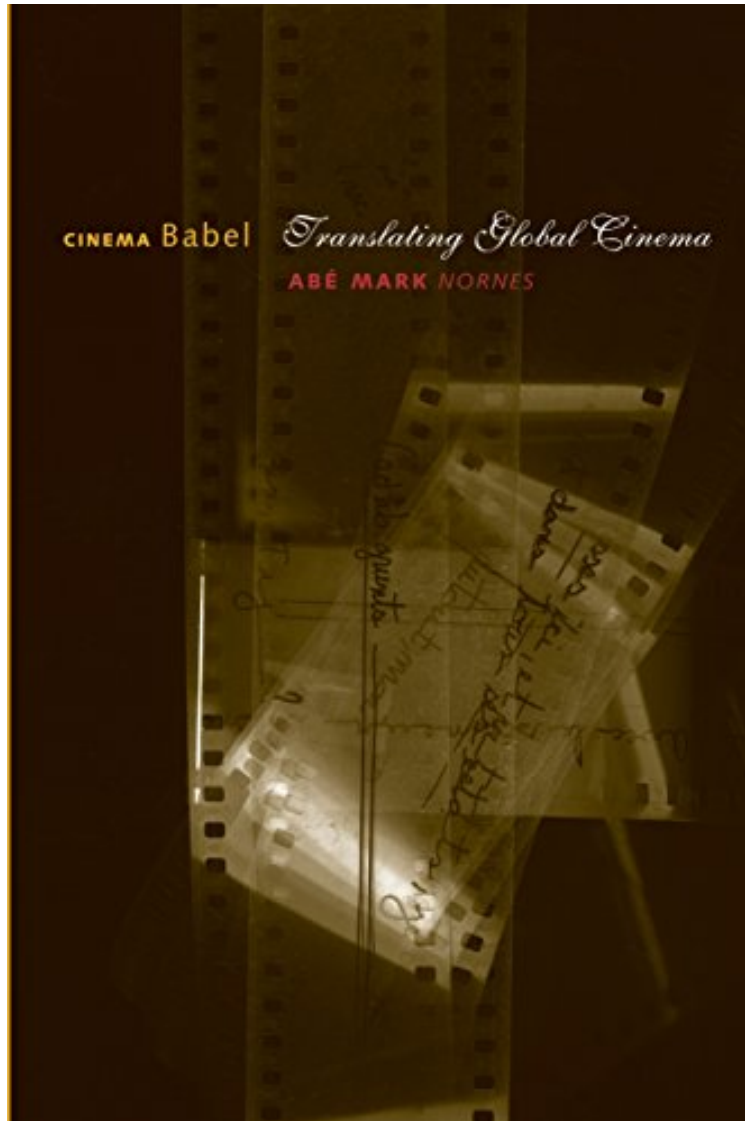


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Cinema Babel: Translating Global Cinema

Abe Mark Nornes

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Abe Mark Nornes : Cinema Babel: Translating Global Cinema before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cinema Babel: Translating Global Cinema:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. For fans of foreign films, but it needs factchecking.By John ColaresiI wholly agree with the two favorable reviews of Nornes' book so I won't repeat what they ably stated. However, as good as this book is in explaining the art of subtitling and dubbing, it has one problem I see in so many film books - the lack of proofreading and fact checking: In discussing 1931's THE MAN WHO CAME BACK, its star

Janet Gaynor morphs two paragraphs later into the disco singer Gloria Gaynor. A proofreader does not have to know about them except to recognize that these are two different persons and correct the error. Nornes explained about subtitling 1931's *THE CHAMP* but confuses its star Jackie Cooper every time for Jackie Coogan who's also listed that way in the book's index with no mention of Cooper anywhere. In discussing 1930's *BLACKMAIL*, Nornes mentions how a critic "couldn't stand Anny Ondra's dubbing for Joan Barry" when it was the English Barry who dubbed the Czech Ondra for Hitchcock's film. I checked Nornes' source which has the information correct. Nornes cites a NY Times article from 1944 about Mexican actors dubbing *DON Q, SON OF ZORRO*, but that was a 1925 silent film so he must be thinking of 1940's *THE MARK OF ZORRO* or a 1944 serial called *ZORRO'S BLACK WHIP*. I can't access the original article because I don't subscribe to the newspaper, but I'm sure Nornes is not talking about dubbing a silent film. The reason for me pointing out these mistakes is because I see so many similar ones in film books, which are generally expensive, and we expect better editing in a scholarly work written by a college professor. In other words, we should expect better quality control for our money. Regardless, 'Cinema Babel' is a worthwhile read for anyone who wants to know what goes into subtitling and dubbing foreign films.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Provocative and Entertaining
By D. Bannon
Abe Mark Nornes has a gift of gab to match his fine mind and provocative ideas. He has written a book that's genuinely interesting on a topic that is no longer relegated to obscure art houses. Global marketing is part of the film industry. Many movies gauge success not only in domestic box office receipts, but also in international profits. Nornes addresses the dollars and cents of the industry as clearly as he does the ethical and pragmatic challenges of translating subtitles. Ultimately that's what this book is about: subtitles and what they mean to global cinema. The book is accessible to the general reader, but those who enjoy non-native language films will be especially pleased. Nornes rants, he cajoles, he coerces, grumbles, advises and insists. Each chapter is informed by his considerable experience and emphatic opinions. He admirably rises to the challenge of informing and challenging readers on an area of film that is seldom discussed. And he does so with considerable wit and panache. Film lovers will find Nornes' book provocative at times--and always entertaining.

D. Bannon is the author of *The Elements of Subtitles: A Practical Guide to the Art of Dialogue, Character, Context, Tone and Style in Subtitling*

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A new view of cinema
By Donpatchi
Unless you only watch your own country's movies (and maybe only Americans do that), a lot of our movie experience is about films from abroad. Cinema has always been a global art. But when we see a foreign movie, it is after it has passed through many translations. It is subtitled or dubbed, it is introduced and interpreted at film festivals, etc. These don't just show the movie as is. They interpret and shape it. But even though these translations always go on, many don't think about it. Nornes' book is a new view of cinema because it researches this important problem. It looks at the practices themselves and how they shape the film. Some countries like dubbing and some like subtitling, but they have histories and ideologies. We also have to ask about the ideology of not thinking about translation in cinema. Nornes does that.

The original foreign film its sights and sounds is available to all, but the viewer is utterly dependent on a translator and an untold number of technicians who produce the graphic text or disconnected speech through which we must approach the foreign film. A bad translation can ruin a film's beauty, muddy its plot, and turn any joke sour. In this wide-ranging work, Abe Mark Nornes examines the relationships between moving-image media and translation and contends that film was a globalized medium from its beginning and that its transnational traffic has been greatly influenced by interpreters. He discusses the translation of film theory, interpretation at festivals and for coproductions, silent era practice, talkies, subtitling, and dubbing. Nornes who has written subtitles for Japanese cinema looks at the ways misprision of theory translations produced stylistic change, how silent era lecturers contributed to the construction of national cinemas, how subtitlers can learn from anime fans, and how ultimately interpreters can be, in his terms, traders or traitors.

Abe Mark Nornes is associate professor of Asian languages and cultures and film and video studies at the University of Michigan. He is the author of *Japanese Documentary Film*