

Beyond invisibility: The position and role of the literary translator in the digital paratextual space

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis presents a new theoretical framework through which to analyse the visibility of literary translators in the digital materials that present translations to readers, referred to throughout as paratextual spaces. Central to this model is the argument that paratextual 'visibility' must be understood as including both the way translators and their labour are presented to readers, defined here as their *position*, and also their *role* in the establishment of that position. Going beyond Lawrence Venuti's concept of invisibility as an inevitably negative position to be fought against, this thesis instead establishes paratextual visibility as a complex negotiation between the agency of individual translators, the needs of a publishing house and the interests of readers.

The value of this approach is demonstrated through a case study examining the visibility of translator Jamie Bulloch in the digital spaces surrounding his English-language translations of two novels by German author Timur Vermes: *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. This analysis finds that even though Bulloch played an early role in creating the publisher's paratextual materials, publisher MacLehose Press prioritised making the novels' German origins and the foreignness of the texts visible over Bulloch's status as the translator, or his *translatorship*. Bulloch's limited visibility in the publisher-created materials was then reproduced in digital paratexts created by readers and third parties such as retailer Amazon, despite his attempts to interact with readers and perform his translatorship in digital spaces such as Twitter. Rather than challenging Bulloch's limited visibility, then, digital spaces served to amplify it. This thesis therefore finds that the translator's active participation in the promotion of their work does not always equate to increased visibility, thus demonstrating the need to go beyond Venuti's invisibility and towards understanding the multifaceted roles played by translators in presenting literary texts to new audiences.

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Introduction

In the spring of 2014, the image of Adolf Hitler's hairline and moustache began to appear in bookshop windows and the hands of readers across the UK. As the novel *Look Who's Back* (Vermes, trans. Bulloch, 2014a) received coverage in mainstream newspapers (such as *The Guardian* [Poole, 2014] and the *Financial Times* [Leith, 2014]), its cover was plastered across business cards and postcards, and its author appeared on British television (*Newsnight*, 2014) and radio (*Front Row*, 2014), the striking cover design once again made the unmistakable image of Adolf Hitler a ubiquitous presence in British culture. In doing so, first-time German author Timur Vermes gained a reputation as the author of "the book that had the Hitler haircut on it" and publisher MacLehose Press enjoyed its first major financial success outside of Stieg Larsson's Millennium series.¹ Absent from this cover and much of the ever-present marketing materials derived therefrom, however, was the name of the novel's translator Jamie Bulloch. Yet for social media users with an interest in the novel, translator Jamie Bulloch was a far more visible figure, with his frequent use of Twitter to market the book to British readers making his translatorship explicit in the digital space.

That the literary translator was absent from materials such as the novel's front cover but was able, if not expected, to promote their work via social media and online events is not, however, a situation unique to Bulloch's translation of Vermes' first novel. For instance, translator Jennifer Croft, who is most renowned for her Man-Booker-Prize-winning translation of Nobel-prize-winning author Olga Tokarczuk, worked with author Mark Haddon and *The Society of Authors* to launch the *#TranslatorsOnTheCover* campaign in September 2021. The campaign's open letter from authors calls for publishers to "ensure, whenever our work is translated, that the name of the

¹ A phrase used by now Publisher at MacLehose Press Katharina Bielenberg during interview.

translator appears on the front cover” as an acknowledgement of the translator’s position as the “life-blood of both the literary world and the book trade which sustains it” (Society of Authors, 2021a). The letter has since gathered over 2,500 signatures from authors including Booker-Prize-winner Bernardine Evaristo (Society of Authors, 2021b) and builds upon arguments Croft had made in an article published in *The Guardian* in early September (2021). Notably though, this campaign launched on *International Translation Day* (30 September), just before a major marketing push for Croft’s most recent translation of Olga Tokarczuk’s opus *The Books of Jacob* began. Despite Croft’s activism for this cause and renown as a translator, however, she is not named as the translator on the cover of *The Books of Jacob* but was actively involved in the novel’s promotion on social media.

The disparity between the translator’s absence from spaces such as a novel’s cover yet notable presence in the digital space thus raises the primary research question addressed in this thesis: How are translators made visible to readers in digital spaces and how does this position relate to their visibility in non-digital spaces? Rather than simply focussing on a documentary analysis of how translators are made visible by others in promotional and marketing materials, however, the agency and individual voice of translators as expressed through their use of social media generates a secondary research question: What is the translator’s role in the creation of promotional and marketing materials for the books they translate?

As indicated by the title of this thesis and the above research questions, the “position” and “role” of the translator are key areas of interest for this project. When discussing the *position* of the translator, I am referring specifically to the ways in which the translator is presented to readers in the materials surrounding literary texts. This position may be achieved by the translator’s own participation in the creation of said materials or may result from the way other creators represent or imply their involvement. The translator’s *role* is then concerned with the former, that is the translator’s participation in such creation processes, their distribution of these materials and the extent to which they are responsible for their own visibility in these spaces. Indeed, given the proliferation of content in digital spaces, the translator’s role in the

creation and distribution of promotional materials is of great interest to this project.

The primary benefit of this bilateral approach to investigating how translators are presented to British readers in the materials surrounding their translations is that it allows this thesis to go beyond simply describing the “situation” of translators in contemporary British culture as “invisibility” with purely documentary evidence (Venuti, 1995/2018, 1). Rather, the translator’s own agency, desires and activities can be understood as shaping the way translated literary texts are presented to British readers. Indeed, the shift in the title of this thesis to *beyond invisibility* is indicative of the prominent roles played by translators across both textual production and reception processes, with digital traces of this role thereby granting visibility to translators in a variety of contexts.

As such, this thesis also seeks to elucidate the link between the aforementioned position and role of the translator in digital spaces, and the broader involvement of the translator in the processes that allow literary texts to move between languages and cultures. Thus, where this project discusses the translator’s involvement in broader literary translation and publishing processes in the global circulation of literature, this is referred to as their *translatorship*. This translatorship describes the status of an individual as the translator of a text and the various activities undertaken by this individual to support the movement of literary texts between languages, including involvement in the selling and acquisition of translation rights, the act of translation itself, and promoting the published translation to target audience readers. As such, the final research question addressed in this thesis is: What is the relationship between the translator’s position and role in promotional and marketing materials, and their translatorship?

To answer these questions, this thesis will analyse the visibility of Jamie Bulloch in his role as the English-language translator of Timur Vermes’ novels *Look Who’s Back* (2014a) and *The Hungry and the Fat* (2020). In doing so, I will build upon the theoretical notion of translator invisibility put forward by Lawrence Venuti (1995/2018) and the concept of paratextuality (Genette, 1997a and Batchelor, 2018) to assess Bulloch’s position in the

digital and non-digital materials surrounding both translations and his role in the creation of said materials. As such, I will now demonstrate how this thesis builds upon existing scholarship to provide new insights for scholars working in both translation studies and publishing studies. I will then elucidate and contextualise the selection of the translator, author and publisher combination used as a case study and define the concept of translatorship as it is used throughout this thesis.

Paratextual visibility

Since Lawrence Venuti published an initial version of *The Translator's Invisibility* as a journal article in 1986, questions surrounding the visibility of the literary translator have been tied to the “socioeconomic” contexts in which literary translations are produced (181). For instance, in this early version of his work Venuti ties his argument that translators in “Anglo-American culture” (179) are rendered invisible to a lack of “recognition” for their work (180). Evidence for this then comes from a failure of reviewers to “mention that a book is a translation” (180), the exclusion of translators from promotional spaces such as book covers and advertisements (180), and the need for translators to write their own materials, such as prefaces, to demystify “the practice of translation” (181). In the later expansion of this article in his polemical monograph of the same name (1995/2018), Venuti’s genealogical and historical approach similarly draws on sources such as reviews and prefaces to “trace[s] the rise of transparent discourse in English-language translation” from the 17th century to the late 20th century. As such, investigations into the (in)visibility of translators and translation since Venuti are inherently tied to the materials that “present” a literary text to readers and “ensure the text's presence in the world”, referred to by Gerard Genette as “paratexts” (1997a, 1).

The term “paratext” was coined by Genette to refer to the “productions” that accompany literary texts, thereby enabling “a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public” (1997a, 1). In his monograph *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1997s, trans.

Jane E. Lewin), Genette gives a taxonomic overview of the materials that comprise the paratext that includes many of the elements or spaces used by Venuti to construct his concept of translator invisibility. Examples include book covers, which present the book and “many other items of information” to both the “public at large and then to the reader” (23-32), the name of the author (37-54) and prefaces, which Genette discusses for over a quarter of his monograph (161-293). Although Genette’s work on paratextuality was being developed and published in French around the time Venuti published his first article on translator invisibility (1986), Venuti makes no explicit reference to the term in his subsequent monograph (1995/2018). However, the clear relationship between Venuti’s construction of the translator’s socioeconomic invisibility and the materials covered by Genette’s concept of the paratext have led to paratextuality becoming a key site of interest to translation studies scholars seeking to corroborate, challenge or expand upon Venutian invisibility.

The position of the paratextual space as a key site in the construction of translator visibility was first made explicit by Kasia Koskinen, who differentiates between “*textual, paratextual* and *extratextual* visibility” (2000, 99, emphasis in original). The former relates to the translator’s presence “on the textual level, in the translation itself”; whereas the paratextual and extratextual refer to “translators’ statements about their work outside or in the margins of the actual text” and “the social status of translation outside and beyond the immediate vicinity of the translated text”, respectively (99). Here, a link can be drawn between Koskinen’s differentiation between paratextual and extratextual visibility and Genette’s own distinction between peritexts, that is paratexts that are situated “around the text” and “within the same volume” (1997a, 4), and epitexts, meaning paratexts “located outside the book” (5). In making this distinction, Koskinen brings the translator’s agency into perspective by positioning the paratextual space as a site in which translators can make “statements about their work”, their “understanding of her/his role” and “reports on actual translation projects” (2000, 99). Conversely, the extratextual space is a site where calls for visibility are not “directed at translators themselves but at others dealing with translations” (99). As such, the question of the translator’s socioeconomic

visibility relates not just to how translators are positioned and presented to readers, but also to their own role in this presentation.

In the two decades following the work of Venuti, Genette and Koskinen, the paratextual spaces on which they focus, such as book covers, prefaces and journalistic reviews, have proven to be a rich vein for investigations into translator visibility (see, for example, McRae, 2012; Bilodeau, 2013; and Baer, 2016). However, the world in which literary translations are produced and published has changed dramatically since the mid-to-late 1990s thanks to the rise and proliferation of digital and online technologies. For instance, the existence of eBooks and digital literature challenges Genette's taxonomic delineation of the paratextual space by freeing the literary text from the constraints of physical manifestation in the form of a book and so requires new approaches to paratextuality (such as van Dijk, 2014 and Smyth, 2014). Furthermore, the fluidity and ephemerality of digital paratextual spaces undermines Genette's requirement for paratexts to be "more or less legitimated by the author" by allowing anyone to create materials that "ensure the text's presence in the world" (1997, 1-2). Similarly, the embedding of eBooks in digital retail and reading ecosystems has blurred the line between the paratextual and extratextual spaces outlined by Koskinen, rendering the distinction moot (Batchelor, 2018, 149), and has created a variety of digital spaces in which translators and translation can be made visible that lie outside the scope of Venuti's invisibility hypothesis due to his historical focus that cannot account for digital paratextuality.

As such, this thesis aims to investigate the impact of contemporary digital paratextuality on the concept of translator visibility. This investigation comprises both the effect of digital media and technology on the ways in which translators are made visible to readers within paratexts and the translator's role in the creation of digital paratexts given the shift to digital textual production practices that has occurred since the 1990s (c.f. Thompson, 2021 and Thompson, 2010, 312-368). To meet this aim, this thesis will focus on the impact of digital paratextuality and the translator's role therein in relation to one translator, author and publisher combination working in contemporary Britain. Focussing in on one narrow case within a national context anchors this thesis whilst providing a platform from which to

analyse various digital paratextual spaces with diverse functions and authorship. In this way, a range of paratextual materials can be viewed in constellation with one another to develop a holistic overview of the translator's visibility across the paratextual space. The structure of this thesis as a series of case studies into different digital paratextual spaces therefore means that the various ways in which the translator and their work are made visible can be traced across textual production and reception processes. As such, this thesis presents an original overview of translator visibility across the entire lifecycle of a literary text, rather than artificially separating production- and reception-side visibility based on a need to limit the scope of a research project.

Expanding understandings of visibility through (literary) translator studies

Rather than simply viewing paratexts as documents in which to identify the ways translators are made visible or invisible by others, this thesis places the focus firmly on the literary translator as a figure. Indeed, the dual focus of this thesis' title on the position and, notably, the *role* of the literary translator mirrors growing interest in what has been referred to as "literary translator studies" (Kaindl, Kolb and Schlager, 2021). This burgeoning subfield within translation studies focuses on the "central role of translators" in translation and thereby seeks to "justify translators' creativity and authority in translation processes involving literature" (Hu, 2004, 115-116). To achieve this, scholars must take the "image, status, function, and role of translators" into account (107), rather than focusing solely on source and target texts and the linguistic movement of the literary text between these two poles.

This call to refocus on the figure of the translator has been taken up by various scholars. Andrew Chesterman, for instance, draws on James Holmes' map of translation studies as a discipline to sketch his own vision of translator studies, which differentiates between cultural, cognitive and sociological branches of this subfield (2009). Meanwhile, Anthony Pym draws directly on Hu to argue that, as scholars, "we are thus

methodologically invited never to question the line separating” source and target texts (emphasis in original), that is the figure of the translator (2009, 31). Instead, Pym urges scholars “to find out about translators as people, with their own life stories and evolving ideologies” and thereby “humanize” translation studies to better understand the role of translators in the spaces between cultures (32, 44-45). Such humanisation was necessary because, despite the centrality of the translator in book and article titles since the discipline’s cultural turn (e.g., Robinson, 1991 and Hatim and Mason, 1997), “the translatorial subject is seldom the central theme” (Kaindl, 2021, 6). Indeed, even in Lawrence Venuti’s *The Translator’s Invisibility*, the focus is on the effects of translation strategies and the way that translations are read and received in Anglo-American culture, rather than on individual translators, their ideologies or agency. Nevertheless, interest in the figure of the translator following the cultural turn points towards the growth of “translator-centred research” within the discipline (Kaindl, 2021, 6-7).

Despite what has been referred to as an “abundance of translator-centered publications since the 2000s” (Kaindl, 2021), however, the focus of such research often remains historical. In Kaindl, Kolb and Schlager’s recent edited volume, for instance, an entire section is dedicated to “historical-biographical approaches”, which features research into translators from the early 20th century (Bardet, 2021) and the 19th Century (Strümper-Krobb, 2021 and Eberharter, 2021). Similarly, chapters from other sections of the book focus on historical figures such as Ernest Hemingway (Kolb, 2021), Harriet Martineau (Schlager, 2021) and Elisabeth Wolff-Bekker (Vanacker, 2021). Furthermore, those contributions that prioritise contemporary contexts draw on traditional, book-centric paratextual sources rather than digital materials, such as Ben-Ari’s study into translator’s notes (2021) and Fornalczyk-Lipska’s focus on prefaces and interviews (2021). The present thesis’ focus on a contemporary context and digital materials, therefore, seeks to apply the focus of literary translator studies within a new research context.

Outside of this volume, other large-scale investigations into individual translators have similarly focussed on historical contexts or non-digital paratextual sources, even where the translators remain alive and working

within contemporary digital contexts. Wenqian Zhang (2020), for instance, uses archival material to investigate the formation of Howard Goldblatt's "translation brand" during the 1990s and 2000s, whilst Motoko Akashi (2018) synthesises data collected from contemporary Japanese translators with an analysis of the prominence of translators during Japan's historical Meiji period (between 1868 and 1912). Consequently, where existing translator-studies scholarship uses "the personal perspectives of translators to confirm, correct or relativize our current understanding" (Kaindl, 2021, 22), the digital approach taken within this thesis breaks new ground by situating the paratextual position and role of the translator within the broader digital context in which contemporary translations are produced, published and received.

A microhistory of translation and translators

With "translator studies" approaches shifting the focus away from texts and onto the figure of the translator comes a requirement for methodological shifts away from using target and source texts as the sole primary sources. In her study of the multiple professional roles and "lives" of literary translators, for instance, Reine Meylaerts leverages personal letters from Roger Avermaete to situate his translations within the context of his other professional work and his role as an "intercultural mediator" (2013). In more contemporary settings, the position and role of the translator within broader networks of textual production have similarly been investigated through email correspondence, drafts and working notes (Galletti 2013 and Jansen, 2017). On a larger scale, interview and questionnaire data has allowed scholars to gain direct insights into the conditions, hierarchies of power and networks of communication in which translators work (Akashi, 2018 and Dam and Zethsen, 2012). In such cases, the use of primary sources allows scholars to go beyond the researcher's own interpretation of the position of a text within a given literary system (as required by descriptive translation studies approaches) to instead gain insight into the "everyday experience of individuals" (Munday, 2014, 65).

The use of primary sources to gain insights into “the lives of individuals” and “their interaction with other participants in the translation process” is described by Jeremy Munday as a “microhistory of translation and translators” (2014). This methodology is developed from the concept of microhistory (Levi, 1991 and Ginzburg, 1993) and follows trends towards “cultural history from below” in which a concentration on small-scale case studies allows translation studies scholars to “uncover the power relations at work in the production of the literary text through the representation of its discourses” (Munday, 2014, 67). While Munday draws on Seldon (1996) to caution that first-person testimonies such as interviews are “mediated” sources and so their reliability means findings must be corroborated with other sources, the benefits of such data are that it “gives the subject’s perspective on events and people; it helps interpret documents; and an interviewee may produce new material or offer other assistance to the interviewer” (Seldon, 1996, 358-359).

Given this thesis’ aim to investigate the impact of digital paratextuality on one translator’s visibility and his role in this digital paratextual space, then, a micro-historical approach has several benefits. For instance, while existing scholarship on the translator’s paratextual visibility has made tentative first steps into digital paratextual materials, such as Amazon product descriptions for books (Hassen, 2012) or online forums (Batchelor, 2018, 118-138), little work has been done in the area and the few existing studies focus on secondary sources, rather than including primary sources from the translator within such accounts. As such, little is known about “the specific interaction between a translator and other individuals, groups, institutions and power structures” (Munday, 2014, 77) that control (digital) paratextual production processes. Furthermore, even when translator-created paratexts such as prefaces or afterwords are studied (such as McRae, 2012 and Norberg, 2012), these are made available to the public in the publisher-mediated space of the book. By including primary sources from the translator and other agents involved in paratextual production, such as interviews and pre-publication, industry-facing paratexts from the publisher, the present thesis therefore goes beyond current research to re-introduce the translator’s agency within the concept of paratextual visibility. In doing so, I establish a

new theoretical conceptualisation of paratextual visibility that bridges the gap between traditional text-based methodologies from literary translation studies and the sociologically informed approaches developed within literary translator studies.

Sociology of literature

By focussing on the translator's "interaction with other participants in the translation process" (Munday, 2014, 64) to provide unique insights into paratextual visibility, this thesis conceives of the "translation process" as spanning a literary text's entire journey from one language to another. This understanding is built upon the work of sociologist John B. Thompson, who set out to map the landscape of the Anglo-American (trade) publishing field in his monograph *Merchants of Culture* (2010). In the introduction to this monograph, Thompson argues that the various agents and activities which are "all oriented towards a common goal — namely, the production, sale and distribution" of the book, can be described as "the publishing chain" (14). This publishing chain can be categorised as both a "supply chain", in which the book-as-product "is gradually produced and transmitted via distributors and retailers to an end user who purchases it", and what Thompson describes as a "value chain" (14). Within this publishing value chain, each link "performs a task or function which contributes something substantial to the overall task of producing the book and delivering it to the end user" (15). As such, each contribution "adds some 'value'" to the literary text and is typically a task for which the agent responsible is financially remunerated (15-16).

In the context of this thesis, Thompson's value chain is useful because it maps out the journey of a literary text from "creation, selection and acquisition" (16) to making a book "available" and "known" to readers (21) and so comprises the production of paratextual materials in which this thesis will investigate the translator's visibility. Thompson's overview of the publishing process is based on data generated from 280 in-depth interviews with publishers, agents and booksellers of varying sizes spanning

conglomerates to independents (409-411). Although Thompson's survey of the Anglo-American publishing field did not focus on publishers specialising in translated literature, the breadth of this overview results in a useful framework from which to understand book production processes and position the translator therein. As such, where this thesis seeks to understand Bulloch's role in the creation of paratextual materials and his resulting visibility, Thompson's "publishing value chain" will be used as the framework through which the publishing industry is understood.

Where this thesis focuses on digital paratextual materials specifically, Thompson's sociological approach will be complemented by the work of Simone Murray. Murray's monograph *The Digital Literary Sphere* (2018) similarly adopts a "sociology of literature" (English, 2010 in Murray, 2018, 17) perspective to investigate the "relationship between digital communication technologies and contemporary literary culture" (1). In doing so, Murray charts what she describes as the "digital literary sphere", a space in which "various traditional literary 'processes'" are manifest in digital spaces, primarily websites (9). As such, Murray focuses on the digital literary space as it is available to readers, rather than Thompson's production-side (publisher-centric) approach. Indeed, whilst Thompson's *Merchants of Culture* does include a section on the "digital revolution" in trade publishing (312-368), a topic Thompson further develops in his subsequent monograph *Book Wars: The Digital Revolution in Publishing* (2021), the focus remains on how digital technologies have impacted textual production processes. As such, combining Murray's reader-oriented perspective with Thompson's allows this thesis to position production- and reception-side paratextual materials in constellation with one another, both in terms of their creation and how readers interact with them in the paratextual space. Consequently, where this thesis brings in discussion of the function of various digital spaces in relation to "literary processes" or their ownership, this will be done in relation to Murray's work.

I must now acknowledge the scope of this thesis in relation to Thompson and Murray's studies into the sociology of literature and the publishing field. Both authors draw extensively on the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1993, 1995) to conceptualise publishing and literary spaces as

fields in which social positions “can be occupied by agents and organizations” depending on “the type and quantity of resources or ‘capital’ they have at their disposal” (Thompson, 2010, 3-4). Indeed, as noted by Murray, “Bourdieu’s field theory appears especially applicable” to the online environment, which can be demarcated as “a ‘universe of belief’” in which participants can self-identify as “‘literary’ adherents” (2018, 18). However, this thesis’ focus on digital phenomena, such as the generation of algorithmic content or recommendation engines, cannot be readily accounted for within Bourdieu’s work given his focus on a “cast of human and institutional actors” (Murray, 2018, 18). Moreover, both Thompson and Murray seek to provide overviews of a vast quantity of subject matter, be it the British and American trade publishing industry in Thompson’s case, or Murray’s “mapping” of the entire “digital literary sphere”. In contrast, the present thesis seeks to approach the translator’s visibility within a given space, that is the paratextual space surrounding specific literary texts, through the lens of a micro-historical analysis and with a particular focus on digital materials. Consequently, the translator’s relationships are used to contextualise the analysis of digital paratextual products and production processes rather than to sociologically map the translator’s position within the literary field. Whilst this thesis uses these sociological studies to contextualise the translator’s visibility and role in the digital paratextual space, then, I do not draw explicitly on such a sociological approach for the analysis throughout.

Despite not explicitly invoking Bourdieusian sociology within its analysis, this thesis still provides new insights for those working in the sociology of literature through a focus on the role of the translator in paratextual creation, which is markedly absent from any attempts to sketch the Anglophone publishing field. For instance, in *The Digital Literary Sphere*, Simone Murray makes only a single reference to translation throughout her “charting” of the digital literary sphere and does so within a brief, and largely theoretical, discussion of the “geographic expansion of authorial reputation” (2018, 20). Thus, where Murray does include translation in her work, it is done through the lens of exporting Anglophone authors, rather than within the context of translations into English. Thompson similarly includes only a passing

paragraph to discuss the powerful global position enjoyed by English-language texts in comparison to translations into English, which “seldom appear on the bestseller lists in Britain and the US” (2010, 13), and the sale of foreign language rights by Anglophone literary agents (61-69). In both cases, the translator is almost completely absent from maps of the Anglophone publishing field and the (digital) literary sphere. Indeed, even in conceptualisations of the publishing world that focus on individual agents, such as Darnton’s publishing “communications circuit” (1982) and Ray Murray and Squires updated “digital communications circuit” (2013), translators are conspicuous in their absence — particularly when the role of other “freelancers and outsource agencies” (such as “designers” and “media content producers”) are included. In seeking to understand the translator’s role in (digital) paratextual production processes, then, this thesis also seeks to establish the translator as a figure of interest in conceptualisations of the contemporary publishing field.

The case of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*

Now that I have established the foundations upon which this thesis’ investigation into translator visibility is built, I will introduce the books that form the backdrop for the various paratextual case studies conducted throughout this thesis: the novels of Timur Vermes, *Look Who’s Back* (2014a) and *The Hungry and the Fat* (2020). Both novels were originally written in German by Vermes, translated into British English by Jamie Bulloch and published in English by British publishing house MacLehose Press. In terms of their content and genre, the novels are social satires in which Vermes seeks to criticise modern media culture, in particular the television media, through the lens of representations of Germany’s National Socialist past in modern Germany and the country’s response to the Mediterranean migrant crisis. The books have been chosen as the object of study in this thesis for several reasons.

Firstly, the two novels have had vastly different levels of commercial success in English translation. *Look Who’s Back* sold over 250,000 copies across all

English-language editions whereas *The Hungry and the Fat* was described by the publisher as “a real struggle” in terms of sales (personal communication). Consequently, a comparison of Bulloch’s paratextual visibility across the two novels allows this thesis to control several key variables (such as author, translator, publisher and publishing context) whilst investigating the differences between the translator’s visibility for one novel that had commercial success in Britain and one that did not.

Secondly, despite the difference in the two novels’ success, both feature a strong paratextual brand in which the same fonts, colour palettes and layouts are used in many of the traditional paratextual materials, such as the front and rear covers. As such, the creation of this paratextual brand for Vermes’ novels in English-language translation allows this thesis to investigate differences in Bulloch’s paratextual visibility at two different points in time, 2014 and 2020, without having to account for huge compositional changes in the paratextual materials produced by the publisher.

Finally, the success of *Look Who’s Back* in particular has resulted in the proliferation of digital paratextual materials pertaining to both novels that span production- and reception-side perspectives. Consequently, the paratextual spaces surrounding both novels serve as fertile ground in which to explore the paratextual visibility of Bulloch and his role therein, whilst the focus on these two novels anchors the analysis of various digital paratextual spaces within a unified context. One consequence of this proliferation of content, as well as this thesis’ focus on the “de-territorialized” digital space (Murray, 2018, 18), is an overwhelming amount of source materials in which to investigate Bulloch’s paratextual visibility and his role therein. Given the British context in which the novels were acquired, translated and published by a British-based translator and publisher, this thesis chooses to focus primarily on paratextual materials created and published within a British context. As such, where British versions of a website or digital space exist, for instance as demarcated by the use of web addresses ending in .co.uk or .org.uk, then these will be the focus of this thesis.

As well as the book-based factors elucidated in the previous paragraphs, *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were also chosen as the case study for this thesis due to several factors regarding the translator, author and publisher of the books.

The translator: Jamie Bulloch

Jamie Bulloch is a German to English translator based in London. After completing a PhD in 20th Century Austrian history (Bulloch, 2002), Bulloch began his translation career working in the realm of technical translation. In 2007, Bulloch was then commissioned by a colleague of his wife Katharina Bielenberg, who was a freelance copyeditor working with MacLehose Press at the time and had previously worked with publisher Christopher MacLehose at Harvill, to complete a sample translation of a literary crime novel. His first full length book translation, Paulus Hochgatterer's *The Sweetness of Life*, was subsequently published in 2008 by MacLehose Press. Since then, 41 of Bulloch's literary translations have been published by a variety of publishing houses including *Harvill Secker*, *Peirene Press*, *Atlantic Books*, *Hodder & Stoughton*, and *Head of Zeus*. *Look Who's Back*, his translation of Vermees' first novel, was published by MacLehose Press in 2014, whilst the English-language *The Hungry and the Fat*, Vermees' second novel, was also published by MacLehose Press in 2020.

In terms of using Bulloch as a case study to investigate digital paratextual visibility within this thesis, there are several points of interest to consider. Firstly, of the 41 literary texts translated by Bulloch and published in Britain throughout his career, 18 have been published by MacLehose Press — including *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. In terms of assessing his position and role in the paratextual spaces surrounding the books he translates, then, the selection of translations published by MacLehose Press serve as a representation of almost half of Bulloch's published translations. Furthermore, the time between the publication of the two novels allows this thesis to examine how the continued development of this working relationship between Bulloch and MacLehose Press affects his paratextual visibility.

Secondly, Bulloch's work as a translator has been recognised in various ways throughout his career. For instance, four of Bulloch's translations have been nominated for the Society of Author's *Schlegel-Tieck Prize*, which recognises "outstanding translations" from "works in German of literary merit and general interest", including *The Hungry and the Fat* in 2021 (Society of Authors, 2021c). Bulloch also serves as a jury member for *New Books in German*, an organisation that "promotes German-language literature for translation into English in the UK, USA, and beyond" by recommending titles from Austria, Germany and Switzerland and guaranteeing translation funding for those recommended books (New Books in German, no date a). As such, Bulloch plays a visible role in the broader movement of German-language literature into English that goes beyond translating individual texts and so the potential impact of this recognition on his visibility within the paratextual spaces surrounding *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* raises interesting questions.

Finally, Bulloch's career as a literary translator began through a privileged proximity to the publishing industry through his wife Katharina Bielenberg, who is now the Publisher at MacLehose Press (Cowdrey, 2020). This privilege is accompanied by his status as a white, male, heterosexual translator working between the "central" German language and the "hyper-central" English language (Heilbron, 2000). Consequently, any paratextual visibility achieved by Bulloch is built on a foundation of this privilege. In this way, Bulloch's paratextual visibility is not representative of translator visibility across the entire British publishing field. Rather, his privileged position and proximity to MacLehose Press can be understood as revealing a form of 'best-case scenario' in which translator visibility can be achieved. Thus, where Bulloch is absent from the digital paratextual spaces studied throughout this thesis or where his role is limited by other parties, we might expect even greater levels of invisibility in instances where translators have less privilege than Bulloch or work between less powerful language combinations.

The author: Timur Vermes

Timur Vermes began his writing career as a tabloid journalist for the Munich-based newspaper *Abendzeitung* and Cologne's *EXPRESS*, before returning to Munich as a freelance writer for women's, media and marketing magazines. In 2006, Vermes became chief copy editor at a women's fitness magazine before being made redundant following the 2008 financial crash. Through his wife, who works in the German publishing industry, Vermes was then contracted as a ghost-writer for Michael Hirte (2009), who won the second series of the German *das Supertalent* TV talent show, and Peter Anders, a crime-scene cleaner (2011), among others. When the ghost-writing contracts then also dried up, Vermes began writing *Er ist wieder da* (2012a), which would go on to be translated into English as *Look Who's Back*. Since then, he has published two subsequent novels, *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* (2018, translated into English as *The Hungry and the Fat*) and *U* (2021), and he has also translated David Duchovny's novel *Holy Cow* into German (2015).

English-language translations of Vermes' novels *Er ist wieder da* and *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* have been selected for analysis within this thesis for several reasons. Firstly, the former provides a notable case study thanks to its large and sustained commercial success, whereby the hardback was one of the top three books on German bestsellers lists from the autumn of 2012 until September 2013 and various further editions of the novel would remain on said lists until 2016 (c.f. Freeth, 2021, 125). Given the novel's narrator and subject matter, this commercial success sparked cultural debate on representations of Germany's National Socialist history both within Germany and the UK (c.f. Freeth, 2021, 126-128, 130-131). Given the transnational interest in the novel prior to the publication of an English translation in 2014, then, *Er ist wieder da* presents a notable example of British interest in German culture and literature in which to then examine the paratextual position and role of translator Jamie Bulloch. Conversely, the setting of *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* within an international political context in which Britain was involved, the Mediterranean migrant crisis, presents a notable point of comparison to investigate Bulloch's position and

role whereby many variables, such as author and publisher, remain the same whilst the novel no longer satirises a specifically German cultural issue.

Secondly, discussion of the two novels and their English-language translations contributes to both scholarship on the translation and circulation of 21st-century German-language literature in a global context. In the case of *Look Who's Back*, scholars working in various languages and cultural contexts have discussed the translation of the novel. In a Spanish context, for instance, work has been done on the humour and the framing of the target text (López, 2015), as well as the translation of German cultural references (Cabo and de Luxán Hernández, 2021). Similar discussions of translation strategies and decisions can also be found in Finnish (Kokkonen, 2021), Croatian (Veselčić, 2020) and German (Höhenberger, 2016) scholarship. Within English-language scholarship, however, the focus has primarily remained on the novel's subject matter and satirising of Hitler (Williams, 2017 and Griffiths, 2015); its narrative structure (Troupin, 2018) or my own analysis of the novel's framing and reception from a comparative, imagological perspective (Freeth, 2021). In the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, there has been no scholarly work on the novel. Thus, this thesis's focus on the materials surrounding the translations, their reception, and the cultural and institutional contexts in which they were produced presents new knowledge for those working within translation studies and comparative literature, as well as scholars interested in literary representations of Germany's National Socialist history.

Finally, Vermes has a level of English that means he can participate in the English-language paratextual space himself — particularly within the British context on which this thesis focuses, with Vermes being able to travel to the UK and make appearances on British radio and television. As such, the figure of the author is both visible and a participant within the paratextual spaces that surround the two novels within the British context. This therefore positions Bulloch the translator alongside Vermes the author rather than the translator needing to act in lieu of the author, which is the case with all other

languages into which Vermes' novels have been translated.² Indeed, the fact that Vermes was able to participate in the English-language paratextual space presents an interesting case study for this thesis, given that authors speaking all of the languages into which their works are translated is a rare phenomenon.

The publisher: MacLehose Press

Jamie Bulloch's translations of Timur Vermes' novels were published by MacLehose Press, an imprint of publishing house Quercus Books. The press was set up by Christopher MacLehose, who had previously led the translation focussed *Harvill* imprint, and published its first three titles in 2008. MacLehose Press describes itself as an "independently minded imprint" whose mission is to "read the world" and "to bring a broad spectrum of the very best of foreign literature to English-reading audiences" (c2021). The press's publishing list focuses on foreign language literature, and its largest commercial success has come in the form of Stieg Larsson and David Lagercrantz's *Millennium* crime fiction series. The first book in the series, published as *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2008, translated pseudonymously by Steven T. Murray), was one of MacLehose Press's first three titles and became a lead title for the imprint. On the more literary end of MacLehose Press's list, titles such as *Ladivine* (Marie Ndiaye, trans. Jordan Stump, 2016) and *An Inventory of Losses* (Judith Schalansky, trans. Jackie Smith, 2020) have been longlisted for the International Booker Prize in 2016 and 2021 respectively and the latter won the 2021 Warwick Prize for Women in Translation. As such, MacLehose Press' focus on English translations of foreign-language fiction spans commercial and literary fiction, with Vermes' commercially successful yet Schlegel-Tieck-prize-nominated satire falling between those two poles.

² Vermes noted during interview that he is only able to speak German and English, so his position alongside Bulloch in the English-language paratextual space is not replicated in other languages.

In terms of the composition of MacLehose Press and its situation within the wider British publishing field, there are several things to note. Firstly, Quercus was bought by Hodder & Stoughton in spring 2014 (Shaffi, 2014), with the deal taking place as *Look Who's Back* was released in Britain. Consequently, Hodder & Stoughton's position as an imprint of Hachette UK places MacLehose Press within the corporate structure of one of the UK's 'big five' publishing houses and one of the world's most profitable publishing companies, Hachette Livre (Milliot, 2018). As such, the "independently minded" MacLehose Press stands out in comparison to many other translation-focused publishers in contemporary Britain which are characterised as small and independent from broader publishing conglomerates and so lack the same financial resources, such as Fitzcarraldo Editions, Charco Press and Pushkin Press. Thus, the combination of MacLehose Press's small and curated publishing list with the institutional backing of a major international conglomerate presents an interesting case study in which to investigate the translator's paratextual visibility and their role therein.

Secondly, the MacLehose Press team is particularly small and the member of staff responsible for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* was (the then Associate Publisher) Katharina Bielenberg. Bielenberg had originally worked for Christopher MacLehose's wife as a literary scout in the early 1990s before joining Christopher MacLehose at Harvill as a rights manager following his buyout of the company in 1995 (Wroe, 2012). When Christopher MacLehose left Harvill following a buyout from Random House in 2002 (Wroe, 2012) and subsequently set up MacLehose Press with Quercus Books, Bielenberg worked for the new imprint as a freelance copyeditor and proof-reader. Bielenberg was then brought fully into the company in 2011 as Associate Publisher. Within this role, Bielenberg oversaw the acquisition and publication of both of Vermes' novels in English and acted as the editor for the two translations. So, along with Vermes and Bulloch, Bielenberg serves as a third constant agent in the movement of the two novels into English, thereby presenting a stable team in which to explore the translator's role and visibility in the paratextual space.

Finally, this thesis must frame any findings within the context of Bielenberg and Bulloch's marriage, which raises questions regarding the representativeness of Bulloch's visibility and role in paratextual production within the context of MacLehose Press. However, several factors limit the potential for Bielenberg and Bulloch's personal relationship to impact his paratextual visibility to a major extent. For instance, the small MacLehose Press editorial and publishing team is embedded within Quercus' broader publishing and text production processes. As such, the hands-on editorial approach taken by Bielenberg as the Associate Publisher is not mirrored in other areas of the publisher's activities, such as marketing and publicity, which are handled by broader teams within the Quercus infrastructure. Consequently, Bulloch's visibility within such materials falls outside of Bielenberg's purview, thereby limiting her ability to influence the ways in which Bulloch's translatorship is presented within the paratextual space. Furthermore, the original hardback run of *Look Who's Back* had limited financial resources in terms of marketing and publicity. Indeed, MacLehose Press was awarded a "Shoestring" marketing award from the Book Marketing Society, which praised the press's leveraging of "supporters from the book trade" to begin a "word of mouth campaign" (BMS, 2014). It was only after the commercial success of the hardback that more money was put into the marketing campaign for the paperback edition. Consequently, the position of Bielenberg and MacLehose Press within a broader corporate structure prevents this personal relationship from impacting Bulloch's role in the broader paratextual creation processes — though its existence, of course, places him closer to MacLehose Press than other translators.

Defining Bulloch's translatorship

As outlined at the beginning of this introduction, this thesis aims to investigate the way translators are made visible to readers in the paratextual space and the translator's role in these paratextual spaces. Inherent in the making visible of a translator, however, is a nuance between the personified translator who can be presented to readers as an individual, in this case Jamie Bulloch, and the abstract figure of 'the translator' who is the agent responsible for the completion of the translation and associated activities,

that is their *translatorship*. For instance, where *Look Who's Back* or *The Hungry and the Fat* are described by MacLehose Press as “translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch” the two coalesce. However, when online reviewers describe the former novel as “really well translated” (Lanta, 2014) it is the act of translation as performed by Bulloch, rather than Bulloch himself, that is made visible. Such a distinction raises interesting questions about how readers understand both translators and translation, as well as the extent to which representations or inferences of translational activities render the translator responsible visible. To address these questions throughout this thesis, however, I must first define the concept of translatorship and relate this to Bulloch’s practice as the translator of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*.

The notion of translatorship discussed throughout this thesis is developed as a corollary of authorship. The construction of authorship is described by Longolius as a “performative act” whereby an authorial identity is dynamically formed and reformed through actions both within and outside the literary text (2016, 7-8). According to Murray, this performance of authorship then becomes a key functionality of what she describes as the “digital literary sphere” (2018, 9-10). The initial distinction made within this thesis, then, is the switch from outlining the formation of authorship to that of translatorship. Given that translators are involved in the creation of “aesthetic objects whether visual or textual”, which according to Longolius defines the term “author” (2016, 7), this shift may initially seem obvious and unproblematic.

Yet within the field of translation studies, the question of whether translators can be described as or compared to authors is a persistent point of contention between scholars. An overview of this debate is provided by Caroline Summers (2019), who notes that while the conceptualisation of the source author as the only author is “institutionally ingrained in modern translation practice”, an argument made by Venuti in *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995/2018), the prioritising of fidelity to an original author results in a “configuration of authority and agency in the translation process” that “seems to weigh against the translator”. Arguments against this are based upon the translator’s role in ensuring the growth and future life of a text in

translation (Nord, 2011) and the accounts of translators, who position themselves as collaborators alongside the author (Eco, 2001; Frielinghaus, 2002; Uman and Bistué, 2007) making creative and informed decisions for which they desire compensation in the form of copyright and financial remuneration (Jansen, 2019). Others, however, support the differentiation of the translator from the figure of the author on the grounds that translators do not go as far as taking “ethical or pragmatic” responsibility for the text in lieu of the author (Pym, 2011, 34).

Approaches that understand the task of the translator as different from that of the author (Benjamin, 1923/2021) have become increasingly popular in the discipline following the so-called cultural and sociological turns. For instance, Lefevere’s definition of translation as a form of “rewriting” (1992) or Littau’s definition of translators as “versioners” (1997/2010) both position translators alongside other agents who ensure the growth of a literary text (such as reader-reviewers). As discussed earlier in this introduction, it is such an approach, which views translators as individualised, creative agents who rewrite literary texts into other languages, that underpins this thesis. Nevertheless, despite the positioning of translators as collaborative yet individualized *rewriters* alongside an author, which acknowledges both their agency and the pragmatic difference between the act of writing and translation, discussion of translatorship remains entrenched in these translator-author dichotomies and thereby focuses solely on the act of translation in terms of its relationship to authorship. Indeed, even concepts such as Jansen and Wegener’s “multiple translatorship” (2013), which differentiates between the labour of the translator and other agents such as a publisher or copy editor, go on to ascribe authorship of the translated text to all these agents, thereby maintaining the focus on questions of authorship. In terms of understanding the other professional activities undertaken by literary translators, as well as their position within publishing practices and life cycles that lie outside of debates of authorship, then, this remains an open question within translation studies.

However, if we turn to other cognate fields, such as publishing studies or book history, where several attempts have been made to chart the world of British literary publishing, the question of how we define translatorship

remains elusive. For instance, differentiation along professional titles is commonplace, with industry mapping exercises such as Thompson's "publishing value chain" (2010, 16) and Darnton's communication circuit (1982) neatly dividing the publishing life cycle into role-specific chunks with little-to-no cross over between these agents. While the modernised "digital publishing communications circuit" from Ray Murray and Squires (2013) acknowledges the contemporary conflation of some roles within this model (notably the author and publisher) and provides a digital focus, it retains a modular approach based on professional roles within which translators do not easily sit. Indeed, translators are conspicuously absent from the publishing value chain and both versions of the communication circuit. In the case of the latter, given the status of literary translators as freelancers, they seem most easily positioned within the "Freelancers and Outsource Agencies" module of the digital communication circuit, which includes editorial and design work and feeds into the role of the author, publisher, and retailers and distributors (2013, 6). However, translation can be understood as an act of reading (Cook, 1986), translators can serve as the reader reviewers discussed in Chapter 4, and translators work with publishing houses and rights agents in the sale and circulation of translation rights (as demonstrated by Bulloch's completion of reader reports discussed in Chapter 3).³ Thus, translatorship constitutes the undertaking of professional activities that defy such modular and differentiated conceptualisations of the publishing industry. As such, a conceptualisation of the translatorship that encompasses these activities requires a broader approach than the limited author-translator dichotomies frequently discussed in translation studies.

Given the continued debate surrounding the question of how to define translatorship within translation studies and the absence, or indeed

³ For instance, Man-Booker-International and Schlegel-Tieck Prize shortlisted translator Jen Calleja writes reviews and essays for publications such as *The Times Literary Supplement* (Calleja, c2022) whilst the Man-Booker-International-longlisted and translator-of-the-2020-London-Book-Fair Katy Derbyshire wrote the long-running *Love German Books* blog (Derbyshire, 2018).

invisibility, of translators within theoretical conceptualisations of the publishing industry, this thesis therefore opts for an inductive approach. Thus, rather than seeking to present a new general definition of translatorship here that would be ambitious given the specific focus of this thesis on one translator, I will instead base the concept of Bulloch's specific translatorship on two data sets. The first comprises descriptions of his role as a literary translator during interviews with Bulloch, Bielenberg and Vermes. The second, paratextual data, will then be used to corroborate these "mediated testimonies" (Munday, 2014, 75) in line with the microhistory of translation approach outlined in the introduction of this thesis. Doing so is beneficial as it reflects the agency of Bulloch within the notion of performing his role as a translator, thereby mirroring the ideological focus of this thesis on understanding the active roles played by translators in promoting and talking about their work. Furthermore, this approach allows me to focus on the impact of Bulloch's actions on his paratextual visibility within the context of the two novels studied throughout this thesis. This specific anchoring in two literary texts, rather than attempting to map Bulloch's actions into a general taxonomy of translatorship, prevents any implication of a correct or typical notion of translatorship and reductive discussions of actions not taken by Bulloch. In doing so, I acknowledge that all translators, as well as the activities they undertake in their roles as translators, are individual and influenced by their context.

My starting point for defining Bulloch's translatorship stems from the first question that I asked during interview: *What it is that you do within the world of literary publishing and translation?* Bulloch responded:

"Well, I am what I would call a literary translator. I translate principally novels from German to English. I've done the occasional non-fiction book but not very many. And of these novels, I would say around about 95% of them are contemporary. I've had one or two which were written in the earlier part of the 20th century. But otherwise, the authors are still alive, the books are being published now or they've just been published. I've also translated a kind of mixture of genres, so from sort of slightly higher literary works down to more commercial literature such as crime and thrillers."

Notably, the fact that his translation work has focussed on contemporary texts means that most of the authors with whose literary texts he works are still alive, thereby positioning his translatorship as a linguistically driven professional activity alongside the figure of the author. At a basic level, then, Bulloch's translatorship corresponds to the act of translating German-language novels into English and Bulloch taking responsibility for the completion of this activity, that is as the *translator* of the literary text.

However, as noted by Bulloch during interview, the role of the literary translator is not simply the performance of the verb *to translate* but covers a range of additional professional activities which must, therefore, be included within the conceptualisation of Bulloch's translatorship. Within this thesis, I present a model of translatorship that summarises these activities under four headings, which are: the translator as *literary scout*, the translator as *rewriter*, the translator as *marketer*, and the translator as *ambassador*. Before exploring these general groupings, however, it must be noted that these are not presented as an exhaustive taxonomy of every possible professional role played or activity undertaken by a literary translator, nor as a comprehensive catalogue of the roles and activities undertaken specifically by Jamie Bulloch throughout his professional career. Rather, these broad groupings of professional activities present an overview of Bulloch's translatorship as described during interview and with a particular focus on the two novels comprising this thesis' primary case study, *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*.⁴ The inductive development of these categories within the context of the present thesis serves to indicate the multifaceted ways in which translatorship can be performed by individual translators and understood within the wider book publishing and circulation

⁴ Indeed, given that the completion of research interviews constitutes a co-creation of knowledge and data based upon the dialogue between participant and researcher (Kvale, 1996), a different interviewer or another interview within the context of a different research project may well uncover other activities not discussed within the context of the present thesis.

practices in which Bulloch operates and within which the two novels studied in this thesis were published.

The translator as literary scout

The first category, that of the translator as *literary scout*, comprises activities undertaken by translators to facilitate the buying and selling of translation rights between publishing houses. These activities come as the second stage of Thompson's "publishing value chain", described there as the publisher's process of "content acquisition" (2010,16). As will be discussed further in Chapter 3, prior to the acquisition of the translation rights for *Er ist wieder da*, Bielenberg asked Bulloch to read the novel and provide an opinion on the book and its suitability for translation. As such, Bulloch served as a professional reader for the publishing house and as an expert in the literary field to be able to present a recommendation for translation, activities which he has also undertaken for other novels and publishing houses, including Timur Vermes' second novel *Die Hungrigen und die Satten*. What is more, the translator who completed the sample translation of *Er ist wieder da* for German publisher Bastei Lübbe, Katy Derbyshire, similarly described her undertaking of these activities within her professional work as a literary translator during interview, whilst *New Books in German* have published an advice article on "how to write a good reader's report" (Rault, 2021) — thereby indicating the applicability of this category outside of Bulloch's own experience.

The translator as rewriter

Next come activities undertaken by the translator as a *rewriter*, which comprises the creation and revision of the translated literary text. As such, the basic notion of translatorship as the movement of a text from one language to another discussed previously is included here. However, within the role of the rewriter, this notion is also expanded to include the additional editorial activities undertaken by Bulloch during the translation of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. In the case of the former, that is

translatorial activities, Bulloch notes that during the translation process for *Look Who's Back*, he and twelve other translators of *Er ist wieder da* into various languages spent a week with author Timur Vermes at the *Europäisches Übersetzer-Kollegium* [European Translator College] in Straelen. During this residency, both Vermes and original German publisher Bastei Lübbe were keen to encourage the translators to do whatever was necessary to make the novel “work” in translation. In the case of the latter, editorial activities, Bulloch notes that he and publisher MacLehose Press made the editorial decision to cut down some sections of *The Hungry and the Fat* based on reviews of the German novel stating that it was too long, thereby engaging Bulloch in editorial activity. In terms of relating these activities to Thompson’s “publishing value chain” (2010, 16), the combination of creative and editorial work based on assessments of the novels’ suitability for English-language readers does not align simply to one phase of Thompson’s model. Rather, Bulloch’s role as a *rewriter* extends from Thompson’s “content development” module into the “quality control” and subsequent “copy-editing” phases.

This group of activities are referred to as rewriting because the act of translation goes beyond linguistic equivalence into the creative space of interpreting, adapting and “rewriting” (Lefevere, 1992) the literary text for an English-language audience. Furthermore, in both the undertaking of editorial and creative activities during the translation of the two novels, Bulloch’s translatorship includes taking responsibility for the English-language literary text as its content is based upon decisions made by him as the translator, rather than by or in consultation with the author Timur Vermes. Indeed, Bulloch noted during interview that Vermes was unaware of the aforementioned cuts made to *The Hungry and the Fat* prior to the novel’s release. As such, the creative role played within Bulloch’s translatorship comprises editorial and creative activities for which Bulloch then takes responsibility as the translator of the English-language text.

The translator as marketer

The third set of activities, the translator as *marketer*, typically then occurs once the activities involved in translating the text have come to an end and a book enters the “sales and marketing” stage of the publishing value chain (Thompson, 2010, 16). In the case of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, Bulloch’s activities built upon his close relationship to publisher MacLehose Press. Consequently, he notes being involved with developing a title for *Look Who’s Back* that worked with the novel’s cover design and drafting a blurb for *The Hungry and the Fat* following its acquisition to assist with marketing the novel both within the corporate structure above MacLehose Press as an imprint and to booksellers. Once the novels had been announced and released publicly, Bulloch also played a role in marketing them both in the digital and non-digital worlds. For instance, Bulloch noted during interview that his use of social media platform Twitter allows him to share posts relating to his work and interact with readers to discuss books that he has translated. Similarly, Bulloch’s involvement in public events to promote the novel, such as public readings and ‘meet the author’ events alongside Timur Vermes, demonstrates a very literal example of Bulloch performing the marketing activities that constitute a component of his translatorship.

Notably, activities such as interacting with Twitter users and developing a matrix to see when users post about his novels is an initiative Bulloch undertook at his own discretion. The fact that Bulloch was absent from the marketing and publicity plans devised for *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, even from events in which he would eventually participate, demonstrates the proactivity displayed by Bulloch in performing this aspect of his translatorship. Indeed, Bielenberg noted during interview that MacLehose Press have worked with translators who are “not even on emails”, let alone willing to participate in live events and so translators are able to play marketing roles at their own discretion. Moreover, Bulloch has discussed the importance of undertaking such marketing activities at literary events (Sounds Right, 2020) and has expressed that translators “need to use all our courage and creative skills to ensure” that a positive reputation of

German-language literature is communicated to English-language readers (Bulloch and Langton, 2017). Thus, for Bulloch, it is the ontological state of being a translator that “puts you on the front line”, rather than publishers requesting or contractually requiring such activities.

The translator as ambassador

Finally, Bulloch’s translatorship includes the undertaking of activities in which he acts as an *ambassador*, which lie outside of formal publishing life cycles such as those mapped in Thompson’s value chain and contribute to the afterlife of his work. For Bulloch, this ambassadorship functions on three levels. First comes his ambassadorship for the literary texts that he translates, with Bulloch noting that outside the ephemeral processes of the publishing industry, where spotlight remains on a literary text only fleetingly given the volume and frequency of novels being released in the British market, he has an “underlying wish” that “those few books that really got absolutely nowhere but I still believe in passionately might get a slight revival” (stated during interview). This may be achieved through his use of social media or the creation of his own website; though Bulloch noted that the development of his own website remains “very much in the embryonic stage” as “it’s quite a lot of work and you could spend weeks, maybe even months, getting it up and running”.

What differentiates this ambassadorship from the marketing activities discussed in the previous paragraph is that it lies outside the lifespan of typical publishing processes, instead reflecting the broader literary processes that underpin Murray’s conceptualisation of the “digital literary sphere”, such as “curating the public life of literature”, “consecrating the literary” and “entering literary discussion” (2018, 10). The remaining two levels of Bulloch’s ambassadorship pertain to his activities as an ambassador for literary translation as a professional activity and for German-language literature within the English-language literary field. In both cases, this ambassadorship can be traced most explicitly through his participation in

institutional activities, such as judging a translation competition for the Austrian Cultural Forum and the *New Books in German* programme.⁵

Translatorship and paratextual visibility

In putting forward a model of Bulloch's translatorship that is based across these four categories, that is the translator as literary scout, rewriter, marketer and ambassador, I have identified the activities that, if referred to in the paratextual space, can make Bulloch's translatorship visible. What is notable, however, is that many of these activities generate paratexts themselves. As a literary scout, for instance, Bulloch's reader reports serve an internal paratextual function for decision makers at MacLehose Press, whilst his promotion of the novels on Twitter creates a paratextual link between his social media and those books. In this way, keeping Bulloch's translatorship in focus not only allows this thesis to investigate the ways in which Bulloch and his work are made visible in the paratextual space, but also to understand his role in paratextual creation processes within the context of his broader status and work as a translator.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into three major sections. The first section covers the theoretical frameworks within which the translator's paratextual visibility will be investigated throughout. Chapter 1 presents my definition of paratextuality, outlines the genesis of this definition within the context of translation studies and broader paratextual research, and its benefits both to this project and translation studies more broadly. Chapter 2 then moves on to the notion of translator invisibility, where I begin by demonstrating the value of Venuti's bilateral conceptualisation of invisibility, before adding my

⁵ More details on both of these activities are given in the section *Bulloch the ambassador*.

own nuance and outlining the analytic framework through which Bulloch's visibility will be studied throughout this thesis; that is his *position* and *role* in the paratextual space.

The second section then turns to analyse Bulloch's visibility in what is described as the "consciously crafted" paratextual space — a term coined by Kathryn Batchelor (2018) and clarified in Chapter 1. As such, the focus of these two chapters is on digital paratextual spaces that function specifically to influence the way other readers engage with *Look Who's Back* and *the Hungry and the Fat*. The two chapters are split between what Batchelor describes as a "producer-based approach" and a "receiver-based perspective" (2018, 143). The former is the subject of Chapter 3, in which I compare Bulloch's visibility across publisher MacLehose Press's iterative paratextual creation processes to Bulloch's visibility in born-digital publisher-created paratexts. In Chapter 4, I then compare Bulloch's visibility in reader-created paratexts spanning the traditional print-media and born-digital spaces NetGalley.co.uk and Amazon.co.uk. Both chapters meet the aim of this thesis by investigating the impact of digital paratextuality on Bulloch's paratextual visibility across a variety of materials and creators.

Finally, the third section of this thesis investigates Bulloch's paratextual visibility within what I define as "collateral paratextuality", which refers to materials whose primary or sole function is not to influence the ways in which readers engage with *Look Who's Back* or *The Hungry and the Fat* (see Chapter 1 for a full definition). In this way, the final section of this thesis focuses on the impact of expanding the potential to participate in the paratextual space that has coincided with the proliferation of digital media and technology. In Chapter 5, this is investigated within the context of Amazon.co.uk and the impact of digital retailers and retail ecosystems on Bulloch's paratextual visibility. Chapter 6 then builds upon this to focus specifically on Bulloch as a paratextual creator in the digital space and the agency afforded to him by online platforms such as Twitter.

The findings from sections two and three will then be synthesised and discussed in the Conclusion, thereby allowing reflection on these findings considering the theoretical understandings of paratextuality and translator

visibility put forward in section one. The thesis then concludes by pointing towards implications for future research.

Part I
Theoretical Frameworks

Chapter 1: Defining paratextuality

A primary goal of this thesis is to investigate how translators are positioned within the materials that present their work to readers and the role they play in creating said materials. To do so, this thesis will seek to work within the theoretical framework of paratextuality, which allows us to analyse the materials that “present” a literary text to readers and “ensure the text's presence in the world, its "reception" and consumption” (Genette, 1997a, 1). However, by situating the physical form of the literary novel within a wider constellation of digital and non-digital paratextual materials, the theoretical approach taken within the present thesis seeks to challenge existing approaches to paratextuality that remain bound by notions of functional hierarchisation, materiality and authorisation. Instead, the definition of paratextuality developed here emphasises the significance of these presentational materials in how readers understand and approach translated literary texts, particularly given that readers will encounter many more paratexts than texts during their lifetime (Gray, 2010). As such, this thesis puts forward a new, multimodally informed theoretical framework of paratextuality that draws upon, develops, and responds to existing approaches by understanding paratextuality as a functional relationship that can exist between any texts, rather than as an ontological state or exclusionary category. Once the definition of paratextuality used within this thesis has been clarified and substantiated, I will then be able to introduce the methodological framework through which translator visibility will be analysed within this now redefined paratextual space.

(Para-)Textuality in a multimodal context

Before beginning to explore the definition of the term “paratext”, it is first important to establish both the meaning of this term’s root, *text*, and the ways in which texts can make meaning. The digital and non-digital materials that will be analysed throughout this thesis are made up of both verbal and non-verbal elements, such as embedded images, typography and layout. As such, the theoretical framework presented here is built upon the foundations

of “multimodality”. A multimodal understanding of textuality does not see the communicative function of a text as being carried out by language alone, but rather through combinations of modes that span a variety of semiotic resources and which come together to make meaning (Jewitt, 2012). Here, “modes” refers to the various semiotic resources that can be used to make meaning, such as written language, speech, images, audio and layout, among many others (Mavers and Gibson, 2012). As such, where the term “text” is used throughout this thesis, it refers to “any multimodally composed meaningful whole (or multimodal ensemble)”, rather than focussing on the verbal elements alone (Adami and Ramos Pinto, 2020, 73). In this way, the entire contents of a book cover or webpage, including any embedded images or their spatial features, are understood as part of the text and included in the analysis.

Building a theory of paratextuality upon a multimodal foundation is beneficial for several reasons. Firstly, within a multimodal approach, both the availability of a resource and the decision to use it within a given context are understood as motivated, norm-driven and influenced by the needs and aims of the producer and receiver (Jewitt, 2012). As such, the meaning and communicative function of a text, in our case its paratextuality, is not stored within the text itself but is fulfilled in the act of either creation or interpretation (Kress, 2020, 32). Thus, a multimodal understanding of communication and meaning-making facilitates the taking of both a producer- and receiver-side perspective, as will be taken throughout this thesis. Furthermore, these two meaning-making processes, creation and interpretation, offer distinct opportunities for meaning making that are dynamic and embedded in their social context (Kaindl, 2020, 51). This, therefore, allows us to similarly understand paratextuality as a relationship that makes meaning for an audience within a given cultural context, whilst acknowledging that paratextual relationships are not fixed, but rather constitute a fluid and dynamic space through which audiences can take countless trajectories.

Secondly, the multimodal perspective taken here positions all semiotic resources as “co-texts” that come together to make meaning both on an individual level and in relation to one another (Adami and Ramos Pinto, 2020). As such, where non-multimodal, “context”-based approaches have

assumed the cultural universality of non-verbal modes of communication and taken the limited view of such resources as simply providing context for verbal content, the “co-text” approach taken here positions all these elements as equally relevant to the making of meaning within the textual whole (Adami and Ramos Pinto, 2020, 74). This is not to say that the meanings made by different modes and resources within the same text will always coalesce. Indeed, within a given multimodal text different modes may provide complementary or even divergent potential meanings (Kress, 2020, 33). Rather, it emphasises the significant role that non-verbal elements such as formatting and materiality can play in presenting literary texts to readers, a fact that can be traced throughout the history of paratextuality (e.g. Genette, 1997a, 7). Finally, from an ideological perspective, seeing the content created and interpreted across all modalities as equally relevant to the potential meaning of a text mirrors the understanding of paratextuality taken within this thesis, in which paratextual materials are positioned in constellation with the literary text rather than as subordinated “context”. As such, the multimodal understanding of textuality that underpins this thesis is inherently linked to the theoretical framework put forward in the following sections.

Furthermore, the word “text” is used throughout this thesis to describe an analytical unit within which paratextual relationships can be traced and the translator’s visibility can be investigated. Thus, before conducting the forthcoming analysis, the boundaries of this unit must be defined. Given the digital focus of this thesis then, the analytical unit of “a text” will be defined as all the semiotic resources used within a multimodal ensemble that are available to readers at a singular location. Consequently, artefacts such as a physical book or a publisher’s entire website are not themselves texts, but rather contain constellations of co-texts to which a specific spatial identifier can be attributed, such as a page range or Uniform Resource Locator (URL). As such, where a reader must navigate to a new location to encounter a text, such as by clicking a hyperlink, this new page is understood as a unique text that can then form functional relationships with others — for instance as a co-text relationship within the construction of a codex or as paratext for a literary text. In this way, potentially disparate forms of textuality, such as the

physical codex and an Amazon product listing, can be defined as comparable units of analysis and the relationships between them can be conceptualised. For instance, this definition of the text as an analytical unit facilitates the comparative analysis in Chapter 3, where the visibility of the translator in the exterior elements of a codex (its front cover, spine, and rear cover) is contrasted with their visibility in book-specific pages from the publisher's website. To prioritise clarity throughout this thesis, then, the term "text" will not be used to refer specifically to the printed literary text, which in this thesis comprises the fictional narratives written by Timur Vermes and translated into English by Jamie Bulloch. Rather the texts that can form paratextual relationships with a literary text are understood as outlined above and the adjective "literary" will be employed to specify the literary text where necessary.

Paratextuality as a functional relationship

Within this thesis, paratextuality is understood as a functional relationship between texts in which an encounter with one can frame an encounter with another within a given context. Based on the multimodal understanding of textuality outlined earlier in this chapter, this function, and so the establishment of a paratextual relationship, can be fulfilled in an act of either creation or interpretation. Thus, a paratextual relationship can be formed and identified from the perspective of both a producer and a receiver. Furthermore, the paratextual relationship is understood as one potential relationship that can exist between texts and as a relationship that can exist between any two texts. As such, the ontological question of whether *X* is a paratext of *Y* becomes redundant. This is because an ontological understanding of paratextuality leads to the taxonomic cataloguing of specific materials, thereby privileging the materials found within the researcher's corpus and excluding other materials which could similarly form a paratextual relationship with the literary text in any other context. Rather, the primary question when delineating a paratextual corpus becomes "can a paratextual relationship exist between *X* and *Y*?", with the emphasis placed

on the existence of this relationship within a given context. This mirrors the multimodal understanding of textuality put forward in the previous section, which understands functional relationships as “dynamic” and “culturally specific” (Kaindl, 2020, 51). In the rest of this chapter, I demonstrate the benefits of this approach for the contemporary, digital context within which this thesis is working. Whilst this definition continues recent movement towards the prioritisation of a paratext’s function over, for instance, its authorship (Batchelor, 2018), this thesis also draws on the original context within which the concept of paratextuality was introduced, Genette’s five forms of textual transcendence (1997b), and returns the concept to its relational roots.

The term “paratext” was first outlined by Gérard Genette in his book, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (1982; translated into English by Newman and Doubinsky as *Palimpsests: Literature of the Second Degree*, 1997b), where it was introduced as one of his five aspects of textual transcendence: intertextuality, paratexts, metatextuality, hypertextuality and architextuality.⁶ For Genette, these transtextual relationships constitute “all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts” (1997b, 1), thereby providing an all-encompassing network of relationships between literary texts and the contexts in which they circulate. What is notable here is that the nominal suffix ‘ity’ is missing from paratext, an omission that mirrors Genette’s presentation and definition of these terms within *Palimpsestes*. Intertextuality, metatextuality, architextuality, hypertextuality and indeed transtextuality itself, are introduced to the reader as abstract nouns derived from adjectives which describe a quality (c.f. Swan, 2005, 421). For instance, an intertextual relationship becomes

⁶ The term paratextuality first appears in Genette’s *Introduction à l’architexte* (1979). However, at this point Genette uses paratextuality to refer to the textual relationship which he later refers to as hypertextuality, and so while Genette first coined the term here, it wasn’t until *Palimpsestes* that it came to mean what scholars know the term as today.

intertextuality. In this way, Genette seems to position these forms of textual transcendence as potential relationships that can exist between any texts.

On the contrary, Genette defines paratextuality as the relationship between a text and a specific set of subordinate texts: “its paratext” (1997b, 3; “son paratexte” in the original French). This instantly raises a significant, ontological question for any scholar wishing to use paratext theory in their own work: what is *the* paratext? For Genette’s other transtextual relationships, such a structuralist delineation is unwarranted, as any text may serve a critical, and so metatextual, or a transformative, and so hypertextual, relationship to another. However, in *Palimpsests* Genette frames the paratext as a specific text type. This text type, of which Genette gives a brief introductory taxonomy in *Palimpsests* that includes prefaces, forewords, illustrations and book covers (1997b, 3), therefore becomes his primary focus rather than the abstract relational approach taken with the other forms of textual transcendence.

In his subsequent book, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, which focuses solely on paratextuality, Genette continues to understand paratextuality as a group of practices and texts to be catalogued rather than as a relationship. The one caveat added by Genette in his monograph expanding the concept of paratextuality is that such materials must be “more or less legitimated by the author” (1997a, 2).⁷ Genette then uses the book to inductively study such materials as found in the literary text manifest as a codex and taxonomically “follow the order in which one usually meets the messages this study explores: the external presentation of a book - name of author, title, and the rest - just as it is offered to a docile reader” (1997a, 4). In doing so, Genette cements the notion of paratextuality within a specific set of codex-based texts and practices that subsequent scholars have continued to privilege and focus on, with the term “paratexts” referring primarily to

⁷ This requirement for authorial intent goes beyond Genette’s argument in *Palimpsests* that paratexts “provide the text with a (variable) setting and **sometimes a commentary, official or not**” (my emphasis, 1997b, 3).

these materials, rather than to the relationship they share with the literary text. Indeed, the continued prevalence of prefaces, to which Genette dedicates a third of his study, within paratextual analyses demonstrates the pervasive impact that Genette's pivot from a relational understanding of paratextuality to a structuralist taxonomy of "the paratext" has had on the migration of paratextuality as a theoretical concept.⁸

Within the digitally driven perspective taken by this thesis, Genette's inductive book-based approach to defining paratextuality is limited for several reasons. Firstly, the inductive approach taken by Genette throughout *Paratexts* results in a theory of paratextuality that is inherently embedded in the form of the codex and the practices of book production that were prevalent within his own cultural context: France in the late 1980s.⁹ As such, any application of Genette's theoretical concepts outside of this context requires us to negotiate between the wider significance and relevance of a particular term or concept, and its embedded relationship to Genette's object of study: the codex. While this already becomes challenging for applications such as the study of literature released in periodicals, which Genette himself admits requires a different approach (1997a, 405), as soon as we include digital contexts within our research, we can no longer simply relate paratextual materials that are a product of the digital world back to the non-digital materials discussed by Genette.

Consequently, the desire to apply Genette's paratext theory to new contexts has resulted in the conducting of further context-specific inductive studies with limited scope for wider application. An example of this can be found in the work of Birke and Christ (2013), who find that the modes of textual production and reception available for digitised literature are so different from those studied by Genette that they must inductively catalogue and

⁸ For example, see Kovala, 1996; Tahir Gürçağlar, 2002/2014 and McRae, 2012

⁹ *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* was originally published in French as *Seuils* in 1987, a decade before its full English translation.

retheorise paratextuality for e-books and DVDs (66). Similarly, while McCracken (2013) extrapolates Genette's concept of the paratext presenting and making present a text within the realm of electronic literature and e-reading devices, these devices are so different from a physical book that McCracken must again take an inductive approach with these new materials. Away from the study of literature, Rockenberger (2014) similarly takes an inductive, auto-ethnographic approach to understanding the various paratextual materials that accompany video game texts, while Simonsen (2014) catalogues the paratexts used to frame and present YouTube videos. Consequently, applications of a Genettian approach to paratextuality outside the context of the codex requires that we replicate Genette's inductive approach to create new paratextual typologies that continue to only be relevant within individual research contexts. Yet, if we return paratextuality to the relational roots of Genette's textual transcendence, such limited foci become unwarranted.

Secondly, by focussing on the productions that accompany a literary text to form a book, Genette included the material nature of the codex within his definition of paratextuality in such a way that cannot be mapped to digital contexts. This is demonstrated through Genette's inclusion of "features that constitute the basis of the book's material realization: the typesetting and the choice of paper" (1997a, 34). In an argument that points towards the relevance of multimodality to paratextuality, Genette argues that "there are cases in which the graphic realization", such as the typesetting or choice of paper, "is inseparable from the literary intention" and so these choices communicate the aesthetic, economic or symbolic status of a text to a reader and present the text as having a corresponding value (1997a, 35). However, these decisions begin to move out of the publisher's control when we again turn to digital spaces. For example, when using an e-reading device such as the Amazon Kindle, users can change the "font size, line spacing, margins, background colour, or font type" to suit their own requirements, even if the publisher provides a specific "Publisher Font" for a text (Amazon, c2019). In this instance, such options lie outside of the publisher's control and so cannot be understood within Genette's theoretical framework. Yet, as demonstrated by Genette's inclusion of typesetting in his typology of

paratexts (1997a, 33-36), the very existence of a preferred, text-specific font acknowledges that such elements can influence the way that readers receive a text. Thus, while it would be unreasonable to criticise Genette's inability to predict the invention and popularity of e-reading devices, or in more general terms the digital media now used on a day-to-day basis, it is possible to say that Genette's inductive, book-based approach inherently limits the applicability of even the most open reading of Genettian paratextuality to research in digital contexts.

It is for these reasons that the present thesis seeks to understand *paratextuality* as a relationship, in line with Genette's original conceptualisation of textual transcendence, rather than presenting a new definition of the term "paratext". This latter approach was taken by Kathryn Batchelor in her functional redefinition of paratext for translation studies contexts, in which she sought to similarly avoid taxonomic delineations of where the paratext starts and ends by referring to "a paratext" (2018, 142). The limitation of this approach is that despite the use of an indefinite article, which opens the possibility of any material serving a paratextual function and so being "a paratext", such a definition continues to point analysts to the binary question of "is this a paratext?" and thereby facilitates the continuing creation of inductive or taxonomic studies with specific relevance and limited scope for wider application. Consequently, by returning to paratextuality and a relational understanding of the term, this thesis seeks to restore the theoretical concept to the potential of its origins and free the concept from any one context or text type. Thus, where this thesis uses the term "paratext" or refers to a "paratextual material", it does so as shorthand to describe a text that shares a paratextual relationship with the literary text within a given context. In no way does this thesis seek to create a new or updated taxonomy of paratexts based on the digital case studies conducted throughout.

Paratextuality and authorship

Within the theoretical framework put forward here, a paratextual relationship can exist between two texts regardless of their authorship or whether they can be authorised by a figure involved in the production of a literary text. In taking this approach, this framework facilitates deeper investigations into the various individuals involved in the creation of production-side paratexts, which refers to paratextual relationships created during the production of a literary text, whilst also acknowledging the proliferation and increasing relevance of paratextual relationships that are crafted outside of textual production processes, such as those created by readers. Indeed, given the digital focus of the present thesis, non-authorised paratextual relationships are particularly relevant as the user-generated content prevalent on Web 2.0 websites creates digital spaces where both production- and reception-side materials can co-exist, such as Amazon or GoodReads.¹⁰

By removing any requirement for authorship in my definition of paratextuality, the theoretical framework presented here continues the transdisciplinary trend to move away from Genette's strict insistence on authorial presence in the paratextual space. Genette argues that paratexts are "always the conveyor of a commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author" thereby ensuring that the literary text is read pertinently "in the eyes of the author and his allies" (1997a, 2). Indeed, Genette explicitly states that to be considered a paratext, the material in question must be "characterized by an authorial intention and assumption of responsibility" (1997a, 3). Consequently, Genette explicitly states that materials that an author cannot take responsibility for, such as a magazine review or word-of-mouth, do not "according to our conventions, generally belong[s] to the paratext" (1997a, 3). While the status of the author is of prime importance to Genette, it should also be noted here that the inclusion

¹⁰ Here Web 2.0 is understood as online platforms and websites that add value through the creation of networks, such as Facebook, YouTube and Amazon (Blank and Reisdorf, 2012).

of “his allies” as a figure alongside the author allows materials that an author cannot legitimate, such as those crafted after their death, to still be considered paratexts. Nevertheless, for Genette, it is the authorial figure who presides over the paratextual space.

Genette’s insistence on the authority of the authorial figure within the paratextual space stems from his inductive, taxonomic study of the literary text manifest as a physical codex. In monolingual and codex-focussed research contexts, such as publishing studies, this authorial responsibility remains a key element in conceptualisations of paratextuality — even in digital contexts (see, for instance, Murray, 2018, 168-180). However, where disciplines such as translation studies, film studies or media studies have a more complex conceptualisation of authorship but have adopted at least the term “paratext” from Genette, the notion of authorial responsibility and legitimacy has begun to slip away. In Translation Studies, for instance, suggestions such as Deane-Cox’s “translatorial” paratext have expanded Genette’s typology to include materials specifically created by translators within the paratextual paradigm (2014, 29). Others, such as Gil-Bardají, Orero, and Rovira-Esteva (2012) and Pellatt (2013) within their respective edited volumes, have sought to free the notion of paratext from Genette’s authorial responsibility by defining the term purely in pragmatic, functional terms and using quotes from Genette that omit passages specifically referring to auctorial authority (c.f. Batchelor, 2018, 27-28).

Movements away from Genette’s authorship model can also be traced in film studies and media studies where theorists such as Caldwell (2011) have broadened the authorial space to cover “official”, “professional unofficial” and “amateur” created materials and Tavares (2015) includes a “network paratext” for algorithmically generated content, whilst others such as Gray (2010) have actively removed authorship as a paratextual criterion altogether. Within these alternative approaches, the focus has moved towards materials that influence the ways in which audiences receive and encounter texts that are created by other audience members and so can be seen as receiver-, or in translation studies terms target-, oriented. Yet, whilst this expansion of the paratextual spaces allows us to incorporate new forms of paratexts and paratextual relationships within our definitions, critics have

noted that such a move risks undermining the significance of paratextuality as a theoretical concept by allowing everything to become paratext (Rockenberger, 2014, 267; Batchelor, 2018, 143).

An attempt to find a middle ground between Genette's strict authorial requirements and the exponential expansion of paratextuality *à la* Gray can be found in Kathryn Batchelor's redefinition of paratextuality (2018).

Following a series of case studies that analyse and problematise the issues of authorising translations; institutional and ideological intervention in the paratextual space; and audience-created paratexts in the digital space, Batchelor suggests a new definition of paratextuality: "A paratext is a consciously crafted threshold for a text which has the potential to influence the way(s) in which the text is received." (2018, 142). Here, then, Batchelor has removed all explicit references to the author and thereby freed the notion of paratextuality from the control of an authoritative figure to allow research that "takes a producer-based approach" as well as a "receiver-based perspective (2018, 143). In doing so, she has also facilitated the inclusion of user-/audience-/reader-created materials within the paratextual space and presented a framework that, as demonstrated in her Walter Presents case study (2018, 118-138), can situate a text within the digital paratexts that proliferate around it. Thus, Batchelor presents a definition of paratextuality that in many ways resembles the theoretical framework suggested by this thesis. Yet, the problematic trace of authorship remains in Batchelor's definition.

While the main caveat placed within Batchelor's redefinition of paratextuality, the notion of "conscious crafting", places the author as a more distant figure among a myriad of paratextual creators, it does not remove all authority figures from the paratextual space. Where the present thesis argues that a paratextual relationship can exist between any two texts, Batchelor's "consciously crafted" caveat "places broader context as well as happenstance (for example, the individual circumstances through which a particular reader comes to a text) outside of the scope of the paratext" (2018, 142). Batchelor is keen to note that this is not to "ignore the fact that contextual and incidental factors can have a bearing on the way a text is received" (2018, 143) but rather seeks to prevent what Rockenberger

describes as the "paratext's collapse into the vastness of 'the context'" (2014, 267). While the openness of this definition allows the answer to the question 'consciously crafted by whom?' to be answered in the broadest sense, and thereby allow readers to become paratextual creators, the issue becomes how we identify whether a text was "a consciously crafted threshold for a text" and how we understand materials that were not "consciously crafted" as thresholds for a text but may still function as such. Indeed, Batchelor's requirement for conscious crafting runs counter to the multimodal understanding of meaning making that underpins this theoretical framework in which meaning, in this case the paratextual relationship, can be made in both the act of creation (or in Batchelor's term crafting) and interpretation. Furthermore, the inclusion of "conscious crafting" in her definition of paratextuality as a "threshold" implies a hierarchy between text and paratext whereby the latter must always be a derivative created in service of the former. Thus, rather than requiring paratextual analysts to identify the presence of an authorial figure, Batchelor's definition shifts this requirement on to identifying the conditions of a paratext's creation and fails to acknowledge that paratextual relationships can also be formed by audiences who engage with a text and interpret its relationship to another text as paratextual.

Within the context of the present thesis, such identification is not always practical or possible, particularly when dealing with digital materials that are generated algorithmically (in part or in full) or materials that are created to paratextually frame one version of a text but then also form paratextual relationships with another version or rewriting, as will be discussed in Chapter 5. As such, the present thesis seeks to introduce a new term to describe such paratextual relationships: *collateral paratextuality*.

Constellations in the paratextual space

Given that the present thesis understands paratextuality as a relationship that can exist between any two texts, rather than a specific set of texts, it must now be noted that this relationship is not understood as hierarchical.

Rather, paratextual relationships set texts in rhizomatic (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) *constellation* with one another within a *paratextual space*. In this way, all texts are understood as unique and distinguishable texts in their own right that can be connected to other texts through the establishment of paratextual relationships. Thus, where I identify constellations of paratextual relationships, the various texts within are positioned as “co-texts” (Adami and Ramos Pinto, 2020) that co-occur and co-construct the paratextual space through their relationships both with the literary text and each other.

This approach has several benefits for paratextual analysis. Firstly, within his original conceptualisation of paratextuality, Genette subordinates the paratext to the literary text as it is “dedicated to the service of something other than itself that constitutes its *raison d’être*” (1997a, 12). In doing so, Genette takes a production-side approach and positions the functional significance of paratexts in terms of the purpose that paratextual creators want paratexts to serve: to draw readers towards the more significant literary text. Yet, as noted by Jonathan Gray (2010), the proliferation of paratextual materials in contexts far removed from the associated textual product means that audiences do not simply encounter paratexts for the texts they choose to read or watch; they also encounter paratexts for texts that they will *not* engage with. Consequently, audiences encounter far more paratexts than they do texts and so, from a reader-based perspective, paratexts can be as, if not *more*, significant points of contact between an audience and a text. Thus, situating all forms of text, including the literary text and marketing materials for said literary text, as co-texts within the same paratextual constellation, rather than within a textual hierarchy, acknowledges the societal role that paratexts play and their relevance as texts in their own right within the present theoretical framework.

The second benefit to this approach stems from the fact that the paratextual relationships that construct these constellations are not tethered to particular materialities or spatial locations. As such, the present approach acknowledges that digital and non-digital texts can form paratextual relationships with one another, rather than viewing a particular paratext as only pointing towards a specific version or material form of a text. Consequently, the constellation approach to paratextuality defies binary

distinctions such as Genette's "peritext" and "epitext" (1997a), which refer to materials found appended to the literary text (typically in the form of a codex) and those that circulate independently from the literary text. The problem with such distinctions lies in their privileging of a particular material form. In this case, Genette's focus on the codex renders the spatial categorisations incompatible in the other contexts outside of this materiality, for example in the digital space where hypertextual links and embedded content blur the lines between materials that circulate independently from or are appended to the literary text. Instead, all such materials are understood as sharing a paratextual relationship with the literary text whilst those that are found within the literary text as product, be it as a physical codex or a digital format such as an eBook, also serve as co-texts in that product.¹¹

Furthermore, binarism in the spatial definition of paratextual spaces fails to acknowledge the complex trajectories that different readers can take towards a text, such as encountering the cover and blurb of a literary text as printed in the form of a codex, but then purchasing the literary text as an e-book. Indeed, as noted by McCracken (2013), different paratexts can move a reader both centripetally towards a given version of the literary text, such as the previous example, or centrifugally away from the literary text entirely. In this way, viewing paratexts in constellations acknowledges the complex routes that readers can take through paratextual spaces and prevents the two-dimensional spatial binarism, and subsequent privileging of particular paratexts, that can result from Genette's approach.

Finally, by conceptualising paratextuality in the form of a rhizomatic (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) constellation, the theoretical framework presented here understands paratextual relationships as fluid and dynamic, meaning that the existence of a paratextual relationship within a given historical, social, linguistic or cultural context does not result in a permanent state of paratextuality or preclude paratextual relationships from evolving or

¹¹ Thus, paratextual and co-textual relationships are not binaries or mutually exclusive.

evanescing. As such, the question of whether a given paratextual relationship is substantial or relevant within a given context depends on the research questions asked, the scope of the analysis, and the focus of the study in question. Consequently, all studies that use paratextuality as a tool to delineate a corpus of study cannot simply state that they will analyse the “paratexts” of a literary text as imprecise shorthand for a particular constellation of materials. This inexactness is based upon the assumption that paratextual relationships take a fixed form that will be communicable outside of the researcher’s own context and fails to acknowledge that as new technology develops outside of the researcher’s foresight, so too will the potential forms of paratextuality. Instead, it is up to the researcher to define the scope of their paratextual analysis within the context of their research project. As a forward-looking general theory of paratextuality, then, the present framework seeks to be as malleable and appropriate for the limitless potential of paratextual relationships as possible and so does not limit its scope to paratextual roads well-travelled or to the paratextual relationship *du jour*.

Not only must paratextual relationships always be identified and analysed in relation to the context within which they were created or interpreted by an audience, they must also be understood within the specific context in which the analyst is working. Particularly in the case of the digital materials used within the present thesis, user experiences within and trajectories through digital paratextual spaces can be influenced by user-specific factors such as cookie data and browsing history. As such, the contemporary digital world presents an unstable and infinitely personalised context within which to identify and analyse paratexts. This differs greatly from the context within which Genette was working, where the material codex constituted a standardised and mediated paratextual space. Thus, it is important for a new theoretical understanding of paratextuality to acknowledge that because constellations of paratextual relationships exist in two positions as both the meanings a creator wishes to make and the meanings made by an interpreter of the text, researchers must separate their individualised and analytic position within the paratextual space from the position of other users.

Para-textual hybridity

By seeing paratextuality as a relationship that can exist between any two texts, the theoretical framework put forward here understands all texts as both works in their own right and as framing devices for other texts. In this way, a functional, paratextual relationship is one of many potential relationships that can exist between texts. Thus, it is through this duality that paratextuality gains a hybridity in which a previously hierarchical relationship can extend across multiple rewritings of a text into the rhizomatic constellations of paratexts introduced in the previous section. In this way, new versions or “rewritings” of a text (Lefevere, 1992), such as a translation, can simultaneously exist as literary texts embedded in constellations of paratexts and as paratexts within a constellation for another literary text. What distinguishes between these states is the creation or interpretation of this meaning by a paratextual creator or receiver, whose trajectory through the paratextual space can either result in the creation of new paratextual relationships or leave the potential for paratextuality between two texts unfulfilled.

The functional hybridity made explicit in the present theoretical framework can be traced back to Genette’s original conceptualisation of paratextuality (1997a) and has recently been revived by Kathryn Batchelor (2018).

Throughout *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, Genette gives examples of paratexts used to present French translations of classical literary texts to Francophone readers. In doing so, Genette demonstrates that translations serve as their own literary texts framed by paratexts. Yet, in the conclusion of his study, Genette notes that his study has “left out three practices whose paratextual relevance seems to me undeniable, but investigating each one individually might demand as much work as was required here”: translation, serial publication and illustration (1997a, 405-406). Elaborating on translations in particular, Genette continues to argue that where translations are “more or less revised or checked by the author” or where the original author also functions as the translator, they “serve as commentary on the original text” (1997a, 405). Here, Genette links back to the theoretical conceptualisation of paratextuality given in the introduction of his study

where he describes the primary function of paratexts as being the “conveyor of a **commentary** that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author” (1997a, 2; my emphasis). Thus, while Genette discusses translations as literary texts in their own right throughout *Paratexts*, here he also identifies that a paratextual relationship can exist between a translation and its source text when it is approved by the author, thereby indicating the hybridity inherent in paratextual relationships.

Where the theoretical framework presented here differs from Genette in this regard is that paratextual hybridity is explicitly acknowledged, rather than implicitly introduced and left to the deduction or assumptions of subsequent scholars. The limitations of Genette’s failure to explicitly acknowledge this hybridity can be seen, for example, in Tahir Gürçağlar’s (2002) oft-cited criticism of Genette’s paratext theory. For Tahir Gürçağlar, the situating of “derivative” translations in a secondary position beneath their source texts “will serve translation research little” and runs counter to the target-culture oriented developments made within the discipline (2002, 46). Consequently, Tahir Gürçağlar moves away from the notion of translation as paratext entirely, to instead focus solely on the “presentational materials accompanying translated texts and text-specific meta-discourses formed directly around them” (2002, 44). Yet, as noted by Batchelor, whilst Genette argues that a translation can function as a paratext, he does not claim that this position is mutually exclusive with the status of translations as texts in their own right (2018, 28-30). Thus, Tahir Gürçağlar’s dismissal of paratextual hybridity is not only unwarranted but also fails to acknowledge the ways in which one version or rewriting of a text can influence the way that an audience receives another version or rewriting in a new linguistic context or medium. Indeed, allowing translations to be considered as paratexts allows us to investigate the ways in which a translation can, to draw on Genette’s functional definition of a paratext, present a foreign text to new readers and make said text present in a new cultural or linguistic context (1997a, 1).

Nevertheless, within Genette’s conceptualisation of translation as paratext there remains a caveat with which we must grapple: the requirement for a translation to be a commentary on the source text that is “more or less

revised or checked by the author” or for the author to have translated the text themselves (1997a, 405). As noted by Deane-Cox, this requirement for auctorial authority limits the applicability of the notion of translation as paratext outside of self- or authorised-translation by suggesting that without the authoritative seal of approval from an author, translations cannot perform a paratextual function (2014, 28). In this way, rather than arguing that Genette’s notion of translation as paratext subordinates the target text to its source *à la* Tahir Gürçağlar, Deane-Cox argues that Genette’s conceptualisation positions the translator as a “commentator who is subordinate to the author-translator as commentator” (2014:28). To combat this, Deane-Cox suggests the insertion of a “translatorial paratext” within Genette’s model to position the translator as an individual yet authoritative paratextual creator and helping us to “discern the extent to which the translator plays an active role in the cultural mediation of their (re)translation” (2014, 29). In this way, the notion of translation as paratext can be useful in identifying the way that translators read, interpret and intervene in the source text to produce a target text. Yet, as noted by Batchelor, this requires readers to be able to identify both the translator’s reading of a text within the polysemy of the translated literary text and the authorial voice of the source-text author (2018, 186-187). Furthermore, the creation of a translatorial paratext privileges the position of translators over other agents who also play a significant role in the production, presentation and circulation of translated literature, such as editors, copywriters and PR agents. As such, the theoretical framework presented within this thesis emphasises that translations can function as both literary texts and paratexts whilst acknowledging the vast number of people who may play an active role in creating paratextual relationships outside of traditional conceptualisations of authorship.

If, as suggested here, rewritings such as a translation are understood as both literary texts in their own right and as paratexts to their source text, a temptation to formalise when a rewriting is or is not considered a paratext may arise. As discussed in the section *Paratextuality as a functional relationship*, however, the issue with such lines of inquiry is that they conceive paratextuality as an ontological and privileged category rather than

as a relationship that can exist between any texts. Within the present framework, then, translations form a paratextual relationship with their source text when an encounter with the target text can frame a subsequent encounter with the source within a given context — or *vice versa*. Thus, for a monolingual reader who reads a translation but either never encounters the source text or is never made aware of the source's existence, no paratextual relationship exists between the two texts. Alternatively, for a bilingual reader who has encountered the source and subsequently goes on to encounter the translated text, a paratextual relationship can be formed between the two. Notably, the definition of "encounter" used here remains open and includes any engagement that a reader can have with a literary text. Be it a glance at paratextual materials created by the publisher, such as the cover or blurb; listening to a chapter of the audiobook; or reading the entire literary text, any form, length or level of encounter with a literary text can result in the formation of paratextual relationships – particularly when we consider that readers encounter far more paratexts than texts in their lifetime (Gray, 2010). As such, within the present theoretical framework, no minimum exposure or contact is required before an encounter with a text can be considered substantial enough to form a paratextual relationship and there exists no hierarchy of such encounters. Rather, it is the context within which the researcher is working that defines whether the potential para-textual hybridity of translation is realised.

Collateral paratextuality

Throughout this thesis, the analysis will examine paratextual relationships that fall outside the notion of Batchelor's "consciously crafted" paratextual relationships in which one text was created with the intention of forming a paratextual relationship to another (2018, 142). This alternative form of paratextual relationship is here understood as *collateral paratextuality*, defined as a paratextual relationship that is formed inadvertently, in parallel or in addition to another without the conscious intervention of any individual creator. The present thesis does not situate these two forms of paratextuality

within a hierarchical structure and so neither a “consciously crafted” nor a collateral paratextual relationship is subordinate to the other. Rather, collateral paratextuality is here introduced to explicitly acknowledge that while some texts may be created and published with the intention that they form a paratextual relationship with a given literary text, this is not always the case. In some cases, paratextual relationships between texts form without the conscious intervention of an authority as the consequence of an individual creator or interpreter’s individual engagement with a text. Yet, by placing these two forms of paratextuality in constellation alongside one another, I emphasise that for the receivers who traverse the paratextual space, either a consciously crafted or a collateral paratextual relationship can impart as much influence over the receiver’s engagement with the literary text as the other.

There are several benefits to including collateral paratextual relationships within the present theoretical framework. Firstly, the introduction of collateral framings here seeks to supplement Batchelor’s creator-focussed notion of “consciously crafted” paratextual relationships with a paratextual relationship that is formed when a text is engaged with and interpreted, rather than simply created. Doing so allows us to include wider materials, such as a reader’s cultural knowledge and “the individual circumstances through which a particular reader comes to a text” (Batchelor, 2018, 142) within our understanding of how readers approach literary texts without any requirement for authorial responsibility and without facilitating the “paratext’s collapse into the vastness of ‘the context’” (Rockenberger, 2014, 267). For instance, a reader’s prior knowledge of an author, such as their gender, sexuality, race or background, may not stem from consciously crafted paratextual materials. Consequently, an author cannot take responsibility for the visibility of these facts and so they fall outside of Genette’s strict paratextual parameters. Similarly, working with Batchelor’s definition, if the same information is released into the public sphere inadvertently or in a manner that is far detached from literary text in question, thereby placing it within “broader context” or “happenstance” (2018, 143), then it cannot be considered to be a paratext. Yet, as Genette (1997a, 6) and Batchelor note, such details can influence the way texts are presented to an audience and

influence their reception of a text. Thus, the concept of collateral framings allows the inclusion of such paratextual relationships within the theoretical framework and paratextual analysis without restricting them through auctorial authorisation *à la* Genette and Batchelor.

Secondly, the inclusion of collateral paratextual relationships within the concept of paratextuality demonstrates that while production-side perspectives continue to prevail within existing theories of paratextuality, readers are equally able to establish paratextual relationships through the act of interpretation. Of course, the theoretical understanding of paratextuality put forward here acknowledges that producer-centric approaches remain valid and relevant to the analyst within certain contexts – particularly given the power creators wield in selecting how to frame texts for readers, both in terms of content, medium and modality (Kress, 2020). Yet, within a multimodal understanding of paratextuality, the individual's trajectory through a paratextual constellation and engagement with texts can also establish paratextual relationships and give them meaning. While such approaches present new lines of paratextual inquiry and analysis, it must also be noted that as interpreters engaging with texts themselves, paratextual analysts must also acknowledge their own position within the paratextual space.

For instance, researchers are positioned outside of textual production practices and so can distance themselves from the creation of consciously crafted paratextual relationships. On the other hand, within the receiver-focussed paratextual space such a distancing is not possible because the analyst, who comes from a position of institutional power and privilege, is themselves partaking in the interpretation of texts, the traversal of paratextual trajectories and the potential establishment of paratextual relationships. As such, the analyst must acknowledge that they have the power to interpret paratextual relationships with which the general reading public would not otherwise engage and that their activity within the paratextual space may leave traces or effect change. Particularly in the digital space, then, where professional, public and private lives coalesce on institutional websites and social media accounts, such critical reflection on the position of the researcher is increasingly necessary.

Finally, the concept of collateral paratextuality is beneficial in the digital space, where the intervention and mediation of algorithmic and user-generated data is omnipresent. In the case of algorithmic content, algorithms are understood here as “well-defined rules or instructions for the solution of a problem, such as the performance of a calculation” (A Dictionary of Computer Science, 2016a). In the digital space, such algorithms can be used to generate recommendations for users and provide hyperlinks to other texts, thereby creating complex trajectories for a user to take that are created solely by machine-programmed sets of rules and data. An example of this is Amazon’s “item-to-item collaborative filtering”, which uses the browsing and purchase history of site visitors to make product recommendations to all users (Smith and Linden, 2017). In such cases, the data used within these algorithms is generated by cookies, which are “small file[s] placed on a user’s hard disk by a server, containing details about the user’s use of the website” (A Dictionary of Computer Science, 2016b). As this cookie data is user-specific, the paratextual relationships formed by such algorithms present users with bespoke paratextual constellations to traverse without any conscious crafting. The individualistic nature of these algorithms can also result in a single user engaging with different digital paratextual constellations depending on the device they use, as individual devices store and report their own specific cookie data. Given that no human agent can take responsibility for the creation of these individualised paratextual relationships, these relationships lie outside of the scope of Batchelor’s “consciously crafted” thresholds (2018, 142) yet their prevalence in digital spaces requires that we take them into account when questioning how literary texts are presented and circulated online. Thus, within the notion of collateral paratextuality, we can include and analyse such paratextual relationships without diminishing the value of “consciously crafted” paratextual relationships.

Beyond paratexts

To sum up the theoretical framework used within this thesis, then, paratextuality is defined as a functional relationship between texts in which, within a given context, an encounter with one can frame a subsequent encounter with the other. In this way, paratextual relationships are understood as dynamic, context specific and established through the acts of both creation and interpretation. Thus, while the existence of such a relationship can give insights into how translated literature is presented and perceived within a given context, the definition of paratextuality put forward here sees no fixed notion of “the” or “a” paratext. As such, this thesis will not privilege codex-based paratexts but will instead look at the constellations of paratextual relationships that can surround, present and extend translated literary texts for contemporary readers across both digital and non-digital spaces. Where this thesis uses the terms “paratext” and “paratextual material” then, it does so as shorthand to describe a text that shares a paratextual relationship with the literary text within this context. In no way does this thesis seek to create a new or updated taxonomy of digital paratextual materials.

Within this theoretical framework, translated texts are understood as fulfilling a paratextual hybridity in which they can simultaneously form paratextual relationships with other literary texts, such as their source text, whilst functioning as literary texts that are surrounded by constellations of paratextual relationships in their own right. As a result of this hybridity, as well as the use of a relational definition of paratextuality, paratextual relationships can exist between texts regardless of their authorship. In some cases, texts are created with the explicit aim of creating a paratextual relationship with another text. Following Batchelor (2018, 142), such paratextual relationships will be referred to as “consciously crafted”. Where a paratextual relationship between two texts was not created purposefully, for instance as the result of an algorithm that uses data generated by other users to create new paratextual materials, this thesis puts forward the term “collateral paratextuality”. As the multitude of potential trajectories that audiences can take through a paratextual constellation include the traversal

of paratextual relationships that can be created by anyone either consciously or collaterally, no hierarchy exists between these paratextual relationships. Thus, whether a paratextual relationship is created by a text-producer or the audience's interpretation of a text creates a paratextual relationship, consciously crafted and collateral paratextual relationships are understood as equally relevant, influential, and significant. This approach is important to the study undertaken throughout this thesis as it allows the analysis of Bulloch's position and role in digital spaces that would otherwise fall outside of the realm of paratextuality.

From this point, the analytic core of the thesis will be divided along the lines of these production criteria, with the first two chapters focussed on consciously crafted paratexts and the latter two on collateral paratextual relationships. However, before delving into the paratextual analysis, it is essential to first establish the ground upon which the issue of the translator's paratextual visibility will be identified, analysed, and understood.

Chapter 2: Translator (in)visibility in the paratextual space

Now that I have established the conceptualisation of paratextuality that will be used throughout this thesis, I define translator visibility in the paratextual space and how it will be analysed throughout this thesis. Within the context of the research questions posed by this thesis, this chapter puts forward an understanding of translator visibility that reflects both the way translators are presented in the paratextual space, that is their *position*, and their *role* in the creation of said paratexts. In doing so, my approach marks a shift in perspective from Venuti's *invisibility*, which is inherently tied to his ideological stance that invisibility must be fought against, towards marking the ways in which translators achieve visibility in the paratextual space. As such, the framework developed here goes beyond desktop research that primarily analyses visibility as a reader-based phenomenon to instead examine the translator's agency in the paratextual space, as well as the extent to which their presence or absence within it is a position that they can influence or control. In doing so, this thesis reflects movements within translation studies to develop more nuanced typologies of visibility (such as Woods, 2016 and Huang, 2021) through the establishment of a two-step methodology for investigating paratextual visibility. Step one comprises the documentary analysis of paratextual materials to identify the position of the translator therein, with step two then being discussions with paratextual creators to account for the translator's role in creating said paratexts. Before elucidating this methodology, however, I will first demonstrate the ways in which this thesis draws upon Venuti's original concept of invisibility and subsequent developments in translation studies to create a foundation from which to fully define the paratextual *position* and *role* of the translator in the latter half of this chapter.

Venuti's invisibility and paratextuality

The term invisibility, and its implicit corollary visibility, was elaborated by Lawrence Venuti in his book *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995/2018), where he describes the "situation" and "activity" of literary translators working in

Anglo-American culture as “invisibility” (1). The “two mutually determining phenomena” correspond to both the way in which translated literary texts are positioned within Anglophone literary systems, and the role that translators play in bringing foreign-language literature into English, with materials that can be understood as forming a paratextual relationship to the translated literary texts, such as covers and reviews, playing a significant role in both phenomena (c.f. Venuti, 1995/2018). As such, Venuti argues that because translated literature is deemed most “acceptable” when it appears to be a fluent, transparent original text with an invisible translator, creative decisions during the production of the translated text are based upon this desire for invisibility (1). However, while Venuti’s bilateral conceptualisation of “the translator’s invisibility” challenges the practices, ethics and ideologies of British and American translators, publishers, reviewers, and readers, it does so within the context of “a history of translation” that was formulated before the widespread development of digital and online technologies. Thus, Venuti’s historical focus and methodology raise the question of how applicable his dual concept of invisibility is within contemporary research contexts, both in terms of the “situation” of the translator within digital and online spaces, and the translator’s activities therein.

The key to developing Venuti’s conceptualisation of invisibility lies in the significance he places on the interpretive nature of translation as an act — a theme he has subsequently developed into a “hermeneutic model” of translation (2019). Venuti positions translation as a form of “rewriting” (Lefevere, 1992) that responds to the norms and requirements of the target culture, that is inflected with the interpretation of the translator, and that requires the translator to act with creative agency within the production of a new translated text. This target-oriented approach can be found throughout *The Translator’s Invisibility*, where Venuti emphasises the significance of reading and understanding translated texts within the context of their production and reception. As such, he defines translation as an activity through which the chains of signifiers that comprise the source text are replaced by chains of signifiers in the target language to construct a new text (1995/2018, 17). These chains of signifiers do not, however, contain a fixed meaning as they exist within a “potentially endless chain” of textual,

intertextual and contextual relationships (19-20). Rather, for Venuti, it is the translator who constructs one provisional semantic possibility in the form of a given target text based on the strength of their interpretation of the source text. Thus, when producing their interpretation of the text, translators must establish “the viability of a translation” in relation to “the cultural and social conditions under which it is produced and read” (1995/2018, 18).

Within the definition of paratextuality introduced in Chapter 1, then, Venuti’s general understanding of translation is relevant for several reasons. Firstly, it understands meaning as being made in the acts of both textual creation and interpretation, thereby reflecting how paratextual relationships can similarly be crafted and identified from both a production- and reception-side perspective. Secondly, the emphasis on the “potentially endless chain” of relationships that come together to make meaning in a translated text mirrors the expansive potential of paratextual constellations. Finally, in an extension of the argument made in Chapter 1, that a translation can concurrently serve as a paratext and a literary text, paratexts can similarly be understood as rewriting the polysemy of a literary text into an infinite number of potential paratexts through the interpretative lens of a paratextual creator within a given cultural context. As such, paratextual creation can also be seen as an act of rewriting that is similarly based upon the viability of a given paratextual relationship to frame and present a text within the cultural and social conditions under which it will be circulated and read. In this way, studying the paratextual space can provide insights into how different paratextual creators perceive the context in which a translation is being produced and received, and so how these agents choose to frame the translation through the creation of consciously crafted paratextual relationships. Such perspectives are of interest as not all paratextual creators have the same level of creative intervention within the translated text as, for instance, a translator or editor. Thus, in opening up the paratextual space beyond the requirement of auctorial or translatorial authority, as argued for in the previous chapter, questions pertaining to how different paratextual creators draw upon different chains of signifiers to present the translated texts to a new audience come to the fore.

The paratextual space, therefore, serves as a significant site of potential translator visibility. For instance, Venuti argues that a pressure to present translated foreign texts as transparent, original texts exists within the UK and the USA that stems from two primary locations: the “individualistic conception of authorship” that prevails in the Anglophone West, and the focus of Anglophone readers on fluency (2018, 6). In the case of the former, the second-order status of translation as derivative of an original text is manifest in the frequent absence of translators from paratextual spaces such as a book’s cover or marketing materials (Christ 1984 in Venuti 1995/2018, 8).¹² Consequently, the translator’s absence within this production-side paratextual space situates the translated text within a “transparent discourse” in which sole authorship is given to the author of the source text, thereby “producing the illusion of authorial presence whereby the translated text can be taken as the original” (7) and presenting the target text as offering unmediated access to the source author, text and culture. In this way, Genette’s requirement for paratexts to be “more or less legitimated by the author” (1997a, 2) is practically manifested in the second-order status of translations and the “individualistic conception of authorship” in Anglophone literary systems as conceived by Venuti (2018, 6).

Venuti’s argument that translated texts are presented as transparent, unmediated original texts is similarly manifested in the reception-side paratextual space. Within newspaper reviews written by professional readers, for example, Venuti notes that the primary criterion by which translated texts are assessed is the style of the literary text. Positive assessments, for instance, praise the perceived fluency of the translated text whilst negative reviews criticise how the so-called “translationese” present in the translation prevents it from achieving the required level of fluency and success (2018, 2-4). As such, the signalling of difference within the translated text through the use of archaic, specialized or colloquial language;

¹² An absence that the launch of Jennifer Croft’s #TranslatorsOnTheCover campaign in 2021 would indicate is still the norm in Britain today.

foreign words; or non-standard English syntax is assessed as resulting in an ineffective English-language literary text and subsequently presented by professional readers to the wider reading public as undesirable. Thus, the prevalence of such reader responses in the UK and USA further increases the requirement for transparent translations that are presented as if they were written in English because professional readers reflect these expectations in the paratexts that they create. As such, paratextual spaces can be seen as significant sites of Venuti's translator invisibility as, on the production-side, they frame foreign texts within Anglo-American reader's horizon of expectations whilst, on the reception-side, they provide a window into the ways in which target-culture audiences continue to promote and call for transparent, fluent translations.

Beyond The Translator's Invisibility

The primary challenge facing this thesis in developing Venuti's bilateral understanding of translator visibility for a contemporary, digital paratextual context is that Venuti was developing his concept of *invisibility* prior to the rise of internet and without reference to the concept of paratextuality. Indeed, it was Kaisa Koskinen (2000) who first introduced paratextuality into Venuti's work by differentiating between three levels of visibility: textual, paratextual and extratextual. This tripartite typology defines paratextual visibility as "translators' statements about their work outside or in the margins" of the literary text, whilst extratextual visibility is "most closely related to the social status of translation outside and beyond the immediate vicinity of the translated text" (2000, 99). This distinction between the paratextual and extratextual has been mirrored by others in translation studies. Tahir Gürçağlar, for instance, similarly views paratexts as the "presentational materials accompanying translated texts and the text-specific meta-discourses formed directly around them" and extratexts as "the general meta-discourse on translation" (2002, 44). This conceptualisation, however, creates a hierarchy that does not align with the definition of paratextuality put forward in Chapter 1. Thus, despite Koskinen's typology of visibility mirroring

other scholarship, this thesis does not differentiate between Koskinen's paratextual and extratextual visibility. Others have also argued that such differentiation is unwarranted given the overlapping functional role played by paratexts and extratexts (Batchelor, 2018, 148-149). Thus, whilst this thesis builds on the existing prominence of paratextuality within theoretical conceptualisations of translator visibility, the understanding of visibility put forward here relates directly to the definition of paratextuality put forward in Chapter 1.

In the case Venuti's historical focus, a little more dissecting is required. On a basic level, the evidence provided for the translator's invisibility within contemporary Britain and America comes from Venuti's "genealogical" history of translation (1995/2018, 32). According to Venuti, this methodology builds on historical evidence to challenge the "cultural and social conditions" in which invisibility and fluency have come to dominate Anglophone translation practice and discourse in the present, and to "propose different conditions to be established in the future" (1995, 32-33). Consequently, while Venuti's conceptualisation of the situation and activity of translators is embedded in the context within which he was working, the Anglophone West in the mid-1990s, it is built upon historical rather than contemporary evidence. This, therefore, raises the question of whether the phenomenon of the translator's invisibility in the British and US literary systems discussed by Venuti is an appropriate tool to discuss the digital and online paratextual constellations in which literary texts are now situated. Thus, while Venuti's analysis demonstrates how inevitable narratives of invisibility were formed historically through the use of non-digital paratexts, no assumptions can be made about the appropriateness or relevance of this approach or its findings within other contexts, such as the paratexts found within the contemporary digital world.

Since the publication of *The Translator's Invisibility*, other scholars have sought to answer these questions by theorising what translator visibility might mean in digital contexts. For instance, A. E. B. Coldiron argues that digital trends such as "sampling" in popular music and the rise of online meme culture actively draw upon the "visible alterity" of presenting the Other within a new context. This, in Coldiron's words, "suggests a contemporary

aesthetic favorable to [translator] visibility, or at least that visible alterities provide stimuli well suited to current sensibilities” (2012,197). As such, Coldiron indicates the relevance of visibility research in contemporary digital contexts and questions whether the postmodern use of digital technology may usher in an era of “digital omni-texts” within which the translator’s co-authorship and the foreignness of the text may be revealed through hyperlinks, embedded files and pop-up windows (197-198). In doing so, Coldiron draws upon earlier work from Littau (1997/2010) who some fifteen years prior had similarly argued that digital technology would allow for a text’s entire production history to become visible to readers, thereby destabilising the hierarchical relationship between a source text and its “versions” and “reconfiguring our conceptions of authorship, originality, and, as we shall see, of translation” (81). However, the fact that some fifteen years passed between Littau and Coldiron’s work, during which the user-generated sites of “Web 2.0” became the hegemonic form of online digital content and this postmodern “visible alterity” remained, in Coldiron’s terms, “future potentials for visibility in translation” (2012, 195) rather than widespread digital reality, indicates the limitations of such approaches.

In more recent studies, scholars working in audio-visual-translation-studies contexts have empirically demonstrated the continued productivity of visibility research in digital contexts. Kathryn Batchelor, for instance, investigates attitudes towards subtitled television programmes in Britain by examining the visibility of translation discourse in the paratexts and branding for the *Walter Presents* programme catalogue (2018, 118-138). However, Batchelor’s approach constitutes a qualitative case study that serves to demonstrate the value of digital paratexts as sources, as much as to investigate the visibility of translation in audio-visual texts. As such, Batchelor presents no replicable or well-defined methodology for others to investigate paratextual visibility in other contexts. Conversely, Boyi Huang’s study into the visibility of Chinese subtitles for the sitcom *The Big Bang Theory* understands visibility as a spectrum manifested in the subtitle’s occupation of “different social positions” in “different social settings” (2021, 55). Consequently, Huang focuses on the human element in visibility and emphasises the need to discuss and compare the relative visibilities of

individuals over questions of whether someone is or is not visible (2021, 55). Notably, Batchelor's document-focussed approach and Huang's sociological approach again mirror Venuti's own distinction between the translator's "situation" and "activity" within the concept of invisibility and so it is a consolidation of these two approaches that the present thesis seeks to develop.

On a more intricate level, the nature of Venuti's genealogical method, which serves as a cultural representation of the past that is at once a "discontinuous succession of division and hierarchy" and an abandonment of objectivity with "a professed political agenda" (1995/2018, 32), inevitably ties his work to the notion that contemporary translator invisibility is a negative position that must be challenged. This assumption is problematic as becoming visible within particular political, cultural or linguistic contexts may endanger translators if they are translating texts pertaining to sensitive, controversial or even illegal subjects. In such instances, invisibility may not only be desirable but necessary for the translator's ability to work and live within their cultural context.

Furthermore, even in cases where translators want or strive for visibility, it cannot be assumed that visibility always comes in the same forms. For instance, as noted by Woods, when referring to the translator as a figure of linguistic and exegetical authority within the translated text, this figure can be "disguised, elided or decidedly present" (2016).¹³ Here, the passive use of past participles as adjectives to describe "the authority of the translator" not only demonstrates that the translator's position can be mediated by other actors but also that different translators may have different positions and levels of visibility within different contexts. Equally, Woods' verbal construction places the emphasis on translators as human beings, rather

¹³ Unfortunately, Woods uses these terms without providing further detail on what constitutes a "disguised", "elided" or "decidedly present" translator. The concept of paratextual visibility put forward in the subsequent section of this chapter therefore goes beyond existing scholarship by adding detail and nuance to such categorisations.

than abstract figures, and so acknowledges the professional relevance of these issues to the large number of individuals who undertake translational activity across a variety of contexts on a daily basis. As such, Woods' description of translators being "disguised, elided or decidedly present" in the paratextual space recognises the varying levels and forms that translator visibility can take whilst placing no ideological weight or personal preference behind any one position. However, it should be noted that a description of translators as "elided" or "disguised" signifies an undesirable state along the lines of Venuti's invisibility being a state that must be challenged or overcome. While the present thesis follows Woods in adding further nuance to the concept of translator (in)visibility, then, the negative implications of Woods' terms means that they are not used explicitly within this thesis.

Finally, within Venuti's elucidation of the "situation" in which Anglophone translators work, the line between the visibility of individual translators and the act of translation itself becomes blurred. Whilst the two are inherently linked, as the act of translation must be completed by a translatorial agent and so visibility of one implies the other, the two cannot not be conflated. For instance, Brian Baer notes the varying references to translation and translators made within paratexts written by professional reviewers by distinguishing:

between those that ignore the translator and those that erase the translator. The former reviews make no mention of the translator while the latter not only fail to mention the translator but discuss the style of the translated text as if it were that of the source text author. Among the reviews that mention the translator, I distinguish between those that mention her by name, and those that refer to her only with the generic term "translator." (Baer, 2016)

Here, Baer nuances his descriptive categories of translator visibility by distinguishing between representations of the translator as a personified or an abstract figure. Furthermore, Baer acknowledges a difference between the invisibility of the translator as an individual agent involved in the production of the text and the invisibility of translation as a process of textual creation. In this way then, Baer's differentiation between the visibility of the

translator as an agent and translation as an activity indicates the productivity of a more nuanced understanding of translator visibility that differentiates between the ways a translator may be made visible by others.

Consequently, the present thesis seeks to move away from the term “invisibility” due to its intrinsic relationship to Venuti’s ideological position and instead take its corollary, visibility, as an overarching, neutral descriptive tool that spans a continuum from very visible to not visible at all without prioritising a given position. This allows the present thesis to develop translator visibility as a dual process along the lines of Venuti’s “situation” and “activity” without immediately falling foul of many of the criticisms levelled at Venuti for his works’ potential for overly simplistic binarism (Baker, 2010; Tymoczko, 2000; Pym, 1996). Nevertheless, other aspects of Venuti’s invisibility remain decidedly relevant for the present study. For instance, Venuti emphasises the significance of an individual’s interpretation of a text within the rewriting process. This mirrors the multimodal definition of paratextuality put forward in the previous chapter that understands the individual interpretations of both paratextual creators and receivers as influential on the ways in which translated literary texts are circulated and received. At this point, then, the question becomes how this thesis will add nuance to the concept of visibility and how this nuance will be operationalised to actively re-introduce the translator’s voice into their paratextual visibility.

Paratextual visibility as the “position” and “role” of the translator

While the issue of translator invisibility finds continued relevance within paratext-driven translation studies scholarship, the question of how we analyse visibility remains. Indeed, for anyone wishing to investigate or operationalise visibility, the primary concerns are as follows:

- a) Venuti’s ethical assumption implies that translator visibility is always desirable, beneficial or unproblematic;

- b) Venuti's theoretical approach relies heavily on a particular context: that of the book manifest as a codex, published in the Anglophone West and within the historical period of the mid-17th century to the late 20th century; and
- c) the dichotomy of visibility/invisibility can either lead to an oversimplification of a complex continuum or is too vague to operationalise, thereby making it difficult to consistently describe and analyse.

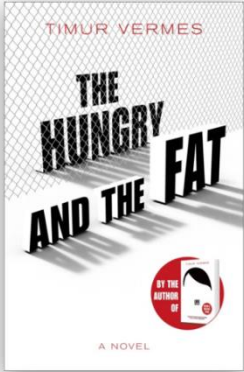
The solution put forward in the present thesis seeks to provide a workable conceptualisation that corresponds to the theoretical framework of paratextuality put forward in Chapter 1. The first thing to note, then, is that the theoretical framework put forward here will focus on translator visibility, rather than invisibility *à la* Venuti. This distinction allows this thesis to move beyond Venuti's ideologically charged conceptualisation of translator invisibility and towards a shift in perspective that focuses on how translators are made visible and their agency therein. Secondly, where this thesis seeks to identify and analyse the ways in which translators are visible to British readers, this focuses solely on the translator's visibility in the paratextual space as defined in Chapter 1. Doing so allows this thesis to present a fully fledged framework through which to analyse paratextual visibility within a contemporary, digital context, rather seeking to position paratextual visibility alongside the translator's visibility in other spaces as in Koskinen's tripartite model (2000, 99). Thus, while the conceptualisation of translator visibility put forward here invokes Venuti's bilateral notion of invisibility being both a passive "situation" and an "activity", this thesis focuses specifically on the paratextual space rather than Venuti's broader analysis of the "effect of discourse" and "the practice of reading and evaluating translations that has long prevailed in the United Kingdom and the United States" (1995/2018, 1). Thirdly, I present a more nuanced conceptualisation of translator visibility as put forward by Woods (2016) and Baer (2016) whilst incorporating the agency of the translator in their visibility *à la* Huang (2021). As will be elucidated in the following sections, the descriptive categories and methodological approaches that add this nuance are referred to here as the

translator's *position* and *role*.¹⁴ These terms refer to two differentiated yet related perspectives which coalesce within a continuum of paratextual visibility that can be ascertained via different methodological means. In the following sections, explanations of these terms will be furnished with examples from publisher-created paratexts for Jamie Bulloch's English translations of Timur Vermes' novels *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*.

The paratextual “position” of the translator

The first of the terms used within this thesis, the “position” of the translator, refers explicitly to the ways in which the translator is presented to readers within a text that forms a paratextual relationship with the literary text. The overarching positions that a translator may take within a paratextual space are “presence” and “absence”. A translator is present when they are referred to in the paratextual space and absent when they are not. However, as shown in Figure 1, these overarching positions should not be understood as binary positions to be alternated between, but rather opposite ends of a continuum of paratextual visibility. An example at the extreme end of presence would be Bulloch's blog post *Not Only for Emergencies: what helps a German-language book to travel* (2020). Here, Bulloch writes about his opinions on German-language literature in translation, his work as a translator on novels such as *Look Who's Back* and his opinions on the importance of translation in the publishing industry. In this digital space, Bulloch expresses himself in the first person and is credited as doing so, thereby making it explicit to site users that he is responsible for this paratextual material and so is present in this paratextual space. At the opposite end of this continuum, absence, Floresiensis' review of *Look Who's*

¹⁴ At this point, it must be stressed that this model can also be applied in contexts involving more than one translator, though the question of whether their positions and roles correlate or come into conflict is out of scope for the present thesis.



THE HUNGRY AND THE FAT

by Timur Vermes

By the author of *Look Who's Back*, a radical and bold satire in inequitable times.

REFUGEE CAMPS IN AFRICA ARE SWELLING

And Europe has closed its borders. The refugees have no future, no hope, and no money to pay the vast sums now demanded by people smugglers. The only thing they have is time.

AND THEN AN ANGEL ARRIVES FROM REALITY T.V.

When model and star presenter Nadeche Hackenbusch comes to film at the largest of the camps, one young refugee sees a unique opportunity: to organise a march to Europe, in full view of the media. Viewers are gripped as the vast convoy moves closer, but the far right in Germany is regrouping and the government is at a loss. Which country will halt the refugees in their tracks?




THE HUNGRY AND THE FAT


A devastating, close-to-the-knuckle satire about the haves and have-nots in our divided world by one of Europe's finest and most perceptive writers.

"Satirical, sharp, believable . . . Brilliant" Rick O'Shea, *RTE*

Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch

Genre: Fiction & Related Items / Modern & Contemporary Fiction (post C 1945)
On Sale: 23rd January 2020 Price: £16.99 ISBN-13: 9781529400533

Share   

EBOOK 


BUY BOOK 

Figure 2 – The webpage of *The Hungry and the Fat* from MacLehose Press' website on the novel's original release day (23 January 2020)

At this point, however, these terms may simply appear to be supplanting Venuti's own invisibility and its corollary visibility. As such, this thesis seeks to prevent potential binarism arising from these categories by introducing three positions within the overarching position of "presence": the *participant*, *represented* or *implied* translator. In doing so, the concept of translator visibility presented here not only adds nuance to Venuti's continuum of invisibility/visibility but also goes beyond Woods' "disguised, elided or decidedly present" translator by acknowledging that the translator's presence may stem from their own agency, in the case of the participant translator, or come from others, as with the represented or implied translator. Furthermore, where Venuti's ideology sees invisibility as an inherently negative position, Woods' "disguised" translator similarly signifies an undesirable state. As such, the terminology put forward by this thesis seeks to avoid imbuing terminological choices with ideological stances or value judgements by being as malleable as possible for both descriptive and analytical work.

The first position that a present translator can take in the paratextual space is that of the “participant”, which refers to a translator who is explicitly named as a paratextual creator. As a participant within the paratextual space, such paratexts allow translators to communicate directly with readers either as a personified translator, which is achieved by them being named, or as the abstract figure of a translator who participates under their title of translator, rather than their personal identity. Interview blogposts discussing Bulloch’s translation of *Look Who’s Back* form an example of the former (e.g., A Fiction Habit, 2013), while the title “Translator’s Note” in the codex of *Look Who’s Back* demonstrates the latter. Of course, translators may participate in paratextual creation and not be explicitly credited for this work, in which case they are not positioned as participants in the paratextual space. Thus, the fact that *the translator is being presented to readers as a participant* in the creation of paratextual materials, and so the framing of the text, is the most salient point.

The second position is that of the “represented” translator. This refers to paratexts which present, depict or refer to the translator explicitly but for whose creation the translator is not credited. Typically, this would therefore come in the form of references to the translator or their translatorship in the third person. As with the position of the participant translator, such representations may be personified through the inclusion of the translator’s personal details. For instance, when the bibliographic details of Bulloch’s career as a literary translator are included in the backmatter of both *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, he is paratextually represented as the translator of those novels.¹⁵ Alternatively, where reader reviews of *Look Who’s Back* refer to “the translator” without naming Bulloch explicitly (e.g., AnnaLivia, 2015), it is the abstract figure of the translator that is represented. This links to the differentiation Brian Baer draws between reviewers who

¹⁵ Notably, it became clear during interview that Bulloch was responsible for the creation of these short paratextual biographies. Nevertheless, because he is not presented to readers as their author, such materials position him as a represented, rather than participant, translator.

mention the translator by name and those that simply refer to “the translator” (2016). In both cases, however, the fact that the translator is paratextually announced as a presence within the literary text but is not credited as a paratextual creator, regardless of whether they did in fact participate, is what defines the translator’s position as “represented” within these spaces.

The third position within which a translator can be considered present is that of the “implied” translator. In these instances, the notion that a translator was involved in the text’s production is stated within the paratextual space but the translator themselves, either as an individual or an abstract figure, is not referred to. MacLehose Press’s webpage for *Look Who’s Back* provides an example of this, in that the book is categorised as “Fiction in Translation”. Here, then, the fact that the novel is a translation implies the process of translation and so an agent who conducted this labour, but no explicit reference is made to Bulloch or his translatorship. In this way, paratexts that other the literary text by referring to its foreignness would always paratextually position the translator as implied. As such, this position precludes the personified figure of the translator as an identifiable individual and instead serves only to present the abstract figure of a translator. Thus, it is the fact that the literary text is a translation that is primarily made visible, thereby implying the involvement of a translator.

Finally, then, we come to the realm of absence. Translators are positioned as absent when they are not credited or referred to as paratextual creators; when a paratext does not refer to them either as a personified or abstract figure; or when their presence within the text is not implied through references to the fact that the literary text is a translation. In the case of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, the cover designs and their manifestation as images on MacLehose Press’s website serve as notable examples of this as no reference is made to Bulloch or the fact that the novels are translations.

Within the methodology used throughout this thesis, these positions serve as descriptive categories to be ascertained through desktop, text-based research. Care must, therefore, be taken when equating this position to the translator’s role in the creation of said text as, unless this information is

contained within the text, this cannot be ascertained through desktop study alone. To give an example: as previously discussed, Jamie Bulloch is positioned as an absent translator on the covers of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, which feature only the titles of the novels, the name of the author and marketing straplines. Yet, by conducting interviews with the agents involved in the production and translation of the novel, it became clear that Bulloch was involved in the creation of English-language titles for both novels. Consequently, despite his paratextual absence, the prominence of the titles as paratexts means that Bulloch is, to some extent, responsible for the way in which they present the literary texts to a reader. As such, while Bulloch the translator may have limited visibility within this space, the way he read and interpreted the text is visible through his role as a paratextual creator. Yet it is only through other methodological means that this role comes to light. Thus, it is for this reason that the present thesis seeks to interrogate the relationship between a translator's position within the paratextual space and the role that they play in the creation of paratextual materials.

The paratextual "role" of the translator

Where the position of the translator in the paratextual space focuses primarily on texts as they are encountered and received by readers, this thesis will also focus on the "role" of the translator in the paratextual space. This additional aspect when understanding translator visibility is a significant step in creating a dialogue between often document-based visibility research and literary translator studies. The most obvious role translators play in paratextual creation stems from the aforementioned "participant" position in which the creation of paratexts is credited explicitly to the translator, such as the translator's note in *Look Who's Back* being signed off with Bulloch's name. In such cases, the role of the translator as a paratextual creator is made explicit to the reader and so translators are presented as playing an active role in crafting the paratextual space.

However, just because a translator is not positioned as a participant within a paratextual space does not mean that they made no contributions to the

creation of these paratexts. For instance, where translators may write synopses and reports alongside a sample translation of a text prior to the selling of translation rights, such materials may then be used to form the basis of content found on the blurb. Similarly, translators may be asked to provide a brief biographic or bibliographic note on their previous work to be featured in the frontmatter of a translation but must do so in the third person with no assigned authorship. In such cases, authorship of these paratexts typically remains unstated in the paratextual space, thereby giving the publisher institutional authorship and preventing the translator from taking the position of a participant in the paratextual materials as their role is not signalled in this textual space. Alternatively, translators may write copy or create paratextual materials for a literary text in which they are themselves absent. This constitutes a form of “self-annihilation”, in Venuti’s terms (1995/2018, 7), whereby the translator plays an active role in the paratextual creation but takes an absent position. Nevertheless, regardless of their position within these paratexts, the translator can play an active role in their creation and so serves as a key figure in the framing of translated texts for new audiences within the target culture. The primary focus when interrogating the role of the translator is, therefore, whether the translator played an active role in the paratext’s creation and, if they did, ascertaining the extent of this role.

Methodologically speaking, where the position of the translator constitutes a form of paratextual visibility that is traceable within a textual product, investigations into the translator’s role must go beyond this desktop work. In the case of the present project, the contemporary context within which *Look Who’s Back*, *The Hungry and the Fat* and this thesis have been written means that the agents involved in the translation, production and circulation of the two novels can be brought into the research through qualitative interviews. Interview participants within the scope of the present project included the author of the novels, Timur Vermes; the translator, Jamie Bulloch; editor and publisher at MacLehose Press, Katharina Bielenberg; and translator Katy Derbyshire, who produced an early sample translation of one of the novels. The interviews presented an opportunity to gain insights into the events surrounding the publication of the two novels through

discussions of the participants' own experiences and actions, as well as the participants' attitudes towards theoretical issues such as translator visibility.

The interviews also served as an opportunity to discuss the text-based sources used to investigate the position of the translation, thereby providing both new perspectives on the documentary evidence and allowing me to reflect on my own interpretation of the paratextual materials. Moreover, discussion of publishing practices during interviews led participants to supply the author with additional archival materials — particularly industry facing documents created by MacLehose Press. It must be stated that such interviews are not without limitations, for instance doubts can be cast over reliability of an interviewee's accounts and the potential for falsification (Munday, 2014, 7). Consequently, interviews were conducted with participants representing different perspectives and positions within the creation and publication of the literary text, thereby allowing their responses to be compared, whilst the bipartite text analysis and interview-based methodology allowed findings from the interviews to be corroborated with documentary evidence.

Of course, investigations into the role of the translator in the creation of paratextual materials within the present thesis are facilitated by the researcher's access to the participants. In the current context, this means that they are still alive, were willing to participate in the project, and had access to a computer and internet connection.¹⁶ However, within different research contexts these conditions may not be replicable — particularly for those working within historical contexts or within a context where involvement in the research project may pose a danger to a potential participant. Similarly, whilst an institution that was involved with the creation of paratextual materials may still be active, such as a publishing house, the individuals who worked on a given text may no longer be associated with the

¹⁶ As a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent institutional blocks on both travel on university business and face-to-face research activities, the interviews conducted during the present study were done remotely via online video calling platforms.

institution. In such cases, documentary source materials, such as correspondence between translators, publishers and authors; drafts or unpublished manuscripts; or personal files, present an alternative opportunity to ascertain the role played by the translator in the paratextual framing of a literary text.¹⁷

As such, while the methodological framework presented here is tailored towards the contemporary, digital focus of the present thesis, this emphasis does not preclude investigations within other contexts from taking the same bilateral approach to paratextual visibility — though the suitability of this approach must be evaluated insofar as primary sources that reveal the translator's role are available to the researcher. Nevertheless, by making a distinction between the position and role of the translator in the paratextual space, research can delve beyond the surface-level notion of visibility as a reader-based phenomenon into the question of how translators can shape the paratextual framing of the texts they translate, how they are positioned within these framings and the extent to which their presence or absence within the paratextual space is a position that they can influence or control.

Towards visibility

Previously, I identified issues with Venuti's theoretical conceptualisation of translator invisibility that researchers would need to address to investigate and operationalise the notion. The approach taken within this thesis, focussing on the position and role of the translator, has sought to address these concerns. Firstly, the notion of invisibility was developed by Venuti within an ethics of translation that sees translator visibility, which signals the foreignness of the translated text, as a force for good against the hegemonic cultural narcissism of the Anglophone West's reading practices and expectations for translated literature. As such, Venuti's ideologically driven

¹⁷ For more on this, see Jeremy Munday's work on the microhistory of translation and translators (2014).

work frames invisibility as the norm and visibility as a goal to strive towards that is always beneficial and unproblematic. The theoretical approach put forward in the present thesis makes no such connections between the descriptive and analytical categories of the position and role of the translator and their ethical impact. Rather, the present approach seeks to describe the ways in which the translator is positioned within the paratextual space and investigate the extent to which the translator is involved within the creation of these paratexts, thereby taking each translator and paratextual space as its own context and providing a more nuanced approach than Venuti's call to action allows.

Secondly, the positions that the translator can take within the paratextual space are here conceptualised as concurrent and co-existing positions within the same continuum, rather than presence and absence being solely binary opposites. In this way, the reductive cataloguing of various paratexts at either end of a dichotomy can be avoided and we can better understand the nuance of individual paratexts within wider paratextual spaces, rather than attempting to assert that visibility has been achieved by ticking enough boxes. This approach is underpinned by the theoretical assumptions that, even if the translator is not explicitly named as a paratextual creator, their role in pitching foreign texts to publishers, creating sample translations and reader reports prior to the selling of translation rights, and the very act of creating the translated text to be framed means that, at a minimum, a translator's translatorship is always present to some extent in the paratextual space. Consequently, whether through ignorance or by choice, the positioning of the translator as absent by any paratextual creator is seen as an active decision, rather than as a passive, default position against which all translators must fight to become present. As such, the role of the translator in creating paratexts becomes increasingly important, as we seek to identify the ways in which translators participate in the circulation of translated literary texts.

Finally, the theoretical framework outlined here is developed with a broad understanding of the types of texts that may be found in the paratextual space, as discussed in the previous chapter. As such, the codex-based approach required by Venuti's historical focus is avoided, thereby allowing

this thesis to fully explore the potential for translators to become present outside of the mediated world of publisher-controlled paratexts and the established literary media without the constraints or influence of pre-existing theoretical assumptions from those worlds. Notably, however, as this thesis turns to digital paratextual spaces and connects them to codex-based physical paratexts, the number of potential trajectories that readers can take between these different paratexts proliferates. For theoretical concepts such as visibility, this is problematic as it renders more challenging our ability to identify instances of translator visibility and makes the qualifying of an arbitrarily defined level of visibility unworkable. As such, the approach developed within this thesis, which sees the translator's paratextual presence and absence not as binary opposites but co-existing phenomena, avoids this issue by explicitly acknowledging that the translator's position is dynamic and so cannot be used to create concrete, stable descriptive categories. No translator *is* a participant translator, or an absent translator in general. These descriptive positions are relevant only within the specific context of an individual paratext or a particular paratextual space. Thus, it is at this point that we can now turn to the question of how Bulloch is positioned in the publisher-created and -mediated paratexts for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and The Fat*.

Part II

The “consciously crafted” paratextual space

Chapter 3 – Visibility in production-side paratexts: The iterative nature of MacLehose Press’ digital production processes

Introduction

While the broad definition of paratextuality put forward within this thesis understands that a paratextual relationship can exist between any two texts, this chapter will focus on materials that are “consciously crafted” by the publisher (Batchelor, 2018, 142). Between the writing of a literary text and its appearance in print, publishers are responsible for a variety of processes that create such paratexts, such as design, typesetting and marketing (c.f. Thompson’s publishing value chain, 2010, 16). In some cases, publisher-created paratexts are available to readers concurrently to the literary text, with the two being packaged as co-texts within the form of a codex or an eBook file, as is the case with covers, prefaces and epigraphs. Alternatively, these paratexts can circulate independently from the literary text in either the physical or the digital world, such as advertising posters or promotional web pages.¹⁸ In both cases, the positioning of a translator within such paratexts, as well as the translator’s role in their creation, can reflect the wider socio-cultural status and position of translation as an authorial, creative and professional activity, and the paratextual creators’ perception of these factors within their cultural and historical context.

The focus of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, the chapter will give an overview of the journey that *Er ist wieder da* and *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* took in translation into English, thereby examining the ways in which production-side paratextual materials were created and analysing Bulloch’s role therein. This overview will be linked to Thompson’s “publishing value

¹⁸ A reference to Genette’s peritext/epitext dichotomy is avoided purposefully here due to the understanding of paratextuality put forward within this thesis which seeks to detach paratextuality from being restrictively tied to a particular manifestation of a text, as discussed in Chapter 1.

chain” (2010, 16) to situate these processes within the broader context of contemporary Anglophone publishing practices. Secondly, through an analysis of the constellations of paratexts that act as co-texts within the hardback editions of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* and the webpages for the two novels on the publisher’s website, this chapter will examine how Bulloch is positioned by publisher MacLehose Press, thereby demonstrating the links between Bulloch’s position and role in the paratextual space across the digital and non-digital materials. Finally, the chapter will turn to Bulloch’s visibility in the born-digital paratextual materials created by MacLehose Press, namely video trailers and promotional images shared on social media, to investigate Bulloch’s visibility in publisher-created paratexts designed specifically for digital spaces. In doing so, this chapter seeks not only to shed light on the potential impact of digital creation and publishing practices on the translator’s visibility in production-side spaces, but also develop existing understandings of the relationships between different paratextual constellations created by the same paratextual creator.

Meaning, media and material affordances

The present investigation into paratextual translator visibility is built upon the multimodal conceptualisation of paratextuality put forward in Chapter 1. Within this framework, the various texts between which paratextual relationships can form are understood as multimodal “ensembles” (Mavers and Pahl, 2012) in which meaning is made via a variety of semiotic resources, including written text, layout, typography and image. As such, both when choosing to create a text within a given medium, and then when selecting the semiotic resource to use when making a specific meaning, creators are making motivated, norm-driven decisions influenced by their own needs and aims (Jewitt, 2012). By focussing on one meaning that can be made within the publisher-created paratextual space, the question arises of whether this meaning is made, and if so how, across various media and materials. In the case of the present thesis, the meaning on which I focus is that a translator was involved in the production of a given literary text and so made visible in the paratextual space. Thus, when comparing the semiotic

resources available to print-based and digital paratextual creators, the potential for differences in paratextual translator visibility in digital and non-digital spaces continues to increase.

Furthermore, if the affordances of a given medium, in this case one that is either digital or non-digital, can affect the way that a single meaning is made, then the affordances of individual platforms within these broader media are of similar interest. In the case of online, digital texts, the general medium can here be understood as a website and so the obvious publisher-controlled platform within the digital space would be their own website. Yet where publisher-controlled materials in the non-digital world serve as co-texts in the physical manifestation of the literary text as codex or eBook, in the digital space the publisher's website is but one paratextual space within a constellation of digital materials that can all form paratextual relationships with the literary text, such as the retail websites analysed in Chapter 5. As such, the composition of the digital space poses a potential challenge to the publisher's powerful paratextual position in the non-digital world. This, therefore, raises the question of whether the digital publisher-created paratexts, and the position of the translator therein, diverge from their non-digital counterparts to respond to the varying challenges presented by the different media.

To examine the ways in which MacLehose Press creates paratextual materials and creates meaning within the paratextual space, this chapter will employ a methodology based upon Jeremy Munday's "microhistory of translation" (2014) to present an overview of the two novels' journeys into English. As such, the forthcoming analysis of public-facing paratextual materials is supported by documentary evidence gathered from the publisher, such as "Title Information Sheets" (TIS) and marketing plans, and interview data gathered during one-to-one conversations with translator Bulloch and the editor/associate publisher of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* at MacLehose Press, Katharina Bielenberg. Doing so allows this chapter to ascertain Bulloch's role in paratextual creation, and so his influence over his own visibility within the publisher-created paratextual space, by investigating his "interaction with other participants in the translation process"; to corroborate findings between documentary evidence

and the “mediated testimonies” (Munday, 2014, 75) of interview participants; and to contextualise Bulloch’s visibility within the subsequent analysis of the codex and publisher’s website as public-facing paratextual spaces.

Consequently, this chapter can also question how the potential for meaning making and translator visibility in the digital paratextual space is utilised by publisher MacLehose Press — a discussion that will become increasingly relevant in the collateral digital paratextuality examined in Chapters 5 and 6.

Investigating the position and role of the translator in publisher-created paratextual spaces

Once I have established the contexts in which production-side paratextual materials for *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were produced, and Bulloch’s role therein, the chapter will then investigate the extent to which the translator’s position in publisher-created paratexts differs between the non-digital and the digital. To do so, this chapter primarily focuses on two paratextual spaces: *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* in their original, hardback editions, and the pages for the two books on the publisher’s website. The final section of this chapter will then broaden the scope of the production-side paratextual space to examine Bulloch’s position within digital-only materials created by MacLehose Press’s marketing team. This final comparison allows this chapter to investigate whether paratextual materials created by agents outside of the influence of translator Bulloch and editor Bielenberg position Bulloch and his translatorship differently from those found in codices and MacLehose Press’s website.

These platforms have been selected for several reasons. Firstly, the original hardback editions of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* have been selected as they present an opportunity to investigate the position and role of the translator in the publisher-created paratextual space at the same point in the life of the novels, that is before any changes were made in response to other external factors, such as sales, the existence of other adaptations or reviews. In this way, the hardback books present the publisher-created paratexts as the publisher originally chose to frame the novels for British readers. Furthermore, in practical terms, *The Hungry and*

The Fat had only been released in hardback at the time of conducting the forthcoming analysis. Thus, using the initial hardback edition of *Look Who's Back* allows for a consistent comparison between the two.

Secondly, the book-specific pages found on the website of the publisher, MacLehose Press, have been chosen as they serve as the digital space for which the publisher has explicit authorship and authority. The site-wide branding of MacLehose Press instils a sense of legitimacy and authority for readers that reflects the traditional control that publishers exert over the non-digital paratextual space of the codex. Furthermore, whilst the actual design and creation of the website was not undertaken by the individuals responsible for the creation and publication of paratextual materials, this specific platform was designed with the publisher's needs in mind. As such, the affordances of this given platform have, to an extent, been designed to present books to readers. Thus, both in terms of auctorial authority and control over the platform, as well as its primary function, the publisher's website presents a comparable paratextual space to that of the hardback book.

In terms of the relationship between these two paratextual spaces, that is the hardback codices and the corresponding pages from the publisher's website, the following matrix indicates the internal consistency between these sources. In the case of the two hardback codices and the webpage for *The Hungry and the Fat* (MacLehose Press, 2020e), all are being studied as they were published at the same point in the production cycle of the respective novel, that is the day of the two novels' releases. This approach allows the following chapter to investigate Bulloch's visibility within the production-side paratexts of the two novels at the point they were first made available to readers. In the case of the webpage for *Look Who's Back*, however, the version analysed here was archived on the day that *The Hungry and the Fat* was first published (23 January 2020), thereby focussing on the position and role of Bulloch at a particular point in time (MacLehose Press, 2020d). In doing so, the present chapter can also investigate the ways in which Bulloch's visibility in the production-side paratextual space is affected by the fluidity of the digital paratextual space in the post-publication world and compare this to the release-day materials found within the codex. The

selection of these paratextual materials therefore allows the following analysis to reflect the ephemeral nature of the digital space and understand translator visibility as fluid and dynamic, as outlined in Chapter 2, rather than as a static position or goal to be achieved.

Table 1 – The relationships between the paratextual materials studied within Chapter 3

	Same point in the life cycle of the novels – day of publication	Same point in time – 23 January 2020 ¹⁹
Hardback codex of <i>Look Who's Back</i> (April 2014)	•	
Hardback codex of <i>The Hungry and the Fat</i> (January 2020)	•	•
Publisher's webpage for <i>Look Who's Back</i> (January 2020)		•
Publisher's webpage for <i>The Hungry and the Fat</i> (January 2020)	•	•

At this point, however, it must be noted that the decision to begin the analytic work within this thesis with a comparison built around the codex does not contradict the theoretical and ideological stance taken throughout. Rather than reflecting the Genettian relationship between the material form of the book and the theoretical concept of paratextuality, or a hierarchisation of the

¹⁹ This date has been selected as it was the day that *The Hungry and the Fat* was first published in English.

codex above other forms of paratextuality, the forthcoming analysis demonstrates the need to situate both digital and non-digital forms of paratextuality in overlapping and interrelated constellations within the broader paratextual spaces that surround literary texts for readers in the 21st century. Indeed, whilst the eBook market is now a staple of the contemporary publishing industry, British consumers continue to buy more physical books than digital texts and books (Nazir, 2020). Yet, the dominance of digital retailers such as Amazon in the contemporary book market further indicates the importance of digital paratextual spaces and their influence on 21st century readers, even when these readers continue to primarily consume literature in the format of the physical codex. As such, the paratextual space cannot be divided along digital and non-digital lines. Thus, for projects such as this, which seeks to investigate and challenge notions of translator visibility within a broad understanding of paratextuality, discussion of physical materials such as the codex and their relationships to digital paratexts cannot be avoided — particularly when focussing on the very paratextual creator who takes responsibility for materials found within the codex: the publisher. Thus, the decision to begin with the codex, despite the digital focus of the present thesis, stems solely from the author's opting to start with the publisher as a paratextual creator.

In terms of the structure of the forthcoming analysis, the chapter is divided into three sections. The first details the production processes in which *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were translated and published in English. In doing so, I will contextualise the subsequent paratextual analysis with findings from interviews and documents supplied by publisher MacLehose Press and allow this chapter to answer the question of what the translator's role in the creation of paratextual materials is. The second section comprises paratextual analyses of the hardback codices and the publisher's website. In both cases, the analysis begins with an overview of the constellations of paratexts found within each, thereby indicating the scope of the forthcoming analysis before discussing the affordances of the platforms and their potential impact on the position and role of the translator. Subsequently, the focus will turn to identifying and analysing the position of translator Jamie Bulloch within these paratextual spaces and the role that he

played in their creation, as outlined in Chapter 2. Bulloch's position as a participant, represented, implied or absent translator will be identified within the paratextual materials, followed by a discussion of the findings and their impact on Bulloch's overall visibility for the given paratextual space. Finally, the third section of this chapter expands on the findings of the second to investigate Bulloch's visibility in born-digital paratexts produced by MacLehose Press for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. In doing so, the analysis will provide insights into how translators are made visible in both digital and non-digital spaces whilst allowing discussion of the relationship between the translator's position and role in the digital paratextual space.

The publication of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* as a paratextual creation process

Within the realm of "consciously crafted" paratextuality (Batchelor, 2018, 142), this thesis differentiates between two primary forms of paratextual materials: those created by textual producers, or production-side paratexts; and those created by readers of the literary text, or reception-side paratexts. Not only does this distinction reflect the multimodal foundations of this thesis (c.f. *(Para-)Textuality in a multimodal context* in Chapter 1), in which meaning can be made both during the act of creation (production) and interpretation (reception), it also acknowledges that "reception-side paratexts are created by readers who themselves encountered paratexts" (Freeth, 2021, 4), notably those produced during the publication of the literary text. Thus, it is on the first of these two forms of paratextuality, the production-side, that the present chapter is focussing.

In terms of the types of materials that comprise the production-side paratextual space, much of Genette's taxonomic approach to the codex, as well as the "marketing and 'promotional'" materials such as "posters, advertisements, press releases and other prospectuses" upon which he chooses not to dwell are inherently included within this space (1997a, 373). However, given that the present thesis builds upon Batchelor's functional

definition of paratextuality (2018), rather than an auctorial approach à la Genette, this chapter will not seek to present a new or updated catalogue of production-side paratexts. Rather, this chapter will analyse public-facing paratextual spaces created and mediated by the publisher in order to assess the position of the translator therein.

Before beginning this documentary analysis, however, the methodological approach to translator visibility put forward by this thesis necessitates that examinations of the translator's position within paratextual spaces are corroborated with investigations into the translator's role in their production. To achieve this, an overview of the acquisition, development and publishing processes that saw *Er ist wieder da* and *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* translated into English and published by MacLehose Press will now be given. These accounts are based on data gathered during interviews and the analysis of documents pertaining to the two novels as archived by MacLehose Press. In presenting these accounts, subsequent analysis of Bulloch's position within the production-side paratextual space can be contextualised by his role in their creation, thereby allowing this chapter to address the question of Bulloch's agency and influence over his visibility in the consciously crafted, production-side paratextual space.

Look Who's Back

Timur Vermes' first novel, *Er ist wieder da*, was published by Eichborn Verlag in September 2012. The novel seeks to satirise modern media culture by imagining the re-awakening of Adolf Hitler in 21st-century Berlin, where he becomes a TV celebrity and seeks to re-enter the world of German politics. Despite some initial reluctance by the mainstream German press to cover the novel, *Er ist wieder da* went on to sell over 250,000 copies in the run up to Christmas 2012 and stayed on the German bestseller lists in either hardback or paperback form until early 2016 (for more see Freeth, 2021, 10-12). Notably, this commercial success and the novel's controversial subject matter resulted in *Er ist wieder da* attracting transnational media coverage, with British-based news outlets such as *The Guardian* (Connolly 2013), *The Independent* (Paterson 2013) and *The Telegraph* (Alsop 2013) all covering

the success of Vermees' debut in Germany. As such, the international appeal of the novel was clear even before the book became a commercial success. According to Bielenberg, MacLehose Press had put in a pre-emptive offer for English-language rights before the 2012 Frankfurt Book Fair.

Given that MacLehose Press was buying rights for an existing novel, the journey of *Er ist wieder da* into English begins with what Thompson describes as the "complex" "content acquisition" stage of the publishing value chain (2010, 16). As both the eventual translator of this novel for MacLehose Press and the husband of its editor Katharine Bielenberg (who is now Publisher at MacLehose Press), Bulloch played a limited, but not insignificant, role in this acquisition process: he critically read and assessed the book on behalf of the publisher prior to the acquisition of translation rights. Whilst in the case of *Look Who's Back* this arrangement was done informally, with Bulloch reporting orally back to Bielenberg rather than producing a written document, the creation of such a reader report is a key step in the movement of literary texts between languages as they "function[s] *instead of reading the whole book*", thereby allowing editors to assess the text's suitability for a new market without actually reading the text themselves (Rault, 2021, emphasis in the original).

Whilst in many cases this may be due to the editor being unable to access the source text in its original language (Rault, 2021), in the case of *Er ist wieder da*, Bulloch was asked to read and assess the novel on Bielenberg's behalf due to time constraints in the lead up to the Frankfurt Book Fair. This was significant, however, as Bielenberg noted during interview that *Er ist wieder da* had likely been on the market for around 6 months before it was submitted to MacLehose Press by the German publisher.²⁰ As such, reader reports were required to ascertain whether the novel was, in Bielenberg's words, "too bold". Indeed, the description of *Er ist wieder da* as having the potential to be a "bold and rewarding acquisition" by *New Books in German*

²⁰ Similar reluctance by US publishers to purchase US English rights for *Er ist wieder da* was reported by Donadio (2015).

(no date c) indicates the reason that English-language rights had been on the market for six months before original publisher Eichborn Verlag approached MacLehose Press. Thus, in giving *Er ist wieder da* a positive critical assessment and recommending acquisition to Bielenberg, Bulloch can be understood as playing a small yet significant role in the novel's movement from German to English that demonstrates the importance of reader reports and their assessments of a novel's suitability for new markets in translation.

Once MacLehose Press had acquired a book, the typically two-year-long journey to publication began with the "content development" phase (Thompson, 2010, 16), which can be split into two major processes.²¹ The first was the act of translation, for which MacLehose Press typically allows one year, while the second spanned various processes on Thompson's "publishing value chain" (2010, 16). In the case of latter, from the outset MacLehose Press worked with the content management system Biblio3, which is used by the entire Hachette UK group (Hachette Careers, no date). In the early stages of the publishing process, this system is used by editorial and sales staff to log practical data such as a costing for the book based on desired formats, expected sales, and the assigned ISBN number; followed by the expansion of this data to include information on the "cover author" (such as where they live), an early synopsis of the novel, a draft of the book's jacket, and key notes based on press reviews or sales figures for the original novel. These details are then used to generate a *title information sheet* (TIS; often referred to in the industry as an *advance information sheet*), an industry-facing paratext used both within the publishing house and to promote a literary text to other professionals prior to publication. For instance, in the case of the former, a TIS at MacLehose Press is handed over to the sales, marketing and publicity teams to inform their planning and strategies in the lead up to the book's release and forms the basis of the

²¹ During interview, Bielenberg stated that "our time between acquiring a book and actually publishing it is two years because we allow for a year for translation".

paratextual materials created by these teams to present the books to industry (e.g. booksellers), the press and the reading public.²²

In the case of Bulloch's role in the production of *Look Who's Back*, several points from this "content development" phase (Thompson, 2010, 16) are worth noting. Firstly, due to the perceived relationship between the novel's success in Germany and the book's striking cover design, which was commented on frequently in the German media (e.g. Fiedler, 2013 and Höbel, 2013), MacLehose decided to contract the original German designer, Johannes Wiebel from Munich based punchdesign, to produce the same cover design using the English-language title. Notably, however, the literal rendering of the title *Er ist wieder da* as *He's Back*, which can be seen as the novel's English title prior to MacLehose Press's acquisition on the *New Books in German* recommendation page for the novel (New Books in German, no date c) and as the title of Katy Derbyshire's sample translation (Vermes, no date), did not suit the cover design, which uses the novel's title to form the image of Hitler's moustache. This led to an unusual situation where the novel's cover design dictated a change in title, with Bielenberg and Bulloch each attributing the idea for "Look Who's Back" to the other during interview. Whilst this means we cannot attribute authorship of the novel's English-language title directly to Bulloch, the personal relationship between the translator and editor and their dual attributing of this title to the other indicates that Bulloch was at least involved in discussions on the novel's title and contributed to its creation. This is significant as the same English title was then also used for filmic and audio adaptations of the novel

²² The distinction between these departments within Quercus is based primarily on their target audiences. The sales team works with industry, for instance with booksellers and retail chains; publicity work with intermediaries to promote books to customers, such as reviewers; and marketing primarily advertise books directly to customers.

and, according to Bulloch during interview, has even come to supplant the original German title (*Er ist wieder da*) for German audiences.²³

Bulloch's involvement in the creation of other materials found on the TIS is more difficult to trace. For instance, from metadata of the TIS for *Look Who's Back* we can see that it was generated in April 2013 — approximately six months after MacLehose Press's acquisition and a year before the hardback would be released in the UK. However, because the content was generated based on data entered into the Biblio3 content management system, its specific authorship, and so Bulloch's role therein, is unknown. During interview, Bielenberg noted that the early synopsis for a translated book may be translated or adapted from the original novel or may be based on the reader reports commissioned prior to the novel's acquisition. For German-language books, however, Bielenberg's own ability to read and speak German means that she can draft at least a placeholder blurb herself. Similarly, while Bielenberg noted that translators may be asked to look through source-language media quotes and translate key points into English, this process may also be undertaken by the original, foreign-language publisher to advertise foreign-language rights at international events such as the Frankfurt Book Fair or may be done inhouse by editorial staff with the help of online translation tools. In the case of *Look Who's Back*, neither Bielenberg nor Bulloch were able to recall whether the latter played a specific role in initially drafting or translating such materials, though Bulloch noted that his close personal relationship to Bielenberg means that he does work closely with MacLehose Press on materials such as the blurb when translating for this specific publisher — an activity he would not typically replicate for other publishers. As such, the extent of Bulloch's influence and role in the creation of these materials is difficult to ascertain, other than

²³ Bulloch claimed during interview: "Interestingly that's kind of stuck internationally as the title. It may be also because of the presence of English, the dominance of English in the world, that has stuck as the title. Even when Germans post online about reading it, they'll call it 'Look Who's Back' sometimes."

acknowledging that, as with the novel's title, Bulloch played some part in discussions pertaining to the initial copy entered into Biblio3 that would go on to form the basis of paratextual materials such as the copy found on the rear cover of the novel.

Finally, while Bulloch's participation in the creation of the TIS for *Look Who's Back* may have been limited, there are several instances where he is represented or implied within this space. Notably, while the novel's title and author are given the largest fonts at the top of the sheet, the phrase "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" comes immediately thereafter. Similarly, the author biography section of the TIS is not just limited to Vermees, but also gives a brief two-line list of some of Bulloch's previous translation work.²⁴ Furthermore, the "sales points" for the novel not only refer to the success of the novel in its original German context, thereby implying that the English is not the original text and so has been translated, but there is also a reference to both the sale of film rights and translation rights. As such, Bulloch the translator is both represented and implied within this industry-facing paratextual space which is used to garner interest in the novel with booksellers and the press, thereby demonstrating that the process of translation and the translator's role is not something MacLehose Press would downplay or obscure when promoting the novel within the bookseller industry. Indeed, rather than presenting *Look Who's Back* as an original English text, MacLehose Press gave the translator and novel's foreign-language origins visibility throughout the publishing process. Despite Bulloch's participation in the creation of these materials being difficult to trace, then, we can see Bulloch remained a represented and implied translator in texts which served as the foundation for many of the production-side paratexts that would later accompany the novel upon publication.

²⁴ "Jamie Bulloch is the translator of novels by F. C. Delius, Daniel Glattauer, Katharina Hagen, Paulus Hochgatterer, Birgit Vanderbeke and Alissa Walsler."

Subsequently, the TIS was handed over to the sales, marketing and publicity teams for their work to begin on the “marketing and sales” phase of Thompson’s value chain (2010, 16). During this phase, the writing and editing of copy for the codex of *Look Who’s Back* and the associated marketing and publicity materials fall increasingly outside of Bulloch’s purview as the translator. For instance, the copy used on proof editions of *Look Who’s Back* sent out in advance of the novel’s release comes from a MS Word document created by a staff member from the Quercus marketing team in November 2013, with Bielenberg then making tracked changes to the document. Similarly, metadata from other documents used to plan marketing and publicity strategies for *Look Who’s Back* shows authorship and editing stemming from Quercus’ marketing department, external marketing partners and Bielenberg. This metadata does not reveal every individual who may have opened and edited these documents, rather their original creator and most-recent editor. What it does reveal, however, is that the original copy developed by Bielenberg and Bulloch and entered into Biblio3 during the earlier stages of the novel’s movement into English moved further away from Bulloch’s sphere of influence the closer the novel came to publication. As such, whilst he as the translator with a close personal relationship to Bielenberg was able to play a role in the early drafting of paratextual materials, his ability to contribute to paratextual production and so influence the ways in which he participated, was represented or was implied should not be overstated. Indeed, as can be traced through changes to the synopsis as found on the TIS (from April 2013), to the copy used on the proofs (from November 2013) and then the final hardback edition of the novel (published April 2014), authorship of these paratextual materials expanded outwards within the publishing institution to meet the aims and requirements of the marketing and publicity strategies devised to achieve commercial success for the novel. Thus, where Bulloch can be understood as playing a role in the early development of these paratextual materials, thereby influencing the way the novel was framed and presented internally within MacLehose Press and parent company Quercus, his influence and authorship of the materials that made their way onto the codex or the associated marketing materials is far more limited.

At this point, it is worth noting that the same Biblio3 system is used to populate online platforms including MacLehose Press' own website and digital retail platforms such as Amazon. As such, the same trace of Bulloch's role can be found in these digital paratextual spaces. Where these spaces differ, however, is that editorial and publishing staff at Quercus and its imprints, such as Bielenberg, are encouraged to update this metadata regularly following publication to keep online pages up to date in a way that is not possible with new editions of a codex. Evidence of this can be seen on the pages from MacLehose Press' website analysed later in this chapter, where taglines such as "A box-office-hit film now available on NETFLIX" and "A two-part BBC Radio 4 Dramatisation directed by and starring David Threlfall (Shameless)" could not have been included prior to the novel's release as these adaptations followed the release of *Look Who's Back* in the UK. As such, these digital spaces serve as more fluid and dynamic platforms than the codex, with Bulloch's role in early paratextual production becoming increasingly distant and diluted with every update and change made by staff at publisher MacLehose Press.

One production-side paratextual material for *Look Who's Back* in which Bulloch's role and authorship remains clear, however, is the translator's note found at the rear of the codex. Bulloch noted during interview that the decision to include a "glossary" for *Look Who's Back* was taken jointly between himself and Bielenberg based on a mutual distaste for footnotes in fiction and a feeling that some of the novel's cultural references may be lost on English-language readers. As such, Bulloch went through the manuscript and underlined sections that he felt may benefit from elucidation, before then using his background as an academic historian to research and write a glossary explaining these references.²⁵ Bulloch noted that this glossary style translator's note is different from others that he has been asked to write, such as requested by HarperCollins for the US edition of Daniela Krien's

²⁵ Dr Jamie Bulloch was awarded his PhD by University College London for his thesis *The Promotion of an Austrian Identity 1918-1938* (2002).

Love in Case of Emergency, which are typically much shorter and pertain specifically to translation issues and challenges. As such, the inclusion of this translator's note not only displays the active, collaborative role that Bulloch played in the creation of production-side paratexts for *Look Who's Back*, but also indicates what is important to him as a translator. That is, rather than making his work as the translator visible by discussing particular issues or challenges, Bulloch sought to make the translation as understandable for English readers as possible by serving as an interface between the novel's original German context and the expected historical and intercultural knowledge of English readers. He thereby prioritised the understanding of target audience readers over making the act of translation visible in the paratextual space. Indeed, that he continued to refer to this note as a "glossary" during interview, rather than as his translator's note, indicates the role that he played in limiting his own paratextual visibility and, in Schleiermacher's terms (1813/2012), moving the novel towards English-language readers.

The Hungry and the Fat

Die Hungrigen und die Satten, Timur Vermes' second novel, was released on 27 August 2018. As with Vermes' first novel, *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* is a satirical novel. It focusses on the media industry and their response to the so-called "European migrant crisis", a period spanning 2014 to 2019 when a large increase in the arrival of displaced persons fleeing war in the Middle East—notably Syria—lead to the relocation of asylum seekers across the EU. Angela Merkel's decision to allow more than a million refugees to seek asylum in Germany in 2016 proved a divisive policy (c.f. Mushaben, 2017).²⁶ Thus, while Vermes' second novel does not place the

²⁶ After a steady increase in migrant numbers from 2010, the number of migrant's arriving in the EU via the Mediterranean and seeking asylum or refuge peaked in 2015 and 2016, with the EU declaring the crisis over in 2019, though migrants continue to arrive in the EU via the Mediterranean.

reader within the mind of a controversial first-person narrator such as Adolf Hitler, the book continues to satirise the media through the lens of politicised subject matter within a contemporary European context.

When acquiring translation rights for *Die Hungrigen und die Satten*, MacLehose Press was the “option publisher” because it had published Verme’s first novel. Thus, where the rights for *Look Who’s Back* had been on the market for around six months prior to MacLehose Press’s involvement beginning, MacLehose was the only publisher offered English-language rights for this book. Nevertheless, the publisher still commissioned reader reports to ensure that *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* was a book it wanted to take on. As the editor and translator of Verme’s first novel in English, Bielenberg and Bulloch produced the reports in early August 2018. These both noted that, while the novel is longer than *Look Who’s Back* and not necessarily the follow-up they had expected, it remained a “bold” and “uncomfortable read for some” that would offer something different and new to English-language readers.²⁷ As with the oral report given by *Bulloch* for *Er ist wieder da*, then, Bulloch played an active role in the novel’s movement from German to English by providing a positive critical assessment of the novel for publisher MacLehose Press. Furthermore, as noted earlier, such reports can form the basis of the first synopsis and blurb drafts used to pitch and present the novel internally within MacLehose Press and its parent company Quercus. Indeed, Bulloch’s comment in his reader report that the novel “treads a fine line between deadly serious subject matter [...] and a comic treatment” is reflected in the blurb text found on the TIS for the translation, which euphemistically describes the book as a “close-to-the-knuckle satire”. Thus, Bulloch can be understood as playing a role in the early development of the paratextual materials that would later be used to present the novel to industry, press and the public.

²⁷ Metadata from the report document dates its creation as 10 August 2018 and that it was “last modified” on 12 August 2018.

In terms of other paratextual creation on the production side, there is little further evidence of Bulloch's involvement. Where Bulloch worked with Bielenberg to pitch and then write a narrative glossary/translator's note for *Look Who's Back*, *The Hungry and the Fat* features no such materials. Similarly, within the metadata of internal documents from MacLehose Press, such as the TIS, marketing plan and proof copy, there is no evidence of Bulloch's direct involvement. As with *Look Who's Back*, files appear to have been created and maintained either by the marketing team at Quercus or Bielenberg as the editor. Consequently, any influence Bulloch had on early, internal paratextual framings was diluted by the involvement of other agents who claim institutional authorship over the creation of the production-side paratexts that were used upon the book's publication — a process mirrored in Jansen and Wegener's definition of "multiple translatorship" (2013).

In terms of the position of Bulloch within internal documents used to present *The Hungry and the Fat* within Quercus and plan further strategies, such as the TIS, Bulloch is represented similarly to the TIS for *Look Who's Back*. For instance, "Translated by Jamie Bulloch" is listed at the top of the sheet, directly under the name of the author; whilst "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" is listed at the bottom of the "description" box. The presence of a translator is also once again implied by details such as "Rights so far sold in 13 territories" as a sales point and the inclusion of a quote from a German-language review under the "Reviews" heading. The one difference between the TIS for *The Hungry and the Fat* and *Look Who's Back* is that there is no translator biography for the former, whilst there was on the latter — even though both were produced from the same content management system (Biblio3) and that the editor in charge of their Biblio3 data management was Bielenberg in both cases. Nevertheless, the representation and implication of Bulloch's translatorship within this space once again demonstrates the visibility that Bulloch had within the development of production-side paratextual materials created by MacLehose throughout the entire process.

The iterative nature of MacLehose Press's paratextual creation

Within these two accounts of the acquisition and translation of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, an important cycle can be traced through the way that paratexts were created by MacLehose Press. I refer to this cycle as an *iterative* process in which existing paratexts, and the decisions made using them, form the basis for further paratextual creation, rather than new paratexts always being created from scratch. In this way, new iterations of existing paratexts are developed to meet specific requirements within a given context — a process that typically results in individuals who were not involved in the translation process becoming paratextual creators.

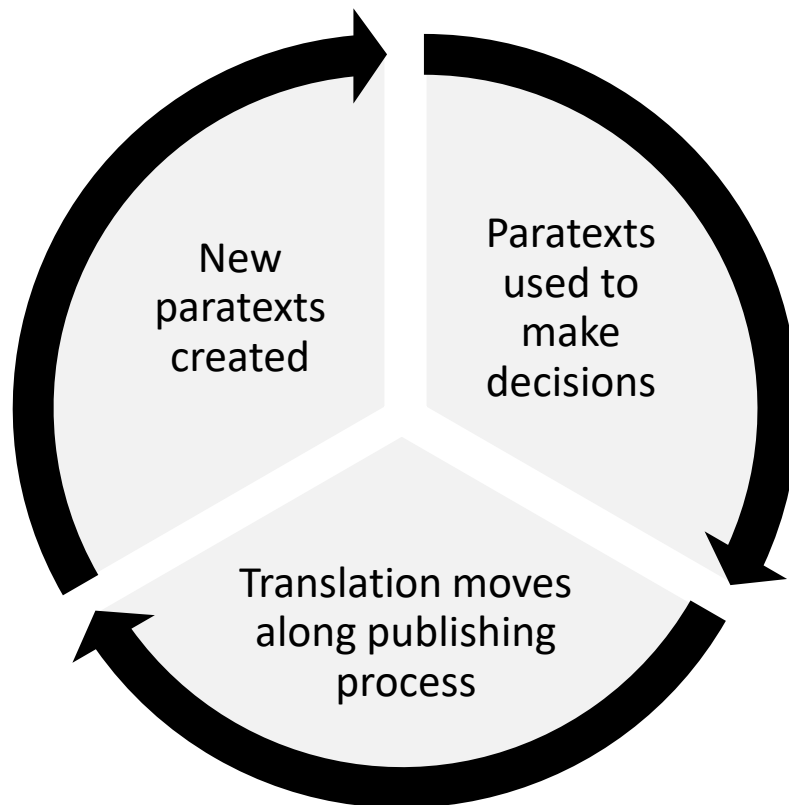


Figure 3 – The iterative nature of paratextual creation

Taking the acquisition of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* as an example, the decision by MacLehose Press to bid for English-language rights was based on the reader reports given by Bulloch. As the translation then moved along Thompson's publishing value chain into the "content development" phase (2010, 16) existing paratexts (the reader report and media coverage of the original German novel) were used as the basis to

create new paratextual materials, notably the Title Information Sheet. This TIS was then used to make further decisions as the book continued to move along the publishing value chain, such as the “design” and “sales and marketing” phases (Thompson, 2016, 10). Subsequently, these decisions resulted in the creation of new paratextual materials, such as the cover, which were in turn used to create new iterations of the TIS featuring these updated materials. As such, paratextual creation is an iterative process both in terms of the way that various updates and refinements are brought to existing documents and the re-use of existing paratexts to create new materials for different contexts.

Understanding paratextual creation as an iterative process is relevant to the present thesis for two primary reasons. Firstly, the further along the publishing chain that the two novels moved, the greater the distance between the paratextual creators and the original German novels. While Bulloch’s initial presentation of the novels through his reader reports was informed by his knowledge of German-language literature, contemporary German culture, and the reception of the novels in their source context, iterations created by monolingual employees at MacLehose Press were framing the novel based solely on existing paratexts and their knowledge of Anglophone literary culture. Particularly given that paratextual creation processes such as the development of the TIS took place simultaneously to Bulloch’s translation process, then, existing paratexts were the primary basis upon which subsequent production-side paratexts were created. Thus, Gray’s argument that we encounter far more paratexts than texts also applies within textual translation processes (2010).

Secondly, paratextual materials that were consciously crafted to present the source texts to readers also played a role in the creation of English-language paratexts. For instance, review quotes from *Die Zeit* and *Stern Magazin* were included in the TIS for *Look Who’s Back*. As such, iterating upon existing paratexts to create new materials goes beyond production-side processes and extends to the way readers discuss their encounters with a literary text. This, therefore, creates a cycle of paratextual iteration in which an initial encounter with a literary text is framed by paratexts, which were created by someone who had themselves encountered paratexts for the

novel. This cycle can be traced all the way back to the author, who may use short blurb-style pitches and titles to present their writing to the publishing industry. At its very core, then, paratextual creation is always a process of iterative rewriting.

Now that the iterative nature of paratextual creation has been elucidated, as well as Bulloch's position and role in the creation of production-side paratextual materials for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, this chapter will now analyse his visibility within the hardback codices of the two novels and the corresponding webpages from MacLehose Press's website.

Platform 1: The hardback codices

The hardback editions of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were released in 2014 and 2020 respectively. In terms of their exterior elements, the two novels are very similar, with their cover design attributed to Punch Design; typesetting to Patty Rennie, who used the same font, Minion, for both books; and printing to Clays Ltd. Both codices come without dust jackets and feature exclusively black, white and red design schemes. As such, design elements such as the images from the front cover and the text on the rear cover are printed directly onto the exterior of the codex, thereby making them inseparable from the rest of the book. The paratextual materials printed on the exterior of the codices fall into the same broad categories for both literary texts: the front cover, the spine and the rear cover.

However, the paratextual materials that serve as co-texts within the two codices do differ, as demonstrated by the following matrix:

Table 2 – The number of co-texts found in the hardback codices of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*

	Look Who’s Back	The Hungry and the Fat
Front matter		
Half title page	1	1
Full title page	1	2
Copyright page	1	1
Legal disclaimer (separate from copyright page)	1	
“Other works by” page		1
Epigraph		2
Link to translator’s note in back matter	1	
Back matter		
Translator’s note	1	
Biographical information on the author, Vermes	1	1
Biographical information on the translator, Bulloch	1	1
Page featuring quotes from reviews of other work by same author		2

As such, while the hardback editions of the two texts present generally similar constellations of paratextual materials, particularly in terms of their exterior elements, several divergences can be seen within the interior elements of the codices. As I will show, the difference in composition

between the two constellations may result in translator Bulloch's position also diverging therein.

Affordances of the platform

As indicated within the dual focus above, one of the primary affordances of the hardback codex as a platform is the divide between exterior and interior elements. In practical terms, the glossy coating and thickness of the codex's cover protect the materials within, whilst the materials printed on the exterior serve to provide information on the literary text that may relate to, amongst other aspects, its content, style, form or commercial value. Given the exterior element's spatial positioning as the representation of the literary text to the outside world, exterior elements typically feature graphical elements such as the use of colour and image. The non-verbal semiotic resources are, therefore, typically used to appeal visually to potential readers and attract them into committing to an encounter with the literary text. Inside the codex, however, the range of semiotic resources available to paratextual creators decreases as the use of imagery and colour becomes more limited and linguistic modes take priority. This, therefore, raises an interesting question in terms of whether the position and role of the translator differ between the exterior, more appellative focussed paratexts and the more verbal-focussed interior paratexts of the hardback codex.

The distinction between the exterior and interior elements of the codex also impacts upon the trajectories that readers are likely to take through this paratextual constellation. For instance, the existence of both exterior elements that are passively available to any individual who interacts with the codex and interior elements that individuals must actively turn to enforces both a spatial and temporal trajectory that readers must take when interacting with the platform. However, whilst the general trajectory of exterior to interior remains set, the location at which a codex will be opened is not. Consequently, the frequency with which exterior and interior elements will be encountered has the potential to differ greatly, as the exterior elements must almost always, in some capacity, be encountered every time the codex is interacted with. Conversely, individual pages within the codex

may only be encountered once or remain ignored, and so unread, altogether. As such, whilst all the interior and exterior materials found within the codex serve as co-texts in the physical form of the codex as literary product, a hierarchy can be expected in terms of the frequency with which readers engaging with the hardback codex will encounter the paratexts found on the exterior and interior of the book. As such, the locations at which the translator is presented as a given position must also be considered, though any attempts to add a particular value to this must be approached with caution given that individual user's trajectories through the paratextual space cannot be guaranteed.

The participant translator

Within the paratextual materials that comprise the hardback edition of *Look Who's Back*, translator Jamie Bulloch is only positioned as a participant translator in one paratext: the translator's note. The title of this nine-page paratextual item is "Translator's Note" (Vermes, 2014a, 367), with Bulloch then signing his name to the text on the final page (375). As such, this paratext is bookended by explicit references both to Bulloch's translation of the literary text and to him as a specific, personified figure. Notably, however, within the content of the translator's note, Bulloch makes little to no reference to his work, the process of translation or any specific translation decisions that he made during the process. Rather, Bulloch implies that the novel is a translation by emphasising the universality of the novel's themes and satire despite its German origins: "The rapid progress of globalisation over the past two decades means that most of the material in the novel will resonate with audiences in all western societies rather than just in Germany" (367). Rather, the primary purpose of the note is to provide a "brief résumé" of the cultural and historical references found within for "those readers who feel they may have missed" them (367). Consequently, where he is positioned as a participant translator, Bulloch creates a paratextual intervention that continues to facilitate the cultural transfer of the novel between its original German context and the receiving British culture, rather

than using this paratextual space as a platform to promote, celebrate or discuss his own work and status as the translator of the text.

In contrast, there are no instances in which Bulloch is positioned as a participant translator within the hardback codex of *The Hungry and the Fat*.

The represented translator

The positioning of Bulloch as a represented translator occurs more frequently within both *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. In both cases, the rear covers of the hardback editions feature the text "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" (shown in Figure 5 and Figure 6). Here, through the statement of his name, Bulloch is positioned as a personified, represented translator, and his translatorship is made explicit through the verbal description of his involvement in the creation of the English-language text. The positioning of Bulloch as a represented translator continues in several locations within both hardback editions. Firstly, on the full-title pages, "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" (see top left and top right in Figure 4) is printed alongside the two novels' author, titles and publisher. Whilst this page occurs once within *Look Who's Back*, there are two identical versions of this full-title page within the front matter of *The Hungry and the Fat*. Secondly, the copyright pages of the two codices feature the legal text "Jamie Bulloch asserts his moral right to be identified as the translator of the work." (see middle left and middle right in Figure 4). Finally, a short biographical note on Bulloch can be found within the back matter of both hardback editions (see bottom left and bottom right Figure 4) in which other authors translated by Bulloch are listed and, in the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, the fact that Bulloch's translation of *The Mussel Feast* won the British *Schlegel Tieck Prize* is also included. In all three cases, Bulloch is positioned as a represented translator both in terms of his individual identity and his role within the creation of the literary text.

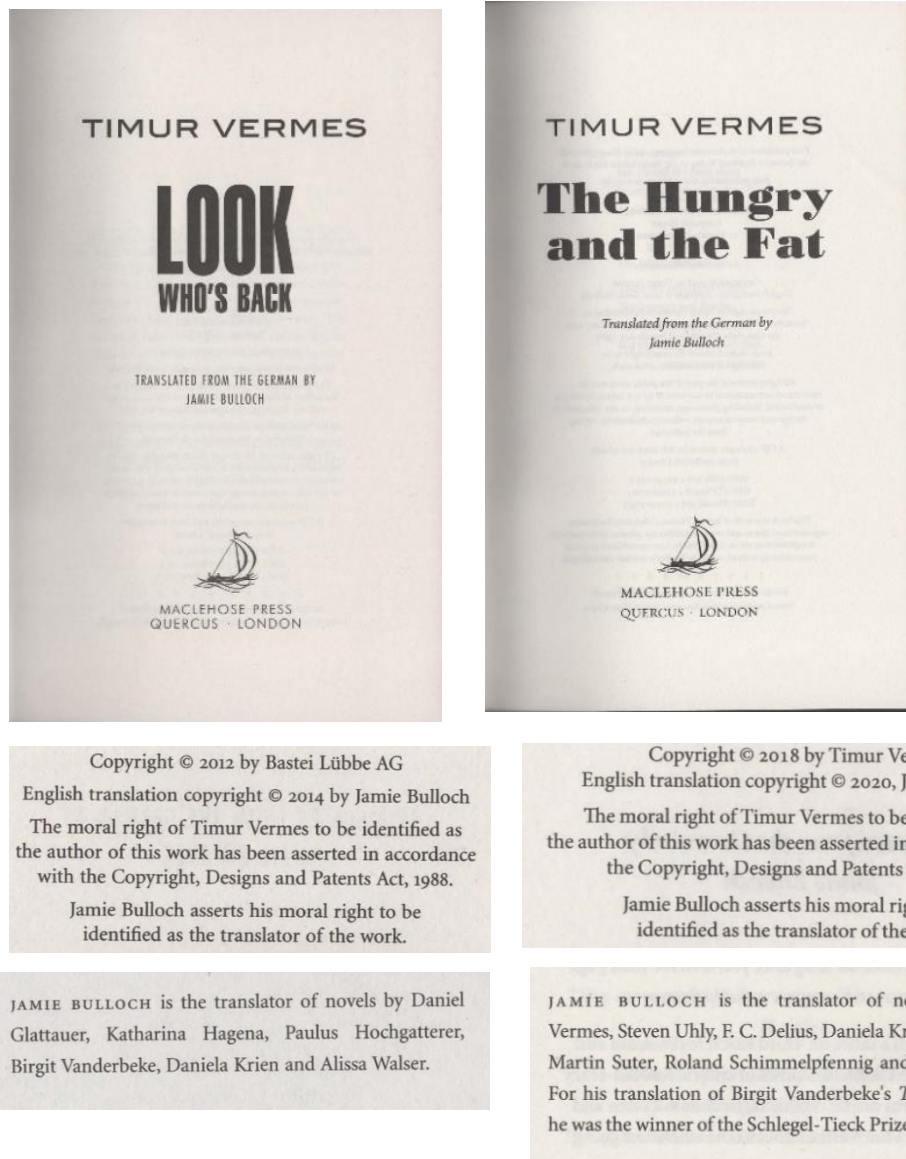


Figure 4 – Top left: Full-title page of *Look Who’s Back*. Top right: Full-title page of *The Hungry and the Fat*. Middle left: Copyright page of *Look Who’s Back*. Middle right: Copyright page of *The Hungry and the Fat*. Bottom left: Biography of Jamie Bulloch in *Look Who’s Back*. Bottom right: Biography of Jamie Bulloch in *The Hungry and the Fat*.

The implied translator

Paratextual allusions to the presence of a translator in *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* come either in the form of references to the novels’ German-centric narratives, and so the foreignness within the translated text, or the texts’ reception in their original German cultural context. In the case of

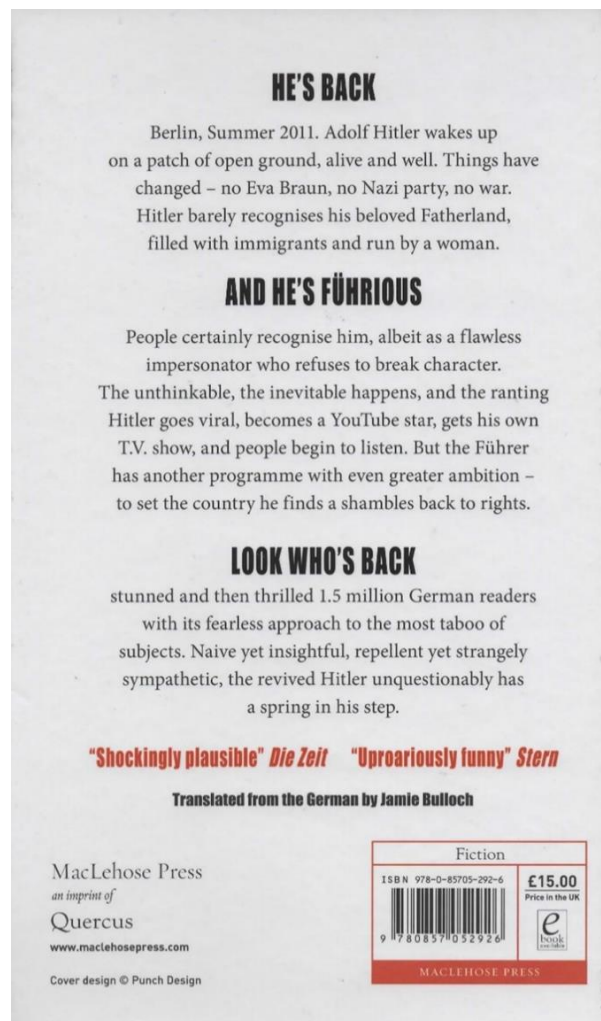
Look Who's Back, instances of both can be seen on the rear cover of the codex. For example, the blurb includes two uses of the German word "Führer". In one, the term is used as a proper noun to denote Hitler, whilst the second seeks to create multilingual humour through the pun "HE'S BACK AND HE'S FÜHRIOUS". By including this Germlish word play within the blurb of the translated text, the novel is situated linguistically between German and English, and readers are themselves invited to translate the linguistic meaning and cultural significance of this term. In doing so, the blurb indicates the novel's position between two cultural and linguistic contexts whilst also demonstrating to readers that the cultural mediation and transfer that occurs during the translation process may similarly be required to understand the content of the novel.

Furthermore, the blurb makes vague references that require some knowledge of modern German culture and history to be understood, such as the description of Germany as "run by a woman".²⁸ As such, the novel places an expected level of knowledge about a foreign culture on English-language readers that was not required by German readers who found their own, domestic culture represented in the novel. Indeed, the general appeal and relevance of the text to German audiences is made explicit in the final paragraph of the blurb, which states that "LOOK WHO'S BACK stunned and then thrilled 1.5 million German readers". The large number of German readers referred to here demonstrates the popularity of the novel within its original context and communicates the fact that the novel was not originally published in English, thereby implying that the novel is a translation. Moreover, the commercial success of the novel with the German public is then supported by two translated quotes from German newspaper reviews:

²⁸ Of course, Great Britain was also "run by a woman" between 2016 and 2019 when Theresa May was Prime Minister. However, in the context of the hardback codex, which was released in 2014 and superseded by the paperback in 2015, this reference points more uniquely to the novel's German setting — particularly given the extensive length of Angela Merkel's tenure as Chancellor, which began in 2005 and concluded in 2021.

“‘Shockingly plausible’ *Die Zeit*” and “‘Uproariously funny’ *Stern*”. These quotes are given in English despite their German origins, implying the presence of a translator without explicitly acknowledging this process. As such, references to the foreignness of the translated text within the paratextual materials found on the rear cover of *Look Who’s Back* imply both the presence of a cultural mediator, the translator, within the literary text and the fact that the novel is a translation.

Figure 5 – The rear cover of *Look Who’s Back*



Within the blurb of *The Hungry and the Fat*, references to the foreignness of the novel’s content, context and authorship similarly imply that the text is a translation. For instance, one of the main characters from the novel, Nadeche Hackenbusch, is named within the second paragraph of the blurb. Both the character’s first- and last-names are noticeably non-Anglophone. Of course, the name Hackenbusch may elicit connections between the novel

and Dr Hugo Hackenbush from the Marx brothers' film *A Day at the Races* (1937). At the same time, the Germanic spelling of the name, using "sch" rather than the English "sh", invokes the foreignness of the text and points towards a German setting. This is then made more explicit in the following sentence, which refers specifically to "the far right in Germany" and thereby links the narrative of the novel to a German setting.



Figure 6 – The rear cover of *The Hungry and the Fat*

Notably, however, references to German author Timur Vermes present him not in terms of his nationality but of his Europeanness: "A devastating, close-to-the-knuckle satire about the haves and have-nots in our divided world, **by one of Europe's** finest and most perceptive writers" (my emphasis). Given the context within which the translation was published in Britain, within a week of the day that Britain left the European Union, references to the novel's European context and authorship politically other the novel in a

different way from references to Vermes' German nationality.²⁹

Nevertheless, in presenting the novel's author as the European Other, rather than an Anglophone writer, the blurb continues to imply the presence of a translator.

Several further allusions to the presence of a translator can be found within the codex of *The Hungry and the Fat*. For example, the verso of the second full-title page features the text "Also by Timur Vermes in English translation *Look Who's Back* (2014)". Here, despite Bulloch being the translator of both novels, he is not represented as the translator of either. Instead, the fact that another novel by the same author, *Look Who's Back*, is described as an English-language translation implies that *The Hungry and the Fat* is also a translated novel. When we couple this text with other paratextual materials found within the codex of *The Hungry and the Fat*, such as the press quotes pertaining to *Look Who's Back* found in the back matter; the sentence "By the author of *Look Who's Back*" on the rear cover; and the "BY THE AUTHOR OF" sticker on the front cover of the codex, the relationship between the two texts is further highlighted and the status of *The Hungry and the Fat* as a translation is similarly implied. Finally, the epigraph page features two quotes, one from Woody Allen and one from Heinrich Heine. In the case of the latter, the title of the poem from which the quote is taken, *Die Wanderratten*, is given in German without translation, whilst the stanza of poetry that follows is given in English. As such, the presence of a translator is implied through the inclusion of both languages without clarification of whether this quote was translated by Bulloch or another individual.

The absent translator

On the front covers and spines of both *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, there are no references to Jamie Bulloch as an individual, the

²⁹ Remain-voters in Britain may, for instance, feel forcefully disconnected from this European context due to Britain's exit from the EU, whilst Leave voters may revel in the European becoming a political other.

presence of a translator in the creation of the English-language texts, or the fact that the novels were originally written in German. Both front covers feature the name of the author and the titles of the novels, whilst the spines also feature the name and logo of publisher MacLehose Press (see Figure 7 and Figure 8. In the case of *Look Who's Back*, a single line of text describes the book as "A merciless satire"; whilst *The Hungry and the Fat* is described as "A novel". The primary difference between the content of the two covers is that *The Hungry and the Fat* features a roundel highlighting that the novel is by the same author as *Look Who's Back*. Notably, the dominant presence of *Look Who's Back's* cover in the roundel and absence of Verme's name mirrors Bielenberg's observation during interview that the cover was "the most memorable thing about the book", rather than the title or the author's name. However, in terms of Bulloch's visibility in the cover of *The Hungry and the Fat*, Bulloch continues to be absent from this space despite the link back to his previous translation of Verme's debut novel. As such, the book is presented as a "covert" translation (House, 1981).

There are several other paratextual items within the two hardback codices in which Bulloch is absent. Firstly, in the British publishing industry, the half-title page of a novel typically only displays the title of the book, and in the case of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* this is the case. Secondly, within the front matter of *Look Who's Back* comes a page featuring a disclaimer that the events within the novel are "fictitious" and text that advises the reader that a "narrative glossary" exists at the rear of the book for readers "who would welcome explanation of some of the characters and terms referred to in this novel." Even though the paratextual material actually bears the title "Translator's note" (367), the use of the term "narrative glossary" here omits any reference to Bulloch, his status as the note's author or his translatorship. As such, Bulloch is positioned as an absent translator within this paratext. Finally, the back matter for *The Hungry and the Fat* includes two pages of review quotes for *Look Who's Back*, none of which

make any reference to the text in terms of translation or to Bulloch as the translator of Vermes' first novel.

Figure 7 – Left: Front cover of *Look Who's Back*.



Figure 8 – Right: Front cover of *The Hungry and the Fat*.

Discussion

In terms of Bulloch's visibility within the codices of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, then, there are several noteworthy points. Firstly, the only instance where Bulloch is positioned as a participant in the paratextual space is within the "Translator's Note" included in the backmatter of *Look Who's Back*. In the inclusion of the note, however, Bulloch's translatorship is clearly differentiated from that of the author, as it is Bulloch's position as an expert interface between the source text and the target audience in the receiving culture that is encountered by readers within this space. By participating in the paratextual space, then, Bulloch the translator is differentiated from the figure of the author and the act of writing, as there is no "author's note" in either the source text or the translation. Rather, the sole expression of Vermes' authorial voice comes through Bulloch's translation of the literary text, whilst Bulloch's additional narrative glossary intervenes to

explain “some of the characters and terms referred to in this novel” that he and publisher MacLehose Press assumed would be unfamiliar to Anglophone readers.

The use of this assumption as the basis for the inclusion of the narrative-glossary-cum-translator’s-note is interesting as it presupposes German readers would need no such glossary to understand the historical references throughout *Er ist wieder da*. However, it cannot be guaranteed that German readers, with whom the novel was extremely popular, would be familiar with many of the historical figures to whom the narrating Hitler refers. Indeed, given the novel’s narrative focus on the question of how the historical figure of Hitler would respond to 21st-century Germany, the inclusion of references to obscure historical figures emphasises that the narrator has awoken as if nothing has changed since 1945. Consequently, explanation of the narrator’s historical references reframes the novel’s satirising of modern media and Hitler’s continued ubiquity as a figure in contemporary German pop-culture through a more historically focussed lens. In English translation, Bulloch’s note deems the details of all the narrator’s (i.e. Hitler’s) references pertinent to a reader’s understanding and enjoyment of the translated text. In doing so, Bulloch’s visibility as a participant translator can be understood as drawing the reader closer to the narrator Hitler by eliminating some of the disconnect between his frame of reference and the reader’s. This then distances the reader from the other characters in the novel who undergo the same experience of being confronted by the historical Adolf Hitler in a contemporary context. Thus, Bulloch’s “narrative glossary” demonstrates the ways in which the interpretation of those involved in moving a literary text between languages, such as a translator and publisher, can intervene in and subsequently reframe the translated novel for readers in a new language or cultural context.

Elsewhere in the codices, however, Bulloch’s visibility comes through representations of his work or implications that the novel is a translation, thereby focussing on the act of translation and the foreignness of the target text rather on Bulloch as a figure. Examples of this can be seen in the inclusion of “Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch” on the rear covers and title pages of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*; the

legal statement that “Jamie Bulloch asserts his moral right to be identified as the translator of the work” on the two novels’ copyright pages; and references either to the novels’ original reception in Germany or Vermes’ credentials as a writer who has been translated widely across Europe. Given that the elements within the codices where these paratextual references to Bulloch can be found, such as the frontmatter, were developed by various personnel from the publishing house (including the editor, the marketing team and the publicity team), this demonstrates that, in this instance, the publisher is more likely to make the act of translation visible than the translator themselves.

The one instance where representations of Bulloch go beyond this attribution of the translation process to him is within the biographical notes, where in both codices several other authors translated by Bulloch are listed and, in the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, as is the fact that Bulloch won the 2014 Schlegel-Tieck Prize for his translation of *The Mussel Feast* (The Society of Authors, c2019). Despite providing more personal details regarding Bulloch’s professional career than the brief sentence “Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch”, these biographical notes similarly focus solely on Bulloch’s professional role and the act of translation. This contrasts to the details found in Vermes’ biographical note within both novels, which include his place of birth, his mother’s German heritage and the fact that his father fled Hungary in 1956. Within the paratextual space of the codices, then, we can see the differences between authorship and translatorship, with the biography of an author deemed relevant to the literary texts that they write. By contrast, the life experiences and views of the translator remain irrelevant as they simply perform a professional, rather than an artistic or creative, service: the act of translation. As with the translator’s note, then, Bulloch’s translatorship is differentiated from Vermes’ authorship through a focus on the act of translation. Yet, even when made visible, the figure of the translator is depersonalised and discussed solely in terms of professional activities. What is interesting here, however, is that Bulloch noted during interview that he wrote his own short biography for the end matter of both novels. As such, while Bulloch played a role in the creation of this paratextual material, the fact that he is not credited with authorship and is

described in third person means that he is positioned as a represented translator for readers encountering the codex. Thus, Bulloch is responsible for framing his work through a purely professional lens resulting, in Venuti's terms, in a "a weird self-annihilation" from the paratextual space (1995/2018, 8).

By making the figure of the translator visible whilst depersonalising Bulloch through a focus on his professional achievements, *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* are still largely presented as translations with "the status of an original source text in the target culture", or "covert" translations in House's terms (1981). These continue to produce "the illusion of authorial presence" (Venuti, 1995/2018, 6), even though Bulloch's translatorship is made visible paratextually. This illusion is achieved by describing Bulloch solely in terms of his professional work and removing that work from any personal context surrounding Bulloch's background outside of translation, whilst simultaneously foregrounding Vermes' authorship and the relevance of his personal experiences to the literary text. This can be seen paratextually in Bulloch's absence from the two primary exterior areas of the codices, the front cover and spine, which are used to display the books and attract readers in retail environments. In both cases, Bulloch as a personified translator and the abstract figure of the translator are absent from spaces that typically serve as the first point of contact between a reader and a codex, whilst Vermes' name is given in large, red letters at the top of both.

Bielenberg noted during interview that the translator's absence from front covers is MacLehose Press policy, as the public profile and status of most literary translators would not help sell a book as much as the inclusion of a press quote or prize roundel on the cover. In case of Vermes' two novels, the hardback codex of *The Hungry and the Fat* features a roundel stating, "BY THE AUTHOR OF" and an image of the cover of *Look Who's Back*, while the latter hardback features just the text "A MERCILESS SATIRE" (see Figure 7 and Figure 8). For *The Hungry and the Fat*, then, Vermes' authorship of the commercially successful *Look Who's Back* is leveraged whilst for the latter, no additional quotes or details were given, despite the inclusion of favourable quotes from German outlets being featured in the title information sheet discussed earlier in the chapter. What we can see within

the codices, then, is that the visibility either afforded to or achieved by Bulloch within these paratextual spaces primarily presents translation as a depersonalised professional role undertaken within the publishing process. Even when participating in paratextual creation, Bulloch prioritised the commercial viability of the novel over discussions of his own processes and experiences, thereby cementing his role as a professional interface between the source text and target text readers. As such, Bulloch's visibility as the translator of these two novels within the hardback codices fails both to challenge the "individualistic concept of authorship that has banished translation to the fringes of Anglo-American culture" and to indicate that the author is not the "sole origin" of the language of translation (Venuti, 1995/2018, 311), as Vermes' authorship still dominates these paratextual spaces, even when Bulloch participates by creating a translator note, and the act of translation is represented as a sole and professional act devoid of any wider context.

Platform 2: The publisher's website

The publisher of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, MacLehose Press, hosts its own institutional website at the address <https://www.maclehosepress.com>. As an imprint of Quercus Books (which is itself a publishing division of Hachette UK), the overall layout and structure of the MacLehose Press website follows a group-wide style. Content found on the website is entered through a system that is similarly used across Hachette UK, Biblio3. Where the MacLehose page differs from others within the Quercus division of Hachette publishing is in its styling. MacLehose uses a black and white colour scheme and a serif font, both of which are unique within the group's websites.

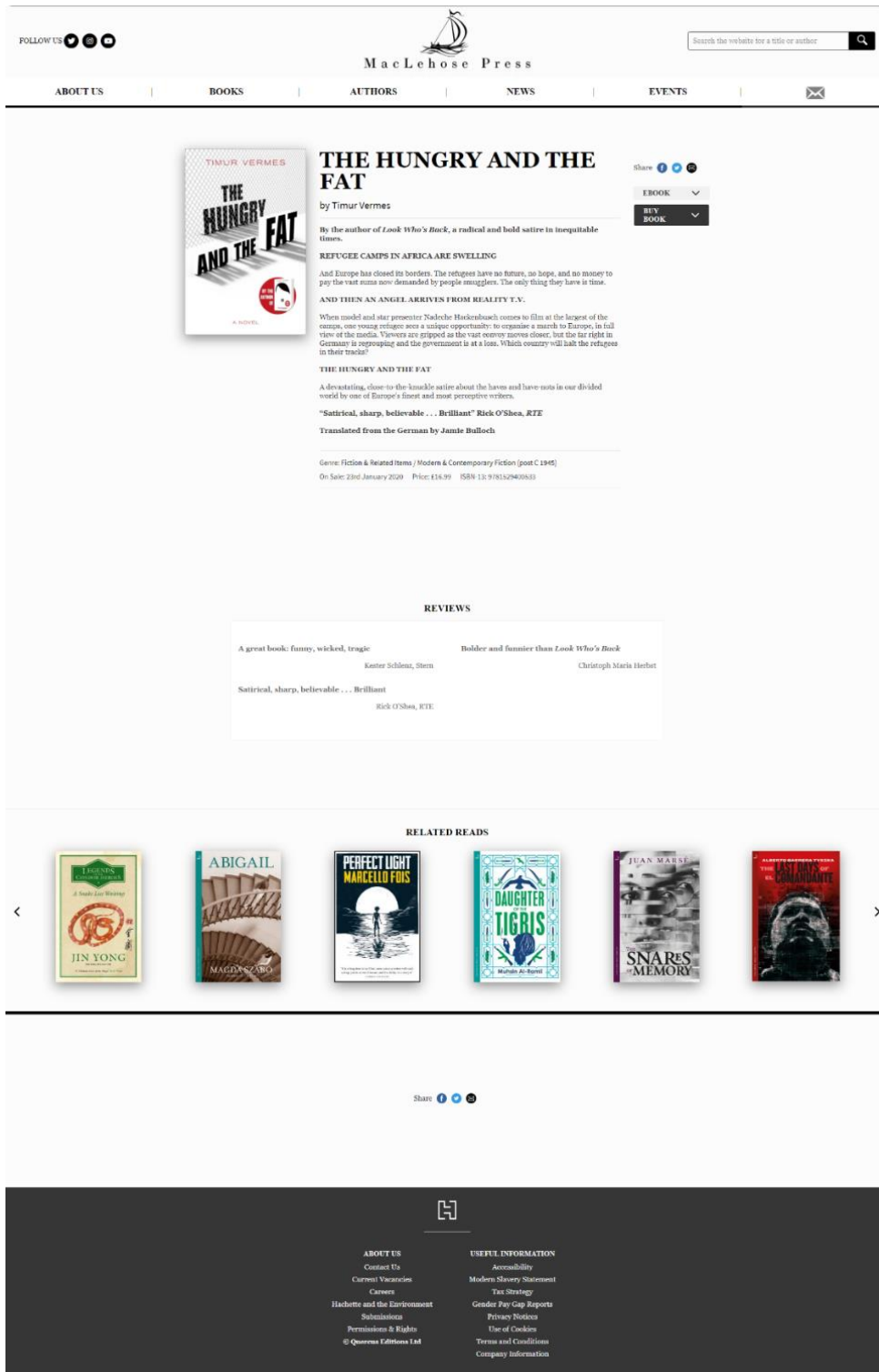


Figure 9 – A sample webpage from the MacLehose website demonstrating the structure of MacLehose Press’s website and the tripartite page structure: specifically, the webpage for The Hungry and the Fat from 23 January 2020

In terms of the content found on book-specific pages within the MacLehose website, the page is divided into three primary blocks of content: 1) the

descriptive top section that comprises an image of the book's cover, bibliographic details (such as the title, author, release date, price and ISBN) and a longer blurb-style text describing the content of the book; 2) the tabular reviews section, in which quotes from reviews of the book are presented in two columns; and 3) the related reads section, which presents the covers of six other books published by MacLehose to the user at any one time. Finally, links to share the page on Facebook, on Twitter and via email are given just above the website footer.

The versions of the MacLehose webpages for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* used within the forthcoming analysis were published as of 23 January 2020, the release date of *The Hungry and the Fat*. The two pages as they were published on this date have been archived using the WayBack Machine and remain available there for further analysis and comparison (MacLehose Press 2020d and 2020e). The significance of the version of a given webpage is discussed further in the next section.

Nevertheless, it should be noted here that, in the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, the release-day version of the webpage was chosen for the same reasons as the first, hardback edition of the book. However, *Look Who's Back* was first published in English in 2014 and no publicly accessible archive of the page from this date is available. As such, a version of the *Look Who's Back* page of the MacLehose Press website from 23 January 2020, the release day of *The Hungry and the Fat*, will also be used to create internal consistency between the two webpages and to analyse the translator's visibility at a given point in time, thereby allowing this chapter to reflect on the impact that digital impermanence and fluidity have on the translator's visibility.

Affordances of the platform

As a digital platform, the primary affordances to be considered within the present analysis are the semiotic resources available within this online, digital space; the trajectory a site user will take through this space; and the impermanence of the content found. In the case of the semiotic resources available on this platform, its digital nature allows the use of several semiotic

resources unavailable to paratextual creators in the non-digital space. For instance, the digital space is not limited by the snapshot-like permanence of non-digital, print-based media. Consequently, movement-based visual modalities, such as video, or aural modalities, recorded voice or music for example, can be used alongside written, verbal modalities or still images. As such, the digital space offers a wider pool of semiotic resources to creators when choosing how to make meanings. However, as MacLehose Press's website is propagated by the largely verbal content entered into the Biblio3 system, little use is made of these affordances and opportunities.

Secondly, webpages present a specific trajectory through which content is made available to users and interacted with. When users load a webpage from the host server, the entire page is loaded and made available to users simultaneously. However, typically users are not able to view all this content at once due to the impact this would have on size and legibility.

Consequently, depending on the device being used and the display settings thereof, including screen size and resolution, only a certain amount of content will be visible at any given time.³⁰ By default, when webpages are loaded in a web browser, they show users the content found at the top of the page first. Users must then scroll downwards through the content. Thus, even though the entire page is loaded simultaneously, users still move downwards through the digital space and the volume of content made available to them at any given time depends entirely on their own unique display settings and device configurations. Given the infinite possibilities this affordance therefore generates, the general downward trajectory necessitated by digital textuality will be used to contextualise the structure of the webpages within the present analysis. However, as paratextual spaces, the pages will be discussed as singular whole documents, with no attention

³⁰ Of course, the device one accesses the site through will also affect the way pages are displayed. In terms of the forthcoming analysis, all pages were accessed through a computer.

paid here to other linked pages that are instead considered their own unique documents.

Finally, digital spaces such as the MacLehose Press website present a challenge to researchers not found when analysing materials such as hardback books: their impermanence. Whilst digital platforms such as blogs or social media may make metadata pertaining to the time and date that content was posted visible to site users, the MacLehose website does not make this content available on the surface. As such, not only is the original publication date of a webpage or specific content within that page unavailable to site visitors, so too is the site's version history and the relevant changes made within. Of course, some of this data can be found when viewing the source code of a given webpage. For instance, within the source for *The Hungry and the Fat* page on MacLehose Press's website, the following lines of code are listed:

```
<meta property="article:published_time" content="2019-01-17T20:48:56+00:00" />  
<meta property="article:modified_time" content="2021-11-02T17:38:01+00:00" />
```

Here, the metadata for the page shows that whilst it was first published in January 2019, changes have since been made, with the last being in November 2021. This is, however, the limit of the publicly available information pertaining to the version history of the webpage and so details on what changes were made when within these two dates is unavailable. Furthermore, unless a page is publicly archived within a system such as the WayBack Machine (a service hosted by the Internet Archive, 2019), updates to a webpage supersede the previous version and render it unavailable to later users. As such, where the printing of a given edition of a text provides a permanent version of the text to be read, circulated and analysed, this level of standardisation in terms of the version of a text that a given reader will encounter at any one time is not possible within this digital space. Consequently, from a research perspective, the strategic, prior identification of a specific page version to be analysed is required to ensure that both researcher and reader can access the version of a webpage used within a

given research context. Furthermore, with regard to translator visibility, this impermanence undermines the notion of translator visibility as a stable or fixed state and demonstrates the potential fluidity and ephemerality of the position of the translator within digital paratextual spaces.

The participant translator

Within the paratextual constellations that comprise the pages on MacLehose Press's website for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, none of the content is authorially attributed to Bulloch. Indeed, neither the personified figure of Jamie Bulloch as an individual nor the abstract figure of the translator are explicitly named as paratextual creators. As such, there are no locations within either page where Bulloch is positioned as a participant translator.

The represented translator

On the web page for *The Hungry and the Fat*, much of the verbal content is identical to that found on the rear cover of the hardback book. As such, where the text "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" can be found at the bottom of the blurb in a bold typeface, the same text can be found at the bottom of the blurb section found on the MacLehose website — also in bold. Consequently, both the personified figure of Bulloch and the fact that he translated the novel are represented in the same way across the rear cover of the hardback book and the webpage for *The Hungry and the Fat* on the publisher's website.

Notably, however, the same cannot be said for *Look Who's Back*. Even though there is great deal of overlap between the content found on the rear cover of the hardback book and the webpage for the novel on MacLehose Press's website, as was the case for *The Hungry and the Fat*, the text "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" is, in this case, absent. Consequently, there are no representations of the personified Bulloch or the abstract figure of the translator within the materials found on the webpage for *Look Who's Back*.

The implied translator

Given that much of the verbal content found on the webpages for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* overlaps with the materials found on the rear covers of the hardback editions, many of the allusions to Bulloch and his translatorship can be found in this digital space. In the case of *Look Who's Back*, while the pun based around the German word *Führer* is missing from MacLehose Press's website, the other references to the text's German origins remain, including: the naming of Berlin as the novel's geographical setting; describing Germany as "filled with immigrants and run by a woman"; referring to Hitler using the German term "Führer"; and the fact that the novel "stunned and then thrilled 1.5 million German readers".

These allusions to the novel's German origins, and so the involvement of a translator in the publication of the English-language text, are supplemented by two elements not found on the first hardback edition.³¹ The first is a reference to the commercial success of a filmic adaptation with German audiences, "Film a box-office hit in Germany". Here, the reference to the success of the film within its original German context implies that the English novel is a translation in the same way as stating that the novel "stunned and then thrilled 1.5 Million German readers" in the blurb. The second allusion can be found within the genre categories assigned to the novel by MacLehose Press. Underneath the long-form blurb text on the website, three genre descriptions are given for the novel, including "Fiction In Translation". Thus, by referring to the novel as "in translation", the webpage adds an additional inference of the presence of a translator within *Look Who's Back*.

In the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, the blurb found on the hardback edition of the novel similarly mirrors the content of the webpage. As such, the situating of the novel within a European context and by a European

³¹ This stems from the details being added after the hardback codex was published and shows the fluidity of the digital paratextual space in comparison to the non-digital codex.

author continues to other the text and implies the presence of a translator. Furthermore, where press quotes from German-language institutions were used on the hardback edition of *Look Who's Back*, similar examples can also be found in the reviews section of the webpage for *The Hungry and the Fat*. Here, quotes from Kester Schelnz, writing for the weekly German news magazine *Stern*, and actor Christoph Maria Herbst, who read the German audiobook of *Look Who's Back* and is known in Germany for his portrayal of the Hitler-esque office manager in the sitcom *Stromberg*, imply the Germanness of the original novel and that the English-language text is not the original.

The absent translator

The primary images used on the webpages for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* are the front covers of the two novels. In both cases, the covers are reproduced alongside the blurb-like product descriptions at the top of the pages. In the case of *Look Who's Back*, the image features the cover of a later paperback edition in which the words "A MERCILESS SATIRE" at the bottom of the cover are replaced with a quote from *The Independent's* Rebecca Morrison: "Be warned. This book is funny. Very funny." And a red roundel featuring the text "NOW A MAJOR FILM" has been added to the lower-right section of the design. The cover image used for *The Hungry and the Fat* is identical to that used on the hardback edition. In both cases, and despite the use of an updated cover for *Look Who's Back*, both the personified figure of Jamie Bulloch and the abstract figure of the translator are absent from these cover designs. Thus, they remain absent within the images used on the webpages.

Furthermore, the webpages feature a heading and subheading in which the title and author of the book are given above the verbal, blurb-like content. In both cases, the titles are followed simply by the text "by Timur Vermes". As seen on the covers and spine of the two novels, Bulloch and his translatorship are absent within this paratextual space. This differs from the title information sheets generated by for the novels in which Bulloch was named as the translator directly beneath Vermes' name at the top of the

documents. In the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, the absence of Bulloch in references to the text's authorship can also be seen at the top of the blurb where the novel is described as "By the author of *Look Who's Back*". Further examples of the absence of the translator in this paratextual space can be found in the genre descriptions of *The Hungry and the Fat*, which refer to the text only in terms of it being "fiction"/"modern and contemporary fiction", and the reviews on the page for *Look Who's Back*, which make no reference to the novel in terms of translation or its original German context.

Discussion

The most obvious difference between Bulloch's visibility within the webpages for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* on the website of publisher MacLehose Press is that there are no instances of Bulloch being positioned as a participant translator in the digital space. This stems from the fact that, as with the codices, the text used to generate these paratextual materials is pulled from the publisher's Biblio3 system. Thus, Bulloch's positioning as either a represented, implied or absent translator within the verbal paratexts found in the codices that were propagated through Biblio3 is mirrored within this digital space.³² Consequently, Bulloch is similarly not positioned as a participant translator within any digital spaces whose content is also populated from the Biblio3 system, including the websites of retailers such as Waterstones, unless those sites allow for the creation of platform-specific content, as will be discussed in relation to Amazon in Chapter 5. Rather than assuming a role in paratextual creation that outweighs that of the author through the penning of a translator's note, then, neither the translator nor the author are positioned as participating in the paratextual space on MacLehose Press's website.

³² The translator's note for *Look Who's Back*, where Bulloch was positioned as a participant, was not managed through the Biblio3 system.

There are, however, a few notable differences between the content found within the codices and on the publisher's website. Firstly, while the text "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" could be seen at the bottom of blurb text found on the webpage for *The Hungry and the Fat*, which mirrors its position on the rear cover of the codex, this line was missing from the page for *Look Who's Back*, despite its inclusion on the rear cover of the hardback codex. This omission can be traced back to the TIS, where the text is missing from the "Description" section of the *Look Who's Back* sheet but is present for *The Hungry and the Fat*. The absence of this text on webpages for *Look Who's Back* can also be seen on other sites that pull product description details from Biblio3 (such as Waterstones, c2017 and Amazon, c2020).³³ This indicates that this text was missing from *Look Who's Back* within Biblio3 and was added to the cover during its design. This is noteworthy because the version of the webpage analysed above is from 23 January 2020, some six years after the release of *Look Who's Back* in English. Thus, this representation of Bulloch's translatorship was absent long after the novel was released and so, for site visitors interested in *Look Who's Back*, Bulloch was not positioned as a participant or a represented translator on the publisher's webpage for the novel at all — thereby framing the translation as original English-language novel written by Vermes.³⁴

Secondly, the webpages for both novels feature specific spaces for additional content not found within the codices, namely key notes/sales points and reviews. In the case of *Look Who's Back*, these include references to the commercial success of the novel and its filmic adaptation; the availability of the filmic adaptation on the Netflix streaming platform; and

³³ Only the paperback edition of *Look Who's Back* was available through Waterstones when this page was archived as the hardback was only produced for the novel's first year in print. All subsequent reprints have been in paperback.

³⁴ This text has subsequently been added (as can be seen on a subsequent archive of the page from 7 January 2021 [Amazon.co.uk, c2021]), which may be the result of this project's engagement with Bielenberg following the release of *The Hungry and the Fat*, such as to arrange the interview.

the existence of a BBC radio dramatization starring actor David Threlfall. Consequently, additions to this paratextual space following the release of the hardback codex frame the novel as a successful English-language text whilst making no additional references to Bulloch or translation. This is mirrored in the review quotes featured on the webpage for *Look Who's Back* and within the backmatter of *The Hungry and the Fat*, which emphasise the novel's humour whilst making no reference to Bulloch's translation or the fact that the novel was originally written in German. As such, the ability to update and edit the digital paratextual space at any point following a novel's release does not, in this case, result in any additional translator visibility. Rather, narratives used to frame the novel under an illusion of transparent originality were recapitulated and amplified.

Conversely, the webpage for *The Hungry and the Fat* analysed above was captured on the novel's release day and so pre-dates the publication of reviews in the press. As such, the English translations of positive quotes from German sources found on the TIS for *The Hungry and the Fat* were used on MacLehose Press's website in lieu of quotes from English-language publications, thereby implying the presence of a translator and the foreign origins of the novel. If we look at previous versions of webpages relating to *Look Who's Back*, quotes from *Die Zeit*, *Stern Magazin* and *n-tv.de* were similarly featured on the novel's Amazon page prior to the hardback's original release (c2014). This therefore indicates that, for publisher MacLehose Press, some quotes are better than none. However, if we turn to subsequent versions of MacLehose Press's webpage for *The Hungry and the Fat*, the German-language quotes have been supplemented with those from English media. Consequently, while the implication of a translator's involvement in a novel's production through the inclusion of foreign-language quotes can be seen, the over-riding or supplementing of these texts with Anglophone reviews results in the dilution of any implied translator visibility. Furthermore, the overwriting of these quotes in the case of *Look Who's Back*, as well as the omission of any quotes from German outlets in the codex of *The Hungry and the Fat*, indicates a preference for endorsements within the receiving culture over the inference of a novel's foreignness through the inclusion of translated press quotes and a preference for the

English-language novel to be paratextually situated within English-language discourse.

Bulloch's visibility in the broader constellation of digital production-side paratexts

Thus far, this chapter has argued that as the novels moved along the publishing value chain and away from Bulloch's role in their acquisition and translation, he was positioned as an increasingly less visible translator by other paratextual creators. This has been demonstrated through an analysis of two publisher-controlled paratextual spaces that are inherently tied to MacLehose Press's content management system, Biblio3. However, production-side paratexts are also created outside of the Biblio3 system for distribution on the other digital platforms that MacLehose Press uses to promote both books. In such cases, Bulloch's role in the production of such paratexts becomes increasingly distant as the marketing and publicity departments of Quercus Books take over. Thus, the question becomes whether the patterns found within the prior analysis of the codices and the publisher's websites are similarly manifest in the born-digital production-side paratexts used to promote the novels on other platforms. As such, I will now consider two specific forms of digital production-side paratexts produced for both books: video trailers posted on popular video sharing site YouTube and promotional images designed for use on the social media platform Twitter.

The choice of these platforms stems from the different affordances they present to the codex and publisher's website studied earlier in this chapter, with the modes of (moving) image and sound taking priority over the verbal content found in the codices and on MacLehose Press' website, and the size of MacLehose Press' audience on the two platforms. On Twitter, for example, the MacLehose Press account (@maclehosepress) has over 11,000 followers (as of November 2021) whilst the Quercus YouTube channel (where MacLehose Press videos are posted) has over 1,200 subscribers. As such, the forthcoming analysis seeks to complement prior analysis of the production-side paratextual space with born-digital materials

that make meaning through more modalities than the largely text-based paratexts studied previously. A qualitative approach will be taken that focuses on Bulloch's presence or absence within both the video and image sources and the accompanying co-texts provided by MacLehose Press.³⁵ As such, user-created data such as comments will not be analysed here given the production-side focus of this chapter.³⁶

The YouTube trailers for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*

Trailers for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were both posted to the Quercus Books YouTube channel in advance of the books' launches.³⁷ In both cases, Bielenberg noted during interview that the two trailers were created for the original German novels, bought by MacLehose Press for use with the English translations and then adapted for a British audience.³⁸ Since being published on YouTube, the trailer for *Look Who's*

³⁵ Other scholars have argued that the relationship between, for example, a YouTube video and its title or description is paratextual in nature (Simonsen, 2014). However, rather than nesting an additional paratextual relationship within the paratextual relationship that exists between a book trailer and the literary text, these elements are here understood as "co-texts" (Adami and Ramos Pinto, 2020, 73-75) that work with the video to create meaning as a unified production-side paratext, rather than as paratexts to a paratext.

³⁶ Though the author would like to acknowledge that such comments can form paratextual relationships to the novels. Thus, their omission from this analysis stems from my current focus on production-side materials rather than any indication that they should not be considered paratextual.

³⁷ The trailer for *Look Who's Back* was posted in November 2013, five months before the English translation's release, while the trailer for *The Hungry and the Fat* was posted three months before release.

³⁸ Bielenberg also noted that book trailers "wouldn't necessarily be made for our books", so particularly in the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, the marketing department needed some persuasion to buy the trailer.

Back has just under 60,000 views and so is the fifth most-viewed video on the Quercus YouTube channel, whilst the trailer for *The Hungry and the Fat* has just over 100 views.³⁹ This pattern of markedly greater user engagement with *Look Who's Back* than *The Hungry and the Fat* will be further evidenced in later chapters but, here, demonstrates that the publisher's position as a paratextual authority does not guarantee users will engage with the paratextual materials that they produce.

The fact that the trailer for *Look Who's Back* is one of the most-viewed on Quercus' YouTube channel is notable because the trailer is almost identical to the original German-language trailer produced by dec3 for *Er ist wieder da* (2015), which constitutes a short animation based on the hairline and moustache design used for the book's cover.⁴⁰ In the version posted to the Quercus Books YouTube channel (2013), Christoph Maria Herbst (who read the German audiobook version of *Er ist wieder da*) voices Hitler in German as he responds to being depicted with different styles of facial hair associated with other historical figures, including Stalin's moustache and Karl Marx's beard (for example, see Figure 10). After finally being given his infamous toothbrush moustache, this block of black then morphs into the title of the original German novel *Er ist wieder da* (see top right Figure 10). The trailer then concludes with a fade transition that replaces the animation firstly with a static digital rendering of the English translation and then MacLehose Press' logo (see bottom left and bottom right Figure 10). What is remarkable here is that no translation of the trailer is provided despite the posting of this video on an English-language publisher's YouTube channel. Rather, the German-language audio remains, and no English-language subtitles are

³⁹ As of November 2021. The viewership for *The Hungry and the Fat* here indicates a marked difference in the novel's reception in the UK to in Germany, with the German-language version on publisher Eichborn Verlag's YouTube channel having circa 20,000 views (as of February 2022; eichbornverlag, 2018).

⁴⁰ The original, German language version can be viewed on the dec3 YouTube channel (2015).

provided. If users click the closed-captioning feature on YouTube to add automatically generated subtitles, these match the language of the audio and so are provided in German, with users then having to click into the settings to select “Auto-translate” and then choose their desired target language. During interview, Bielenberg initially assumed that the trailer had been translated into English before going on to emphasise that the marketing budget for the initial hardback run of *Look Who’s Back* “would have been quite limited” — thereby implying a lack of financial resources prevented the German trailer being translated into English. The popularity of this trailer despite the lack of English-language audio or subtitling is interesting as the combination of Hitler’s voice and image with the comedy of applying various famous moustaches, a trope often seen in films, indicates a level of transnational and translinguistic humour and meaning that transcends the trailer’s foreign language.⁴¹

Consequently, the foreignness of the novel is foregrounded throughout the trailer by presenting the book to Anglophone audiences solely with German audio. Indeed, the inclusion of the German language title and cover design before a dummy graphic of the English translation reinforces this emphasising of the novel’s German origins, thereby implying the act of translation in the English-language book’s production. However, despite this clear presentation of the novel as moving between languages, translatorship is not represented within this video. Although the English-language cover is displayed, as I discussed earlier in this chapter, Bulloch is absent from that paratextual space and so is equally absent from this section of the video. Similarly, Bulloch is absent from the final image of MacLehose Press’s logo and company website address. In this way, the process of translation from German into English is foregrounded in the trailer whilst the agent responsible for this process, either the abstract figure of the translator or the personified Jamie Bulloch, is absent from this space.

⁴¹ Examples of this trope can be seen in *Intouchables* (2011) and its English-language remake *The Upside* (2017).

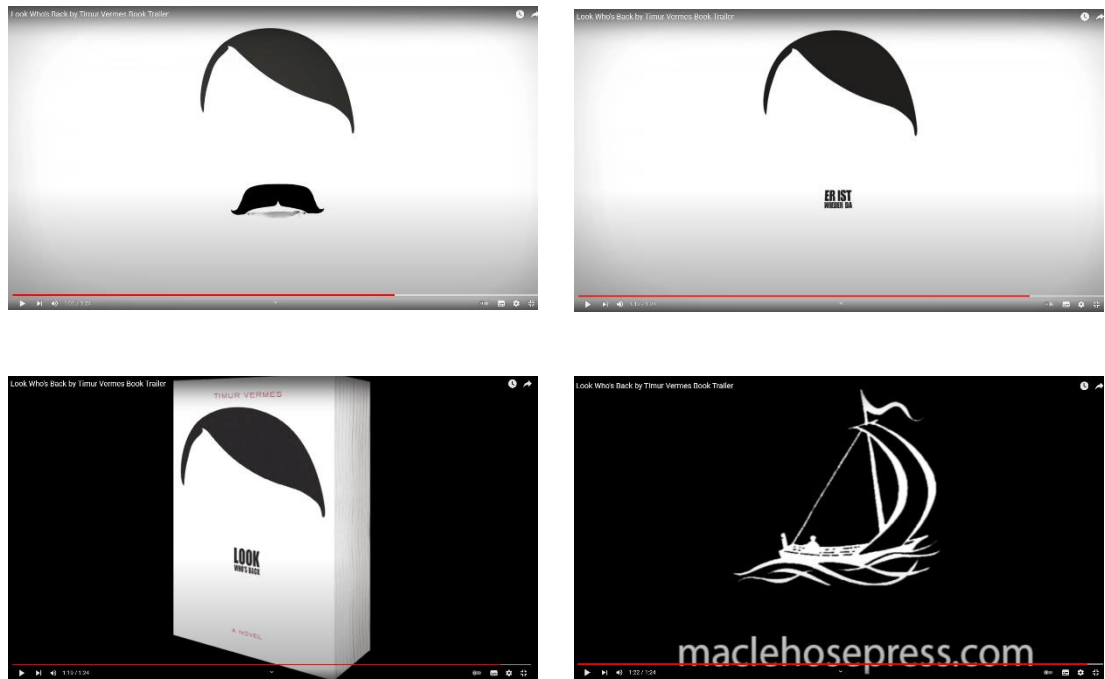


Figure 10 – Screenshots from the video trailer for *Look Who's Back*. Top left is from 1:01, top right from 1:12, bottom left from 1:15 and bottom right from 1:22.

Bulloch is similarly absent from the co-texts that accompany this trailer, which comprise the video's title and description. The video's title, for instance, is given as "Look Who's Back by Timur Vermes Book Trailer", which centres the English translation's authorship on Vermes whilst not referring to Bulloch or the fact that the book is a translation. Similarly, the video description comprises the "Description" section of the title information sheet produced for the novel. Once again, then, the iterative nature of paratextual production results in Bulloch's absence from this space. Consequently, within both the trailer and the accompanying verbal materials, the novel is presented as a literary text by Vermes without any reference to the translator responsible for the English-language version, despite the German audio implying the process of translation in the novel's production. The trailer for *The Hungry and the Fat* (Quercus Books, 2019) differs from that of *Look Who's Back* in that the book is presented to readers in English using in-video text. The trailer is primarily made up of nine animated placards fixed to a metal fence, which sits in front of a sandy desert background. As the camera pans from left to right, short sections of text

appear on the placards describing key elements of the novel's premise, such as "Europe has CLOSED its borders" and "MILLIONS OF REFUGEES are stuck in Africa", accompanied by an abstract, often stick-figure animation relating to the slogan (see Figure 11 below). Interestingly, a comparison between the English and German trailers indicates that the text used on the signs has been translated into English, rather than new text being written for the English trailer. However, no translator is credited with this process and so, despite the role of translation in the creation of this production-side paratext, this process and the individual responsible remain invisible therein. The novel's German origins are only referred to in terms of its German setting: "But with so much TIME on their hands they could WALK all the way to Germany" (0:15) and "How would Germany react?" (0:39). However, the lone fact that the novel is set outside of the UK is not an indication that the book has been translated into English. Thus, Bulloch is absent from the animation that constitutes the main body of this trailer.



Figure 11 – Screenshots from the video trailer for *The Hungry and the Fat*. Left is from 0:02 and right is from 0:07.

As with the *Look Who's Back* trailer, an end card featuring a digital rendering of *The Hungry and the Fat* is displayed once the animation has come to an end. Where this differs from *Look Who's Back* is that additional textual elements are given to the right of the frame, which comprise the novel's name, the author's name, the fact that Vermes was the author of *Look Who's Back*, MacLehose Press' logo and the text "Coming in January 2020" (see Figure 12). Consequently, Bulloch remains absent within this space as

there are no representations of him or the role of a translator in the English-language novel's production, nor are there implications of this role through discussions of translation as a process or the novel's German origins.

Bulloch's absence from this space is then mirrored in the co-texts that accompany this trailer. The video's title for instance, "The Hungry & The Fat by Timur Vermes - Coming January 2020", presents the novel as an original English text by Vermes whilst making no reference to Bulloch or translation. Furthermore, the video's description on YouTube then reproduces the "Description" section of the title information sheet with one notable omission: the final line, "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch", is missing. The reproduction of the description from the title information sheet here mirrors the trailer for *Look Who's Back*, but the omission of that final line removes the one instance where Bulloch's translatorship was represented within this paratextual space. As with the blurb and description of the novel on MacLehose Press' website earlier in this chapter, then, references to the "German model and star presenter Nadeche Hackenbusch" and "the far right in Germany" imply the novel's German setting but do little to make the process of translation or Bulloch's role therein visible. This, therefore, indicates that the move towards English-language marketing materials was accompanied by an attempt to present *The Hungry and the Fat* as a covert translation (House, 1981) that functions as an original English-language text under what Hermans describes as the "illusion of equivalence" (2007, 24)

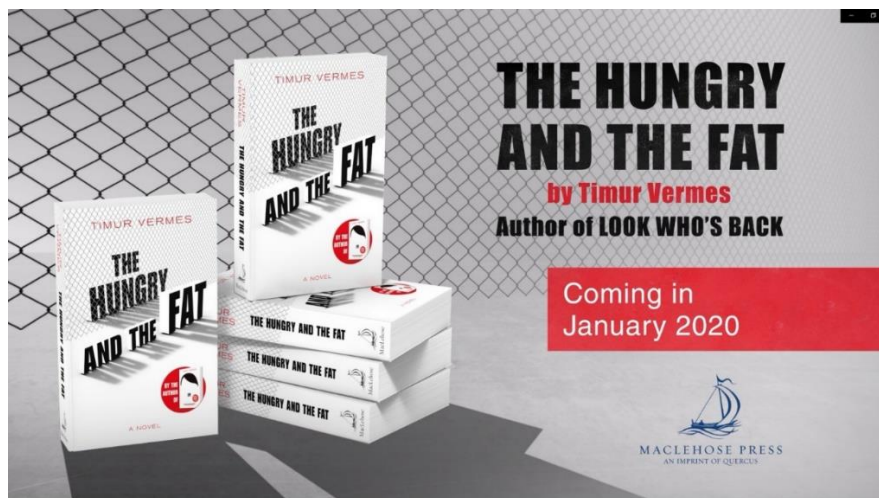


Figure 12 – The final screen of the YouTube trailer for *The Hungry and the Fat* (0:48).

The promotional images used to promote *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* on Twitter

The term “Tweet card” was used by Bielenberg during interview to refer to promotional images created specifically for use on social media platform Twitter. During interview, Bielenberg noted that, in terms of digital materials, these Tweet cards are “the minimum you would do for a book” and often make use of “advance quotes” to promote a book to readers. As such, these images can be understood as key elements within MacLehose Press’ marketing strategies. Notably, the production of these images and their publication on Twitter are handled by the Quercus marketing team, so this process was “taken out of the editor’s hands”. Consequently, Bielenberg (as the editor of both *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*) was not responsible for their content or the content of the accompanying Tweets.



Figure 13 – Tweet card 1 for *Look Who's Back*

In the case of *Look Who's Back*, three versions of the Tweet card were published to the MacLehose Press Twitter account across nine individual Tweets. All three versions feature a digital “dummy” image of the novel, showing its front cover and spine; the text “HE’S BACK AND HE’S FÜHRIOUS”; and the MacLehose Press logo. The first version (see Figure

13), which was tweeted twice, coincided with an online competition in which Twitter users could “Win 1 of 5 copies of Timur Vermes’ dark comedy about Hitler by RT’ing [re-tweeting] before midday tomorrow (01.04)” (see MacLehose Press, 2014a and MacLehose Press, 2014b). The only additional content found on the first version of the image was the text #LookWhosBack. These Tweets were published on 31 March 2014, prior to the novel’s publication and so demonstrate how publisher MacLehose Press wanted to present the novel to readers before publication. Tellingly, then, Bulloch is absent from both the image itself and the accompanying text.

The second version features three fictional quotes from other famous historical leaders (Winston Churchill, Napoleon Bonaparte and Joseph Stalin), which use wordplay to draw links between their historical context and the novel’s status as a humorous satire (see Figure 14). This image was Tweeted by MacLehose Press six times: once to ask other Twitter users for their opinions on the book (2014c); twice in response to British celebrities who had publicly engaged with the book (comedian Russell Kane [@russell_kane], 2014d and television reporter Dawn O’Porter [@hotpatooties], 2014e); once to report that author Timur Vermes was appearing on Richard Bacon’s BBC Radio 5 programme (2014f); once to publicise the novel’s position on the *Evening Standard’s* book chart (2014g); and once to publicise a book giveaway (2014h). In all cases, no reference is made to the fact that the book is a translation or to Bulloch, rather the pun “HE’S BACK AND HE’S FÜHRIOUS” combines with the fictional quotes to foreground the novel’s humour. Indeed, by positioning Hitler alongside other historical leaders from across Europe, the German context of the novel is diluted to the extent that it no longer implies the book is a translation (as was the case with the pun’s use on the rear cover). Not only is Bulloch and his translatorship absent from this paratextual space, then, but direct references to both the author (who does not use Twitter) and celebrity readers positions their importance over the identity of the translator within this social media space.



Figure 14 – Tweet card 2 for *Look Who's Back*

The final version of this Tweet card (see Figure 15) was used only once and features two quotes from reviews in British newspapers *The Independent* and *The Daily Express*. The chosen quotes make no reference to translation or Bulloch, instead emphasising the novel's humour and the impact of its subject matter on readers. The accompanying Tweet similarly makes no reference to Bulloch, instead stating that the publisher had “been loving the press coverage for #LookWhosBack” and asking, “has anyone else enjoyed it?” (2014i). Consequently, the review quotes are leveraged in this paratextual space to frame the novel within the narrative of a positive reading experience whilst the labour of translation in the novel's production is downplayed. As such, all three versions of this Tweet card and the accompanying Tweets prioritise the novel's humour and positive reception, thereby presenting the book as an original English-language text rather than a translation.



...

We've been loving the press coverage for [#LookWhosBack](#) - has anyone else enjoyed it? maclehosepress.com/book/Look-Whos...



6:40 pm · 7 Apr 2014 · Twitter Web Client

Figure 15 – Tweet card 3 for *Look Who's Back*

In the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, two versions of the Tweet cards were posted to Twitter by the MacLehose Press account. As with the *Look Who's Back* cards, the overall layout is consistent between the two: the cover of *The Hungry and the Fat* is displayed on the right-hand side, whilst a sign adorned to a wire fence, which mimics the animation in the trailer, takes up the left of the image. The differences between the cards come from the use of different text on this sign. Mirroring Bulloch's absence from the Tweet cards for *Look Who's Back*, neither image refers to Bulloch or the fact that the novel is a translation, instead featuring a list of "UK TOUR DATES" for the book or a quote from Alex Preston's review in *The Financial Times* (2020). In the case of the former, both accompanying tweets refer explicitly to author Timur Vermes "discussing" the novel "on tour" without any reference to Bulloch, despite his planned attendance (2020a and 2020b). This is notable as the one event that actually took place, at Topping's in Bath, was advertised by the bookshop as "Timur Vermes in conversation with translator Jamie Bulloch" (Topping & Company Booksellers, no date)

rather than focussing solely on Vermes as the author.⁴² Indeed, whilst one Tweet refers to this being “a rare UK visit” for Vermes, this primarily implies that Vermes lives outside the UK rather than the fact that the book was translated into English. Thus, the foregrounding of Vermes’ authorship further demonstrates how the marketing team at Quercus presented the English-language translations of Vermes’ novels as original English books.⁴³



★ Don't miss Timur Vermes, author of LOOK WHO'S BACK, discussing THE HUNGRY AND THE FAT on a rare UK visit this month. 3 dates at 3 excellent bookshops - book your tickets now:

Heffers bit.ly/2QVoSec

Hatchards bit.ly/389HbSE

Toppings bit.ly/2NsglHI



Figure 16 – Tweet card 1 for *The Hungry and the Fat*

The one exception to this comes in a singular Tweet that accompanies the card quoting Preston’s review, which describes the book as “Timur Vermes’ THE HUNGRY AND THE FAT, tr. @jamiebulloch” (2020c). Here, Bulloch’s labour as the translator is represented through the abbreviation “tr.”, whilst

⁴² The events at Heffers, Cambridge and Hatchards, Piccadilly were cancelled due to poor ticket sales.

⁴³ Due to the imprint’s small size, MacLehose does not have a dedicated marketing team. Instead, one team working for Quercus covers all of the associated imprints.

his own Twitter account is tagged in the post. Of course, this labour is only made visible if users can decode that “tr.” means “translated by”. Nevertheless, this link to Bulloch’s Twitter account not only results in his representation as a personified translator within this Tweet through the inclusion of his name, but also invites users to click the link through to Bulloch’s own social media page where, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, he can perform his translatorship to increase his own visibility. Nonetheless, this Tweet marks the only instance out of twelve where the posting of a Tweet card for either novel results in any visibility for Bulloch and so demonstrates the limited visibility that Bulloch has within these digital promotional materials.

Discussion

When discussing the development of content for the codices and webpages for *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, I argued that the greater the distance between Bulloch’s translatorship and the novels, the lesser Bulloch’s level of visibility due to the involvement of other agents in paratextual creation processes. Further evidence of this has been found by examining the book trailers used to promote the two novels on YouTube and the posting of promotional images on social media site Twitter. Within both paratextual spaces, Bulloch goes almost completely unrepresented, with only a single Tweet referring either to him as a named individual or his translatorship. Furthermore, the presentation of the two novels as original English-language texts, or in House’s terms “covert” translations (1981), resulted in few instances where the presence of the translator was even implied. Indeed, although the trailer for *Look Who’s Back* was published with only German-language audio, the transnational and translinguistic humour created by the trailer’s use of image and the automatic association of Adolf Hitler and the German language does little to imply the role of a translator in the English-language novel’s production — particularly when no translation of the trailer is available either. Rather, by presenting viewers with the English-language cover at the end of the trailer, the process of translation is presented as immediate and mechanical.

Furthermore, when discussing the webpages for both novels on MacLehose Press' website, I demonstrated the iterative nature of paratextual production whereby the materials from the title information sheets and book covers are simply reproduced in digital spaces. The two trailers and images discussed here demonstrate that this iterative creative process can similarly be traced when new paratextual materials are created by agents outside of the textual, translation process — with paratextual iteration even spanning the divide between source and target texts. For instance, the Tweet cards for both books all feature the books' covers (and, in the case of *Look Who's Back*, the spine), a space where, as I established earlier in this chapter, Bulloch is absent. Similarly, where the trailers end on bibliographic information, Bulloch is absent from both the digital “dummy” renderings of the novels and any additional textual information. Consequently, the decision to omit the translator from the covers and spines of the two novels continues to position Bulloch as an absent translator in subsequent production-side paratextual spaces. From their own website to the audio-visual materials used on websites such as YouTube and Twitter, then, the digital paratextual materials produced and circulated by publisher MacLehose Press continually position Bulloch as an implied, if not largely absent, translator and the two novels as original, English-language literary texts. This is despite the inclusion of elements within the codices that represent Bulloch as the translator and allow him to participate in the paratextual space, such as biographical details and a translator's note. Consequently, this analysis demonstrates that Bulloch had a markedly more visibly position within the co-texts that constitute the literary text manifest as codex than within the broader constellation of production-side paratexts produced to present the books to readers, despite his role in their production being the same.

Conclusions

This chapter sought to investigate the position and role of translator Jamie Bulloch in the production-side paratextual materials that were consciously crafted by publisher MacLehose Press to present the novels to readers. By

examining the hardback codices of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, the corresponding webpages from MacLehose Press's website and the born-digital marketing materials used to promote the two novels, this chapter has demonstrated the iterative nature of production-side paratextual production and the limited, yet significant role of the translator therein. Through his work as a professional reader, Bulloch played a central role in the acquisition of translation rights for both novels and contributed to the early development of content that would later go on to form the basis of the production-side paratexts used when the books were published. In Bulloch's case, this active role developed from his close personal relationship to editor and associate publisher Bielenberg, thereby placing him in a position where he was involved in conversations relating to details such as the novels' titles in English. However, as the initial content added to the publisher's content management system, Biblio3, was adapted and developed by other teams within MacLehose Press and Quercus Books, such as the sales and marketing teams, Bulloch's role in the paratextual space diminished and so the production-side paratexts were altered to meet the publisher's commercial aspirations and publishing practices. Indeed, as the novels moved further towards completion and to public consumption, Bulloch's role in paratextual creation becomes harder to trace. The same can be said for his position in the paratextual space, which went from being named at the top of pre-publication internal documents, such as the title information sheet, to his absence from public-facing production-side spaces such as the covers and spines of the codices, the publisher's webpage for *Look Who's Back*, the trailers for the two books and almost all the "Tweet cards" posted to Twitter.

In terms of the impact of digital media on the translator's visibility in the production-side paratextual space, then, the analysis within this chapter indicates little change from the non-digital world of the codex. Indeed, despite the affordances of digital platforms to include video and audio files that are impossible to produce non-digitally, MacLehose Press's use of the all-encompassing and largely verbal-text-focussed digital Biblio3 system leaves these opportunities for new forms of visibility unfulfilled on their website. Even when such materials were created for use on external

platforms such as YouTube and Twitter, MacLehose Press' paratextual production was primarily an iterative process building on existing materials (such as the trailers created for the original German novels) in which Bulloch was already absent. Furthermore, within the space of its own website, MacLehose Press has done little to develop the paratextual framing of its novels from the non-digital world beyond the addition of other verbal content that would require a new edition of the codex to include, but which can be added to the digital space in a few seconds thanks to Biblio3. In the case of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, however, the additional fluidity of the digital production-side space did not result in particularly dramatic changes to Bulloch's position and role from the non-digital space and, given that the Biblio3 content management system also populates retail websites, the same can be said for other online spaces where production-side paratextual materials are reproduced. Indeed, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, it is the content created uniquely by or for online retailers such as Amazon that differentiates these spaces from the publisher's own use of digital media.

Where Bulloch was positioned as a participant, represented or implied translator in either the codices or the publisher's website, however, this was primarily manifested as references to the act of translation and so clearly differentiated his translatorship from Vermes' authorship. Indeed, in becoming visible as an active participant by deciding to include and subsequently writing a translator's note, Bulloch intervened and spoke for the text in a way that author Vermes does not, either within the original German context or within the translated novel. Rather, Bulloch's translatorship here includes mediation between the source text and the target audience, who reads and interprets what the target audience might find difficult on their behalf and intervenes before that reading can even take place. This differs from the role of the author Vermes, whose creativity and artistic textual production is left to speak for itself without the addition of an "author's note". Rather than revising "the individualistic concept of authorship" (Venuti, 1995/2018, 311), then, Bulloch's visibility can here be understood as reinforcing it through the clear differentiation of the authorial and translatorial role within the paratextual space. This was further

demonstrated in other areas within the codices such as the biographical notes, where Bulloch represents himself solely in terms of his professional achievements and detaches his translation work from his own personal context or habitus. In doing so, the form of translatorship that is made visible here is one that could be undertaken by any practicing professional translator, whilst the authorship of Vermees' novels is unique to his own experiences, opinions and cultural background.

Now that the limited impact of digital paratextuality on Bulloch's visibility within paratexts that were consciously crafted by publisher MacLehose Press has been established, the question becomes what impact has the advent of digital reception-side paratexts had on Bulloch's paratextual visibility.

Chapter 4 – Visibility in reception-side paratexts: The proliferation of reader reviews in digital spaces

Introduction

Within the “consciously crafted” paratextual space (Batchelor, 2018), materials created during the production of a literary text form constellations of paratextual relationships alongside materials created by receivers of a text, referred to here as reception-side paratexts. These reception-side paratexts are of interest because the readers who create them not only form new paratextual relationships between the content they create and the literary text, but also provide insights into how their encounters with a novel were shaped by the production-side paratexts they encountered. As such, reception-side paratexts give insights into the way readers interpret production-side paratexts and the translator’s visibility therein, as well as providing a platform for readers to either challenge or reinforce this visibility and the perception of literary translations within their own paratextual creations.

Within the digital contexts studied throughout this thesis, the advent of Web 2.0 has resulted in the proliferation of reception-side paratextual materials across a variety of platforms and media. In the case of Timur Vermes’ novels, for instance, reader reviews on retail websites are complemented by image-based social media posts on Instagram (e.g. jesshasbooks, 2020), video reviews on platforms such as YouTube (e.g. Shelf Indulgent Reader, 2015), and discussion posts on bookish community websites (e.g. the question “Donald Trump parallels? (just started the book)” posted by the user Dorrit on GoodReads, 2016), to name but a few. However, while user-generated content has pushed reception-side paratexts into a variety of modes and media, traditional forms of literary criticism such as written reviews in newspapers have also migrated over to digital platforms. Indeed, reviews may be published in print and online simultaneously, whilst other publications use digital spaces to publish online-only content outside of the editorial and spatial constraints of print media. As such, reception-side paratexts in the digital space constitute a heterogeneous form of content

created by a diverse range of readers all with varying proximities to the world of literary publishing.

Given that this thesis seeks to investigate the ways in which the expansion of the paratextual space into digital media has affected the visibility of the translator, analysis within the present chapter will focus on one form of reception-side paratext that has not only migrated and adapted to the digital space, but also proliferated therein: reader reviews. Using reader reviews as a case study builds upon the previous chapter to similarly investigate whether translators and the act of translation are made visible differently across digital and non-digital settings, by comparing Bulloch's visibility in print-media reviews of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* to those reviews posted in born-digital spaces. Furthermore, by distinguishing the different readers who publish reviews of a novel, which I define here as *professional*, *strategic* and *amateur* readers, this chapter will also address the question of how Bulloch's visibility in reception-side paratexts is impacted by the so-called democratisation of literary criticism made possible by digital spaces such as NetGalley and Amazon (Murray, 2018, 111-140).

As such, the chapter will begin by defining reception-side paratexts and situating reader reviews as a significant element therein, followed by definitions of professional, strategic and amateur readers. Subsequently, this chapter will investigate the way Bulloch is represented and implied as the translator of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* within the reception-side paratexts created by these groups and compare findings between the three. Finally, this chapter will reflect on the perception of translators and translation within the three distinct groups of readers and draw links between these findings and those of the production-side analysis conducted in the previous chapter.

Understanding reader reviews as reception-side paratexts

The concept of reception-side paratexts as studied in the present chapter is built upon a distinction first developed in film and media studies, in which paratextual materials are understood as either industry created (Gray, 2010, 143), and so "official" (Mittell, 2015, 262; Boni, 2016, 213), or

viewer/audience created (Gray, 2010, 143), and so “unofficial” or “grassroots” (Mittell, 2015, 262; Boni, 2016, 213). Differentiating between “official” and “unofficial” paratexts reflects a distinction between “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches to the study of paratextual creation (Caldwell, 2011) that allows researchers to position the user-generated content of digital, Web 2.0 platforms alongside the paratextual materials created during textual production processes. Of course, such approaches can be criticised for their binary approach to paratextual creation (Caldwell, 2011) and their entrenchment in a concept of authorisation that becomes difficult to trace outside of broad categories such as ‘industry-’ or ‘audience-’ created. Nevertheless, using such distinctions to “acknowledge and interrogate the meaning-producing and meaning-changing power of all paratext producers” (Batchelor, 2018, 62), rather than as tools to delineate the paratextual space, allows us to identify a significant difference between production-side and reception-side paratexts.

Reception-side paratexts are created by receivers of a literary text who are detached from the processes of that text’s production, development and publication and so from the generation of the production-side paratexts studied in the previous chapter. In other words, reception-side paratextual materials are created once books have worked their way through Thompson’s “publishing value chain” and the literary text is made available to “consumers/readers” (2010, 16). What is significant about the paratextual materials created by such receivers is that these creators have themselves encountered production-side paratexts. Thus, reception-side materials provide both new paratextual framings for a literary text and an opportunity for the receiver-cum-paratext-creator to respond to the publisher-created paratexts that frame the novel upon publication (Freeth, 2021, 118). As such, the study of reception-side paratexts not only gives insights into a reader’s understanding and enjoyment of a literary text, but also their responses to the production-side paratextual materials that accompanied it. In the context of the present thesis, then, this distinction is useful as it allows investigations into the impact of different paratextual creators on the translator’s visibility in the paratextual space, particularly in digital contexts

where production- and reception-side paratextual materials interact in constellation with one another.

An example of such analysis can be found in Kathryn Batchelor's case study of *Walter Presents*, a curated collection of subtitled television series hosted by Channel 4, from her monograph *Translation and Paratexts* (2018, 118-138). Here, Batchelor draws on Gray's distinction between industry- and viewer-created paratexts (2010) to investigate the extent to which the "paratextual strategies" of *Walter Presents* are "affirmed or countered" in viewer-created paratexts. Batchelor finds that, on the industry-side, paratexts promoting *Walter Presents* seek to emphasise the curated nature of the collection, the quality of the programmes therein and their geographical setting whilst downplaying the fact that they are in a foreign language and so must be viewed with subtitles (2018, 124-127). On the viewer-created side, however, Batchelor's results are more complex. For instance, in terms of press reviews, Batchelor finds that journalists "reproduce the industry-created paratextual messages" relating to the curated nature of *Walter Presents* whilst "consistently bring[ing] the fact that the dramas are in a foreign language back into focus" (2018, 133). As such, professional reviewers counter the downplaying of subtitling found in "industry" paratexts to instead emphasise their status as translated products. The paratexts created by other viewers, however, "tend to parallel the industry-created paratexts in terms of their lack of emphasis on subtitling" (2018, 133) and so downplay the foreign elements of the programmes included in the *Walter Presents* collection. As such, Batchelor's case study demonstrates the contradictory levels of paratextual visibility afforded to translation that can occur when paratexts with different creators are situated in constellation with one another. Thus, in applying a similar approach and line of inquiry to a translated literary text, this thesis is further developing existing scholarship on paratextual visibility through its combined literary and digital focus.

An important factor in Batchelor's case study that goes uninterrogated, however, is the grouping of all receivers within the broad category of "viewer" and the varying relationships these different viewers have to textual producers. For instance, Batchelor situates press reviews, comments in a

fan-created *Walter Presents* Facebook group, comments on trailers for shows included in the *Walter Presents* collection on YouTube, and discussion forums hosted on third-party websites such as *Digital Spy* all under the banner of “viewer-created paratexts” (2018, 127-132). The creators of these paratextual materials, however, differ greatly in their proximity to textual production industries and their motivations for paratextual creation. Press reviews are written by professional critics and writers who are, to some extent, financially remunerated for their content, in a position of cultural authority that is guaranteed an audience through the associated publication, or whose professional role affords them a proximity to the industry that created the text for which they are creating paratextual materials. By contrast, viewers who partake in Facebook fan groups or post comments on YouTube trailers create paratextual materials without guarantees of financial remuneration, audience or a privileged proximity to the industry. As Batchelor’s case study finds, this distinction is significant, as the likelihood that a receiver would echo the industry-created branding put forward in the production-side paratexts varies depending on the creator’s proximity to the industry (2018, 133).

However, solutions to this challenge that simply distinguish between “professional” press reviewers and “amateur” receivers remain overly simplistic. Such a distinction is made by Simone Murray in *The Digital Literary Sphere*, in which “professional” reviewers refers to those published in “traditional”, “mainstream” publications such as newspapers (2018, 113-114) whilst “amateur” reviews constitute content found on, amongst others, book retailer websites, community-based “social cataloguing sites” such as GoodReads, and online blogs (2018, 120-121). The problem with this distinction is that the definition of “amateur” content creators positions lay readers expressing their bookish interests and reading habits alongside bloggers who often benefit from working relationships with publishers. Based on these relationships, bloggers may receive or request free advance review copies of literary texts from publishers in exchange for review content or other coverage on their blog, such as author or translator interviews. Indeed, publicists often now include prominent bloggers within their contact lists (Thompson, 2010, 252-254) and publishers may even seek to collaborate

with bloggers to organise promotional “blog tours” surrounding the launch of a particular title — a practice sometimes undertaken by the focus of this thesis, MacLehose Press.⁴⁴ Of course, a strict definition that relies on financial remuneration may position all of these non-professional readers within the same broad category of “amateur”. However, the working relationships some “amateur” readers develop with publishing houses and the benefits such readers subsequently reap from these relationships distinguishes them from lay readers who buy books independently and create paratextual materials based on their personal reading habits.

As such, in this chapter I distinguish between three types of reception-side paratextual creator: *professional* readers, *strategic* readers and *amateur* readers.

Professional readers

The first type of reviews studied within this chapter are those written by *professional* readers who receive financial remuneration for the creation of paratextual materials. Given the financial resources required to pay such creators for their work, such paratextual materials are published within what Simone Murray describes as “the traditional book reviewing model”, that is the print-media typically constituting newspapers and periodicals (2018, 113-114). As described by Murray, the number of new titles published in the Anglophone literary sphere results in a supply of books that greatly exceeds the volume of reviews that can be published in such media. Consequently, there is great competition to secure reviews by professional readers in the print media, particularly longer-form pieces such as a feature or an “industry-standard mid-length review” (Murray, 2018, 114). Publications may therefore limit coverage of a particular book to a “capsule” review of less than one hundred words or group several titles together thematically in a single review article (Murray, 2018, 114). In terms of the status of reception-side

⁴⁴ A review of *The Stoning* by Peter Papathanasiou from damppebbles (2021), for instance, was one of seven stops on a blog tour organised by MacLehose Press running from 7th to 10th October 2021.

paratextual materials found in the print media, then, the high demand for coverage imbues such paratexts with a greater value and prestige than other reception-side paratextual materials, such as those that proliferate in online digital spaces — hence their frequent use as indicators of the reception and perception of translated literature within Anglophone literary contexts.⁴⁵

In terms of paratextual creation, what distinguishes the reception-side materials published in traditional print media is that they typically constitute a "summative" and "incontestable judgment" of a book because a "critic's verdict was typically univocal, once-off, and ex post facto" (Murray, 2018, 115). Although responses to reviews from an author or reader may be published in a later edition of the same periodical at the editor's discretion, this model of paratextual creation is largely unidirectional (Murray, 2018, 115-116). This stands in contrast to the multi-directionality and social aspects of digital spaces, such as the ability to comment on a blog post or reply to another user's review on community-driven bookish websites such as GoodReads. Consequently, writers producing reviews for the print media occupy a privileged position as paratextual creators whereby the unidirectionality of their critical judgement establishes a hierarchy in which the professional reviewer is assumed to have a more "intimate" knowledge of what constitutes great literature than lay readers (Murray, 2018, 115). Thus, reception-side paratexts published in the traditional print media represent a finite snapshot of a novel's reception by a privileged and financially remunerated reader in a highly competitive market. Indeed, due to the large volume of books published each week, even the decision to review a novel constitutes a motivated and strategic choice on the part of the publication outlet based on a perceived level of interest or relevance to their target audience.

⁴⁵ For instance, Lawrence Venuti's conceptualisation of translator invisibility being built upon quotes from print media outlets (1995/2018, 2-5) or Brian Baer's charting of the "rise of readability" (2016).

Strategic readers

The second type of reception-side paratextual materials studied within this chapter are those created by what I define as *strategic* readers. This refers to paratextual creators who are not paid to write literary criticism but whose creation of such content either establishes, relies on, or benefits from strategic relationships with the professional world of literary publishing. The benefits of such relationships include the receipt of free advance review copies, proofs or final copies from a publisher or publicist in exchange for the creation of content relating to that book; or the inclusion of the reader and their platform in publisher-organised publicity events such as blog tours or read-alongs. As such, my classification of these readers as *strategic* not only reflects the fact that such readers purposefully create content to achieve their own aims, such as developing an audience through their chosen platform, but also the strategic inclusion of such content creators within marketing and publicity planning by the publishing industry.

Publishers and publicists strategically contact readers publishing content as bloggers, 'bookstagrammers' and 'booktubers' to generate reception-side paratextual materials in the same way that advance copies and PR documents are sent to editors and writers working in the traditional print media discussed in the previous section.⁴⁶ As such, the lines of communication between the publishing industry and strategic readers afford the latter knowledge, information and resources (such as advance copies) that an amateur reader purchasing or borrowing a book from a retailer or library lacks. In terms of the translator's visibility, then, the question becomes whether these strategic relationships result in the translator being positioned differently in the paratexts created by strategic readers from those created by professional readers or those who solely interact with the literary text as a product available on the open market post publication.

⁴⁶ Here, 'bookstagrammer' is a neologism referring to users on social media site Instagram who focus on bookish content whilst 'booktuber' similarly refers to YouTube channels devoted to bookish content.

The media and platforms through which strategic readers typically create content, such as personal blogs, social media accounts and video-hosting websites, all constitute the user-generated-content made possible by the advent of Web 2.0 that allows anyone to create and publish content in the digital space. However, while the proliferation of online review culture since the late 1990s has resulted in the “democratization of reviewer expertise” through the “seizing of the critical mantle by millions of reviewers uncredentialed by any reviewing establishment” (Murray 2018, 119), the existence of strategic readers demonstrates the hierarchies that still exist within the digital reviewing space. For instance, strategic readers benefit from their privileged relationships with the publishing industry, thereby creating a hierarchy within the world of non-professional paratextual creators that gives strategic readers access to the literary world that is unavailable to amateur readers. Given that “writing for the Web has yet to become a way for a book reviewer to establish a critical reputation” within mainstream literary culture (Pool, 2007), however, strategic readers reviewing in digital domains remain differentiated from the professional readers outlined in the previous section. Thus, the visibility of the translator within materials created by strategic readers is of interest to the present chapter due to both the unique position of these readers between professional and amateur reception-side paratext creators and their unique proximity to the publishing industry.

It is worth noting, however, that the identification of strategic readers and the analysis of their reviews presents challenges different from those created by professional and amateur readers. The definition of strategic readers given here is reliant on the identification of a relationship between the reader and publisher that strategically benefits one or both parties. However, despite legal requirements to disclose the existence of relationships in which an “online endorsement” for a product is given in exchange for “payment” (financial or otherwise; Competition and Markets Authority, 2016), these relationships can be difficult to trace. For instance, whilst blogger BOOKPHACE concludes their review of *The Hungry and the Fat* by stating “My thanks to Corrine Zifko at MacLehose Press for a copy of this entertaining and thought provoking book” (2020), Osborne (2020) includes

no such disclosure in her review for *A Life In Books*. Consequently, visitors to Osborne's blog must assume that she purchased her own copy of the novel and posted a review on her blog of her own volition, thereby positioning her as an amateur, rather than a strategic reader. As such, coverage of a book by non-professional readers does not necessarily mean that this content was created as a result of a strategic relationship between the paratextual creator and a publisher. Within the context of research projects that focus on contemporary contexts, such as this thesis, the status of the reader-reviewer may be clarified through contact with either the reviewer or the publisher. However, this may not be possible in historical research contexts; in cases where contact details are missing from the reviewer's chosen platform; if the reviewer wishes to remain anonymous; or if this strategic relationship is subject to confidentiality agreements.⁴⁷ Thus, when delineating a corpus of strategic reviews, care must be taken to identify these relationships both in terms of ensuring the content was created by a strategic reviewer and in the potential for the researcher's intervention to highlight the strategic reader's prior failure to meet the requirements of consumer-rights regulations and guidelines.

Amateur readers

The final reception-side paratextual materials analysed here are those produced by *amateur* readers. In contrast to the professional and strategic readers outlined above, amateur readers are defined by the absence of any remuneration or incentivisation for their paratextual creation, and the distance of this creation from the world of literary publishing. These are readers for whom paratextual creation is not instigated by a publisher's publicity and marketing plans or compensated by an editor, rather those who choose to create paratextual content based upon their own ad-hoc reading,

⁴⁷ For instance, strategic reviewers may post content to Amazon, but the Amazon platform provides no way for users to contact the authors of customer reviews.

purchasing or borrowing habits. As such, anyone can become an amateur reviewer on digital platforms such as GoodReads outside the authorised gatekeeping of professional literary criticism (Keen, 2007). As noted by Murray, such attitudes and content-production processes have been normalised following the growth of online retailers such as Amazon (2018, 119), with the widespread development of algorithmically and customer-generated content across the internet stemming from the company's need to generate content for its early, book-centric website (Marcus, 2004). This has led to the proliferation of online customer review sites and community-based bookish platforms, such as GoodReads and LibraryThing, which not only allow users to curate digital bookshelves and review titles they've read, but also interact with other users and the content they create (Murray, 141-167). Consequently, the creation of amateur reception-side paratexts in the digital space goes beyond the realms of criticism and becomes an exercise in community and relationship building.

What is significant about these amateur readers is that their paratextual creation follows an encounter with the literary text as a product that is presented to them solely by public-facing paratextual materials. This differs to the professional and strategic reviewers who may receive additional documents such as a PR sheet with a book and are creating reception-side paratexts prior to or in conjunction with a literary text's publication.⁴⁸ As such, content created by amateur readers not only reflects their responses

⁴⁸ Of course, it must be stated here that this may not always be the case. New content from professional or strategic readers may come further down the line, such as an outlet's end-of-year book round-up (e.g., Kürten, 2014) or a blogger adding a novel to their 'to be read' pile and coming back to it at a later date (e.g., liamcbyrne, 2019), thereby meaning their paratextual creation may similarly be influenced by content produced by other readers. However, within Anglophone publishing contexts marketing campaigns that rely on coverage from professional and strategic readers aim to get "people talking about a book and generating interest and excitement well in advance of publication" (Thompson, 2010, 249). Thus, the typical timing of professional- and strategic-readers' content-creation prevents such reviews from reflecting on the reviews of others.

to the literary text but can also respond to paratextual routes through which they encountered the novel. Over time, this can result in a paratextual feedback loop in which amateur reviewers create new paratextual materials that respond to other amateur-reader-created paratexts. For instance, bookish platforms such as GoodReads are inherently designed to allow such interaction by allowing readers to comment on and reply to other users' reviews, whilst Amazon allows customers to vote on whether they found a review "helpful". This differs greatly from the unidirectional nature of professional and strategic readers. As such, where paratexts created by professional- and strategic-readers indicate a snapshot of the reviewer's response to a text at a given point in time, typically orbiting around a literary text's initial release period, those created by amateurs can proliferate long beyond the life span of the publishing industry's publicity and marketing campaigns.

Now that I have defined the readers whose reviews will be studied throughout this chapter, I will now analyse Bulloch's visibility in the reviews written by each type of reader — starting with professional reviews.

Bulloch's visibility in paratexts created by professional readers

The corpus of professional reviews in the print media

The professional reviews analysed in this chapter all stem from the print media. Both *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* received coverage in the print media, with this corpus comprising 25 reviews of the former and only six of latter — a notably lower number of reviews. Details of this dataset can be seen in the following two matrices, which provide an overview of the reviews published by professional readers in the print media within the first year of the novels' publication. This dataset was provided by MacLehose Press, which uses third-party media monitoring companies to track and archive coverage of its books in traditional media outlets within a

given timeframe.⁴⁹ As such, the dataset comprises an archive of all reviews of the books within their first year of publication as they were originally printed and so does not comprise any online versions which may be subject to editing and updating post-publication.⁵⁰

It should be noted, however, that these matrices do not include all the paratextual materials found within this dataset. For instance, given this thesis' focus on a British context, any that were not published in Britain have been omitted. Similarly, coverage that simply reproduces production-side paratexts verbatim has been excluded as it was not produced by receivers of the literary texts to appraise or critically reflect on the books.⁵¹ As such, the reproduction of a production-side paratext in the print media cannot be considered a reception-side paratext. Rather, such materials mark the expansion of the production-side paratextual space into non-publisher-controlled outlets, as will be seen Chapter 5. Lastly, content that primarily lists bibliographic details, such as bestseller lists, is omitted as this reflects a more factual paratextual relationship, detailing the sales success of a literary text, unlike the reception-side materials discussed in the present chapter.⁵² This is not to say that such content does not form a paratextual relationship

⁴⁹ In the case of *Look Who's Back*, these services were provided by the International Press Cutting Bureau (no date), whereas Gorkana (c2022) provided these services for *The Hungry and the Fat*.

⁵⁰ The decision to focus solely on printed reviews means this chapter can compare Bulloch's visibility in reader-reviews across the digital and non-digital space. However, the page numbers for several of the articles were not included during archival by the IPCB and Gorkana. Given that the I have analysed the print versions within this chapter then, this is reflected in the references for the primary sources used in this chapter because referring instead to online or digital versions would misleadingly indicate that those versions were analysed here.

⁵¹ An example of this can be seen in Northern Woman (2014, 90), which reproduces the entire blurb alongside the novel's cover artwork as part of their "Shelf Life" feature.

⁵² For instance, see The Times (2014) bestsellers list from 12 April where *Look Who's Back* places first in the "Hardback Fiction" list.

with the literary text, as the understanding of paratextuality put forward in the present thesis would argue the opposite. Rather, as it simply comprises the reproduction of production-side paratexts, it is not the focus of the present case study so is omitted from this analysis of reader reviews.

Table 3 – Professional reviews of *Look Who’s Back* analysed within this chapter.

Look Who’s Back			
Publication	Author	Date of publication	Content type
Big Issue (London)	Thomas Quinn	17 March 2014	Mid-length, multi-book review
Daily Express	Caroline Jowett	4 April 2014	Mid-length, solo review
Daily Mail	Kath Whitbourn	4 April 2014	Capsule review
The Daily Telegraph	Sophie Hardach	15 March 2014	Feature
Financial Times	Sam Leith	3 May 2014	Mid-length, solo review
Financial Times	Ángel Gurría-Quintana	28 June 2014	Capsule review
The Guardian	Steven Poole	3 May 2014	Mid-length, solo review
The i Newspaper	Rebecca K Morrison	4 April 2014	Mid-length, solo review
The Independent	Boyd Tonkin	3 April 2014	Feature
The Independent on Sunday	Sue Gaisford	6 April 2014	Mid-length, solo review (audiobook)

London Magazine	Fiona Wilson	1 September 2014	Capsule review
Mail on Sunday		13 April 2014	Capsule review
Monocle	RB	1 March 2014	Capsule review
Observer (The New Review supplement)	Philip Oltermann	23 March 2014	Feature
Radar (The Independent supplement)	Rebecca K Morrison	5 April 2014	Mid-length, solo review
Scotsman	Lori Anderson	29 March 2014	Feature
Sunday Express	Matt Thorne	20 April 2014	Mid-length, solo review
Sunday Express	Charlotte Heathcote and Viv Groskop	15 June 2012	Capsule review
Sunday Sport	Jon Wise	6 April 2014	Capsule review
The Lady	Stephen Coulson	9 May 2014	Capsule review
Times on Saturday	Robbie Millen	29 March 2014	Mid-length, solo review
The Times	Fiona Wilson	5 July 2014	
Traveller Magazine (EasyJet)	Katie Buckley, Ed Frankl		Capsule review
Weekend Sport	Jon Wise	4 April 2014	Capsule review
The Bookseller	Jo Harding	11 April 2014	Capsule review

Table 4 – Professional reviews of *The Hungry and the Fat* analysed within this chapter.

The Hungry and the Fat			
Publication	Author	Date of publication	Content type
Financial Times	Alex Preston	14 February 2020	Mid-length, solo review
The Guardian	Sam Leith	8 February 2020	Mid-length, solo review
The Spectator	Daniel Hahn	22 February 2020	Mid-length, solo review
Strong Words Magazine		23 January 2020	Capsule review
The Sunday Times	David Mills	5 January 2020	Capsule review
The Times	Robbie Millen	20 January 2020	Feature

Before beginning my analysis, two things are worth noting about this dataset. Firstly, *Look Who's Back* received considerably more coverage in the British print media than *The Hungry and the Fat*. This stems from the controversy that surrounded the former within a German context, which had stoked interest in the British media following the book's commercial success in Germany and resulted in a variety of 'feature'-style content discussing the

novel's cultural significance from a transnational perspective.⁵³ While *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* also achieved commercial success in German, hitting the number one spot on the *Spiegel* bestsellers list immediately upon release (buchreport, 2018), it did not incite the same level of cultural debate that Vermes' use of Hitler as a narrator had upon the release of *Er ist wieder da*. This pattern of less coverage for *The Hungry and the Fat* is mirrored in other reception-side paratexts and so this discrepancy is a naturally occurring characteristic of this dataset, rather than a result of corpus delineation. Secondly, the inclusion of the various forms of reception-side paratextual materials, that is novel-specific features, mid-length reviews and capsule reviews, allows my analysis to provide a snapshot of Bulloch's visibility across all forms of reviews written by professional readers published in the British print media.

Participant translator

Bulloch is not positioned as a participant translator in any of the 31 reviews written by professional readers included in this corpus. Given that Bulloch is not a reviewer this finding is not surprising. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Vermes did conduct interviews with British media outlets for *Look Who's Back* (see, for examples, Felsenberg, 2014), and one review of *The Hungry and the Fat* incorporated content generated by reviewer Robbie Millen during an interview with author Timur Vermes (Millen, 2020). In this case Vermes is a participant in this paratextual space as his contribution is explicitly acknowledged and credited using direct quotes. This is significant, as not only is there no such combined review and interview featuring Bulloch, thereby demonstrating the value placed on authorship over

⁵³ For an overview of the novel's original reception in Germany and transnational interest therein from the British media, see Freeth (2021). Given that the British media were amplifying German-language media responses to a German-language novel, this coverage of *Er ist wieder da* from transnational perspective itself required an implicit process of translation.

translatorship within the British press, but there is also no mention of Bulloch or the abstract figure of a translator from either Millen or Vermes in this combined review-interview feature (2020). Thus, Bulloch did not participate within the professional-reader-created paratexts for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* and remained absent from these spaces even when the author participated.

Represented translator

Bulloch is represented in 14 of the 30 professional reviews in this corpus. Within that 14, 13 refer to Bulloch by name and five of these do so purely with the inclusion of the bibliographic detail “translated by Jamie Bulloch”.⁵⁴ In these cases, Bulloch’s translatorship is made visible in the reviews through the explicit naming of both Bulloch and his status as the translator, yet the reviewers make no attempt to engage with the translation process beyond a bibliographical acknowledgement. Notably, representations of Bulloch’s translatorship through the inclusion of “translated by Jamie Bulloch” in these five professional reviews mirror the sole representation of Bulloch found on the exterior elements of the final codices for both novels and the proof copy for *The Hungry and the Fat*, which simply feature the text “translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch”.⁵⁵ Thus, this representation of Bulloch mirrors what the reviewers themselves encountered when reading either the proof or final edition of the codex in order to review the book.

Beyond this, five reviews describe either Bulloch’s translatorship or the fact the book has been translated simply by listing positive adjectives or adverbs. For instance, Morrison argues that *Look Who's Back* is “quite brilliantly translated by Jamie Bulloch” in two (slightly different) reviews for different versions of the same publication (2014a and 2014b), whilst Gaisford (2014)

⁵⁴ These five are Hahn (2020), Mills (2020), Gurría-Quintana (2014), Poole (2014) and Wilson (2014a).

⁵⁵ There is no mention of Bulloch in the proof copy for *Look Who's Back*.

and Tonkin (2014) describe the translation as “superb, demotic” and “sassy” respectively. Similarly, Preston describes *The Hungry and the Fat* as “immaculate: tight, nuanced and waspish” (2020). Notable here are the positive connotations from all these adjectives, which either provide an overall assessment of the translation’s quality, such as “brilliant[ly]”, “superb” and “immaculate”, or refer to the language of the translation as in the cases of “nuanced”, “demotic” and “sassy”. As such, the findings from this corpus indicate that representations of Bulloch in reviews by professional readers are primarily associated with a positive assessment of the text. Conversely, as will soon be demonstrated, the translator is absent from more critical and negative reviews. This finding contradicts Venuti’s argument that “dissident” translators achieve visibility by breaking target culture norms (2018, 267-268) as it was in the reviews written by professionals who found the novel to be in bad taste or thought it was unhumorous, thereby breaking British literary or satirical norms, that Bulloch is positioned as an absent translator.

The one professional reviewer who goes beyond simple adjectives and adverbs in a positive engagement with Bulloch’s translation is Sam Leith, who reviewed both *Look Who’s Back* for the *Financial Times* (2014) and *The Hungry and the Fat* for *The Guardian* (2020). In his reviews of both books, Leith gives specific examples of English phrases that highlight Bulloch’s skill as a translator. For instance, on *Look Who’s Back* Leith writes

Bulloch’s English translation is good enough that it feels like its own thing. His Hitler, given new trousers, mishears “jeans” for “genes”; someone asks Hitler, thinking him a stand-up comic, about his flyers (“Don’t talk to me about the Luftwaffe...”); asked whether he’s had any operations, Hitler says: “Sea Lion, Barbarossa, Cerberus...” The jokes are very funny. (2014)

In Leith’s first two examples, mishearing “genes” and the “Luftwaffe” reference, the wordplay is specific to the English-language version and so Leith’s discussion of these jokes emphasises Bulloch’s creativity in the translation process. Moreover, the reference to “his [Bulloch’s] Hitler” differentiates the voice of the English text from that of Verme’s German. This makes Bulloch’s creative labour as the translator visible by emphasising the fact that translation is not a search for one-to-one semantic equivalence and

attributed the creativity of the English version to Bulloch. When later reviewing *The Hungry and the Fat*, Leith (2020) goes into similar detail by quoting:

“Don’t give them money and soya flour! We need a wall and fire power!”
(That couplet gives a sense of how able and idiomatic Jamie Bulloch’s translation is, and I’d love to know what the German words translated as “shitgibbon” and “jizztrumpet” were.)

In this case, the positive adjectives of “able” and “idiomatic” harken to Venuti’s argument that reviews only mention translation in terms of fluency (1995/2018, 2-5). Yet Leith again goes beyond this by not only giving an example in the form of a rhyming couplet that is unique to the English translation, but also by emphasising the creativity of Bulloch’s English in the use of non-standard profanities.⁵⁶ As the only reviewer to engage with Bulloch’s translatorship in this way, however, Leith’s approach and the subsequent representation of Bulloch as a personified translator are the exception in this corpus.

The final instance of the represented translator in the professional reviews corpus is simultaneously the only example found in a negative assessment of *Look Who’s Back* and the only representation of the translator as an abstract figure, rather than as the personified individual Jamie Bulloch. In his review for *The Sunday Express*, Thorne argues that the novel constitutes “mild farce: a diverting but never fully engaging novel” that “feels inconsequential” (2014). He does, however, have praise for the inclusion of “a long afterword” in which “the specific German references, both historical and contemporary” are “helpfully explained by the translator” (Thorne, 2014). In mentioning the translator’s note at the end of *Look Who’s Back*, Thorne makes the cultural differences between the novel’s original German context

⁵⁶ The original German rhyme for this passage is “Statt Spendengeld und Sojamehl: Mauerbau und Schießbefehl” (literally ‘Instead of donations and soya flour: wall building and order to shoot’) and, notably, “Sojamehl” (soya flour) and “Feuerkraft” or “Schlagkraft” (fire power in both a military and figurative sense) do not rhyme in German.

and the new English-language audience explicit. This makes Bulloch's translatorship, in which he acts as a cultural and linguistic mediator between the two, visible within Thorne's review. Nevertheless, by referring simply to "the translator" and describing Bulloch's translator's note as a "long afterword", Thorne represents the translator as an abstract figure, rather than an individual.

As discussed earlier, however, the absence of Bulloch as a personified figure coincides with Thorne's review being a more negative appraisal of the novel. Indeed, where the translator is represented in Thorne's review, it comes as a positive parenthetical aside to the German references being "helpfully explained" by the translator. The reference to the abstract "translator" over naming Bulloch subsequently distances the personified figure of Bulloch from Thorne's critique of the novel. As such, Thorne's review further indicates the correlation between positive commentary and translator visibility in professional reviews, even if on a more micro level than the representations of Bulloch as a personified individual in the positive reviews discussed earlier.

Implied translator

Where representations of Bulloch and his translatorship were only found in 13 of the 30 reviews for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* analysed here, 26 of the professional reviews imply the figure of the translator.⁵⁷ The first way in which this is achieved is the most implicit: through references to the German setting, content or characters within the two novels. An example of this can be found in references to characters such as the "airhead German reality TV star" "Frau Hackenbusch" (Leith, 2020 and *Strong Words*, 2020) and "Frau Bellini" (Tonkin, 2014), which all use the German honorific "Frau" (*Ms*) to imply the novels' German origins

⁵⁷ The overlap here stems from the fact that Bulloch's positions as a represented or implied translator are not mutually exclusive within a given paratextual space, as outlined in Chapter 2.

and suggest the role of translation (and so a translator) in their English-language publication. Another example can be found in allusions to the position of the two novels within contemporary German politics, such as a reference to “the modern Social Democratic Party the NPD” (Jowett, 2014) and describing the setting of *The Hungry and the Fat* as being “explicitly post-Merkel Germany” (Hahn, 2020). In highlighting the specifically German-centric political discourses on which the novels’ satire draw, these reviewers similarly imply the movement of the books between German and English and so the involvement of a translator. It must be noted that, in isolation, these implications are the weakest form of the implied translator, as writing in any language may be located within a German context or feature characters with German names. However, all instances of such implications within this corpus of professional reviews coincide with representations of the translator (Morrison, 2014a; Morrison, 2014b; Hahn, 2020; Tonkin, 2014; Gaisford, 2014; Mills, 2020; Leith, 2020; and Thorne, 2014) or with more specific references to the source-culture reception of *Look Who’s Back* (Strong Words, 2020; Jowett, 2014; and Oltermann, 2014). Thus, within the broader contexts of the reviews in which they appear, these references to the novels’ German content imply Bulloch’s translatorship by making visible the Germanness of the two literary texts.

Where the Germanness of the two novels more clearly implies the role of a translator is in discussions of the cultural discourses within which the original novels were situated. In the case of *Look Who’s Back*, these discussions primarily pertain to the ways in which Germany has come to terms with its National Socialist history. The primary reason for this is the controversial history of humour pertaining to this period given the role of German soldiers and citizens as the perpetrators of, or bystanders to, the Holocaust.⁵⁸ However, “increased public interest in *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* [the

⁵⁸ For full accounts of the development of National-Socialist-based humour in Germany, see Gölz (2012) and Strzelczyk (2012). For more on the position of *Er ist wieder da* in the development of German Hitler humour, see Freeth (2021).

process of coming to terms with the past] following German re-unification” resulted in increasing attempts to satirise contemporary responses to Hitler (Freeth, 2021, 120). Examples include the 1992 film *Schtonk!*, which satirises public interest in the so-called “Hitler-diaries”, and the “*Neueste Nationale Nachrichten*” TV feature, where actor Robert Missler performs monologues as Hitler to mock far right and neo-Nazi groups in modern Germany. Nevertheless, while Hitler-based humour has become more common in German film and television since reunification, Vermes’ decision to write the novel with Hitler as a first-person narrator pushed the boundaries of literary and cultural representations of National Socialism in contemporary Germany.⁵⁹

Consequently, the novel’s commercial success in Germany and the associated *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* discourse raised transnational interest even prior to the release of the English translation and so, upon its release, discussions thereof resurfaced.⁶⁰ Examples of such reviews are the articles *How Germans have fallen back in love with Hitler* (Hardach, 2014) and *Germany asks: is it OK to laugh at Hitler* (Oltermann, 2014). In both texts, Hardach and Oltermann review the novel alongside an overview of the history of Hitler-humour in Germany aimed at Anglophone British readers and contrast this to British comedy that uses Germany’s National Socialist history as material, such as *Monty Python* and *Fawlty Towers*. Thorne (2014) and Morrison (2014a and 2014b) make similar comparisons to Charlie Chaplin’s *The Great Dictator*. In such cases, these professional

⁵⁹ For instance, while Edgar Hilsenrath’s 1971 novel *Der Nazi & der Friseur* had previously given National Socialism a satirical treatment, he did not write from the first-person perspective of Hitler and the book was “notoriously difficult to publish in Germany” (c.f. Freeth, 2021, 122).

⁶⁰ As will be discussed in Chapter 5 when discussing the overlapping paratextual spaces of the versions of *Look Who’s Back* across different media, this can be understood as a form of what this thesis defines as *collateral paratextuality* in that responses to the original German novel in the British press can also influence the way the English translation is received.

reviewers make explicit the distinct cultural contexts in which the German novel and the English translation circulate, thereby implying that the novel exists across the two languages and so recognising the act of translation. Furthermore, that the British press reviews situate the text within a canon of works that prevents the subject matter of *Look Who's Back* from causing the same controversy for British readers as occurred in Germany emphasises the cultural aspects of literary translation, rather than focussing solely on linguistic elements or the idea of fluency. Thus, when Thorne (2014) argues that the satire of *Look Who's Back* is unsuccessful in British context as, "for all its play with taboo material, the novel feels inconsequential," and Poole (2014) states "the novel feels oddly cosy" rather than transgressive, these reviewers imply the process of translation by distancing the novel from British discourses and comedic traditions.

The process of marking the variations in cultural context for the source and target novels can similarly be seen in professional reviews for *The Hungry and the Fat*. Preston (2020) and Millen (2020), for instance, emphasise the novel's position within German refugee discourse rather than situating the novel within the broader European context of the migrant crisis in which Britain also played an active role. In their review and interview combined feature, Millen and Vermes even go as far as comparing the migrant crisis in Germany to Brexit in Britain, due to the extremely polarized nature of the two debates (2020). As with the situation of *Look Who's Back* within *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* discourse, Preston's and Millen's reviews situate *The Hungry and the Fat* in another cultural and linguistic context from a transnational perspective, thereby implying cultural transfer and the role of a translator in the novel's English-language release. In this way, then, the longer features produced by professional readers can be understood as broader discussions of difference between the novels' original German context and their new British audience. These discussions may not represent Bulloch and his role explicitly, but their existence implies the role of translation in the movement of literary texts between linguistic and cultural contexts.

The final way in which Bulloch's translatorship is implied in the professional reviews comes from references to the novels being translated into

languages other than German but that make no explicit reference to English or Bulloch. The first way in which this is achieved is through references to Vermes' international success and the volume of translation rights sold. Buckley and Frankl (2014), for instance, note on 1 April 2014 that *Look Who's Back* "is being translated into 28 languages", whilst Thorne (2014) states in late April that the novel has "been translated into 35 languages" and Jowett (2014) and Whitbourn (2014) give the figure as 38 languages. The discrepancies between the figures provided by different reviewers are interesting as the press release produced by MacLehose Press prior to the hardback release of *Look Who's Back* gave the figure as 38 languages. Nevertheless, in referring to the successful mass sale of translation rights, the reviewers imply the novel is a translation by foregrounding its international success, thereby positioning the book within a transnational frame of reference rather than focussing on the English-language context of *Look Who's Back* specifically. Indeed, that references to the sale of translation rights within the review of *Look Who's Back* are all accompanied by sales figures for *Er ist wieder da* further implies the translational relationship between the two.

The second are instances where Bulloch's translatorship is implied whilst reviewers make explicit reference to *Look Who's Back* being a translation. This can be seen in the capsule review from the Mail on Sunday's *EVENT* supplement (2014) where *Look Who's Back* is described as "translated from the German" and in Oltermann's feature (2014) in which he states the book "is now about to be published in English", a statement that is expanded in an image caption: "An English translation of Timur Vermes' Hitler satire *Look Who's Back* is to be published in April". In both cases, the passive verbal formation decouples the act of translation from the individual(s) responsible for the process and so only implies the translator's role in the English novel's production. These examples are the strongest ways in which Bulloch's translatorship is implied within the professional reviews as they make explicit reference to the process of translation. However, the positioning of Bulloch as an implied translator here indicates a lack of interest in the translator as a personified individual worthy of praise or consideration. Indeed, the frequency with which professional reviewers consider Vermes' novels from a

transnational perspective and refer to Vermees' international success as an author, coupled with the lack of representations of Bulloch as a personified figure discussed earlier in this section, provides further evidence that this is the case. Given that such editorial decisions reflect the publication's expectations of its own audience's interests, this then indicates that British readers are interested in the transnational perspectives and cultural exchange that occur when discussing translated literature — particularly when the books pertain to internationally relevant subject matter such as the history of the Second World War and the Mediterranean migrant crisis. However, the agents involved in the publication processes and details of their work are of far less interest, hence Bulloch being implied in almost twice as many reviews (26) as he was represented (14).

Absent translator

In terms of professional reviews in which Bulloch is completely absent, this corpus contains four. What is notable is that all four are capsule reviews of *Look Who's Back* and so are the shortest form of professional review published in the British press. Whilst two mention the fact that Hitler wakes up in Berlin in 2011 (Coulson, 2014 and Wilson, 2014b), thereby situating the events of *Look Who's Back* in contemporary Germany, this does nothing to either imply or represent the role of Bulloch and translation in the novel's publication in English as the reference comes in isolation and novels in any language may be set in Berlin. Similarly, Harding (2014) makes one reference to the narrator's intention to save "the German people" but does nothing more to position the novel within political or cultural discourses relating to contemporary German society. Finally, the closest Heathcote and Groskop (2014) come to referring to the novel's German context is the statement that Hitler wakes up "ranting about the horrors of a modern, tolerant Europe" — a description that detaches the novel from any national context and so similarly renders Bulloch and his translatorship absent.

It would be easy to argue that these absences are due to the brevity required of capsule reviews and so indicate the little value that professional reviewers place on translation as, when word counts are restricted, the

details of translation are seemingly omitted. Yet, other capsule reviews in this corpus imply that the novel is a translation (Mail on Sunday, 2014) and infer its German reception (Monocle, 2014), even within publications that typically don't focus on literary content, such as the *Sunday Sport* and *Weekend Sport* (Wise 2014a and Wise 2014b). Thus, a requirement for brevity cannot be understood as a cause of Bulloch's paratextual absence. Nevertheless, Bulloch is only represented as the translator in one of the capsule reviews featured in this corpus (Wilson, 2014a), where the simple "translated by Jamie Bulloch" is given along with other bibliographic information.⁶¹ Thus, in the shortest reviews of *Look Who's Back*, Bulloch had limited visibility and was more likely to be absent from the paratextual space than in longer-form reviews.

Bulloch's visibility in paratexts created by strategic readers

The corpus of strategic reviews on NetGalley

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the main challenge when delineating a corpus of strategic reviews is identifying whether a strategic relationship exists between the reader-cum-paratext-creator and the publisher. To circumvent this challenge, this chapter focuses on reviews for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* published on the website NetGalley.co.uk. The corpus comprises 29 reviews, 22 of which pertain to *Look Who's Back*

⁶¹ Notably, Bulloch was not implied or represented in Wilson's capsule review published in *The Times* (2014b) and so the addition of "translated by Jamie Bulloch" to the bibliographic details in *London Magazine* (Wilson, 2014a) appears to be an institutional, rather than authorial, decision.

and seven to *The Hungry and the Fat*.⁶² As a review platform, NetGalley is a company within the Firebrand Technologies family of book-publishing software and services that seeks to “help publishers and authors promote digital review copies to book advocates and industry professionals” (c2021). To this end, publishers pay NetGalley to make digital copies of books available to readers in exchange for “buzz”, “feedback” and “reviews”, whilst reviewers, bloggers, librarians, booksellers, educators, journalists or any “other member of the media” can sign up for a free account and begin requesting review copies from publishers (NetGalley, c2022a). Alternatively, if publishers have existing relationships with particular reviewers, they can use direct links to provide contacts with access to digital advance copies through the NetGalley platform. In terms of the definition of strategic readers outlined above, then, reviews posted on NetGalley clearly fall within this category both in terms of the inclusion of such reviews in publisher’s marketing and publicity strategies and the strategic relationships developed between such readers and the publishers from whom they receive free eBooks.

However, the construction of a corpus of strategic reviews from NetGalley is not without its own challenges. In the case of *Look Who’s Back*, for instance, the now archived NetGalley listing for the novel states that 57 members rated the novel, generating an overall rating of four stars (out of five). Clicking on the “See all member reviews” button, however, loads a page featuring only one review (see Figure 17 below). When asked, NetGalley confirmed that while “there were additional reviews” posted on the site, “it appears that the publisher has chosen to not publicly display all of the reviews for this book” and they were “unable to speak to why” (personal

⁶² As will be discussed in the following paragraphs, the reviews for *Look Who’s Back* analysed within this corpus were provided by MacLehose Press and are no longer publicly available. As such, these reviews have been pseudonymised and included in Appendix A of this thesis. Where reviews of *The Hungry and the Fat* are discussed, they pertain to content that remains publicly available on the NetGalley site and so are referenced as such (NetGalley c2022b and NetGalley c2022c).

communication, 2021). For their part, MacLehose Press provided a Word document containing reviews for *Look Who's Back* harvested from NetGalley featuring 26 ratings, 25 of which were accompanied by review text. This corpus presents several issues, however. Firstly, it is unclear what parameters were used to select this set of 26 reviews out of the 57 total reported on the NetGalley listing for *Look Who's Back*.⁶³ The only additional metadata provided is the reviewer's name and their role in the literary industry (such as "Reviewer" or "Bookseller at" X bookshop), so details of exactly when these reviews were published and archived remain elusive. Notably, however, calculating a mean average of the review scores given in MacLehose Press's NetGalley document gives an average star rating of 3.5, which can either be seen as lower than that given on the NetGalley page or, if rounded to a whole number, the same. Thus, the selection of these reviews does not indicate an attempt to record a more positive overview of the novel's reception than found within the overall corpus of NetGalley reviews. Consequently, despite the unknown parameters with which this selection of the NetGalley reviews were recorded, this corpus will be used as a sample within the forthcoming qualitative analysis that is representative of the novel's reception on NetGalley. However, this is done with the explicit acknowledgment that Bulloch's visibility may have differed within the reviews not made available to the project either by MacLehose Press or through the NetGalley platform.

The second challenge posed by using NetGalley stems from this thesis' focus on the British context in which *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were translated and published. In the case of the reviews provided by MacLehose Press, the metadata included information on the reviewer beyond their NetGalley account type. Thus, reviews are accompanied by details such as "Reviewer, Bookseller at WHSmith" and "University of Queensland, AUS". With this metadata, then, four of the NetGalley reviews

⁶³ Attempts were made to find out through contact with MacLehose Press but these went unanswered.

for *Look Who's Back* provided by MacLehose Press can be excluded from this corpus as they were written by readers outside of this thesis' British focus. This level of detail, however, is not publicly viewable on the NetGalley platform, with only the user's NetGalley account type being listed (e.g., "Reviewer" or "Educator"). Given, then, that MacLehose Press did not provide a similar document containing NetGalley reviews for *The Hungry and the Fat*, details of the reviewers that reveal their geographical location are not available for the six reviews posted on NetGalley for *The Hungry and the Fat*. As such, the focus solely on a British context cannot be guaranteed within this corpus.

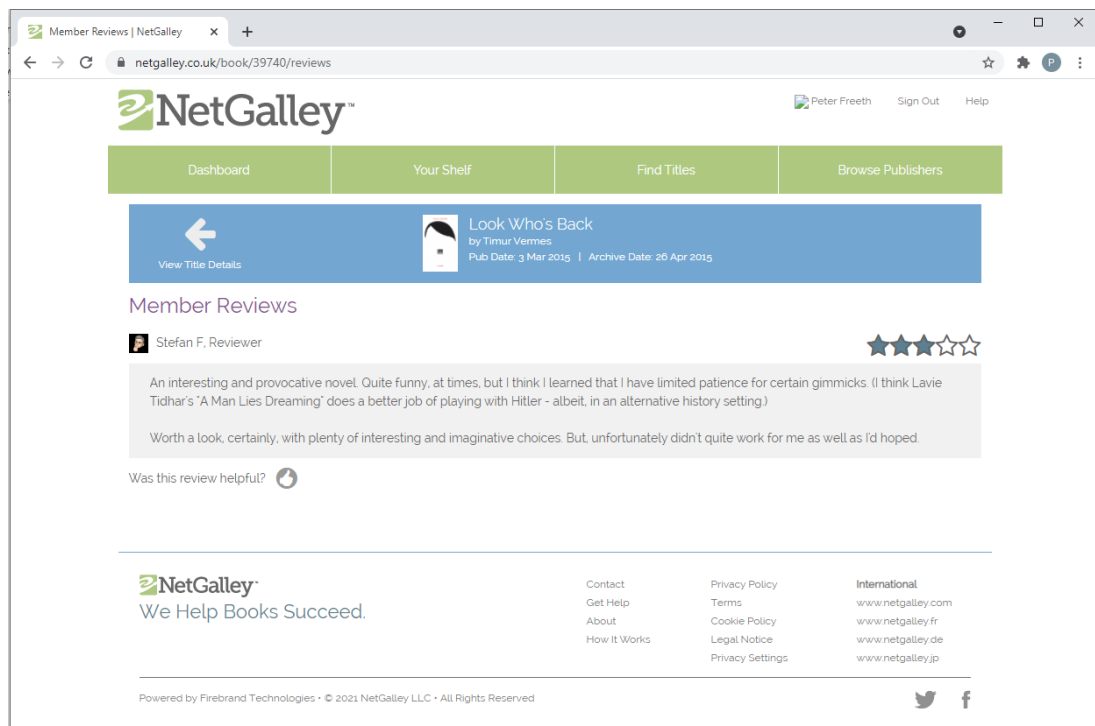


Figure 17 – The “archived” reviews page for *Look Who's Back* on NetGalley.co.uk as of December 2021

Nevertheless, the significance of strategic readers as reviewers within the publishing ecosystem means that this chapter will still include an analysis of Bulloch's position within these reviews. Doing so facilitates a comparative discussion of Bulloch's visibility across the different forms of reader reviews with a corpus of strategic reviews in which this strategic relationship is completely transparent. Given the issues with this dataset highlighted here,

however, this analysis will take the form of a qualitative overview rather than the more in-depth analyses undertaken with the professional and amateur reviews. Doing so not only allows this chapter to reflect on Bulloch's visibility within reviews created by different readers but also acknowledges the transnational nature of MacLehose Press' marketing and publicity campaigns, despite the thesis's overarching focus on the British context.

Participant and represented translator

Within the strategic reviews posted on NetGalley, Bulloch is neither a participant in the paratextual space nor is his translatorship represented by any of the reviewers. This means that within the 29 reviews left by the strategic readers who left a review on NetGalley in exchange for a free (digital) copy of the novel, there are no references either to Jamie Bulloch or the figure of a "translator". In the case of *Look Who's Back*, this mirrors the NetGalley listing through which the book was offered, which comprises content found within MacLehose Press's title information sheet (TIS) for the novel. This includes the blurb, which is found under the "Description" heading; the three translated quotes from German outlets referring to the original novel *Er ist wieder da* (on NetGalley under the heading "Advance Praise"); and the "Marketing Plan" bullet points, two thirds of which are variations on those found under the "sales points" heading on the TIS (see Figure 18).⁶⁴

The difference between the TIS and the NetGalley listing for *Look Who's Back* is that the former features other content which represents Bulloch as the translator of the text, such as the subheading "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" beneath the novel's title and the inclusion of a short biographic note under the author/translator" heading, whilst Bulloch is

⁶⁴ The first and second bullet points under "Marketing Plan" are almost identical to the TIS (see Figure 18) whilst the final bullet point, "Backed by a nationwide pre-publication PR and advertising campaign" is unique to the NetGalley listing.

not represented as the translator of the novel on the NetGalley listing. As such, whilst the copy found on NetGalley can be traced back to the production-side paratextual creation processes outlined in the previous chapter, Bulloch's visibility on the NetGalley platform is affected by the streamlining of content from the TIS to fit the platform's layout.

Consequently, the strategic readers who accessed an advance review copy of the novel through NetGalley fail to refer to Bulloch or the figure of a translator in their reviews in the same way as the production-side paratexts made available within this space. This demonstrates the iterative nature of paratextual creation, with the failure to represent Bulloch in reception-side paratexts being traceable back to the production-side materials made available to those readers.

In the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, however, the blurb featured on both the TIS and the NetGalley listing ends with the words "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" (see Figure 19). Here, then, the fact that no NetGalley reviewers represent Bulloch as the translator within their reviews does not stem from reproducing MacLehose Press' paratextual framing because Bulloch was represented in this space. One potential cause for this failure to represent Bulloch by the strategic reviewers stems from the layout of book pages within the NetGalley website, whereby the platform prioritises authorship by only naming authors at the top of a listing. Conversely, MacLehose Press's inclusion of the text "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" comes as the last text in the "Description" field towards the bottom of the page. These factors are relevant because the button that users click to request a copy of a book on NetGalley is found at the top of the listing beneath the title, subheading and author (see Figure 20, an active NetGalley listing for a newer title from MacLehose Press). The structure of the website therefore draws users away from the paratextual materials found further down the page and towards the top where actions can be taken. Thus, while Bulloch was represented within this paratextual space, his absence from the title overview section of the NetGalley and the subsequent failure of strategic readers to represent Bulloch in their reviews demonstrates the significance of layout and formatting in achieving visibility.

NetGalley Peter Freeth Sign Out Help

Dashboard Your Shelf Find Titles Browse Publishers

Look Who's Back

by Timur Vermes

This title was previously available on NetGalley and is now archived.

Buy this Book on

Pub Date 3 Mar 2015 | Archive Date 26 Apr 2015
Quercus Books, MacLehose Press
General Fiction (Adult)

LOOK WHO'S BACK

A NOVEL

Description

Summer 2011 Berlin. Adolf Hitler wakes up on a patch of ground, alive and well.

Things have changed - no Eva Braun, no Nazi party, no war. Hitler barely recognises his beloved Fatherland, filled with immigrants and run by a woman. People certainly recognise him, though - as a brilliant, satirical impersonator who refuses to break character. The unthinkable, the inevitable, happens, and the ranting Hitler takes off, goes viral, becomes a YouTube star, gets his own TV show, becomes someone who people listen to. All while he's still trying to convince people that yes, it really is him, and yes, he really means it.

Look Who's Back is a black and brilliant satire of modern media-bloated society, seen through the eyes of the Führer himself. Adolf is by turns repellent, sympathetic and hilarious, but always fascinating. *Look Who's Back* is outrageously clever, outrageously funny - and outrageously plausible.

Advance Praise

"Shockingly plausible" *Die Zeit*
"Uproariously funny" *Stern Magazin*
"A merciless satire on our media-obsessed society" n-tv.de

Marketing Plan

- A phenomenal bestseller that has set the cultural agenda in Germany since publication in September 2012
- Film rights and translation rights to seventeen languages sold
- Backed by a nationwide pre-publication PR and advertising campaign

Available Editions

EDITION Hardcover	Available on NetGalley
ISBN 9781782067832	Send To Kindle (MOBI)
PRICE £8.99 (GBP)	Download (EPUB)

Average rating from 57 members [See all member reviews >](#)

Readers who liked this book also liked:

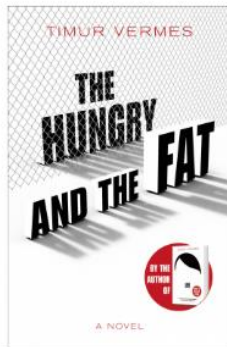
- Amor Towles**
The Lincoln Highway
21 Oct 2021
- Somerset**
1 Jul 2021
- This Lovely City**
12 Mar 2020
- ROBERT HARRIS**
V2
17 Sep 2020
- LEARWIFE**
4 Nov 2021
- Sarah Moss**
The Fell
11 Nov 2021

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Contact Get Help About How It Works Privacy Policy Terms Cookie Policy Legal Notice Privacy Settings International www.netgalley.com www.netgalley.fr www.netgalley.de www.netgalley.jp

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Figure 18 – The NetGalley.co.uk listing for *Look Who's Back*



The Hungry and the Fat

A bold new satire by the author of LOOK WHO'S BACK
by Timur Vermes

This title was previously available on NetGalley and is now archived.

Buy this Book on



Pub Date 7 Jan 2021 | Archive Date 25 Jan 2021

Quercus Books, MacLehose Press

General Fiction (Adult)

Talking about this book? Use #TheHungryAndTheFat #NetGalley [More hashtag tips!](#)

Description

By the author of LOOK WHO'S BACK, a radical and bold satire in inequitable times.

"Whizz-bang energy and gleeful imaginative savagery" Sam Leith, *Guardian*

"More than mere satire, it's a book that engages deeply" Alex Preston, *Financial Times*

"An immensely enjoyable read" Daniel Hahn, *Spectator*

"Satirical, sharp, believable... Brilliant" Rick O'Shea, *RTE*

REFUGEE CAMPS IN AFRICA ARE SWELLING

And Europe has closed its borders. The refugees have no future, no hope, and no money to pay the vast sums now demanded by people smugglers. The only thing they have is time.

AND THEN AN ANGEL ARRIVES FROM REALITY TV.

When model and star presenter Nadeche Hackenbusch comes to film at the largest of the camps, one young refugee sees a unique opportunity: to organise a march to Europe, in full view of the media. Viewers are gripped as the vast convoy moves closer, but the far right in Germany is regrouping and the government is at a loss. Which country will halt the refugees in their tracks?

THE HUNGRY AND THE FAT

A devastating, close-to-the-knuckle satire about the haves and have-nots in our divided world by one of Europe's finest and most perceptive writers.

Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch

Available Editions

EDITION Other Format
ISBN 9781529400564
PRICE £8.99 (GBP)

Available on NetGalley

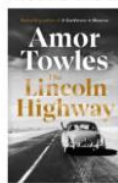
NetGalley Shelf App (PDF)
Send To Kindle (PDF)
Download (PDF)

Average rating from 6 members

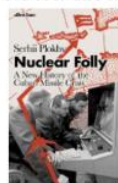


[See all member reviews](#)

Readers who liked this book also liked:



The Lincoln Highway
21 Oct 2021



Nuclear Folly
13 Apr 2021



Island Reich
30 Nov 2021



Dinner Party
10 Sep 2021

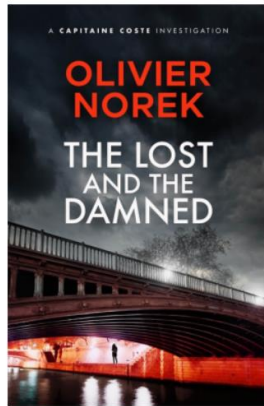


Something New Under the Sun
3 Aug 2021



Seven Down
30 Nov 2021

Figure 19 – The NetGalley.co.uk listing for *The Hungry and the Fat*



Like the Cover? 30 0

The Lost and the Damned

Sunday Times Crime Book of the Month
by Olivier Norek

Request

Pub Date 11 Nov 2021 | Archive Date Not set

Quercus Books, MacLehose Press

Mystery & Thrillers



Talking about this book? Use #TheLostandtheDamned #NetGalley. [More hashtag tips!](#)

Description

This impressive debut is slick, sick and not for the faint-hearted. The first 30 pages contain what must be one of the most shocking scenes ever committed to paper. It will make you cry out (for more) - Mark Sanderson, *The Times* Crime Book of the Month

Introducing Olivier Norek: Former police officer, writer on *Spiral* and an award-winning, million-copy bestseller.

A corpse that wakes up during the autopsy.

A case of spontaneous human combustion.

There is little by the way of violent crime that Capitaine Victor Coste has not encountered in his fifteen years policing France's most notorious suburb - but nothing like this.

As he struggles to find a link between the cases, he receives a pair of anonymous letters highlighting the fates of two women whose deaths were never explained - two more blurred faces among the ranks of the lost and the damned.

Why were their murders not investigated? Coste is not the only one asking that question. Someone out there believes justice is best served on a cold mortuary slab.

What readers are saying about *The Lost and the Damned*

You can see the similarities with the TV series *Spiral*, which can only be a major positive!

A hard hitting and gritty French crime read that makes an impact.

A great thriller, sardonic, humorous, dark.

I loved this book. Well written and had an authentic feel to it. A complete page turner.

Translated from the French by Nick Caistor

Available Editions

EDITION Other Format
ISBN 9780857059642
PRICE £8.99 (GBP)

Available on NetGalley

NetGalley Shelf App (EPUB)
Send To Kindle (MOBI)
Download (EPUB)

Average rating from 8 members



[See all member reviews >](#)

Figure 20 – The NetGalley.co.uk listing for *The Lost and the Damned* (Norek, 2021)

Implied translator

Not only did none of the strategic reviewers represent Bulloch as the translator, fewer than half (12 of the 29) implied the presence of a translator. In nine cases, this was achieved through the inclusion of verbs or nouns stemming from the root “translat”. Examples of verbal constructions include “Oh the joy when I heard this gem had finally been translated into English!” (NetGalley X), “Translating this novel into English must have been incredibly challenging” (NetGalley O), “The whole thing was very well written and translated” (Chrys A on NetGalley, c2022b) and “the book was very well translated into English idiom” (NetGalley B). Within a similarly positive review of *Look Who’s Back*, NetGalley W refers to the novel as a “translation from the German”. In such cases, the use of translation and translate within these strategic reviews positions the process as positive, thereby implying Bulloch’s success in his translation of the two novels.

References to the fact that the books are translations can also be found in negative reviews. NetGalley E, for instance, argues that “the humour just didn’t translate well” and NetGalley P and NetGalley U claim the humour got “lost in translation”, whilst Alexander H (NetGalley, c2022b) reflected on their failure to finish *The Hungry and the Fat* with the question: “perhaps a translation issue but I enjoyed his first book enough”. Notably, where the professional reviewers represented the translator within positive assessments of the novels and then switched to implying the role of a translator when expressing a negative sentiment, strategic reviewers only went as far as implying the role of a translator in the novels’ production whether their review was positive or negative. Thus, despite their proximity to the publishing industry, the strategic reviewers analysed here differ from the professional reviewers who represented Bulloch either by giving bibliographic details or within a positive assessment of the translation.

The other way in which the novel’s status as a translation is implied in reviews by strategic readers stems from references to the two novels’ German context. As with the professional reviewers, the commercial success and associated controversy of *Er ist wieder da* in Germany are

mentioned in three of the reviews. For example, NetGalley S simply refers to novel being “a huge hit in Germany” whilst NetGalley B and NetGalley X go further by embedding this success within the context of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* discourse. In this way, the discourse surrounding cultural representations of National Socialism and humour expanded beyond the professional reviews and results in strategic readers similarly implying the process of translation by discussing German cultural discourse through a transnational lens. Where discussion of the German context differs, however, is in references to loss of meaning — specifically in reference to *Look Who’s Back*. For instance, NetGalley U, NetGalley H, NetGalley B and NetGalley W all comment on the need for a deeper understanding of contemporary German culture, reflecting the novel’s setting and references to German popular culture throughout. Thus, despite the novel’s attempt to satirise modern television and media culture, the reviewer’s identification of the setting as a potential obstruction to enjoyment of the novel breaks any illusion of originality around the English-language novel and so implies it is a translation. In a more positive take, NetGalley L states “I suspect that many readers in Britain will know even less than readers in Germany”, thereby implying involvement of a translator by making the novel’s existence in two different language cultures explicit in his review. Thus, either by referring to the novels’ reception and position within German cultural discourse, or to the German-specific content found within the novels, strategic reviewers implied the involvement of a translator in the English-language novel’s production in similar ways to professional reviewers.

Interestingly, all three of the NetGalley reviewers who mention having read other reviews or recommendations in the press (NetGalley L, NetGalley P and NetGalley B) implied process of translation. Only NetGalley B refers to reviewers by name, citing Goodwin’s (2014) interview with Vermes and Poole’s (2014) review for *The Guardian*. Both articles foreground the novel’s controversy in Germany and the ethics of National-Socialism-based humour — a topic which also dominates NetGalley B’s review. NetGalley L on the other hand, chastises “those reviewers published in the UK’s national newspapers” as they “had simply not read this novel”. By then writing a positive review of the novel, NetGalley L challenges the narrative put forward

in the professional reviews he read and even goes so far as to state “This is the first book I've read this year that score's [sic] an 8 out of 10. Last year, I read just one and that was 'War and Peace'. This novel is that good.” Conversely, NetGalley P questions the “recommendations” she had seen in “various trade magazines” with a negative review in which she ponders whether the humour was “lost in translation”. Notably, this desire to challenge the authority of other paratextual creators spanned both positive and negative assessments of the novel as can be seen in the cases of the reviews by NetGalley L and NetGalley P. Thus, these reviews demonstrate the iterative nature of reception-side paratextual production, whereby readers can either propagate the narratives found in other paratextual spaces by reproducing them in their own paratexts or call them into question.

Absent translator

Within the 29 strategic reviews analysed here, Bulloch and his translatorship were completely absent from 17. Five of these are reviews for *The Hungry and the Fat*, for which this corpus features only six in total.⁶⁵ As discussed in relation to Figure 19, this is notable as Bulloch was represented within the production-side materials found on the NetGalley platform. Thus, these strategic reviews did not reproduce Bulloch’s visibility within the paratextual materials used to frame *The Hungry and the Fat* on the platform through which they accessed the novel. As highlighted in prior discussion of the challenges faced by research into strategic reviews, no metadata is available for these users other than NetGalley’s classification of them as “Reviewers”. Nevertheless, given that such strategic readers will then go on to publish reviews of the novel that subsequently frame the literary text for other readers, Bulloch’s absence within their NetGalley reviews is significant in

⁶⁵ The other review implies Bulloch’s role by stating “The whole thing was very well written and translated but it wasn't what I expected” (Chrys A on NetGalley, c2022b).

understanding how subsequent readers will then approach the novel. Furthermore, the fact that Bulloch was absent within this sample of reviews that includes one-star, three-star and four-star ratings indicates that this absence does not correlate to a positive or negative review within this small corpus.

In the case of *Look Who's Back*, the twelve reviews in which Bulloch is absent similarly span reviews from two to five stars, thereby corroborating this finding from the strategic reviews of *The Hungry and the Fat*.⁶⁶ The primary difference between the strategic reviews for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* is that the former was reviewed by a wider variety of strategic readers, with the strategic reviews for *Look Who's Back* that rendered Bulloch completely absent comprising five written by reviewers, five by booksellers, one by an individual who is both a reviewer and a bookseller, and one by a librarian. The presence of booksellers and a librarian is notable here as these figures would not typically feature in dichotomisations of reviewing culture into amateur and professional because their position within the life cycle and public life of literature are not reliant on recorded review outputs. However, such figures play key roles in the transmission of literary texts through their positioning as experts who can guide readers based on the reader's own interests and reading habits, as well as their own knowledge of the literary field. Consequently, the ways in which such individuals conceive and discuss translation processes within the British literary field are important signifiers of the ways in which publishers promote translated texts to the industry; their own assumptions of what readers want to know or what will appeal to them; and the interactions that they have had with British readers. Thus, the absence of Bulloch and his translatorship in six reviews written by booksellers and librarians indicates the lack of value placed on translator visibility within their roles as mediators between the publishing industry and readers. Indeed, even within the seven

⁶⁶ No one-star reviews were featured within the dataset provided by MacLehose Press, making a two-star rating the lowest within this corpus.

NetGalley reviews by booksellers and librarians who implied the presence of a translator, this was achieved by discussing the novel in terms of the act of translation rather than the agents who undertake this translation work (in this case, Jamie Bulloch). While this dataset is limited, the findings here indicate the ways in which intermediaries between the production and reception of translated literary shape the visibility of translators through their own engagement and creativity within the paratextual space.

Bulloch's visibility in paratexts created by amateur readers

The corpus of amateur reviewers on Amazon.co.uk

Finally, then, I will now analyse Bulloch's visibility in the reviews created by amateur readers. This corpus comprises customer reviews from the Amazon.co.uk listing for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* and contains 141 of the former and 0 of the latter.⁶⁷ The absence of reviews for *The Hungry and the Fat* stems from the three major constraints used when delineating this corpus, which have been applied because reviews published by professional- and strategic readers are concentrated around the pre-publication and initial post-publication periods of the first, hardback edition of a novel. The first constraint is that only reviews published within the first year of publication will be included, as paperbacks for both books were published approximately one year after the initial hardback's release. Secondly, and as a result of this, reviews included in this corpus pertain to the hardback, "Kindle" eBook and original audiobook editions of the text and exclude any

⁶⁷ All 141 reviews can be accessed via unique URLs and so are referenced as such in the Bibliography of this thesis.

early reviews of the paperback edition.⁶⁸ This distinction mirrors the professional and strategic reviewers' focus on the initial release of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* rather than their paperback editions, thereby creating consistency throughout this chapter's analysis. Finally, only reviews marked as "verified" purchases on Amazon will be included in the corpus. The "verified purchase" description is given to reviews posted by accounts who purchased the book through Amazon, thereby ensuring that such content falls in the category of "amateur" readers defined above rather than reviews posted to Amazon by strategic readers who received their copies for free to boost Amazon sales rankings prior to release (c.f. Thompson, 2010, 250-251). Thus, it is for these reasons that the corpus consists of 141 reviews of *Look Who's Back* and 0 reviews for *The Hungry and the Fat*. This absence of any amateur reviews for *The Hungry and the Fat* reflects a far lower volume of reviews overall: at the time of writing (December 2021), a total of six reviews have been posted to the Amazon.co.uk page for *The Hungry and the Fat* by UK-based users, (compared to over 750 on the Amazon page for *Look Who's Back*) and only one is registered as a "Verified purchase". However, this verified review is excluded from the present corpus as it was posted outside of the initial one-year publication window.

The decision to focus on amateur-created paratexts found on this particular platform despite the absence of suitable reviews for *The Hungry and the Fat* stems from the historical role played by Amazon in cultivating online review culture within contemporary digital platforms, the ubiquity of Amazon as a

⁶⁸ Here, it is worth noting that the eBook features the same front- and backmatter as the hardback codex. When describing the original audiobook, this refers to the unabridged reading of the novel by Julian Rhind-Tutt that was published simultaneously alongside the hardback and eBook versions on 3 April 2014 by Quercus (of which MacLehose Press is an imprint). This audiobook retains many of the production-side paratexts found in the print editions, including the translator's note, bibliographical details for the novel including the fact that Bulloch was the translator, and the listing of copyright holders for novel and its translation. All these elements are read at the end of the audiobook.

retail platform (particularly in European and Anglophone contexts) and the power Amazon holds as a retailer in the contemporary book market (c.f. Thompson, 2021, 141-171). While other British online retailers similarly feature reviews in their product listings, most notably the UK's largest book-selling retail chain *Waterstones*, Amazon's market share renders the website an important paratextual route towards literary texts frequently taken by a significant number of readers. The translator's visibility on Amazon.co.uk, therefore, gives insight into the ways these two translated texts have been understood, framed and reflected upon by amateur readers. Furthermore, the focus on customer reviews here allows links to be drawn between this chapter and the subsequent analysis of Amazon as a collateral paratextual space in Chapter 5.

Participant translator

The corpus of amateur reviews analysed here comprises 141 "verified" reviews posted on the Amazon.co.uk listing for *Look Who's Back*. Within this space, Bulloch neither claims authorship of a review posted on the listing, nor do any reviews reference direct contact with Bulloch or the inclusion of content taken directly from him, for instance if they had asked him a question via social media. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, there are areas of an Amazon.co.uk listing for books such as *Look Who's Back* in which translators can become participants in the paratextual space. However, there are no such opportunities within the customer reviews section of the novel's Amazon.co.uk listing and so Bulloch is not positioned as a participant translator within this space.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ The type of opportunity referenced here would include, for instance, the ability to endorse another user's review by "liking" their post or to respond to the reviews of other users as can be done on the Amazon-owned bookish community website GoodReads.

Represented translator

Of the 141 “verified” customer reviews posted in the year following *Look Who’s Back’s* publication in Britain, only 4 explicitly represent Bulloch or the figure of a translator within their reviews. The first point to note about this finding is that none of these references represent the personified figure of Jamie Bulloch as an individual. Rather, these amateur reviewers refer only to the abstract figure of “the translator”. For customers buying the book through Amazon and returning to the site to post a “verified” review, then, the individual identity of the translator was not significant enough to their consumption of the novel to result in Bulloch being named in their reviews. The absence of Bulloch as a personified figure in these amateur-reader-created paratexts reflects Bulloch’s absence from many of the paratextual spaces used to market and promote the book to such readers, such as his absence from the novel’s front cover and the subsequent trailers and social media posts based on this design seen in the previous chapter. Here, then, the iterative nature of paratextual creation results in Bulloch’s paratextual absence as a personified figure in much of the marketing and publicity for *Look Who’s Back* being reproduced by the amateur readers who approached the novel through these thresholds.

It should be noted that, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, Bulloch is named explicitly in eight reviews posted to Amazon.co.uk that fall outside of this corpus, either because they were posted more than a year after the novel was published or because the reviews are not verified as coming from users who purchased the book through Amazon. Indeed, some users, such as TripFiction (2020) and Laura Hartley (2020), can be identified as strategic readers thanks to their status as bloggers. What is significant about the lack of any representations of Jamie Bulloch as a personified translator in the corpus analysed in this chapter, then, is that these amateur readers were creating paratexts within the novel’s first year of publication and were doing so primarily within the discourse surrounding the novel that was created by the public-facing, production-side paratexts and the reviews from professional or strategic reviewers with a proximity to publishing industry. This, therefore, demonstrates the limited visibility that Bulloch had in the

novel's public-facing paratextual space upon its initial release and the way in which textual receivers can reproduce the existing paratextual narratives when creating their own reception-side paratexts.

Where the four amateur reviewers represent the figure of the translator in their reviews, they do so either in terms of Bulloch's success in translating the novel or in reference to the beneficial presence of the translator's note. In the case of the former, user AnnaLivia describes Bulloch as "obviously very good" (2015) whilst K DICKENS argues that Bulloch "clearly handled" the Berlin dialect found in the original German "well" (2014). In both cases, positive assessments of the novel are accompanied by an acknowledgement that a translator was involved in the novel's publication in English. This broader understanding of the translator as a cultural mediator in the novel's movement between German and English is then also invoked by AnnaLivia who describes Bulloch's translator's note as "useful". This sentiment was shared by the two other users who referred to a "translator" in their reviews, Richards (2014) and Ryuto (2014), who felt the translator's note should come before the novel as "some of the German-specific humour will become clearer". As such, where Bulloch is represented as the abstract figure of "the translator" in these amateur reviews, this visibility is tied either to an enjoyable reading experience or his mediation between the novel's original publishing context and an English-speaking audience through the inclusion of his translator's note. Interestingly, this mirrors the representations of Bulloch within the professional reviews, which similarly represented Bulloch in the paratextual space in positive assessments of the novel or spoke favourably of his translator's note in more critical appraisals of the book. As such, the tendency to avoid representing the translator within negative reviews spans both professional and amateur reviewing practice, despite the latter's distance from the literary production processes and circles in which translators may circulate.

Implied translator

The need for cultural mediation between the novel's original German context and Anglophone readers is, however, made more explicit in the amateur

reviews that imply the presence of a translator in *Look Who's Back*. Of the 141 reviews in this corpus, only 36 imply the presence of translator Bulloch. Within these 36 (two of which also represented the abstract figure of the translator), 16 refer to the notion of loss, particularly in terms of book's humour (such as Neil, 2014), and that the novel often "covered topics which were too intrinsically German for me to appreciate in full" (John Reddish, 2014). Six reviewers even go so far as to include the phrase "lost in translation" in their reviews.⁷⁰ The fact that almost half of the reviews that imply the presence of the translator do so within the negative context of loss indicates that, despite his efforts to creatively rewrite the humour of the novel for English-speaking audiences, Bulloch's strategies failed to domesticate the novel enough to satisfy the expectations of these readers. This is notable as the assumption that the novel's humour fell flat due solely to the novel being a translation from German indicates the general negativity with which translated texts are met by amateur British readers. This is further demonstrated by the comparatively low number of positive assessments explicitly attributing the novel to a translator compared to the volume of negative assessments that refer to the translation process as resulting in loss.

Similarly, users such as Bruce62 (2014), johew (2014), colin rees (2014) and markw (2014) invoke the need for cultural mediation between the source text and the target text by commenting on their surprise that *Look Who's Back* is a German book "that is funny" (Bruce62, 2014), with several such references being made to "a national stereotype that the Germans do not have a sense of humour" (johew, 2014). In doing so, these amateur reviewers invoke many of the challenges Bulloch himself has described when translating humour in German literature, with Bulloch arguing that German literature is typically categorised as "serious, weighty, meditative, brooding, melancholy" and that British readers often pigeon-hole Germans as "a humourless

⁷⁰ Dred1956 (2014), James Singleton (2014), Neil (2014), L. Tait (2014), SarahPiano (2014) and Dobi Ho Su (2015).

bunch” (Bulloch and Langton, 2017). In terms of the visibility of the translator, however, these reviews can be understood in two ways. On one hand, acknowledging the German origins of the novel implies the process of translation in its English-language publication and assessments of the novel’s humour as “definitive proof that, contrary to negative stereotypes, the Germans do indeed have a sense of humour!” (markw, 2014) do so in a positive light. On the other, a focus on the novel’s original German-language context prioritises original authorship along the lines of Hermans “illusion of equivalence” (2007), whereby these readers-cum-paratext-creators are framing the translated novel as though it were not mediated through Bulloch’s translation processes and so obscure the translator from view. Given that only three of the ten reviews containing the phrase “well written” also mention translation (Mozza Squirms 2014; Pete, 2014; and Dr Lex, 2015), this illusion largely veils Bulloch’s translatorship within amateur-reader-created reviews on Amazon even when said readers acknowledge the novel’s German origins.

Absent translator

The final finding from this corpus of Amazon customer reviews is the absence of any reference to translation or the translator in 103 of the 141 reviews. In my view, this finding can be attributed to two primary factors. Firstly, the relative absence of Bulloch from the marketing and promotional materials used to present the book to readers set a precedent for amateur readers whereby the fact that the novel’s status as a translation was not deemed relevant to its potential for success in the British market. As such, when amateur readers created their own paratextual materials they did so based on a reading experience in which translation was not a salient aspect of the novel’s identity, repeating this fact in their own paratexts. Rather, the narratives of laughing at Hitler and the relationship between Germany and its National Socialist history that were foregrounded in both production- and reception-side paratextual framings (c.f. Freeth, 2021, 122-123) also dominate Amazon’s amateur user reviews. In this way, the iterative process of paratextual creation means the translator’s presence in the production-

side paratexts influences their subsequent presence in the reception-side materials.

Secondly, the media coverage achieved both prior to (c.f. Freeth, 2021) and upon release pushed *Look Who's Back* towards a mainstream British readership. As such, the customers writing reviews for *Look Who's Back* fall more within a demographic of general readers than readers interested specifically in translated fiction. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, evidence for this can be seen in Amazon's recommendation algorithms which indicate readers who purchased *Look Who's Back* were interested in other mainstream English-language titles, whereas readers of *The Hungry and the Fat* were interested in other translated works (see the section Personalised paratextuality in Chapter 5 for more). Consequently, this corpus of amateur Amazon reviewers indicates that when translations find mainstream success in Britain, readers will approach them with the "illusion of equivalence" (Hermans, 2007), or an assumption that they are original English texts. Even in a case such as this, where Bulloch's name was printed on the rear cover of the novel and his translatorship is represented in the front- and backmatter of the novel, the figure of the translator and Bulloch's translatorship are largely absent from this amateur-reader-created space.

Conclusions

At the end of the previous chapter, I argued that a focus on paratexts created by receivers of a literary text would allow research into translator visibility to answer the question of what is being made visible, and what this visibility then communicates about the perception of translators and their professional work within the receiving culture. By analysing Bulloch's visibility across reception-side paratexts created by three distinct types of reader with differentiated relationships and proximities to the world of literary publishing, this chapter has several key findings. Firstly, representations of Bulloch and his translation of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were limited across reviews written by professional, strategic and amateur readers. Notably, despite the limitations on space and word length posed by

their position within traditional print media, professional reviewers represented Bulloch the most frequently, whilst amateur reviewers only represented the abstract figure of the translator (rather than naming Bulloch explicitly) and no strategic readers represented Bulloch or the figure of the translator at all. This indicates that Bulloch's translatorship and identity are of little interest to British readers working outside of the print media. Indeed, given that reception-side paratexts are simultaneously aimed at readers and are reflections on the creator's own reading experience, this indicates a lack of interest in the figure of the translator both in terms of the reviewer's own understanding of the novels and what they think is important to communicate to other readers.

Conversely, the second key finding of this chapter is that the act of translation was made visible in the reviews studied throughout. Across all three review types, this visibilisation of translation as a process typically occurred through references to the novels' original reception in Germany (particularly in the case of *Look Who's Back*), discussion of the German-centric content of the novels, or through passive verbal constructions explicitly referencing translation. In the case of the first two, this mirrors the narratives put forward by the production-side paratexts which framed the novels in terms of the commercial success and scandal surrounding Verme's novels in Germany, and the book's German settings. For *Look Who's Back* in particular, discussions of Verme's satirical approach to "the most taboo of subjects" (Verme, 2014, rear cover) dominates reception-side paratexts spanning newspaper features to NetGalley and Amazon reviews, thereby demonstrating the impact that reproducing production-side paratexts can have on a literary text's readership. Thus, where the figure of the translator is largely invisible within the reception-side paratexts studied here, the status of the two novels as translations that originated from another cultural and linguistic context was of interest and concern.

The making visible of the translation process by situating *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* within German cultural discourse from a transnational perspective was then furthered by references to translation in terms of loss. In such cases, the entrenchment of the novels' plots and satire within contemporary German culture resulted in confusion and a perceived

lack of humour, thereby demonstrating the third key finding: the more negative the assessment of the translation, the more abstract the position of the translator. This can be seen most clearly in the professional reviews that represented Bulloch as the personified translator beyond listing him as the translator as a bibliographic detail. In these five instances, the naming of Bulloch in the body of the review coincided with a positive assessment of the translation. In more critical reviews, reference is made solely to the abstract figure of the translator (as in Thorne, 2014), thereby detaching Bulloch's identity from the criticism, or the translator was implied rather than represented. A similar pattern was noted in the amateur reviews. In this case, only four reviewers represented Bulloch's translatorship and this was as the abstract figure of the translator in all cases. Nevertheless, such representations of Bulloch's translatorship accompanied a positive assessment of the novel (AnnaLivia, 2014 and K DICKENS, 2014) or praised for the translator's note that accompanies *Look Who's Back*, whilst negative reviews implied the involvement of the translator through discussions of the novel's humour and entertainment value being lost in translation. The strategic reviews from NetGalley challenge this finding somewhat, as none represented Bulloch or his translatorship, rather this was implied both in positive and negative assessments of the novels. Yet in the professional and amateur reviews, a pattern can be seen in more critical assessments of the novel in which readers distance their reviews from the figure of Bulloch to instead discuss translation as a passive process.

This finding raises interesting questions regarding the ethics of translator visibility and the relationship between visibility and critique. For instance, is visibility only desirable if it benefits the translator's personal or professional reputation? What impact would an increase in translator visibility within negative coverage of translations have on the individual or, more broadly, on the perception of translated literature for English-language readers? In Bulloch's case, he noted during interview that he can see whenever anyone in the world mentions a book that he has translated on Twitter using an application called TweetDeck (c.f. see Chapter 6). This application allows Bulloch to see whether readers like or dislike the novels and affords him a chance to interact with those readers. Consequently, Bulloch is not shy of

seeing negative criticism of his work in the digital space. Yet, given that his professional reputation as a competent and successful literary translator is key to his securing of future work, overly negative discourse pertaining to both him and his name has the potential to affect his status and income. In cases where translators are less established within the literary system or are less willing to step forward into public spaces, either on social media or at in person events (Bulloch's role therein will be discussed in Chapter 6), others may not be so willing to be made visible in paratextual spaces that speak negatively of their work. Indeed, Bulloch himself hypothesised during interview that "quite a lot of people who go into translation are quite quiet studious types who don't like [...] limelight". Consequently, ethical standpoints that call for increased translator visibility across the board, such as Venuti's (1995/2018), may not be desirable to such translators for whom a position within public discourse and recognition is unwelcome.

Finally, this chapter has demonstrated the value of identifying a category of reader, and reception-side-paratext creator, between professional and amateur: the strategic reader. Despite the difficulties in identifying and accessing reviews by such readers to analyse, the small sample of NetGalley reviews discussed within this chapter were of interest for several reasons. For instance, strategic readers serve as a rival source of literary expertise outside of the gatekeeping and editorial practices of professional literary criticism and so can challenge or reproduce paratextual narratives with interesting effects. In the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, for example, Bulloch was represented on the NetGalley listing but goes unnamed within the NetGalley reviews for the novel. These readers, therefore, undermine the visibility of Bulloch in the production-side paratexts through which they accessed the novel by positioning him as less visible within their own content. This undermining of other paratextual creators can similarly be seen in discussions of other reception-side paratexts. As discussed previously, for instance, one NetGalley reviewer argues that professional reviewers "had simply not read this novel" (NetGalley L, 2014), whilst another had seen "quite a few recommendations for this book in various trade magazines" but then describes *Look Who's Back* as "not as funny as I expected" (NetGalley P, 2014). Conversely, blogger NetGalley B noted in her review that she

“agree[s] with Steven Poole (Guardian review) that the satire here is not as effective as it might have been” (2014). Whilst their critical assessments of the two novels differ, these reviews demonstrate the ways in which reception-side paratextual creators can both challenge and reinforce the paratextual materials that framed their own encounter with the literary text. It should be noted that this practice can also be seen in the amateur reviews analysed within this chapter. However, amateur reviewers neither directly engaged with, nor explicitly referred to, press reviews in the same way. For instance, Dr Lex (2014) questioned the validity of others’ reviews but primarily focussed on other Amazon reviewers, whilst A. Finnimore (2014) and colin rees (2014) refer only to “a review” and “reviews” in general terms. In terms of translator visibility, then, the choice of NetGalley reviews as a dataset allowed this chapter to identify the ways in which intermediaries between literary producers and readers, such as booksellers and librarians, discuss literary texts and the translator’s position therein. Indeed, the absence of Bulloch or his translatorship within any of the NetGalley reviews analysed here is telling. For instance, in the case of booksellers and librarians, who take their own reading experiences and knowledge of literary texts to promote and recommend books, this absence indicates the lack of interest that amateur British readers have in the figure of the translator. This finding is corroborated by the corpus of Amazon.co.uk reviews for *Look Who’s Back* also studied here, in which only four amateur reviewers represented Bulloch out of 141. As such, the approach taken here provides new insights into translator visibility in the spaces between production and reception — a theme that will be developed further in the following two chapters of this thesis, which focus specifically on the impact of collateral paratextuality on the translator’s paratextual visibility.

Part III
Collateral paratextuality

Chapter 5 – Visibility in digital retail spaces: Collateral coalescence on Amazon.co.uk

Introduction

So far throughout this thesis, the visibility of the translator has been investigated within texts that were “consciously crafted” (Batchelor, 2018, 142) to form a paratextual relationship with a literary text. The present chapter, however, focuses on the digital retail platform Amazon, a paratextual space that lies outside of the consciously crafted realm of production- and reception-side materials studied in the previous chapters yet relies on the existence of both. It is at this point, then, that this thesis begins to investigate the translator’s visibility in what I have defined in Chapter 1 as *collateral* paratextual spaces. Through an exploration of the Amazon.co.uk listings for *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, this chapter argues that the platform’s collateral paratextuality destabilises the limited visibility achieved by, or bestowed upon, Bulloch across the consciously crafted paratextual materials. Indeed, as the iterative nature of both production- and reception-side paratextual creation proliferates into digital spaces controlled by the third parties, the coalescence of various paratextual constellations within a singular textual space and Amazon’s own mediation of this digital space further dilutes Bulloch’s visibility in the digital paratextual space.

As outlined in Chapter 1, *collateral paratextuality* is understood as a paratextual relationship that is formed inadvertently, in parallel or in addition to another and without conscious intervention. Such paratextual relationships are not, therefore, created or published with the intention that they form a paratextual relationship with a given literary text. Consequently, collateral paratextuality is positioned between the “consciously crafted” paratextual materials analysed in Chapters 3 and 4, and what Kathryn Batchelor describes as “broader context as well as happenstance”, which fall outside of the paratextual space (2018, 142). Defining and studying collateral paratextuality as a phenomenon outside of consciously crafted production- and reception-side practices is a requirement of the digital focus

taken throughout this thesis. Collateral paratextuality provides a lens through which to examine the individualised nature of the contemporary digital world, as well as the associated instability and incomparability of personalised paratextual spaces, within the present investigation into digital paratextual visibility. Indeed, a study of digital translator visibility that failed to consider collateral paratextuality would serve only to perpetuate pre-existing hierarchies of paratextual production that privilege authors and publishers, and ignore the potential ways that modern readers with access to the internet can approach literary texts. Furthermore, given Bielenberg's claim during interview that "Amazon sells more than 50% of all our books these days", the impact of digital retail spaces on the production, circulation and reception of translated literary texts has become an increasingly urgent area for further research — a gap this project seeks to fill. Thus, the ability to free paratextuality from any form of auctorial responsibility or abstract requirements for "conscious crafting" allows in depth analysis of Bulloch's visibility in the digital spaces where algorithmic content and hypertextual links defy existing definitions of the paratextual space.

Within the concept of collateral paratextuality, this chapter focuses on the British version of one of the world's largest digital book retailers, whose website incorporates several different forms of collateral paratextuality and demonstrates their potential to impact upon digital translator visibility: Amazon.⁷¹ As with the consciously crafted paratextual materials discussed in previous chapters, the discussion will be centred around Amazon.co.uk listings for Jamie Bulloch's English-language translations of Timur Vermes'

⁷¹ To create consistency with the consciously crafted paratextual materials discussed in section 1 of this thesis, the focus here will be on paratextual materials found on Amazon within a British context, which along with the US and China is one of the world's largest ecommerce markets (Basul, 2019). As such, the focus of this chapter more specifically is Amazon.co.uk, the British version of the platform. Nevertheless, the ubiquity of Amazon's platform design across various territories and language versions means that the insights gleaned from Amazon.co.uk within this chapter are also relevant to the product listings of literary texts within other regional versions of the Amazon website.

two novels *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. In terms of the choice of Amazon.co.uk for the present analysis, the primary reason is that Amazon.co.uk continues to serve as one of the largest retailers of books in the contemporary British market (Jones, 2021 and Thompson, 2021, 141-143). As such, Bielenberg noted during interview that Amazon is “very central” to MacLehose Press’ marketing strategies given the aforementioned statistic that 50% of the imprint’s sales come through Amazon.⁷² Indeed, books have formed an important part of Amazon’s business model since the company’s earliest expansion (Murray, 2018; Marcus, 2004) and so its hegemonic position within the world of online retail marks Amazon.co.uk as a significant, high-traffic digital space in a British context through which to explore both the boundaries of paratextuality and the issue of translator visibility in the digital literary sphere. Thus, the forthcoming analysis of Amazon.co.uk serves as both a demonstrative case study of the significance of collateral paratextuality and a window into the ways that parties outside of textual production or reception, such as retailers, can mediate and intervene in issues such as translator visibility.

In terms of the structure of the chapter, I will begin by positioning digital retail platforms such as Amazon as paratextual spaces and situating Amazon as a significant and demonstrative case study therein. In doing so, I will also note the similarities between this site and other digital retail spaces in the contemporary British market and the ways that such platforms challenge existing notions of paratextuality and translator visibility. Secondly, I will examine materials found on the Amazon.co.uk product listing pages for the two books for which Amazon is responsible but whose content was not created by Amazon, such as the “More about the author” section or their algorithmically generated product star ratings. Here, Amazon’s influence as a third-party platform owner and content creator will be discussed in relation to the impact of the company’s automatic processes on Bulloch’s position

⁷² Notably, Bielenberg did not state during interview whether this figure corresponds to the imprint’s sales just on the UK version of Amazon (co.uk) or across all versions of the site worldwide.

within this paratextual space. Finally, this chapter will investigate the impact of personalised paratextuality by means of algorithmically generated content and the impact that this personalised paratextuality has on the issue of translator visibility in the digital literary space. As such, this chapter seeks not only to demonstrate the significance of collateral paratextuality in the digital literary sphere but also to indicate the destabilising effect of Amazon on the position and role of the translator within the paratextual space.

Understanding digital retail websites as paratextual spaces

Before investigating the visibility of Jamie Bulloch within the Amazon.co.uk pages for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, we need to define digital retailer websites such as Amazon as paratextual spaces. The websites of digital retailers constitute a technological platform comprising a vast quantity of individual webpages including product listings, product collections and sales rankings. As discussed in Chapter 1, because these webpages are spatially identifiable, accessible, and differentiable through unique Uniform Resource Locators (URLs), they are understood here as individual texts that can both form distinct paratextual relationships with a literary text and function as co-texts that come together to form the retailer's website as a platform. As such, despite the hypertextual linking between pages, the impact of which will be explored in the coming discussion, the listings for the two literary texts and the individual pages for different versions therein are understood as separate texts in co-textual constellation with one another.

Conceptualising individual pages from retailers' websites that are distinguishable by individual URLs as unique texts is significant in understanding why the Amazon.co.uk listings for literary texts are collateral rather than consciously crafted paratextual spaces. Under the definition of paratextuality presented in Chapter 1, paratextual relationships are formed between texts. As texts, however, webpages on Amazon.co.uk comprise content crafted by various creators for which no single entity takes authorial responsibility or credit. For instance, in terms of Amazon listings for books,

the product description and image found at the top of the page come from the publisher who takes responsibility for listing the literary text on Amazon, whilst the customer reviews found at the bottom of the page are written and posted by individual site users with no collective identity or institutional affiliation. Furthermore, while Amazon is responsible for the platform's existence in the digital literary sphere and the form that pages within this platform take, thereby defining the type of content that can be featured therein, the site does not approve, moderate or curate the content found on individual product listings or pages. As such, the fluid and nebulous nature of the pages' authorship and the automated content found on these pages means that they cannot be defined as "consciously crafted" spaces. Thus, the concept of collateral paratextuality allows us to continue to investigate the significant role played by Amazon in the digital literary sphere and the way that the website influences how readers approach literary texts, whilst acknowledging the structural differences between this space and other "consciously crafted" paratextual spaces at a theoretical level.

It should be noted that, as a retailer within the digital sphere, Amazon is not unique in presenting a space where materials created by different paratextual materials coalesce within a singular textual space. Other retailers in the contemporary British literary market, including both bricks-and-mortar chains such as Waterstones and The Works, and online retailers like Wordery.com, similarly present both production- and reception-side materials within the product listing for a specific literary text on their websites – namely product descriptions and user reviewers. Thus, while the site owner may take responsibility for their platform's presence and continued availability within the digital sphere, this conflation of paratextual creators results in the creation of complex textual spaces for which no one creator can take complete authorial responsibility and which remain in a constant state of mutability, given the potential for new site users to add content at any time. As such, the structure of digital retail websites such as Amazon presents a uniquely digital challenge to the boundary between production- and reception-side paratextual creation by conflating the two within a singular, collaterally created digital space.

definition of paratextuality presented in Chapter 1 and so the question of how we approach, catalogue and chart these paratextual constellations remains. However, by turning to the digital literary sphere, where such materials are digitalised and presented as texts, these materials come back into scope. As such, investigations into digital retail contexts such as Amazon.co.uk provide an opportunity to gain an insight into the impact of paratextual creators outside of strict production- and reception-side paradigms on the presentation of literary texts and, in the case of the present thesis, on the position and role of the translator within these collateral paratextual spaces.

Amazon.co.uk as a case study

As discussed in the introduction of this chapter, I have chosen to focus on one digital retail platform in the forthcoming analysis: Amazon.co.uk. The selection of Amazon stems from the site's ubiquity in the contemporary British literary market and the dominance of the site within MacLehose Press's own sales figures. In her work on charting the digital literary sphere, however, Simone Murray warns against focussing on "specific technological platforms (however modish)" as the researcher risks their work becoming out of date "almost immediately" (2018, 170). Instead, Murray suggests focusing on literary processes, such as the creation, circulation and consumption of literary texts. Doing so, she argues, can "futureproof" research as the book-industry structures upon which they are constructed have survived the rise of the Web 2.0 era and so they "retain analytical utility" (2018, 170).

Nevertheless, while Murray's concerns over the mutability or even existence of a given platform over a period of time are well founded, Amazon.co.uk is here used as a demonstrative manifestation of these three processes (creation, circulation and consumption) within a major digital retail platform in the contemporary British literary market, where the company's market share has previously been estimated to be as high as 70% (Denny, 2011) and the company remains the principle brand through which British customers purchase books (Kunst, 2022).

In the case of Murray's first process, the creation of literary texts, the production-side materials found on Amazon.co.uk, such as the product overview, production description and product information sections, are a manifestation of textual creation processes described in Chapter 3. Within the "publishing value chain" (Thompson, 2010, 16), various paratextual materials are created to define and describe the literary text, such as a synopsis or blurb, a cover design or a title. In the process of creating a legal and public record of the literary text's existence, such paratextual materials are then added to digital databases in the form of metadata.⁷³ Consequently, when the text is finished and ready to enter the market, this data is distributed to a variety of digital platforms including digital retailers and the publisher's own website by a content management system, which in the case of MacLehose Press is *Biblio3*. As such, the content found on individual retailer websites, including bricks-and-mortar retailers such as Waterstones and digital retailers like Amazon, comes from the same source and features the same content. In this way then, whilst Amazon is but one specific technological platform, it serves as a manifestation of the production-side processes in which paratextual materials authorised by the publisher are distributed and circulated to a variety of retail contexts in the digital and non-digital worlds.

Secondly, in terms of the circulation of literature, Amazon has developed several tools and algorithms within its platform to facilitate the circulation of literary texts that can be found on the product listing page. These algorithmic texts are manifested primarily as recommendations, which come in the form of site-wide algorithmic calculations generated by the company's "item-to-item collaborative filtering" system (Smith and Linden, 2017) and personalised recommendations based on a user's unique browsing history. In the case of the former, the browsing habits of all Amazon site visitors are leveraged to present new visitors with recommendations based on general

⁷³ Such materials are then also used to create pre-publication paratextual materials, such as the title information sheet discussed in Chapter 3.

browsing and purchasing history, whereas the second depends on the existence of cookie data from the individual user. Such recommendations are commonplace both in digital retail contexts, where other book retail sites including Waterstones and wordery.com similarly feature recommendations in their specific product listing pages, and other digital platforms, with content providers including Netflix and YouTube basing their own algorithms on Amazon's item-to-item collaborative filtering system (Smith and Linden, 2017, 13-14; Gomez-Uribe and Hunt, 2016). As such, Amazon not only serves as a manifestation of wider algorithmic practices within the digital environment, but also serves as the original platform where such recommendation algorithms were developed and implemented.

Furthermore, the writing of algorithms and their implementation within the product page is a manifestation of the retailer's intervention in the paratextual space to guide readers to similar products and drive sales. This can also be said for personal bookseller recommendations in bricks-and-mortar contexts, where recommendations may be given based on the reader's own habits (where such a personal relationship exists between the bookseller and the reader), a bookseller's local knowledge of their overall customer bases' preferences, or on production-side metadata such as genre classifications or author descriptions. Indeed, the ability for the Amazon website to mirror the personalised service of bricks-and-mortar retailers was a driving factor in the development of their algorithmic content (Marcus, 2004 and Smith and Linden, 2017). In this way, a parallel can be drawn between the role of booksellers and Amazon's more complex algorithmic systems, meaning that Amazon serves as a typical manifestation of circulation processes within digital retail spaces.

Finally, as indicated by Murray's chapter on "Book Review Culture and the Digital Literary Sphere (2018, 111-130), one of the primary digital manifestations of the consumption of literature comes in the form of online reviews (2018), which Amazon features in several locations across its platform. As seen in Chapter 4, these reviews constitute a rich data set for investigations into how lay readers understand translation processes. In the present chapter, however, it is the way these reviews are framed and leveraged by Amazon to create new paratextual materials that is of interest.

The bottom section of all Amazon product listings consists of a product reviews section, where customers with an Amazon account can leave reviews featuring a title, a star rating and a body of text alongside the optional inclusion of photographs or video content. Amazon aggregates the star ratings given across all of a product's customer reviews into a rating out of five that is then featured in various locations on the site, including at the top of the product listing page underneath the product's title; in product previews used when searching the site; when displaying product recommendations as discussed above; and within the "Product details" section of the product listing. As with the recommendations mentioned above, the product star rating found on Amazon is a ubiquitous feature on a variety of digital retailers' websites and even extends into other digital spaces, such as bookish community sites *GoodReads* (which is Amazon owned), *LibraryThing* and *The StoryGraph*. Thus, while the reviews found on Amazon.co.uk pages constitute a limited snapshot of a literary text's online reviews, the form and content are typical of other digital sites and the platform's powerful position within the literary market results in a large body of users. Consequently, Amazon.co.uk serves as a demonstrative case study of how literary consumption processes are manifested within the digital paratextual space of the retailer website.

Before diving into the analytical sections of this chapter, however, the scope of the present study must be brought plainly into view. Firstly, while the forthcoming analysis investigates Bulloch's visibility across areas of the Amazon.co.uk listings for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, the chapter in no way seeks to create an inventory of all the possible paratextual materials that may be found within the product listing of a literary text (translated or otherwise). Given that the present thesis focuses on just two literary translations within the context of the contemporary British literary market, any attempts to do so would not only be based upon too narrow a dataset to achieve such a lofty goal but would also risk this work becoming out of date "almost immediately" when Amazon next makes changes to its platform (Murray, 2018, 170). As such, the lens of collateral paratextuality is here used to analyse instances where Amazon's platform and mediation of content within this platform impact upon the primary focus of this thesis: the

position and role of the translator across the digital and non-digital paratextual space.

Secondly, and building upon this point, the analysis throughout this chapter is primarily built upon two specific Amazon listings, those for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* as archived on the latter's release day.⁷⁴ As within the preceding chapters, then, the broader issue of translator visibility will be discussed in relation to translator Jamie Bulloch, and his position and role within the paratextual materials surrounding these two literary texts. Consequently, phenomena that do not occur within the product listings for these two literary texts are similarly out of scope for the present study.⁷⁵ As with the composition of the product listing page, then, this chapter does not seek to sketch or catalogue the multitudinous potential manifestations of translator visibility on the Amazon.co.uk website. Rather, this case study seeks to indicate the advantages of, and challenges posed by, studying translator visibility within such collateral or digital paratextual spaces and invites other scholars to conduct further studies in other literary, cultural and linguistic contexts.

⁷⁴ The choice of this date, 23 January 2020, mirrors that of the digital materials analysed in Chapter 3 and so seeks to create a consistency throughout this thesis. These pages have been archived as they were on this date via the Internet Archive's WayBack Machine and can be accessed at Amazon.co.uk, c2022a and Amazon.co.uk c2022b. Where other versions of the two Amazon listings are referred to within this chapter, the date of access is made clear.

⁷⁵ For instance, much could be said about cases where translators are not listed as contributors on an Amazon product listing and so cannot access services such as "Author Central" (see the section *Collaterally propagated content* for further discussion of this service). However, as Bulloch has been listed as a contributor for these two novels by MacLehose Press, such instances are out of scope within the context of the constellation of paratextual materials studied throughout this thesis.

Paratextual coalescence


In defining digital retail platforms such as Amazon.co.uk as paratextual spaces and expanding upon the reasons for selecting Amazon as a case study, I have indicated how the coalescence of different paratextual creators within a singular textual space constitutes Amazon product listings as complex sites of collateral paratextuality. The chapter will now build upon this overview to analyse the ways in which the coalescence of paratextual material from creators spanning both production- and reception-side processes destabilises the position of the translator within the paratextual space of the product listing.

Collateral coalescence of production- and reception-side content

As discussed previously, the production-side content found within the Amazon page for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* comes from the same metadata management system as the content found on publisher MacLehose Press's website that was analysed in Chapter 3. As such, the same bibliographic information, product image and product description can be found in both locations, with the two even sharing formatting such as bold text:

The screenshot shows the Amazon UK product page for the book 'Look Who's Back' by Timur Vermes, translated by Jamie Bulloch. The page features the book cover, a 'Look inside' button, and a list of purchase options: Kindle Edition (£4.99), Audiobook (£0.00), Hardcover (from £0.14), Paperback (£7.99), and Audio CD (£20.41). Below the pricing, there is a 'Want it delivered by Tuesday, 28 Jan.?' section with a note about click and collect. The page also includes promotional text: 'The smash-hit satirical bestseller, more than 3 million copies sold worldwide' and 'Film a box-office hit in Germany, now available on NETFLIX'. A section for a BBC Radio 4 dramatisation is also visible, along with a 'Follow the author' section for Timur Vermes.

Figure 22 – The Amazon page for *Look Who's Back* on the release day of *The Hungry and the Fat* (23 January 2020).



LOOK WHO'S BACK
by Timur Vermes

The smash-hit satirical bestseller, more than 3 million copies sold worldwide

Film a box-office hit in Germany, now available on NETFLIX




A two-part BBC Radio 4 Dramatisation directed by and starring David Threlfall (Shameless)


Berlin, Summer 2011. Adolf Hitler wakes up on a patch of open ground, alive and well. Things have changed – no Eva Braun, no Nazi party, no war. Hitler barely recognises his beloved Fatherland, filled with immigrants and run by a woman.

People certainly recognise him, albeit as a flawless impersonator who refuses to break character. The unthinkable, the inevitable happens, and the ranting Hitler goes viral, becomes a YouTube star, gets his own T.V. show, and people begin to listen. But the Führer has another programme with even greater ambition – to set the country he finds a shambles back to rights.

Look Who's Back stunned and then thrilled 1.5 million German readers with its fearless approach to the most taboo of subjects. Naive yet insightful, repellent yet strangely sympathetic, the revived Hitler unquestionably has a spring in his step.

Genre: Fiction & Related Items / Fiction: Special Features / Fiction In Translation
On Sale: 27th March 2014 Price: £7.99 ISBN-13: 9781782067825

Share   

EBOOK 


BUY BOOK 

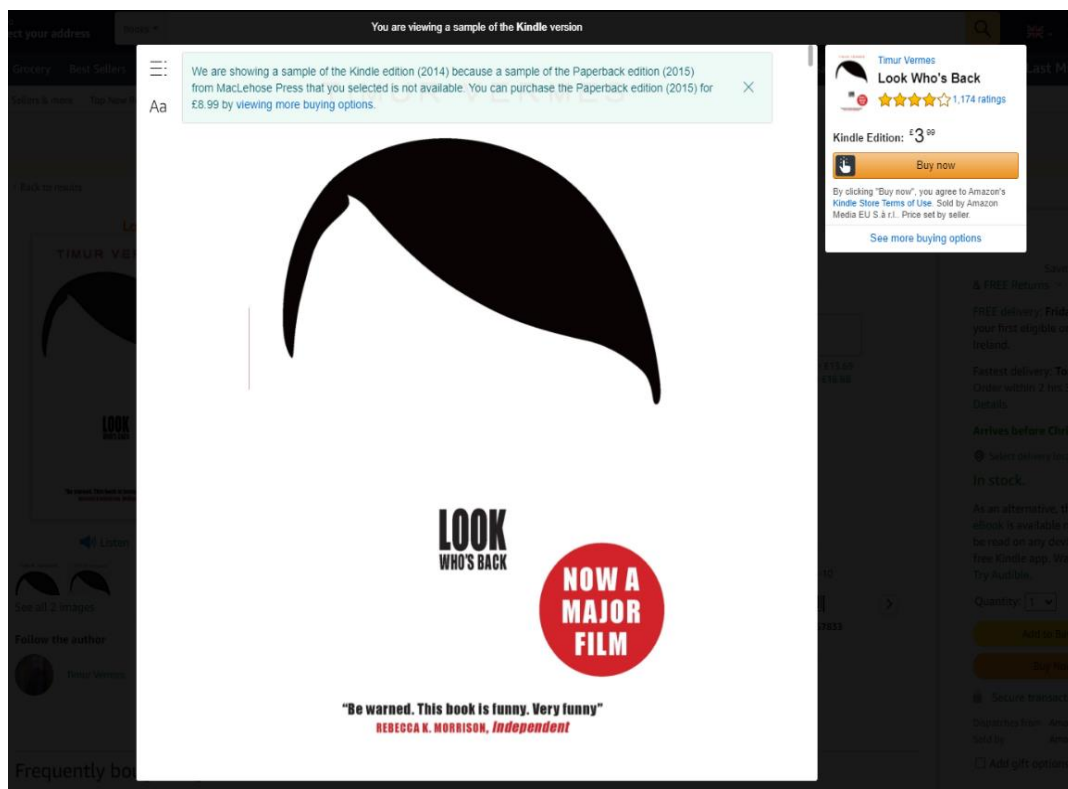
Figure 23 – The MacLehose Press page for *Look Who's Back* on the release day of *The Hungry and the Fat* (23 January 2020; MacLehose Press, 2020d).

What is notable in both cases is that different versions of the book are linked within this same space. As shown in Figure 23, on the day that *The Hungry and the Fat* was released, five versions of *Look Who's Back* were listed on the latter's Amazon.co.uk page: the hardback codex, the paperback codex, an audio book, an audio CD, and an electronic "Kindle Edition" of the book; whilst two versions were listed on MacLehose Press's website: the eBook and the paperback.⁷⁶ On both webpages, then, different versions of *Look Who's Back* are presented to potential readers as interchangeable versions of the same literary text. However, while the two versions listed on

⁷⁶ Notably, as no further hardback copies were produced once the paperback edition of *Look Who's Back* was released, Amazon.co.uk now defaults to the paperback version of the novel whilst MacLehose Press' website defaults to the eBook.

MacLehose Press's website are all editions published through MacLehose and its parent publisher Quercus, the Amazon page includes one audiobook version read by Julian Rhind-Tutt (Vermes, 2014b) and a second published by German publisher Bastei Lübbe read by David Threlfall (Vermes, 2017). Of course, as outlined in the section *Para-textual hybridity* in Chapter 1, different versions of the same literary text can form paratextual relationships with one another. The coalescence of multiple versions with different creators and publishers on Amazon goes beyond the situation of various manifestations of the same literary text in rhizomatic constellation with one another to unproblematically present different versions as interchangeable. Indeed, even when viewing the Amazon.co.uk listings for physical editions of the novel (such as the paperback), users may be shown a sample of the Kindle edition when using Amazon's "Look inside the book" preview feature (see the blue banner at the top of Figure 24). Consequently, where the use of the same synopsis and description for the versions published by MacLehose Press constitutes a consciously crafted relationship between the texts, the coalescence of this content with the production-side materials

Figure 24 – A screenshot of the “Look inside” feature for a paperback edition of *Look Who’s Back* displaying a preview of the eBook from December 2021.



created by Bastei Lübbe constitutes a collateral paratextual relationship between these spaces.

This collateral paratextuality subsequently impacts the position and role of the translator within this space in several ways. Firstly, as discussed in Chapter 3, the translator's position and role within paratextual materials created as part of the literary text's production are very much dependent on the mediation and oversight of the publisher. Thus, where different versions of a literary text are published by different parties, these versions are set within different constellations of publisher-created paratextual materials in which the position and role of the translator can vary. Consequently, where the codex presents a stable paratextual space in which the translator's position and role are set (at least for each edition of a book), the coalescence of different versions of a literary text on Amazon constitutes a more unstable paratextual space in which that position and role depend on a given user's trajectory through the space and so need to be traced across an increasing number of paratextual creators.

Secondly, and building on the previous point, where other versions of the translated literary text feature additional authorial or performative voices, such as the narrator of an audiobook, their presence in the paratextual space can marginalise the position of the translator and destabilise their paratextual visibility – particularly when the additional figures have a level of celebrity and prestige above that of the translator. For instance, in the example listed above, the narrators of the two audiobook versions, David Threlfall and Julian Rhind-Tutt, are established British television actors. As such, their involvement in the audiobook brings a level of celebrity to the literary product that Jamie Bulloch does not. This is, therefore, reflected in the fact that both are listed in the credits at the top of the Amazon page where Bulloch is not, despite the fact that both read the English-language novel as translated by Bulloch. As such, the additional presence of other creative agents has, in this case, resulted in Bulloch's absence from this paratextual material where for other versions of the text he is represented. It is, of course, not always the case that the presence of a narrator will impact the position of the translator in this way. In the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, for example, both the narrator, Peter Noble, and Bulloch are listed

alongside Vermes and MacLehose Press. However, where the celebrity of Threlfall and Rhind-Tutt as television actors brought prestige to the audiobook, Noble's primary profession of audiobook narrator (Noble, c2020) does not come with the same level of celebrity. Thus, in these examples, Bulloch's paratextual position is maintained when additional voices provide no additional prestige to the literary text, yet when they do, Bulloch becomes an absent translator within this production-side paratextual material.

The impact of Amazon's coalescence of paratextual materials created for different versions of the same text within a singular space can be further seen when we turn to the reader-created content on the platform. As discussed in Chapter 4, the main reader-created paratexts found on the Amazon.co.uk page are customer reviews. Users with an Amazon account can leave reviews on any product, with those who purchased the product with the same account marked as "verified purchases". Thanks to this low barrier to entry, and in comparison to the institutional mechanisms and gatekeeping that control literary discourse (Murray, 2018, 113-118), Amazon customer reviews can serve as a useful resource when looking at how lay readers respond to a literary text — as evidenced by the insights gleaned in Chapter 4.

However, as with the product descriptions discussed in the previous section, the structure of Amazon as a paratextual space conflates reviews left for different versions of the same literary text, thereby creating a similarly collateral reception-side paratextuality. The primary difference between this conflation in the reader-created materials and the production-side materials discussed previously is that site users have no control over the version of the space that they encounter. Where users had to select the version of text in the product description area, Amazon automatically displays reviews for all versions of a literary text together without allowing users to select or filter out reviews for a given product version. Consequently, customer reviews may contain references to elements or agents not present or involved with the version of the literary text that a user is interested in, for example when a user interested in a hardback edition sees reviews referring to the audiobook narrator or the audio quality. Furthermore, as was the case with the version history of the publisher's website discussed in Chapter 3, the version of a

literary text that the review pertains to is not consistently displayed on the Amazon site. As shown below, on the launch day of *The Hungry and the Fat*, the format is made explicit under the star rating, title, and date of the review (Figure 25), whereas from September 2020 this information is missing (Figure 26). As such, not only are users unable to consciously filter through Amazon's conflation of these paratextual materials, but this conflation can also be hidden from users entirely depending on the point in time at which a user accesses the site.⁷⁷

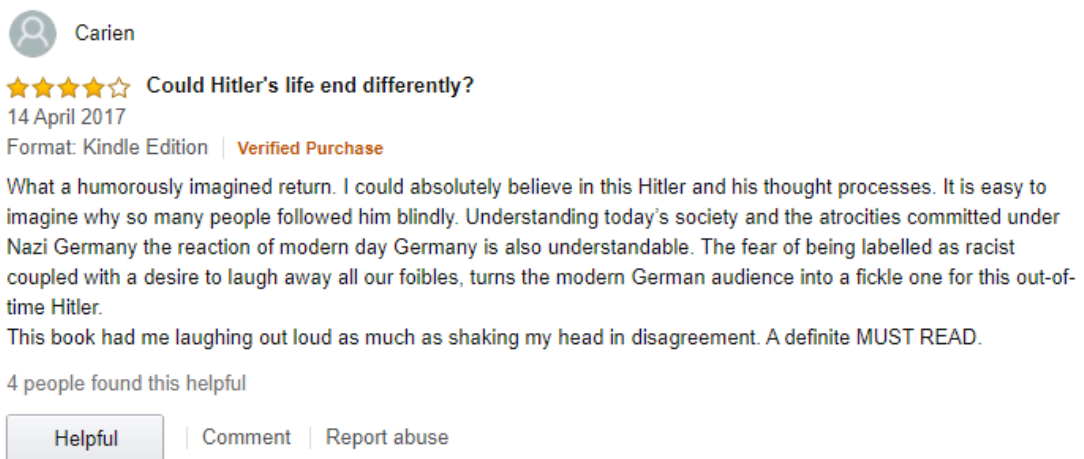


Figure 25 – A screenshot from the archived version of the page, dated 23 January 2020, showing the review as relating to the Kindle version of the book

⁷⁷ This reflects Murray's warning regarding the impermanence and ephemerality of research data gathered from a particular technological platform at any given time.

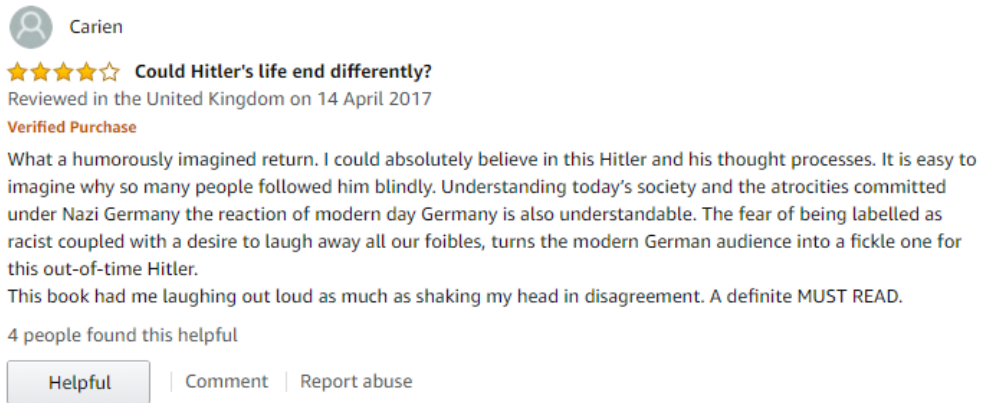


Figure 26 – A screenshot from 17 September 2020 where the above reference to the Kindle edition is absent

In terms of the position of Bulloch within these collateral, reader-created paratextual materials, the impact of this coalescence is difficult to ascertain. For instance, in the title of their review, Ryuto (2014) argues that the “Translator's Note should be at the start of the audiobook” before advising in the body of their review to:

“Listen to the translator’s notes at the end of the audiobook before listening to the actual, brilliant book. Some of the German-specific humour will become clearer and you'll also have a better idea of the people Hitler mentions in his diatribes!”

Here, then, the reference to the existence of a translator’s note indicates that the novel is a translation and represents Bulloch as the abstract figure of the translator to users interested in the codex or the audiobook.⁷⁸ Indeed, the

⁷⁸ The very presence of the translator’s note within the audiobook is noteworthy, given that the inclusion of that additional content will have been reflected in the voice actor’s fee. While the inclusion of Bulloch’s “narrative glossary” indicates the value of its content for British audiences unfamiliar with the historical figures references throughout, the performance of this note by a third-party rewrites Bulloch’s work through the voice actor’s performance, resulting in Bulloch’s representation in the co-texts constituting the audiobook, rather than his participation as in the physical codex.

fact that the translator's note is present in both the verbal and audio versions indicates its value for English-language readers and the positive effects of Bulloch's involvement in paratextual creation for readers unfamiliar with the novel's original German context. Thus, where Bulloch was absent from the production-side paratextual materials that were consciously crafted for audio versions of the text as discussed above, this customer review for an audiobook version positions the translator as a presence within the text that, thanks to Amazon's coalescence of these paratextual spaces, is available to users interested in any version of the novel.

Nevertheless, the implications of Amazon's conflation of customer reviews for different versions of the same product on Bulloch's paratextual visibility cannot be overstated for several reasons. Firstly, from a theoretical perspective, the coalescence of paratextual materials within Amazon.co.uk product listings reflects the way that many readers "construct" an image of a book from materials that lie outside the literary text itself (Lefevere, 1992, 6) rather than through their own engagement with the whole text. This similarly reflects Gray's argument that readers encounter far more paratexts than texts throughout their lifetime (2010). Consequently, in instances where several versions across various media are paratextually presented as different instances of the same literary text, the labour of any individual involved in the rewriting of a specific version of a literary text, whether a translator or an audiobook voice actor, gets diluted through the coalescence of both the paratextual space and the boundaries of the literary text itself.

Secondly, the number of reviews written for the audio versions of *Look Who's Back* constitute an incredibly small sample size. For instance, in the almost five years following the audiobooks' release (from June 2014 to February 2019), only five reviews were published on Amazon.co.uk for audio versions of the text, compared to the total number of over 450 reviews. As such, reviews of non-audio versions of the text have a more significant impact on the paratextual space of the audio versions than vice versa.

Secondly, where on the production side Bulloch was not listed as an authorial figure but the voice actors were, references to the voice actors on the reception-side are limited. For instance, despite his fame, David Threlfall is not mentioned by name in any reviews. Conversely, Julian Rhind-Tutt is

mentioned once (Latham, 2016), whilst user D. V. GATENBY (2015) ambiguously states that it is “[m]uch easier to listen to this voice for the English translation” without indicating which narrator they prefer. Consequently, whilst these references come without mention of Bulloch as a personified translator, they indicate the potential for the translator’s paratextual position to be supplanted or displaced in this digital retail environment when the novel’s paratextual space coalesces with those of versions of the same literary text in different media. As such, the examples described above demonstrate the challenges that this conflation of paratextual constellations within a singular space can pose to digital translator visibility primarily in theoretical terms.

Collaterally propagated content

The second form of collateral paratextuality found with the paratextual space of Amazon.co.uk comes in the form of content that may have been “consciously crafted” (Batchelor, 2018,142) to serve one function, but that was either not consciously crafted to share a paratextual relationship with the literary text at all or was not consciously crafted for use within a given constellation of paratexts. Consequently, in the re-use of verbal paratexts, such as the repurposing of the blurb as it was written for the codex on the publisher’s website or NetGalley listing (as discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 respectively), we have seen how paratextual materials crafted for use within a given setting can be consciously reused in other contexts. However, thanks to content propagation processes that require no human input or oversight, materials found within Amazon product listings can be inadvertently taken from other locations on the platform and automatically re-used, thereby forming a collateral paratextual relationship with the literary text.

An example of this from the product listings of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* can be seen in the “More about the author” section, the content for which is controlled through Amazon’s “Author Central” service. “Author Central” is described by the company as a “free service provided by Amazon to allow authors to reach more readers, promote books, and help

build a better Amazon bookstore” (c2020b). The primary mechanisms made available to authors within this service are the Amazon author profile and the associated bibliography. Using these tools authors can create a unique profile page on Amazon that can feature a biographical note, a photograph, external materials such as blog feeds, and a bibliography. This bibliography links the unique Amazon listings for an author’s work to their profile page and so creates a direct relationship between these two pages within a specific regional version of the Amazon website. For any such literary texts, their linking to an author profile creates the “More about the author” section within the paratextual space of a book’s Amazon listing (Figure 27). This, therefore, serves as a collateral form of paratextuality as the biography and image displayed on the author profile were not consciously crafted in relation to a given literary text, yet they are presented to readers within this paratextual space.⁷⁹ Indeed, authors who have used Amazon Author Central to create a profile and link their texts to a bibliography are unable to individualise this content or make changes uniquely to one literary text. Rather, any changes to the content displayed on the author profile updates the content pulled across into all the linked literary texts uniformly. It is this automatic propagation of content and uniformity that situates this Amazon-created content in a collateral paratextual relationship with the associated literary texts.

Despite the service’s name, however, it is not just authors who can access Amazon Author Central to create a profile and bibliography. Anyone listed as a “contributor” to the creation of a literary text listed on Amazon can also

⁷⁹ While a comparison could be made here to the biographical notes for Vermees and Bulloch featured as co-texts in the codices of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, their inclusion in that space constitutes a consciously crafted paratext given that they are checked for relevance and updated as necessary. This can be seen in the differences between Bulloch’s biographical notes in *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* as shown in Figure 4 (p.110).

register for the service.⁸⁰ As such, where we saw Bulloch listed as the translator at the top of the Amazon page, or David Threlfall and Julian Rhind-Tutt listed as narrators, these individuals have been listed as contributors. Consequently, these agents can access the Author Central services and link their version of *Look Who's Back* to their profile and bibliography. Thus, while the name of the service indicates a target userbase for the service on Amazon's part, that of authors, the widening of access to any "contributor" to the text provides a digital space in which individuals such as a translator can play an active role in paratextual creation and presenting themselves to readers. Notably from a theoretical perspective, this service positions "contributors" such as the translator or voice actor alongside authors as paratextual authorities and so grants them equal agency and opportunity to play an active role in this digital space. In doing so, Amazon's Author Central service reinforces the Genettian requirement for authorial responsibility in the paratextual space whilst heavily featuring and relying on customer reviews across its site, thereby demonstrating a contradictory democratisation of the digital paratextual space.

While the featuring of an Amazon author profile on the product listing for a literary text can provide an opportunity for translators to participate in this paratextual space, the knowledge of, expertise to use, or desire to engage with this service is not guaranteed. For instance, in Jamie Bulloch's case, on 23rd January 2020 he had no author profile on Amazon and when interviewed he expressed that he had no knowledge that this service was available to him. On the contrary, while the author Vermes has commented that he played no role in creating the profile, one has been created for him.⁸¹ Consequently, as shown in Figure 27 and Figure 28, the profile for Vermes

⁸⁰ This was not always the case and there have been major pushes towards educating translators on their ability to access the platform from institutions such as PEN America in 2015 (Vergnaud, 2016).

⁸¹ Vermes noted that this was likely done by his publisher.

was pulled across to both the page for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*.

More about the author

[Visit Amazon's Timur Vermes Page](#)



Biography

Timur Vermes was born in Nuremberg in 1967, the son of a German mother and a Hungarian father who fled Hungary in 1956. He studied history and politics and went on to become a journalist. He has written for various newspapers and magazines, and has ghostwritten several books since 2007. This is his first novel, and is currently being made into a film by Mythos in a co-production with Constantin Film.

Figure 27 – Screenshot from *Look Who's Back's* Amazon page as of 23 January 2020

More about the author

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Biography

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Figure 28 – Screenshot from *The Hungry and the Fat's* Amazon page as of 23 January 2020

This has several notable implications. Firstly, in terms of the paratextual position of Jamie Bulloch as translator, the fact that only the author is listed results in an absent translator. Consequently, Vermes is presented as an unmediated authorial voice in English with whom readers will interact when reading Bulloch's English-language translations. This, of course, stems from the fact that Bulloch did not create his own profile on Amazon and so in failing to participate in this paratextual space, his translatorship is absent whilst Vermes' authorship is foregrounded. Notably, though, Vermes stated during interview that he was not responsible for his own Amazon author profile. As such, Vermes receives authorial visibility on the Amazon.co.uk listings for the two books without personally participating in this space, yet the same inactivity on Bulloch's part renders him absent from this paratextual space. Secondly, whilst the fact that Vermes was born in Nuremberg to a German mother is mentioned at the start of this biographical note, the fact that his university studies, career as a journalist and later work as a ghost-writer were within a German context is not made explicit.

Similarly, then, whilst there is a trace of German-ness within this paratextual material, the fact that Vermees writes in German and so the text is a translation is largely absent.

Finally, as discussed previously in theoretical terms, the content of this biography demonstrates the collateral nature of this paratextuality. For example, the final sentence, “This is his first novel, and is currently being made into a film by Mythos in a co-production with Constantin Film” (see Figure 27 and Figure 28), relates specifically to *Look Who’s Back* rather than *The Hungry and the Fat*. This text, therefore, cannot be understood as a “consciously crafted threshold” (Batchelor, 2018, 142) for the latter, as it is simply untrue, yet it features within this digital paratextual space regardless. Furthermore, in specifying that the film adaptation of *Look Who’s Back* is “currently being made”, this content can be dated back to pre-October 2015 as that is when the film was released. This, therefore, demonstrates the extent to which this biography was not consciously crafted for *The Hungry and the Fat* despite its use on the novel’s Amazon page, as it was written and uploaded onto the platform at least three years prior to the novel’s original German-language release and at least five years prior to the English translation’s publication date. As such, not only does the automatic propagation of this author biography serve as the collateral coalescence of paratextual materials in spaces for which they were not consciously crafted, in the case of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* the automatic propagation of this content serves to position Jamie Bulloch as an absent translator. Thus, both Amazon’s coalescence of paratextual content created by others and paratextual content created within Amazon’s own platform destabilise Bulloch’s visibility within this digital paratextual space.

Mediation of content as collateral paratextuality

The destabilisation of the translator’s visibility within this collateral paratextual space can be traced further within Amazon’s mediation of content on the platform. This primarily takes two forms: through the design and layout of the page, and through the algorithmic creation of content. In

the case of the former, the forthcoming analysis will demonstrate how the structure and formatting of the Amazon page, which controls the way that content is displayed, privileges particular pieces of content and influences the way that paratextual materials within this space are encountered by users, thereby impacting upon the translator's visibility. Subsequently, the analysis will turn to the ways that reception-side materials, namely customer reviews and product ratings, are opaquely mediated and leveraged by Amazon such that particular narratives found within these paratextual materials, for instance the fact that the text is a translation, may be amplified or neutralised with no human oversight or "conscious crafting" (Batchelor, 2018, 142). In both cases, Amazon's mediation of the content featured on its platform continues to complicate the visibility of translator Jamie Bulloch within the product listings for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*.

Intervention in the presentation of production-side content

One of the primary ways through which the form of the Amazon product listing mediates the paratextual content found within it stems from the way that production-side content is displayed on the page. Within multiple areas of the page, such as the product overview at the top of the product listing (see Figure 29), longer pieces of verbal content are displayed in short previews which require users to interact with a so-called "call to action" that then opens up the rest of the content when clicked. In such cases, the content that comes first within these spaces is privileged as it is displayed on the page at all times, whilst the content lower down is hidden and requires user interaction to be viewed. Consequently, the position of the translator within these production-side materials is mediated by the form of the Amazon page in such a way that it may be neutralised for users who do not engage with the "call to action" and so never engage with this content, despite the fact that it is available within this textual space.

Kindle Edition £9.99	Audiobook £0.00	Hardcover £11.89	Paperback from £10.18
Read with Our Free App	Free with your Audible trial	3 Used from £11.42 16 New from £8.95	1 Used from £10.18 2 New from £15.53

Want it delivered by Tuesday, 28 Jan.? Order within 17 hrs 31 mins and choose AmazonGlobal Priority at checkout. [Details](#)

Note: This item is eligible for click and collect. [Details](#)

By the author of *Look Who's Back*, a radical and bold satire in inequitable times.

REFUGEE CAMPS IN AFRICA ARE SWELLING

And Europe has closed its borders. The refugees have no future, no hope, and no money to pay the vast sums now demanded by people smugglers. The only thing they have is time.

AND THEN AN ANGEL ARRIVES FROM REALITY T.V.

When model and star presenter Nadeche Hackenbusch comes to film at the largest of the camps, one young refugee sees a unique opportunity to organize a march to Europe, in full view of the media. [Read more](#)

Figure 29 – The product overview section of the Amazon.co.uk listing for *The Hungry and the Fat* as of 23 January 2020.

An example of this can be found on the launch-day Amazon listing for *The Hungry and the Fat*, where the initial preview of the “Product overview” cuts the content off midway through the blurb (see Figure 29).⁸² For users who do not click the “Read more” call to action, then only the text “By the author of *Look Who's Back*, a radical and bold satire in inequitable times” and the first paragraph and a half of the blurb are displayed. Within this limited content Vermes’ authorship is foregrounded through the reference to his other novel whilst Bulloch is positioned as an absent translator. Furthermore, only the inclusion of the German name “Nadeche Hackenbusch” in the preview of the blurb indicates the novel’s Germanic origins and so status as a translated literary text, as was discussed in Chapter 3. Yet for users who do click the call-to-action “Read more” button, the text “Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch” can be found at the end of the product overview. Consequently, where the publisher positioned Bulloch as a represented and personified translator within this paratextual space by naming him and describing his role in the novel’s creation, Amazon’s mediation of this

⁸² Both in Figure 29 and at the time of writing (December 2021) this cut off can be calculated as six lines of text, though no official guidelines or policy are elucidated by Amazon.

content through the hiding of longer content impacts upon the visibility of Bulloch within this space.⁸³

As revealed during interview, the fact that particular content is hidden by the formatting of an Amazon product listing is not lost on publisher MacLehose Press, who noted that factual information regarding the success of a novel is often added to the top of a book's product description to increase the interest of future readers. In the above example from the listing for *The Hungry and the Fat*, the reference to *Look Who's Back* and its author demonstrates this by leveraging the latter's commercial success in the UK and drawing an authorial link between the two books to imbue *The Hungry and the Fat* within additional prestige. Similarly, on the Amazon.co.uk product listing for *Look Who's Back*, the product overview is topped by three taglines which seek to draw on the novel's commercial success and further adaptations into other media:

The smash-hit satirical bestseller, more than 3 million copies sold worldwide

Film a box-office hit in Germany, now available on NETFLIX

A two-part BBC Radio 4 Dramatisation directed by and starring David Threlfall (Shameless)

Notably here, as was also highlighted earlier in the section *Collateral coalescence of production- and reception-side content*, Bulloch goes unmentioned whilst MacLehose Press include references to other agents such as the British actor David Threlfall within this product overview. Consequently, we can see that Bulloch's own professional experience and position as the text's translator were not deemed by MacLehose Press to imbue either novel with the same prestige as references to the novels' author or other celebrities. As such, MacLehose Press has responded to the

⁸³ The impact of a platform's layout on the discoverability of paratextual visibility was similarly discussed regarding NetGalley's layout in Chapter 4.

form of the Amazon product listing by positioning these other factors at the top of this content to ensure that they are always displayed on the page. Indeed, Bielenberg noted during interview that only a few translators would ever reach a level of fame that would result in their name being featured on the front cover of a book or being displayed prominently within product overviews or descriptions on digital retail platforms.⁸⁴ Notably then, in the case of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, not only does the format of the Amazon product listing intervene in the way that the publisher positions the translator within the paratextual space by restricting the availability of content on the page, but it also feeds back into the ways that publisher MacLehose Press enters content into their metadata systems, thereby influencing the decisions that they make regarding the composition of paratextual materials in the digital literary space.

Algorithmic mediation of reception-side content

Where the hiding of content behind call-to-action buttons restricts the availability of production-side materials on the product listing page, Amazon's mediation of reception-side content similarly affects the visibility of the translator within this paratextual space. For instance, the format of the Amazon page means that only a selection of customer reviews can be displayed on the main product listing page. Consequently, Amazon must intervene in this space to decide which reviews are displayed. This is done using two filters: "Most recent" or "Top Reviews", with the latter being the default (as can be seen in Figure 30). In the case of the former, the criterion by which reviews are displayed is self-evident, prioritising those that were posted most recently. However, the default "Top Reviews" option filters reviews according to several criteria relating to the "trustworthiness" of the

⁸⁴ An example given during interview was Jennifer Croft, the Man-Booker-International-Prize-winning English-language translator of Nobel laureate Olga Tokarczuk.

review that go unspecified by the platform.⁸⁵ Consequently, Amazon opaquely intervenes in this space to determine the specific reception-side customer reviews that are made available to users within the primary product listing page, which can subsequently impact upon the visibility of the translator. For example, in the case of the product listing for *Look Who's Back*, none of the “Top Reviews” that are displayed by default on the product listing either mention that the novel is a translation, thereby alluding to the abstract figure of a translator, or refer to Bulloch by name. Consequently, within the privileged space of the “Top Reviews” for *Look Who's Back*, Bulloch is positioned as an absent translator, even though other reviews do refer to him and his translatorship. Thus, the featuring of other reviews within this space would not always result in Bulloch's absence within these paratextual materials.

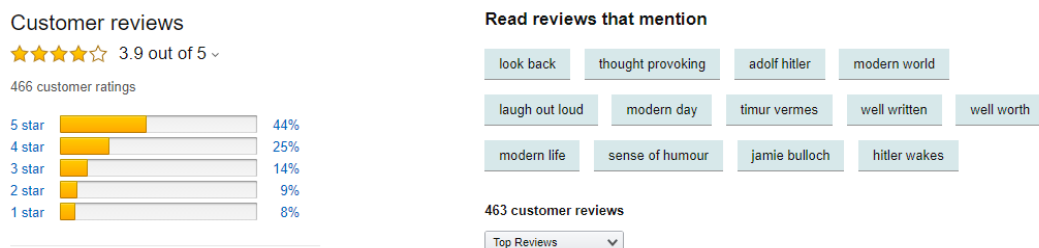


Figure 30 – The ‘Read reviews that mention’ filters for *Look Who's Back* as of 23 January 2020.

However, another of Amazon's algorithmic interventions in the customer reviews section, the “read reviews that mention” thematic filtering system, counters Bulloch's absence within the “Top Reviews” by positioning Bulloch as a presence within this paratextual space. As shown in Figure 30, the “Read reviews that mention” filtering system presents users with several terms that appear frequently within a product's customer reviews. By

⁸⁵ When clicking the “How are ratings calculated” button on any Amazon.co.uk product listing, the following description is given: “To calculate the overall star rating and percentage breakdown by star, we don't use a simple average. Instead, our system considers things like how recent a review is and if the reviewer bought the item on Amazon. It also analyses reviews to verify **trustworthiness.**” (My emphasis)

selecting one of the blue boxes, users are then presented with reviews that contain the featured terms, thereby allowing them to filter through the customer reviews for themes that appeal to them. These terms are generated by the content entered by other users and so share a complex web of authorial responsibility between the individual users and Amazon as the calculator and curator of these filters. In terms of the algorithmic generation of these filters, it was reported at the launch of the review themes feature that it “simply picks out terms based on how often they appear” (Perez, 2017) and so the resulting thematic filters can clearly be understood as collateral, rather than “consciously crafted”, paratextual materials.

In the case of the product listing for *Look Who's Back*, the presence of these filters an interesting effect: “Jamie Bulloch” features as one of the most frequently mentioned terms within the customer reviews on Amazon.co.uk (see Figure 30). This not only indicates that Bulloch is explicitly named in enough reviews to be deemed a frequently occurring theme, thereby demonstrating his presence within the reception-side materials found on the novel's Amazon listing, but also creates a further location on the Amazon.co.uk product listing where Bulloch is named and so is a presence within this paratextual space. This is notable given the findings from the Amazon customer reviews analysed in Chapter 4, which focussed on “verified purchases” from the year following *Look Who's Back's* first publication in English. In that corpus, which focussed solely on amateur readers, Bulloch was not represented as the personified figure of the translator at all. Conversely, seven of the eight users who have named Bulloch in their Amazon.co.uk reviews for *Look Who's Back* are not verified purchasers and three can be identified as “strategic readers” given their status as a “TOP 1000 REVIEWER” on Amazon (Dr R, 2016 and TripFiction,2014) or the fact they've linked their Amazon account to a blog (Hartley, 2015). Indeed, Bielenberg noted during interview that the Quercus publicity team “are also responsible for getting early Amazon reviews” and so Amazon serves as a platform for strategic readers to benefit from their relationships with publishers and publish content alongside amateur readers. Rather than indicating the interest of lay readers in Bulloch's translatorship, which Chapter 4 found to be lacking, the inclusion of Bulloch as an

algorithmically generated “Read reviews that mention” filter demonstrates the influence that Amazon’s algorithmic intervention can have on the translator’s visibility. In this case, the result of this intervention is an amplification of Bulloch’s visibility from an otherwise minority group of users who represent the translator in their customer reviews.

Of course, in being named explicitly as a personified figure, rather than referred to in terms of his translatorship, the use of Bulloch’s name as a filter relies on a user’s prior knowledge of his professional role and relationship to the text to infer that the novel is a translation — such as seeing Bulloch’s listing as “Translator” at the top the product listing. Indeed, as all terms stemming from translation (such as translator) are absent from this space, this potential visibility will go unfulfilled by any users unfamiliar with Bulloch and his professional role. Nevertheless, the fact that Bulloch is named frequently enough within the customer reviews of *Look Who’s Back* to generate this algorithmic representation demonstrates how Amazon’s algorithmic intervention in this paratextual space can mediate the content published on the platform by other paratextual creators and amplify particular paratextual narratives — in this case that Jamie Bulloch translated the novel into English.

This algorithmic intervention is, however, contingent upon the existence of enough customer reviews to generate the thematic filters and so a level of success and visibility within the literary market itself. For instance, in the case of *The Hungry and the Fat*, which sold far fewer copies in hardback than *Look Who’s Back* and whose sales cycle was affected by the lockdown measures brought in to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic less than two months after its release, there are only 18 global ratings and 6 global reviews of the novel.⁸⁶ Consequently, no thematic “Read reviews that

⁸⁶ In terms of *The Hungry and the Fat’s* sales in hardback, the publisher was confident that it had sold at least a tenth of the volume that *Look Who’s*

mention” filters have been generated and so the algorithmically generated visibility granted to Bulloch on the *Look Who’s Back* product listing is not mirrored here.

Interestingly, this runs contrary to the frequency with which Bulloch is referenced within the customer reviews for the two novels. This can be demonstrated by again comparing between the two Amazon.co.uk listings for the two novels on the release date of *The Hungry and the Fat*.⁸⁷ In the case of *Look Who’s Back*, where ‘Jamie Bulloch’ was listed as a frequent term, Bulloch was named in only seven reviews, which is 1.5% of the total 463 reviews. Conversely, ‘Jamie Bulloch’ featured as a term within two of the ten reviews of *The Hungry and the Fat*, making him a feature of 20% of the reviews. Consequently, despite the fact that Bulloch features more frequently within the Amazon customer reviews of *The Hungry and the Fat* than *Look Who’s Back*, the larger quantity of reviews for the latter book results in the automatic generation of thematic filters that subsequently increase Bulloch’s presence as a represented translator within the paratextual space of the product listing. This example, therefore, not only demonstrates that the number of references to a translator does not directly equate to their paratextual visibility, but it also highlights the extent of Amazon’s mediation of the paratextual content featured on its platform and its impact on Bulloch’s visibility. Indeed, Amazon’s algorithmic mediation of content created by other parties contributes to a fluidity on the platform that can equally amplify or neutralise a translator’s presence within this digital space.

Back sold in hardback but that following the loosening of lockdown restrictions bookshops still had many copies of *The Hungry and the Fat* unsold, with questions arising as to whether they would be sent back to the distributor’s warehouse. These figures are true as of 14 December 2021.

⁸⁷ 23 January 2020.

Personalised paratextuality

Where the previous two sections have focussed on the coalescence of both production- and reception-side paratextual materials within the Amazon product listing and Amazon's mediation thereof, the final form of collateral paratextuality analysed within this chapter stems from individual users.

Within Amazon's platforms, algorithms are used to recommend items to users based on their individual browsing habits, the contents of their virtual "shopping basket", and their purchase history, with the recommendation engines used by the site aiming to "be like talking with a friend who knows you, knows what you like, works with you at every step, and anticipates your needs" (Smith and Linden, 2017, 17). Consequently, the inclusion of product recommendations within an Amazon product listing creates an individualised experience for every user that visits a given page, rendering these areas within the product listing highly unstable and fluid paratextual spaces.

Despite the mutability of these recommendations and their slipperiness as a material within the paratextual space of the Amazon product listing, they can still provide insights into the position and role of the translator within the paratextual space and the British literary market.

For example, within the product previews that are displayed within the recommendation panes, only one "contributor" is listed under the product's title (see Figure 31) — even when more than one has been given on the relevant product listing. This can be seen with the recommendation links generated by Amazon between *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. On the launch day of the latter, both were listed under the "Customers who viewed this item also viewed" recommendation pane of the other novel. In both cases, even though Bulloch was listed as a contributor on the Amazon product listing for both novels, only Timur Vermes' name is given under the title of the novel within the recommendation pane. This stems from Amazon's recommendation panes only displaying the name of the contributor listed first on the relevant product listing. A further example of this can be seen in Figure 31 with the listing of only lead actor Oliver Masucci as a contributor to the DVD version of *Er ist wieder da's* filmic adaptation, with

other contributors listed on the page, such as Masucci's co-star Fabian Busch or director David Wnendt, missing from this recommendation preview.

Customers who viewed this item also viewed



Figure 31 – A selection of recommendations from the product listing for Look Who's Back on 23 January 2020.

Whilst this phenomenon is not limited to Amazon product listings of books with more than one contributor, such as a translation, it leads to the absence of the translator within this product overview. Since recommendations are estimated to account for 30% of Amazon page views (Sharma, Hofman and Watts, 2015), this absence results in the potential first impression of a translated literary text being one from which translators or the act of translation are absent for a large number of users and potential readers who discover new books through Amazon's recommendations. Given that this phenomenon transcends the world of literary translation to also affect more explicitly collaborative cultural products such as films and reflects technical decisions to limit the space and bandwidth taken up by individual recommendations within the product listing page, the significance of this reduction of authorship to a single individual should not be overstated. Yet when situated alongside other features of Amazon's platform, such as the somewhat misleadingly named "Author Central" service discussed in the section *Collaterally propagated content*, a singular notion of authorship begins to emerge throughout the composition of the platform. In the present case, this results in Bulloch's absence from the algorithmically generated recommendation previews, despite his being correctly listed by publisher MacLehose Press as a contributor within the metadata used by Amazon.

In more general terms, Amazon's recommendations give an indication of where a novel fits within a receiving culture's literary system, such as whether the English-language translations of Vermes' novels remain in the more peripheral zone of translated literature in the British literary system or within the broader, more mainstream area of general fiction. The primary algorithm used to generate recommendation is Amazon's "item-to-item collaborative filtering" system, which can be loosely described as "finding related items for each item in the catalog" with related here meaning "people who buy one item are unusually likely to buy the other" (Smith and Liden, 2017, 12-13). Whilst these recommendations are based on purchasing rather than reading habits, the fact that they are based upon user search, browsing and purchase data gives an insight into the other books that readers of a given novel may be interested in and so the position of that novel within the literary market. For instance, as shown in Figure 31, customers who viewed *Look Who's Back* not only looked at other versions of the text, such as the filmic adaptation, but were also looking at other novels featuring Hitler as a character, such as Christine Leunens' *Caging Skies*, and novels similarly narrated by a well-known character who is generally perceived to be 'evil' such as Glen Duncan's *I, Lucifer*, which is narrated by the titular fallen angel from Judeo-Christian theology. As such, these recommendations indicate that users interested in *Look Who's Back* also looked at and purchased novels with a similar moral focus rather than, say, other translated literature or literature set in Germany.

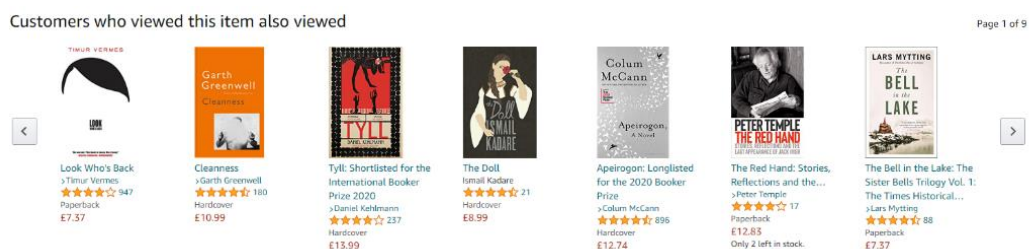


Figure 32 – Product recommendations from the listing for *The Hungry* and the *Fat* as of 3 December 2020.

The time at which a user visits a product listing is, however, a key factor in establishing recommendation links between products that are either useful for a user or insightful for a researcher. When new items are added to the

Amazon product catalogue, Smith and Linden note that they “don’t have enough data yet to have a strong correlation with other items” (2017, 17). Such instances are referred to as a “cold-start problem” that may be combatted by providing recommendations drawn upon data from other algorithmic systems or by “play[ing] it safe” and recommending “generally popular items” (Smith and Linden, 2017, 17). An example of this cold start can be seen in the “Customers who viewed this item also viewed” pane of *The Hungry and the Fat’s* at the novel’s launch, where a link to *Look Who’s Back* is joined by recommendations for novels spanning various genres and levels of success rather than any thematic links as seen with the *Look Who’s Back* page. A year later, however, the same pane is propagated with recommendations for other literary translations, such as Ross Benjamin’s translation of Daniel Kehlmann’s International-Booker-Prize-shortlisted *Tyll* and John Hodgson’s translation of Ismail Kadare’s *The Doll*, or literary texts set outside the Anglophone West, such as Garth Greenwell’s *Cleanness* and Colum McCann’s *Apeirogon* (see Figure 32).

In this instance, then, the recommendations generated by the algorithm provide two indications about the position of *The Hungry and the Fat* within the British literary market. Firstly, the primacy of *Look Who’s Back* within the first slot of the recommendation pane indicates that the shared authorship of the two novels is a significant feature of *The Hungry and the Fat’s* public image and reception. This was noted by the publisher during interview and is interesting given that while the overarching genre remains the same between the books, the two satirise markedly different subjects. Secondly, where the recommendations for *Look Who’s Back* discussed above indicated that the subject matter of the novel was what interested readers most, the same cannot be said for *The Hungry and the Fat*. Indeed, whilst *Apeirogon* shares broad political links to *The Hungry and the Fat* through its focus on the Middle East, most of the recommendations are for literary fiction and literature in translation rather than works dealing with the migrant crisis in Europe. Notably, the commercial success of the *Look Who’s Back*

and *The Hungry and the Fat* in hardback differs greatly, so comparisons between the two must be made carefully.⁸⁸

Nevertheless, the recommendations for *Look Who's Back* indicate the readership's focus on the novel's thematic elements in which the issue of translation plays a marginal role, whilst recommendations for *The Hungry and the Fat* situate the text with a more translation-oriented readership within the British literary market. Thus, these two examples indicate that the algorithmic generation of recommendations within the paratextual space of the Amazon product listing can both situate a literary text within a canon of translated literature or position it outside of such narratives, thereby resulting in an unstable level of translator visibility that is contingent upon the mutable browsing and purchase habits of an unknowable group of platform users and customers. Consequently, the prominence of algorithmic texts within this paratextual space further contribute to the destabilisation of the translator's paratextual position within this online retail platform.

Conclusions

The aims of this chapter were twofold. Firstly, the study of Amazon.co.uk as a digital paratextual space sought to demonstrate the value and usefulness of *collateral* paratextuality as a theoretical concept and indicate ways in which the notion can be leveraged to perform analysis. In doing so, this chapter has shown that the form of an Amazon product listing and the content found within challenge traditional, literary notions of paratextuality where a focus on authorial responsibility and "conscious crafting" (Batchelor, 2018, 142) has often limited research horizons to the materials created by publishers, authors and translators on the production-side and professional reviews on the reception-side. For example, this chapter has demonstrated

⁸⁸ During interview, Bielenberg noted that *The Hungry and the Fat* had sold 10% of the hardback copies that *Look Who's Back* sold.

how third parties outside of the production and reception of literature, such as a retailer, can mediate the paratextual space to not only intervene in the narratives used within “consciously crafted” paratextual materials but also to exert influence over the ways in which other paratextual creators craft paratextual materials by actively defining the form of this digital paratextual space. Given the specific focus of this thesis on this issue of translator visibility within the context of two translations, a full sketch of these processes remains out of scope for the present chapter. Nevertheless, as seen in the ways that Amazon limits the amount of content that is available to users by default and the platform’s use of algorithms to pull out frequently used terms, Amazon undoubtedly plays a role in the presentation of literary texts to readers in the contemporary literary market. Thus, it is through the development of *collateral paratextuality* that this chapter has been able to begin bringing this paratextual mediation into focus.

Secondly, and building upon this first aim, the chapter sought to investigate the visibility of translator Jamie Bulloch, that is his position and role, within the paratextual spaces of the Amazon product listings for *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. Through the lens of *collateral paratextuality*, analysis within this chapter has shown that Bulloch’s position within this space is particularly unstable. Indeed, whilst on the production-side the content may have remained the same across other digital paratextual spaces (such as the publisher’s website as analysed in Chapter 3), The coalescence of multiple versions of a text on Amazon and intervention in the presentation of content to users results in a situation where the availability of content in which Bulloch is positioned as a represented or implied translator depends on the actions and browsing trajectories of individual users. Whilst the trajectory of a reader through a particular paratextual space is always a relevant consideration, even within the form of traditional print codex, the mutability of this paratextual translator visibility is compounded by the fact that content used on Amazon is not consciously crafted solely for use on this platform. Rather, the content management system used by MacLehose Press provides the content to a variety of digital sites, including the publisher’s own website. So, where the visibility of the translator within a codex reflects conscious design decisions taken by a publishing house, the

same cannot be said for the way that paratextual content is displayed on specific retail websites. As such, the collateral nature of Amazon as a paratextual space directly influences the instability of the translator's visibility therein.

This chapter has also demonstrated that the difficulties posed by the destabilisation of the paratextual space when investigating issues such as translator visibility are not just limited to the production-side materials within the Amazon product listing. On the reception-side too, Amazon's mediation of customer reviews and algorithmic generation of new content based on user data continues to destabilise the translator's visibility. For instance, the algorithmic generation of the "top reviews" featured on the product listing for *Look Who's Back* resulted in Bulloch's absence from this privileged reception-side space. Yet, within the "Read review that mention" filters, which are also algorithmically generated, Bulloch's name was mentioned frequently enough to be included as a filter. This, therefore, creates conflicting paratextual narratives in which Amazon's algorithms pull from the same data yet collaterally position Bulloch as simultaneously present and absent within this space. Amazon's algorithms, therefore, destabilise Bulloch's paratextual visibility within this reception-side content without any conscious intervention. At an even more fundamental level the inclusion of both production- and reception-side materials within the singular textual space of the Amazon product listing creates a complex web of authorship that allows the varying paratextual framings and narratives crafted by different creators to come into contact within one another, rendering the position and role of the translator reliant upon a greater number of paratextual creators and so more difficult to trace.

In terms of the other aspect of Bulloch's visibility within the paratextual space of the Amazon product listing, that is his role, the production-side content stems from the same metadata as that found on the publisher's website and so his role therein remains the same as discussed in Chapter 3. On the reception-side, where Bulloch shows an eagerness to use digital platforms to engage with and respond to readers (such as his use of Twitter discussed in Chapter 6), such participation in the reception-side of the Amazon product page is only possible if you list and sell the product (Amazon Seller Central,

c2022). This process is done by publisher MacLehose Press, with Bulloch simply listed a “contributor” to the two literary texts, thus he is unable to respond to reviews left for the two novels on their Amazon product listings and so participate within this reception-side space. Consequently, Bulloch’s participation in the Amazon product page is limited to the use of the “Author Central” service and the subsequent propagation of content therefrom onto individual product pages associated with his “Author profile”. However, Bulloch was unaware that this service was available to him prior to his involvement with the present research project and so, within the versions of the pages studied in this chapter, he played no further role in the creation and maintenance of this paratextual space. Thus, despite the availability of a system through which translators can participate and play a role in shaping this digital paratextual space, Bulloch’s position and role on the Amazon product listings for these two translations either remained reliant upon other paratextual creators, such as the customers who left reviews, or reflected his visibility within other paratextual spaces, such as the content developed by the publisher. This is notable given the extent to which Bulloch has emphasised the importance of publicity and promotion within his work as a translator both during interview for this project and at live events (c.f. European Literature Network, 2020). Consequently, the limited role played by Bulloch within this paratextual space not only highlights the powerful position of other paratextual creators on his visibility, but also demonstrates the influence Amazon, a third party that simultaneously spans and sits outside of production- and reception-side paratextual practices, can exert over the paratextual space.

Finally, this chapter has also uncovered several avenues that would be of interest for further academic enquiry. For instance, whilst the “Author Central” service is available to contributors including translators, rather than simply authors as indicated by its name, the question remains of how many translators actually use the service and whether it has a marked impact upon them or their work. As mentioned in the section *Collaterally propagated content*, Bulloch was not aware that this service was available to him and so we can infer that publisher MacLehose Press is not prompting its translators to log into and use this service, despite indications given during interview

regarding the importance of Amazon to their marketing strategies and sales revenue. Similarly, the translator who created an English-language sample of *Er ist wieder da* prior to the sale of translation rights, who is herself well established in the field and has professional ties to the publishing world, similarly noted during interview that she does not use Amazon's "Author Central" service. Whilst this remains too narrow a dataset from which to generalise, it indicates the discrepancies between the existence of a service that provides a platform for translators to play an active role in this digital paratextual space and the actual take-up and use of that platform by literary translators and so would benefit from further research.

Another opportunity for further research uncovered within this chapter pertains to Amazon's recommendation algorithm and the insights it provides into the browsing and purchasing habits of British readers. As demonstrated in the *Personalised paratextuality* section, the recommendations generated for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* indicate the very different readerships that the two novels found within the British market despite their shared author, translator, publisher and genre. Indeed, where the recommendations for *The Hungry and the Fat* situate the novel alongside other translated or international-focused literature, thereby indicating a readership that is particularly interested in translated fiction, the commercial success of *Look Who's Back* has pushed the novel outside of the microclimate of translated literature and into constellation with other general English-language literature that deals with the same themes or personalities. While further research is needed to establish the position of translated literature within these algorithmic systems, the potential use of these algorithmically generated recommendations as reflections of readership and reception can be seen in the differences between the general and multi-genre recommendations generated for *The Hungry and the Fat* prior to the novel's release and the markedly translation-centric recommendations generated a year later. Consequently, the collateral forms of paratextuality found within the digital paratextual space of Amazon.co.uk has not only proved productive for the present thesis' focus on translator visibility, but also presents several exciting new avenues for research into the creation, circulation and consumption of literature in translation.

Chapter 6 – Visibility in translator-controlled digital spaces: The performance of Bulloch’s translatorship and his factual paratextuality

Introduction

Within the *collateral* paratextual space, this chapter develops a thread uncovered in Chapter 5: the opportunities presented by digital spaces for translators to become independent paratextual creators and exert influence over their own paratextual visibility. In the case of Amazon.co.uk, this potential went unfulfilled as Bulloch was unaware that he could create an “Author” profile for himself to link broader contextual information about him as a translator, such as a short biography and promotional photographs, to the Amazon listings for his translations. When searching for information about Bulloch and his translatorship online, however, it becomes clear that Bulloch does actively create content and participate in other digital spaces. These activities then generate digital, textual references to Bulloch that can inform the way readers approach individual translations such as *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. In doing so, Bulloch not only establishes an ever-expanding factual paratextuality relating to his translatorship but also creates visibility for himself which can be tapped by other paratextual creators in relation to any of his translated texts. Through his use of digital media, then, Bulloch can influence his visibility across various digital and non-digital paratextual spaces. Thus, it is on Bulloch’s own ability to produce *factual* paratexts and perform his translatorship in the digital space that this chapter will focus.

Given that these factual materials are not necessarily “consciously crafted” as a threshold to a given translation (Batchelor, 2018, 142), broader factual details pertaining to Bulloch and his translatorship found in digital spaces are understood here as forming *collateral* paratextual relationships with the literary texts he translates. In Genette’s original typology, factual paratext refers to “a fact whose existence alone, if known to the public, provides some commentary on the text and influences how the text is received” (1997a, 7). However, given that this thesis understands paratextuality as a

relationship between *texts*, this chapter seeks to establish factual paratextuality as a form of collateral paratextuality that can be traced across digital spaces. In doing so, I continue to demonstrate the productivity of defining collateral paratextuality as a space alongside “consciously crafted” paratextuality (Batchelor, 2018, 142) that prevents “paratext’s collapse into the vastness of ‘the context’” (Rockenberger, 2014, 267). As this thesis is focussing on the impact of digital paratextuality on Jamie Bulloch’s visibility as the translator of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, the factual paratexts analysed in this chapter pertain to Bulloch’s translatorship and the ways translatorship is performed in digital spaces. The following analysis investigates how Bulloch’s performance of translatorship in digital spaces increases his visibility as the translator of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, as well as how digital platforms allow Bulloch to play an unmediated role in the paratextual space through which to position his own visibility.

In terms of the chapter’s structure, I will begin by situating the notion of collateral, factual paratextuality within the definition of paratextuality put forward in Chapter 1 of this thesis. This theoretical work will then facilitate the establishment of performing translatorship as a means of creating factual paratextual materials in the digital space. Analysis within this chapter will then be structured around the major activities undertaken by Bulloch during the performance of his translatorship and their correspondence to publishing practices and life cycles. As such, this chapter seeks to demonstrate the ways in which digital and online media allow Bulloch to make his translatorship visible in ways not possible in the “consciously crafted” paratextual spaces surrounding *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*.

Situating “factual paratext” within the present understanding of paratextuality

Within the theoretical framework put forward in Chapter 1 of this thesis, I defined the concept of paratextuality as a functional relationship between

texts. This conceptualisation of paratextuality as a relationship between texts is necessary given the present thesis' focus on digital spaces, as the digitisation of information inherently creates texts. However, where Genette originally referred to factual paratext as "a fact whose existence alone, if known to the public, provides some commentary on the text and influences how the text is received", this is not limited to instances where this fact is "brought to the public's attention by a mention that, itself, belongs to the **textual** paratext" (1997a, 7-8; my emphasis). As such, Genette's conceptualisation of factual paratextuality facilitates what Rockenberger describes as "the paratext's collapse into the vastness of 'the context'" (2014, 267) and is too broad to be applied within this thesis's digital analysis.

In this thesis, then, factual paratextuality is understood as a form of collateral, paratextual relationship in which textual manifestations of broader contextual information can frame a subsequent encounter with a literary text. In this way, texts that were not "consciously crafted" as paratextual materials for a literary text, but whose content can influence the ways in which readers approach and understand a literary text, can form a factual, collateral, paratextual relationship therewith. This focus on textual manifestations of factual details centres around this thesis' investigation into the impact of digital content on translator visibility in the paratextual space, as a fact cannot be accessed digitally unless it exists in a digitised, textual form.

Examples of a factual paratextual relationship relating to the novels studied throughout this thesis could include historical accounts of National Socialist Germany, such as a documentary film access via YouTube, informing a reader's understanding of Adolf Hitler when reading *Look Who's Back*; or a reader encountering a television news report on migrant camps on social media before reading *The Hungry and the Fat*. Similarly, recorded interviews with Jamie Bulloch on his general approach to translation can influence the way readers of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* understand Bulloch's translations. Notably, in the examples given here, the focus on textuality within this conceptualisation of factual paratext does not pertain solely to the realm of verbal texts, as inferred by Genette's description of a "mention" within "paratexts" that are themselves "*textual*, or at least verbal" (emphasis in the original, 1997a, 9). Rather, the multimodal understanding of

textuality that underpins this thesis (c.f. *(Para-)Textuality in a multimodal context* in Chapter 1) means that the textual manifestations of broader contextual information that constitute factual paratextuality may be found in texts comprising elements of any modality.

The implication of this necessity for factual details to be manifested as texts is that inferences made by readers from, for instance, the author or translator's name are not understood here as forming a paratextual relationship with the literary text. Rather, these would fall into what Batchelor describes as "broader context" and "happenstance" (Batchelor, 2018, 143). Such facts would only become the focus of this thesis if they were manifested in texts. For instance, a reader of *Look Who's Back* may desire further information on Bulloch's career as a translator and so search for his name online. When entering Bulloch's name into the search engine Google, a profile panel is displayed to the side of the search results that includes a headshot photograph of Bulloch (google.com, no date). When seeing this image, users may then infer details about Bulloch including his age, race and gender. As such, Bulloch's Google search profile can form a factual, paratextual relationship with the novels he translates by influencing the way readers understand his translatorship, but this must be understood as collateral paratextuality because this space was not "consciously crafted" as a paratext for a particular translation. However, a reader inferring that Bulloch identifies as male when seeing "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch" on the rear cover of *Look Who's Back* because they know another man called Jamie would not be paratextual in nature. Given that the present thesis seeks to explore the roles translators play in achieving paratextual visibility then, the question addressed in this chapter becomes how Bulloch can use digital spaces to create factual paratextual relationships between his translatorship and his translations, as well as the impact of this factual paratextuality on his visibility.

The performance of translatorship as translator visibility in the (collateral) paratextual space

As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, Bulloch's translatorship comprises his activities as a literary scout, rewriter, marketer and ambassador. Of course, this model does not seek to provide a taxonomic overview of all activities undertaken by literary translators within the context of their professional work. Rather, it reflects Bulloch's work surrounding the publication of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* in English-language translation. Thus, Bulloch's broader translatorship as it pertains to other specific texts is out of scope for the present chapter. What is of relevance here, however, is how the undertaking of these activities around the publication of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* generates textual materials through which Bulloch can perform his translatorship and increase his paratextual visibility in the digital space.

When analysing how Bulloch's translatorship is *performed*, the present chapter draws on the work of Simone Murray, who argues that "performing authorship" is one of the "traditional literary 'processes'" undertaken within the digital literary sphere (2018, 9-10). This performance comprises the active "construction" of an authorial "persona" by the "creators of aesthetic objects" such as literary texts, through which "different performative strategies" shape "authorial identity" (Longolius, 2015, 7-8). In defining this performance as a process, Murray argues that "authorial embodiment and performativity", which includes activities such as "author tours" and "live broadcasts of book-prize ceremonies", "have come to be key—and controversial—criteria in the marketing, reception, and evaluation of literary fiction" (2018, 16). Thus, for Murray, this focus on the persona of the author within the "public life of literature" (Carter and Ferres, 2001) facilitates the characterisation of authorship as a performance, particularly in the digital literary sphere (2018, 15-16). As such, this performance of authorship can be understood as the making visible of the authorial role. Given, then, that the present chapter is focussed on digital manifestations of Bulloch's translatorship, or in Murray's terms his persona and its relationship to the literary texts that he translates, the performance of translatorship is

understood as the making visible of Bulloch's labour and status as the translator of those novels.

The performance of translatorship is of interest to this project for two reasons. Firstly, in looking at the ways in which Bulloch uses digital media to perform his translatorship, this chapter builds upon Simone Murray's argument the digital literary sphere allows individuals to "publish, publicize, and sell their work without the gatekeeper approval of mainstream media arbiters", a process referred to as disintermediation (2018, 29). Furthermore, the interactivity and para-sociality afforded to authors by the digital literary sphere allows them to interact in real time with readers and thereby form para-social relationships between readers and the performed author persona (2018, 29-30). As such, where this thesis seeks to position digital and non-digital paratextual materials in constellation with one another, Murray's understanding of the performance of authorship provides a lens through which to understand the ways in which Bulloch performs his translatorship in digital spaces and so increases his visibility.

Secondly, and taking Murray's example of "author tours" as the performance of authorship, I have already shown in Chapter 3 (pp. 120-121) that a brief author tour for *The Hungry and the Fat* was advertised by MacLehose Press on the social media website *Twitter* (2020c). Here, then, the public, non-paratextual performance is archived as a digital text that can form a paratextual relationship with *The Hungry and the Fat*. Furthermore, whilst Bulloch was absent from the materials created by MacLehose Press to promote the event, Bulloch attended the one author event that went ahead. Consequently, images from the event that show Bulloch's attendance and name Bulloch were shared on social media (Topping & Company Booksellers of Bath, 2020). As such, Bulloch's performance of translatorship through his participation in live events was archived in the digital space, thereby establishing a factual paratextual relationship between this performance and the novel that can be traced by other readers far removed from the live event. Furthermore, the fact that the images were shared to publicly document the event, rather than comment specifically on the novels, makes this factual paratextuality collateral in nature. Thus, by investigating how the performance of Bulloch's translatorship is archived and manifested

in the digital space, this chapter can analyse sources and spaces that would otherwise fall outside the scope of paratextual visibility.

As a result of the archival of performances in the digital space, this chapter takes the view that all the digital activity that contributes to Bulloch's visibility as a translator cumulatively increases the traces of his translatorship within the digital literary sphere. As such, digital evidence of Bulloch's translatorship within the British literary field constitutes a level of translator visibility that forms a collateral paratextual relationship with any and all of his future translations. Indeed, where the ephemerality of a face-to-face event in the non-digital world limits the wider impact of such events on a translator's visibility, the potential for digital artefacts (such as blog posts and video or audio on-demand recordings of online events) to be made permanently available results in the establishment of paratextual trajectories that are accessible to readers far removed from the original event or time of publication. This further establishes such relationships within the realm of collateral paratextuality, as paratextual materials that were consciously crafted for a given literary text during the performance can form a collateral, factual paratextual relationship with other translations by the same translator and thereby impact the translator's visibility across these paratextual constellations.

Nevertheless, whilst this chapter will seek to establish Bulloch's visibility across a variety of digital spaces, the context of this visibility will remain fixed around publication of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. This anchoring is useful, as to progress without such a focus risks the exponential expansion of this collateral paratextual corpus beyond an ability to comprehend and analyse within the context of this thesis. Of course, as argued in Chapter 1, such collateral, factual paratextual relationships have the potential to exist between an infinite number of texts and a given literary text. Limiting the forthcoming analysis to Bulloch's performance of translatorship in relation to the publication of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* therefore serves as a methodological necessity rather than a theoretically driven narrowing of the scope of paratextuality.

Bulloch's visibility through the performance of his translatorship in the digital space

Now that the theoretical framework behind the performance of translatorship has been clarified, I will now analyse the ways in which Bulloch performs his translatorship in the digital space to generate factual, collateral visibility. As such, the forthcoming analysis is divided along the lines of the four aspects of Bulloch's translatorship outlined in the introduction of this thesis — that is his activities as a literary scout, a rewriter, a marketer, and an ambassador. The findings from these analyses will then be used to discuss Bulloch's visibility as generated through the performance of his translatorship in the digital paratextual space and relate this to his visibility with the consciously crafted paratextual constellations of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*.

Bulloch the literary scout

The first form of factual paratextuality this chapter will investigate is that generated by Bulloch's activities as a literary scout. These activities comprise the translator's facilitation of the buying and selling of translation rights between publishing houses and therefore indicate the significant role played by translators within the global circulation of literature. Within a British context, where in general terms scouts serve as a vital source of information on the newest and most-desired titles prior to their acquisition by a publishing house (Williams, 2009), the advent of scouts came largely in the 1990's (McLay, 2016). Katharina Bielenberg, the now head of MacLehose Press and editor of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, worked alongside a literary scout in the mid-1990s. Consequently, she noted during interview that while there were very few literary scouts at that time, they played an important role in advising foreign publishers about books of interest released in Britain by sending reader reports or collating and forwarding reviews of given titles. So, when discussing the paratextual materials generated through Bulloch's activities as a scout, it is to such activities I refer.

In many cases, the texts generated as part of these processes are either not made available to the public or not aimed towards a general readership. In the case of the former, for instance, Bulloch noted during interview that he was asked by publisher MacLehose to read the original German version of *Er ist wieder da* prior to the publisher's acquisition of the title in order to assess its quality and suitability for the British market. In doing so, Bulloch's marriage to editor Katharina Bielenberg meant that this report was delivered orally, rather than as a written text. As such, the content of this report remains unknowable or traceable to other readers outside of the inferences that can be made from the outcome of these conversations: the book was acquired by MacLehose Press and translated by Bulloch. In the case of *Die Hungrigen und die Satten*, however, written reader reports were commissioned by MacLehose Press and completed by Bielenberg and Bulloch. Despite playing this role in the acquisition of translation rights, the sensitive and industry-facing nature of the reader reports commissioned by MacLehose Press means that they are not made available to the public. Rather, as outlined in Chapter 3, the two reports were leveraged to create initial English-language paratexts for the novels that were subsequently used as the basis for further iterations of the publisher's production-side materials. In terms of Bulloch's paratextual visibility, then, this aspect of Bulloch's translatorship increased his professional reputation with MacLehose Press but did not increase his visibility in the public sphere.

Indeed, Bulloch's consistent and successful career as a literary translator generates a public-facing level of visibility through his continued work within the British publishing industry. Thus, whilst scouting activities for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* cannot be found in the public-facing paratextual space, the consequences of this role contribute to the presence of Bulloch as a translator within the British publishing industry and so a level of factual paratextuality surrounding his work. This factual paratextuality then also feeds directly in to the consciously crafted paratextual space, where translator biographies in the codices of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* refer specifically to other novels and authors translated into English by Bulloch (as seen in Chapter 3, Figure 4). Consequently, direct correlation can be drawn between Bulloch's general professional reputation

as generated by his previous work and his continued presence within the British publishing industry, and his paratextual visibility within specific literary texts.

In other cases, textual manifestations of the translator's role as a literary scout can be found within the public sphere but are still not aimed towards a general readership. For example, *New Books in German* is an organisation which recommends German-language books deemed "to have a high chance of success in an English-speaking market" to the Anglophone publishing industry (no date a). As such, the programme's output is aimed at industry professionals, such as editors and translators, rather than lay readers.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the content generated by the reading and judging processes, such as reader reports and sample translations commissioned by foreign rights agents from the original publisher, is made publicly available via the *New Books in German* website. This differs from the publisher-specific reader reports commissioned by MacLehose Press which, as discussed above, served to report on the books' suitability for publication with that specific publishing house. An example of such a public-facing reader report can be seen on the page for *Er ist wieder da*, which is here translated as "He's back" (New Books in German, no date c).

⁸⁹ The *New Book in German* juries, of which Bulloch is a member on the British side, convene twice a year to recommend circa 15 to 20 titles. In doing so, the recommended titles come with a guarantee of translation funding from cultural institutions in the originating country, those being the Goethe Institut (at who's London offices *New Books in German* is based, no date b) for books originally published in Germany; the Austrian Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport; or Pro Helvetia for books originating from Switzerland. These recommendations used to be published in their bi-annual magazine and on their website simultaneously but from 2020 they have become online only (Hemens and Howarth, 2020).

The screenshot shows the 'New Books in German' website listing for the book *Er ist wieder da* by Timur Vermes. The page layout includes a navigation menu on the left with links for 'explore books', 'find funding', 'submit a book', 'for translators', and 'news'. Below the menu are links for 'home', 'about us', 'contact', and 'newsletter signup'. The central focus is the book cover for *ER IST WIEDER DA* by TIMUR VERMES, published by EICHBORN. To the right of the cover, the text reads: 'by Timur Vermes', 'Eichborn', 'August 2012 / 396pp', and 'Fiction'. Below this, a note states: 'This book is outside of the five year window for guaranteed assistance with English language translation. We suggest approaching the relevant funding body for an informal conversation on the possibility of support. Please refer to our [recommendations page](#) for books that can be funded.' A 'review' link is present, followed by a 'Sample Translation here' link. The review text asks: 'What would happen to Hitler if he were alive today? What would he make of contemporary multicultural society? How would people react to him? Vermes dares to imagine the answers to these questions in his humorous and intelligent satire, which envisions Hitler at large in twenty-first century Berlin.' Below the review, a paragraph describes the plot: 'It is the spring of 2011. Hitler wakes up on an empty plot of land in Berlin. He has a bit of a headache. He can't remember anything after being with Eva Braun in the bunker, so is somewhat confused to find Berlin suddenly intact and not overrun with Russian soldiers. He wanders the streets until a newsagent takes pity on him and lets him sleep in his kiosk. People obviously recognise Hitler but they assume that he is a comedian playing a role. His unintentionally hilarious monologues and the way he never slips out of character cause a great deal of amusement.'

Figure 33 – A screenshot of the *New Books in German* listing for *Er ist wieder da*.

Here, the “review” portion of the webpage is constructed from the reader report, whilst the sample translation is hyperlinked at the top of the page beneath the bibliographic details.⁹⁰ In both cases, this content was not created by Bulloch and so its existence within the public sphere of the digital space, and particularly the sample translation which is explicitly attributed to Katy Derbyshire, serves to destabilize Bulloch’s visibility as the translator of the English-language version of *Er ist wieder da* (*Look Who’s Back*) by presenting an alternate version with an alternative title (*He’s Back*) that was

⁹⁰ The sample translator noted during interview that she also wrote the reader report on *Look Who’s Back* for *New Books in German*. The report was then copyedited and published on the New Books in German website (no date c).

rewritten by another translator.⁹¹ However, as mentioned previously, this content is aimed at a professional, publishing industry audience rather than the general reading public. Furthermore, both the sample translator and Bulloch noted during interview that it is common practice for a translator to produce a sample translation for a literary text that they then do not go on to translate in full. As such, the impact of this destabilization of Bulloch's visibility within the wider context of *Look Who's Back* should not be overstated. Rather, this example demonstrates the ways in which industry facing activities such as creating reader reports and providing sample translations, both of which Bulloch described as part of his role as a literary translator during interview, can become visible within the publicly available, digital paratextual space.

What these examples of Bulloch's activities as a literary scout and their position within the British literary field have demonstrated, then, is that despite the opacity of much of this work behind the inner mechanisms of the publishing industry, Bulloch's public visibility through his continued presence within the British literary field is testament to the professional visibility and reputation that he has generated within the publishing industry. His work for German-language publishers creating sample translations, thereby assisting the export of German literature, alongside his professional reading and recommendation activities for British publishers and organisations such as *New Books in German*, comprises a base-level of translator visibility through his consistent work within the British publishing industry. Obvious though it might sound, Bulloch's continued visibility as a translator is reliant on his very ability to perform the act of translation. Thus, the factual paratextuality of Bulloch's presence in, and engagement with, the British and German publishing industries is essential to any further visibility ascribed within the consciously crafted or collateral paratextual spaces.

⁹¹ Bulloch noted during interview that it was common for translators' names to be associated with any sample translations that they complete, thereby generating further professional visibility for the individual within the industry.

Furthermore, where the translator's activities as a literary scout have been made publicly visible, such as the reader report and sample translation for *Er ist wieder da* published on the *New Books in German* website, this visibility is granted within a digital space. The *New Books in German* recommendations used to be published in a magazine aimed at "editors working in British and American publishing houses" and circulated to "translators, bookshops, universities and libraries" (Friederici and Boyer, 2016). Many of these readers overlap with those who can access the strategic-reader review site NetGalley.co.uk (see Chapter 4 for more), which demonstrates the limited target audience of these reports. However, by also publishing this content on the platform's website, the reader reports and sample translations become publicly available texts that can later form paratextual relationships with the published translation. In this way, the digital space uniquely makes the translator's activity as a literary scout visible to a public audience that the limited audience of printed trade publications cannot. This not only creates a collateral paratextual framing, where the online reader report for the original German novel can be leveraged as a comment on the translated text, but the differences between Derbyshire's "He's back" sample and Bulloch's published translation makes the plurality of translation visible to lay readers who may otherwise only expect there to be *the* translation of a novel. Thus, while Bulloch's role as a scout may remain opaque, the existence of other paratextual materials pertaining to the sale of translation rights for *Er ist wieder da* in the digital space collaterally makes the foreignness of *Look Who's Back* and the book's status as a translation visible in the paratextual space.

Bulloch the rewriter

The second aspect of Bulloch's translatorship that he performs in the paratextual space pertains to the way he rewrites German literary texts into English. This rewriting does not, however, simply refer to the act of translating the German text into English as a linguistic exercise. Rather, it encompasses the ways in which Bulloch's own creativity has uniquely shaped the English-language translation in comparison to the original

German or translations into other languages, thereby constituting him as a rewriter of the text (Lefevere, 1992), as well as the ways that Bulloch publicly and professionally takes responsibility for these decisions and the resulting translated literary text. While a comparative analysis of the English and German novels can reveal this creativity and ascribe visibility to Bulloch, a type of reading advocated for by Venuti in *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995), this is only possible for bilingual readers with access to both books. Thus, the significance of this aspect of Bulloch's translatorship is that it makes the mechanics of his translation visible to English-language readers for whom the translation would otherwise function under an "illusion of equivalence", that is as an original text (Hermans, 2007, 24).

An example of Bulloch performing his role as a rewriter can be found in the article *Translating German Humour* (Bulloch and Langton, 2017), which was posted on the *New Books in German* website. The article begins with Bulloch leveraging his knowledge of the British and German literary fields to give an overview of British perceptions of German literature, which he argues are "dominated by terms such as serious, weighty, meditative, brooding, melancholy". Bulloch then draws on his own experience to counter this perspective, arguing that "literature from the German-speaking countries is awash with humour" and that "humour has been a key element" in many of his translations (Bulloch and Langton, 2017). Interestingly for this project, he emphasises that this is evident "most of all in Timur Vermes' brilliantly audacious satire *Look Who's Back*, which has struck a chord with English-speaking audiences".

According to Bulloch, the key to translating the humour of *Look Who's Back* was his working relationship with German publisher Bastei Lübbe and author Timur Vermes, which was developed when spending a "residential week" with both at the Europäisches Übersetzer-Kollegium [European Translator-College] in 2013. As previously discussed, Bulloch and twelve other translators of *Er ist wieder da* spent a week there with Timur Vermes and a representative from publisher Bastei Lübbe discussing and dissecting the German text to find "solutions for rendering tricky parts into our respective

languages” (Bulloch and Langton, 2017).⁹² Notably, Bulloch remarks in the article that the “most helpful” advice he received during this residence was when “both author and publisher encouraged us ‘to do whatever is needed to make it work in your own language’”, a sentiment he reiterated during interview. Consequently, this discussion of Bulloch’s approach to the translation process and his activities therein provides a level of visibility for the labour of translation undertaken by Bulloch in rendering *Er ist wieder da* into English. Moreover, given that this approach is described as “an idea worth bearing in mind when undertaking any translation” (Bulloch and Langton, 2017), the article creates a collateral paratextual framing for all of Bulloch’s work as a literary translator regarding his general creative approach to this process, including Bulloch’s subsequent translation of Vermees’ second novel as *The Hungry and the Fat*.

Bulloch then goes into specific details about creative changes made to the text of *Look Who’s Back* during the translation process. For example, Bulloch describes the neutralisation of the character Fräulein Krömeier’s Berlin accent, which is written phonetically in the original German (“Ouh! Det is mir jetzt so rausjerutsch!” [*Oops! That just slipped out!*] Vermees, 2012, 209). Bulloch argues that this accent would be “impossible to render faithfully” (Bulloch and Langton, 2017), instead choosing to translate her speech into a “a contemporary metropolitan vernacular” (“O.M.G.! That just like, totally slipped out!” [Vermees, 2014a, 190-191]). In doing so, Bulloch sought to create a similar juxtaposition to the narrating Hitler’s “outdated, stuffy and ludicrously rhetorical idiom” for English-language readers (Bulloch and Langton, 2017). A further example is the addition of “absurd business clichés that aren’t there in the German original” into the speech of the

⁹² The thirteen translators involved in the residence translated *Er ist wieder da* into Bulgarian, Chinese, English, Greek, Italian, Catalan, Macedonian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Swedish, Serbian, Spanish and Czech (Europäische Übersetzer-Kollegium, personal communication).

character Sensenbrink.⁹³ In both cases, Bulloch makes his aim explicit: “to preserve the humour in English and thereby boost the book’s impact as a satire” (Bulloch and Langton, 2017). Interestingly, author Vermes expressed support for the creative approach described by Bulloch during interview based on the need for translators to “interpret” and provide a particular reading of a literary text. As such, not only can we here see the creative activities undertaken by Bulloch as part of the translation process within the literary text, but the explicit discussion of these translation decisions in the digital space generates a factual, paratextual understanding of both Bulloch’s specific approach to *Look Who’s Back* and a general conceptualisation of his translation philosophy as it pertains to all of his books.

Consequently, by arguing that creative freedom gives translators the license to “invent your own” “comic ingredients or devices” when the source text may not “resonate” with a new target audience, Bulloch takes personal responsibility for these examples by describing them as “concrete example[s] of this **in my case**” (my emphasis, Bulloch and Langton, 2017). Notably, the extent to which Bulloch is responsible for these specific examples and not, for instance, Bielenberg in her role as editor is impossible to ascertain without access to translation drafts. Thus, in taking personal responsibility for these decisions, Bulloch performs his translatorship to make his role as rewriter visible but in doing so renders the labour of other agents involved in the creation of the English-language translation invisible. Furthermore, the use of these digital media to perform his translatorship and make his role as a rewriter visible to British readers achieves a visibility that cannot be replicated in the book itself. This is not only because Bulloch’s

⁹³ An example of the changes to Sensenbrink’s dialogue is the translation of “Haben Sie davon noch mehr” (Literally: *Have you got more of that?* Vermes, 2012, 67) as “What other clubs have you got in your bag?” (Vermes, 2014, 58). Given that the character of Sensenbrink also appears in *The Hungry and the Fat*, this explicit discussion of Bulloch’s strategy for translation his dialogue similarly frames his translation of Vermes’ second novel.

translator's note is a glossary of terms and references, rather than a discussion of his translation strategy, but also because his creative solutions to the challenges of translating Vermees' prose would go un-signalled to any readers of the English-language literary text who could not sit down with the German next to the English and compare the two. Consequently, this factual paratextual material pertaining to Bulloch's creative work as a translator increases the visibility of this aspect of his translatorship and provides a window into processes which would remain opaque to monolingual readers accessing *Look Who's Back* under the illusion of the translation's equivalence to Vermees' original German (Hermans, 2007, 22-24).

Bulloch the marketer

The third aspect of Bulloch's translatorship manifested in the collateral, paratextual space stems from his promotional activities marketing the books he translates to Anglophone readers. While some of these activities take place alongside the acquisition and translation of a foreign-language text, as can be seen in Bulloch's involvement in the creation of production-side paratexts discussed in Chapter 3 (such as the writing of early blurb copy), most of these activities comprise public-facing appearances surrounding and supporting the release of the finished translation onto the British market. During interview, the activities that Bulloch described most prominently within marketing and promotional practices are his participation in live events and use of social media. In the case of the former, it is the archival and discussion of these in-person events in digital texts that allows them to form a paratextual relationship with the literary text, whilst the use of social media is inherently text based.

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AUTHOR EVENTS, BOOK REVIEW, BOOKS

Book Review – Look Who's Back by Timur Vermes

POSTED BY ISABEL COSTELLO · APRIL 4, 2014 · 11 COMMENTS

FILED UNDER HITLER, JAMIE BULLOCH, LOOK WHO'S BACK, TIMUR VERMES, TRANSLATED FICTION

This has been quite a week. I've had a breakthrough in the planning of my new novel. I read Jenny Offill's extraordinary *Dept. Of Speculation* in one sitting and felt compelled to add to the buzz. I attended the spectacular theatrical launch of Jason Hewitt's debut *The Dynamite Room* – it's one of my Hot Picks 2014 and the very next day it was longlisted for the Desmond Elliott Prize for New Fiction. Then last night I got to meet Timur Vermes, author of the satirical German novel *Look Who's Back*, at the UK launch hosted by Waterstones London Wall.

Look Who's Back has a pretty astounding premise: Adolf Hitler wakes up in Berlin in 2011 to find the Fatherland unrecognisable and, despite many technological advances, decidedly inferior to the one he recalls. Unable to convince anyone that he is anything other than a flawlessly convincing impersonator, he becomes a YouTube sensation, ends up with his own TV chatshow – in fact everything's changed but his political agenda.



Figure 34 – A screenshot of a blog post featuring a photo from an author event for *Look Who's Back* held at Waterstones' now-closed London Wall branch on 3rd April 2014 (Costello, 2014).

In the case of Bulloch's involvement in live events and accounts of these events in digital spaces, Bulloch played an active role in the promotion of both *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* in the UK. For *Look Who's Back*, these events consisted of traditional author-meet-and-greet style events, such as the image from a Waterstones event in Figure 34, and more unique, one-off events such as the "literary dinner" event hosted at a restaurant in central London pictured in Figure 35. In both cases, Bulloch's primary activity consisted of a joint reading of the novel with author Vermes in which an extract of dialogue between Hitler and his secretary was performed by Vermes and Bulloch respectively.⁹⁴ As such, Bulloch very

⁹⁴ Of course, as discussed both in Chapter 5 with regards to the layout of bookshops and earlier in this chapter (see the section *Situating factual paratext within the present understanding of paratextuality*), the

literally personified the voice of the English-language text by performing a reading alongside Vermes as an authorial figure and leveraging his translatorship as a tool to promote the translation to readers in attendance at these events.



Figure 35 – An image of the ‘Literary Dinner’ event for Look Who’s Back held on 31st March 2014 tweeted by the account for the host restaurant (Hardy’s restaurant, 2014).

existence of textual materials documenting such information is required for such details to be considered paratextual. As such, details pertaining to the structure of the Waterstones event and Bulloch’s activities therein are gleaned from the account published by Costello (2014), whilst details given during interview are coupled with the image in Figure 3, and a tweet from Jamie Bulloch (2014a) to present the account of the event in this Chapter.

However, in the case of the events organised to promote the launch of *Look Who's Back*, textual materials used to promote these events did not position Bulloch and his translatorship as a presence within the literary text, and his activities within a promotional capacity were limited to readings from the text. Furthermore, question and answer sessions were either run solely with the author Vermes (Costello, 2014) or were moderated by an external speaker, such as filmmaker Rex Bloomstein at the literary dinner event hosted by Hardy's restaurant (Bulloch, 2014a). Indeed, as can be seen in Figure 35, whilst Vermes and Bloomstein hold the floor from bar stools (on the right of the photograph), Bulloch is sitting within the audience, taking a photograph on his mobile phone (the fourth figure from the left at the back of the image). In these instances, then, the public performance of Bulloch's translatorship consists of his giving voice to the English text but, as argued by Pym, does not go as far as taking "ethical or pragmatic" responsibility for the text in lieu of the author (2011). Instead, Bulloch is positioned as an auxiliary figure to that of Vermes through the limited scope of the activities undertaken within the parameters of these events, despite the fact he would remain at the event whilst Vermes left to conduct further media appearances (Bulloch, 2014b).⁹⁵

When participating in the live event to promote the release of *The Hungry and the Fat* in January 2020, however, Bulloch played a far more active role.⁹⁶ The event, an image from which can be seen in Figure 36, was hosted by Topping & Company Booksellers in Bath who advertised the event as "Timur Vermes in conversation with translator Jamie Bulloch in Bath" (2020). This description was not only used online but can also be seen in the

⁹⁵ Vermes left the event at Hardy's to take part in the BBC's *Newsnight* programme hosted by Jeremy Paxman alongside author and journalist Sophie Hardach. A copy of this feature can be found on YouTube (Atzmon, 2014).

⁹⁶ As seen in the Tweet cards analysed in Chapter 3, three events had originally been planned to celebrate the novel's release but two were cancelled beforehand due to poor ticket sales (Jamie Bulloch, personal communication).

in-store advertising used to promote the event to shop visitors, where the event title is given as **Timur Vermes** in conversation with translator **Jamie Bulloch**” (as seen on the centre bookshelf in Figure 36 and in close up in Figure 37). Consequently, Bulloch’s performance of his translatorship at this later event expanded from his voicing of the English text through the reading of an extract, to his shared position as the focus of the event and his public representation of the text alongside Timur Vermes as an authorial figure.



Figure 36 – An image from the launch event for *Look Who’s Back* tweeted by the host bookshop Topping & Company, Bath on 30th January 2020 (Topping & Company Booksellers of Bath, 2020).

As such, the digital texts that create a record of Bulloch’s involvement in the promotion of *The Hungry and the Fat* and his positioning alongside Vermes in these texts leverages Bulloch’s own professional experience, renown and expertise to advertise the novel whilst establishing factual paratextuality about Bulloch’s translatorship. This marks an interesting deviation from the representation of Bulloch in the production-side paratextual space, where MacLehose noted during interview that a translator’s name is strategically absent from covers and cover-based promotional materials, such as posters, in favour of including a quote or a prize roundel (see Chapter 3 for more detail). Rather than reproducing Bulloch’s limited visibility in the production-side paratexts, this third-party retailer created its own paratextual materials in which Bulloch was represented as the translator of *The Hungry and the*

Fat so create an alternative paratextual framing to that pushed by MacLehose Press. In the performance of his translatorship through participation in promotional events, then, Bulloch not only creates visibility for himself through his presence at the event, but is also positioned as a personified, represented translator in third-party-created promotional materials.

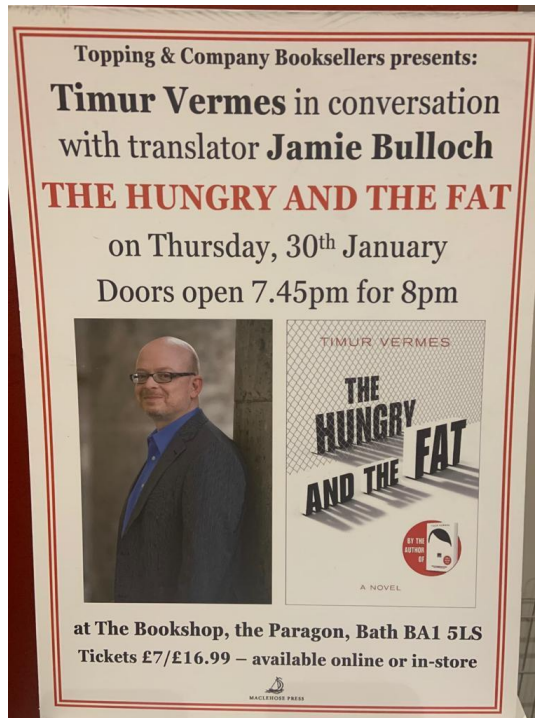


Figure 37 – A close up of the promotion boards used to advertise the launch event for *The Hungry and the Fat*

The second way in which Bulloch performs his translatorship by marketing and promoting his translations can be traced in the source materials used within the previous analysis: Bulloch’s use of social media. During interview, Bulloch noted that social media marketing was a consistent way in which he would help to promote his translations. This activity primarily takes place on Twitter, which he typically uses to share (or in Twitter’s terminology, “retweet”) posts by other users, such as those published by MacLehose Press to promote events, or to amplify production-side paratextual materials in the digital space, for instance by posting pictures of his books upon receipt of “author copies” (see Figure 38). While Bulloch noted during interview that his Twitter usage has decreased in recent years, he still

emphasises its importance in the marketing of the books that he translated. This sentiment was shared by publisher MacLehose Press, who stated that international authors typically do not use social media in the same way as Anglophone authors. Indeed, Vermes himself noted during interview that:

“... the publishing house has their Facebook pages and this is done by their public relations staff. I don't do it for myself as an author. I decided against working with my audience on Twitter, on Facebook, on everything because I don't want to communicate with bots. I don't know who I'm talking to. [...] you still have to understand that this is not my actual business. My actual business is telling stories and getting paid for telling them.”

Consequently, translators who engage with social media present a way for publishers to bridge the gap created by international authors such as Vermes who decide to stay away from social media. In this way, and as can be seen in Figure 38, Bulloch's activity on social media here serves to amplify the consciously crafted paratextual materials posted by the publisher on social media and do so in lieu of the original author. Thus, where the role of Bulloch in the production-side marketing of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and that Fat* was found to be incredibly limited in Chapter 3, Bulloch's use of social media allows him to re-insert his translatorship into this paratextual space. Furthermore, in regularly using his social media presence to publicise the books that he has translated, Bulloch creates a base level of visibility for himself via the establishment of a database of factual paratextuality in which his translatorship is documented, publicised and archived.



Figure 38 – An image of several copies of The Hungry and the Fat tweeted by Bulloch two weeks prior to the novel’s release (Bulloch, 2020b)

Bulloch’s activities on social media are, however, not limited to the amplification of production-side materials. Rather, Bulloch’s desire to help market the books on a personal level has not only resulted in the creation of his own Tweets to promote his translations, but also to interact with readers. In order to manage these “interactive” and “para-social” (Murray, 2018, 29-30) elements of his translatorship in the digital space, and particularly with regards to interaction with readers for the vast array of books that he has now translated, Bulloch uses the “TweetDeck” application, which allows users to “view multiple timelines” spanning multiple Twitter accounts or keyword searches within a single interface (Twitter Help Center, c2022). During interview, Bulloch noted that his tweet deck application has now become rather complex with approximately 50 columns, typically showing tweets relevant to search strings based upon the titles of books that he has translated. In monitoring this online activity, Bulloch is not only able to share posts by others pertaining to his books but also respond directly to readers who share their thoughts or questions in this social media space.

An example of this can be seen below, in the dialogue between Bulloch and another Twitter user shown in Figure 39. There are several notable things demonstrated within this exchange. Firstly, the original Tweet that Bulloch is

responding to here does not mention *Look Who's Back* or Timur Vermes by name, as the user is enquiring after these details. As such, the use of keywords such as "Hitler" and "book" were enough for Bulloch to find and respond to this Tweet and demonstrates his creativity in developing the TweetDeck search strings he described during interview. Secondly, in this example we can see how Bulloch performs his translatorship in this digital space to directly engage with a potential reader alongside an explicitation that this activity forms part of his translatorship in one of his replies ("Hence my scouring of Twitter for any mention of it!", Bulloch, 2014c). In doing so, Bulloch makes this aspect of his translatorship visible and contributes to the factual paratextuality surrounding it by explicitly defining his role in the public sphere.

Finally, even though Bulloch is performing his translatorship within this exchange, the other user only acknowledges that Bulloch is the translator of *Look Who's Back* some 3 Tweets into their exchange and 27 minutes after Bulloch's initial response to the user's question — an admission that comes following the user noting that they have "Looked it [*Look Who's Back*] up". Here, then, we can see that the positioning of Bulloch as the translator of *Look Who's Back* in the paratextual materials encountered by this user, the factual paratextuality surrounding Bulloch's translatorship and his professional visibility are not enough for this user to immediately identify him as the translator of the novel.

Another humorous example of this is a user directly tweeting Bulloch (by using the @jamiEBulloch handle within the body of the Tweet) to ask him if he has read "the Vermes book?" (Rowe, 2019), to which Bulloch responds "Yes: I translated it!" (Bulloch, 2019). In terms of the visibility that the performance of translatorship on social media achieves for Bulloch, the limited audience of such Twitter interactions means that the impact of any individual Tweet cannot be overstated due to their limited, individual audiences. What is noteworthy is that online social media platforms present an opportunity for Bulloch to perform his translatorship that is not possible in the non-digital paratextual space. Furthermore, these performances serve as a platform to actively engage in and shape the paratextual spaces surrounding his translations that is "disintermediated" (Murray, 2018) from

the publisher or third parties such as retailers, who have their own ideologies and objectives. Bulloch's role as a marketer can, therefore, be understood as facilitating the expansion of the factual space surrounding his translatorship and the creation of collateral paratextual relationships between his social media and the literary texts that he translates.



Figure 39 – A dialogue between a Twitter user and Jamie Bulloch regarding Look Who's Back

However, what is limited within both the traditional, face-to-face performance of translatorship (as seen in Bulloch's participation in author events for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*) and the digital activities undertaken via social media is their potential reach. In both cases, there is a level of ephemerality resulting from the very nature of the activities not found within, say, the creation of a cover design that accompanies every copy of a book. With the live events discussed in the above, attendance was limited by temporal and spatial elements, thereby preventing future readers from accessing the specific content. Furthermore, textual traces of their occurrence through the continued existence of promotional materials in the digital space contribute to the further proliferation of a factual paratextuality surrounding Bulloch's translatorship. In other words, we do not know exactly what Bulloch said or did at these events, yet the fact that we know he participated at all communicates something about his translatorship. The same can be said of Bulloch's use of Twitter, where the use of "timelines" that prioritise the propagation of the newest content establishes a virtual shelf-life for content posted to the site. Yet, in the performance of his translatorship in the digital space through the amplification of production-side marketing processes and interaction with readers, Bulloch's Twitter account gains followers and so establishes a platform through which he can continue to perform his translatorship to a greater audience and further establish a web of factual paratextuality within the digital space, despite the ephemerality of any such individual activities.

Bulloch the ambassador

Where the activities discussed in the previous section typically fall within the marketing life cycle of a translated text, thereby imbuing them with a potentially restrictive ephemerality, the performance of translatorship as an ambassadorial role presents a more persistent form of collateral factual paratextuality that exists outside the framework of a publishing house's marketing processes. Such activities go beyond the processes mapped in Thompson's "publishing value chain" (2010,16) to support literary texts and

the act of translation in the years following publication. The activities discussed within this ambassadorship function on three levels: as an ambassador for a given literary text; as an ambassador for foreign-language literature, which in Bulloch's case is German-language literature; and as an ambassador for the act and profession of literary translation within the British literary field.

In the case of the first, that is ambassadorial activities for given literary texts, Bulloch stated during interview that the large quantities of new books being published in the contemporary British market gives new releases "a very, very short shelf-life" to the extent that, "if it [a book] doesn't do anything in the first three weeks or so that's it, it's gone". Consequently, ambassadorial activities for individual titles here relates to promotional activities undertaken outside of the short-term publishing life cycle whereby Bulloch seeks to invoke a renewed interest after a perceived lack of success or impact. In terms of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and that Fat*, such instances are difficult to identify as the commercial success of the former places it out of scope for Bulloch's activities and during the research and writing for this thesis, the latter was still firmly within its hardback and paperback publishing cycles. Nevertheless, in undertaking such ambassadorship for other titles during the publishing cycle of those two novels, the factual paratextuality of Bulloch's translatorship is still being generated in such a way that ambassadorial activities can form paratextual relationships with *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*.

An example of this can be seen in Bulloch's participation in the first meeting of the *Borderless Book Club* (Peirene Press, 2020a). This online book club, which was created by Peirene Press in March 2020 as a response to the UK's first COVID-19 induced lockdown, puts translation at the forefront through question and answer sessions with the books' translators.⁹⁷ The

⁹⁷ Though it was originally called the "Translated Fiction Online Book Club", then being renamed the *Borderless Book Club* following the extension of its program past the first six weeks (Peirene Press, 2020b).

book club's initial six week run featured translations from six publishers, with Peirene Press' own publication of the Jamie-Bulloch-translated *The Mussel Feast* (Vanderbeke, 2013) being the first text featured.⁹⁸ What is notable here is Peirene Press' decision to feature a seven-year-old novel, rather than a release from 2019 or 2020 as done by the other presses who participated. Bulloch's activities as an ambassador for individual texts outside of their production and promotional cycles is clearly demonstrated through his participation in this online event, during which he answered questions relating to the content of *The Mussel Feast* and its position within the German literary field, his translation process (both in general and specifically relating to *The Mussel Feast*), and the translation of humour. By discussing these aspects of his translatorship within the forum of the internationally successful *Borderless Book Club*, which was featured in *The New York Times* (Beckerman, 2020) and was nominated in the "Best of the Year" category at the FutureBook Best of Lockdown Awards organised by publishing industry magazine *The Bookseller* (Bookseller staff, 2020), Bulloch continued to increase the visibility of his translatorship through the expansion of the factual paratextual space.

As such, the book-specific ambassadorial activities relating to *The Mussel Feast* undertaken through his participation in the *Borderless Book Club*, which took place only two months after the hardback release of *The Hungry and the Fat*, increased Bulloch's visibility as a translator in a way that can then draw links between this performance of his translatorship and his other translations — particularly where they cover similar subject matter or themes, such as Germany's 21st century history or the translation of humour.

⁹⁸ The schedule also comprised *Where The Wild Ladies Are* by Matsuda Aoko, translated from the Japanese by Polly Barton (Titled Axis Press, 2020); *Fate* by Jorge Consiglio, translated from the Spanish by Carolina Orloff and Fionn Petch (Charco Press, 2020); *Restless* by Kenneth Moe, translated from the Norwegian by Alison McCullough (Nordisk Books, 2020); *Thirteen Months of Sunrise* by Rania Mamoun, translated from the Arabic by Elisabeth Jaquette (Comma Press, 2019); and *Singer in the Night* by Olja Savičević, translated from the Croatian by Celia Hawkesworth (Istros Book; 2019).

Furthermore, the existence of a permanent, freely and publicly available record of this performance, achieved through the creation of a podcast from the event's audio and made available on SoundCloud (Peirene Press, 2020c), establishes this as a textual manifestation of Bulloch's ambassadorial translatorship that can continue to create collateral, factual paratextual relationships beyond the ephemerality of the original event.

An example of Bulloch's wider ambassadorship for German-language literature can be seen in his work on the UK jury of *New Books in German*, who meet biannually to judge books submitted by German-language publishers (New Books in German, no date a). The role of this jury is to decide which books to make eligible for translation grants based on the books having "a high chance of success in an English-speaking market" (New Books in German, no date a). In doing so, the *New Books in German* programme encourages the importing of German-language literature into the British and US literary markets by providing financial support to English-language publishers, thereby reducing the economic risk of publishing translated literature given its continued position on the periphery of Anglophone literary systems and the increased costs of involving a translator compared to books written in English.⁹⁹ Bulloch's involvement within this programme through his work on the British jury not only reinforces his activities as a literary scout, given that he reads a large number of German-language books from across the German speaking world within this role, but also demonstrates his ambassadorship for German-language literature in Britain by promoting the continued translation of German-language literature into Anglophone markets. Consequently, ambassadorial activities tied to the promotion of German-language literature in Britain are also implicitly tied to Bulloch's ambassadorship for translation as a professional activity as it is through the act of translation that these German-language books enter the Anglophone market.

⁹⁹ As described to by MacLehose Press during interview.

Nevertheless, explicit opportunities to promote the work of translators within the global circulation of literature, thereby serving as an ambassador for translation, also exist. For instance, Bulloch partook in the “translation session” at the digital UK-Swiss Publishing Fair (European Literature Network, 2020b) in December 2020.¹⁰⁰ Here, Bulloch and three other German-to-English literary translators discussed “their experiences in tracking down those key books to translate, pitching to publishers, rights and wrongs, practical tips and final triumphs” (European Literature Network, 2020b), thereby making the various activities undertaken as part of their translatorship visible to the public and serving as ambassadors for the labour of translation within the global circulation of literature. Another example of Bulloch’s ambassadorship for translation came from his position as head of the jury for the 2020 Austrian Cultural Forum’s translation prize (Austrian Cultural Forum, 2020). In doing so, Bulloch’s professional experience and reputation positions him as an expert in the field who can function in the role of a judge and thereby allows him to support both professional and aspiring literary translators. Though these two examples of ambassadorial activity did not pertain specifically to Bulloch’s translation of Vermees’ two novels, it once again serves to make Bulloch’s translatorship visible between the publication of *The Hungry and the Fat* in hardback and paperback. Thus, by making his presence within the publishing industry and his work as a translator traceable across public and industry events, Bulloch’s role as an ambassador contributes to the factual paratextuality surrounding his translatorship.

¹⁰⁰ The event took place within the first year of *The Hungry and the Fat*’s publication in Britain and a month before the paperback edition of the novel was published in the UK. A recording of the event is available online via the European Literature Network (2020a).

Conclusions

The aim of this chapter was to demonstrate how digital paratextual spaces allow Bulloch to perform his translatorship outside of the “consciously crafted” paratextual space to create a factual paratextuality that impacts his visibility within the paratextual spaces of *Look Who’s Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. In doing so, the chapter engaged with theoretical debates on translatorship and the translator’s role in book publishing practices by providing an inductively produced, holistic overview of Bulloch’s professional activities as a literary translator that is situated within the understandings of translation and translator visibility put forward in the introductory chapters of this thesis. Indeed, through an investigation into the paratextual manifestation of Bulloch’s translatorship comprising activities from before the acquisition of translation rights to the post-publication afterlife of a literary text, this chapter has demonstrated two major impacts of the digital sphere of factual paratextual. Firstly, the proliferation of paratextual materials in digital spaces means that Bulloch’s professional and public visibility as a translator can be influenced by paratextual creators outside of oft-studied production- and reception-side processes. This may be institutions such as *New Books in German* who create digital-only content such as translator interviews, engaged readers who document live events on their blogs, or even digital retailers such as the Amazon case study used in the previous chapter. Secondly, the translator can also leverage digital media to create their own paratexts and so play an active role in their own paratextual visibility. In returning agency to Bulloch as a paratextual creator through the lens of collateral, factual paratextuality, then, this chapter challenges the notion of an impotent or voiceless translator whose visibility lies solely in the hand of publishers and readers to instead highlight the ways that translators can leverage or benefit from digital and online platforms to increase their own paratextual visibility.

Within the professional activities that comprise Bulloch’s translatorship as analysed throughout this chapter, Bulloch’s roles as a literary scout and an ambassador both generate texts that can form a paratextual relationship with his translations. Though they come at opposite poles of Thompson’s

publishing value chain (2010, 16), with literary scout relating to the forelife of the translated text (which, if rights are not bought or another translator is commissioned for the full translation may go unfulfilled) and ambassador then pertaining to its afterlife post-publication, the two roles are analogous in their relative opacity to the wider public. For instance, the reader reports and sample translations that comprise Bulloch's work as a literary scout have an industry-specific target audience and are not intended to be publicly available, whilst ambassadorial roles such as serving on the jury of Austrian Cultural Forum's 2020 translation prize or participation in the Borderless Book Club may be public facing but still have industry-specific or niche audiences.

In both cases, however, rather than increasing Bulloch's paratextual visibility through the generation of textual materials pertaining to his translatorship, such activities contribute to Bulloch's continued presence as a literary translator within the British publishing industry. This presence then feeds directly back into paratextual spaces such as the translator biographies found in the front- or backmatter of Bulloch's translations, which document his professional acumen within the production-side paratextual space, or interviews and translator profiles which focus on the personified figure of Bulloch the translator, such as Lizzy Siddal's "Meet the translator: Jamie Bulloch" (Lizzy's Literary Life, 2019). Of course, this is not to say that textual traces of these activities cannot be found, as indicated by the existence of the Borderless Book Club as an audio-on-demand podcast and promotional materials for industry events in which Bulloch participated, as discussed previously in this chapter. Rather, that in the case of Bulloch's paratextual visibility surrounding *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, it is in Bulloch's continued presence within the British literary field that these activities primarily contribute towards his visibility.

The two other forms of professional activity analysed within this chapter, Bulloch's role as a rewriter and marketer, are tied more inherently to practices outlined within Thompson's publishing value chain. Interestingly, while the two may seem to focus on opposite sides of the production/reception-side paradigm, with rewriting activities constituting the translator's role in the production of the translated literary text and marketing

activities pertaining to the presentation of the finished translation to readers, the two are linked in their service of the other side. For instance, where Bulloch makes his rewriting of dialogue in *Look Who's Back* visible to Anglophone readers by discussing his approach to *producing* the translated literary text in a blog post (Bulloch and Langton, 2017), he describes his rewriting of the literary text in service of making the novel 'work' in English — a reader-oriented approach that prioritises the novel's *reception*. Similarly, where his social media posts and participation in live events for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* aid the novels' *reception* by promoting the book to potential readers, he does so in service of the novels' *producer*, publisher MacLehose Press, who relies on translators to fill the void of an author (as is the case with Timur Vermes' absence from social media). As such, Bulloch's visibility within these two roles is inherently tied to the visibility of the associated literary texts within the British literary market, the visibility of himself as a personified figure, and the visibility of the role of translation within the production- and reception-side framings of the novels. Moreover, what links the performance of these roles to the accumulation of translator visibility is the digital space, where these activities take place or can be documented for future reference.

Investigating and understanding the impact of these activities on Bulloch's visibility in the paratextual space remains, however, a challenge. For instance, the creation of such paratextual materials may fall outside of typical production- and reception-side practices and so these creators may position the translator differently. This can be seen in Topping's Book Shop creating their own promotional materials for a launch event for *The Hungry and the Fat* which positioned Jamie Bulloch prominently alongside Timur Vermes. Compared to the promotional materials created by publisher MacLehose, then, from which Bulloch's name is absent, Bulloch is represented as a present and personified translator by the event organisers and therefore granted increased visibility. However, when Bulloch then shares such materials on social media, he becomes an amplifier for the paratextual visibility afforded to him by others, rather than an agent in control of his own visibility. The impact of this was seen in the Twitter exchanges discussed previously, where readers interacted with Bulloch directly

regarding *Look Who's Back* but were unaware that he was the translator of the book. As such, despite Bulloch's increased agency in using his own social media channels to market and promote his work, his visibility as the translator of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* remains tied to the ways in which he is positioned by other paratextual creators — as was the case in the reception-side materials discussed in Chapter 4.

Furthermore, in positioning Bulloch either alongside author Vermes, as done at live events, or encouraging his performance of social media marketing in lieu of the original author, Bulloch the translator continues to be positioned in relation to the author. As discussed in the section *Defining Bulloch's translatorship*, such dichotomising of the two roles is problematic in understanding the full breadth of Bulloch's translatorship and so attributing visibility to him as the translator solely in relation to Vermes the author proliferates this conversation within the British literary field. Furthermore, as noted by Jansen and Wegener (2013), other agents such as editors and proof-readers are also involved in the production of translated literary texts and so the raising of the figure of the translator as a figure either in opposition to or collaboration with an author not only renders their work invisible, but also fails to acknowledge the activities undertaken by translators in support of and in collaboration with these agents.

In conclusion, then, whilst the analysis within this chapter has demonstrated the value of focusing on the agency of the translator in their professional activities through an examination of Bulloch's translatorship, it has also highlighted the extent to which the position and role of the translator in this collateral, factual paratextual space remains subject to the peripheral position of translation and translators within the British literary field. Indeed, as seen in the absence of translation from the theoretical models of contemporary publishing processes such as Thompson (2010), Ray Murray and Squires (2013), and Murray (2018), the visibility achieved by or attributed to Bulloch through the performance of his translatorship relies on broader publishing practices and systems which largely function without acknowledging literary translation.

Conclusion

This thesis has sought to demonstrate that the advent and proliferation of online and digital media has had a marked impact on the visibility of translators in the paratextual space. The digital space is, by its very nature, a complex web of hypertextual and intertextual links that encourages the iteration, proliferation, and coalescence of content. Thus, it is hardly surprising that the translator's visibility within this space is similarly nebulous and difficult to trace. Indeed, given the boundless paratextual trajectories readers can take towards a literary text in the digital space, paratextual visibility becomes reliant on an increasing cast of digital content creators spanning both production- and reception-side literary processes. Yet, within a digital space that ostensibly results in the democratisation of content creation, this thesis has revealed the continued power of publishers both in the creation of paratextual materials and the establishment of paratextual narratives, such as the involvement of a translator in a book's creation. In this way, the fact that publishers give life to literary texts and initiate paratextual creation processes in the world of trade publishing results in a level of responsibility for establishing the literary translator's visibility in the paratextual space. The subsequent iterative, proliferative, and coalescing nature of online and digital media then results in the diffusion of this paratextual visibility into spaces over which the publisher no longer has full, if any, control. Of course, the possibility for anyone to become a paratextual creator in the digital space means that other individuals can seek to corroborate or challenge this paratextual visibility — most notably the translator themselves, who may seek to reinsert themselves into the discourse surrounding a given literary text. Despite this apparent democratisation of content in digital spaces, however, the fact that materials produced by the publisher often serve a hybrid function as both paratextual materials and co-texts within the literary text as product, whether that be manifested as a codex or in a digital form such as an eBook, imbues the publisher with a paratextual authority that is either reproduced or called into question by other paratextual producers.

From a scholarly perspective, the result of the publisher's paratextual authority is that research into translator visibility in any paratextual space is always to some extent mediated by the institutional practices and ideologies of a publishing house. Consequently, studies that focus solely on paratexts as they are made available to readers can reveal how the translator was positioned in the paratextual space by the publishing house and how the publisher understands attitudes towards translators and translation within a receiving culture. They cannot, however, reveal the role played by a translator in paratextual creation processes and so the translator's role in the establishment of their paratextual visibility. Only by refocussing our attention on the translator and the publishing practices within which they work can we truly begin to analyse and understand how and why translators are made visible in the paratextual space.

To reconnect the figure of the translator to their paratextual visibility, this thesis has made two theoretical contributions. Firstly, it has developed a definition of paratextuality that understands the concept as a relationship that can exist between any two texts. This relationship can be established either in the act of paratextual creation or an act of interpretation when a reader moves through the paratextual space. This definition moves beyond any spatial hierarchisation or auctorial authority, either in a Genettian sense of the author's intention (1997a) or Batchelor's "consciously crafted" thresholds (2018, 142). Consequently, seemingly disparate paratextual materials such as social media posts by a translator and the front cover of a codex are placed in constellation with each other for analysis, thereby allowing this thesis to investigate how a translator may corroborate or challenge the publisher's paratextual narratives. Similarly, I have introduced the concept of *collateral paratextuality* to bridge the gap between paratextuality and "the vastness of context" (Rockenberger, 2015, 267). Doing so allows Koskinen's "extratextual" factors (2000, 99), such as the paratextual materials generated to frame another rewriting of a literary text (like an audiobook) to be properly situated within the paratextual space. This new definition of paratextuality was necessitated by the aim of the thesis to investigate the translator's visibility across a broad spectrum of previously under-studied and under-theorised digital paratextual spaces. In its

development, then, I have presented a theoretical framework in which literary texts can be fully situated and analysed within the digital paratextual constellations that surround them.

In terms of establishing the translator's visibility across this broad conceptualisation of the digital paratextual space, I have also put forward a new understanding of translator visibility that is conceived as a continuum. This continuum goes beyond the binarism for which dichotomies such as invisibility-visibility are criticised, to instead acknowledge that paratextual visibility for the translator is tied to both the translator's agency in paratextual creation processes and the presentation of literary translations as texts that have been translated. This presentation of the translator is described here as their *position* in the paratextual space. A translator's position in the paratextual space may be their *participation* in paratextual creation and the explicit acknowledgement thereof; *representations* of them in third person as either a personified individual or the abstract figure of "the translator"; or their presence being *implied* without attaching individual agency or responsibility to a translator. Where the translator is not present in the paratextual space through participation, representation, or implication, then they are absent. Notably, however, these are not mutually exclusive ontological states with which to categorise translators. Rather, they serve as analytical tools to identify the ways in which translators are made visible in the paratextual space. The advantage of this continuum of visibility is that it allows us to analyse the diverse ways in which translators may be made visible in the paratextual space and thereby situate the ways readers understand translators, translated texts and translation processes in dialogue with one another. Additionally, by analysing this position within the paratextual space in relation to the translator's *role* in the creation of said paratext, I have developed questions surrounding translator visibility beyond discussions of text-based phenomena to instead understand the translator as a key figure in determining how translations and their translatorship thereof are presented to British readers. As such, the more nuanced approach to visibility developed and applied through this thesis facilitates dialogue between the desktop, documentary methodologies typically used when

researching translator visibility with both literary translator studies and the sociological approaches that prioritise the voice and agency of the translator.

The position and role of Jamie Bulloch in the digital paratextual spaces surrounding *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*

The efficacy of the theoretical and methodological innovations put forward in section one of this thesis is most readily demonstrated in the case study that has underpinned its analytic chapters: Jamie Bulloch's visibility as the English-language translator of Timur Vermes' novels as published by the British publisher MacLehose Press. Of course, the narrow focus of this case study on one translator-author-publisher combination working between powerful European languages means caution must be taken when generalising from the findings of this analysis. However, the foundations of this thesis in broader book publishing and circulation processes situates the findings within a broader context that allows several notable observations to be made.

Firstly, as outlined in Chapter 3, MacLehose Press's paratextual production processes are embedded in a digital workflow that is built around their content management system Biblio3. This system is used to manage a book's development from acquisition to post-publication marketing, with the content entered therein forming the basis for a variety of production-side paratextual materials including the industry-facing title information sheet and the public-facing blurb found on the codices and publisher's website. As such, the very nature of this production-side paratextual creation process is iterative. Despite Bulloch's role in guiding MacLehose Press's decision to acquire English-language rights for *Er ist wieder da* and *Die Hungrigen und die Satten* and early discussions on how to present the novels to English-language readers, such as changing the title of the former to suit its cover design, this process of iteration results in the dilution of Bulloch's position and role in the production-side paratexts produced by MacLehose Press. For

instance, whilst Bulloch was named as the translator on the title information sheets for both novels, he was absent from MacLehose Press' webpage for *Look Who's Back* and the NetGalley.co.uk listing for *The Hungry and the Fat*, which were developed later to present the novels to readers. Moreover, as the marketing and publicity teams at Quercus got involved, Bulloch continued to be absent from public-facing spaces such as the trailers for the novels posted on YouTube and all-but-one of the promotional "tweet-card" images posted on MacLehose Press's social media.

As such, the nature of the translator's limited role as an outsourced freelancer involved in primarily in what Thompson describes as "content development", as well as the iterative creation of institutionally authored paratexts for new audiences as books move along the "publishing value chain" (Thompson, 2010,16), ensures limited visibility for the translator. Particularly given MacLehose Press's aversion to naming translators on the covers of their books, a paratextual space which is particularly prominent in subsequent paratexts, this context precludes the positioning of the translator as a participant in the paratextual space or even explicitly representing them therein. This results in many of the paratextual materials produced for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* presenting the two translations as original English texts, or in House's words as "covert" translations (1981), despite Bulloch being named as the translator within some of the co-texts that form the codices (such as the rear cover and title pages). The impact of Bulloch's absence from many of public-facing paratextual materials for both novels can then be seen in reader-created paratexts, such as the reader reviews from Amazon and NetGalley analysed in Chapter 4 where Bulloch goes completely unnamed, or the Twitter users discussed in Chapter 6 who interacted with Bulloch to discuss *Look Who's Back* without knowing he was the translator.

In more general terms, then, the case study underpinning this thesis has demonstrated that research into the translator's paratextual visibility can no longer afford to privilege the paratextual materials that serve as co-texts in the literary text as product, as these serve only a limited function as the public face of literary texts. Indeed, as Gray points out (2010), the fact that readers encounter far more paratexts than literary texts in their day-to-day

lives demonstrates that it is to the marketing and publicity materials that we must now turn our attention. Of course, the specific focus here on two translations published by MacLehose Press means that the use of a content management system such as Biblio3 cannot be guaranteed in broader publishing contexts. Nevertheless, the correlation between the use of this system to produce paratextual materials and Thompson's more broadly developed "publishing value chain" (2010, 16) means the same principles can be applied elsewhere. Indeed, whilst smaller independent publishers may not have the economic capital to invest in such software, the iterative production of documents goes beyond any one software package or publishing house. For instance, the development of advance information and PR sheets from the blurb drafts used at rights-selling pitches, or the translation of press quotes for the source text are general processes that transcend the publishing of translated literature beyond this thesis's MacLehose Press case study. As such, the iterative nature of the digital content management and document creation systems at the heart of contemporary publishing inherently undermine the translator's paratextual visibility as books move along the publishing chain. Rather than simply being a finding from this case study, then, the undermining of the translator's visibility in production-side paratexts is an endemic symptom of contemporary digital publishing processes. If translator visibility is desired, then, this inherent undermining of the translator throughout the publishing process must be actively worked against through the inclusion of translators in paratextual creation or ensuring their representation in the paratextual space.

Where translators are able to challenge this dilution of their paratextual visibility and play a more active role is in the digital paratextual space. Examples of this can be seen across the paratextual materials created by other parties for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. On the Amazon.co.uk pages for the two novels, for instance, the *Author Central* service offered by Amazon provides a platform through which translators (along with any other listed "contributor" to a book) can create a factual paratextual space for themselves. In doing so, the translator can combat the further dilution of their paratextual visibility due to the

coalescence of multiple versions of a literary text within the online retail platform or their absence from the customer reviews featured on the page. However, despite MacLehose Press' own reliance on Amazon as a retail platform and Bulloch's extensive literary translation career working with various publishers, Bulloch was unaware of this service's existence. Consequently, questions must be raised pertaining to whether other translators and publishers based in Britain know about this service – especially given the industry knowledge and resources at MacLehose Press's disposal given their position with a major publishing conglomerate. Furthermore, the existing lack of engagement indicates that the personified presence of the translator within digital retail spaces like Amazon.co.uk is deemed as unimportant or undesirable by publishing houses who are not asking translators to support their work in this way, as well as a lack of education for translators on the use of such platforms within the broader conceptualisation of their translatorship.

Finally, by performing his translatorship on digital platforms outside the publisher's control, such as through his own Twitter account or conducting interviews with bloggers, Bulloch can create paratextual materials that directly increase his visibility. In the case of social media, this not only allows Bulloch to iterate on publisher created paratexts by sharing them, but also to reinsert himself into those spaces by making his translatorship explicit to readers. However, his ability to do so and to have an audience when performing his translatorship is reliant on his wider professional networks and reputation, as well as his ability to market himself and his work in the digital space. For translators such as Bulloch who are happy to take this position as participants in the digital paratextual space, these can be effective tools. However, as noted by Bulloch himself during interview, a desire to do so cannot be assumed for all translators and may indeed be detrimental to those working in specific cultural or linguistic contexts. Furthermore, the requirement to build an audience on social media platforms means that assumptions cannot be made about the audiences of social media posts. Given the often-solitary nature of translating, and literary translation in particular, social media networking has become a powerful way for translators to make connections with others

working in the field, thereby generating a specific digital space for those interested in literary translation rather than connections with general readers. As such, it is Bulloch's use of TweetDeck keywords to actively find users posting about his translations that allows him to engage with broader groups of readers and increase his paratextual visibility rather than his specific Twitter following. Furthermore, interviews and features on blogs are similarly limited in scope to the platforms readership, such as the publishing industry focus of *New Books in German* or the bookish readers who typically engage with literary blogs. In broader terms, then, translator-created digital paratexts should be corroborated with other sources when investigating translator visibility as engagement and audience are significant factors in ascertaining the impact of social media use on a translator's visibility within the context of the wider paratextual constellations surrounding their work. Of course, discoverability is a key factor in assessing the translator's visibility in any paratextual space – particularly in digital contexts far removed from the literary text as a product. However, assumptions cannot be made about the impact of visibility within a given paratextual space without considering the potential audience and reach of that visibility — particularly when translators are needing to develop a (digital) platform for themselves by developing a social media following or maintaining their own website.

Beyond invisibility

Through the development of new theoretical frameworks and analysis into a variety of paratextual spaces that span various mediums and perspectives, this thesis has sought to answer the question of how translators become visible in the digital paratextual space and how this visibility relates to their role in the creation of paratextual materials. The in-depth case study of Jamie Bulloch's visibility as the English-language translator of Timur Vermes' novels that underpins this thesis has demonstrated that, despite the large role played by Bulloch in the early development of paratextual materials, the proliferation of content produced by an expanding cast

of digital paratextual creators means Bulloch was made visible in the digital space much as he was in the non-digital space: when it benefitted the marketing strategies developed by publisher MacLehose Press. Yet through his broader work as an ambassador for German-language literature in translation, his use of social media to interact with readers and his desire for the novels he translates to find an audience in English, Bulloch has demonstrated the ways in which translators can go beyond invisibility to assert their own presence and agency in the paratextual space. In terms of assessing how digital paratextuality has impacted upon paratextual visibility then, it is primarily through digital means that Bulloch has indeed been able to do so.

However, this thesis has chosen to prioritise analysing one translator's position and role in the digital paratextual space across as broad a constellation of paratexts as possible, rather than many translators within a specific paratextual space. As such, the theoretical and methodological frameworks developed here serve as an open invitation for further research into the impact of digital paratextuality on the paratextual position and role of literary translators working in other linguistic and cultural contexts. Remaining with Britain, studies focussing on translators who translate other languages into English; who work with different publishing houses; or who come from less privileged positions than the white, male, heterosexual Bulloch will provide valuable insights into the other contextual aspects that can affect the translator's paratextual visibility. Beyond the context of this small island, studies into the position and role of literary translators would be even more insightful — particularly in multilingual contexts or when working between languages at the periphery of global literary systems (Heilbron, 2000). Indeed, the most valuable insight from this thesis is the research value provided by acknowledging the agency of translators in the paratextual space and giving weight to their voices within our scholarship. Thus, in expanding this study to broader contemporary contexts, the research community can contribute to the translator's movement beyond invisibility in both research and publishing contexts.

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Appendix A: NetGalley reviews for *Look Who's Back* as provided by MacLehose Press

NetGalley A, Bookseller

2* review

I really wanted to like this book, as the premise of it was unique and so different from anything else I ever read. But I found it to be contrived and just hard work. Hitler was portrayed as a conniving, yet rational and almost likeable fellow. He was fairly calm, accepting and lucid compared to the Hitler that is history knows so well. There were no moments of rage or general dictatorial obnoxiousness. I felt that the change in Hitlers character was to radical, it just didn't work.

NetGalley B, Reviewer

3* review

What if Hitler didn't die in 1945 but, Rip Van Winkle-like, lay dormant until 2011 and emerged in near-contemporary Berlin? Such is the simple premise behind Vermes's playful bestseller, which began as a succès de scandale in his native Germany and has spread worldwide. Heretofore, Christopher Goodwin writes in the London Times, "Germans have been terrified that humanizing Hitler in any way might lead to a resurgence of Nazism." Vermes's Hitler seems something of a hapless buffoon. Sheltering with a newspaper seller and featuring on comedy variety shows – everyone's convinced he's a peerless method actor – he appears harmless enough. Mostly he marvels at technology (catching up on seven decades of history via Wikipedia), deplores daytime cooking shows, and mocks Germany's chancellor, "a chunky woman with all the confidence and charisma of a weeping willow." His first-person narration is rather quaintly charming as it contrasts his assumptions with modern reality. Yet his campaign of racial purification continues: he is obsessed with Turkish immigrants, and "the Jews are no laughing matter" is a chilling little refrain throughout. Television producers use the phrase to mean Jewish jokes are off the table, not realizing he means he is deadly serious where that topic is concerned. Goodwin reports that "the author has been criticized for not

putting more focus on the Holocaust,” but it is unavoidably there in the background. As Herr Hitler broadcasts his creepily familiar hopes for the German future, everyone just keeps laughing at the amazing impersonation. Maybe that Nazism stuff wasn't all so bad after all?

The author's stated intention with this book is to, by reclaiming Hitler as an ordinary human being, show how the many were culpable – not just the one sacrificial villain. If Hitler continues as “a mythically evil figure” (Goodwin's words), there's every chance we'll absolve the millions who went along with him at the time. Vermes is also showing the potential danger of nostalgia for the time of a strong leader.

I think I agree with Steven Poole (Guardian review) that the satire here is not as effective as it might have been, simply because the book is a bit boring in places, and also relies on a deeper knowledge of current European (especially German) politics and culture than many readers will possess. I most enjoyed the classically silly material, such as Hitler's interchanges with his Valley Girl / Goth secretary, and the minor misunderstandings brought about by his 1940s worldview and his dogmatic sense of his own identity in the face of others' disbelief. I also thought the book was very well translated into English idiom, especially jokes and slang.

In sum, it's not as funny as Shalom Auslander's *Hope: A Tragedy* (in which Anne Frank is discovered alive in an attic in contemporary upstate New York), but a decent stab at a very different type of sacred cow.

NetGalley C, Librarian

3* review

I've tried several times now with this novel and while the premise appeals I can't get into the book at all.

NetGalley D, Academic

3* review

Timur Vermes had a very good idea for a book on an intriguing premise, namely what would Hitler do if he came alive today and how would he cope

with the today's modern Germany. A tall order. While this satirical book has some funny moments it was too long and repetitive in parts, and once repeated the jokes did not come off. There was the potential to further develop the theme of the far right political factions in Germany and even though they might appear a pitiful bunch they should be taken seriously. Unfortunately however this issue was not dealt with, a fundamental shortcoming. It is possible that some of the humour did not translate well into English as humour is culture-specific. The book hit the best-seller lists in Germany, but the topic runs the danger of ridiculing or brushing over historical facts. I have read the reviews in German papers and overall they agree that the book is superficial and tedious. Hitler as a comical and ridiculous figure, the first question is of course, what would he make of Jewish folk? Can one of the most evil human beings in history be portrayed as a silly fool and will that work - clearly it hasn't but Vermes has given it a try with mixed results.

NetGalley E, Bookseller

2* review

I was excited to read this title as I'm a fan of the way alternative history stories make you think, and the same can be said when you place a historical character in a present day setting. Unfortunately for me, this title fell flat. It often felt like I was being hit over the head with a history book. I also felt that the humour just didn't translate well. I know which customers I could recommend this to, but ultimately, it just wasn't my cup of tea.

NetGalley F, Reviewer

3.5* review

Positives: very enjoyable and at times amusing and very interesting to read about!

Negatives: I'm not knowledgeable about Hitler nor the world wars so I feel I missed out on a lot of the humour. I thought this would be able Hitler getting used to the new world but there was hardly any 'what is going on in the 21 century?! And how do I use this?! And what is that?' but it wasn't a main focus at all, as if he got used to it all straight away.

NetGalley G, Reviewer

4* review

Daring, clever, imaginative and original.

NetGalley H, Reviewer

3* review

I had come across this book on Goodreads a view times and was intrigued by it. Not something that I would usually gravitate towards but it sounded interesting and different. So when I saw it on Netgalley I decided to give it a whirl and see what the fuss was about.

The book is set in 2011, when Hitler himself wakes up in Berlin, just lying on the ground, alive and well. He soon establishes what year it is and sets about trying to pick himself up and continue with his work of bettering Germany. He soon gets a role on TV playing a Hitler impersonator. Despite trying to convince people that he IS Hitler, everyone just thinks he's saying so to stay in role all the time. After a YouTube clip goes viral, Hitler is thrust back into the limelight and sees his popularity soaring again.

First off, I'm going to address some of the controversy around this book.

Some people are less than impressed that a book about Hitler could be funny, after all that he has done. I don't think it's a big problem, the book is clearly satire and making a statement that while we like to think someone like Hitler will never rise to power again because we all know better, in reality it is really easy to get swept up by someone persuasive. It reminded me of the novel *The Wave* by Todd Strasser in that sense.

But like I said, this book is satire and a pretty funny one at that. It had me laughing out loud at times, some of the lines are very witty. There was a line on morning people 'What irritates me most of all about these morning people is their horribly good temper, as if they had been up for three hours and already conquered France'. Ya, I know that feeling, chirpy morning people are the worst! I also really liked this line from a scene at rowdy Oktoberfest 'People were wailing and shouting for someone called Jude'. Hey Jude is one of my favourite Beatles songs.

Another thing I liked about the book was all the question marks put at the end of Hitler's secretaries sentences, even though she wasn't asking questions. I thought it was a great way to portray the up-speak a lot young women do these days. Also, I really like the cover!

There were a few downsides. One was all the names of past Nazi party members that Hitler constantly names throughout the book. A few I recognise no problem, but there are quite a few I don't, which got annoying at times. Also there are some German pop culture references that went a bit over my head. And while I mostly liked the narrative style throughout the book, sometimes it was a bit too much, too heavy. There was one or two times when I struggled to get through some paragraphs, getting frustrated like some of the characters in the book. But overall it's not too bad.

I would recommend this book if you like satire and want to read something a bit different. I didn't find it offensive, I don't think the author tries to paint a positive picture of Hitler, quite the opposite really. A very clever read.

NetGalley I, Bookseller

5* review

I thought this book was fantastically funny and really insightful. I've had several debates with colleagues about it's approach to Hitler, in particular that Verme's Furher isn't evil or pathological, his attitude is very rationally nationalistic, if obviously misguided! Whether it's right to portray him in this way is an interesting debate, I found the book made him look faintly ridiculous which is controversial enough in itself. As a satire on modern television it was interesting, but this was the less amusing part of the book. I'd have liked to see it go further, what happens to this Hitler in 5 years time?

NetGalley J, Bookseller

4* review

Loved this! Will recommend now and expect it to really go in paperback

NetGalley K, Bookseller

4* reviews

What an interesting idea for a novel. The fact that it is written in first person made me feel somewhat sympathetic towards Hitler, in the sense that he was essentially being laughed at. I know a fair bit of German History, but I assume that anyone who doesn't have much knowledge of Hitler's past/German political parties would find even that part just as interesting.

NetGalley L, Bookseller

5* review

It became abundantly clear as I read this fantastic novel that those reviewers published in the UK's national newspapers had simply not read this novel. Shame on them.

It would be no simple task for any author to contemplate using Adolf Hitler as the protagonist of any novel in modern Germany, especially one in which the Führer is portrayed to comic effect while remaining completely unrepentant about the past. As the descendant of an Ashkenazi fleeing the nineteenth century pogroms, my mother has gone to great lengths to ensure that her children remember their roots and I have to admit that at times I felt very uncomfortable reading some passages because there is, contrary to the review in The Guardian, no softly-softly approach to Hitler's anti-Semitism. Though everyone else he knew is dead, this modern incarnation of Hitler is not about to back-pedal on his main project. There was one three-page part of the narrative that I found particularly difficult and that was when Hitler was thinking about Wannsee and the gassing of Jews. It was a brave decision by the author but entirely consistent with the story he's telling.

Hitler wakes up on a patch of waste ground in Berlin in 2011. There is no explanation of how he got there and Hitler isn't going to second-guess either. It is the hand of Fate and no more. After some initial confusion in which he thinks 'Ronaldo', printed on a young boy's football shirt, is an unusual name for a member of The Hitler Youth, Hitler sets about rediscovering the modern Germany. Contrary to what many readers may imagine, Hitler is not alarmed by the number of foreigners in the capital, particularly Turks, because young Aryan men should be at the front and someone needs to make their munitions – at least in Hitler's way of thinking.

This is one of the continuing motifs within the text: we think we know Hitler and about Nazism but quite simply, we don't, and I suspect that many readers in Britain will know even less than readers in Germany. For instance, when Hitler first encounters a plastic shopping bag, he is surprised. The last he knew, IG Farben had stalled the development of this material because there was not enough oil. In what is little more than a throwaway comment from Hitler's first-person perspective, we can see that the author has studied an immense amount to get everything as accurate as possible and this is of vital importance to the author's long-term goal.

While authors in the UK worry about whether plot or character should dominate a novel, it seems that authors in Europe have not forgotten that fantastically entertaining literature can also be about things. The author is attacking modern celebrity culture and not just the shallow, banal nature of pop culture but the fact that it is no different to the world in the 1930s. Perhaps with an awareness that many readers will not see themselves as pop-culture aficionados, the modern Hitler becomes a sensation in stand-up comedy, his routine apparently so unrehearsed and honest that he shows up other comedians for their racism. Even people who profess to hate TV will watch a comedy show on TV – I know I do.

Chapter by chapter, page by page, we follow Hitler's first-person perspective on events. He may not understand modern technology but he sees how constant access to social media damages how we relate to each other in conversation. He quickly intuits that mobile phones and the inter-web with the wealth of information is actually a greater distraction than radio or TV. Rather ingeniously, it is through the fansite for his comedy show that the author shows just how divorced our understanding of fascism is from the reality. Right-wing commentators make threats to the 'Jewish comic' who they feel is mocking their Fuhrer. No-one, it seems, is able to see that some forms of satire are too close to their subject matter and it becomes obvious then just who the author is trying to provoke: us.

This fictional Hitler can't understand why Germans are not so keen on green/renewable energy because as he understands too well, energy shortages can disable the strength of a nation's economy and its industrial capacity. It is just one instance of many when a reader will find themselves – very

uncomfortably – agreeing with the fictional Hitler. The question that is being provoked is just how easy would it be for a charismatic person who shares the concerns of ordinary people to readily find popular support in modern Germany. With the rigour and attention to detail shown by Vermes, the answer is too clear by the novel's end and with sly references to Putin, it's very clear that the author believes modern European voters are far from immune from the fascist disease.

As a novel, *Look Who's Back* is very dependent on satire but knowledge of modern German politics and the current output of German broadcasters is not necessary. The book is outrageously funny and pulls off this feat without being offensive, rude or blasphemous.

Look Who's Back is clearly the result of a lot of hard work by the author. It is comedy but also drama. It is enlightening, heartening but also poignant. Unfortunately, we don't even have to turn on our TVs to see what damage a charismatic, 'straight-talker' like Nigel Farage can do to democratic debate. This is the first book I've read this year that scores an 8 out of 10. Last year, I read just one and that was 'War and Peace'. This novel is that good.

NetGalley M, Bookseller

4* review

Excellent read from start to finish. A satirical look at what if!!

NetGalley N, Reviewer

4* review

Satire with bite This is a clever book which deals with a taboo subject in a knowingly witty way: what if Hitler were to wake up in 2011 Germany? Vermes manages to keep this the right side of funny, sometimes ridiculous, without it ever becoming tasteless: we laugh *at* Hitler but not, I think, *with* him. And there is a well-placed older Jewish woman who refuses to let anyone ever forget the true impact of Nazi ideology. Indeed, one of the things this book manages to do with oblique sleight-of-hand is educate younger generations in what German fascism was, believed and did: something increasingly important as 'history' moves back into the past and we see the re-emergence of neo-Nazism in Europe. While Hitler's

amazement at shopping channels, the internet, YouTube and mobile technology has something to say about 'celebrity' culture and mass media, he can only conceive of them as tools for political propaganda to destroy democratic systems and reimpose the Third Reich. The terrifying self-blindness and lack of self-awareness of the man also comes across well ("I may be a level-headed man", "my trusty methodical reasoning", "my grounded perspective", his self-confessed ability to "keep my rancour in check, to separate reasonable anger from blind rage") and some of humour derives precisely from Hitler's self-image and our assessment, judgement and historical indictment. Vermes has done a good job of merging political and social satire with entertainment, and has come up with a book which is funny, sometimes silly, but with bite. It might be a little long for the joke, but it takes its lead from the long European cultural tradition of satire in the style of Juvenal, Martial and Swift.

NetGalley O, Reviewer

4* review

Thanks to NetGalley and Quercus Books for the ARC of this book.

Wow, this book has an amazing cover! It jumps out off the shelf and demands to be read. The designer must be given huge credit for the success of the book. They have designed something which is simple, bold and brave and perfectly reflects the book's contents.

The book itself is a fish out of water story of a person transplanted to another time, with the astonishing twist that this person is Adolf Hitler! It is always interesting to see the modern world through the eyes of someone from the past, but it is even more fascinating to see it from the point of view of one of the worst people ever to have lived.

This is a really clever satire. Vermes manages to balance the characterization of Hitler as at once both completely delusional and on occasions surprisingly insightful and perceptive about the things which ail modern society such as the proliferation of Starbucks, the woefulness of daytime TV and the 'industrialisation' of Christmas.

The plot follows Hitler who following his suicide wakes up in 2011 and becomes a huge comic TV star. He thinks he is still a political figure who is

forwarding his own agenda, but in fact people are laughing at his values and he is seen by the public to stand for the opposite values.

Using Hitler in this way is an incredibly brave and original choice by the author, I'm not sure it's entirely appropriate but I really did enjoy this book. Right up until the end, this novel was surprising me. The most audacious decision comes at the end of the book when Vermees chooses to give Hitler a relatively happy ending. Throughout the novel I was waiting for his downfall or comeuppance and it simply never comes.

Translating this novel into English must have been incredibly challenging, quite a lot of the humour comes from wordplay or a knowledge of German politics. I think the translation is done well, although there are a few sections which I thought felt a bit muddled or cloudy. This may be due to the fact that large sections of the book are narrated in Hitler's monologue and he has a rather strange old-fashioned voice.

Thank you so much for letting me read this book, it's great! I have posted the above review on my blog (link below) and on Goodreads

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/921371985> and on Amazon and Waterstone's - both posts are awaiting moderation so I am currently unable to post links.

NetGalley P, Bookseller

3* review

After seeing quite a few recommendations for this book in various trade magazines, I ventured to read this title. It was funny in parts, with a mixture of historical information (this often appeared in quite long paragraphs, which made them a little tedious), and some obvious/predictable/cringeworthy moments, that were, however, handled with humour and tact, even when dealing with sensitive subjects. The modern surroundings of present day Germany act as a buffer against the controversial subject of Adolf Hitler as the main character/narrator, as well as his misunderstanding of these new surroundings, and of those who think he is an impersonator.

Not as funny as I expected, although maybe this was lost in translation. An enjoyable book though, and a satirical look at a character not many authors would attempt to put across in this way.

NetGalley Q, Reviewer

3* review

An interesting and engaging concept, for sure. I found this enjoyable and really liked the energetic language. As a satire I didn't find it particularly clever, and a bit repetitive in the long run. Overall though, definitely a fun enough diversion.

NetGalley R, Reviewer and Bookseller

2* review

Unfortunately, I was unable to read this book. The premise was not how I imagined, and I felt uncomfortable with the subject. Some readers may adore this novel, however it was not for me.

NetGalley S, Reviewer

3* review

When I'm reading a book for review or watching a film I usually have a good idea at about the midway point what my rating will be. Sometimes that changes – when I was watching Dark Shadows for example my patience got thinner as the film progressed and I started knocking points off its rating because it was becoming increasingly annoying. Usually though my gut reaction wins out in the end. Problems come when I can't settle on a score, when I'm pulled in various directions at one time. I've found this to be the case with Timur Vermes's Look Who's Back. A hit in Germany, this satirical novel is published in the UK on 3rd April 2014.

One summer day in 2011 Adolf Hitler (yes, THAT Adolf Hitler) wakes up on the ground in Berlin, apparently well and healthy despite the 65 years that have passed since his last public appearance. Progress over the decades does not suit the Fuhrer and he sets about trying to convince the people of Germany that he has returned to them and that the Reich will be built again. Despite his seriousness he is regarded as a satirical comedian and becomes a media hit.

The intention of Look Who's Back is to satirise today's media culture where people can become celebrities despite their apparent lack of talent or their

objectionable views. To that extent the book works brilliantly well, the media as a whole – particularly television – is roundly mocked and the absurdity of the situation is made clear. Vermes certainly hits his target straight on in an amusing way.

So far so good, it should be easy enough for me to score as an excellently drawn satire on the ridiculous nature of celebrity and media. Yet, it wasn't. I struggled throughout the book – while I appreciated the brilliance of the writing and the intention of the satire I felt incredibly uncomfortable with *Look Who's Back*. I wouldn't ever say Hitler is beyond satire or that the Nazis don't offer the opportunity for comedy but this didn't work for me. Hitler justifies his actions throughout the book and is very rarely challenged, indeed he's thought of as a funny, lovable man. It takes until three-quarters through the book before any character tells Hitler how despicable the Holocaust was but even then he justifies his actions and it is swept under the carpet very quickly. I couldn't accept this at all. I understand the satire, I know that the story serves as a warning that fascists can gain a foothold by appealing to very real concerns, I realise that we are supposed to feel uncomfortable but this was just too uncomfortable. Why isn't more prominence given to those who oppose the Hitler "character"? Why does the Holocaust get treated as though it was little more than a minor traffic accident? Why are very few anti-Nazi voices allowed to speak? This has been a huge hit in Germany and I wouldn't be surprised if it also finds critical acclaim here in the UK but I also see it being thoroughly divisive. One side will find the satire biting and the concept intriguing, the other will be appalled by its cavalier treatment of one of the worst times in human history and think it's just a little bit too clever for its own good. I've got one foot firmly in both camps and that has left me confused, uncomfortable and completely unsure of my opinion on the book.

NetGalley T, Reviewer

1* review

Looks *Who's Back* had a very interesting premise but the follow through was just not there. Being translated from German I felt that a lot of sentence structures didn't flow as well as it could have. Also for a translated book

there were still a lot of German phrases that need to be looked up constantly for anything to make sense. This was really frustrating and interrupted any reading rhythm. I wasn't able to get even a quarter of the way through the book I'm sad to say.

I can't give a detailed review given the little amount of the book I could finish.

NetGalley U, Bookseller

4* review

I wouldn't normally pick this book up off a shelf but the description just grabbed me. Once you get over the initial strangeness of the premise you become so absorbed into the story and into what is happening.

I found this book incredibly funny in the most unsettling way (a sign of a great dark satire) I found myself laughing aloud on tubes and I'm public places more than once! The real achievement of this book is it's ability to shock as well as entice you to want to know more, Vermes gave himself. Hard mission of writing about the most controversial figures of all time, something I think he did particularly well at.

My only problems were at times I feel like some jokes and cultural references were slightly lost in translation, being a person who doesn't know too much about modern German media, but it didn't hinder my amusement!

NetGalley V, Bookseller

4* review

The inherent controversy about this novel is whether it's acceptable to give a character like Hitler a platform to air his ideas again and therefore this book will no doubt offend some people.

But let's have a look at what we've got here; a simple idea spun into a nifty little satire. How would Hitler cope in 21st century Germany? Very well indeed. Instead of beer hall audiences he finds something even his propaganda ministers could not have dreamed up: TV, the internet and YouTube.

There is a term in Germany of the 'fun-society', a society obsessed with hedonism, celebrity culture and reality TV, dumbed down, ignorant and

unable to take anything seriously. This book satirises these parts of society but is also part of its culture.

Don't expect anything too profound, but the story zips along nicely, told in the pompous and self-deluded voice of the Fuehrer himself and it will take the reader only a little imagination to come to some chilling conclusions of their own.

NetGalley W, Librarian

4.5* review

I can guess what you're thinking: "That cover.... is that ?" And then, "But it says it's funny....?!"

I imagine a few people (like me) will consider themselves irreverent and try this because of the shock value. I know I saw the fantastically simple but instantly recognisable cover and was sold. Thing is, this isn't written for its shock value. It's not disrespectful. It's certainly not cheap laughs and stereotypes. This is a well-thought-out, witty and very relevant satire on modern life, on the media, on our own sense of humour.

We have to take one giant leap for it to work - Adolf Hitler from 1945 suddenly wakes up in modern-day Germany. We never find out how, even he doesn't spend too long questioning. To immerse yourself in what happens after, you just have to accept it. Initially disorientated, he doesn't let his unfamiliar surroundings faze him for long. A kind-hearted newspaper seller takes him under his wing and is the first of many to see the Fuhrer as a fully-in-character comedy impersonator. Soon TV producers come calling and a slot on a comedy show beckons.

However much the Fuhrer rants, raves and talks politics, his new contemporaries applaud his brave comedic insights into the current world climate and his witty outlook of Germany's past. It's something you think you might find appalling. After all, this is Adolf Hitler. But even the 'Jewish question' is well handled. Of course racist sentiments are spouted by our protagonist, but with the first-person perspective and everyone constantly reminding him that as a comedy topic "the Jews are no laughing matter" and Hitler agreeing that they are "absolutely right", the author gets away without making his lead overly repellent (as a fictional Fuhrer).

The modern world finding Hitler a comedy genius it itself pretty funny, as we are meant to find it. It does say a lot about the world today that we would very likely find this kind of thing post-modern, ironic, and think ourselves very witty for declaring it. Which of course makes it all the funnier in the book.

Hitler's speeches are hilarious at times - his old, trademark style of speechmaking, his old speeches and phrases themselves used but to a vastly different audience. But maybe not such a different one in many respects. Gullible in a different way? I did think reading this: if a man appeared claiming to be Hitler, looked like him, dressed like him, orated like him - he would either end up in a mental hospital or on YouTube.

My favourite sections of the book were those that introduced the Fuhrer to modern technology. His views on TV shopping channels and cookery shows had me in stitches, for example: "My jaw dropped. Providence had presented the German Volk with the wonderful, magnificent opportunity for propaganda, and it was being squandered on the production of leek rings." He discovers 'Vikipedia', discusses with us his views on the 20th-century history that he missed, and smugly compares his own YouTube viewing figures to that of Chaplin's 'The Great Dictator'.

How people react to him is fascinating - most find the 'Heil Hitler' amusing, his refusal to get out of character admirable, his improvisation astounding. And all that is funny. Yet the author also touches on the tragic - the old Jewish woman who cannot find him funny, remembering the atrocities he (or the person he is impersonating) committed, the Nazi-haters who don't see satire but die-hard National Socialism. The National Socialists for whom he is too extreme.

I loved this. The translation from the German is excellent, and the only reason I haven't given this 5 stars is because there are references to modern-day Germany that I didn't follow (references to contemporary political figures and situations), and I also found a few of the Fuhrer's speeches and thoughts bordered on overlong. Only a few though. Most of this is perfectly-paced and wittily-written.

You'll never read another book like it. I'm Jewish myself and found it original, hilarious and far from shallow. It treads the path of satire carefully. Recommended.

NetGalley X, Bookseller

5* review

Oh the joy when I heard this gem had finally been translated into English! A bestselling phenomenon in mein Fazerland since its publication in 2012, it had tickled my curiosity since I first heard about it, and delighted me when it was gifted to me by the 'rents last Christmas. A novel about Adolf Hitler waking up in a 2011 Berlin car park, rescued by a newsagent who thinks him a hilarious and scarily convincing impersonator and promptly introduces him to some media fellers who in turn jump on the chance to line their pockets and boost the ratings by giving him some air time. The bewildered Fuehrer, meanwhile, has to adjust to modern society, its gadgets, people, multiculturalism and social media addiction, and slowly planning, naively, clumsily, but with chilly calculation, his return to power, thus delivering a commentary on modern Germany that is equally frightening and hysterical. Let's just say, when I read the German original, it was like hearing Adolf speak. I dunno if Vermes studied the speech patterns of Hitler before he started writing, but he did a wonderful job rendering his persona in his book. And the translation, although it inevitably lost the classic Berlin dialect spoken by some of the characters, managed to get incredibly close to the original.

It's obviously funny seeing Hitler in his 1940s mindset interact with the contemporary age, similar to seeing Socrates and Billy the Kid stumble their way through 1980s mall strip California in "Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure", but at the same time it scathingly satirises an increasingly dumbed-down, historically uninformed or indifferent multi-media generation that is too distracted by Reality TV, sensationalist headlines and Facebook Likes to see the danger the "born again" Fuehrer really poses.

Needless to say, there is a debate whether it is acceptable to make Hitler a subject of comedy. But it's been done before countless times, with "The Producers", with "The Dictator", some more gratuitous, some with enough satire in it to render it more "acceptable". If anything, "new" about it is only that the Germans are increasingly seen to have a sense of humour about their own history. Not in a belittling or insensitive manner, mind. Hitler and

the Holocaust continue to remain a serious subject over there, deeply embedded in the German mentality and Constitution. But the – in my book – ridiculous and unhelpful self-flagellation by people who were barely the glint in daddy's eye in 1945, undermining any approach of the subject in a grown-up way, is finally starting to cease; Hitler as a subject of comedy becoming less and less restricted to the terrain of risqué Stewart Lee-type German comedians, and is particularly well-balanced in this novel.

Comedy will always remain in the grey areas of acceptability, and perhaps that's exactly what keeps us on our toes and debating; to speak the truth like a jester, in joke form to escape medieval beheadings or modern censorship. Take from this book what you will. I for one both enjoyed and pondered it. Thoroughly.

NetGalley Y, Reviewer

2.5* review

I received an ARC of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

First off, I'd like to make something clear. I'm not a Hitler enthusiast. I believe he was a mass murderer and his ideology continues to poison this world long after he took the easy way out and never actually got any punishment for his crimes.

However, the idea that any race can be supreme or that any human being can be considered to be better than any other for things like birth, lineage or anything else they have no control over isn't just Hitler's thing.

Nationalism is everywhere, from the seemingly benevolent national sports teams to white supremacy. And somehow people seem to think that nothing like what Hitler did could ever happen again in today's world.

This book is attempting to argue that, yes, it can. Driving home the point by not only having someone pretending to be a racist, supremacist become a television sensation. But by having it be the same man who once brainwashed an entire nation.

Under the guise of comedy, television executives allow who they think is a very historically accurate Hitler impersonator to become a regular on television.

However what they don't know is that this is in fact the fuhrer himself. Depending on your disposition, you could either find this hilarious or horrifying.

For me it was a mixture of both.

The fact that it was told through Hitler's perspective is what drew me to it. I confess I has a pervers dsire to see how Hitler would react when he saw that his derranged life's work had fallen to nothing. And was in fact considered to be a blemish on the face of history.

I've always wondered what it's like to be German. Do you carry around any inheritance of guilt common to those sorts of situations? I assume the younger generations don't. And rightly so, of course. But it is a thought that has crossed my mind more than once.

As for the funniness of this book, I have to say it had its momemts. But nothing like I had originally anticipated.

NetGalley Z, Bookseller

5* review