"Yes: I translated it!": Visibility and the performance of translatorship in the digital paratextual space

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1. Introduction

In *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995/2018), Venuti defines invisibility as an "illusion of transparency" that is determined by two interrelated phenomena. The first is the "illusionistic effect of discourse," that is "the translator's own manipulation of English" on a textual level, while the second comes on a sociological level as "the practice of reading and evaluating translations that has long prevailed in the United Kingdom and the United States" (1995, 1). To demonstrate this illusion and its apparent cause, a preoccupation with fluency in Anglophone literary culture that focusses on translation as a singular rather than polysemantic activity, Venuti draws on a range of source materials that would now be understood as "paratexts" (Genette 1997; Batchelor 2018), including book covers and reviews in the print media. In doing so, Venuti argues that the translator's absence within these paratextual spaces perpetuates "a way of conceiving and practicing translation that undoubtedly reinforces its marginal status in Anglo-American culture," thereby indicating both the powerful role that paratexts can play in framing translated literary texts and their potential to influence translational and reading practices (1995, 8).

A quarter of a century later, however, the paratextual space conceived and studied by Venuti is now a markedly changed landscape thanks to the advent and widespread proliferation of digital and online media. For instance, the perennial battleground of translator visibility that is the book cover has become a template for a variety of wider promotional materials, such as Twitter cards and book trailers, whilst translators themselves have taken to online platforms such as social media and blogs to interact directly with readers. Consequently, whether one wishes to accept or challenge Venuti's hypotheses on translator invisibility within contemporary publishing contexts, the question of how translator visibility is manifested and achieved within the digital world that emerged after the release of *The Translator's Invisibility* becomes increasingly relevant.

As such, this chapter argues that the digital paratextual space serves as a key site of translator visibility in contemporary Anglophone culture thanks largely to the translator's ability to perform their translatorship and assert their own visibility within such spaces. To demonstrate this,

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this chapter comprises a case study of German-to-English translator Jamie Bulloch and his activities within the digital paratextual space, with a particular focus on paratexts pertaining to *Look Who's Back* (2014) and *The Hungry and the Fat* (2020). The two are Bulloch's English-language translations of Timur Vermes' novels as published by MacLehose Press and are attempts at satirizing both political issues in modern Germany and Europe, and contemporary media and television culture more broadly. In the case of *Look Who's Back*, Vermes imagines a resurrected Hitler once again becoming a celebrity and political figure in contemporary Germany, whilst *The Hungry and the Fat* presents an extreme escalation of the Mediterranean migrant crisis that sees thousands of migrants marching to Europe as documented live by a German reality-TV star. These novels, and Bulloch's translatorship thereof, have been selected as case studies for two primary reasons. Firstly, the commercial success of the former compared to the relative commercial failure of the latter presents an interesting dichotomy in which to explore Bulloch's visibility whilst keeping other variables, such as the books' author, editor, and publisher the same. Secondly, Bulloch's status as an established, white, male, German-to-English translator with a personal connection to the publishing world imbues him with a level of prestige that means his visibility and the ways he performs his translatorship can be understood as a barometer for other translators working in less privileged positions. [1]

In terms of the chapter's structure, I will begin by elucidating the paratextual space and establishing it as a key site of translator visibility, before then defining the performance of translatorship within both digital and non-digital paratextual spaces. In terms of analysis, this chapter will then investigate Bulloch's visibility as achieved through the performance of his translatorship in both digital and non-digital contexts. In doing so, this chapter argues that translators have increased opportunities to perform their translatorship and so increase their own visibility within digital spaces.[2]

2. The digital paratextual space

[1] Bulloch is married to Katharina Bielenberg, who served as editor and associate publisher at MacLehose Press when both *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were published.
[2] Though I would also like to emphasize that digital media cannot guarantee a translator's increased visibility, and such increases are not always desirable or beneficial. Rather, digital spaces provide translators the agency and *opportunity* to perform their translatorship.

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In the introduction to *The Translator's Invisibility,* Venuti argues that because "translators receive minimal recognition for their work," the way that translated literary texts are published in the Anglophone West reinforces their "marginal status" (Venuti 1995, 8). As such, because translators are often absent from materials such as book covers or reviews, Venuti argues that it is up to the translator to make themselves visible through discussions of their work in other spaces, such as a preface or afterword (1995, 311). Consequently, the concept of translator visibility within spaces such as book covers and prefaces has proven to be fertile ground for translation studies research (for instance McRae 2012 and Norberg 2012).

However, Venuti's conceptualization of translator (in)visibility was the culmination of work that can be traced back to the 1980s (e.g. Venuti 1986), with the eventual release of *The Translator's Invisibility* in 1995 coming at a time of great change in the media landscape. In the following decade, the dot-com bubble would swell and burst, bringing in the dawn of Web 2.0 and the widespread proliferation of user-generated content, smart devices, and social media that remain prominent today. These technological developments had a large impact on the publishing industry, with the pre-web world of book covers, reviews in newspapers and physical advertising materials now complemented by publisher's webpages, blog reviews and digital advertising. While the sources used by Venuti in the formulation of his notion of invisibility are still prevalent in the book publishing world today, the question becomes whether, and if so how, the proliferation of digital media and technologies have impacted upon the translator's visibility, that is, the "translator's situation and activity" (Venuti 1995, 1), within such materials.

In asking this question, the present chapter is drawing on the distinction made by Kaisa Koskinen between "*textual*, *paratextual* and *extratextual* visibility" (emphasis in the original), which in turn refer to "the ways in which the translator makes his or her presence visible (…) in the translation itself;" "translator's 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" (2000, 99). In making this tripartite distinction, Koskinen differentiates between the concepts of textuality, paratextuality and extratextuality and so invokes the work of Gerard Genette. Genette first coined the term "paratext" to refer to the "products" that "surround" and "extend" a literary text

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> precisely in order to present it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to make present, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its 'reception' and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book. (Genette 1997, 1)

For Koskinen, then, paratextual visibility relates to materials such as prefaces and afterwords, or the translator's name being added to a book's cover, whilst extratextual visibility may be found in publicity materials created by the publisher or in reviews of translations in the print media (2000, 99). This distinction can be understood as being drawn across two boundaries: firstly, between the codex and the wider context in which the codex circulates, which links to Genette's own peritext-epitext dichotomy (1997); and secondly, between materials for which a translator may be explicitly ascribed authorship, such as translator's note or afterword, and those created by or with other agents, such as a publisher or reviewer.

When working in digital contexts, however, the distinctions between these two spaces and the translator's visibility therein are more difficult to trace, particularly when we focus more specifically on functional aspects of paratextuality rather than authorial or spatial elements. Jonathan Gray's (2010) work in media studies has, for instance, demonstrated the ways in which materials far removed from a text's production can serve to "present" texts to an audience in the same way as the codex-centric materials outlined by Genette in his original definition of paratextuality. Similarly, Kathryn Batchelor's functional redefinition of paratextuality for applications within translation studies contexts has demonstrated that the distinction between paratextual and extratextual materials is typically moot because they serve the same function "as a threshold to the cultural product" (2018, 149). As such, where the present chapter discusses the notion of translator visibility in the (digital) paratextual space, this refers to any materials studied within Koskinen's paratextual and extratextual visibility, in line with both Batchelor's more recent definition of a paratext as "a consciously crafted threshold for a text which has the potential to influence the way(s) in which the text is received" (2018, 142) and Freeth's (2023) conceptualization of paratextual spaces as rhizomatic constellations through which readers can take trajectories both towards and away from the literary text.

3. Defining the performance of translatorship

By arguing that translators can increase their visibility through the performance of their role in the book's production in digital spaces, this chapter builds on the work of Simone Murray. In *The*

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Digital Literary Sphere (2018), Murray charts the ways in which literary processes and practices are manifest in the digital space, the products of which she "collectively term[s] 'digital paratext'" (2018, 169).[3] Murray acknowledges that "the range encompassed by this term is enormous," comprising digital marketing, online literary events, digital reviews, online reading communities and the performance of authorship – all of which have in common "a focus on literary interests and their existence in a digital environment" (2018, 169).[4] As such, digital paratextual producers similarly span a wide range of agents including authors, readers, and publishing houses. However, because this chapter is investigating how translators can use digital and online media to increase the visibility of their work and outputs, it is on digital paratexts that pertain to the *performance of translatorship* that the forthcoming analysis will primarily focus.[5]

The notion of performative translatorship discussed within this chapter draws on the concept of "performative authorship" (c.f. Longoliu 2016), which Murray describes as one of the "traditional literary 'processes'" undertaken within the literary field (2018, 9–10). In defining this performance, Murray argues that "authorial embodiment and performativity," which includes activities such as "author tours" and attendance at book-prize ceremonies both in digital and non-digital contexts, "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 characterization of authorship as a performance, particularly in the digital literary sphere (Murray 2018, 15–16). Given, then, that the present chapter is focused on the performance of translatorship, rather than authorship, it is the persona and activities of the translator within the public life of literature that this chapter will investigate.

Since the present chapter focuses on the performance of translatorship as a relative concept to the performance of authorship, this shift may initially seem obvious and unproblematic. Yet within the field of translation studies, the role of the translator and their relationship to an author are persistent points of contention between scholars. An overview of this debate is provided by Caroline Summers (2019), who notes that the conceptualization of the source author as the only

[3] It should be noted that the author does not use Murray's own definition of paratextuality due to her notion of "digital paratext" relying heavily on Genette's original definition, which is entrenched in authorial intention and so is problematic for use in translation studies, as demonstrated by Batchelor (2018) and Freeth (2023). Rather, definitions from Batchelor (2018) and Freeth (2023) are combined with Murray's research into the constitutive elements of "the digital literary sphere" to investigate Bulloch's role and visibility therein.
[4] Of course, all these processes can also take place in non-digital contexts.
[5] An expanded formulation of the roles and activities that comprise this *translatorship* can be found in Freeth (2021b).

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author is "institutionally ingrained in modern translation practice"—an argument we can trace back to Venuti in *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995). Consequently, the prioritizing 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" (Summers 2019, 35). This goes against accounts from translators themselves, however, who position themselves as collaborators alongside the author (such as Frielinghaus 2002 and Uman and Bistué, 2007) and make creative and informed decisions for which they desire compensation in the form of copyright and financial remuneration (Jansen 2019).

As such, approaches that understand the task of the translator as different to that of the author (Benjamin 2000 [1923]) have taken root in the discipline following the so-called cultural and sociological turns. For example, both Lefevere's definition of translation as a form of "rewriting" (1992) and Littau's definition of translators as "versioners" (2010 [1997]) position the translator alongside other agents who ensure the growth of a literary text (such as reader-reviewers). Despite the positioning of translators as collaborative yet individualized *rewriters* alongside an author, which acknowledges both their individual agency and the pragmatic difference between the acts of writing and translation, discussion on the role of the translator remains entrenched in these translator-author dichotomies and thereby focuses solely on the role of the translator in terms of its relationship to authorship. Indeed, even concepts such as Jansen and Wegener's "multiple translatorship" (2013), which differentiates between the role of the translator and other agents such as a publishing editor or copy editor along the grounds of professional titles, go on to ascribe authorship of the translated text to all these agents, thereby maintaining the focus on questions of authorship. Thus, little work has been done in translation studies to understand the other activities undertaken by literary translators, as well as their position within publishing practices and life cycles that lie outside of debates of authorship.[6]

If we turn to cognate fields, such as book history or publishing studies, debates surrounding the plurality of authorship similarly challenge individualized conceptualizations of authorship that render the work of other agents in the production of a literary text invisible (see, for example, Greenberg 2018 on the role of editors). However, as scholars have attempted to map the world of Anglophone literary publishing and the various agents involved therein, the role of the translator

[6] One notable exception to this is Elin Svahn, whose doctoral thesis investigated the "dynamics of extratextual translatorship in contemporary Sweden" (2020). Given the focus of this paper on a British context and the Anglophone publishing world, however, this chapter remains an original contribution in this context.

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has become increasingly elusive. 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). Furthermore, the only scholarship used to support this discussion is Pascale Casanova's *The World Republic of Letters* (2004), a peculiarly Francophone and historical study from comparative literature given Murray's otherwise Anglophone and contemporary, digital focus. Consequently, the translator is almost completely absent from Murray's charting of the (digital) literary sphere and so the translator's autonomy and influence as an agent within the publishing world remains untheorized here. The relative absence of translation and translators from scholarly attempts to chart the (digital) literary sphere can also be seen elsewhere in book history and publishing studies, such as industry and field mapping scholarship by Thompson (2010), Darnton (1982), and Ray Murray and Squires (2013). Consequently, while the *performance of translatorship* discussed within this chapter is developed from Murray's work within book history and publishing studies, the concept of *translatorship* requires further elucidation to establish translators as key agents within the literary sphere and to avoid the limited author-translator dichotomies frequently discussed in translation studies.

Given the continued debate surrounding the question of how we define translatorship within translation studies and the absence, or indeed invisibility, of translators within theoretical conceptualizations of the publishing industry, this chapter therefore opts for an inductive approach. Rather than seeking to present an all-encompassing definition of translatorship, which would be ambitious given the specific focus of this chapter on one translator, the concept of translatorship used here is based on the definitions and descriptions of Bulloch's work as a literary translator discussed during interview, which will then be substantiated through subsequent qualitative case studies. Doing so is beneficial as it centers on the agency of Bulloch within the notion of performing his role as a translator. Furthermore, this approach presents a nuanced study of Bulloch's performance of translatorship and paratextual visibility in terms of the two novels used as a case study within the present chapter, rather than attempting to generalize a taxonomy of translatorship from a limited dataset that would pertain solely to one straight, white, male translator working between dominant European languages. Such an approach would unduly imply the

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existence of a correct or typical notion of translatorship, rather than acknowledging that all translators, as well as the activities they undertake, are individual and influenced by their context.[7]

The starting point for defining Bulloch's translatorship stems from the first question he was asked during interview: *What it is that you do within the world of literary publishing and translation*? In his response, Bulloch described himself as "a literary translator" who translates "principally novels from German to English," with around 95% of those translations being contemporary books that "are being published now" or have "just been published." Notably, the fact that his translation work focuses on contemporary texts means that most of the authors are still alive, thereby positioning his translatorship as a linguistically driven 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 describes him as the agent responsible for the completion of this activity, that is, as the *translator* of the literary text.

However, when asked how he would describe the translator's role in the movement of literature between languages, Bulloch also listed activities such as an "unofficial role as a scout," preparing sample translations for German publishers and helping to "market the book" upon release. Consequently, Bulloch's role as the translator is not simply the act of translating but covers a range of additional activities which must, therefore, be included within the conceptualization of his translatorship. As I have demonstrated elsewhere (Freeth 2021b), such activities can span, and even go beyond, the entire publishing lifecycle of a translated text. Furthermore, these activities all rely on Bulloch establishing and developing relationships with both individuals working in the publishing industry and the target audiences for his translations (see Bozkurt Jobanputra's chapter in this volume for other examples of such activities and their impact on translator visibility in a Turkish context). As such, the performance of translatorship draws on Murray's definition of the performance of authorship as an "ongoing performance," in which translators seek to "directly shape" their identity "across multiple communication channels and with a frequency impossible by means of codex publication alone" (Murray 2018, 24–25).

In terms of questions of translator visibility, then, the performance of translatorship is here understood as constituting the translator's attempts to make their identity as a translator, their

[7] Indeed, inductive case studies into the roles and visibility of other translators working in different contexts would present a range of activities, expectations or desires that do not comprise Bulloch's translatorship as outlined in this chapter. Such cases could range from the role of the translator in lieu of an author, such as Ann Goldstein's role in representing reclusive and pseudonymous author Elena Ferrante's work on an international stage (c.f. Preston 2020); or Jennifer Croft's activism for the naming of translators on book covers (c.f. Croft 2021).

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undertaking of the act of translation, and the translated products they produce visible within a receiving culture. As such, the analysis within this chapter will now explore the ways in which translator Jamie Bulloch performed his translatorship of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* in both non-digital and digital contexts, thereby investigating the ways in which the "disintermediation" (Murray 2018, 29) afforded by digital media grants translators more autonomy and opportunities to perform their translatorship in the digital literary sphere.

4. Analysis of Bulloch's visibility and the performance of his translatorship

4.1 Performing translatorship in the codices

Jamie Bulloch's English-language translations of Timur Vermes' two novels *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* were published in hardback by MacLehose Press in 2014 and 2020 respectively, with the paperback edition of each following a year later. The paratextual materials that comprise these codices were developed as part of what Thompson describes as the "publishing value chain" (2010, 16). Consequently, even though a translator may contribute to their development, authorial responsibility for their contents and design typically lies with the publisher.[8] As such, opportunities for visibility through the performance of translatorship are limited within the codices of the two novels. For instance, both *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* feature the same cover designs and typology as the original German novels, with the only information found on the front covers being the name of the author, Timur Vermes; the title of the respective novel; and an additional tagline either describing the book (in the case of the hardback editions) or (on the paperbacks) favorable quotes from newspaper reviews.[9] The spines of the novels similarly feature the author's name and the title of the novel, whilst also including the name and logo of publisher MacLehose Press.

The absence of Bulloch from these spaces is notable as, during interview, he stated that "it is important to get some kind of recognition for the work that you've done, not to be hidden by publishers as if you had nothing to do with it." Within this desire for recognition, Bulloch noted the importance of people not thinking "that it's been written by the author themselves," rather he emphasizes the importance of readers knowing that "you [the translator] actually have had a role" in

[8] For instance, Bulloch and publisher MacLehose noted during interview that the title "*Look Who's Back*" was developed collaboratively by the two to fit the typography of the novel's cover design.
[9] MacLehose Press noted during interview that this stemmed from the original success of the cover of *Er ist wieder da*.

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the publication of the English text. However, Bulloch's desire for visibility in his role as the translator runs contrary to the policies of MacLehose Press, who stated during interview that they have a "clear" policy not to have the translator's name on the front cover. This stems from their belief that there are "only a few translators in the whole world or in the whole history of translation" where "the book will sell on the basis of who's translated it." As such, Bulloch is absent from the two exterior paratextual spaces which would typically be visible to readers or used in marketing materials, the spine and cover, despite his own desire for his translations not to be presented as original English-language texts. Thus, Bulloch's translatorship goes unperformed in this space.

Within other areas of the codices, however, Bulloch is named as the translator of the texts. For instance, the phrase "Translated from German by Jamie Bulloch" can be found at the bottom of the rear covers and on the title pages in the frontmatter of both novels. Similarly, on the author-biography pages within both novels, a short paragraph detailing other translations done by Bulloch is given below biographical details of author Vermes. In these instances, both the act of translation and Bulloch's role as the translator are made explicit through the naming of the translator and the listing of some of his achievements. However, the framing here remains focused on Bulloch's linguistic transfer of the novel from German to English rather than on the broader roles he played in the two novels' journeys into English, thereby presenting a limited snapshot of Bulloch's translatorship that relates solely to the act of translation. Furthermore, even though Bulloch claimed in interview to have penned his own biographical note, the parameters for these notes were defined by publisher MacLehose Press and no authorship is ascribed to Bulloch within this space.[10] As such, Bulloch's involvement in the creation of these paratexts granted limited opportunities for him to perform his translatorship and, due to the publisher's control of this space, these opportunities were controlled and defined by the publisher's own preferences and practices.

The one space within either of the two codices where Bulloch has a larger opportunity to perform his translatorship comes in the "Translator's note" to *Look Who's Back* (Vermes 2014, 367–375).[11] In Venuti's call for translators to assert their visibility, such texts are named as sites that can grant translators visibility by serving as a space to make their processes and agency visible to readers (2018, 311). However, Bulloch's note in *Look Who's Back* is limited to providing a "brief

[10] For instance, MacLehose Press noted during interview that a translator's biographical note must always be shorter than that of the original author.
[11] Unlike *Look Who's Back*, The *Hungry and the Fat* does not feature frequent references to figures and events from German history, instead focusing on Europe's response to the Mediterranean migrant crisis. So, the novel contains no so-called "narrative glossary" or translator's note.

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resumé" of the cultural and historical references found in the novel which may be lost on English language readers (Bulloch in Vermes 2014, 367), rather than reflecting on Bulloch's translatorship in relation to *Look Who's Back*. Functionally then, rather than giving Bulloch a space to voice his own thoughts on the text, discuss his translation decisions and strategies, or increase his visibility as a textual producer, this translator's note serves only to provide background information "for those readers who would welcome explanation of some of the characters and terms referred to in this novel" (Bulloch in Vermes 2014, v). As such, while the existence of a translator's note for *Look Who's Back* communicates the presence of a translator to the reader and demonstrates the shifts in cultural knowledge and experience that can occur when literary texts move between languages, the focus on explaining references found within the novel rather than Bulloch's own work and agency limit the visibility that Bulloch gains from its inclusion in the codex.

Notably, MacLehose Press is a small imprint within the publishing house *Quercus* that specializes in mainly commercial literature in translation, with large successes coming in the crime and thriller genres from titles such as the *Millennium* series.[12] This commercial focus means that MacLehose do not typically feature translator notes within their codices. Rather, Bulloch stated during interview that the volume of historical and German-cultural references throughout *Look Who's Back* meant that he and editor Bielenberg felt that a "glossary" would be beneficial to English readers who "wouldn't necessarily" understand without additional information. Indeed, the only reference to Bulloch's note (which is found at the back of codex) in the frontmatter describes it as a "narrative glossary," rather than a translator's note. Thus, despite the inclusion of a translator's note in *Look Who's Back,* MacLehose Press can still be seen as attempting to frame *Look Who's Back* as an original English-language text, with the note serving the target-oriented purpose of facilitating an Anglophone reader's understanding of the novel's German cultural content without making the fact that the novel itself has been translated from German visible to Anglophone readers.

While this note does not serve to make Bulloch's translatorial activities or the novel's status as a translation explicit to Anglophone readers, the inclusion of this translator's note can still be understood as the performance of Bulloch's position as an expert at the interface between the

[12] Quercus is, itself, then part of the Hachette UK group. Thus, MacLehose Press is rather uniquely positioned as a small, "independently minded" imprint within one of the UK's largest publishing groups (MacLehose Press n.d.). This position allows MacLehose Press to balance commercial successes with translations that might be less commercially successful, or even "making a loss" (in editor Bielenberg's words), but are winning or shortlisted for prestigious prizes, such as the Oxford-Weidenfeld Translation Prize or the International Booker Prize.

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Germanic and Anglophone literary fields because it was Bulloch's experience as a literary translator that informed the decision to write a translator's note and include it in the codex. Consequently, Bulloch did have limited opportunities to perform his translatorship within the codices of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, as seen in his writing of biographical notes for himself and the inclusion of a translator's note in the case of the former. However, these opportunities were restricted by the parameters, expectations and requirements of publisher MacLehose Press. Therefore, they serve the commercial viability of the novel in Anglophone contexts over allowing Bulloch a space to freely perform his translatorship or increase his visibility.

4.2 Performing translatorship at live events

Another way in which Bulloch performed his translatorship in the non-digital world came through his participation in promotional events organized by MacLehose Press to celebrate the launches of both *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*. In the case of the former, these events consisted of unique, one-off events such as the "literary dinner" event hosted at a restaurant in central London (Hardy's Restaurant 2014) and traditional author-meet-and-greet style events hosted at bookshops (Costello 2014). 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. Here, Bulloch embodied the voice of the English language text by staging a reading alongside Vermes and so literally performed his translatorship in front of the audiences at the events.

However, in the case of the aforementioned events organized to promote the launch of *Look Who's Back*, Bulloch's involvement was limited to readings from the text alongside Vermes, thereby limiting the scope of Bulloch's visibility as the translator of the novel. For instance, question and answer sessions were either run solely with the author Vermes (as reported by Costello 2014) or were moderated by an external speaker, such as Jewish filmmaker Rex Bloomstein at the literary dinner event hosted by Hardy's Restaurant (Bulloch 2014a). Indeed, as can be seen in an image posted on social media by event organizer Hardy's Restaurant (2014), whilst Vermes and Bloomstein held the floor from bar stools, Bulloch sat within the audience, taking a photograph on his mobile phone. In these instances, then, the public performance of Bulloch's translatorship consisted of giving voice to the English text but, as argued by Pym, did not go as far as taking "ethical or pragmatic" responsibility for the text in lieu of the author (2011). Instead, Bulloch was

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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 remained at the event when Vermes left to conduct further media appearances (Bulloch 2014b).[13] As with the paratexts found in the codices discussed in the previous section, these events were organized by publisher MacLehose Press. Thus, even when physically performing his translatorship to an audience, Bulloch's ability to perform his translatorship was limited at these publisher-planned events.

When participating in the one live event organized to promote the release of *The Hungry and the Fat* in January 2020, however, Bulloch played a far more active role. The event was hosted by Topping & Company Booksellers in Bath who advertised the evening as "Timur Vermes in conversation with translator Jamie Bulloch in Bath" (Topping & Company Booksellers of Bath 2020). This description was not only used online but can also be seen in the 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 in Figure 1, emphasis in original). In practice, this meant that Bulloch not only read from the English language text, but also interviewed Vermes, and answered questions from the audience alongside the author — some of which pertained explicitly to Bulloch's role and work as the English-language translator of Vermes' two novels. Consequently, Bulloch's performance of his translatorship at this later event expanded from his voicing of the English text by reading an extract, to his shared position as the focus of the event and his public representation of the text alongside Vermes. As such, in the performance of his translatorship through the promotion of *The Hungry and the Fat* at this live event, Bulloch's own experience, renown and expertise were leveraged to advertise both the novel and its launch event. This marks an interesting deviation from earlier events for *Look Who's Back* and the codices, where MacLehose noted during interview that a translator's name is strategically absent from covers and cover-based promotional materials, such as posters, in favor of attributing more cultural capital to a book through the inclusion of a quote or a prize roundel.

[Insert Figure 1 - Freeth here]

[13] Vermes left the event at Hardy's to take part in the BBC's *Newsnight* program hosted by Jeremy Paxman alongside author and journalist Sophie Hardach. A recording of this feature can be found on YouTube (Atzmon 2014).

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Consequently, by participating in publisher-organized live promotional events for *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, Bulloch was able to perform his translatorship and so increase his visibility as the translator of the two novels at said events. Of course, the narrow audience of these one-off events compared to the novels' readership means that this visibility is both limited and context specific. However, as demonstrated through the social media sources used within this analysis, the documenting of these events through online platforms such as Twitter can broaden the potential visibility by creating a public record of Bulloch's performance of translatorship in the digital space. Of course, the potential reach of these social media posts must not be overstated. Nevertheless, as will be demonstrated in the coming section, digital media allows the performance of translatorship to expand outwards from the control of the publisher, or the ephemerality of one-off live events, and into the hands of the translator themselves.

4.3 Performing translatorship through online interviews

One way that Bulloch performs his translatorship in the digital space is by discussing his translation process in online blogs and interviews. An example of this 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 giving an overview of British perceptions of German literature, which he argues are "dominated by terms such as serious, weighty, meditative, brooding, melancholy." Bulloch then describes his own contradictory experience of finding German literature funny, supported by examples that he has read and translated. Here, Bulloch's discussion of books that he has worked on makes his role as a translator visible by discussing it explicitly, thereby fighting against any "illusion of transparency" which would seek to position the translated texts as English-language originals (Hermans 2007).

However, it is within the second half of the article where Bulloch's creativity as the translator of Vermes' novels comes to fore. Bulloch begins by describing his overall approach to translating the humor of *Look Who's Back,* which was reliant upon his working relationship with German publisher Bastei Lübbe and author Timur Vermes, and his experience of attending the Europäisches Übersetzer-Kollegium [European Translator-College] in 2013 with the author and publisher. There, Bulloch and twelve other translators of *Er ist wieder da* spent a week with author Vermes and a representative from publisher Bastei Lübbe discussing and dissecting the German text

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to find "solutions for rendering tricky parts into our respective languages" (Bulloch and Langton, 2017).[14] Notably, Bulloch remarks in the article that the "most helpful" advice he received during this residency 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 not only provides a level of visibility for the labor of translation undertaken by Bulloch in rendering *Er ist wieder da* into English but also, given that this approach is described as "an idea worth bearing in mind when undertaking any translation" (Bulloch and Langton, 2017), presents a "collateral" paratextual framing (Freeth 2023) for all of Bulloch's work as a literary translator and his general creative approach to this process.

After describing his overall approach to translating the novel, Bulloch then goes into specific details about creative strategies and solutions used when translating *Look Who's Back.* Examples given include the neutralization of the character Fräulein Krömeier's Berlin accent, [15] which is written phonetically in the original German ("Ouh! Det is mir jetzt so rausjerutscht!" ["*Oops! That just slipped out!"* Vermes 2012, 209]), into a "a contemporary metropolitan vernacular": "O.M.G.! That just like, totally slipped out!" (Vermes 2014, 190–191), and the addition of "absurd business clichés that aren't there in the German original" into the speech of the character Sensenbrink (Bulloch and Langton 2017).[16] In this way, Bulloch's translation of *Er ist wieder da* seeks "to preserve the humor in English and thereby boost the book's impact as a satire" in such a way that he prioritized the books resonance with an Anglophone audience to ensure the English-language translation would live up to the commercial success of the German original (Bulloch and Langton 2017).[17] 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 "collateral" (Freeth 2023) paratextual

[14] The thirteen translators involved in the residency translated *Er ist wieder da* into Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, English, Greek, Italian, Catalonian, Macedonian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Swedish, Serbian, and Spanish (Europäische Übersetzer-Kollegium, personal communication).
[15] Krömeier works as Hitler's assistant in the novel.
[16] In *Look Who's Back*, Sensenbrink works as an executive at the television company who offer the resurrected Hitler his first TV slot and he continues this role for the "An Angel in Adversity" television show at the heart of *The Hungry and the Fat.* 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).
[17] *Er ist wieder da* sold over 400,000 copies in its first six months on the German market and remained in the *Spiegel* bestsellers list in either hardback or paperback form until early 2016, some three and a half years after its initial release. For a more detailed account of the reception and commercial success of *Er ist wieder da* in Germany and Britain see Freeth (2021a).

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understanding of both Bulloch's specific approach to *Look Who's Back* and a general conceptualization of his translation philosophy as it pertains to all of his books.

Where the performance of Bulloch's translatorship within the codices was at the service of the target audience's understanding of the translated novel, rather than highlighting or discussing his own processes, in this online article Bulloch has taken ownership and responsibility for these choices and their impact on the text. Bulloch's taking of responsibility for the translated text, which author Vermes expressed support for during interview based on the need for translators to "interpret" and provide a particular reading of a literary text, is therefore performed in this digital space through his explicit ownership of translation decisions. Without this performance, Bulloch's creativity would go un-signaled to any readers of the English-language literary text who could not sit down with German next to the English and compare the two. Consequently, by performing his translatorship in this digital space Bulloch 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 Vermes' original German (Hermans 2007, 22–24).

4.4 Performing translatorship on social media

The second way that the performance of Bulloch's translatorship in the digital space increases his visibility stems from his role in promotional activities marketing the translated products to Anglophone readers. While some of these activities take place alongside the acquisition and translation of a foreign-language text, described by Thompson as the "publishing value chain" (2010, 16), most of these activities comprise public-facing appearances surrounding and supporting the release of the finished translation onto the British market. During interview, the digital activities that Bulloch described most prominently within marketing and promotional practices stem from his use of social media. Thus, it is on his performance of translatorship on social media that the present section will focus.

[Insert Figure 2 - Freeth here]

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During interview, Bulloch noted that social media marketing was a consistent way in which he would help to market the book, primarily through Twitter. Typically, Bulloch uses Twitter to share (or in Twitter's terminology, "retweet") promotional posts published by MacLehose Press, or to amplify publisher-created paratexts in the digital space, for instance by posting pictures of his books upon receipt of "author copies" (see Figure 2). While Bulloch noted during interview that his Twitter usage has decreased in recent years, he still emphasizes 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 and so translators who engage with social media present a way for translation-centric publishers to bridge this gap. Notably, Vermes is one such author who does not use social media. As such, Bulloch's activity on social media amplifies the paratexts produced by the publisher on social media and does so in lieu of Vermes' performance of his authorship. Thus, 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 publicize 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, publicized, and archived.

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 has not only resulted in the creation of his own Tweets to promote his translations, but also to interact with readers. To manage these "interactive" (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. This application allows users to "view multiple timelines" spanning numerous Twitter accounts or keyword searches within a single interface (Twitter n.d.). During interview, Bulloch noted that his TweetDeck application had 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.

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An example of this can be seen in the exchange between Bulloch and a Twitter user shown in Figure 3.[18] There are several notable things demonstrated within this exchange. Firstly, the original Tweet that Bulloch is responding to, "What's the name of the book where Hitler wakes up in 2011 Berlin?", 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 the creativity used in developing the TweetDeck search strings he described during interview. Secondly, later in this exchange, the user notes "I've only just clocked on that you're the one who translated the book!" Bulloch then performs his translatorship in response by explicitly acknowledging that this activity forms part of his role as the translator ("Hence my scouring of Twitter for any mention of it!"). In doing so, Bulloch makes this aspect of his translatorship visible by explicitly defining his role in the public sphere.

[Insert Figure 3 - Freeth here]

Finally, even though Bulloch is making his translatorship explicit within this exchange, the other user only acknowledges that Bulloch is the translator of *Look Who's Back* some three 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 publisher-mediated paratextual spaces looked up by this user, the factual paratextuality surrounding Bulloch's translatorship and his reputation are not enough for this user to immediately identify him as the translator of the novel.

Another humorous example of this comes from a different Twitter user directly tweeting Bulloch (by using the @jamiebulloch handle within the body of their Tweet) to ask him if he has read "the Vermes book?", to which Bulloch responds "Yes: I translated it!" (Bulloch 2019b) before adding that "there's another Timur Vermes novel coming next year" (Bulloch 2019a). In terms of the visibility that the performance of translatorship on social media achieves for Bulloch, then, its

[18] To ensure the ethical anonymity of this user, I have omitted identifying details from their account. Such an approach is shared by Desjardins in her chapter within this volume and justified by van Egdom and Kotze in Section 3.3 of their chapter in this volume.

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impact must not be overstated as the ephemeral nature of social media timelines and the need to cultivate a following limits the audience of such posts. Nevertheless, Bulloch's use of social media to perform his translatorship serves as a platform to actively engage in the paratextual spaces surrounding his translations in a way that is "disintermediated" (Murray 2018) from the influence and control of the publishing world. As such, Bulloch's use of social media to make his role as translator visible facilitates the expansion of the paratextual space surrounding his translatorship and the creation of paratextual relationships between his social media and the literary texts that he translates.

5. Conclusions

While debates surrounding the democratizing potential of digital and social media call into question the ability of all users to partake in the literary sphere on an even footing (c.f. Steiner 2018), the analysis within this chapter has demonstrated how the translator's disintermediated access to content creation in the digital paratextual space allows for the performance of translatorship outside the confines of publishing practices, norms, and requirements.

For Jamie Bulloch and the novels *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat*, this can be seen most clearly in comparisons between Bulloch's visibility within the publisher-controlled non-digital space and the digital space, where he is able to directly interact with readers and perform his translatorship without the publisher's mediation. In the case of the former, Bulloch's translatorship is limited to the commercial goals of publisher MacLehose Press, for whom the presentation of *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* as English-language texts authored by Vermes eclipsed Bulloch's own creative agency, as well as his role as an interface for the two novels between the German and Anglophone literary fields. As such, where Bulloch was able to perform his translatorship in the non-digital space, such as in the writing of biographical and translator's notes within the codices or his participation in live events, he did so in service of the text's acceptability for British audiences and to support the performance of Vermes' authorship. In digital spaces, however, Bulloch can directly perform his translatorship through participation in interviews and the authoring of articles that place his work as a translator at the fore, or through his ability to interact directly with readers on social media and make his translatorship explicit within such dialogues.

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Returning to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter then, how translator visibility is manifested and achieved within the digital world that emerged after the release of *The Translator's Invisibility,* this case study of Bulloch's performative translatorship has demonstrated several findings. Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, Bulloch's ability to engage in the digital paratextual space without the publisher's mediation has resulted in the production and proliferation of texts pertaining to *Look Who's Back* and *The Hungry and the Fat* that make his identity as the translator explicit. Within the constellation of paratexts that surrounds these two novels, the performance of translatorship in the digital paratextual space can be understood as increasing Bulloch's visibility due to an increased number of texts which refer to Bulloch and his work as the translator.

Secondly, the increased visibility achieved in the digital paratextual space functions as the amplification of Bulloch's translatorship as it was performed within the non-digital space. For instance, in tweeting "Yes: I translated it!" (2019b) Bulloch is amplifying the paratextual message found on the rear cover and title page of the codices, which all state "Translated from the German by Jamie Bulloch." Similarly, the inclusion of a biographical note in the codices or his participation in live events grants Bulloch visibility by presenting him as an embodied and identifiable figure, an identity which is then developed through the cultivation of a following on his personal Twitter account or participation in online interviews. As such, the performance of translatorship in the digital paratextual space does not result in an alternative or competing visibility to that cultivated through the "publishing value chain" (Thompson 2010, 16), rather it compliments and amplifies this visibility within a new digital context. The performance of translatorship in digital paratextual spaces, therefore, very literally constitutes *an opportunity* for translators to increase their visibility.

Finally, and drawing on the previous point, it is important to note that the performance of translatorship is not only an opportunity, rather than a requirement or a given, but also a privilege. Jamie Bulloch is an established, white, male translator who is given platforms such as the *New Books in German* website (see, for instance, Bulloch and Langton 2017 analyzed throughout this chapter) or is asked to speak at live readings and promotional events, and who has then chosen to make himself visible through the performance of his translatorship on platforms such as Twitter. However, and as noted by Bulloch himself during interview, this limelight and visibility may not be desirable, beneficial, or even possible for some translators. As such, the concept of the performance of translatorship put forward within this chapter, and its relationship to translator visibility, emphasizes both the increased focus on individual agency required by further applications of

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Venuti's concept of translator invisibility, and the need for such research within other cultural, linguistic, and geographical contexts to better understand the multifaceted roles played by translators in the global circulation of literature.

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--- 2014b. "@TranslatedWorld No, I shall remain at the event at Hardy's Brasserie." Twitter, March 31, 2014. https://twitter.com/jamiebulloch/status/450702986969645056?s=20

--- 2019a. "And there's another Timur Vermes novel coming next year: The Hungry and the Fat." Twitter, August 27, 2019. https://twitter.com/jamiebulloch/status/1166467651813748736?s=20

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