Meta
Journal des traducteurs
Translators' Journal

META

Creative subtitling as film-transformative practice: From immersion to amazement in Edgar Pêra's *The Baron*

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Volume 69, Number 1, 2024

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1113945ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/1113945ar

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Publisher(s)

Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal

ISSN

0026-0452 (print)
1492-1421 (digital)

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Cite this article

Kapsaskis, D. (2024). Creative subtitling as film-transformative practice: From immersion to amazement in Edgar Pêra's *The Baron*. *Meta*, *69*(1), 155–173. https://doi.org/10.7202/1113945ar

Article abstract

In this article, I examine creative subtitling as a cultural practice whose significance exceeds its use value as merely an enhanced variety of subtitling. The article's main argument is that creative subtitling transforms the films that contain it by expanding further on their creative ideas, by foregrounding these films' constructedness, and by embedding new layers of self-awareness in them. I begin the analysis by critiquing some recent studies on creative subtitling for downplaying the part of creativity in favour of a reductive conceptualisation of translation as meaning transfer. I then turn to Antoine Berman's account of translation as reflexive practice, the ethical aim of which is to undo this conceptualisation and turn our attention away from meaning and closer to the experience of language itself. Taking translational creativity to mean literally this transformative "undoing," in the last section, I examine the case of the creative subtitles of Edgar Pêra's film, *O barão* [*The Baron*] (2011). I argue that these subtitles expand further on the creative ideas of this film while simultaneously "undoing" it: they take us out of a state of immersion in the story and into a state of "amazement" at the experience of the language of cinema itself.

Creative subtitling as film-transformative practice: from immersion to amazement in Edgar Pêra's *The Baron*

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RÉSUMÉ

Cet article examine le sous-titrage créatif comme pratique culturelle dont la signification dépasse sa valeur d'usage en tant que simple variété améliorée de sous-titrage. L'argument principal est que le sous-titrage créatif transforme les films qui le contiennent en développant davantage leurs idées créatives, en mettant en avant le caractère construit de ces films et en y intégrant de nouvelles couches de conscience de soi. L'analyse commence par une critique de certaines études récentes sur le sous-titrage créatif qui, selon nous, minimisent le rôle de la créativité au profit d'une conceptualisation réductrice de la traduction comme transfert de sens. Nous explorons ensuite la vision d'Antoine Berman sur la traduction comme pratique réflexive dont le but éthique est de défaire cette conceptualisation en détournant notre attention du sens et en la rapprochant de l'expérience du langage lui-même. En prenant la créativité traductionnelle au sens littéral de ce « défaire » transformateur, dans la dernière section, nous examinons le cas des sous-titres créatifs du film d'Edgar Pêra, *O barão* [*Le Baron*] (2011). Nous soutenons que ces sous-titres développent davantage les idées créatives de ce film tout en le « défaisant » : ils nous font sortir d'un état d'immersion dans le récit et entrer dans un état d'« étonnement » devant l'expérience du langage cinématographique lui-même.

ABSTRACT

In this article, I examine creative subtitling as a cultural practice whose significance exceeds its use value as merely an enhanced variety of subtitling. The article's main argument is that creative subtitling transforms the films that contain it by expanding further on their creative ideas, by foregrounding these films' constructedness, and by embedding new layers of self-awareness in them. I begin the analysis by critiquing some recent studies on creative subtitling for downplaying the part of creativity in favour of a reductive conceptualisation of translation as meaning transfer. I then turn to Antoine Berman's account of translation as reflexive practice, the ethical aim of which is to undo this conceptualisation and turn our attention away from meaning and closer to the experience of language itself. Taking translational creativity to mean literally this transformative "undoing," in the last section, I examine the case of the creative subtitles of Edgar Pêra's film, *O barão* [*The Baron*] (2011). I argue that these subtitles expand further on the creative ideas of this film while simultaneously "undoing" it: they take us out of a state of immersion in the story and into a state of "amazement" at the experience of the language of cinema itself.

RESUMEN

El presente artículo examina la subtitulación creativa como una práctica cultural cuya trascendencia supera su valor de uso como una simple variedad mejorada de subtitulado. El argumento principal del artículo es que la subtitulación creativa transforma las películas donde se utiliza expandiendo las ideas creativas de la obra, destacando su carácter construido e integrando nuevas capas de autoconsciencia. El análisis comienza con una

crítica a algunos estudios recientes sobre la subtitulación creativa por desdeñar el papel de la creatividad en defensa de una conceptualización reduccionista de la traducción como transferencia de significado. A continuación, se explora la visión de Antoine Berman sobre la traducción como una práctica reflexiva cuyo objetivo ético es deshacer esta conceptualización y apartar nuestra atención del significado para redirigirla a la experiencia del lenguaje en sí mismo. Habiendo establecido que la creatividad traductora significa literalmente este «deshacer» transformativo, la última sección examina el subtitulado creativo de la película *O barão* [*El barón*] de Edgar Pêra (2011). Sostenemos que este subtitulado desarrolla las ideas creativas de la obra al tiempo que la «deshace»: nos saca de un estado de inmersión en el relato para introducirnos en un estado de «asombro» ante la experiencia del lenguaje cinematográfico en sí mismo.

MOTS-CLÉS/KEYWORDS/PALABRAS CLAVE

sous-titrage créatif, traduction du cinéma, créativité, transformation, Edgar Pêra
creative subtitling, film translation, creativity, transformation, Edgar Pêra
subtitulación creativa, traducción de cine, creatividad, transformación, Edgar Pêra

1. Introduction

This article will reflect on creative subtitling as a cultural practice that has a transformative impact on the films that contain it. The main premise of the article is that, while creative subtitling has a relatively limited presence in contemporary cinema, its examination enables a critical and interdisciplinary rethinking of film, translation and their inter-relationship. Looked at from the perspective of cinema, the presence of creative subtitles in a film suggests that that film has lent itself to new linguistic and visual manipulations which, in many cases, undermine that film's claim to being a unique and autonomous cultural artefact. Looked at from the perspective of translation, creative subtitling indicates that the film thus subtitled is a new iteration that cannot be understood in terms of mere transfer of the dialogue or reproduction of visual style. The claim that I will be making is that a creatively subtitled film has undergone a *transformation* that can only be understood if we factor in other parameters such as the following: the broader creative ideas that have informed the film's conception, design and production (for instance, those regarding the film's genre, subject and audience); the way in which the film positions itself in relation to the dominant industry norms and translation conventions; and the film's self-awareness of its place in the overall asymmetrical flows of cinematic culture across the globe. Overall, I will argue that the presence of creative subtitling questions the very notion of an autonomous "completed film"; and that it reflects, and sometimes interrogates, the cultural and economic logic that underpins the circulation of films across linguacultural borders. Furthermore, I will suggest that all subtitling is fundamentally (that is, in terms of its theoretical paradigm) a creative practice not of transfer but of transformation of cinematic texts.

I plan to develop my argument in three steps. First, I will review some academic writings that are frequently quoted in debates on creative subtitling and I will claim that they display a fair amount of discursive unease when it comes to the relationship between translation and creativity. Noting that these writings tend to downplay the tensions and risks that this relationship entails, I will speculate that this may be due to the allegiance that the academy is nowadays expected to display to the film transla-

tion industry, sometimes at the expense of the critical focus that is usually expected from theoretical reflection. In pursuit of that level of focus, in the second step, I will zoom in on Antoine Berman's thinking on translation and creativity. Berman is not a proponent of creative translation as such, but he nevertheless understands translation as a form of *undoing*, indeed "destruction"—a term borrowed from Martin Heidegger—of the (Western) assumption that translation consists in the transfer of meaning. For him, translation is rather a textual operation aiming at bringing into relief the corporeality of language, not its ability to conjure meanings. In the final step of my inquiry, I will return to film subtitling and will test my idea of translation as undoing/destructive/transformative practice by examining the English creative subtitles of a Portuguese film, *The Baron* (*O barão*, 2011[1]), which were created by the film's director, Edgar Pêra. I will refer extensively to an interview that Pêra gave to professional subtitler and (then) postgraduate student Eleni Exarchou in the summer of 2020 on the issue of these subtitles. At that point, I will consider translation as taking place more broadly at the level of the audiovisual language of cinema rather than just the film dialogue. I will draw a parallel between Pêra's notion of *espantar*, a Portuguese verb which in cinematic terms would mean the ability of films to amaze audiences in quasi-somatic ways, and Berman's notion of the corporeality of language. This will lead me to my specific argument, namely, that creative subtitles contain a moment of undoing, or destruction, of the story narrated in a film, and effectively impede immersion in film narratives. I will suggest that creative subtitles give rise to a transformative viewing experience that takes us away from the story and closer to the somatic experience of the language of cinema as such.

2. Who's afraid of creativity? A review of recent literature

There is no agreed-upon definition of creative subtitling, a fact indicating perhaps its fluidity as a practice that is primarily driven by shifting aesthetic and social considerations, as well as advances in media technology. This is not to say that market and economic factors are not important, especially as creative subtitles are comparatively more costly to produce. Still, such factors have not led to anything like the level of standardisation that has characterized commercial subtitling over the past decades (Días Cintas and Remael 2021). Often, creative subtitling is defined negatively, that is, in juxtaposition to these entrenched commercial practices. For example, in a recent paper, Pablo Romero-Fresco refers to the one-size-fits-all graphological and other conventions that apply to standard commercial subtitles before describing creative subtitling as a practice that defies these conventions.

> In contrast, creative subtitles […], respond to the specific qualities of every film, giving subtitlers and filmmakers more freedom to create an aesthetic suiting that of the original film. Not constrained by standard conventions, these subtitles experiment with font, size, position and effects to become part of the image and contribute to or reflect the typographic and aesthetic identity of the film. (Romero-Fresco 2021b: 305)

Romero Fresco is primarily interested in intralingual subtitles for media access, but his statement applies equally to interlingual creative subtitles used for film translation. I will keep this definition in mind as I now move to some earlier writings on creative subtitling which were also among the first to discuss this cultural practice from a theoretical perspective.

In what follows I will argue that a close reading of some of these publications suggests that they are permeated by a double discourse about what such subtitles are expected to do. On the one hand, there is the discourse of equivalence, focusing on how creative subtitles (should) convey the semantics, stylistics and other aspects of the audiovisual text in relation to conventional subtitles. On the other hand, there is the discourse of creativity, usually construed as the ability to divert from usual practice in order to convey the assumed intentions of the filmmakers. For example, Anna Foerster's study of the creative subtitles of the film *Night Watch*[2] assesses their quality based on how well they "illustrate" the characters' feelings (Foerster 2010: 92), how they "underline" their state of mind (2010: 91) and more generally how they "underline the film's aesthetics" (2010: 94). Tellingly, Foerster rejects visually marked subtitles that "do not seem to have a diegetic or stylistic function that supports the film" on the grounds that they "feature an effect just for the sake of it" (2010: 95). The main idea is that creativity is a resource to be tapped into only when it comes to problem-solving and with the purpose of replicating the film's narrative and stylistic features. It follows that creativity is to be used for the purpose of better imitating the original. This risk-free approach exemplifies the double and paradoxical discourse on creative subtitling, pervaded as it is by a profound mistrust towards subtitles. Translational creativity of this kind is not supposed to leave any marks on the filmic text (like all subtitles, creative ones must also be invisible). For Foerster, the mission of "aesthetic subtitles" (her term) is "to support or match the aesthetics of the audiovisual text and consequently develop an aesthetic of their own" (2010: 86). It is as if this aesthetic applies only to the subtitles and not to the film, which, rather implausibly, is left intact in this process. The autonomy and uniqueness of the "original" film is thus firmly confirmed, and the separation between translation and creativity is complete.

Wendy Fox's work on "integrated titles" (2018), as is her preferred term, is typical of the added-value approach. Fox combines an analysis of subtitling placement strategies and an eye-tracking study using a relatively large corpus of films and TV programmes. Based on her findings, she is able to come up with general principles and guidelines regarding creative subtitling for the use of filmmakers and industry professionals. While Fox's methodology is rigorous and convincing in its own terms, it is equally a vehicle for the double discourse of translation and creativity, reproducing the metaphor of translation as mere transfer of meaning. For all of Fox's talk about the need to break with norms, she is intent on formulating new ones that harness the affordances of subtitling technology and the desire to engage creatively with the film. Even as Fox praises creativity, the purpose of these new norms is clearly to contain it, and channel it exclusively towards solving problems of semantic or stylistic transfer. In a section entitled "Operationalisation," she enumerates some "characteristics […] required of integrated titles" (Fox 2018: 131) which mostly have to do with the legibility and readability of these subtitles, as well as their ability to convey information. For instance, the requirement of "consistency" is explained as "following comprehensible rules and avoid irritation, frustration or amusement when not intended" (Fox 2018: 131). Thus, while the film can intend anything that is deemed creatively relevant and interesting, subtitles can only intend their faithfulness to the original, within fixed and inflexible limits of consistency and comprehensibility. When they fail to do so—for instance, when Fox finds inconsistencies in the visual integration of the subtitles she examines—they are deemed to have "shortcomings" (Fox 2018:

32; 92; 115). Arguably, then, Fox's criteria are mechanisms of control of creativity in subtitling and aim at regulating opportunities for intervention and transformation on the part of subtitlers.

In two articles that have become standard references in the relevant literature, Rebecca McClarty (2012; 2014) has shown more subtlety and knowledge of creative subtitling's theoretical implications than any other scholar. McClarty emphasizes the subtitler's agency and situates the discussion exactly at the intersection of Film Studies and Translation Studies. Unlike the previous writers we discussed, McClarty embraces the prospect of creativity in this type of subtitling and the possibilities that it affords for transformation.

> [T]he aim of creative subtitles is not to "invisibly" reproduce the same effect on the target audience as that of the source audience. For who is to say what that experience is? Who is to say that that experience can be defined as one single unifying experience? Creative subtitles, then, aim to achieve difference rather than sameness. (McClarty 2012: 140)

Here, McClarty situates creative subtitling in relation to key debates in Translation Studies, such as equivalence of effect (Nida and Taber 1982) and translation invisibility (Venuti 1995). Further, borrowing from film theory (for example, the critical analysis of classical Hollywood narration in Bordwell 1985), she also directly challenges the notion of the unity of the cinematic text, thus allowing the subtitler room for exploring alternative interpretations of individual films. The question, however, remains as to how to understand the "difference" that creative subtitling makes and the ways in which it transforms the cinematic text. As I shall now argue, McClarty's answer is not consistent with her stated thesis.

In her 2014 paper, McClarty defines creative subtitling as "a subtitling practice that creatively responds to the individual film text in terms of both language and style," a practice that "offers a bespoke solution that responds to film as a creative, artistic medium" (McClarty 2014: 593). Taking everything into account, then, the creative subtitler's response aims "to achieve difference rather than sameness" and "to transform and expand the target audience's filmic experience" (McClarty 2014: 596). Yet when it comes to the details, McClarty resorts to the same discourse of sameness and equivalence as the other writers I discussed. The choice of verbs describing what creative subtitles should do is telling: they should "*follow* the rhythm of the film text" (2012: 146), "*mirror*" the effect of shot changes (2012: 146), "*mirror* the emotion of the moment" (2012: 145), "*adequately reflect* the style and themes of the film" (2014: 602), "*reflect* shot type, framing, or the position of characters within the mise en scène" (2014: 594), "*reflect* characterisation" (2014: 594) and "*mimic* […] the style, angle and position of the original text" (2014: 594) (all italics are mine). The list of synonyms is long, while the logic of translation as mere imitation also underlies longer analyses that I can discuss here (for example, McClarty 2014: 601-602).

McClarty's version of the academic double discourse on creative subtitling is encapsulated in phrases such as "subtitles that fully blend with and respond to their backdrop" (2012: 142). As innocuous as this phrase sounds, one has to ask: which one is it: *blending with* the backdrop (equivalence, transfer, sameness); or actively *responding* to it (interpretation, transformation, difference)? Eventually it becomes clear that by "response" McClarty does not have in mind critically engaged subtitles that genuinely register the film's encounter with new cultural contexts, but the use of

cinema-specific resources (such as subtitling position, colour, character opacity, etc.) so as to better emulate the immersive and unifying strategies of the film. Ostensibly an endorsement of the creative dimension of translation, creative subtitling of that kind ultimately serves to delimit the work of translation as something separate from "true" creation. It must be concluded that the latter remains the sole prerogative of the author/filmmaker.

Creative subtitling is a niche topic but reflecting on it can take us very soon to questions about translation, creativity, authorship as well as film and filmmaking. All the papers I reviewed celebrate creative subtitling as a fascinating translation practice that is characterized by greater artistic freedom. However, recognizing the part of creativity in translation entails certain risks that none of them seems willing to take. These papers resort to a double discourse that falters between translation as a creative and as a derivative practice before settling quite bluntly for the latter. In different ways, all these papers strive to normativize creative subtitling and limit its scope, for fear, it seems, of encroaching on the authority of the source text, that is, the film. This double discourse also reveals contradictions in the authors' understanding of translation, creativity and film/filmmaking. For all of them, creativity means unconventional thinking leading to transformation and generation of newness when it refers to films, but only imitation, problem-solving and the creation of new conventions when it refers to translation. And while films by themselves are recognized as complex, plurivocal and open to interpretation, when they are seen from the perspective of translation, they are treated as closed and finished artefacts that may at most, reluctantly, allow for subtitles to be *integrated* into them. It matters little that film theorists (Bordwell prominently among them), as much as filmmakers, have deconstructed the notion of visual and narrative unity of films already in the 1980s, if not earlier; from the point of view of the subtitler, this unity must always be assumed to be there, unequivocally the product of the filmmaker's "intention," which is to be obeyed at any cost.

In my critique, I am concentrating on the theoretical implications of creative subtitling without paying due attention to the expectations of studios and subtitling companies. This dimension is central to the papers discussed: using a language that the industry would be willing to understand, they aim to change industry attitudes vis-à-vis creative subtitling. This, however, limits the scope of the discussion and leads to the adoption of an apologetic tone that sometimes defeats the papers' analytical purpose. Witness, for instance, McClarty's self-doubts when arguing for more freedom for the subtitler: "Is this evolved role of the subtitler idealistic? Perhaps. Is it too much to ask for subtitling to become part of the filmmaking process? Perhaps" (2012: 149). It seems that industry realities provide both the frame of reference and the horizon of all possible reflection on creative subtitling. To be sure, we cannot begin to conceptualize (creative) subtitles without taking into account their material contexts of production and circulation. But then these material contexts must be critically assessed for what they are rather than taken for granted and left undiscussed. Methodologically speaking, if the industry dictates the theoretical framework, then that ought to be factored in explicitly as a parameter and a limitation of these papers (exploring perhaps *corporate* definitions of "aesthetics" and "creativity"). But if the industry context is one contingent factor among many, then the discussion should be able to focus on any freely selected variables and without the pressure to apologize.

Abé Mark Nornes's well-known concept of *abusive subtitling* (Nornes 2007) exemplifies an approach that avoids the pitfall of the academic double discourse of subtitling. With it, Nornes assumes the risk of non-equivalence and exposes the fallacy of the model of translation as transfer. In so doing, he is able to take an unambiguous stand in relation to all the theoretical and practical parameters of the discussion: in relation to translation, he suggests that it cannot but have a transformative effect on source texts; in relation to film, he argues that subtitling is integral to film culture and history; in relation to culture, he claims that originals can and must be "abused"; in relation to the political economy that underpins film traffic, he explains that conventional subtitles aid films to perpetuate asymmetries of power and capital. Although Nornes is not advocating a specific model of creative subtitling, it is clear that creativity for him takes the form of defamiliarization and abuse (see also Kapsaskis 2008). Overall, however, the point is not to agree with Nornes's position, rather it is to try and pursue critical approaches to subtitling that audiovisual translation, due to its apparent entanglement with the industry and its further dependency on logocentric modes of thinking, has been painfully slow to develop. For that reason, I will now turn my attention to broader discussions on translation and creativity. I'll begin the next section with a brief discussion of contemporary debates on this topic before turning to Antoine Berman's earlier approach to translation as reflexive practice and experience.

3. Translation and creativity

There has been a proliferation of writings on translation and creativity over the past years. I will begin this section by briefly touching upon some key ideas. In this respect, the work of Jean Boase-Beier stands out for its breadth and consistency over many publications. Relevantly to the current discussion, in a chapter of her book *Critical introduction to translation studies*, Boase-Beier (2011: 48) associates the question of creativity with that of the translator's allegiances, including those to patrons/clients and of course to the author, reader and text. For Boase-Beier, creativity seems to lie in the translator's interpretation of these allegiances, with the constraints that they entail operating as triggers, rather than just restrictions, for creative readings of source texts. Overall, Boase-Beier associates creativity with freedom of interpretation and imaginative problem-solving. This then leads her to introduce a "distinction between non-literary translations and literary ones" (Boase-Beier 2011: 53) whereby the latter, by "nature," "invites creative engagement" (Boase-Beier 2011: 55). I will evaluate Boase-Beier's ideas together with Kirsten Malmkjær's in the following paragraphs.

Malmkjær's recent monograph, *Translation and creativity* (2020), also discusses creativity as a heightened form of interpretation. While it is impossible to summarize her argument here, not least because it involves a full-on foray into Donald Davidson's philosophical semantics, it is fair to say that Malmkjær understands (i) translation as a form of description of a source text that is genetically bound to it, and (ii) creative translation as a move beyond description, based on the translator's aesthetic appreciation of the source text (2020: 67). In my view, both the ideas of genetic bond and aesthetic appreciation are human-centric and rely on the age-old Kantian paradigm of the "creative genius" (which Malmkjær criticizes in her book without debunking it).

Malmkjær conceptualizes translation as a form of procreation when she writes that it "will not be 'about' the source text, but of it, like a child is of its parents" (2020: 30). In this model, there is no meaningful sense of transformation in translation, whether "creative" or otherwise. Rather, there is continuity based on learned and inherited codes about what creativity should look like. In Malmkjær's words, creativity is about "noticing the artistry deployed in the arrangement of [the ST's] linguistic features" and "reflect[ing]" that in the translation (2020: 37).

From a critical perspective, we will notice in both Boase-Beier's and Malmkjær's accounts the persistence of a high modernist code whereby "originals" are superior to "copies" and literary creations are more special than other kinds of texts. Although both accounts recognize the osmosis that exists between creating and translating, and therefore readily problematize the concepts of authorship and intended meaning, translation's transformative agency and the role of creativity are considered to be superficial and incidental to the translator's work. But is translational creativity only about the transfer of surface meanings and formal elements of the source text—the "reflection" of someone else's "artistry," to quote Malmkjær again? If it's about more than that, then what other types of engagement might it concern?

In their introduction to their volume *Translation and creativity*, editors Eugenia Loffredo and Manuela Perteghella (2006) point to a convincing answer. Drawing from a tradition in the philosophy of translation that links Walter Benjamin to Jacques Derrida, Loffredo and Perteghella remind us that texts rely on translation for their survival and growth in time. Only, the form of that relationship is not procreation (contrary to Malmkjær's hypothesis) but mutation. The two editors quote Derrida: "The original gives itself in modifying itself; this gift is not an object given; it lives and lives on in mutation" (Derrida in Loffredo and Perteghella 2006: 3). If this is true, then a change more radical than that of a mere language switch takes place in translation, making the dependency between ST and TT reciprocal (as opposed to hierarchical, which is how both Boase-Beier and Malmkjær see it). Loffredo and Perteghella conclude that "writing and translating are therefore intricately dependent on each other: the two are bound together by a paradoxical and unavoidable contract" (2006: 3). It is precisely to this "contract" that I would like now to turn my attention. I will do so from the perspective of Antoine Berman because he insisted early on, and perhaps more succinctly than Derrida, that this contract does not refer to surface meanings in the first place, but to language in its texture and corporeality.

On the face of it, Berman's thought can hardly be used as part of a thesis on creative subtitling, for he is explicitly critical of creativity in translation. But it is precisely this exclusion that pushes us to clarify the terms of the discussion. In his essay "La traduction et la lettre, ou l'auberge du lointain" (Berman 1985), on which I will focus here, Berman stresses that a translation is linked to its original by means of a "Draconian" contract which "prohibits any *excess of the texture of the original*. It stipulates that the creativity required by the translation must be put entirely at the service of the re-writing of the original in the other language, and never produce an over-translation determined by the personal poetics of the translator" (Berman 1985: 58, emphasis in the original[3]). This seems to say that, in translation, creativity should be used strictly for the purpose of imitating the original. Yet in a more careful reading of his text, Berman explicitly rejects the Western conceptualization of translation as imitation, which he associates with the long tradition of European ethnocentrism

and its philosophical foundation, Platonism (the link being that the ethnos/nation is a concept of Platonic order, an *idea* to be imitated in and through language). He argues that, in practice, translators tend to focus on surface meanings, ignoring more fundamental, literal and "corporeal" aspects of the texts they translate. For him, translating a text in this way results in a "parodie, pastiche, adaptation, plagiat" (Berman 1985: 49) and has deep political implications. By systematically prioritizing the more readily communicable aspects of texts over their poetic particularities (their "spirit" over their "letter") the Western translation tradition foregrounds similarities and creates an illusion of universal translatability.

However, for Berman, the essence of translation is not in communicability but in foreignness: this is the precious element that translation brings to a language, but it resides in the literal, the particular and the somatic. As Berman puts it, "[t]he ethical aim of translation is to receive the Foreign in its fleshy corporeality" (Berman 1985: 90).[4] If we suppress these elements (along with the ethical imperative that they entail), most of the rest becomes exchangeable between lingua-cultures. Now, this suppression requires a certain artistry and problem-solving skills, and it is precisely this form of creativity that Berman denounces. An example would be the skills that are required for successful domestication, in Venuti's parlance. Conversely, staying faithful to the literal requires the translator to resist professional and pedagogical norms around equivalence and function, and to dare to stick to the texture of words and other linguistic features of the text. Berman strongly insists on this agency of the translator even if he does not call it "creative." In Françoise Massardier-Kenney's words: "for Berman, translation is a space of hospitality for a creative subject"; and translation is "a space for the agency of the translating subject" (2010: 260).

Berman's analysis is relevant because it makes possible an alternative conceptualization of creativity that is necessary if translation is to fulfil its ethical role: namely, to resist the imitation/normativization tendency and to proactively engage with the text, valuing its otherness and attending to its corporeality. Moreover, this specifically translational creativity places a premium on text and texture rather than author and authorship. It may be argued that this model fits better to literary translation rather than to other genres. However, as I will discuss below, it can also help us understand creative subtitling as a form of translation that is appropriate to the cinematic text as it fully engages with it, building further on its language, and transforming it for the sake of new audiences. Before doing that, I would like to briefly unpick three key concepts in Berman's analysis that are crucial for understanding his concept of creativity. These are: (i) the experience of translation, (ii) translation as transformation and (iii) translation as destruction. I will examine all three concepts together as part of the same argument.

Berman borrows the theme of "experience" from Heidegger's essay "The nature of language" (1959/1971), in which experience is described as something distinctly somatic. Heidegger writes:

> To undergo an experience with something—be it a thing, a person, or a god—means that this something befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us. When we talk of "undergoing" an experience, we mean specifically that the experience is not of our own making; to undergo here means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it. (Heidegger 1959/1971: 57)

By highlighting the physicality of the "experience" of language, Heidegger reminds us of the violence that it exerts on each one of us individually. Beyond communication and storytelling, language shapes and subjectifies humans. If that is what an "original" text does, Berman contends that the translated text should have an equally violent effect, only it should be in translational terms. Contrary to the teachings of translation textbooks and the expectations of industry, the translated text should bear the difficult marks of linguistic difference and of its invariably bumpy journey across cultures and histories: in short, it should read like a translation. If translation is to offer a transformative experience, the translator should aim at producing a text that "strikes" and even "overwhelms" the reader presenting them with a clear-cut choice to accept or to reject the foreign as foreign. Thus freed from the agonistic relationship with the author and the original, "creative" translation of this kind is not an act of transgression but an exercise in textual transformation and growth.

We can therefore argue that if translation wants to have a transformative effect on the text, it must be creative and aim for more than re-presentation and transfer of meaning. Moreover, creativity in translation is not about reversing the hierarchy between "original" writing and translating because these two tasks are of different order. Creative translation of this kind transplants the text into another context (Berman 2008: 83) rather than standing in for it. In so doing, however, translation negates the structure of originality and derivativeness, and that is why, when it does not purport to represent the "original," translation often surprises us, bewilders us or even alienates us. For Berman, this entails a moment of "destruction," a term that he also borrows from Heidegger (Berman 1985: 46) to signify the methodical undoing of the entrenched structure of originality through the application of translation as critical practice. "Destruction," of course, has a strongly negative connotation and it is fair to say that this negative moment inheres within creative translation: translation "undoes" before "doing." However, it is equally important to understand that what translation "destroys" is not the "original" but the assumption of the original's self-sufficiency and its ethnocentric and logocentric foundations.

With this admittedly cursory reference to Berman's thinking, I would like to uphold the notion of creativity for translation even if he emphatically states that "translating is not creating" [traduire n'est pas créer] (1985: 63). Berman reserves a special place for authorial creativity which he has called elsewhere "la créativité propre," creativity proper (1984: 115). This may expose his thought to the same criticism that Derrida levelled at Roman Jakobson and his notion of "translation proper" (Derrida 1985). Just as translation cannot be reduced to a prototype, so creativity in the sense of producing something out of nothing can never be encountered in its pure form. I will return to this potentially problematic point in the epilogue of this essay. For now, I want to utilize the reflexive potential of translation in the sense that Berman gave it in order to recognize the creative moment in it. As reflexive practice, translation's creativity is expressed through the methodical undoing of assumptions about authorship and originality that surround the source text. As productive practice, translation's creativity is expressed in its application as a textual operation that actively transplants the text outside of the context of its assumed originality and onto a new and foreign terrain.

4. Creativity in film translation

We may now return to the question of whether film is an appropriate space for translation to manifest itself as creativity and transformation. Recently, film theorist Robert Stam extolled the multimodal affordances of film in comparison to literature, adding that: "the cinema offers a feeling of transcultural intimacy denied to literature, where we imagine, but do not actually hear 'the grain of the voice,' or literally witness the postures, attitudes, and movements of the character" (Stam 2019: 79). Cinema's "transcultural intimacy" could mean that film lends itself to translation more readily than, say, the novel. In his book, Stam was inspired by David Damrosch's claim that World Literature was defined by its quality of *gaining* in translation and proceeded to examine the same argument with regard to World Cinema. One of the chapters in the book is aptly titled "The gains of (film) translation" (Stam 2019: 75-83). It is now tempting for me to generalize and propose that any film, not just those qualifying as "World Cinema," is able to gain in translation, in so far as translation productively transforms it.

While Stam expressed this idea in terms of cinema as art form, Eric Cazdyn did the same in terms of the geopolitics and philosophy of cinema. He writes:

> [a]ll subtitles invariably transform the original text. This concept of transformative subtitling seeks to de-link and de-territorialize the subtitled version from the original. […] Transformative subtitling implies that the original is not only what it is, but that it also exceeds itself. (Cazdyn 2004: 414-415)

The claim here is that subtitling expands the reach of films beyond their territorial limits. It pushes them to unfold beyond the homogenizing national narratives that so often underpin them. Subtitles add complexity, substituting a manifold linguistic reality for the original assumption of monolingualism and problematizing the unifying visual design of the film. What all this means is that there is transformative politics in subtitling even when subtitling itself is not done with transformation in mind. To put it pithily: no matter how much subtitles comply, they rebel (Kapsaskis 2008; 2017).

At this point, we are approaching Berman's concept of destruction as part of the reflexive practice of translation. Subtitles have the power to dislocate the audiovisual text—a power that scholars like Nornes and Philip E. Lewis (1985, the later with reference to translation more generally) have encouraged us to misappropriate and abuse. However, while scholars choose strong words such as "destruction" and "abuse" in order to bring home the rigidity of existing mechanisms that control (film) translation, the outcome does not have to be chaotic or incoherent. The force of these creative interventions is not in brutalizing the text but in replacing the mandatory search for symmetries between languages with another search for meaningful dis/continuities between the territories that the text traverses. In transcending their conventional role of mere conduits, creative translation and subtitling prolong the generative impulse of texts and push language, including cinematic language, to discover previously unknown resources in itself.

We will see how this happens in the film *The Baron* in a moment but, as a broader reference, it is worth mentioning here a series of articles published over the past years by Pablo Romero-Fresco (2021a; 2021b), Romero-Fresco and Chaume (2022), Romero-Fresco and Dangerfield (2022), and Romero-Fresco and Brown (2023), which document a contemporary trend of creative interventions in films by users, including

through subtitling. Looking at a variety of commercial and non-commercial contexts, these articles show how linguistic and cultural adaptation for disabled and other marginalized audiences is modifying films and unleashing new possibilities for experiencing these films differently. While some of the subtitles to which these articles refer may qualify as "abusive" in Nornes's sense, others may not—though that distinction is slightly beyond the point. Whether consciously intended to "abuse" the source text or not, these subtitles soon begin to tell a parallel story of their own which cannot help but displace the apparent film narratives without at the same time replacing them. These articles' specific interest is in creative media accessibility and it is in this area that some of the most engrossing examples of creativity can be found. These examples are meant to promote inclusivity and participation in culture, but also to show how deeply entrenched ableist structures and ways of thinking are in film, television and other media (Goodley 2014). Often the most creative features of the subtitles discussed are visual rather than linguistic, in which case what is being translated/creatively appropriated is not verbal language but the (audiovisual) language of the medium. In any case, the goal remains the same: namely, the methodical disruption of the audiovisual text in a way that registers the discord between its original inception (as ableist text) and its eventual reception (by disabled audiences).[5]

5. "Amazed by something original": The creative subtitles of *The Baron*

Released in 2011, *The Baron* is a Portuguese horror film based on Branquinho da Fonseca's novel of the same name which was published in 1942.[6] The Portuguese DVD of the film contains the English subtitles as open captions. As already mentioned, I will discuss the subtitles drawing on an interview that Pêra gave to Eleni Exarchou in the summer of 2020. The interview took place via video call in two parts, on July 20 and 25, and formed the basis of Exarchou's MA dissertation at the University of Roehampton, United Kingdom. Exarchou's overall aim was to advocate for the benefits of creative subtitling as a viable industry practice. Her questions focused on the choice of creative subtitles in the film, on the role of subtitlers in creative subtitling and on the intended effects—visual or otherwise—on the viewer. In his answers, Pêra expanded on a broad range of issues, proposing that subtitling is part of "the cosmopolitan aspect of cinema" (Exarchou 2020: 93) and that it carries its own significations beyond the simple transmission of meaning or the amplification of the film's visual aesthetic. In addition to exploring these significations, in the remainder of this article I wish to exemplify the possibility of a discourse around creative subtitles which cannot be separated from the film in which they are attached, from the context of this film's production and exhibition, and from broader questions around creativity and translation in cinema.

The Baron borrows a number of tropes from vampire films, especially of the 1930s and '40s (for instance, darkness, isolation, madness, eroticism as well as the presence of aristocracy and a femme fatale). It is a black and white film (apart from a very brief sequence) made in gothic horror style that is reminiscent of *Dracula*.[7] "Draculian" movies are explicitly referenced in the opening narrative titles of the film (in Portuguese, subtitled in English), where a fictional background to the film's genesis and production is given. This background is important for the examination of the subtitles and I will summarize it here. The film is presented as the hypothetical

restoration and reshooting of "two reels and a screenplay" dating from 1943 which were (always hypothetically) discovered in a Portuguese film club in 2005. We learn that these reels and screenplay were created by an American B-movie crew who found themselves in Lisbon during World War II and came across the then very recent da Fonseca novel. The producer (a fictional figure called Valerie Lewton) read the novel in translation, and the shooting started thereafter. In the tradition of multiple-language versions, the shooting would take place in English during the day and in Portuguese during the night. However, as the story goes, Portuguese dictator António de Oliveira Salazar's regime interrupted the film production, presumably because the authoritative figure of the baron was felt to be a covert reference to Salazar himself. The on-screen text concludes by explaining that the regime had the American crew deported and the Portuguese crew sent to the infamous Tarrafal concentration camp in the then Portuguese colony of Capo Verde—a deadly camp for both anti-Salazarists in the 1940s and African militants of the Portuguese colonial war of the 1960s.

This narrative creates a network of associations which depend on the connected agencies of translation, adaptation, multiple versioning, as well as film restoration and reshooting. On the one hand, there is Portuguese totalitarianism and colonial rule, as well as the imperialism of the English language in film and beyond; on the other hand, there is film history and specifically the implications of the advent of sound for cinema (on multiple film versions, see Vincendeau 1999). This curious mix of aesthetics and politics has informed the creative choices underpinning the film, including the choice to add creative English subtitles as an integral part of the film.

Taking a closer look at the subtitles, from a technical point of view, a large proportion of them adhere to usual spatiotemporal conventions: they are centre-justified, they occupy the lower part of the screen, they follow the film-editing rhythm and they generally respect shot changes.[8] Yet many defy standard conventions and can thus be classified as "creative," as per my discussion at the beginning of Section 2, above). Their main features and peculiarities can be described as follows:

- These subtitles may be positioned at various parts of the screen, mostly in proximity to the speakers and sometimes indicating the direction of their voice.
- They maintain a white colour and the same typeface throughout the film. However, there are distortions, for example, on a few occasions the letters are warped or otherwise stretched, and the subtitle line may unfurl into a curved rather than a straight line.
- Clarity and luminosity may also vary. Subtitles occasional flicker or are blurred, suggesting loss of focus as well as a sense of mystery and enigma which is a familiar characteristic of the genre.
- The subtitles are often animated. They change place in response to the characters' movement, their voice, the camera and the props. On a couple of occasions where a word may be repeated mesmerically by a character, conveying a sense of paranoia and danger, a subtitle in English may keep popping up concurrently with the voice at various parts of the screen before it fades into the background.

Overall, however, the most important feature to stress is not the inventiveness and technical competence of these subtitles but the way they have been enlisted to evoke specific significations and thus add layers of complexity to the film. For the sake of clarity, in what follows, I will examine these significations under three different rubrics, based on what these subtitles do.

5.1 The subtitles signal the film's awareness of its place within the global network of film traffic, and enable its response to it

When Pêra was asked to reflect on the high visibility of these subtitles, he replied as follows.

> I wanted [the subtitles] really to be part of the film […] It came from the idea that the film was made by Americans and this kind of imperialist idea that everybody should talk English. So, it's already written there. We're so used to seeing things with subtitles that people feel that a film without subtitles, it's not really a film. When they see a Portuguese film, they say "Where are the subtitles?." (Exarchou 2020: 79)

It is evident that Pêra capitalizes on subtitles beyond their mere instrumentalization as points of linguistic access. By their very existence, they indicate to the audience that *The Baron* is a non-mainstream, arthouse film (as Pêra said in the interview, subtitling is nothing less than "the language of cinema art world" [Exarchou 2020: 75]). But subtitles also point at asymmetries in the global traffic of film, implying that *The Baron* originates in a culturally non-dominant country and is addressing international festival audiences. Pêra works with this reality, appropriating the vulnerabilities associated with "non-dominant," "non-English," "non-mainstream," and transforming them into assets for his film. Overall, these subtitles are valorized as devices through which to perform "peripheral" cinema's self-positioning within current unequal flows of culture across the globe.

This is why, while interlinguistic access retains its importance, *The Baron*'s subtitles stand out as autonomous entities that paradoxically support rather than undermine the unity of the film though at a different level from that of the story. As Pêra says: "The subtitles should be autonomous […] and have their own life in that space" (Exarchou 2020: 87). Here is an attempt at explaining how this paradox works: from the point of view of the studios, subtitling visibility may be undesirable when the dominant product (for example, a Hollywood film) is exhibited in the non-dominant context (for example, Portugal), for it would hamper the illusion of realism and universality aimed for by the film. But when the reverse is the case, that is, a non-dominant product is exhibited in a culturally dominant context (international film festivals), then the claim to universality is a priori excluded and subtitling visibility may then be a good thing. Subtitling is a way to own that peripherality and intimate to the spectators that they have to find alternative points of entry to the film and less "universal" forms of unity in it. No wonder, then, that Pêra chose to maximize the affordances of subtitling by engaging with it creatively. These unapologetic subtitles ask the viewer to reflect not just on linguistic and cultural imperialism but also on the disunity of the image and the constructedness of cinema as a whole (the opposite of the realist illusion). In this sense, subtitles—all the more so creative ones—are a veritable cinematic trope: rather than suppressing difference in the manner of mainstream subtitling (see for instance Chapter 5 of Nornes [2007: 155-187]; Chapter 3 of Venuti [2019: 127-172]), they promise more of it. From a certain point of view, subtitling is what the cultural "periphery" can do, and Pêra seems to be doing it with a vengeance.

5.2 The subtitles materialize the key effect of espantar*: being amazed by the medium itself*

In his interview, Pêra explicitly associated the use of creative subtitling to the pursuit of originality in *The Baron*. He explained that creative subtitling was an idea that came to him at the stage of editing: "that's the moment when the material tells me, 'Oh, use the subtitles creatively in this situation, because it will make something really interesting for people who want to be amazed by something original or at least trying to be original'" (Exarchou 2020: 91). This use of subtitling as the raw material of originality does not only defy its traditional association with convention and derivativeness but also expresses faith in mediality and cinematicity (after all, subtitles are "the language of world art cinema"). It is cinema itself, and not merely its representational function, that has the power to amaze. From this point of view, creativity is not in the story but in the medium and its language.

Importantly, though, the poetics and aesthetics of *The Baron* are not that of mere defamiliarization. Awareness of the medium is not an end in itself and its politics is not the Brechtian politics of shocking the spectator into conscious engagement. On the contrary, in *The Baron*, the ambition seems to be to continue inciting hypnotic immersion—only this time it will be into the medium and its language rather than the narrative. This is conveyed by conventional cinematic means in the first place: the film editing is manipulative in so far as it creates an illusionistic world, although the viewer is not engulfed in the story as in an average Hollywood film. The set is unmistakably that of a B-movie, with the staging and the props often being visibly artificial. The chiaroscuro in the cinematography is too intense and the alternation of silence and sound, especially the baron's resounding voice, are far from realistic. In the film's claustrophobic environment, the viewer is constantly reminded of the fabricated character of the experience, but also encouraged to be hypnotized. This, I submit, is part of what Pêra defines as *espantar*/amazement. In Pêra's video essay *The Amazed Spectator*,[9] film theorist Laura Mulvey reminds us of the spectators' ambivalent relationship to the irreality of cinema, and specifically of Christian Metz's analysis of "the fetishism of knowing that you are believing in something that is not believable." In his interview with Exarchou, Pêra connected the notion of *espantar* with the early cinema of attraction of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a cinema which "was based […] on positive and negative amazement at the same time" (Exarchou 2020: 76). Spectators were simultaneously "attracted and repelled," willingly participating in this "play between belief and disbelief" (Exarchou 2020: 76). In *The Baron*, Pêra mobilizes a panoply of cinematic tools in order to produce what he calls "the effect of hypnotizing and awaking people at the same time" (Exarchou 2020: 80).

Creative subtitles are part of this panoply, recalling a self-reflexive form of spectatorship which oscillates between immediacy and mediation. While they continue to play their role as mechanisms of mediation (for example, transmission of meaning), these subtitles collaborate in the creation of an unmediated form of immersion, namely, that into cinema itself as a medium. This is the direct experience of the cinematic language, which, for Pêra, seems to be coterminous with the dawning of cinematic literacy. In this sense, subtitles are tools used to produce and enhance the ambivalent effect of *espantar*.

5.3 The subtitles disrupt the film's genesis story and raise questions about text creation, destruction, and transformation

The question "who is the author?" looms over the myth-like narrative of how the film came to be. Is the main authorial figure that of Branquinho da Fonseca, author of *O barão*, the Portuguese 20th-century novel? Is it rather fictional film producer Valerie Lewton? Or is it Pêra, who nonetheless presents himself as the real book's film adaptor and the fictional film's "restorer"? If we decide to take subtitles seriously (as the film is asking us to do and as the present essay is proposing more generally), then we must also ask: what is their authorial and narrative status, that is, who created them and how do they fit in the story of the film's genesis? We know directly from Pêra that the English subtitles were created by himself with the help of (uncredited) translators, yet there is no account of how they may cohere with the narrative of "restoration" and "reshooting." There seems to be no way out of this Borgesian labyrinth. Therefore, we must also ask: is subtitling in this case, an act of undoing, a *coup de grâce* on the unity of the film at the exact point of its completion? To connect with the earlier sections of this paper, can this act of undoing be understood in terms of translational violence at the level of film language—a kind of sabotage-through-subtitling, akin to what Berman called "destruction" and Nornes called "abuse"? Finally, would this act of undoing also not be a manifestation of translational creativity, asking us to reflect anew about such old antagonisms as those between author and text, truth and fiction, originality and repetition?

It would take a deeper analysis of the film, looking closely at its theme and dialogue, to answer these questions with any confidence. But in a more general sense, my essay insists on the importance of raising them, so long as we remember that destruction and abuse do not imply any brutality on the work. In fact, in his interview, Pêra repeatedly stressed his concern that the subtitles should be in "harmony" and "synchronicity" with the visual and sound effects in his film. At the same time, however, he spoke of "terrorism in the translation" (Exarchou 2020: 88), in the sense of freely modifying the dialogue in the process of subtitling, which he paralleled to his own practice of "destroy[ing] the script" during shooting. He added that the creative subtitles are part of a "sabotage on the mechanics of making something" (Exarchou 2020: 89), a disruption of an existing order so as to make room for a new artistic claim. Between harmony/synchronicity and terrorism/sabotage, Pêra seems to have confirmed his aim of *espantar*, combining the hypnotic and the defamiliarizing effects of cinema at somatic and intellectual levels. He added that the effect for the spectator also oscillates between immersion, in the traditional sense of manipulative filmmaking, and that of a "tsunami," "an avalanche" and "a roller-coaster" (Exarchou 2020: 76-80). These metaphors of being engulfed in something with potentially disastrous consequences extend the affective limits of the experience of cinema. They mark the moments where we, as spectators, are at once maximally exposed and maximally oblivious; moments where, as Pêra put it, "you just have to surf [the film] or learn to breathe in the water" (Exarchou 2020: 76). These metaphors of deep and dangerous immersion also bring home the idea that translational creativity, and specifically creative subtitling, are necessary and beneficial acts of destruction in film.

6. Conclusion

I began this essay with a critical discussion of recent writings on creative subtitling, arguing that they tend to feature a double discourse with regard to its status and use. Looking for some more clarity particularly on how creativity and translation relate to each other without effectively negating each other, I turned to Berman's conceptualization of translation as the experience of the corporeality of language as it opens itself to the foreign. According to Berman, the work of translation involves a measure of undoing, or destruction, which inevitably transforms the text. In testing these ideas with translation of film rather than of written text as my example, I looked at how creative subtitles concerned not so much linguistic meaning but the language of cinema. I found that these subtitles were taking the film out of the story that it was narrating and transplanting it into a word outside of itself, as it were. First, the subtitles were a key aspect of the film's self-awareness of its place with regard to film languages, cultures, circuits, histories and audiences. Second, these subtitles encapsulated and enabled the effect of *espantar*, the film's principal aesthetic claim. Third, as the discussion was led to questions about the subtitles' authorial and narrative status, I was also able to glimpse how these subtitles had entailed a moment of "destruction" in the metaphorical sense that Berman gave the word: destruction of the fiction of the film's genesis; destruction of the supposed unity and coherence of the film narrative (the story), in so far as these subtitles foregrounded the constructedness of the film as artwork; and, finally (and always metaphorically), destruction of the spectator, in so far as the experience they promised is not one of mere immersion, but of something altogether more intense and even violent, such as that of a "roller-coaster," a "tsunami" and an "avalanche."

In guise of a conclusion: what about creativity and (film) translation more generally? Berman is undoubtedly right to insist that creating and translating are things of a different order. Put simply, creating expresses a way in which we relate with the world, whereas translating expresses a way in which we relate with language. I think that Berman was keen to preserve for translation a space in which we can experience our relationship with language undisturbed by Western culture's imperative to only value "authored" and "original" meanings and texts. In practice, however, we should also remember that "writing and translating are intricately dependent on each other" (to recall Loffredo and Perteghella 2006): just as there is no pure writing so there is no pure translating. Each contains the other and there is a vantage point from which we can see both as ways of working with the same texts drawing on the same available resources. Creativity in translation may just be a performative way of working with texts that mobilizes their textuality and not just their meaning, with a view to ascertaining these texts' continuing relevance to more contexts and people across times and places. This always involves a transformation of all the texts, contexts and people involved, and to say that a translation is "creative" is perhaps a more palatable way (given our cultural hang-ups) of saying that it is a good, ethical and socially transformative translation. For film, this clearly means that it is high time we untangle the thorny knots that keep subtitling (and the other audiovisual translation modalities) trapped in the current institutional and industrial nexus of film translation. Creative subtitling is bound to continue to thrive; all the more reason for it to be studied from non-normative perspectives and for us to keep our allegiances in one place: that of

film translation as a reflexive, critical, film-transformative practice. As for conventional subtitling, its prospect looks rather grimmer: this essay is passionately in support of its liberation, whether that involves destruction, abuse, creativity, common sense, or, quite simply, a renewed longing on the part of spectators to experience the effect of *espantar*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Edgar Pêra, director of *The Baron*, for his enthusiastic support in the final stages of writing this article and for the additional advice and information that he provided.

NOTES

1. Pêra, Edgar (2011): *The Baron* (*O barão*). ZON Audiovisuais.
2. Bekmambetov, Timur (2004): *Night watch*. Gemini Film.
3. "Ce contrat — certes draconien — interdit tout *dépassement de la texture de l'original*. II stipule que la créativité exigée par la traduction doit se mettre toute entière au service de la re-écriture de l'original dans l'autre langue, et ne jamais produire une sur-traduction déterminée par la poétique personnelle du traduisant." (Unless otherwise specified, translations are my own.)
4. "La visée éthique de la traduction est d'accueillir l'Étranger dans sa corporéité charnelle."
5. For excellent examples of subtitles that incorporate the subtitler's reflective response to the film and thus creatively transform it, see the work of Zdenek and that of Christine Sun Kim, discussed in Romero-Fresco 2021a; and the work of Liza Sylvestre, discussed in Romero-Fresco 2021b.
6. Fonseca, Branquinho da (1942/1969): *O barão*. Lisbon, Portugália Editora.
7. Browning, Tod (1931): *Dracula*. Universal Pictures.
8. Despite my efforts and those of the film director Edgar Pêra, it has not been possible to obtain permission from Cinemate, the copyright owners, to include images from the film in this essay. Readers can get a fairly good sense of the film's creative subtitles by searching for "O barão filme" online, using any major platform or search engine. For example, see Cinept (2024): O barão (2010). *Cinept-Cinema Portugues*. Consulted on June 6, 2023, <https://www.cinept.ubi.pt/pt/filme/8481/O+Barão>.
9. Pêra, Edgar (2016): *The amazed spectator* (*O espectador espantado*). Bando à parte.

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