The volume focuses on the practice of literary translating between Italian and English as seen by both academics and the translators themselves.

The main thrust of the book is on the linguistic, cultural and extra-linguistic factors (including author-translator relationship) which play a key role in the literary translation decision-making process. The translations discussed cover a variety of literary sub-genres ranging from poetry and drama to fiction, and from the classics to chick-lit.

Thanks to its strong focus on the practice of literary translation and its three sections, the book will appeal to a wide readership, which includes all those studying or working in the field of literary translation (in particular, those working between Italian and English). Translation scholars in general will find the practical experiences described in the volume of extreme value, as translators discuss how key issues, theories, and debates in Translation Studies have influenced their practice.

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Lingue e Linguaggi vol. 14 – Special Issue 2015

The practice of literary translation
An Italian perspective

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vol. 14 – Special Issue
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Università del Salento

Lingue e Linguaggi

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LINGUE E LINGUAGGI

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PART II – TRANSLATORS AT WORK: TALKING ABOUT THEIR OWN TRANSLATIONS

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PART I | Literary Translation

What it is and how it works

TRANSLATING THE "LITERARY" IN LITERARY TRANSLATION IN PRACTICE

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Abstract – The aim of this paper is to explore the 'literary' in literary translation. It begins with a discussion of what makes a text literary, focussing on some very famous literary works which did not (and indeed do not) necessarily fit what is generally considered the literary canon. The features that translators should identify when first reading a text, on the look-out for potential literary value, are then outlined. These features are both textual (covering non-casual language, rhetorical features and equivalences) and contextual (connotations, implicatures, intratextual and culture-bound associations).
The paper then discusses changing translation theory and practice, in particular illustrating points with comments made by translators and theorists in this book and elsewhere. Importance is also given to the profession itself, to literary translator beliefs about their role, the changing importance of the model reader and to changing beliefs about accepted style, making reference also to results of a global survey recently carried out on the subject.

Keywords: translation theory; translation practice; literary translation.

1. Literary and non-literary translation

Literary translation has traditionally been separated from non-literary or technical. Indeed, there are over 13 million *Google* hits for "literary and technical and translation"; and the differences on the surface appear to be so profound that university courses clearly differentiate between one and the other. On one side, apart from modules on 'translation', one course will devote more space to literature; while the other will certainly have modules on IT and CAT tools.

However, for the moment only the purely technical areas of non-literary translation lend themselves to IT, such as manuals, and other standardized informative genres. Any text which has been written with the intention of creating some effect on the reader (e.g. promotional, persuasive) rather than simply supplying an informative list will need the eyes of a mindful translator rather than the predicable strings of computer-generated close matches. Also, of course, literary translators today rely on internet resources such as *Google, Google Books* (Salusso, this volume), *Google images* (Parini, this volume, fn.) and *Google Ngram Viewer* (Dixon, this

volume). Dixon also mentions the fact that the reader too has internet at her finger tips; all the more true today with e-books which come ready installed with on-screen dictionaries, translations and Wikipedia available at the touch of the word. Yet, the fact that IT began aiding (or encroaching) on non-literary translation is a clear indication of the fact that literary translation tends to be seen as an art whereas non-literary is seen as technical.

Apart from the supposed artistic/scientific divide, there is certainly a difference in visibility. Though, Venuti (1998) rails against the invisibility of translators, the literary translator is one of the very few categories of translator/interpreter whose name will generally be known to the end user. Indeed, the translator's name should legally appear on the cover of the translated work, and the translator has (in theory) rights deriving from her work as a derivative author (Blésius 2003).

In an unusual copyright twist, Ian Halliday (this issue) recounts how D. H. Lawrence as translator earned the royalties rather than Giovanni Verga's immediate heirs; and as if to mark the point, the front cover of the first English edition (1925) of *Novelle Rusticane/* Little Novels of Sicily actually has D. H. Lawrence's name in a decidedly larger font than that of Verga.

It also transpires that a number of translators do, in fact, appear as 'author'. Else Vieira (1999) highlights the case of Haroldo de Campos, whose 'transcreation' of Goethe's *Faust* into Brazilian-Portuguese resulted in Goethe's name being substituted on the front cover, with that of de Campos, while the original author appeared on the inside cover. Though, in general, 'prominence' and 'fame' do not in general collocate with 'translator', there are countries, such as China and Japan (Tanabe 2010), where literary translators not only have visibility but are revered. Closer to home, Sela-Sheffy (2008, p. 615) recounts that in Israel, a number of literary translators have actually become media "stars"; and Edith Grosman, the American Spanish translator, is well-known enough to have an entry on the Internet movie Data Base (IMDB) – though her actual translations are included in the "trivia" section.

In the Anglo-Italian world, William Weaver earned himself a *Guardian* obituary, which began by lauding him as "the greatest of all Italian translators".[1] However, he was not to be seen on TV chat shows. In Italy, star status appears to be even more limited, and as D'Egidio (this issue) notes, reader reviews tend not even to notice that what they have read is a translation.

There is little translation into English, and though there is a steady translation market into Italian, of 500-700 works/year (Fina, this issue), this is not enough to keep most translators alive. Estimates suggest that the literary

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[1] http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/nov/18/william-weaver

translation market accounts for between 1% and a maximum of 7% of the world market (Katan 2009, pp. 9-10), which consequently means that a literary translator will find it much more difficult to live on translating alone, and will tend to have another, fuller time job in a related field (Katan 2011). Professional translators, in general, according to an ongoing 2nd global survey,[2] though traditionally perceived as underpaid, in reality, are likely to earn well over the national average pay for their particular country, with a peak of nearly 50% of the 600+ respondents claiming to earn up to twice the national average, and just under 5% earning up to five times the national average.[3] Hardly surprisingly, the sub-group of 'mainly literary' translators (63 replies) report lower earnings: only 35% earn up to twice the national average, with 6% earning up to 5 times the national average.

If we accept that literary and non-literary translation are different, then there will be some identifiable translation strategies, techniques and procedures which appertain particularly to literary translation. And it is this area which I would like to focus on. We will begin, first, with the theory.

2. Defining the literary genre

The literary genre is notoriously difficult to define. If we begin with the traditional canons, such as the Oxford English Dictionary, we have: "Written works, especially those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit". Unfortunately, what is considered as artistic merit notoriously changes over time. The American writer Mark Twain, for example, is now regarded a great literary genius, and *Huckleberry Finn* "the genesis of all American literature" (Ulin 2010).[4] It has been translated into some 65 languages and in almost a thousand editions. Yet, as Seymour Chwast (1996), writing in the Books section of the *New York Times* (to publicise a further new edition), explains:

> a month after publication, the trustees of the Concord (Mass.) Public Library expelled the book from its shelves. It was 'trash and suitable only for the slums', they said. 'It deals with a series of adventures of a very low grade of morality; it is couched in the language of a rough dialect, and all through its pages there is a systematic use of bad grammar and an employment of rough, coarse, inelegant expressions.[5]

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[2] The survey was organized, and results analysed, following that of the first survey, available at download2.hermes.asb.dk/archive/download/Hermes-42-7-katan_net.pdf (on-line 'surveymonkey' questionnaire), and update (Katan 2011). The results for the 2nd survey, so far include 605 respondents who earn an income translating.

[3] This figure includes 10% with less than 1 year's experience and over 20% with 20 years' experience. The larger group results of 418 (those who translate and interpret) show a very slight shift to higher earnings, with 45% at twice the national average and just under 10% with up to 5 times the national average.

[4] http://articles.latimes.com/2010/nov/14/entertainment/la-ca-mark-twain-20101114/2

[5] https://www.nytimes.com/books/98/04/05/specials/smiley-huck.html

George Bernard Shaw was equally scathing about James Joyce's *Ulysses*: "In Ireland they try to make a cat clean by rubbing its nose in its own filth. Mr. Joyce has tried the same treatment on the human subject" (Seder 2012).[6] The book is now regarded by the Modern Language Association,[7] at least, as the single greatest novel of the 20th century.

Sometimes the change of assessment can be swift.D. H. Lawrence's, Lady Chatterley's Lover was originally seized by the police for breaking the newly passed Obscene Publications Act of 1959 as a book which would "deprave and corrupt". The book was also criticized as a "trashy novelette", for its ungrammaticality and poor characterization; and a number of fellow writers declined to be called as witnesses for the defence, such as Evelyn Waugh, who said "My memory of it was that it was dull, absurd in places & pretentious. I am sure that some of its readers would be attracted by its eroticism. […] Lawrence had very meagre literary gifts" (Yagoda 2010, p. 93).

The prosecution, of course, focused on the graphic descriptions of sex and the number of times the f-word was used. The only, and "crucial loophole" was "the question of literary merit – through which works might escape prohibition" (Sandbrook 2010).[8] The judges assessing the merit were not fellow writers or men (or women) of letters but a motley crew including the following professions: driver, cabinet fitter, dock labourer, teacher, dress machinist, none, housewife, butcher, and timber salesman (Yagoda 2010). The case was argued, and it only took 3 hours for the jury to decide that the book had artistic merit, and hence contributed to the public good.[9]

The main point here is that what is considered 'literature' cannot be ascertained from the grammaticality, register or tone of the words used.

Assessment of lasting artistic merit clearly requires a focus on the 'how' rather than on 'the what', and consequently on the fact that the selection and organisation of (e.g., common, dialect or taboo) words result in something that transcends trash, rough dialect, bad grammar and so on. In fact, we will return to evidence of Lawrence's artistic merit later, but it is clearly no simple matter to objectively define and identify the components of 'artistic merit' in literature; and it is often defined by what it is not. Voegelin (1960, p. 57), for example, distinguishes between "common usage" and "non-casual", which he defines as "more restricted and often enough, perhaps characteristically [employed for] more elevated purposes".

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[6] http://mentalfloss.com/article/30497/11-early-scathing-reviews-works-now-considered-masterpieces
[7] http://edition.cnn.com/books/news/9807/21/top.100.reax/index.html
[8] http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/8066784/Lady-Chatterley-trial-50-years-on.-The-filthy-book-that-set-us-free-and-fettered-us-forever.html
[9] Since then, the same crucial loophole has been used for "works of no literary merit … and works of demerit" such as *Inside Linda Lovelace* (Robertson 2010).

For example, Seamus Heaney's poem (below) would easily fall into this definition of literature. The poem begins with 'common usage' (e.g. "Potato crops are flowering/ Hard green plums appear"), but clearly as we read on so the language becomes more restricted and its purpose more elevated, corresponding to the enigmatic title "The Summer of Lost Rachel". This is clearly *not* a piece about potatoes and plums.

> Potato crops are flowering,
> Hard green plums appear
> On damson trees at your back door
> And every berried briar
> Is glittering and dripping
> Whenever showers pour down
> On flooded hay and flooding drills.
> There's a ring around the moon.
> The whole summer was waterlogged
> Yet everyone is loath
> To trust the rain's soft-soaping ways
> And sentiments of growth.

The following, however, really does appear to talk of plums being eaten - and nothing else.

> **This is Just to Say**
> I have eaten
> The plums
> That were in
> The icebox
>
> And which
> You were probably
> Saving
> For breakfast
>
> Forgive me
> They were delicious
> So sweet
> And so cold.

This text, deliberately written to resemble a casual fridge note, is recognized as an important piece of literature, and as having been composed by "one of the principal poets of the Imagist movement" (Academy of American Poets, n.d.). It has over one million *Google* hits and its own Wikipedia page. On the other hand, there is no restricted usage and little indication of an elevated purpose. All that we have that might indicate 'literature' is the fact that the text has a particular layout, which as Longenbach (2009, p. xi) points out is actually a fundamental sign: "Poetry is the sound of language organized in

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lines. More than meter, more than rhyme, more than images or alliteration or figurative language, line is what distinguishes our experience of poetry as poetry, rather than some other kind of writing".

What is important here is not so much that this text has the layout of a poem, but that the fridge note has become elevated through the fact that the author has left a sign of authorial choice, thus rendering it in some way observably different to what would be expected had the text *actually* been written mindlessly. Once we have this evidence (in this case, the organization into lines) we can begin to look for further layers of meaning from the words in the text. Snodgrass (2000, p. 51) gives us but one example of elevated meaning for the Plum poem: "Building on sibilance and concluding on 'so cold', the poem implies that sweet, fruity taste contrasts the coldness of a human relationship that forbids sharing or forgiveness for a minor breach of etiquette".

This is then the test of a literary text, the existence of a potentially enhanced meaning, whereby more cognitive effect can be obtained in return for more cognitive effort (c.f. Katan 1993). According to Gotti (2005, pp. 146-148) the potential to reveal more is the only key difference between literary and purely technical writing. Indeed, he cites the economist Maynard Keynes, whose technical work became literary because Keynes wrote, not to clearly explain, but "to stimulate the reader towards a cooperative effort of interpretation of his text" (Gotti 2005, p. 148).

When the 'non-casual' elements are evident, which we now see as encompassing both what is said and not said but inferable, we can say that the text has 'prominence': "the general name for the phenomenon of linguistic highlighting, whereby some linguistic feature stands out in some way" (Halliday 1971, p. 340). There are other terms, such as "markedness", coined by Roman Jakobson (1960) to categorise grammatical forms which were unexpected, and hence marked. In either case, there is a (quantifiable) deviation from standard or expected use.

Clearly, markedness and prominence by themselves do not automatically signify anything 'literary'. Halliday, in fact, reserves "foregrounding" to those prominent linguistic elements that appear "motivated" and which add, through the prominence, to "the total meaning of the work". Indeed, as Baker (1992, p. 130) points out, "The more marked a choice the greater the need for it to be motivated". Surprisingly, perhaps, given his supposedly meagre literary gifts, Lawrence's choice of language is often cited as an example of good literary style. Nicholas Del Banco (1991, p. 31) quotes Ford Maddox Hueffer's reaction to the beginning of a short story Lawrence had submitted to *The English Review*:

> At once you read, 'The small locomotive engine, Number 4, came clanking, stumbling down from Selston', and at once you know that this fellow with the

power of observation is going to write of whatever he writes about from the inside. 'Number 4' shows that. He will be the sort of fellow who knows that for the sort of people who work about engines, engines have a sort of individuality. He had to give the engine the personality of a number… 'With seven full wagons' … The 'seven' is good. The ordinary careless writer would say 'some small wagons'. This man knows what he wants. He sees the scene of his story exactly. He has an authoritative mind.

As Leach and Short (2007, p. 37) continue, the choice is clearly motivated, as it provides a "sense of listening to and 'feeling' the motion of the locomotive [...] created by a combination of rhythm [...] the dragging effect of consonant clusters [...] and the actual qualities of the consonants themselves".

3. Analysing the text for translation

Italo Calvino wrote "you only really read an author when you translate him" (in Grossi, this volume); while Halliday (this volume) adds "literary translation is the human drive to understand […] taken to the nth degree"; and this is plainly true when we realize that literary style, as we have seen, is not always self-evident. Indeed, in discussing the translation of Alasdair Gray's poems Daniela Salusso (this volume) quotes the writer's biographer: "to the untrained eye many of [the poems] just looked like prose chopped up into bits". As all the translators in this volume note, analysing the text also needs trained ears to identify the voices. So, in general, more than reading, this means the translator voicing both the original and the new text (e.g. Dixon, this volume).

One of the few scholars to talk about how a translator in practice can train herself to notice where and how language choice should influence translation strategy is John Dodds (1994), taking "casual" and "non-casual language" (Dodds 1994, p. 21) or "low probability use" (Dodds 1994, p. 148) as his major starting point. Dodds distinguishes the following areas of the source text as essential for the translator to focus on (Dodds 1994, p. 141):

- Phonological features (rhythm, alliteration; sense in sound)
- Syntactic features (verb tense, word constructions, pre/suffixes, grammatical structures, …)
- Positional features (foregrounding, parallelisms, paragraph structure, poem line breaks, …)
- Semantic features (partial synonyms, antonyms, leitmotifs, keywords, …)
- Figures of speech (analogy, metaphor)

These 'features' may result in euphony and onomatopoeia; they may highlight and link what otherwise would appear as isolated aspects within the text, and may strengthen underlying sub-themes or the leitmotif itself running through the text.

Central to this is Samuel Levin's (1962, p. 27) criteria of 'equivalence'. This use of 'equivalence' should not be confused with the equally important reader-oriented theory of "equivalent effect" (see Scarpa and Salusso this volume). Equivalence, here, regards evidence of a relationship between pairs of words or strings of words in the text: "insofar as they overlap in cutting up the general 'thought mass'" (Levin 1962, p. 27); i.e., echo each other or set up contrasts and thus point to parallels or contrasts in meaning (c.f. Weatherill 1974, p. 63). What this means then, for the translator, is that a close relationship between subject content and linguistic form can be identified, or as Jakobson put it (1960, p. 39), there is a "projection of the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection to the axis of combination".

Daniela Salusso (this issue) gives us an excellent example of how a translator first analyses a text to be translated using this very procedure: "what is unique to this particular collection of poems is the morphologic rendering of Gray's poetic of 'absences and reverses', namely the 'un-factor'. More or less intentionally, the author highlights this aspect by employing an astonishingly high number of adjectives and verbs beginning with the negative prefix 'un'.

Dodd's basic thesis is that a (literary) translator should first look for non-casual language in the original, and then account for this in the translation, if not actually recreate it: "the translation must be seen to be 'adequate' at all levels, … [and] must attempt to solve *at least* the majority of the semantic and stylistic features that exist at all levels of language including phonology" (1994, p. 151).

What is important here is the ability to note the levels or numbers of features that are at play. If it is not possible to provide a wholly adequate solution for one of the features, then other features can (and should be) focussed on. Piccinini (this issue) gives us a good example:

> The verb 'to sift' is particularly difficult to render; I can't simply use the Italian verb *setacciare* because it has no intransitive meaning and I can't paraphrase it if I don't want to spoil the rhythm. So here I decide to allow myself a certain liberty on lexis and take more into consideration the music of the sentence, where the sibilant s and the fricative f alliterate enhancing the softness and the sense of delicacy of the literary image.

Today, Dodd's suggestion that 'adequacy' can be fulfilled through (simply) satisfying a checklist of rhetorical features visible in both the source and the target text might seem a little too prescriptive, but it is crucial that a translator

be highly sensitive to any author's 'non-casual' use of language. This is not to say that an author's "choice and favour" is consciously motivated (Fowler 1977, p. 21). Dodds also refers to Wimsatt and Beardsley's (1954, p. 3) Intentional Fallacy theory, which suggests that the author herself is never a useful starting point: "the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art". This means that it is the responsibility of the translator herself to look for (the very possibly unconscious) language choices which create increased cognitive effect. Clearly, this should not, and does not, stop translators from entering their author's world, through reading the author's oeuvre, or where possible meeting and discussing the translation with the author, and in many cases (as noted in this volume) establishing "a bond".[10]

An interesting exception to this rule was D. H. Lawrence, now working as a translator. According to Halliday (this volume) it appears that Lawrence preferred to read and translate Giovanni Verga (which he thoroughly enjoyed) rather than meet him, even though Lawrence was at times living only 40 kilometres from Verga.

The importance of a thorough first reading, even 'hyper' reading (Ladmiral 1979), is often stressed by translation theorists, yet Irene Piccinini starts from what Taylor (1998, p. 158) calls a "rolling translation" approach. Instead of a first thorough analysis, looking for motivated patterns in Banville's novel and then equally patterned solutions, she begins at the beginning, and lets the development of the language guide her as she begins to roll out her translation. This translation , then, is the result of "gradually moulding [the] language into the required shape" (Taylor 1998, p. 158). Today this is remarkably easy, as we write over and otherwise alter the electronic text with little cost – and with huge benefits. But as Halliday (this volume) notes, revising a physical text (as Lawrence had to) was a major issue. Whichever approach is preferred, revision is a constant feature, and often made in cooperation with others, such as with the author or the commissioner. For example, the title of Verga's *Una Peccatrice* was revised from "A Lady Sinner" to "A Mortal Sin" as a result of discussions between Halliday (this volume) and the editor of the publication. And like all translators, his translations roll even more as he returned ten years on to 'improve' on his own translations of the past.

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[10] William Weaver struck a close relationship both with Calvino and Umberto Eco (Spiegelman 2002; Grossi, this volume); Richard Dixon with Eco (this volume); Daniela Salusso interviewed Alisdair Gray.

4. Analysing the context for translation

All texts need to be read within a context, and literary texts excel in exploiting extra-textual references to enhance meaning. There are two main areas to investigate: linguistic and socio-cultural. With regard to the linguistic, Federica Scarpa (this volume) shows how Shakespeare's Italian translators were able to identify the semantic equivalences set up as a result of his choice of figurative language. For example, in *Troilus and Cressida*, Ajax refers to manipulating the proud Achilles and making him docile, using the analogy of preparing dough for baking: "I will knead him: I will make him supple". Lodovici's (1960) translation shows how attentive he was to semantic equivalence as well as to Shakespeare's imagery. His "Me lo rimpasto io, me lo riduco dolce dolce [*I will knead him, I will reduce him into something sweet*] successfully retains the use of culinary equivalences to imply how Achilles will be cut-down; and the translation shifts only from the resulting texture *supple* to the resulting taste *sweet*. To give an idea of how carefully crafted this translation is, Scarpa (this volume) compares Squarzina's (1977) version: "Io ne faccio polpette, io lo svito" [*I'll make him into meatballs, I will unscrew him*]. This translation transforms Ajax's subtle art into something much more violent, and with 'lo svito', loses the continuation of the culinary context, a key domain in the play.

      The extra-textual detective work necessary to reveal the original associations is a constant theme in the translators' own accounts in this volume; in particular when we come to the second area, which is mainly social and cultural. Here too we can divide the work into two main areas, the first of which is the writer's overt or covert use of other's published writings. Bacigalupo (this issue), in fact, divides his translation of *The Cantos* into those (easier), which only require attention to "questions of rhythm and diction, a translator's true business"; and those (more difficult) which require an investigation of the quoted sources. As often as not, the translator is more painstaking than the original author, finding misquotes, typos and more. Bacigalupo, for example, was faced with Pounds's erroneous translation into English of a number of original Italian texts. At times Bacigalupo corrected the errors (not to correct the author but simply to aid the reader) and at times back-translated the actual mistranslation (with the original Italian on the facing page) to allow the Italian reader into Pound's (mis)understanding of Italian.

      The second area here is social and cultural, where ECRs, extra-linguistic culture-bound references (Pederson 2011), remain hidden to the target reader. Again, the translator as a hyper-reader (Ladmiral 1979) will often be more attentive than the original author. For example, during his research Dixon (this volume) discovered that Eco's historical fictional character Simone Simonini could not actually have drunk Grand Marnier nor

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could he have talked about a "hamster wheel" – as neither was in commerce in the 1870s.

Surprisingly, perhaps, it is popular fiction more than high-brow which requires a translator to be conversant with the social and cultural references referred to by the author. Ilaria Parini (this volume) analysed *Bridget Jones' Diary*, and found 69 ECRs to personalities, which include not only references to British politicians, academics and writers, but also to more covert references to fictitious characters (such as Darcy, Heathcliff, Miss Moneypenny, Miss Havisham, a Stepford Wife). Apart from personalities, there are also 36 British culture-specific elements (often repeated), including a large number of brand names only available in the UK. What makes life particularly challenging for the translator is that these ECRs will not have been selected at random, and will almost always hide more than they reveal at the first instance, creating rich cognitive effects for the reader able to access these covert associations.

The associations may simply add more coherence and depth to characters, from their postal code down to their most often used supermarket shopping bag. These associations, however, often offer much richer cognitive effects for the intended reader. For example, Bridget's comment (Parini, this volume) that Daniel would not be put off his stroke even if he saw "naked pictures of Virginia Bottomley on the television". Parini rightly notes that the Italian reader would not know that Bottomley was a conservative minister, and hence unlikely to be seen in anything but full dress; but more importantly, she is a Baroness whose good looks, as reliably recorded by the *Daily Mail* newspaper, "could inflame the erotic imagination",[11] which now fully explains why Daniel might be sidetracked from his own activities with Bridget. And if we were to look further, we might note that Virginia Bottomley is, in itself, a *nomen omen*.

5. Towards translating for the reader

If the original text is clearly marked, and can be deemed 'non-casual', then we are moving to what Viktor Shklovsky (1917) called "ostranenie", the sense a reader has of defamiliarization, estrangement, dehabitualization or non-ordinariness, the effect of which should enhance the reader's appreciation of the text. Until relatively, though, Translation Studies did not occupy itself with the effect on the reader, because as Benjamin (1968, p. 75) famously asserted: "In the appreciation of a work of art or an art form, consideration of the receiver never proves fruitful […]. No poem was intended for a reader". Shklovsky, on the other hand, a contemporary of

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[11] http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2067344/Chloe-Smith-Never-mind-ballots-heres-Sexy-Tories.html

Benjamin's had a slightly more reader oriented (but not reader-friendly) perspective on Art:

> The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects 'unfamiliar', to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged […]. A work is created 'artistically' so that its perception is impeded and the greatest possible effect is produced through the slowness of the perception. (Shklovsky 1917/1965, p. 22)

The idea of creating difficulty has not been popular with translation scholars, though Chinese translator and scholar Lu Xun (in Venuti 1998, p. 185) wrote: "Instead of translating to give people 'pleasure' I often try to make them uncomfortable, or even exasperated, furious and bitter". Today, Lawrence Venuti (Venuti 1988) strongly supports what he calls 'foreignization' ('ostranenie'), the strategy he traces back to Schleiermacher's (1812) simplistic divide regarding a translator's task, clearly preferring the former: "Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him" (in Lefevere 1977, p. 74). By this, he means first and foremost to not adopt a fluent, idiomatic or reader-friendly translation, but to translate "introducing variations that alienate the domestic language and, since they are domestic, reveal the translation to be in fact a translation" (Venuti 1998, p. 11), what House (1997, pp. 111-116) would call an 'overt translation', a translation which clearly reveals itself to just that, rather than 'hiding', covertly, as an original text.

Venuti calls this approach "minoritizing", whereby a variant rather than the dominant cultural form (or what Shklovsky would call the language of habitualization) is used. In theory, this alienation would also lead the reader to appreciate the linguistic and cultural differences that the new text proposes. For Venuti, this strategy is also part of "a political agenda that is broadly democratic: an opposition to the global hegemony of English". Interestingly, as Maria Luisa de Rinaldis (this volume) notes the hegemony during the Renaissance times was the other around: "There were few translations from English into Italian [and] Italy was, in terms of style and poetics, the dominant model". And the Italian translators were clearly making political choices in their decision to translate the religious texts (which defended or promoted the protestant movement).

Apart from the political stance, there is today, a real literary issue at play; that of the Mcdonaldisation of language, whereby, what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1992, p. 400) calls a "with-it translatese", whereby "the literature by a woman in Pakistan begins to resemble, in the feel of its prose, something by a man in Taiwan". This is the downside of 'domestication';

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whereby lingua-cultural differences in a text, which could inform or affect the reader are effaced, homogenised, to conform to a domestic standard. This is particularly problematic with the translation of dialect, local sayings, popular metaphors, colloquial and taboo language. Popular solutions include relocation of accents and/or standardization of the language, in all cases resulting in a 'loss' of the original. Daniela Salusso (this issue) in accounting for all other levels in Gray's *Old Negatives* gets stuck on the Scottish term 'gloaming': "What gets lost in translation is the Scottishness of the poem, the fact that this twilight which is impossible to look upon is not an indeterminate twilight, but precisely a Scottish twilight, namely, a gloaming". Salusso, though, is being a little hard on herself. Translation necessarily means letting go of the original language, but it also allows for conscious intervention and for the foregrounding of other features to compensate – which is exactly what Salusso does.

An example of the issue highlighted by Spivak, as Dodds (this issue) notes, is the long-standing norm which has historically affected much translation into Italian: *il bello scrivere italiano*. He cites the translation of John Fowles' "The Collector" as a case in point. Fowles crucially selected 'bad' grammar to identify not only the working class origins of 'the collector' himself, but also to contrast these origins at every turn with the upper-middle class, university educated, language of his prisoner. Indeed, Fowles himself says (1970, p. 10) that the evil of the kidnapper "was largely, perhaps wholly, the result of a bad education, a mean environment, being orphaned". The very first point is effaced in translation, making the two characters talk in Italian as equals.

An equally serious loss is noticed by Parini (this issue), where "Bridget Jones" in Italian suffers from what have been called the "universal features of translation": explicitation, simplification, and normalization. Much of what is inferable (and hence the essential essence of literature) is either made explicit, generalised, or substituted with a more domestic term. In non-literary translation, these would often be seen as useful strategies. However, here, in return for domestic fluency we not only have a loss of Britishness, but also a loss of character. In reducing her use of ECRs, Bridget has become less observant, less well-read, and finally less funny.

A consistent strategy of reducing difference is unlikely to produce a text of lasting artistic merit which fosters literary appreciation. However, the polar strategy, an *a priori* translation policy to protect the foreignness is equally problematic. This is the educational aim that D. H. Lawrence (now as a translator of Giovanni Verga) pursued. Halliday (this volume) points out that Lawrence genuinely did appreciate the Italian idioms, maintaining the foreign imagery not only in his translations, but also in his own writings. For example, in talking about Verga's work Lawrence writes in one of his letters "It is so good. - But I am on thorns, can't settle" (in Halliday, this volume).

The reference to 'thorns', as we can also find in his translations, was a literal translation of the vivid Italian *essere sulle spine*.

However, used mindlessly, foreignisation understandably leads to what critics call "a tremendous failing" (Cecchetti in Halliday, this volume) and "ridicule" or "quizzical looks" (Dodds, this volume). For example, Lawrence's translation of "fare il passo più lungo della gamba" becomes the decidedly ostranenie, *to take your stride according to your legs* (Dodds, this volume). This literal translation from the Italian results in an almost incomprehensible combination of words, which does not increase any useful cognitive effect, and hence does nothing to help the reader appreciate the foreign. We should also remember what Halliday (this volume) calls Lawrence's low "reserves of patience and dogged concentration" (Halliday, this volume), coupled with the high costs of proof reading and revision, which could very well render at least some of these translations as examples of mindless rather than foreignised translation.

6. The reader

Benjamin's famous comment negating the role of the reader, mentioned earlier, was made nearly a century ago. Since then there has been a Khunian shift, marked in particular by the Intentional Fallacy and then by Barthes' post-structuralist "Death of the Author" (1977). Quite suddenly, the reader rather than the author or indeed the text itself began to take centre stage. Umberto Eco introduced the concept of Model Reader[12] in 1995. This implied, rather than 'empirical', reader "is able to recognize and observe the rules of the game laid out by the text, and who is eager and able to play such a game" (Radford 2002). This means clearly establishing what sort of reader is to be expected; imagining why she will be reading, and to what extent there is an inherent interest, or at least openness to the linguistic and cultural differences encountered in the source text. This imagined reader should fit with the *skopos*, at which point the translator is in a third (mediating) position and nowable to mediate between the two texts. Translation alternatives can be more easily assessed now by literally checking the imagined reader's ability to recognise the rules of the game and gauging her continuing eagerness to continue reading.

What we notice with each of the translators included in this volume is the absolute focus on the model reader. Yet, we should also note that this focus on the reader is not actually new. Political and religious tracts, now considered literature (such as the King James Bible) have always focussed on the reader (Katan 2008). Interestingly, as de Rinaldis (this volume) points

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[12] Very similar is the term "Implied reader", coined by Booth ([1961] 1983).

out, the rare examples of translation into Italian during the Renaissance period reveal that reader understanding was a priority – and *bel scritto* was not the issue. Giacomo Castelvetro's prefaces to his translations are crystal clear: "Translated from English into Italian by someone who hopes that the Italians may know how much the rumours, artfully disseminated throughout Italy, of the aforementioned act are false and mendacious", and "Translated from English for those who love truth. In Venice" (De Rinaldis, this volume).

It is with the rise of English as a Literature that *the bel scritto* began to take hold, beginning with "the Classics", from Shakespeare onwards. As Federica Scarpa (this volume) notes, translations of Shakespeare into Italian are now "reader-centred". The translators she analyses, going back to 1960, have all focused on the performability of the play, and have borne in mind the audience's lack of familiarity with Shakespeare's world.

The most notable intervention is Costa Giovangigli's, who translates the then popular Elizabethan spiced-ginger "Shrewsbury cakes" with the classically Italian "pizze". It could also be argued that this form of extreme domestication might also be destabilising for an audience aware that pizza had yet to be invented in Italy (let alone popular in Elizabethan England), making the strategy a minoritising one, and hence in fact ostranenie. On the whole, though, the translations allow the audience into Shakespeare's world through a familiarity which is not so culturally grounded, allowing for what Massimo Bacigalupo (this volume) suggests should be the *skopos* of a literary translation; to produce a text which "can in fact be read for pleasure and instruction [as the original author] certainly intended". To do this, Bacigalupo himself retranslated Ezra Pound's *Cantos* into a more prosaic and 'down to earth' Italian (following Pound's own use of language).

Simona Sangiorgi (this volume), in retranslating Jane Austen, also underlines how she moved away from the "embellished […] high-register" Italian translations of the recent past. Her analysis of previous translations shows that the emphasis on text created "unnecessary elevation" up to the turn of the century. Not unlike Bacigalupo, she sought "a new mediation" between the language of a literary classic written in the English of two centuries ago, and that of "a contemporary Italian reader who lives in a fast-paced world, where communication modes and codes are influenced by the Internet and other digital environments". In practice this meant at times "stiffening" the text (using the outmoded *voi* instead of the contemporary *tu*) to help orient the reader to eighteenth-century rules of etiquette while at the same time retaining the naturalness and colloquiality of the original by actually simplifying the language of the original, to a present day colloquial naturalness in Italian, thus allowing Austin's fresh style to be appreciated by the model Italian reader envisaged by Sangiorgi.

Richard Dixon (this volume), translating for his model Anglo reader, notes that she would not have the access to the Latin in *Il Cimitero di Praga*

that Umberto Eco's original readers would have; so "a little help could be given". He used a number of strategies including translation couplets (retaining the original followed by the translation), as well as highlighting parts of the translation to indicate *how* the translation was to be interpreted. There was even more translatorial (and editorial) intervention on the translation of *Il Nome della Rosa*. Katan (1993, p. 156) reports that 10% of the Latin was actually omitted in the translation "so as not to scare off the less-erudite reader".

Reader orientation in translation is also at times signalled through a protagonist's shift, whereby the character – in translation – becomes a mediator and interpreter for the non-Italian reader. For example, *Guglielmo da Baskerville*, one of the protagonists in *Il Nome della Rosa*, changed in translation to become (for the *New York Times*, emphasis added, in Katan 1993: 158): "Our learned and ironic monk-detective"; and hence the English reader's personal guide to the Italian world. William Weaver, consciously or not, allowed the Anglo reader to feel a close bond with the character, and through a process of deletion and foregrounding made "Brother William of Baskerville, a most agreeable and engaging hero [...] and is allowed an English sense of humour – vital to the progression of the story" (Tooney 1983, p. 3).

Parini notes a similar (though not so successful) approach in Crosio's translation of *Bridget Jones Diary*, where the diary note "Am going to cook shepherd's pie for them all" becomes: "Preparerò per tutti loro una bella torta salata del pastore: una tipica ricetta inglese a base di carne trita e pure di patate". Bridget, now not just writing in Italian, but has become Italian through the (decidedly didactic) addition of the gloss for herself and for her fellow Italian reader. The gloss explains just what "shepherd's pie" is, and back-translated, reads: "a typical English recipe with mincemeat and mashed potatoes". What the actual, empirical, Italian reader would make of Bridget's didactic note should definitely be an area of research.

It should be remembered that this focus on the target reader does not necessarily mean domestication, as Dixon (this volume) underlines in his search for the *mot juste*. What Dixon shows is that he first accounts for the cultural distance, negotiates this distance with his model reader and is mindful of the effect: "The word "redivivus" exists in English – it appears in the Shorter OED – but my spell-check doesn't like it and it is certainly far less common in English than *redivivo* in Italian. And yet "reborn" or "back to life" seemed just a little too weak. There seemed to be no real alternative to "redivivus". So that was the word I chose, knowing that the English reader would have to work just a little harder".

These examples show just how much both Anglo and Italian translators today have moved away from a source text only approach, or an enforcement

of a *bel scritto* on the target text, and very much see themselves as mediating point by point the effort and the effect reading the text might have.

7. Mediation

The debate over either translating to highlight difference (foreignise) or to explain or reduce difference (domesticate) is, of course, artificial. Even Venuti himself (1998, p. 12) realised that foreignisation *tout court* was impractical: "The heterogeneous discourse of minoritizing translation [...] needn't be so alienating as to frustrate a popular approach completely; if the remainder is released at significant points in a translation that is generally readable, the reader's participation will be disrupted only momentarily". This is a useful let-out clause, and allows for what makes much more sense: cultural mediation, "a form of translatorial intervention which *takes account* of the impact of cultural distance" (Katan 2013, p. 84, emphasis added), rather than prescriptively demanding that foreignness be maintained at all cost. This idea of mediation, considering equally the source text and the model reader's reading of the target text, appears now to be what literary translators today take as being core qualities of their profession. The previously mentioned global survey appears to confirm this. The chart below shows the responses from the 91 of the 600 respondents who "mainly" translate literary texts. They were offered five options regarding 'professionality', which spanned the various levels of intervention. As can be seen in Figure 1, there is general agreement that a professional translation "absolutely" requires fidelity to the original text while at the same time should equally "absolutely" require that the text be fully readable. Less often regarded as professional is further intervention to reduce cultural (rather than linguistic) issues, or that the text be totally domesticated. And finally, Venuti's call for an ethics of difference, remains an extremely minority option:
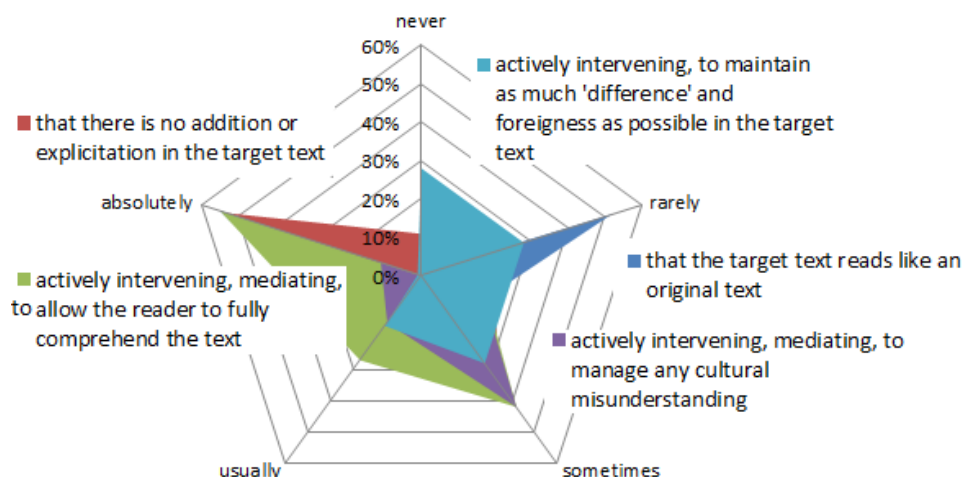
Figure 1.
"Mainly" literary translators and "What does professionality mean?".

Mediation requires that a translator is able to take a meta position, one which allows the translator to decide which strategy to use, whether more foreignising or more domesticating. This cannot be decided *a priori*; though once the Model reader has been formalized, certain translating decisions will become much more logical. And the more detailed the profile of the Model reader, the easier it is to decide just how much that reader will be prepared work – at that particular moment – to obtain the higher cognitive rewards. The task, as Dixon (this volume) says, is "to place the English reader in the same position as the Italian reader", which does not automatically mean that reader is left in peace as his *redivivo/*redivivus example illustrates.

8. Towards Transcreation

Although this mediating meta-position frees the translator from *a priori* decisions about how to translate, the strategy is not in itself going to lead to enhancing the levels of appreciation. Something more is often necessary. We mentioned earlier how Bridget Jones (and many other characters) tend to lose something in translation, and indeed "lost in translation" has nearly ninety four million Google hits. However, loss is by no means a necessary consequence; but often to compensate for a formal loss, creativity is necessary, hence the idea of transcreation.

An example into Italian is Licia Corbolante's retranslation of Sue Townsend's popular "The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole" (see Katan 2004, pp. 206-207). Corbolante took the comically named character "Maxwell House" and transcreated him into "Teo Lipton", thus creating a new term, both domestic *and* foreign. The overall sound is classically English. 'Teo'

sounds English, yet is Italian and sounds close to the Italian for 'tea', which the British are known to drink gallons of. The surname, 'Lipton', refers to Italy's best-selling "Lipton" brand of tea (thus mirroring the Maxwell House brand of coffee). To compound the humour, at the time of the translation, Lipton tea was advertised by a well-known American basketball coach, Dan Peterson, who even more famously spoke a 'Stanley e Ollio' Italian to advertise the product, which more than compensated for the loss of the comical associations cued by the name "Maxwell House".

This is neither foreignisation nor domestication but transcreation (see Katan 2015), whereby the translator intervenes to create something clearly based on the original, but not directly inferable from the original text. Crucially, transcreation is capable of counteracting the universal features of translation, which flatten and standardise the reading, and hence reduce the possibility of (re)producing lasting artistic merit.

9. Conclusion

Clearly, translating the literary, which means first and foremost, sensitivity to the various levels or features in the text, the intended effects on the original reader, and the potential cognitive effects on the target reader make for what Halliday (this volume) calls the need "to live in a constant state of neurasthenic, of hypersensitive awareness", which is perhaps the hallmark of any professional translator. In all cases, a translator is dealing with

> a string of words that helps us read the text in its original language. It is a glossary rather than a translation, which is always a literary activity. Without exception, even when the translator's sole intention is to convey meaning, as in the case of scientific texts, translation implies a transformation of the original. That transformation is not – nor can it be- anything but literary (Paz 1992, p. 154).

'Literary' translation though is clearly a special case of transformation, as text meaning is not only negotiated but the fruit of that negotiation with the reader is a heightened cognitive effect, creating some form of lasting artistic merit cued by the choice and selection of the new words. Hence, the literary translator will be listening and looking for evidence of non-casual language, of equivalences, and other extra-contextual associations which can point to a heightened meaning, which the original intended reader might reasonably be expected to infer. Then the translator as a mediator, having envisioned her ideal model reader is now in a position to transcreate for that reader.

Bionote: David Katan is full professor of English and Translation at the University of Salento (Lecce). He has over 70 publications including *Translating Cultures: An Introduction for Translators, Interpreters and Mediators* (Routledge) now in its 2nd edition; the headword entry "Culture" for the Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation (2008); "Translation as Intercultural Communication" for the Routledge Companion to Translation Studies (2009); entries for Benjamin's *Handbook of Translation Studies* (2012, 2013), and "Cultural Approaches to Translation" in the Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics (2013). He translates regularly, mainly in literature and tourism, and has written about his translation of Italian dialect poetry (2001). Other publications regarding literary translation include those on James Joyce's *The Dead* (1992), *Troilus and Cressida* (1993) and *Il Nome della Rosa* (1999). He is also keenly interested in "The Status of the Translator". The results of the first global survey with over 1000 replies were published in Benjamins (2012, 2013). He is currently working on the second global survey of the profession, which focusses also on translation practice and transcreation. He has been senior editor of the *International Journal Cultus*: the Journal for Intercultural Mediation and Communication since its inception in 2008.

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WORDS OR MEANING?

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Abstract – In the following pages, a brief, personal outline of the history of translation is sketched, so as to determine the whys and wherefores of the form/content dichotomy that seems to be plaguing translators and translation theorists incessantly. From the outset, in Classical times, sense rules supreme. In the late middle ages with the advent of Bible translation in Europe, the word – being the word of God – assumes new-found importance, especially as any deviation from it implies heresy. With Neo-Classicism and the Age of Enlightenment, the original tenets of antiquity unsurprisingly make their comeback, though somewhat short-lived this time. With the Romantics and post-Romantics, foreign lands and cultures gain ever greater interest, as indeed do their various forms of expressions. In contemporary Europe, over the last hundred years or so, with its preoccupation for markets and product diversification, the two schools of thought seem to co-habit quite comfortably, notwithstanding modern linguistic theory that renders form and content into indivisible components of language, thus making the dichotomy fatuous.

Keywords: form; content; Neo-classicism; Romanticism; present-day.

The fundamental question that students of translation desire to have an answer to constitutes in fact an age-old controversy dating back to Classical times: should one translate form or translate content? In other words, when you have a text in front of you that someone has asked you to translate, do you stay as close to the original as possible or are you free to ignore or even change the words and to re-elaborate the meaning as you best see fit?

An analogy may be drawn here in order to illustrate exactly what the choice is all about, if indeed there is a choice. Everybody knows the Ferrari sports car, the fabulous *Testarossa*. Now, if the Japanese, say, wish to reproduce the *Testarossa*, what is going to be more important for the imitators – what it looks like or how it performs or the motor under the bonnet? To apply Chomsky to car manufacturing, is it the surface structure or the deep structure that counts? It is a silly question really because, as everyone knows, you cannot separate the various components, the chassis, the body work, the look, the motor, the performance, even the noise it makes, all are essential components of what makes the *Testarossa* what it is. You cannot put a Ferrari motor into a Toyota and call it a Ferrari any more than you can put a Toyota motor into a *Testarossa* body. Yet, this is what has been going on in literary translation for

centuries and, indeed, what translation theorists too have been discussing for a very long time in their attempts to formulate abstractions for the translation process.

This controversy, or dichotomy if you will, goes back at least two thousand years – back to Cicero and beyond to Ancient Egypt (which is why translation is jokingly referred to as the "second oldest profession").[1] Cicero, more than one hundred years before the birth of Christ, was the precursor of the "non verbum e verbo sed sensum exprimere de sensu" principle ("not word for word but sense from sense"), a maxim reiterated on countless occasions by great translators and theorists alike: Horace, Saint Jerome (the Patron Saint of Translation), Pope, Tytler, Cary, Pound and Steiner. From these names, it can be easily evinced that sense-to-sense translation has been advocated for not only in Classical and neo-Classical times, but right through to the 20th century and, in all probability, it will continue well into the 21st century as well.

It must be said, though, that literal, word-for-word translation has had no shortage of fans over the centuries either. Its popularity was somewhat enforced from the Middle Ages when Bible translation was very much coming to the fore. The very act of translating the Bible was seen by the authorities as a form of heresy and an act of sedition. John Wycliffe, the first translator of the Holy Scriptures into the vernacular (Wycliffe 1390), somehow managed to avoid the consequences of such a serious offence, at least during his lifetime. Although he was a known pre-Reformation, religious dissident, his considerable influence as an Oxford don, philosopher and theologian must have contributed not a little to saving his life. It was probably owing to his adherence to the words of the original Latin text as well in that, although the syntax of the English may have left a lot to be desired, it was always rigorously as close as possible to "the word of God".

> Latin Vulgate: Dixitque Deus fiat lux et facta est lux
> King James: And God said, Let there be light: and there was light
> Early Wycliffe: And God seide, Be maad liȝt; and maad is liȝt (Genesis 1, p. 3)[2]

Wycliffe's excessively close literality doubtless saved him from the stake, but only just. After his death in 1384, at the ripe old age (in those days) of 56, his body was exhumed and burnt. The authorities – better late than never they

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[1] A quick glance at google.com or similar search engines will soon show that politics and/or spying take pride of place as the second oldest profession, though translation theorists are quick to point to methodological analogies.

[2] There are two distinct versions of the Wycliffe Bible. The first, appearing while Wycliffe was still alive in the early 1380s, is today a rarity. The second, thought to have also been the work of several of his collaborators, came out some years after Wycliffe's death and the subsequent banning and burning of his books.

thought – finally came to the conclusion he had been a heretic after all and should be made an example of.

Just over a hundred and fifty years later, William Tyndale was not so lucky. The Tyndale Bible (Tyndale 1534) was the first ever to be translated directly from Greek and Hebrew texts and it greatly influenced the outcome of the Reformation in England. A considerable part of his work was later to be integrated into the James I's Authorised Version. Tyndale himself, nevertheless, was tried for heresy, choked, impaled and, still alive, burnt at the stake in 1536. Tyndale had not been authorised to translate the Bible and the edict against Wycliffe, which had categorically stated that unauthorised translations done by the laity amounted to heresy, was still very much in force. Consequently, Tyndale found himself on trial for corrupting the Scriptures by changing certain words and their meanings.

A decade later, a similar fate was to await a great French translator, Etienne Dolet, who was strangled and burned in 1546, accused of being an atheist. It made no difference whatever that his writings are among the very first in history to deal with the question of how to translate. Posterity will, nonetheless, always remember him for being one of the founding fathers of our modern profession to whom, in the words of Eugene Nida (1964, p. 15), "the credit for the first formulation of a theory of translation must go".

Translators being killed in the exercise of their profession is not something reserved for the barbaric Middle Ages either. Hitoshi Igarashi, aged only 44, was stabbed to death for translating Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses which fundamentalist Muslim groups considered heresy and therefore punishable by death. The murder took place on the 12th of July 1991, just over twenty years ago. History has a way of repeating itself at fairly regular intervals.

It must not be thought that the literalist approach to translation was restricted to early Bible translation only, for it has had its proponents right up to the present day as well. Generally speaking, the neo-Classical period like its Classical model may be said to have been freer, more imitative than what today would be considered translation proper. But John Dryden, the father of translation theory in England at the outset of the 18th century, claimed that it was "the greatest wrong (…) to the memory and reputation of the dead" (Dryden 1680, pp. 17-18). It should be pointed out that he did not like literal, word-for-word translation much, either. He called it being "servile" and a "foolish task", strongly criticising Ben Jonson and other poets for such foolish servility, calling such impropriety the work of a mere "verbal copier" rather than a translator proper.

Two examples may well serve to see what it was exactly that gave rise to such harsh words with regard to translations of the time. A favourite has to be a translator by the name of Henry Boyd, a reverend gentleman of the 18th

century who, in 1785, gave his cultured English readership the following verses:

> When life had labour'd up her midmost stage,
> And, weary with her mortal pilgrimage,
> Stood in suspense upon the point of Prime;
> Far in a pathless grove I chanc'd to stray,
> Where scarce imagination dares display,
> The gloomy scenery of the savage clime.
> On the deep horrors of the tangled dell,
> With dumb dismay, the pow'rs of mem'ry dwell,
> Scenes, terrible as dark impending fate!" (Boyd 1785, p. 1)

> Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
> mi ritrovai per una selva oscura
> ché la diritta via era smarrita.
> Ah quanto a dir qual era è cosa dura
> esta selva selvaggia e aspra e forte
> che nel pensier rinova la paura!
> Tant'è amara che poco è più morte;
> ma per trattar del ben ch'io vi trovai,
> dirò dell'altre cose eh' i' v'ho scorte. (*Inferno* I, ll, pp. 1-9)

The division into the three corresponding tercets of Dante's poem is highly approximative, as there is little correspondence between the source and target texts. What is interesting to note is the translator's efforts at "domesticating" his text, to use a term coined by Lawrence Venuti (1995, p. 20). The fierce "selva selvaggia" becomes an English *grove* and then, later on, a *dell*. In Canto XXXIII of the *Inferno*, there is the awful scene of Count Ugolino eating his children, which Dante compares to a dog on the bone:

> come d'un can all'osso (*Inferno* XXXIII, l, p. 78)

Boyd's attempts at *domesticating* lead to ridicule, as the vicious "cane" of the original becomes a *staunch bloodhound*. The image of the loyal, lovable hunting dog may well be in perfect keeping with English culture, but it is diametrically opposed to the savage treachery of Dante's description. Literal translation was to come to the fore some eighty to a hundred years later in the Victorian Age and, to be kind, fares little better. The literalists believe so much in the word that everything else is sacrificed at the altar of literalism. It is the heyday of prose, of prose translations and, indeed, it must be said, of being downright prosaic. The well-known American poet and translator from the Harvard Dante Circle, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, has no doubt when he opts for just that:

> In translating Dante, something must be relinquished. Shall it be the beautiful rhyme that blossoms all along the line like a honeysuckle on the hedge? It must

be, in order to retain something more precious than rhyme, namely, fidelity, truth – the life of the hedge itself. (Longfellow 1867, p. vii)

Thomas Carlyle's younger brother Joseph, back in England, provides a fitting example that illustrates the absurdity and *foolishness* of being *servile* to the words and syntax of the original. If, in Italian, it is acceptable to say, as Dante does in the opening Canto of the *Inferno*:

Ma non sì che paura non mi desse
La vista che m'apparve d'un leone (*Inferno* I, ll, pp. 44-45)

the same cannot be said of its English prose translation which reads

yet not so, but that I feared at the sight, which appeared to me, of a lion.
(Carlyle 1849, p. 5).

Unfortunately, Carlyle's English prose translation not only totally fails to render the poetry of the Italian original, but it also fails miserably at even minimally respecting the syntax of the English language.

The two extremes of words versus meaning when translating literature were to continue right through the 20th century too, in spite of Ferdinand de Saussure, the father of modern linguistics, who quite unequivocally stated that the two components of a sign, which he called the *signifiant* and the *signifié* are indivisible. Simply put, modern linguistics and semiotics were showing that form and content are merely constituent parts of a linguistic sign which are distinguishable, but not separable. The significance of de Saussure's work was universally influential except, it seems, for translators, who were generally unimpressed. They had grown accustomed and even fond of their ditheistic translation model and had little or no time for monotheism.

Translators would show they were ahead of the times and up-to-date through a series of terminological changes. So, the old free, imitative approach was to give way to what was now the *hermeneutic*, or interpretative approach of Ezra Pound and George Steiner. The literal approach instead became *formal* translation, sometimes referred to negatively as *transcodage*, which Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer define as being glued to the words and sentence structures of the original, "de se coller aux mots, et aux structures des phrases de l'original" (2001, p. 19).

This latter approach was vehemently propounded by the famous Russian-American writer/critic/translator, Vladimir Nabokov, of *Lolita* fame. Nabokov managed to make Alexander Pushkin's Russian masterpiece *Eugene Onegin* into an often incomprehensible jumble of Russian syntactic constructions in English. Not by chance is his most famous paper on translation entitled *That Servile Path* (1966, p. 98) – a reprise of the servility mentioned

by Dryden centuries earlier, though this time upheld in a much more positive light.

Another excellent example of 20th-century literalism can be seen in the translations of D. H. Lawrence. Lawrence loved Italy deeply and chose to live not a small part of his life first in Liguria, then the Abruzzo region, Florence, Capri, and finally, in 1921, his great love, Sicily. While there, he wrote three important essays: *Twilight in Italy, Sea and Sardinia* and *Sketches of Etruscan Places,* and became acquainted with the works of the great Sicilian novelist, Giovanni Verga, through his having read the short story, *Cavalleria rusticana*, on which Pietro Mascagni's opera was later based. When Lawrence read *Mastro Don Gesualdo* and *I Malavoglia,* he immediately found the Italian novelist's use of language fascinating and wanted to translate him. He described Verga as Homeric and thought that only someone like himself could be up to the task of rendering him in English:

> He is extraordinarily good (…) and it would need somebody who could absolutely handle English in the dialect to translate him. (Lawrence 1956, p. 528).

Lawrence firmly believed his translation (translation in general too) had a didactic function, in that it informed the English readership about the way foreigners (Sicilians in this case) actually express themselves. A simple exclamation like "per bacco" becoming *by Bacchus* instead of *By Jove* or *Heavens Above* is quite easy for the English reader to handle. As is even somewhat contorted syntax like:

> Dall'uscio spalancato a due battenti entrarono poco dopo don Giuseppe e mastro Titta. (p. 64)

> Through the wide-open double doors entered after a few moments Don Giuseppe and Master Titta.

The word order certainly grates on the ear of the English reader and the appellative "Master" gives the idea of an under-aged male, rather than a professional *maestro.* But little harm done.

However, when exclamations like "San Gregorio il Magno!" are translated as *Saint Gregory the Great!* or when expressions like "fare il passo più lungo della gamba" [to bite off more than you can chew] become *to take your stride according to your legs*, then it is not at all surprising to see quizzical looks upon the faces of the English readers. Also upon translation commentators who had understood from Lawrence's own declared intentions that the reader could expect "English in the dialect"! Maybe it ambiguously meant English in the Sicilian dialect.

Lawrence's translations of Verga, to be fair, are extremely interesting, notwithstanding the multitude of flaws they contain. Nabokov and Lawrence

are supreme examples of 20th-century *foreignization*, to use Venuti's term once again. But the proponents of domesticated translation abound too, to such an extent that Christopher Taylor (1989, p. 91) claims that it is often easier to read a work in translation than it is to read the original. He cites the translations of Joyce where it is evident that readability is much greater in Italian than it is in the original English – the translator having done much of the work for the "linguistically lazy reader", to use Ezra Pound's (1934, p. 14) damning assessment of British and American readership.

Translators throughout history have taken it upon themselves to do all or most of the work for the reader. They explain, correct, adapt, disambiguate, and even interpret texts for you. The most extreme case is probably when the immortal opening line of the Inferno of Dante Alighieri

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita

is rendered with the totally uninspired prosaicness of a crib-writer:

When I was thirty five.

The English novelist Dorothy Sayers, of Lord Peter Wimsey fame, although one of the nobler attempts at rendering the "terza rima"[3] in English, fares little better at an interpretative level. Sayers in her lengthy introduction to the Penguin version of the Divine Comedy states quite categorically that the "treasure" she finds in the original Italian is its humour. Consequently, when Dante and Virgil come face to face with a demon, the poet exclaims

Wow what a grizzly look he had upon him! (*Inferno* XXI, l, p. 31)

The trouble with the hermeneutic approach is that the translator decides a priori how a literary text should be interpreted and the reader takes it or leaves it, though most of the time convinced that was what the original author or poet actually meant.

An extreme case in point is an English translation of the French poet Francis Ponge on the part of the modern Scottish poet George Macbeth, who died just 25 years ago. A follower of George Steiner's hermeneutic approach, Macbeth had no qualms at all about making the original poem about an insect "La Guèpe" into an English poem about a woman. Presumably, inspiration for this adaption comes from the gender marking in French. Wasps in Romance languages are feminine (*vespa* in Italian *avispa* in Spanish) and so the Scottish poet had no hesitation in turning "La Guèpe" into "the Wasp Woman" (Macbeth 1966, p. 331), with her sting ready to be used not against "Mankind" but against "Men-kind".

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[3] (2004) claims that, of the various English translations, Sayers "does the best in at least partially preserving the hendecasyllables and the rhyme".

Lingue e Linguaggi

Other examples of *domestication* originate from the impositions of publishing houses and editors. If Neo-Classical England was not too fond of literature coming from abroad and whenever it did manage to cross the English Channel it needed to be improved, the same is true in Italy in much of the 20th century. The principles of "il bello scrivere" which go back to Leopardi are consolidated under fascism in the 1920s and 1930s and the motto *Italia agli italiani* had its linguistic counterpart in *l'italiano agli italiani.* The concept of good writing permeated throughout most of the century, thanks to the editorial policies of the major Italian publishers, which influenced even the way works were translated.

In 1922, the first Italian *Dracula* came out. The translator, or more probably the publisher, did not even spell the author's name correctly, calling the Irish novelist *Brahm* Stoker rather than Bram Stoker. And what of dear old Professor Abraham van Helsing, famous vampire-slayer extraordinaire? The Dutch doctor (with a strong German accent – no explanation for this is given) speaks broken English interspersed with occasional German interjections like "Mein Gott!" and "Gott in Himmel". His English syntax is far from being that of a native speaker, as is clear from his little apologue

> The good husbandman tell you so then because he knows, but not till then. But you do not see the good husbandman dig up his planted corn to see if he grow; that is for the children. (1897, p. 166)

The German exclamations, the erroneous 3rd-person singular and subject pronouns, the mis-use of the definite article, all disappear in Italian, in not only the first but also most of the successive translations of the famous Gothic tale. Quite simply, incorrect English was not allowed to become incorrect Italian and foreign words, as a matter of editorial principle, were eliminated on sight.

This practice was not surprising or unpredictable during fascism. What is surprising perhaps is that it was not restricted to that particular period in Italian history. As late as the mid-1960s, translators, or rather publishers, were still covering up the flaws – what were seen as flaws – of what they were translating and publishing from the English. Perhaps the most glaring example of this policy in the second half of the 20th century was Vincenzo Abrate's translation of John Fowles' "The Collector" (1963), a little masterpiece of stylistic variation on the part of an author who was yet to write his major work "The French Lieutenant's Woman" and who was later claimed by many to be the greatest English novelist since Lawrence.

Very simply, the story of *The Collector* is: young working-class man becomes obsessed with upper-middle class woman whom he kidnaps and keeps in his cellar hoping that she will learn to love him, with tragic consequences. The style of the novel is of paramount importance, as both protagonists narrate the story from their own points of view, using their own

idiolects. Clearly, the idiolect of the man is marked by down-to-earth working-class English, whereas the girl's is standard "Queen's English" or received pronunciation, tending towards the posh and pretentious language of a 1960s' art student. The novel was an immediate best seller in Britain, with the Italian translation published by Rizzoli, coming out just before the film starring Terence Stamp had its debut in 1965.

Vincenzo Abrate's *Il collezionista* (1964) succeeds perfectly well in telling the same story as Fowles' *Collector*. What he fails to do, probably by design rather than by accident, is convey the style and idiolect of the young working-class boy. The language in the original is marked with a whole series of syntactic imperfections going from the misuse of the genitive, adjectives instead of adverbs, to horrible-sounding double negatives, almost all of which are corrected in Italian for fear of impoverishing *il bello scrivere italiano*:

> She didn't hardly object (p. 59)
> Non sollevò obiezioni
>
> I didn't give no more than a quick look (p. 109)
> Non le detti che un rapido sguardo.

There is just one exception when the English grammar mistake is kept in Italian, but only because there was no way that the translator could correct it contextually:

> He: You had to think very careful about what you said.
> She: Carefully.
> He: I mean carefully (p. 195).
>
> Bisognava star sempre molto attento a quel che si dice.
> Molto attenti.
> Va bene. Attenti.

Having said that, though, the passive Italian structure used just is not the way a young Italian would express himself, grammar mistake or no grammar mistake. It is all about how Italian should be written, as opposed to using the written form to show how people actually speak.

After such a possibly confusing historical survey of the battle between words and meaning, what conclusions may be drawn? It may even seem from everything that has been said above that just about anything goes. A word or two, however, must be said in defence of the translator. The job of the translator is not at all dissimilar to that of architects. Their work too is commissioned by someone else who pays them, their work also reflects the tastes of the times and they too are the ones who bear the brunt of criticisms made by later generations with different tastes about what they have done to the skyline.

Translators also have to answer to someone who has a say in what they produce, not infrequently a strong say whenever it is a question of being published or not, of being paid or not. Nine times out of ten, those who commission works of translation are less interested in the needs of the producer, but much more in what the customer wants, what the customer will buy. Here, to show to what extent an original may be altered and even distorted to suit the tastes of the customers, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* should be mentioned again.

Bram Stoker, who died one hundred years ago and whose centenary has recently been celebrated in literary circles all over the world, would be turning in his grave (no pun intended) if he could see his Dracula and his Van Helsing today. Dracula has become a blue-eyed blond hunk aka Richard Roxburgh, known for his *baddie* roles in films such as Mission Impossible. Dear old Professor Van Helsing has become superhunk Hugh Jackman of Wolverine fame and sweet Lucy has turned into leather-clad superbabe Kate Beckinsale. All of them are armed with crossbows that can fire six arrows simultaneously, the arrows are made of silver, of course, and they are all blackbelted 7th Dan, Kung Fu experts. Of course, the young thoroughly enjoy an opportunity like this to see their superstar heart-throbs, while the older generation grumpily scoff at the poor quality of the film, oddly grieving the loss of Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing whose films were, in all honesty, not much better.

What has all this to do with translation and translators? Well, film adaptation is just an extreme form of translation. And the point is that after a quick glance at IMDB, you will realise that, even though the film Van Helsing cost a whopping $150 million to make (expensive films can still be bad!), it managed to net over $300 million before even counting DVD sales. Film adaptors and translators work so that studios and publishers make money. You give your audiences and your readership what they want in accordance with the tastes of the day. If good Italian is the trend of the day, then it should come as no surprise that poor style and grammar mistakes be eliminated in the transfer over from English. If your society is closed to foreign culture and literature, little wonder is it then that the translations exclusively follow the tenets of the target language culture.

In the end, it is all about what your aim is when you provide a certain type of translation, what your "skopos" is, to use the term applied to translation by Hans Vermeer (1989, pp. 173-87). In other words, whether you wish to produce a completely different poem, novel or film - along the lines of George Macbeth's poetry or Van Helsing The Movie or whether you wish to provide a crib for school children or university students to help them pass their exams, especially older texts like Dante, Homer, Virgil and many others. That is what *skopos* theory is all about. Translation approach depends on what you want to do, what your aim is, what your publisher and indeed your readership expects of you.

In actual fact, the translator's freedom of choice is pre-determined by the tastes and trends of the moment and as such the translation becomes a social-historical document that also speaks volumes about the target culture in which it is written, what people thought, how they behaved, what people's likes and dislikes were, how they expressed themselves, how they prefer super silver crossbow arrows to wooden stakes and Kung Fu to boxing. Or how they prefer bloodhounds to mongrels, or women to insects. If you like, the original is a static work of art, fixed in time, though of universal appeal. Your translation or rather translations of that work, on the other hand, are dynamic, ever-changing, interpretative and re-interpretative, ephemeral and only rarely of universal appeal. That is why, for example, there is one new translation of Dante's *Inferno* produced in English every two and a half years, that is why the Bible goes on being translated year after year. This of course is good news for translators. Every new age, or generation, with its new tastes and language, will need its new translation. Literary translators may be paid badly, but they will never be out of work. So in the end, approach is less important than quality. What really matters is not whether it is form-oriented or content-oriented, but whether it is a good translation or a bad one.

Bionote: Professor John Dodds began his academic career at the University of Cairo in 1976, after which he moved to Italy in 1979 where he became a language assistant for the English Department of the University of Udine. A few years later he moved to the University of Trieste where, in 1994, he became Dean of the Interpreters' School. He has also been Director of the Language Centre and founding President of the EUT, Trieste's university press. Prof Dodds has published extensively in English and in Italian on a variety of aspects of comparative linguistics and translation theory. His books on the analysis and translation of literary and poetic texts, especially the translation of Dante Alighieri, indicate his main research interests. His most recent book, entitled *Italian Translation Itineraries* (2012), is an in-depth guide on translating literary and non-literary texts in a classroom environment. Prof. Dodds is also on several advisory boards of international reviews, such as *ESP Across Cultures* and *Rivista Internazionale di Tecnica della Traduzione*.

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LITERARY TRANSLATION
BETWEEN ITALIAN AND ENGLISH
Publishing trends in Italy, the UK and the USA

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Abstract – This study aims to investigate publishing trends in literary translation from English into Italian in Italy and from Italian into English in the UK and the USA over the 2000-2008 time span. The data were retrieved from the *Index Translationum*, an international bibliography of translations managed by UNESCO, and were then stored in three Microsoft Access databases, one for each country. The databases were analysed according to specific criteria, in order to determine trends concerning the amount of translated literature in the three countries, the main publishing houses dealing with translated works, and the most translated genres and authors. This paper is meant to provide a mainly descriptive, but necessary basis for future investigation of socio-cultural as well as market-led processes underlying publishers' choices and gate-keeping in literary translation.

Keywords: literary translation market; Index Translationum; most translated authors; most translated genres.

1. Mapping literary translation: *Index Translationum*

The *Index Translationum* (from now on IT) is an international bibliography of translations managed by UNESCO. It consists of a huge database listing books translated in about one hundred of the UNESCO Member States since 1979. The database includes translated works from a number of disciplines and lists around 2 million entries.[1] Bibliographic search[2] allows users to search for information on translated works according to specific criteria, e.g. source language, target language, country, author, subject. It also contains a 'Statistics' section[3] providing specific rankings, such as Top 50 authors, countries, etc.

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[1] http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=7810&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
[2] http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/
[3] http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsstatlist.aspx?lg=0

The database is regularly updated by the Index staff, and particularly useful is the 'Last Updates' section,[4] which indicates last updates for each country.

Over the past years a few reports investigating trends in literary translation in Europe have been published. Among these are the Diversity Reports (Kovač et al. 2009; Kovač et al. 2010; Wischenbart et al. 2008). The Diversity Report 2008 provides figures on books in translation across Europe from 1979 to 2005 and in some aspects until 2008 by analysing data retrieved from both IT and separate national book market statistics. The Diversity Report 2009 analyses seven key European book markets in order to map individual fiction authors, and investigates whether and how they move across languages. The Diversity Report 2010 investigates how a representative sample of contemporary authors of fiction shape cultural identity across fifteen European markets.

There are also two reports produced by Literature Across Frontiers,[5] one of which (Budapest Observatory 2010) is entirely based on IT data[6] and investigates translation flows in Europe from 1995 to 2005, while the other (Donahaye 2012) examines information about literary translation in the UK and Ireland, the way it is collected, and gaps existing in data provision.

Particularly relevant to this study is the first of these two reports, primarily because it addresses issues related to the reliability of IT (Budapest Observatory 2010, p. 4), and secondly because it shows and discusses the dominance of English as a source language (Budapest Observatory 2010, p. 5). Obviously, the data provided by IT do not perfectly correspond to reality, and this is due mainly to slow or irregular submissions by national libraries. Furthermore, inconsistencies have been detected when its data are compared to those from other sources. However, these concern mostly individual numbers, while trends are fairly representative (Wischenbart *et al*. 2008, p. 3). Despite its likely inaccuracies, IT is still considered to be so far "the best available source for establishing major translation trends, especially in Europe, which is the most diligent data provider among world regions" (Budapest Observatory 2010, p. 4).

2. Three case studies: Italy, the UK and the USA

We will now carry out an analysis of the main trends in literary translation from English into Italian in Italy, and from Italian into English in the UK and in the USA since 2000.

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[4] http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bscontrib.aspx
[5] http://www.lit-across-frontiers.org/about/
[6] A list of independent articles based on the data provided by IT is available in the 'Document Section': http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=22194&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

The bibliographical data for each of the three countries were retrieved from IT through the 'search database' tool and were then stored in Microsoft Access 2007 databases. For practical issues, from now on we will refer to 'Italian', 'British' and 'American' databases.

Before proceeding with the analysis of the data, a few remarks are necessary. First of all, bibliographical references provided by IT are sometimes incomplete. More specifically, in a few cases the name of the author is not mentioned. However, this is limited to books for children written by little known writers, as well as to collections of works written by a number of authors and for which only the names of the editors are provided by IT. Omissions sometimes concern also original titles, but these were retrieved from the Web and, wherever possible, added in the databases. Finally, for all the three databases the selected subject category is 'Literature' which includes both fiction and non-fiction works.

As pointed out in the LAF report 2010 (Budapest Observatory 2010), the heading 'Literature' includes a variety of genres. The genre or subgenre to which each book belongs is not specified in IT. However, considering that this information is particularly helpful in determining specific trends, the specific genre for each book was retrieved from the book profile found on the publishing house website and added in the database.

Finally, for a better understanding of the generic trends, for all the three countries the flow of translated literature has been looked at including also the 1990s, while specific trends have been investigated in reference to the more recent 2000-2008 time span.

The three databases were analysed according to specific criteria, in order to shed light on the following aspects: number of translated titles per year, main publishing houses dealing with translated works, most translated genres and their distribution among the various publishing houses over the time span, the most translated authors and genres.

Due to the reliability issues discussed above, the figures provided might not be 100% precise, especially if we consider that IT very rarely provides information about reprints and new editions. However, we believe that the figures listed in this paper can help outline an overview of the recent situation in the three countries, and this is the core aim of this paper.

2.1. Literary translation from English into Italian in Italy

The dominance of the English as a source language – which has been highly criticised by Venuti (1998) – has already been mentioned and concerns also Italy. According to the LAF report (Budapest Observatory 2010, p. 8), over the 1990-2005 time span the average share of the English language in translated literature in Italy accounted for almost 60%, followed by French (13%) and German (7%).

The first trend we are going to analyse is the yearly number of translations from 1990 to 2007.[7] For this time span IT lists 5,133 titles, which are distributed over the years as represented in Graph 1:
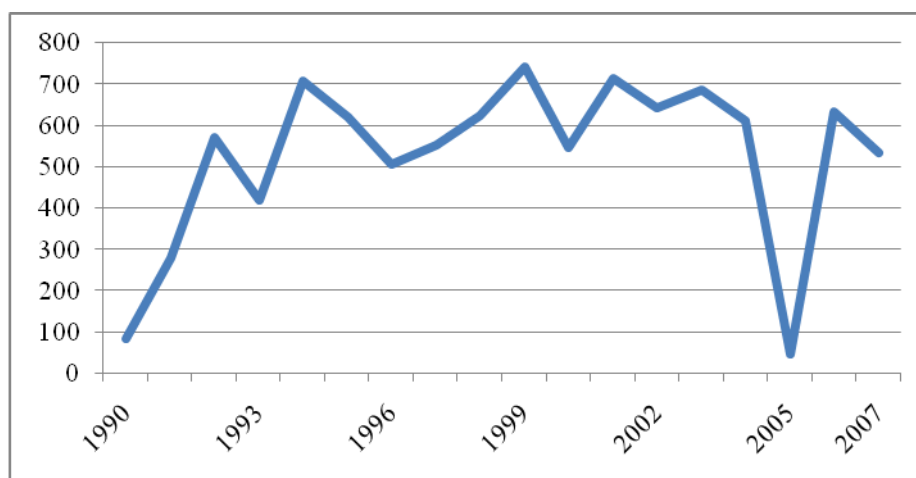
Graph 1.
Production of translated literature from English in Italy.

As can be seen, after a sharp increase between 1990 and 1992, the number of translated titles per year has fluctuated between 500 and over 700 titles, except for the year 2005, for which IT lists 47 translated titles only. We do not know whether this figure corresponds to reality or is due to incomplete submission of data to IT by the Italian National Library. The enquiries sent to the IT staff about this figure did not receive any reply, nor do available global reports help identify the reasons for such a low number of translations in 2005. However, the steady range of the fluctuation (between over 500 and 700 books) may indicate that the figure is probably due to incomplete submission of data to IT by the Italian national library rather than to a real dramatic decrease, and we may assume that the real number in 2005 would still remain within the 500-700 range.

We will now look in detail at the recent trends. For the 2000-2007 time span IT lists 4,424 translated titles. The publishing houses that produced these translations are overall 275 and are represented in Graph 2, Graph 3, and Graph 4:

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[7] The 'Last Updates' section (http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bscontrib.aspx) shows that IT has received data until 2010 and that IT staff is currently processing data relating to years 2009 and 2010. No information on year 2008.
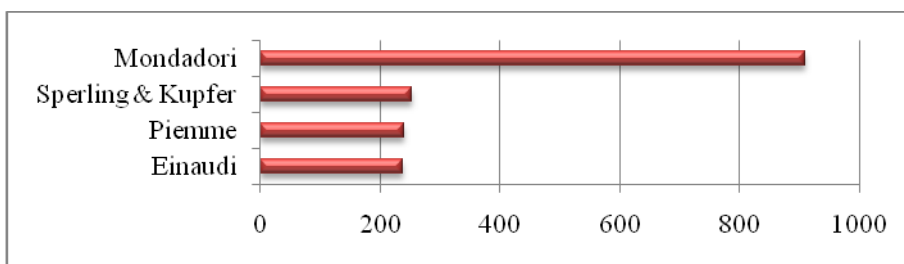
Graph 2.
Publishing houses with over 200 translated titles.
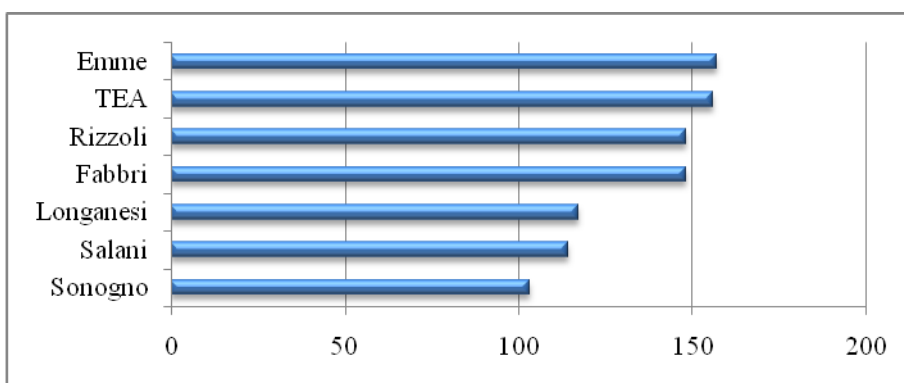
Graph 3.
Publishing houses with 100 to 200 translated titles.
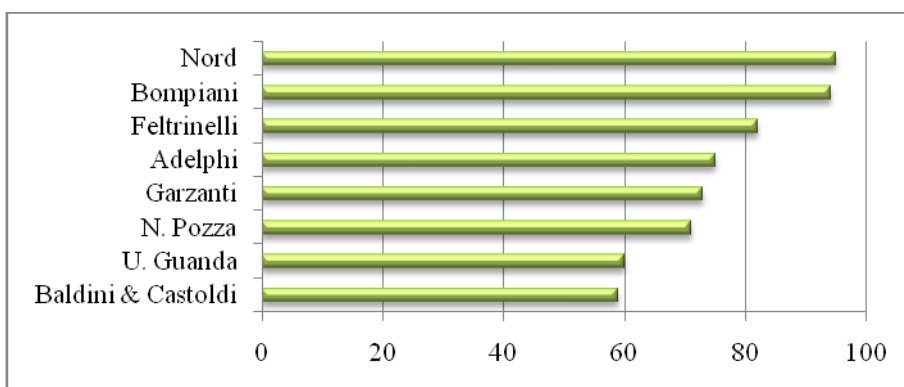
Graph 4.
Publishing houses with 50 to 100 translated titles.

For space constraints, publishing houses with a number of translations below 50 are not represented.

Graphs 5 and 6 show the yearly flows of translated literature produced by the publishing houses with over 100 translated titles:[8]
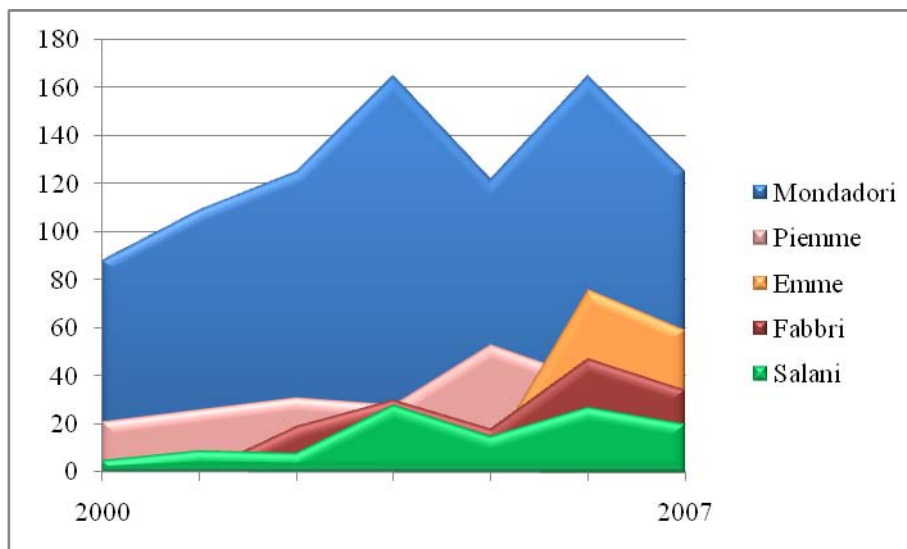
Graph 5.
Flow of translated literature: Italian publishers I.
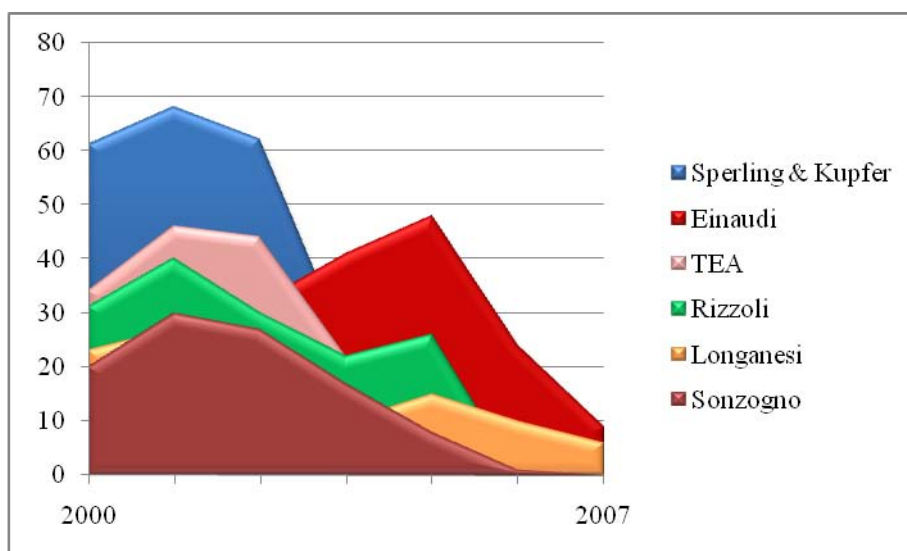
Graph 6.
Flow of translated literature: Italian publishers II.

[8] The 'abnormal' year 2005 is not taken into account as it is highly probable that the very low number of translations displayed in the database is due to incomplete information. Even though this figure is missing, the graph still serves the purpose of this study, which is to look at the general trends to have an idea of the main publishing preferences in literature translated from English into Italian.

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Graph 5 shows an overall increase in the translated literature produced by Piemme, Emme, Fabbri, and Salani. Graph 6 shows instead an overall decrease in the translated literature produced by Sperling & Kupfer, Einaudi, TEA, Rizzoli, Longanesi, and Sonzogno.

In order to understand the reasons underlying this pattern an investigation of genres was carried out.

The translated genres identified are fiction, non-fiction, and classics. Graph 7 shows the translated sub-genres involved:[9]
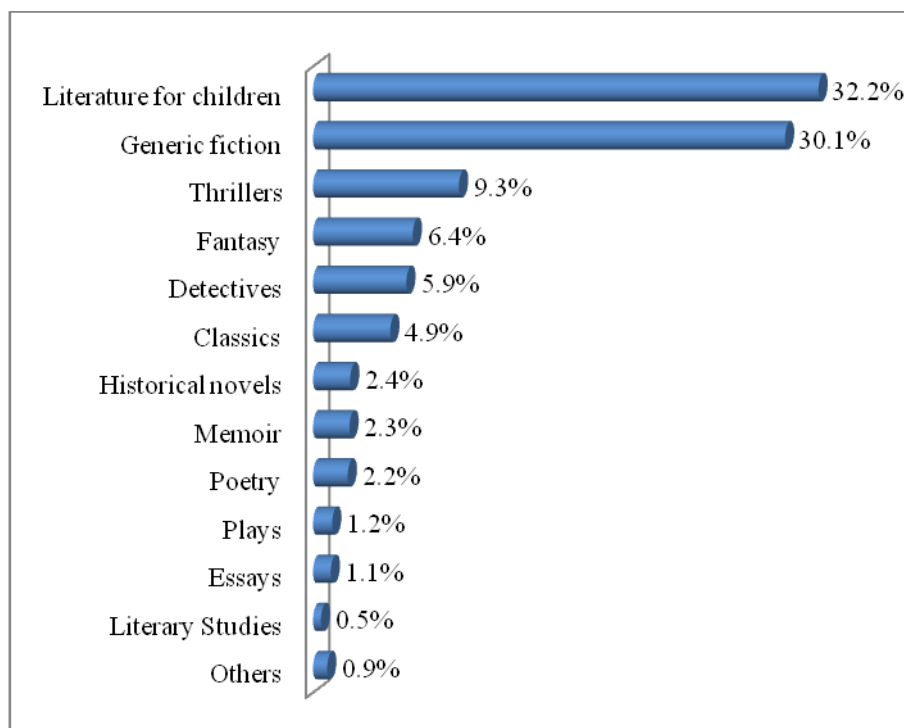
Graph 7.
Translated genres in Italy.

The most translated sub-genres are literature for children and generic fiction with over 1,000 titles each, followed by thrillers, fantasy, detectives, and classics with numbers between 200 and 500 titles. As for non-fiction, the historical novel and memoir sub-genres exceed 100 titles by little. Sub-genres below 100 titles include poetry, plays, essays, and literary studies.

Translated sub-genres can be further investigated by looking at their trends over the time span. We will consider only the main ones, which are represented in Graph 8:

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[9] Sub-genres of fiction include fantasy, detectives, thrillers, literature for children, and generic fiction. By 'generic fiction' we intend fiction-based novel writing not belonging to any of the above mentioned specific sub-genres. 'Literature for children' includes comic strips for kids, educational books, and fairy tales; 'fantasy' includes science fiction and gothic novels; 'detective' includes horror and noir. 'Memoir' and 'historical novel' are sub-genres of non-fiction, with 'memoir' including auto-, semi- and biographical works, and letters. 'Others' includes linguistics, philosophy, religion, manuals, etc.
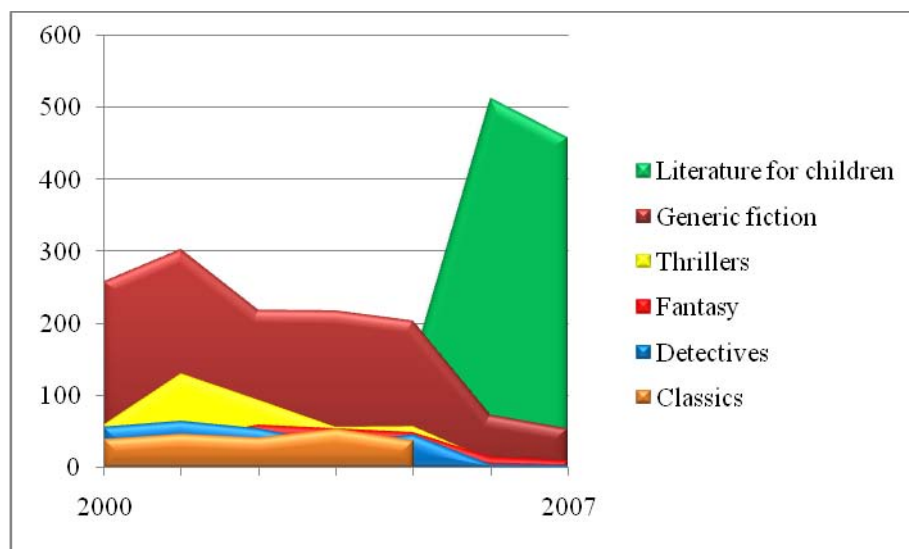
Graph 8.
Trends of translated genres in Italy.

Interestingly, literature for children is the only subgenre experiencing a considerable growth. By contrast, the translation of all the other subgenres overall decreased. The trends of generic fiction and thriller are worth discussing. Translated fiction had a peak in 2001 and remained steady around 200 titles, but then decreased dramatically and in 2007 the number of translated titles was the one quarter of what it was in 2000. Translated thrillers had the highest number of titles in 2001, but then decreased considerably by more than 50% in 2003 and 2004, and was reduced to a few publications in the last year of the time span. Detective and fantasy sub-genres have similar trends, with translations decreasing significantly in the last years. As for the other genres, the translation of classics stopped after 2004, that of plays in 2004, while the translation of poetry in 2006 and 2007 accounted for very few books.

Clearly, over the years literature for children has gained ground in translation from English into Italian. This trend is more evident if we investigate what genres occupy the two top positions in each year (Graph 9). As can be noticed, from 2000 to 2002 generic fiction and thriller occupied the two top positions. In 2003 literature for children gained second position after fiction and maintained it until 2006, when it became the most translated genre. This might be an explanation to the fact that some publishing houses remained productive in 2006 and 2007, while others in the same years did not translate anything (see Graphs 5 and 6).
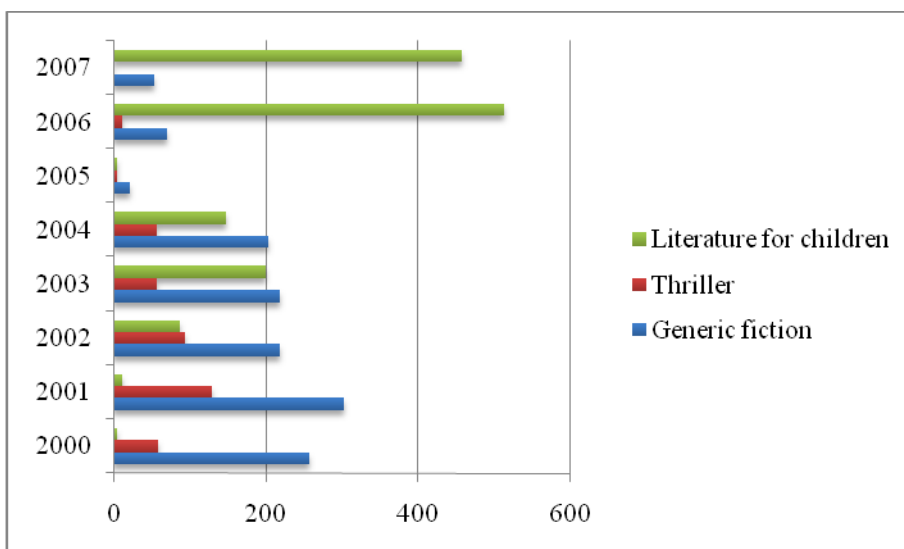
Graph 9.
Most translated genres per year in Italy.

It would be now interesting to relate the top genres identified in Graph 9 to the publishing houses represented in Graphs 5 and 6 (Graph 10):
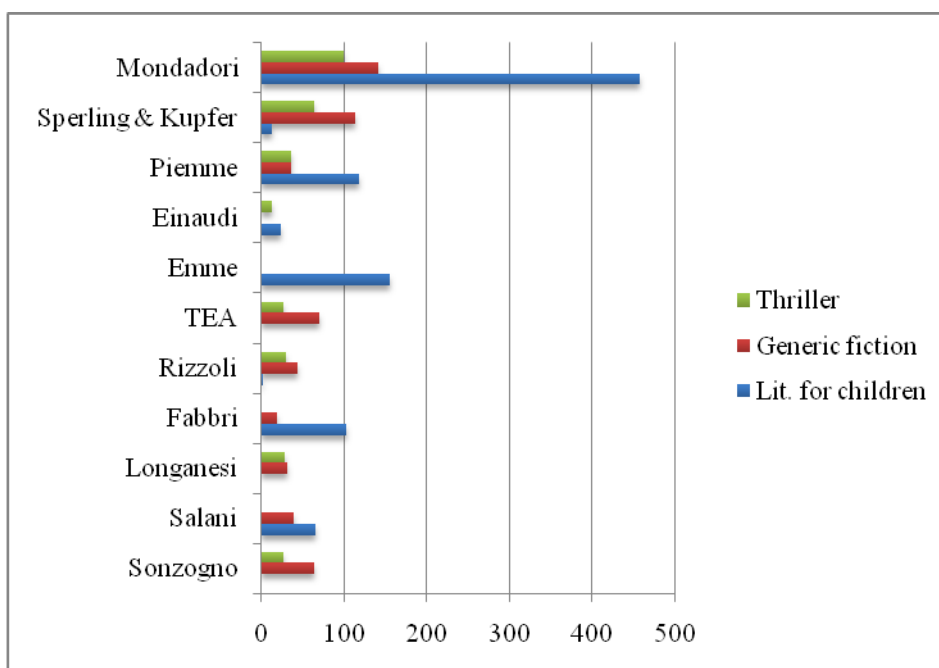
Graph 10.
Italian publishers and their main translated genres.

As can be clearly seen, Mondadori, Piemme, Emme, Fabbri, Einaudi and Salani primarily translated literature for children. By contrast, Sperling & Kupfer, TEA, Rizzoli, Longanesi and Sonzogno translated mainly generic fiction and thrillers and have continued to do so over the years, without engaging themselves in the rising genre of literature for children.

Now that the most translated genres are identified, it would be interesting to see who the most translated authors are and the genres to which their translated works belong.

Before doing so, it must be said that for 102 titles it was not possible to identify the authors, while 36 titles consist of collections of works written by different authors, for which only the editors are mentioned in the IT database. Apart from these cases, the overall number of translated authors over the 2000-2007 time span is 2,292. Considering that the most translated author has 29 titles, authors were grouped into four sets according to the number of translated titles: over 15, between 11 and 15, between 5 and 10, below 5, as shown in Graph 11:
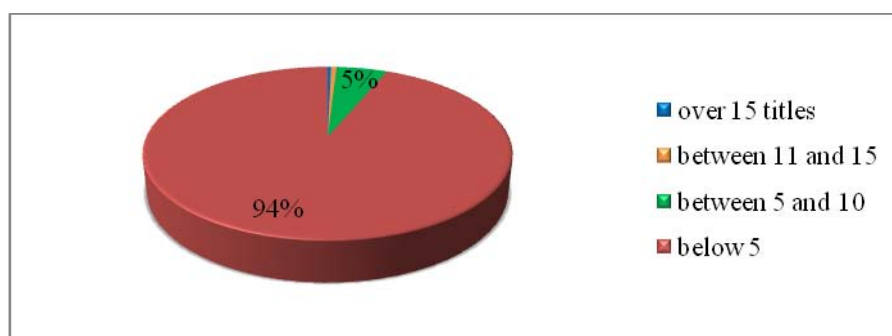
Graph 11.
Translated authors from English: level of diversification.

Due to space constraints, we will focus on authors with at least fifteen translated titles. According to this criterion eleven authors were identified: Robert L. Stine (29), Jan & Stan Berenstain (22), Stephen King (22), William Shakespeare (21), Charles Dickens (19), Cris Morrel and Gill Pittar (16), James Gelsey (16), Robert Louis Stevenson, Emma Thomson (16), Ann M. Martin (15), Daisy Meadows[10] (15). As can be clearly seen from the chart, the general strategy is towards a diversification of authors: translation is not restricted to complete series of works by the most popular authors, but also to a large variety of minor authors. And this explains why the most translated authors listed above account for only 7.9% of the total production of translated literature over the time span.

Unsurprisingly, the leading genre is literature for children with authors such as Stine, Berenstain, Morrel and Pittar, Gelsey, Thomson, Martin and Meadows, followed by the classics with Shakespeare, Dickens, and Stevenson. As for fantasy (dark fantasy and science fiction included), thrillers and horrors, King is the most translated author. It is not by chance that, according to the IT statistics, Stephen King is the ninth most translated author in the global Top 50,[11] and the eighth in the Top 10 authors translated in Italy

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[10] This is a pseudonym used for a group of writers.
[11] http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsstatexp.aspx?crit1L=5&nTyp=min&topN=50

since 1979.[12] His translated works are mostly horror (9) and dark fantasy stories (7), but also include science fiction (2), gothic novel (1), and two essays.

Stine, Thomson and Meadows were published only by Mondadori; Gelsey and Bereinstain by Piemme; Thomson by Emme; and Morrel and Pittar by EDT. As for King, almost all his works were translated by Sperling and Kupfer, while the remaining works were published by Bompiani (2), Frassinelli (1) and Mondadori (1). The strategy changes when considering new translations of the classics: for example, Shakespeare, Dickens and Stevenson were published by a number of publishing houses, such as Mondadori, Garzanti, Einaudi, Feltrinelli. It is worth noticing that, despite the rise of 'lighter' genres, classics still survive thanks to retranslations. If, unlike classics, translations do age (Berman 1990), then the aim of retranslations is to bring new elements in the target system (Toury 1999, in Sangiorgi this volume) and to revitalise the classics for contemporary audiences intervening on both language and style (see Bacigalupo; Sangiorgi; Scarpa this volume). Other most translated authors are: Lucy Cousins for children's literature (14), Mark Twain (13) and Joseph Conrad (12) for the classics, Ellis Peters (11), Elizabeth George (11) and Micheal Connelly (10) for detectives, John Le Carré (13) for thrillers.

These data allow us to draw hypothesis on the preferred strategy of the Italian translation market: gate-keeping here seems to be genre-led rather than author-led. In fact, Italian most important publishing houses seem to make choices in relation to specific, emerging genres, and to focus on leading authors within those genres. Therefore, while popular, best seller authors like King are obviously translated, minor or little known authors are still given voice in Italy as long as they fall within preferred genres. And speaking of genres, the trends suggest, as expected, that Italy imports a variety of subgenres, in particular literature for children and fantasy books. The spread of these subgenres might be related to ISTAT statistics, which report an increase in Italian young readership aged 6 to 14, from 47.4% in 2000 to 52.9% in 2006 (Morrone 2008, in Rotisciani 2010, p. 209). More specifically, readership aged 11 to 14 has increased from 53.3% to 59.8% (Morrone 2008, p. 47). This trend could have encouraged publishing houses to undertake the translation of literature for children. The interest in translating literature for children/fantasy is due not only to the popularity of books in the original language and country (e.g. *Harry Potter*), but also to screen adaptations of literary works which decades ago were very popular, e.g. *Le Cronache di Narnia* (*The Chronicles of Narnia*) and *Il Signore degli Anelli* (*The Lord of the Rings*) (Rotisciani 2011, p. 275). The success of the fantasy genre in Italy has been widely investigated. Even though fantasy

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[12] http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsstatexp.aspx

books have been criticised in terms of both plots and style, often marked as trivial, (Ciccarone 2007; Citati 2012; Detti 2007), they embed features able to produce effects exactly when the reader wants to experience them (Eco 1964, in Rotisciani 2010, p. 213). However, as Rotisciani suggests (2011, p. 278) the popularity of this genre should be investigated looking at the interrelation between its evolution on the one hand, and the cultural-historical processes on the other. This raises further issues worthy of investigation, such as, for example, the way imported genres are received by the Italian audience, along with the socio-cultural reasons underlying specific preferences over others.

2.2. Literary translation from Italian into English in the UK

Data on IT for translated works from Italian into English in the UK since 2000 are available up to 2008.[13] For this time span 233 translated titles are listed, and are distributed over the years as follows (Graph 12):
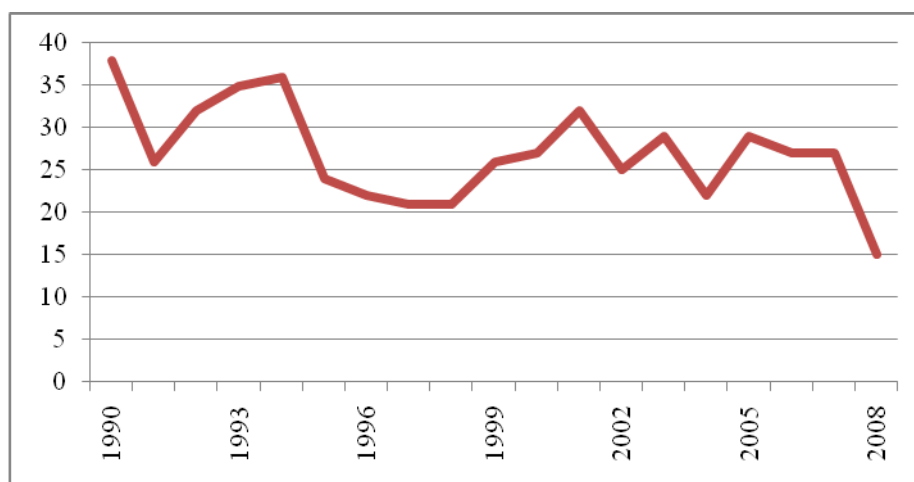
Graph 12.
Yearly number of translated books from Italian in the UK.

As can be seen, the flow of translations has overall decreased since the 1990. After a marked fluctuation in the 1990s, it has remained more or less stable around 30 titles per year until 2008, when it almost halved.

The publishing houses involved are 81. The most productive is Penguin with 28 titles overall, followed by Hesperus with 16 titles. Canogate, Scholastic, Vintage, Picador and Macmillan have 10 translated titles each, while Troubador and Harvill 7, Granta and Pan 6, Secker & Warbung 5. As we are dealing with low numbers, we will look only at the annual production of Penguin and Hesperus (Graph 13):

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[13] The 'Last Updates' section (http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bscontrib.aspx?lg=0) shows that IT has received data until 2012 and that IT staff is currently processing data relating to years 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012.
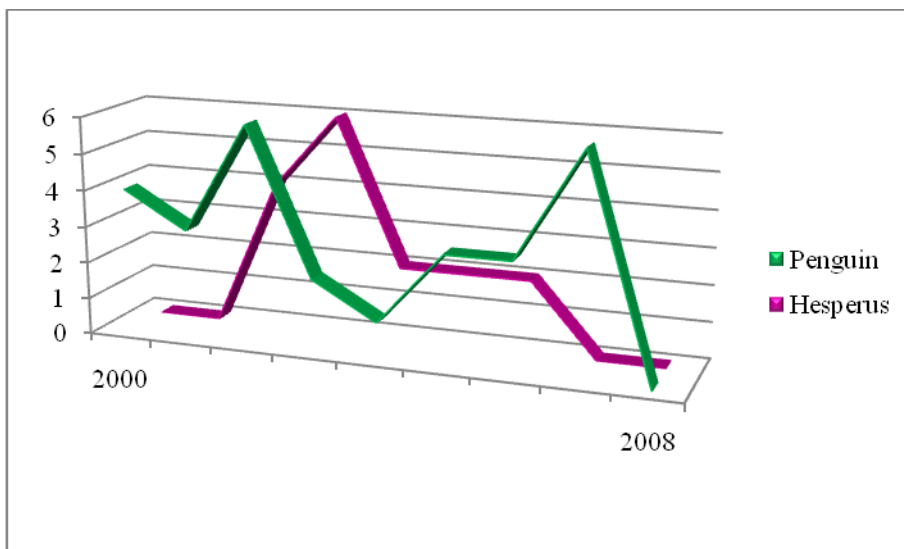
Graph 13.
Flow of translated literature: Penguin and Hesperus.

Penguin's production of translated literature overall fluctuated, with peaks in 2002 and 2007. Hesperus started to produce translations only in 2002[14] and then stopped after 2006.

As in the previous section, an investigation of the most translated genres is necessary. The genres and subgenres identified are represented in Graph 14:
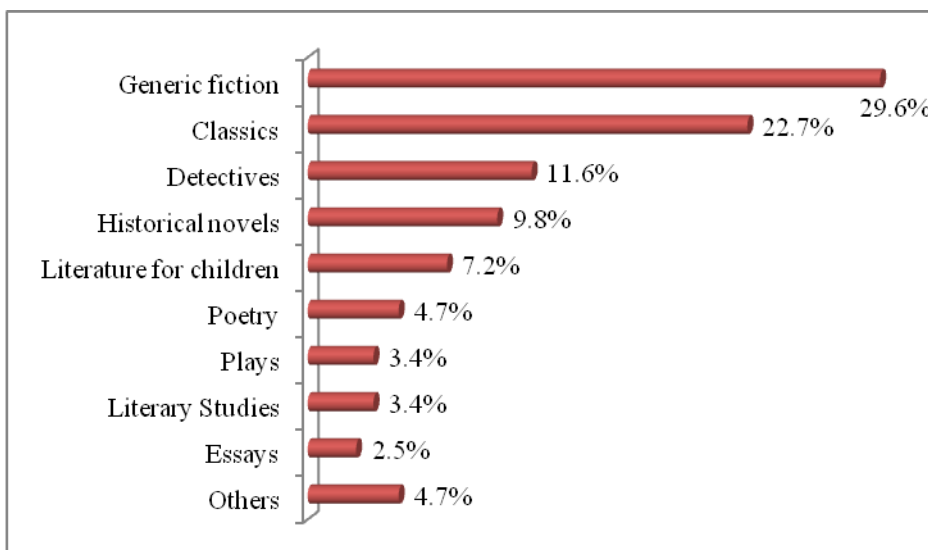
Graph 14.
Translated genres in the UK.

The most translated genres are generic fiction and classic, with over 50 titles each, followed by detective and historical novels. Literature for children has 14 titles only, while the remaining ones have all numbers below 10. Graph 15 shows the distribution of the four main genres over the time span:
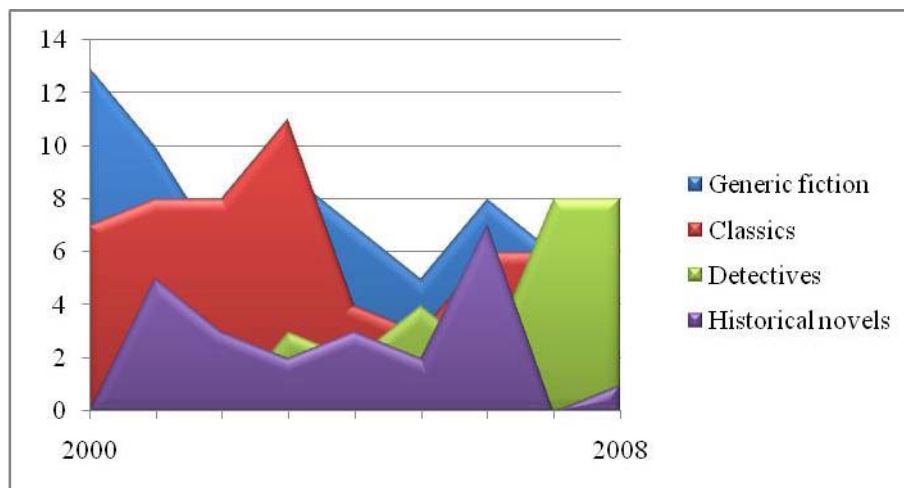
Graph 15.
Trends of translated genres in the UK.

The graph clearly shows a significant reduction of translated fiction to more than half since 2000. The translation of classics peaked in 2003, then it decreased significantly until it stopped in 2007. The detective subgenre has an opposite trend: it was not translated between 2000 and 2002, but then fluctuated around two-four translations and then it went up to eight books in 2007 and 2008. The historical novel as a translated genre fluctuated over the years and peaked in 2007.

To conclude this genre section, we can now see what genres had the two top positions in each year (Graph 16). In 2000 and 2001, the most translated genre was generic fiction, followed by the classic. However, the classic moved up to top position in 2002, but two years later generic fiction re-gained its top position. In 2005 it lost its second position in favour of literature for children and, in 2006, in favour of historical novel. The trend changed completely in 2007: the detective subgenre was in top position, followed by generic fiction and the classic. However, in 2008 only the detective and generic fiction remained in top position.
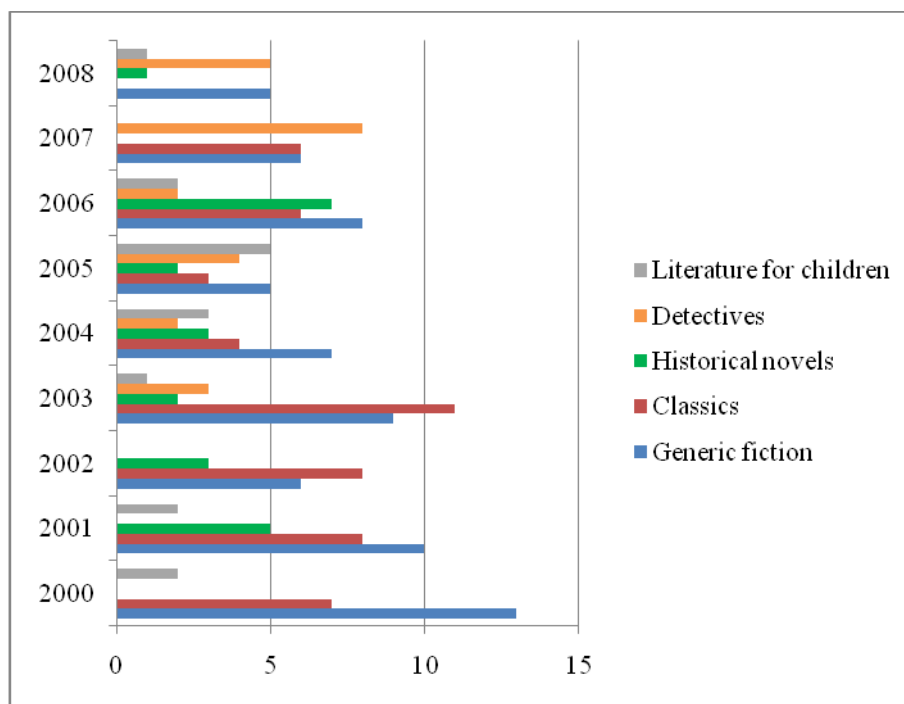
Graph 16.
Most translated genres per year in the UK.

We will now move to the most translated authors. Excluding nine collections of tales or works written by different authors, the database lists 118 authors.
The most translated author is Valerio Massimo Manfredi (19) followed by Alessandro Baricco, Dante Alighieri, and Andrea Camilleri (11 titles each). A possible explanation of the popularity of Valerio Massimo Manfredi could be found in the similarities he seems to share with Dan Brown in terms of genre and style, as said in various book reviews.[15]

Authors with a number of titles between five and ten are Primo Levi (7), Umberto Eco (7), Elisabetta Dami (6), Luigi Pirandello (5).
Differently from the data relating to Italy, the interest towards these authors is shared among several publishing houses. More specifically, Manfredi was translated by Macmillan (10), Pan (6), and W. F. Howes (3). Camilleri was translated mainly by Picador (8), but also by Wheeler Chivers (3). The only publishing house interested in Dami was Scholastic, which published many titles from the *Geronimo Stilton* series. While Levi was translated almost entirely by Penguin, Eco was translated mainly by Secker & Warburg, Dante by Penguin (4), Hesperus (2) and others, Pirandello by Hesperus (2) and others.

The leading genre is classic, with three great Italian writers (Dante Alighieri, Primo Levi, and Luigi Pirandello). As for the other genres, we have historical novels by Manfredi, the detective series *Commissario Montalbano*

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[15] See, for example, http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1850106.Pharaoh (07.08.2014).

by Camilleri and fiction novels by Baricco. As for Umberto Eco, three of the titles are fiction-based novels, while four are essays.

Other translated authors are Carlo Collodi for children's literature (3), Pietro Aretino, Giovanni Boccaccio, Italo Calvino and Leonardo Sciascia for the classics (three titles each), Michele Giuttari and Carlo Lucarelli for the detectives (four titles each).

It is worth remarking the great attention to new translations of the classics and to contemporary authors on the one hand, and the almost complete lack of fantasy genre on the other, which is due to the fact that the UK has its own rich and fascinating collective imagination, which Italy tends to import, as mentioned in Section 2.1. The only fantasy book translated from Italian into English in the UK is *L'ultimo elfo* by Silvana De Mari (English title *The Last Elf*), but it is specifically for children.

2.3. Literary translation from Italian into English in the USA

Data on IT for translated works from Italian into English in the USA since 2000 are available until 2008.[16] For this time span 318 translated titles are listed, and are distributed over the years as follows (Graph 17):
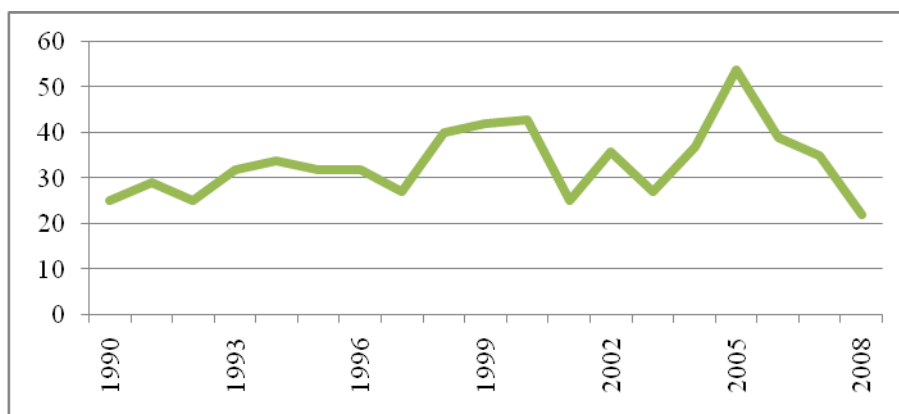
Graph 17.
Yearly number of translated books from Italian in the USA.

Translated literature overall fluctuated between around 25 and 45 books, except for a peak in 2005, after which it decreased significantly to just over half.

The publishing houses involved are 131. The most productive is Scholastic with 26 titles overall, followed by University of Chicago Press with 15 titles, New York Review Books with 13 titles, and Farrar Straus Giroux with 11 titles. Other publishing houses dealing with translated works are Harcourt, Alfred A. Knopf and Steerforth Press with 10 titles each, Dover

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[16] The 'Last Updates' section (http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bscontrib.aspx?lg=0) shows that IT has received data until 2008 and that IT staff is currently processing data relating to years 2009 and 2010.

Publications and Weekly Reader with 8 titles each, Wheeler Publishing and Penguin with 7 titles each, Gareth Stevens, Chelsea and Italica Press with 5 titles each.

Graph 18 represents the annual production of the publishing houses with over ten translated titles:
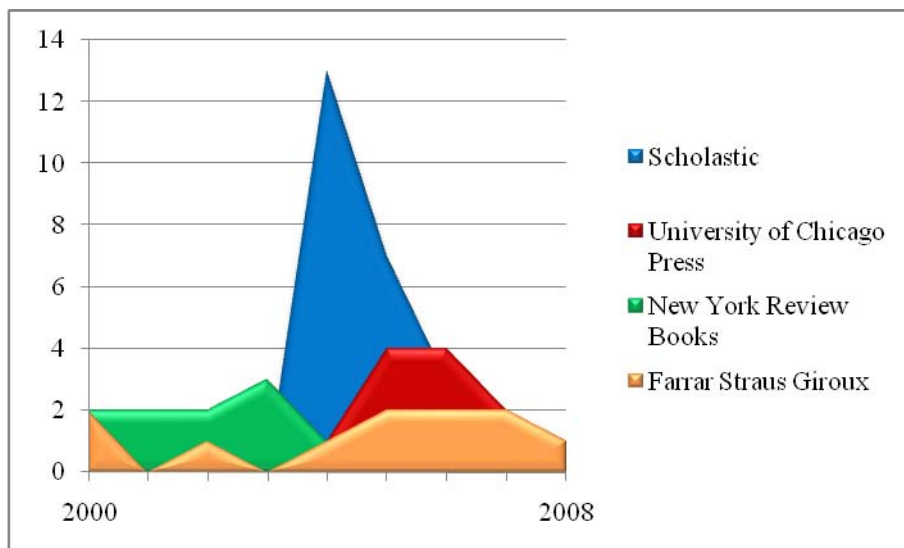
Graph 18.
Flow of translated literature: American publishers.

Particularly interesting is the trend of Scholastic,[17] which started its production of translations only in 2004 with 13 titles. In 2005 the production almost halved, then it continued to decrease until it stopped in 2007. The others do not show any particular trends, but they all had one- or two-year gaps: University of Chicago Press was unproductive in 2002 and 2003, New York Review Books in 2006 and 2008, and Farrar Straus Giroux in 2001.

The genres identified are the same as in Section 2.1. and are represented in Graph 19. Similarly to the UK database, the leading genres are generic fiction and the classics, with over 60 titles each. However, there is a third leading genre, which is literature for children (50 titles), which in the UK database is only the fifth most translated genre.

This and other differences between trends in the UK and the USA are represented in Graph 20. As can be seen, American publishing houses are far more interested in literature for children, poetry and literary studies than their British counterparts. By contrast, they have almost no interest at all in translating historical novels, and the translation of detectives is higher in the UK.

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[17] Previous research on the IT website shows that Hesperus did not produce translated works over the 1990s.

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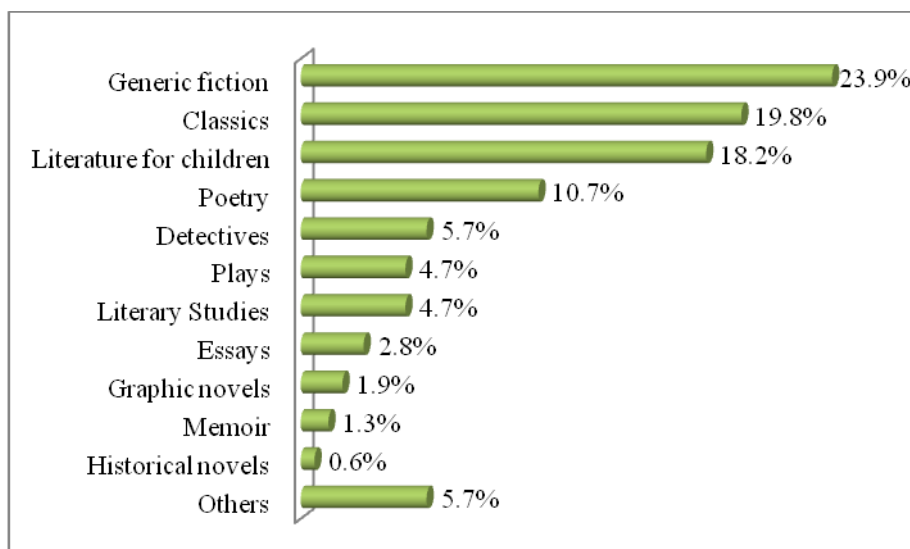
Graph 19
Translated genres in the USA.
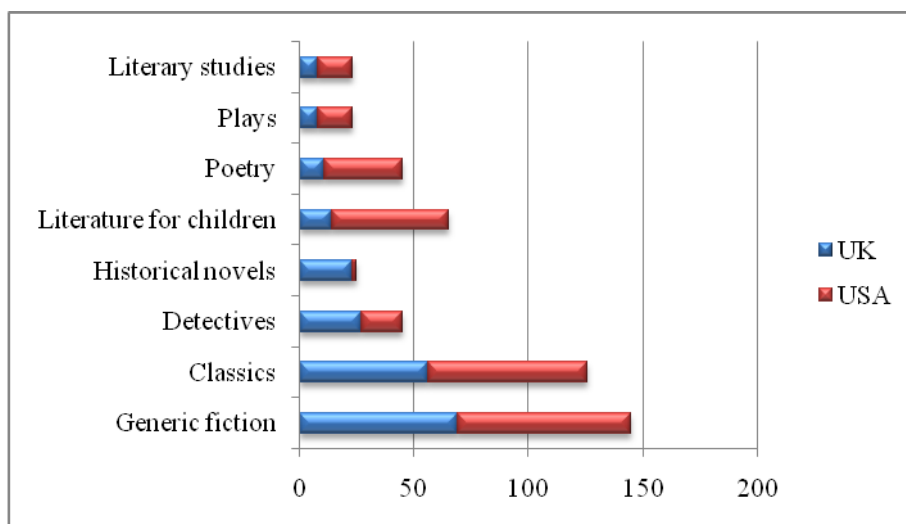
Graph 20.
The UK vs. the USA: translated genres.

Other interesting aspects arise if we look at the trends of the three main genres translated in the USA (Graph 21).

They all have different trends. After a sharp decline between 2000 and 2001, the translation of generic fiction peaked between 2005 and 2007, but then decreased again. The production of new translations of classics was high between 2000 and 2001, but then decreased and was reduced to only one book in 2008. The translation of books for children was very low at the beginning, then picked between 2004 and 2005, but decreased again over the last years of the time span.
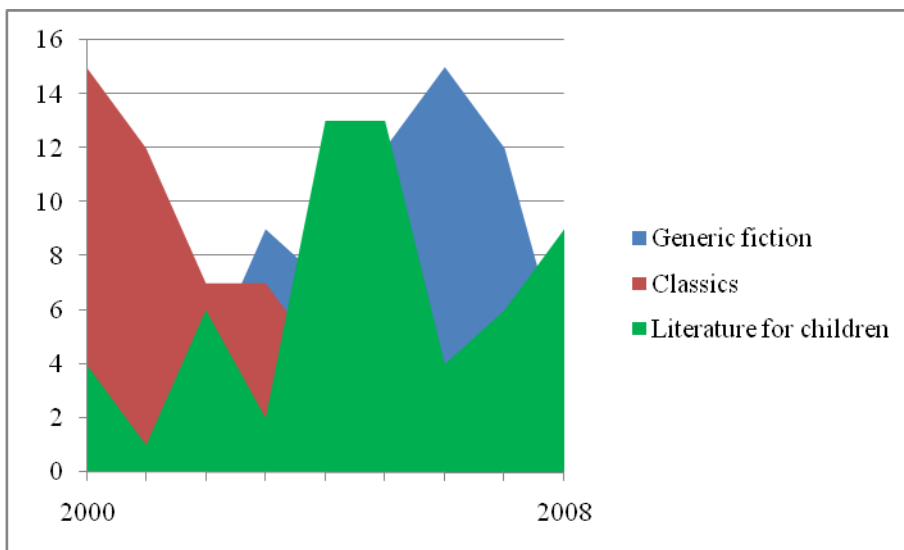
Graph 21.
Flow of translated literature in the USA.

Graph 22 shows the genres that were in the two top positions in each year of the time span.
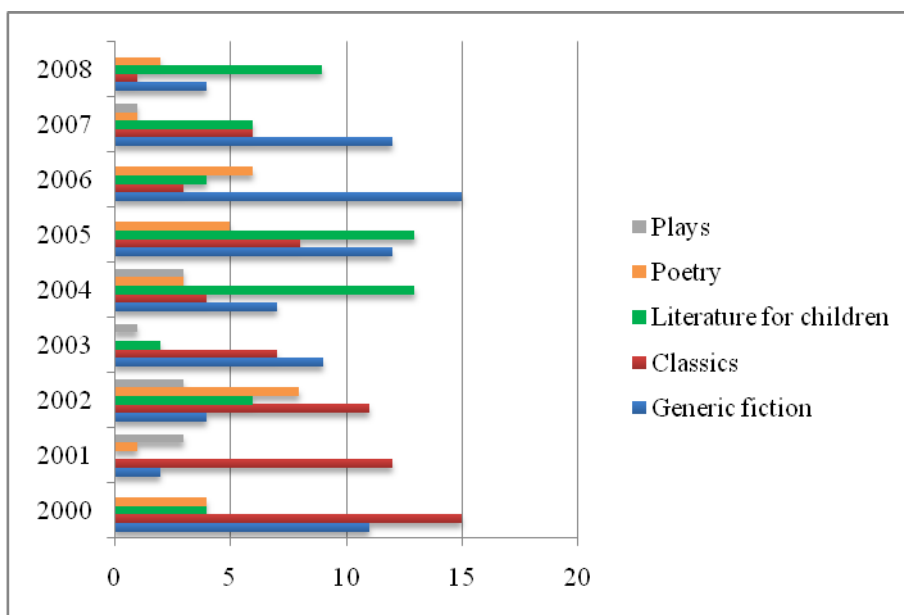
Graph 22.
Most translated genres per year in the USA.

The situation is much more diversified compared to that of Italy and the UK. The classics occupied the top position from 2000 to 2002, moved to second position in 2003 and then to third position in 2004 and 2005, the years in which literature for children was in top position, followed by generic fiction.

Only in 2007 did the classics go back to second position together with literature for children, but lost it again in 2008 in favour of generic fiction.

As far as generic fiction is concerned, it gained the top position in 2003, but moved to second position in 2004. It moved up to top position again in 2006 but lost it again in 2008 in favour of literature for children.

The graph also shows that, differently from Italy and the UK, the role of theatre and poetry has been quite important.

To conclude this section, we will now list the most translated authors. Excluding 14 titles consisting of collections edited by a number of editors, the database lists 179 authors.

The most translated author is Elisabetta Dami with 26 titles, followed by Dante Alighieri (21 titles) and Andrea Camilleri (16 titles). Authors with a number of titles between five and ten are: Umberto Eco and Sebastiano Ranchetti with 8 titles each, Carlo Collodi with 7 titles, and Luigi Pirandello with 6 titles.

Thus, for children's literature we find Elisabetta Dami again, but this time in top position. All her works were translated by Scholastic, half of them in 2004, the year in which literature for children gained the top position. The second most translated author for the same genre is Sebastiano Ranchetti, whose works were all translated by Weekly Reader Books in 2008. Carlo Collodi is also among the most translated authors for this subgenre, and his *Pinocchio* was translated by several publishing houses.

For the classic genre the leading author is Dante, whose translated works were published by a number of publishing houses, among which Dover Publications and Modern Library, and include not only his masterpieces but also literary studies.

Finally, Camilleri is the absolute leading author for the detective genre, again with titles from the *Commissario Montalbano* series. His works were translated by Penguin, Viking, and Wheeler Publishing.

To conclude this part, it is worth spending a few words on the translation of plays. Fifteen Italian plays were translated in the USA over the time span, and eight in the UK. This difference could be related to the fact that literary translation in general in the USA is higher than in the UK by around 36.4%. Even if in both cases we are dealing with small numbers (in comparison with the most translated genres for each country), a specific trend emerges: in the USA among the translated play writers we find Eduardo De Filippo (three titles), whose comedies were shown on the American TV in the 1960s,[18] and Dario Fo (two titles), who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1997. These play writers were not translated in the UK as far as the 2000-2008 time span is concerned. This is an interesting point, which would be worth investigating from a socio-cultural perspective.

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[18] http://www.enotes.com/topics/eduardo-de-filippo/critical-essays/de-filippo-eduardo

3. Comparing results

If we compare the trends detected for each country a number of interesting points arise.

Starting from Italy, the situation is very diversified in terms of publishing houses, genres, and authors if compared to those in the UK and the USA. This is due to the fact that English is the dominant source language in Italy (as well as in Europe). The main trend in Italy is the rising interest in literature for children, which overtook even evergreen subgenres such as generic fiction and thriller. As far as translated authors are concerned, the growth in translated literature for children is confirmed by a preference for books written by Robert L. Stine and Jan & Stan Berenstain. Interestingly, the third most translated author is Stephen King, although fantasy is only the fourth most translated genre in Italy.

In the UK, the tendency to translate mainly fiction books and classics finds correspondence in the preference for Valerio Massimo Manfredi and Dante Alighieri respectively. However, among the most translated authors we also find Andrea Camilleri with translated works from the *Commissario Montalbano* series.

In the USA, even though literature for children is only the third most translated genre after generic fiction and the classics, the most translated author is Elisabetta Dami, with the whole *Geronimo Stilton* series. As in the UK, Dante is the most translated author for the classic genre, followed by Camilleri for the detective genre.

It is worth highlighting the popularity of the Italian *Commissario Montalbano* series by Andrea Camilleri in Anglo-American countries. In fact, in the British Corpus Camilleri has the same number of titles as Manfredi, Baricco, and Dante even though detective is only the third most translated genre. Most impressively, 16 books by Camilleri were translated in the USA, despite the fact that detective in the USA is only the fifth most translated genre.[19]

Similarly, in Italy horror and dark fantasy works by Stephen King are very popular even though these are only the third and fourth most translated genres.

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[19] See D'Egidio (this issue), for a reader reception analysis of the translated Camilleri, and Katan (2014) for a discussion of a subtitled version of *Montalbano* appeared on BBC4, from an intercultural perspective.

4. Patronage and gate keeping in literary translation

Despite the differences in numbers between the three countries (mainly due to the fact that English is the most translated language) the trends highlighted show how preferences for certain authors and genres over others are shaped by publishers in the three countries.

In Lefevere's view of translation as "rewriting of an original text" (2004: vii), translation is regarded as "[...] manipulation, undertaken in the service of power", which "can introduce new concepts, new genres [...] but can also repress innovation [...]" (2004: vii). Thus, translation is constrained by control factors, among which we find "patronage". Lefevere (2004, p. 15) defines "patronage" as "something like the powers [...] that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature".

Patronage may be exerted by individuals, groups, institutions, publishers or the media, and has three components: ideological, economic and status component. The ideological component refers to the control exerted onto the choice and development of form and subject matters. The economic component relates to the translator's economic survival and, on a more global level, to dynamics concerning royalties and production costs (Lefevere 2000, in Asimakoulas 2009). The status component refers to the status that patrons may confer to writers, allowing them to be integrated into a specific group's style (Lefevere 1985, in Asimakoulas 2009).

If we attempt to contextualise these three components within the publishing trends highlighted in this paper, we may argue that a key role is played by the economic component, which clearly influences choices on genres and authors. Thus, the translation of literature is gate kept by publishers, who probably make decisions on preferred genres according to a series of factors. Possible factors may include trends on readership, which probably orient translation towards certain genres, or competition between publishers – hence the need to retranslate the classics as the old versions are not likely to be sold if new ones are produced by other publishers.

The ideological component could be related to the translation policies adopted by publishers and editors, which inevitably constrain the translator's work. As reported by D'Egidio (this volume), the translator of Camilleri's works, Stephen Sartarelli, has admitted in an essay (2004) that his linguistic and stylistic choices were influenced by the translation norms adopted by the publisher and the editors. The ideological component, indeed, "may be traced in omissions, shifts and additions of various kind" (Asimakoulas 2009, p. 242).

The status component has to do with the preference for best-selling authors: in Paragraph 3 we highlighted how the most translated authors usually fall in genres which are not in top position, such as Stephen King (horror and dark fantasy) in Italy, Elisabetta Dami (literature for children) in

the USA, and Andrea Camilleri (detective) in the UK and the USA.

Interesting issues on gate keeping in literary translation have been raised at the London Book Fair in 2012, which brought English and American editors and translators together to discuss publishing trends in literary translation into English. Among the aspects brought to light in the debate[20] those worth mentioning are: the tendency of publishers to expect ready audiences, which is related to the stereotypical idea publishers have about what books and/or genres will be successful, the role of 'road-opener' rather than 'gatekeeper' that small publishers are likely to assume, the lack of adequate advertising when translated books are published, and the great opportunity that publishing translated literature is for the English speaking world – and not only, we may add –, which should lead publishers to buy a translation "as if it were an artwork for their collection".[21]

5. Conclusions

The analysis of the three databases allowed us to identify the main trends characterising the flow of translation from English into Italian in Italy and from Italian into English in the UK and the USA.

This study is meant to encourage research in literary translation, as the trends highlighted open up a variety of perspectives for future investigation in literary translation, such as comparative studies, reader reception studies, issues on patronage. Furthermore, the trends detected may constitute key indications useful to professional translators wishing to publish their works or to undertake translation in new literary genres.

The IT database is currently being updated by the staff and the data relating to years subsequent to the investigated time spans are expected to be available in the near future. Thus, further investigation will be carried out in order to integrate this study with more recent publishing trends, along with investigation aimed at shedding light on gate keeping and the socio-cultural reasons underlying the trends highlighted in this paper.

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[20] http://publishingperspectives.com/2012/04/lbf-2012-the-gatekeepers-of-literary-translations/

[21] Barbara Epler, publisher of *New Directions*. http://publishingperspectives.com/2012/04/lbf-2012-the-gatekeepers-of-literary-translations/

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HOW READERS PERCEIVE
TRANSLATED LITERARY WORKS:
AN ANALYSIS OF READER RECEPTION

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Abstract – The aim of this paper is to investigate the reader's reception of translated literary texts and to explore the reader's expectations about literary works. For this purpose, three comparable corpora of British, American and Italian online book reviews commenting on the English version of Andrea Camilleri's *La forma dell'acqua* (*The Shape of Water*) and on the Italian version of Stephen King's *Joyland* were assembled and analysed. The way active target language readers perceive and evaluate a translated literary work was then explored by taking the language they actually used in book recommendation websites. The analysis demonstrates that the Anglo-American and Italian readers' reception of the translated text is different, in terms of focus and perception.

Keywords: literary translation; corpora; reader reception; book reviews.

1. Introduction

Reception theory is a particular form of reader response literary theory that emphasises the reader's reception of a literary text. In literary studies, reception theory originated from the work of German philosopher Hans-Robert Jauss in the late 1960s. In 1982 Jauss uses the term 'horizon of expectation' to describe the criteria readers use to judge literary texts in any given period. This horizon tells us how a literary work was valued and interpreted in a given time and place without establishing a fixed and final meaning. In his view, reader response does not investigate literary works directly but explores the reader's expectations about literary works based on education, knowledge and experience. According to cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1980), a text is decoded by readers in different ways, perhaps not in the way the producer intended. Many factors seem to influence the way audience members read, such as life experience, mood at the time of reading, age, culture, beliefs and gender. This means that a 'text' (i.e. a book, a movie, or other creative work) is not passively received by the audience but that readers receive and interpret a text based on their individual cultural background and everyday experience of life. Furthermore, Robert C. Holub (1984, p. 45)

defines reception theory as "a general shift in concern from the author and the work to the text and the reader", and highlights the crucial function of the reader in the process of literary experience. According to him, reception theory focuses on the role of the reader in the interpretation of a text and not on the text itself, and he defines literature as the process of how the reader and the text interact with each other.

As far as we know, most studies on Internet book reviews focus on their effects on consumer purchase intention (Chevalier and Mayzlin 2004; Lin and Chiu 2011; Lin *et al.* 2007; Yun and Wen 2010).

In this paper, we will try to explore how 'actual readers', as defined by Holub (1984) perceive and evaluate a translated literary work by taking the language actually used in book reviews as a point of reference. The aim is not to judge the translators' merits or their translation choices and strategies. Rather, by taking inspiration from the studies above we will investigate the reader's interpretation of the language and writing style in a translated text.

2. Material

This study reports on the qualitative analysis of three corpora of British, American and Italian book reviews. Book reviews in the UK and USA were published on Amazon and Goodreads,[1] and comment on the English version of Camilleri's *La forma dell'acqua* (*The Shape of Water*), translated by American poet Stephen Sartarelli for Penguin in 2002. Book reviews in Italian for Stephen King's *Joyland*, translated by Giovanni Arduino for Sperling and Kupfer in 2013, were collected from Amazon and Anobii.[2]

The choice to focus on these two literary works was guided by the results of Fina's (this volume) comprehensive analysis of recent trends in literary translation between the UK, the USA and Italy. The data for each of the three countries were retrieved from the Index Translationum[3] (IT) database (The Budapest Observatory 2010), an international bibliography managed by UNESCO and listing around 2 million entries for translated books from a number of disciplines. Fina found that the most translated authors from English into Italian are Robert L. Stine (29 books), Jan and Stan Berenstain (22 books) and Stephen King (22 books). As Stine and Berenstain write books for children, who tend not to write online book reviews, we

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[1] The choice to focus on these two book recommendation websites was guided by the data retrieved on Alexa, a tool for discovering site rankings. *Amazon.com* is one of top 10 sites and the most popular online bookstore in the world, and *Goodreads.com* is ranked as the number 241 website in the world and the world's largest site for readers and book recommendations.

[2] Anobii is a social networking site aimed at readers. It has readers in over 20 countries and is most popular in Italy, unlike Goodreads, according to the data retrieved on Alexa.

[3] http://portal.unesco.org/culture/es/files/41748/13390726483Translation_trends_1990_2005_Dec_2010.pdf/ Translation%2Btrends%2B1990_2005_Dec%2B2010.pdf

decided to focus on Stephen King, the third most translated author in Italy. It is not by chance that, according to IT statistics, Stephen King is the ninth most translated author in the global Top 50,[4] and the eighth in the Top 10 authors translated in Italy since 1979.[5] His translated works are mostly horror (9 books) and dark fantasy (7 books), but also include the science fiction sub-genre (2 books), the gothic novel (1 book), and two essays.

Regarding translation into English, Andrea Camilleri is the most translated author in the popular detective genre both in the UK and USA. Interestingly, 11 and 16 works from the popular *Commissario Montalbano* series were translated in the UK and USA respectively.

In order to ensure (as much as possible) that the texts included in the corpora were written by native speakers of English or Italian, only reviews published by readers who specified their nationality on their public profile were included. As the analysis focussed on the reader reception of the translation, reviews focussing on the content or plot were also excluded. The remaining comments were then analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. By qualitative analysis, we mean the categorisation of sentences in a book review into semantic fields. This procedure has been commonly used by Critical Discourse Analysis researchers (Baker *et al.* 2008). Through the detailed examination of each review, four semantic fields: 'translation/translator', 'author', 'language' and 'style' were identified. All the sentences under each semantic field were then quantified by using percentages and qualitatively analysed. In doing so, we could ascertain the semantic prosody, i.e. the reviewer's stance (positive, negative or neutral) on the translator/translation in general and the style of the books (see Section 3 and 4), and identify the most commented stylistic and linguistic aspects of the reviewed books (see Sections 4 and 5). Table 1 provides a summary of the composition of the three corpora in terms of total number of reader reviews collected commenting on the books *The Shape of Water* and *Joyland*; whereas Table 2 displays the percentages of comments related to the four emerging semantic fields.

Book recommendation websites	USA	UK	ITALY
Amazon	254	136	63
Goodreads	100	44	//
Anobii	//	//	100
Total number of reviews	154	180	163

Table 1.
Composition of the three corpora.

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Book recommendation websites	USA	UK	ITALY
Amazon	51%	44%	23%
Goodreads	44%	34%	//
Anobii	//	//	32%

Table 2.
Percentages of comments related to the four semantic fields.

As can be noticed in Table 2, the American and British reviewers tended to comment more on the stylistic and linguistic aspects than the Italian reviewers. These, instead, tended to focus more on the plot of the book.

3. The semantic fields of 'translation/translator' and 'author'

Generally speaking, more than 40% of the American and British reviewers included comments referring to Sartarelli's translation of *La forma dell'acqua* (*The Shape of Water*) by Camilleri, although neither negative comments nor positive comments clearly prevail in either of the English corpora (see Table 3). Also, few Italians mentioned Arduino's translation of *Joyland*.

Semantic fields of 'translation/translator'	USA	UK	ITALY
Positive comments	34%	40%	28%
Negative comments	40%	40%	44%
Neutral comments	26%	20%	28%
Total comments referring to Sartarelli's and Arduino's translations	65%	49%	15%

Table 3.
Number of positive, negative and neutral comments referring to
Sartarelli's and Arduino's translations.

Interestingly, among the positive comments the Anglo-American reviewers underline the ability of Sartarelli of translating 'smoothly' Camilleri's interlanguage into English and of even being invisible as a translator, as in (1), (2) and (3):

(1) "Great translation -didn't feel like one." (AM_Corpus)
(2) "I would've thought it was written in English, you cannot tell at all that it is translated from Italian." (UK_Corpus)
(3) "This book is translated from the Sicilian-Italian and I think the translator has done a good job." (UK_Corpus)

These positive opinions are consistent in praising fluent discourse and the translator's invisibility. This can be read in light of Lawrence Venuti's (1995) ideas on what he calls the 'illusion of transparency' when translating a foreign text:

> A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text — the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the "original." (Venuti 1995, p. 1)

It is also worth mentioning that almost all American and British reviewers appreciated the detailed explanatory notes added by the translator at the end of the book with the aim of introducing English readers to Sicilian expressions which were not translated. Also noted were the intertextual allusions to other writers and to the Italian socio-cultural context. This is evident in examples (4) to (8):

> (4) "The translator, American Stephen Sartarelli, does a fine job […] Sartarelli provides three dozen notes in the back of the book, to help Americans understand Sicilian customs and culture. This goes a long way to breaking down the barriers to the book." (AM_Corpus)
> (5) "Sartarelli has done a very good job keeping much of the dialogue quirky enough in English to convey some of the changes in dialect set out in the original. The book also contains some handy reference notes at the end that explains words and phrases that may be commonly understood by Italians but would otherwise be lost on foreigners." (AM_Corpus)
> (6) "The Shape of Water is translated quite smoothly from Italian by Stephen Sartarelli. […] Sartarelli also includes helpful notes on the text explaining cultural references and nuances, which add to the story." (AM_Corpus)
> (7) "The translator, Stephan Sartarelli, does a masterly job, especially in the rapid exchanges between the characters - even adding notes on some of the puzzling minutiae." (UK_Corpus)
> (8) "I enjoyed the notes at the back." (UK_Corpus)

The examples above show that the English readers noted Sartarelli's approach to Camilleri's language and narration through a basically domesticating method. Conversely, 40% of American and British reviewers considered Sartarelli's translation not very readable. The reviewers were aware that they were reading a translation and not the original text and judged it as inaccurate in terms of choice of words and grammar. The examples (9) to (16) clarify the Anglo-American negative perception of the *The Shape of Water*:

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(9) "The translation occasionally stumbled […] a few things needed to be read twice to fully understand them." (AM_Corpus)

(10) "Must say the translator also needed to review it once again at the copy editing level. There some points where the English broke down grammatically and I had to re-read a few times to clarify/guess." (AM_Corpus)

(11) "At no point did I find the book funny - as a previous reviewer mentioned, this may be the result of a weak translation. I suspect the plodding first few chapters are similarly the result of poor translating." (AM_Corpus)

(12) "Unfortunately, this was a rather poor translation; on several occasions I was jolted out of the book by a word or phrase that just didn't work or was wrong." (AM_Corpus)

(13) "I would guess that this book is far better in its original Italian rather than in translation. For about the first one third of the book you are very much aware that this is a translation as the writing and choice of words are often very stilted and awkward. However, as you get further into the book it's almost as if a different translator takes over as it becomes much easier to read." (UK_Corpus)

(14) "However, I found the translation somewhat stilted and jarring." (UK_Corpus)

(15) "the translation is very poor and I have failed to finish it." (UK_Corpus)

(16) "The opening chapter, until the speech set in, I was very confused. I'm not sure if it is because of how the book was translated and stuff." (UK_Corpus)

It is worth underlining that our aim is not to judge Sartarelli's translation of Camilleri's literary work but to look at the effects that the translation had on Anglo-American readers and attempt to understand the reasons behind them. However, we might suggest that one underlying cause might be that the translator was working under less than ideal conditions. The editorial market has always been guided by profit and competition to get on the market first, which represent one of the leading principles, and therefore the work of translators is a negotiation between their loyalty to the source text and the publisher's 'translation policy'. In an essay about his own translations of Camilleri, in fact, Sartarelli (2004) admits to the pressures exerted upon his stylistic and linguistic choices by the editors of his translations. As a consequence, many of his discursive strategies are directly influenced by the translational norms of the editors and of the publisher.

On the other hand, the analysis of the semantic field of 'translation/translator' in the Italian corpus, instead, shows that Italian readers tended not to mention the translation or the translator in their reviews. This can be explained by the fact that Italians are more used to reading translated books from English than Americans or British people. As Fina (this volume) found in the LAF report (2010, p. 8), the English language accounted for almost 70% of the whole literature translation production in Italy over the 1990-2005 time span.

As a result, very few comments regarding Giovanni Arduino's translation were found. Some examples are shown below:

(17) "Un traduttore che non è Tullio Dobner". (A translator that is not Tullio Dobner).

(18) "Magari un piccolo cambiamento di stile lo si può trovare a causa della traduzione, poiché Wu Ming 1 (Tullio Dobner) lascia la penna a Giovanni Arduino". (A slight change of style can probably be found due to the translation, as Wu Ming 1 (Tullio Dobner) put the words in Giovanni Arduino's hands).

Interestingly, the Italian reviewers noticed that the translator Tullio Dobner was substituted by Giovanni Arduino, and that the different style of translation was evident. Also, although reviewers had no access to the original writing qualities of the authors, the analysis of the semantic field of 'author' (in Table 4) reveals that Italian reviewers tended to praise the writing qualities of Stephen King much more than American and British reviewers did with Camilleri.

Semantic fields of 'author'	USA	UK	ITALY
Andrea Camilleri	0.05%	0.10%	
Stephen King			45%

Table 4.
Number of comments referring to the authors Andrea Camilleri and Stephen King.

The table above shows that 45% of the Italian readers gave credit to the author of *Joyland*, as can be noted in examples (19) to (23), while forgetting the ability of a translator to recreate the words of a book.

(19) "[…] per esaltare la bravura di Stephen King che scrive veramente da Dio!... Il libro inoltre è scaturito dalla penna e dal genio di Stephen King". ([…] to praise Stephen King's skills, which writes very very well!...The book also flows from Stephen King's pen and brilliance).

(20) "King si conferma sempre un ottimo scrittore". (King always proves to be an excellent writer).

(21) "La narrazione del Re è sempre brillante e fluida". (The King's writing is always stellar and fluent).

(22) "King si cala perfettamente nella parte con una scrittura fresca, giovane e con un linguaggio davvero particolare". (King has really got into the part with a fresh, lively writing and a very peculiar language).

(23) "[…] esempio della incredibile capacità di King". ([…] example of King's incredible skills).

4. The semantic fields of 'style'

An important example of the different perceptions of the literary works among readers is also represented by the importance they attribute to the writing style. Interestingly, 83% of the Italian reviewers commented about the style used by Stephen King or his translator, while only 57% of the American and British readers commented on the writing style used by Camilleri or recreated by his translator. In addition, 62% of the British and 36% of the American reviewers evaluated the style positively. Some examples of these positive comments found in the UK and American corpora are shown below:

> (24) "It was well written and easy to follow." (UK_Corpus)
> (25) "I liked the pace of the writing." (UK_Corpus)
> (26) "Excellent writing." (UK_Corpus)
> (27) "An easy book to read. It is short, the story is told in an uncomplicated manner." (AM_Corpus)
> (28) "Well-written and plotted." (AM_Corpus)
> (29) "Easily readable." (AM_Corpus)

The American reviewers tended to leave more negative comments (63%), while only 38% of negative comments were found in the British corpus. Negative comments were related mainly to Montalbano's language when conducting investigations, including the convoluted Sicilian-like syntactic structure based upon a repetitive use of subordinate clauses following Camilleri's own use of free indirect speech to reproduce the inspector Montalbano's thoughts.

Examples (30) to (42) illustrate the words used by both American and British readers to describe the reason for their negative evaluation.

> (30) "I had to read the first chapter 3 times because I felt like I had to be missing something." (AM_Corpus)
> (31) "There were times when he clearly should have paused to indicate a shift from one situation to the next, and he didn't, which was momentarily confusing, as I had to reorient myself after realizing the scene had changed." (AM_Corpus)
> (32) "I had trouble getting into the book at first, but it picked up in the second half."(AM_Corpus)
> (33) "The writing style was confusing." (AM_Corpus)
> (34) "It took me a while to get into Camilleri's style of writing, but I came to like it in the end." (AM_Corpus)
> (35) "It was hard to get really into it the first few pages but afterward it was pretty good." (AM_Corpus)
> (36) "It took me a bit to get used to the long sentences […] the style came across odd to me." (AM_Corpus)

(37) "The book's main drawback is that the sentence structure is often extremely long and convoluted. The last sentence on the first page has 96 words in it, for example." (UK_Corpus)

(38) "Lots of unbelievably long sentences." (UK_Corpus)

(39) "The book seems to be continuous with no chapters (though there are gaps) and sentences running on for a whole page in some instances." (UK_Corpus)

(40) "At the start particularly there are some over-long sentences: at the end of page 5 there is one of over 100 words and the following sentence is 61 words long." (UK_Corpus)

(41) "I think I went through 2 pages without encountering a full stop or any other grammatical mark that may allow one to pause for breath." (UK_Corpus)

(42) "Some of the sentences in this translation are so awkward and convoluted." (UK_Corpus)

Positive and negative evaluations clearly convey the reviewer's subjectivity; however, one might relate the higher frequency of the American difficulty with reading to a well-noted difference between Italian, British and American preferred communication orientations. For example, Hall ([1976]1989) and Katan (2004) argue that the English culture is a Low Context Culture (with the American preferring even more Low Context than the British). The examples above confirm that Anglo-American people prefer a more synthetic and simplified writing style. This approach is popularly termed "KISS": keep it short and simple. Furthermore, as already pointed out by Katan (2004, p. 273), "An essential feature of the KISS principle is the sensitivity to information load", i.e. "the speed at which new information is introduced […]. Some languages introduce information slowly. Others use complicated noun phrases which allow for information to be introduced more rapidly" (Larson 1984, p. 438 in Katan 2004, p. 273). So, the use of long sentences and the rapid introduction to new information lead the Anglo-American (and in particular the American) readers to define Camilleri's (and his translator's) writing style as 'awkward' and 'confusing'.

As previously mentioned, 83% of the Italian reviewers focussed on the writing style used by Stephen King or his translator. The content analysis of the comments however revealed that Italian readers tended to be generic and did not include the detailed opinions that the Anglo-American reviewers did. The most frequent evaluative expressions are shown in examples (43) to (46):

(43) "Lettura molto scorrevole" (Very fluent writing)

(44) "Scritto bene, in maniera scorrevole" (Well-written, fluent writing)

(45) "Si legge bene, scorrevole" (Easy to read, fluent)

(46) "Prosa scorrevole" (Fluent writing)

5. The semantic fields of 'language'

Here we analysed reviewers' opinions regarding the language used in the two translations. In line with the comment in the previous section, Italian reviewers tended not to write detailed opinions regarding style or language. As a result, only 5 (out of 47) comments about the language used – a secret carnival lingo based on invented words and real slang, the Talk – were found, and are reported below:

> (47) "Condito dal solito fastidioso slang ammiccante pieno di pseudo-neologismi che forse costituiscono un problema per i traduttori ma nulla aggiungono alla narrazione." (Animated with the usual annoying and alluring slang full of pseudo-neologisms which maybe are a problem for translators and nothing add to the translation).
> (48) "A Joyland si utilizza un "gergo" particolare, un linguaggio che l'autore si è inventato di sana pianta (credo!). Temo che la traduzione pecchi un po', perché certi termini proprio non si possono sentire!!!!" (At Joyland they use a specific "lingo", a language which the author pulled out of the air (I guess!). I suspect the translation is a bit lacking because some terms should not be heard!!!!).
> (49) "Qui si diverte con "La Parlata", lo slang di chi lavora nel parco di divertimenti." (Here he has fun with "The Talk", the slang used by the people working in the amusement park).
> (50) "In Joyland King decide di calcare la mano al punto da inventarsi di sana pianta un gergo segreto (La Parlata) che chi lavora al parco divertimenti utilizza per non farsi capire." (In Joyland King decides to exaggerate and pulled a secret lingo (The Talk) out of the air, which people working at the amusement park use in order not to be understood).
> (51) "Proprio il linguaggio usato, lo stile scanzonato e rilassato e l'utilizzo del gergo sono riusciti a farmi calare nella narrazione facendomi leggere il libro molto velocemente e facendomelo apprezzare." (The language used, the easygoing style and the use of the lingo made me get into the story causing me to read the book quickly and appreciate it).

As can be seen below, the Anglo-American reviewers tended once again to be more detailed when sharing their opinions on these book recommendation websites. 43% and 54% of comments referring to the semantic field of 'language' were found in the American and British corpora respectively. More specifically, the expressions used to comment on specific linguistic aspects of the translation focussed on the presence of the high number of Italian names, Italianized Sicilian words, expressions, exclamations, idioms, names of typical Sicilian food, and last but not least on the sense of humour that runs throughout the book. For the majority of Anglo-American readers the Italian names were confusing and difficult to remember, as can be noted in examples (52) to (57):

(52) "Others may have difficulty with the long, unknown Italian names, or the characters and situations raised once, from which we never again hear." (AM_Corpus)

(53) "There are too many characters who are indistinguishable, and the geography and governmental structure of Sicily makes everything hard to follow." (AM_Corpus)

(54) "The names of people and places in Sicily may be a little overwhelming too at first, but don't give up! Read on!" (AM_Corpus)

(55) "It was a difficult book to read because I have a bad memory of names, so I will continue to watch the DVD's." (UK_Corpus)

(56) "The Italian names were confusing and difficult to attach to the characters and I repeatedly had to refer back to previous chapters in order to link names to events." (UK_Corpus)

(57) "[…] occasionally confused the similar-ish Italian names." (UK_Corpus)

Yet, though the Anglo-American readers had difficulty with the long Italian names, they appreciated the strong sense of place evoked by the extensive use of Italianized Sicilian terms and dialect, which add a certain foreignness to the narrative conveying the local flavour. This is evident in examples (58) to (70):

(58) "The book gives a very tangible sense of Sicily." (AM_Corpus)

(59) "I like the insights into Italian culture and the references to local cuisine and history." (AM_Corpus)

(60) "Camilleri evokes a strong sense of place here, there are rarely any distractions which get in the way of either the main plot or the characters." (AM_Corpus)

(61) "It had a lot of "flavor" of the locality." (AM_Corpus)

(62) "[…] with broad ethnic humor including well-rendered translations of local dialects that connote ignorance and peasantry." (AM_Corpus)

(63) "Apparently much of the dialogue in the original is very idiomatic and reflects much of the slang common to Sicily. Sartarelli has done a very good job keeping much of the dialogue quirky enough in English to convey some of the changes in dialect set out in the original." (AM_Corpus)

(64) "The use of language in translation gives accurate and wonderful insight into Sicilian attitudes to Italy and Italian attitudes in general." (UK_Corpus)

(65) "You can taste Sicily through the page." (UK_Corpus)

(66) "This, like all Montalbano novels give a great insight into real Italian life." (UK_Corpus)

(67) "The author's style [...] creates a great sense of place, although I've never visited Sicily myself." (UK_Corpus)

(68) "I think the translator has done a good job adding the Sicilian flavour to it." (UK_Corpus)

(69) "Comic Italian accents and dialects added for effect! Excellent." (UK_Corpus)

(70) "It must have been hell creating English style out of Camilleri's colloquialisms, but it's really worth the work." (UK_Corpus)

Clearly, the Anglo-American readers recognized Sartarelli's attempt to remain as close to Camilleri's language style as possible since the use of the Italianized Sicilian words and dialect constitutes an intrinsic part of his style.

Sartarelli also appears to convey a *dry*, *wry*, *subtle* humour in the book. Some examples are illustrated below:

(71) "There is a lot of subtle humor in the book." (UK_Corpus)
(72) "[…] with a vein of humour throughout." (UK_Corpus)
(73) "[…] with spots of humour throughout." (UK_Corpus)
(74) "[…] and there's a sarcastic sense of humor that floats in the background of this book." (AM_Corpus)
(75) "I liked the dry sense of humor that ran as an undercurrent to the violence of modern-day Sicily." (AM_Corpus)
(76) "A great mystery amply bolstered by subtle humor." (AM_Corpus)

3. Conclusions

In this paper we explored how actual readers evaluate a translated literary work by taking the language they used in online book reviews as a point of reference. Moreover, we investigated the readers' interpretation of the language and writing style in the translated text, which is the result of both a reaction to their expectations of the genre norm and their literary experience and cultural background.

Generally speaking, the American and British reviewers commented more on the stylistic and linguistic aspects of the translation itself than the Italians did because they found the language difficult. As a result, Anglo-American reviewers appreciated the detailed explanatory notes added by the translator at the end of the book with the aim of introducing them to the Italian socio-cultural and linguistic background. Furthermore, if the sense of humour had been conveyed, they found the presence of a high number of Italian names confusing and difficult to remember. In particular, the American readers defined the syntactic structure of the translated book as complex. On the other hand, Italian reviewers focussed more on the plot than on the style or the language used by the author or his translator. Very few comments on the translation itself were found. Conversely, they praised the writing qualities of the author.

Finally, the Italian reviewers tended not to write detailed opinions about stylistic and linguistic features of a translated book. This suggests that they did not notice the effort the translator made to be invisible or to adopt a domesticating method, which certainly helped the book become popular – but not the translator.

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PART II | Translators at work

Talking about their own translations

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF UMBERTO ECO'S
IL CIMITERO DI PRAGA

RICHARD DIXON
Translator

Abstract – The translation of Umberto Eco's latest novel raised various practical considerations. First, historical context: all of the main characters, except the protagonist, actually exist; most of the events around which the story is told actually happened; this means that the story must not only sound right, but it has to be right. Second, the action in the novel moves between Piedmont, Sicily and Paris, and involves negotiating between three languages: the cultural context suggests that certain words should be left in Italian, while others were better translated into French. Third, the story is told mainly through diaries written in the last years of the 19th century: the vocabulary in the target language therefore had to be appropriate for that period. Fourth, to place the English reader in the same position as the Italian reader, particularly in understanding Latin expressions, a little help could occasionally be given. Fifth, it was important to render the diversity of the three different voices of the Narrator, Simone Simonini and Abbé Della Piccola, as well as changes in pace and style. The task of the translator, in the end, is to try to produce the same effect for an English reader as the author has tried to produce for an Italian reader. It involves working on sound and rhythm – it involves trying to find the voice of the author.

Keywords: Umberto Eco, Prague Cemetery, translation.

1. Introduction

I would like to begin by telling you the story of *Il Cimitero di Praga* as seen through the eyes of the translator.

The main character is Simone Simonini, born in Turin in 1830. His mother dies when he is still a child; his father is away fighting for a united Italy and is killed in Rome in 1848. He is brought up by his grandfather, an old reactionary who houses Jesuit refugees and hates the Jews. The French Revolution, he says, was planned by the Knights Templars, the Bavarian Illuminati and the Jacobins, but behind them were the Jews.

Simonini studies law. After his grandfather's death he is employed by a crooked *notaio* who teaches him the art of forgery. His skills bring him to the attention of the Piedmont secret service who decide he might be useful. He is sent to Palermo in 1860, to follow Garibaldi's advance through Sicily. The Kingdom of Piedmont is worried that Garibaldi's fame might eclipse that of

their king, Vittorio Emanuele, or worse still, that he might proclaim a republic.

He meets Alexander Dumas, Nino Bixio and Ippolito Nievo. Simonini is ordered to destroy some heavily guarded documents in Nievo's possession. To do so, he blows up the ship on which Nievo is sailing, with the loss of all lives. Simonini has gone too far. He is banished to Paris.

He arrives there in 1861. We are now a third of the way through the novel. The remainder of the story is set here, where he sets up business forging documents in rooms over a junk shop near Place Maubert. He also works for the French secret service as a forger and fixer. Over the next thirty-five years he lays traps for revolutionaries fighting against Napoleon III, provides intelligence during the days of the Paris Commune and forges the *bordereau*, the famous secret note that would trigger the Dreyfus Affair.

All of this earns him enough to pay the bills and to indulge his passion for fine food, but he wants to retire on a decent pension. He hatches a plan to forge what will one day become the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a document that claimed the Jews were plotting world dominion. Simonini's idea is first inspired by an account of a masonic gathering in Alexander Dumas's *Joseph Balsamo*, and he gradually embroiders it using other sources, each inspired by the other – Eugene Sue's *Les Mystéres du Peuple,* Maurice Joly's *Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu* and a novel called *Biarritz* by a Prussian secret agent called Hermann Goedsche who uses Sir John Retcliffe as a *nom de plume*.

This story is told through diary entries written over a period of three weeks in 1897. But why? Because Simonini wakes up one morning suffering from loss of memory. He has suffered some kind of trauma and has to find out what has happened. Years earlier he had met a young doctor training at the Salpetrière Hospital, a certain Doctor Froïde, who had told him about *talking cures*. "Nothing in the world", says Simonini, "would persuade me to retell my story to a good Christian, let alone to a Jew", (p. 44)[1] and so he decides to write down all he can remember in the hope that the hidden trauma might re-surface.

He works long hours to complete his account, but each time he falls asleep he wakes to find that someone has been at his diary, a mysterious Abbé Dalla Piccola, who seems to know far too much about Simonini's life. Dalla Piccola has his own story to tell, involving Freemasonry and the Catholic Church, and introduces another historical character, Léo Taxil, one of the greatest hoaxers of the 19th century.

So the novel has three voices: the Narrator, Simone Simonini and Abbé Dalla Piccola.

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[1] Page references are to the English translation, *The Prague Cemetery*, published by Harvill Secker, London in 2011; references in Italian are to the original published by Bompiani in 2010.

2. Historical context

As Eco explains in the postscript to the novel, "the only fictitious character in this story is the protagonist" (p. 433). From the translator's point of view, this means that the story must not only 'sound' right but has to be translated using words that are compatible with the historical context. Much of what Eco describes is well-documented: it was therefore essential during the translation process to go back to the sources.

For example, Eco gives detailed descriptions of events in Rome in 1848 and 1849; he uses eye-witness accounts of Garibaldi's advance through Sicily in 1860; we follow the Prussian invasion of Paris in 1869, the Paris Commune of 1870, the rise of anti-Semitism and the Dreyfus Affair in 1895. Military, political and social detail had to be historically correct – and that means accurate in English.

But the same accuracy is applied to those passages describing the treatment of hysteria, the benefits of cocaine, developments in bomb-making, Paris's most famous restaurants as well as its most disreputable brothels and brasseries, its strange religious cults and its myriad brands of freemasonry.

Eco is just as demanding when he indulges in his passion for lists, whether it is the long list of furnishings in Simonini's rooms over the junk shop in the opening pages of the novel, or the religious institutions suppressed by the Piedmont state (p. 80), or the half page of honorary titles given to a certain General Pike, the Grand Master of Universal Freemasonry, a man, it is said, who had a hand in Lincoln's assassination (p. 313).

There is no point in describing all the sources used, but I doubt whether such extensive research would have been possible before the arrival of the internet, and even long hours in libraries would be a poor substitute for the wealth of information more or less instantly available today. In short, in the days of the internet the translator has the tools to do a more reliable job than ever before.

3. Negotiating between three languages

With most translation jobs it is a simple question of moving everything from one language to another. But here the translation involved negotiating between three languages: some of the text had to remain in Italian, some was in French and had to remain so, and some seemed better translated from Italian into French rather than English. All of this helped to give a sense of place, a sense of foreignness.

3.1. Italian

Food plays a conspicuous role in the novel.[2] Names of Italian dishes obviously remained in Italian: most English readers are familiar with Italian menus, and to translate them would sound odd, or plain stupid.

What about titles? What was I to do with names like *avvocato* Simonini, *notaio* Rebaudengo or *cavalier* Bianco. The English don't use this kind of title – they don't translate well. And the meaning was clear from the context, so I left them as they were, rendering each title with initial capitals as it would be in English.

3.2. French

Two-thirds of the book takes place in France and the Italian text already used many French words. Descriptions were liberally scattered with such words as *arrondissement*, *mouchards*, *coiffeuse*, *flics* or *tombeur de femmes*.

The cultural proximity of England and France made it natural to translate many Italian words into French rather than English. In some cases there is really no choice – "per eccellenza" has to be *par excellence;* "colpo di grazia" and "colpo di teatro" naturally become *coup de grace* and *coup de théâtre,* and the same for "colpo di stato".

Not so obvious was *birreria.* My English dictionary gave me "ale-house", "public-house", "brewery", and I confess it took me a little while to realize that the obvious translation was *brasserie.* Likewise, the word *federato*, the soldier fighting to defend the Paris Commune, is generally referred to in the history books with the French word *fédéré.* But the dictionary gave me *federate* or *confederate* – fine for the American Civil War, but not here, so I used the French *fédéré.*

I rendered titles in French, and so "notaio Fournier" became *Maître Fournier* and, most importantly, "abate Dalla Piccola" became *Abbé Dalla Piccola.*

Most restaurant menus were already in French, but here again I translated into French when necessary, so that "bouillabaise alla nizzarda" became *bouillabaise à la nicoise*, "fegato d'oca" became *foie d'oie* and "trippa alla moda di Caen" became *tripes à la mode de Caen.*

But where should I stop? On page 19, Simonini walks through Place Maubert, the haunt of prostitutes who smell of cheap perfume mixed with sweat. And so, he says, "when I saw one of them approaching I would whirl my stick full circle, as if to form an inaccessible area of protection around me" [*una zona protetta e inaccessibile* (p. 28)]. Fair enough, but why, asks

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[2] This is one area – Eco recently admitted – where, to judge from the reviews, he has failed in his intention: Simonini's substitution of food for sex was supposed to nauseate readers (interview with David Aaronovitch, Jewish Book Week, London, 26.02.2012).

one reader,[3] didn't I use the more obvious French expression *cordon sanitaire*? Why indeed. Perhaps here I stuck too close to the original. I don't know.

4. Choice of vocabulary

Simonini and Abbé Dalla Piccola are writing their diary in 1897 and so it seemed natural to ensure that all the words I used in the translation would have been available at that time. This is something easily done – the OED is invaluable in this respect.

There is only one word, so far as I am aware, that Simonini couldn't have used. At the beginning of chapter 9, Simonini finds himself in a notorious bar called *Père Lunette,* sitting next to a woman who is drinking her "ennesimo absinthe" (p. 190). The only translation for "ennesimo", I think, is "umpteenth". But "umpteenth" came into the English language as British army slang during the First World War. It seemed such a small point that I decided to allow myself this slight anachronism. It was only recently, however, that I begin to wonder whether "ennesimo" itself was perhaps a later arrival into the Italian language, and that perhaps Simonini couldn't have used it in Italian either.

Another word I had doubts about was "gaffe" (p. 48). It didn't sound right. In fact, checking it out, I found that it didn't enter the English language until the early 20th century. The better word was *faux pas*, which had been in regular usage since the 17th century.

The same reasoning led to the removal of a "hamster wheel". There is a description of a masonic ritual (p. 290) where an initiate was blindfolded and had to go through various trials. At one point he had to climb an "everlasting staircase", which gave him the feeling of climbing higher and higher when in fact he was at exactly the same height all the time. Eco's original version described this everlasting staircase as being like a hamster wheel. But hamsters were not domesticated until the 1930s and the first reference to hamster wheels does not appear until the late 1940s. Simonini could not have used the expression hamster wheel. I had rather destroyed Eco's graphic description, but he agreed it had to go.

Another change was made for a similar reason. In the original version, during the days of the Paris Commune of 1870, Simonini is offered a glass of Grand Marnier (p. 292). But Grand Marnier was first produced in 1880, ten years later. It is true that Simonini was writing down these recollections in 1897, and so he might have made a mistake when recalling what had happened twenty-seven years earlier, but Eco agreed it would be safer to

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[3] Personal email.

change Grand Marnier to something else, so it became Green Chartreuse (p. 242).

For idiomatic expressions, an invaluable resource is the Google Ngram Viewer. This trawls a corpus of books between 1500 and 2008 and produces a graph showing the use of a particular word or phrase over that period. For individual words, such as "hamster" or "gaffe" it gives very much the same result as the OED, but is very useful when trying to find out when particular sayings or phrases first came into common use.

When it came to the translation of individual words, I had great difficulty, oddly enough, with the very first and the very last word of the book.

Chapter I begins: "Il passante che in quella grigia mattina del marzo 1897...". The obvious translation of "passante" is *passerby*, but here it doesn't quite fit. This is not a hypothetical person whom we see passing by, but someone we follow over place Maubert, down a narrow alley, into a junk shop and up a flight of stairs, to a room in which we see a figure at a desk, who turns out to be Simonini. So hardly a "passerby". I thought of starting it like this: *On that grey morning in March 1897, a person crossing...* but Eco felt it didn't work, and he was right. So the novel begins *A passerby on that grey morning in March 1897*. And yet I still worry whether it's quite right.

Similarly, the very last words of the novel are: "non sono ancora un rammollito". "Rammollito": *I'm not yet a ... rammollito.*" "Soft in the head", "reached my dotage", "doddering old fool", "old codger"...? In the end I chose: *I'm not yet a decrepit old fool*. But it doesn't have quite the same ring as the original.

5. Placing English readers in the same position as Italian readers

Eco is not always an easy read. There are times when it's useful to have a dictionary close at hand. But there are also times when the plot takes over and his story moves swiftly and easily. This has to be reflected in the translation. The English reader ought to be placed in more or less the same position as the Italian reader. This point is relevant to every translation, and so I don't wish to labour it.

Generally speaking, however, I try to avoid Latinate words and look for the vocabulary that sounds most natural. But this isn't always possible, and one particular example comes to mind. The title of chapter 15 is *Dalla Piccola Redivivo*. The word "redivivus" exists in English – it appears in the Shorter OED – but my spell-check doesn't like it and it is certainly far less common in English than *redivivo* in Italian. And yet "reborn" or "back to life" seemed just a little too weak. There seemed to be no real alternative to

"redivivus". So that was the word I chose, knowing that the English reader would have to work just a little harder.

Earlier I talked about negotiating between three languages but there is, in fact, a fourth: Latin. Here Italian readers are likely to be at an advantage over English-language readers, and so with Eco's agreement a little help was occasionally given.

It was vital, for example, that readers should understand the phrase *Odi ergo sum* – so vital that it was followed by a translation: "I hate therefore I am" (p. 16).

Likewise *carmina dant panem*. Readers need to know here that it's a misquotation. And so it became: "*carmina dant panem* – poetry *does* give you bread" (p. 29). Italicizing "does" indicates there's a little more to it.

Other phrases, such as "*lippis notum et tonsoribus*" (p. 409) were less easily translatable and it seemed safe to leave them in the air. And after all, the internet is there for any reader who wants to research a little further.

6. Three voices

As previously mentioned, there are three different voices in the novel – those of Simonini, Dalla Piccola (his alter ego) and the Narrator. Each of their accounts is printed in a different typeface, but each voice also has to 'sound' different.

First, there is the Narrator. He sets the scene in Chapter One and helps to move the story along in later chapters.

The main voice is Simonini, the anti-Semitic, psychopathic protagonist. Eco, in describing him, says: "I have tried to make the main character the most cynical and disagreeable in all the history of literature".[4] In other interviews, he frequently uses the word "grotesque". This image was important when it came to choice of words. What was the best translation of a particular adjective, describing a particular situation? It was often the word that highlighted the grotesqueness of the situation, that emphasized Simonini's repugnance as a character.

With Dalla Piccola it was more difficult. His voice is often nebulous and confused – it's not clear at first whether he is a real character or a figment of Simonini's imagination. Here it was a question of working on sound. William Weaver, in an interview, had this to say: "I think ear has a great deal to do with it. And I mean that literally. I often read my translation aloud. Quite often it can be technically correct but not sound right. The rhythm isn't quite right, and maybe it just needs a comma somewhere, or something like that".[5]

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[4] Interview with Paul Holdengräber, New York: 8th November 2011.
[5] William Weaver, The art of Translation no.3: interviewed by Willard Spiegelman.

Sounding right, in the end, means sounding something like how the author would have sounded (or how the translator imagines the author would have sounded) if he had been writing in English. Jim Kates, a former president of the American Literary Translators Association, was asked in an interview what makes a good translation, and he gave this answer: "What I want in a translation is one that reads smoothly with a voice that I can be reasonably convinced is the voice of the author. The translator is putting on a mask and the quality of that mask should attempt to replicate the author's face".[6]

Bionote: Richard Dixon's translation of Umberto Eco's *The Prague Cemetery* was published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, New York and Harvill Secker, London in 2011. He was one of the translators of the first complete English translation of the *Zibaldone* by Giacomo Leopardi (Farrar Straus and Giroux, New York; Penguin Books, London, 2013). He has also translated: Umberto Eco, *Inventing the Enemy* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, New York; Harvill Secker, London, 2012); Umberto Eco, author's revisions for a new edition of *The Name of the Rose* (Mariner Books, 2014); Roberto Calasso, *Ardor* (Farrar Straus and Giroux, New York; Allen Lane, London, 2014); Roberto Calasso, *The Art of the Publisher* (Farrar Straus and Giroux, New York; Penguin, London, 2015), Umberto Eco, *Numero Zero* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, New York; Harvill Secker, London, 2015). Forthcoming translations: Marco Santagata, *Dante: The Story of His Life* (Harvard University Press, 2016); Antonio Moresco, *Distant Light* (Archipelago Books, March 2016).

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[6] Jim Kates: Interview, NPR Boston, 17.01.2012.

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GIOVANNI VERGA IN ENGLISH

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Abstract – This paper provides a list of Verga's English translators and their works together with discussion principally of D.H. Lawrence's 1925 translation of the novel *Mastro-don Gesualdo* (1889) and some consideration of the author's own 1995 translation of *Una peccatrice* (1873). Emphasis throughout is placed on the particular nature of literary translation, an activity often and inevitably influenced by factors that go beyond purely linguistic concerns.

Keywords: translation praxis; translation theory; translation's ubiquity; Verism; literary profession.

1. Verga and his English translators

In literary historical terms, Giovanni Verga (1840–1922) is the leading exponent of *verismo*, Italy's contribution to realism, and much of his work is (and has been for almost a century) available to readers of English. A brief description of the first ever translation in book form of one of Verga's works and the way in which it was published will help provide us with a picture of his place in the history of literature. Mary A. Craig's 1890 rendition of *I Malavoglia* in its English title abandoned the negatively loaded surname (literally it means "unwilling") of the tragic and doomstruck family from the fishing village of Aci Trezza who are the novel's protagonists, and made use of the name of the family's home (*La casa del Nespolo*) for the more accessible, *The House by the Medlar Tree*. Harpers published the translation in New York and in London with an introduction by the leading American realist William Dean Howells, who had this to say about his realist colleague:

> When we talk of the great modern movement towards reality we speak without the documents if we leave this book out of the count, for I can think of no other novel in which the facts have been more faithfully reproduced, or with a profounder regard for the poetry that resides in facts and resides nowhere else. Signor Verdi [*sic.*] began long ago, in his *Vita dei Campi* ("Life of the Fields") to give proof of his fitness to live in our time; and after some excursions into the region of French naturalism, he here returns to the original sources of his inspiration, and offers us a masterpiece of the finest realism. (pp. iii–iv)

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Pity about Signor Verdi, but such slips are a constant danger in dealing with other languages. Along the production process it is odds on that several people working on the text, unlike the translator, will be unfamiliar with the original language. In the English edition of the same year Verdi had already been corrected to Verga, though both editions carry another misspelling on the very first page where Ognina, then a small fishing village near Catania, now an attractive little harbour in the midst of a sea of concrete and speeding cars, becomes Ognino.

Verga remains little read in the Anglophone world, however, and his greatest claim to fame, his authorship of the story *Cavalleria rusticana*, on which Pietro Mascagni's one-act opera is based, is often unacknowledged and for many opera enthusiasts is a fact that remains unknown. The reason for this originates in the outcome of Verga's protracted dispute with Sonzogno, the Milanese publisher and producer, over royalties in the spectacularly successful opera. Sonzogno not only failed to respect the contract Verga had signed with Mascagni, based on a then new copyright law under which as original author Verga was entitled to at least one quarter of royalties, but he also failed to comply with subsequent court rulings, taking the case twice to appeal. At the beginning of 1893 Sonzogno convinced Verga, who was at that time in some financial difficulty, to take a lump-sum payment of 140,000 lire as a settlement in the dispute. His writing career never really progressed after this event and he died in Catania on 24 January 1922, just four months after his most famous English translator had expressed a definite interest in translating the second of his two great novels – *Mastro-don Gesualdo* (1889).

Verga has been translated by at least 14 translators over the years and while I hope the bibliographical list I have compiled is complete, it is possible that some further English translations may have been neglected because, to borrow a word from a letter in which D.H. Lawrence (his most famous translator) mentions, Mary Craig's 1893 translation of *Mastro-don Gesualdo*, translations do "disappear".

For reasons of lack of available space and time it would be impossible in this context to provide even a cursory survey of the work of all of these translators and I will concentrate on Lawrence's translation of *Mastro-don Gesualdo* (for reasons of notoriety and literary interest) while also making some considerations regarding my own contribution (for reasons of familiarity).

2. D.H. Lawrence and Verga

The remarkable (and sad) thing about Lawrence's interest in Verga is that the two never met, despite the fact that the English writer had been living on and off in Taormina, only 40 kilometres north of Catania, for just over two years at the time of Verga's death on 27 January 1922. Lawrence wrote in a letter to his

American agent Robert Mountsier on 7 February, "I have done about one-third of Vergas [*sic*] novel *Mastro-don Gesualdo* – translated it I mean. I have written to the publishers in Milan about copyrights. Poor old Verga went and died exactly as I was going to see him in Catania. But he was 82 years old" (*Letters*, volume IV, p. 186). Treves, Verga's publisher, replied that they no longer held any copyright in his works and that Lawrence should contact Verga's heirs. More of the question of copyright later, but for the moment it is enough to observe that the intended visit hardly rings true – the interest in translating *Mastro-don Gesualdo* had been famously expressed in a letter of 25 October 1921 to the Scottish author Catherine Carswell: "I have only been reading Giovanni Verga lately. He exercises quite a fascination on me … Do you know if he is translated into English?... It would be fun to do him – his *language* is so fascinating" (*Introductions,* p. li). In part that fascination will have derived from Verga's subject matter and characters: his verist language was certainly influenced by the conscious choice to write about struggling people, the *vinti*, the vanquished, as his cycle of five novels was to be known. Verga himself, of course, sadly proved vanquished in his ambitions, only managing to reach the halfway mark with the third and incomplete *La duchessa di Leyra*.

But the interest will also have come from the fact that *Mastro-don Gesualdo* is a story about the difficulties of mobility between social classes, a topic which as the writer son of a miner father and a school-teacher mother, Lawrence would have been particularly receptive to. Then there was the simple linguistic fact that Lawrence was learning Italian – surely a trip to Catania to see Verga would have been of great benefit in this sense.

But this never happened because Lawrence was very much preoccupied in this period with escaping from Sicily and the question of how to do it: whether to travel directly to the United States or to, "go east, ultimately intending to go west", via Ceylon (*Letters*, volume IV, p. 220). Had Lawrence been interested in Verga the man, in Verga the fellow writer, he could easily have found a way to meet him between November and December of 1921. In truth Lawrence was primarily interested in Verga's texts and in Verga's language; the translation work on the novel and the stories were very much part of the process of Lawrence's learning Italian and were also a way of carrying something of Sicily with him after his departure in 1922 and during his travels over the last eight years of his life: Ceylon, Australia, New Mexico before his return to Europe, to Italy and France.[1]

Lawrence's need to escape Sicily was profound, but so too was his attachment to the island, and a 1986 article by Julian Moynahan, "Lawrence and

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[1] A letter written from the *Osterley* on 28 February 1922 provides an illustration of just how pleased Lawrence and his wife were to be taking pieces of Sicily with them on their journey: "Too bad you were not there, in Naples, to see us come on board; with trunks bag-and-baggage: baskets of oranges and apples (given us) and a long board, which is a piece of a Sicilian cart, very colourfully painted with two scenes from the life of Marco Visconte – Else knows how lovely are these Sicilian carts: and the *facchini* kept calling: *Ecco la Sicilia – Ecco la Sicilia in viaggio per l'India.*"

Sicily: The Place of Places", documents this fact admirably. Lawrence had extremely mixed feelings regarding Sicily, as indeed he had regarding most things. Ambivalence was one of his trademarks and was often a source of the vigour and appeal in his writing. Here he is in a letter from Taormina to his friend, Jan Juta, on 3 December 1921:

> I am getting so sick of these piffling pleasant people here, and their silly jibber-jabber. Feel I shall die if I have to hear much more. Very few *forestieri* because of strikes etc. Taormina Corso just one long arcade of junk shops now. Things dearer than ever, more faked, food tiresome as it always was. If only Etna would send down 60,000,000,000 tons of boiling lava over the place and cauterise it away. I'll bet Naxos was a foul hole, before Etna kindly crozzled it to a cinder. – But she – Etna – has been looking very lovely, deep, deep snow, and heavy smoke billowing this way, sun sultry through the smoke. Italy has a kind of waste, barren, écoeuré feeling, it seems to me. I want to be off. If only I could get a ship to New Orleans or to Los Angeles. (*Letters*, volume IV, p. 139)

The "piffling pleasant people" are most probably members of Taormina's considerable expatriate community who receive frequent criticism in Lawrence's letters from the villa Fontana Vecchia. The ship in the end would be the *R.M.S. Osterley*, which sailed from Naples on 22 February 1922 to take Lawrence and Frieda to Ceylon.

In truth Lawrence had already come across Verga, or at least Verga's most famous work, before moving to Sicily; some five years previously, while living in Cornwall during the First World War, he wrote to his Russian friend "Kot" Koteliansky, who had lent him some Italian books: "We have read the *Cavalleria Rusticana*: a veritable blood-pudding of *passion*! It is not at all good, only, in some odd way, comical, as the portentous tragic Italian is always comical." (*Letters,* volume II, p. 53) We cannot know in precisely which form Lawrence read Verga's story at that time – in Italian, in English, as the original story or as the theatrical adaptation or even as the operatic libretto, but we can note that Verga himself is not named in the letter with its damning verdict on the work. But by the time he has translated *Mastro-don Gesualdo*, his view on the "portentous tragic Italian" has changed considerably, as this quotation from the first version of his introduction to Verga's work shows:

> In most books of the period – even in *Madame Bovary*, to say nothing of Balzac's earlier *Lys dans la Vallée* – one has to take off about twenty per-cent of the tragedy. One does it in Dickens, one does it in Hawthorne, one does it all the time with the great writers. Then why not with Verga? Just knock off about twenty per-cent of the tragedy in *I Malavoglia* and see what a great book remains. Most books that live, live in spite of the author's laying it on thick. Think of *Wuthering Heights*. It is quite as impossible to an Italian as ever *I Malavoglia* is to us. But it is a great book. (*Introductions*, p. 373)

Lawrence and Frieda travelled to Ceylon to stay with their American artist friends Achsah and Earl Brewster who in 1934, four years after Lawrence's death, published *D. H. Lawrence: Reminiscences and Correspondence*. In one brief passage they provide us with a vision of Lawrence, translator of Verga, at work in Kandy:

> Lawrence sat curled up with a school-boy's copy-book in his hand, writing away. He was translating Giovanni Verga's short stories from the Sicilian. Across the pages of the copy-book his hand moved rhythmically, steadily, unhesitatingly, leaving a trail of exquisite, small writing as legible as print. No blots, no scratchings marred its beauty. (p. 250)

While the copy-books containing Lawrence's handwritten translations of Verga's stories are not available to us, the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, Austin, does hold the four copy-books containing the translation of *Mastro-don Gesualdo*, indeed remarkable for how neat they are, entirely free of "blots" and "scratchings". The typescript of the translation is similarly clean, but the galley proofs, also held at the Ransom Center, tell another story that belies the Brewsters' vision.

On reading the long sheets of galley proofs, apart from the physical oddity of this now bygone step in book production, one is struck by the sheer quantity of corrections. Lawrence was evidently sometimes unhappy with his English, with his translation, but on occasions his corrections are stetted, probably because he was aware of the inordinate cost in terms of time and money that such substantial corrections would entail. On galley 16, for example, the Italian, *La figliuola finse di accorgersi soltanto allora della sua amica* (*Mastro*, Mondadori, p. 47) appears as, "Her daughter pretended to ~~realise only at that moment that her friend was there~~." The words struck through were to have been replaced with the handwritten correction, "have only just noticed the presence of her friend", but they in their turn have been struck through and all the blots and scratchings are stetted, or rather, to be precise, in this instance they are "OK" ed. The line between "realise" and "notice" as English synonyms of *accorgersi* is a very fine one, but the time and energy necessary for reflecting on (and correcting) that subtle difference are considerable: such is the stuff of translation, an accumulation of at least mental blots and scratchings.

The story of how Lawrence translated *Mastro-don Gesualdo* is an object lesson in how not to approach literary translation, in how to apply a praxis that makes no provision for the time and reflection necessary for doing the job well. But even a minimum of reflection told Lawrence that many changes simply had to be made on the galleys. On sheet 12 the Italian *L'arciprete prese tabacco, si spurgò, tossì* (*Mastro*, Mondadori, p. 35) was translated and composed as, "The arch-priest took snuff, spat himself clear, coughed." Lawrence very wisely engages in some cleaning up of his own by striking out ~~spat himself clear~~, replacing it with the more mundane, but much more natural, "blew his nose".

Lawrence's relative lack of familiarity with Italian plays a role in this type of problem in his translations of Verga – the best synonym for *accorgersi* in the one instance, the niceties of Italian reflexive verbs in the other. But he failed to catch all such problems and never would have been able to even if he had had more than a few weeks staying as a guest at Seltzer's home on Long Island. The work of the translator, while certainly requiring writerly qualities of imagination and linguistic verve, also requires great reserves of patience and dogged concentration – resources Lawrence simply could never have had because of the man and the writer he was.

We see that the vision of translatory perfection provided by the Brewsters is completely unrealistic: the blots and the scratchings are always there in one way or another, but of course do not appear in any "definitive", published text. It is the fate of every translation, however, to be open to subsequent revision, correction, comment. In the case of Lawrence's translations this problem is compounded by the fact that the translations themselves are now in the public domain and although over the years many of Lawrence's oversights have been corrected, many remain and may never be corrected because of the costs involved in such an operation. For example, in the paragraph regarding the snuff-taking priest quoted from the galley-proofs above, the current Dedalus edition of the novel (2000) still reproduces a slight misinterpretation on Lawrence's part. Below is the original followed by the same paragraph from the Dedalus edition:

> L'arciprete prese tabacco, si spurgò, tossì, infine si alzò, e si mosse per andarsene, gonfiando le gote – le gote lucenti, la sottana lucente, il grosso anello lucente, tanto che le male lingue dicevano fosse falso, mentre il marchese gli gridava dietro:
> – Don Calogero! don Calogero! dico per dire, che diavolo! Alla mia età… (p. 35)

> The arch-priest took snuff, blew his nose, coughed, and at last rose and made as if to leave, his cheeks puffing: – his cheeks shining, his gown shining, and his ring shining, although spiteful tongues said it wasn't real; while the marchese cried behind him:
> 'Don Calogero! Don Calogero! I mean to say, what the devil! – At my age – !'
> (pp. 39–40)

The translation of *tanto che* with "although" is an imprecision. Here *tanto che* carries the meaning of "to the point that" or "so much that".

Giovanni Cecchetti in his famous article of 1957 highlighted a number of such problems, but he also focused on the fact that Lawrence often chose to translate Verga's Italian idioms literally. Just a few lines after the example mentioned above from galley sheet 16, we have an example of this. The Italian, *Il baronello ch'era sulle spine propose di rientrare in sala* (*Mastro*, Mondadori, p. 47) is translated as, "The young baron, who was on thorns, proposed that they

should go back into the salon." Lawrence chose to translate the Italian idiom of to be *sulle spine*, which means to be on thorns in the sense of a state of painful trepidation, of anxiety, literally. He evidently liked the idiom and its image very much because in a letter from Fontana Vecchia to Mary Canaan of 12 February 1922 he wrote, "I am filling in my time translating a Sicilian novel, *Mastro-don Gesualdo*, by Giovanni Verga: he died last month. It is so good. – But I am on thorns, can't settle." (*Letters*, volume II, p. 191) It seems to me that the image works very well here in this brief extract from Lawrence's letter – Lawrence was a man and a writer constantly "on thorns", never settled – and it works, too, in my opinion, in the translation of the novel. It is not, however, a very common image in English, generally our thorns are more often in our sides and consequently are semantically different. To borrow Lawrence Venuti's terms, "foreignizing" and "domesticating", introduced and explained in 1995 in *The Translator's Invisibility*, D.H. Lawrence, probably due to his being a creative writer, was certainly not afraid of foreignizing his own English. What Cecchetti presented as a tremendous failing in Lawrence's translations has been viewed by others, most notably Armin Arnold, as a positive feature.

In "A Chorus of Cruelty", an article on Giovanni Verga that contains some discussion of *Cavalleria rusticana and other stories*, translated by G.H. McWilliam (1999), the writer and translator Tim Parks quotes McWilliam quoting Lawrence:

> Usefully, McWilliam's introduction quotes Lawrence as observing that a translation of Verga would 'need somebody who could absolutely handle English in the dialect'. 'Probably I shall never do it,' Lawrence says, 'Though if I don't, I doubt if anyone else will – adequately at least.' Remarking on the acuteness of observation, McWilliam then lists four or five howlers Lawrence made as evidence that his 'immodesty' was misplaced and his version not 'adequate'. But there are few translators, McWilliam included, who do not make occasional mistakes [...].

Parks here has illustrated the hubris of two translators – a certain amount of this quality is required before taking on any literary translation – and proceeds to reveal several problems with McWilliam's translation, including his tendency to introduce idioms that while being natural, contemporary language are sometimes anachronistic or inappropriate. These examples include one almost unbelievable, and extremely funny howler that *is* a howler precisely because it *is*, unlike Lawrence's translation at that particular point in the text, a *literal* translation. Translation is indeed a complex business and as Parks writes pithily in his article, "These stories are never pretty." But there are those who see benefit or profit in looking for and eventually exposing the ugly stories, exposing translators' mistakes, an approach that often goes hand in hand with what the Translation Studies scholar Andrew Chesterman in 2004 defined as "the pejorative route" (as opposed to the "descriptive" or "prescriptive" routes).

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Cecchetti, for example, back in the 1950s with his criticism of Lawrence's translations was on the pejorative route and while many of his points were valid and interesting, it is also true that his criticism became something of a vehicle for his own translations of Verga. This is yet another story that is not very pretty, also because Cecchetti's translations in their turn, inevitably, have received criticism, most famously from Armin Arnold who at a distance of just over a decade from Cecchetti's article wrote unequivocally, even categorically, "The present paper proves that Lawrence's translations of Verga into English are, in fact, much better than Cecchetti's: they are the best ones we have." (p. 389) Such is the rise and fall of translators' fortunes and this movement is inevitable because over time and over readings no translation – indeed no text, no author – can be beyond criticism or reinterpretation.

But to return momentarily to Lawrence, writer and translator on thorns, another significant and obvious element in the extract from his letter to Mary Canaan is "filling in my time". The fact is that for Lawrence his translation activity with Verga's texts was not "work" and the eventual publication of his translations seems more related to his publishers' desire to attract and keep him as an author rather than any conviction regarding the value of the texts themselves.

In one of the folders of miscellaneous correspondence regarding Lawrence held at the Harry Ransom Center are two unpublished letters from Adele Seltzer, wife of Thomas Seltzer, Lawrence's American publisher; both make mention of the translation of *Mastro-don Gesualdo*, which she had just (apparently) read. The first letter is to her husband, written from Chicago on Friday January 5 1923, presumably just before her train left for New York:

> I read steadily, but even so got through only a half of *Mastro-don Gesualdo*. It's a superb thing, lusty + kicking with life, but after the middle of the book one gets a little weary of the perpetual Sicilian kicking.
>
>   I hated to be riding back without you. I'd even have preferred 'Lawrence is great, isn't he?' 'Lawrence is a remarkable character, isn't he?' 'Lawrence is a wonderful man, isn't he?' all the way. However, I did get some reading done + made one worth while acquaintance.

The other letter, brief and quoted here in its entirety, is to Lawrence himself, written two days later from New York on Sunday January 7:

> Dear Mr Lawrence:
>
> I have now read *Mastro-don Gesualdo*.
>
>   It is superb, so rich, so lusty, kicking with life. It is one of those few massive works of the whole of literature that tower monumental, apart, a world in themselves. Bitter, too, as you say, but in rare parts so beautiful. Nowhere that I know of has maiden awakening been done as exquisitely as with Isabella in the country, after her father and household have fled there before the plague.

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As for your translation. I take it with the thrilled wonder and delight with which I take everything you do. (Singing of the old Christmas carol included). It seems to me perfection. The world is certainly fortunate that you of all people have done this work: and Verga unfortunate that he did not live to know you.

Yours sincerely,

Adele Szold Seltzer

Lawrence is great indeed, but perhaps Verga's true fortune was in never knowing the precise circumstances under which his novel was translated and published in English and in never knowing that the matter of his (and his heirs') rights in the work was effectively swept under the carpet by Lawrence, his agent and his publishers. Another unpublished letter held in the Ransom Center was written on January 18 1923 and is from Robert Mountsier, American agent, to Curtis Brown, English agent:

> As for Blackwell and "Mastro-don Gesualdo," it seems to Lawrence and me that this novel and the book of short stories, "Black Bread," should be published by the same publisher. We think it useless to try to trace the heirs. On this side in the matter of publication we consider the following; since Verga is dead: the Treves volume from which Lawrence translated "Mastro-don Gesualdo" bore no copyright; there was no copyright agreement in existence between the United States and Italy at the time the volumes were published; if anybody with a legitimate claim to royalties comes along, he or they can share in the royalties of the American edition. However, the English copyright law may put a different face on the matter for you.

"Black Bread" was the title of Verga's story that Lawrence wanted to give the volume of stories eventually published as *Little Novels of Sicily* [*Novelle rusticane*]. The salient point, however, is the "We think it useless to try to trace the heirs." That was part of a story that would have been all-too-familiar to Giovanni Verga.

Italy and the United Kingdom had signed the first Berne Convention in 1886, both countries ratifying it the following year. The significance of this is that under its terms an author automatically holds copyright in his or her work whether or not there is any copyright notice in the published work. (Mountsier's observation about the lack of a copyright notice in the Treves Italian edition is therefore, from a European point of view, a *non sequitur*.) The United States on the other hand relied on its own national copyright laws and in 1911 signed the Buenos Aires Convention. Until 1996 when it signed the Berne Convention, the USA had always insisted upon the need for a copyright notice. The vagaries of international copyright law are perhaps almost as complex as detailed textual matters regarding interlingual literary translation, and to be unravelled would, like the minutiae of translation, require more time and space than is available

here. It is clear, however, that Lawrence's translations of Verga do have something of an air of piracy about them.

3. Translating *Una peccatrice* and *Storia di una capinera*

In 1993 I had no such worries about copyright because Verga's works had entered the public domain. When I began translating *Una peccatrice*, Verga had been in the public domain since 1973 – a period of 50 years since Verga's death had passed, the "duration of protection" established by the Berne Convention. In 1995 the European Union increased the protection period from 50 to 70 years following the author's death, which remains its current length.

   Una peccatrice was one of the first works by Verga I had read – a bilingual dictionary by my side – and I had come across it by chance. In 1985, at the age of twenty-five, I was living in a rented, furnished apartment in Catania with a friend. Our *padrona di casa* had not exactly set us up in luxury, but there were a few books on a shelf in the living room, including an Oscar Mondadori paperback – *Giovanni Verga: Una peccatrice, Storia di una capinera, Eva, Tigre Reale*, which is still (27 years later) in my possession. I have no qualms about declaring this petty theft publicly. Firstly because 27 years seems a reasonable period of protection, secondly because she really was an awful landlady (we only lasted one calendar year in the flat) and thirdly because I remain very fond of the book, which for me is intimately linked with the experience of learning to speak, read and write Italian. By some sort of reader's right, I have considered it mine ever since 1985.

   I had come across Verga in central Catania's only park of any note – the Villa Bellini, where a bronze bust of him has pride of place at the beginning of the *Viale degli uomini illustri* (and they are all illustrious *men* along that avenue). I became curious about Catania's second-most-famous son. (The first being the Vincenzo who gave his surname to the park.) I remember I even went to see the atmospheric *casa museo*, Verga's house in via Sant'Anna, which is still open to visitors.

   I recount all of this not simply because I enjoy reminiscing about how and why I first embarked on the translation, but because I am convinced that there very often are such stories behind the reasons why translators embark on their projects, stories that are expressions of all manner of affective bonds with the texts they subsequently dedicate so much time and effort to, with such relatively slender remuneration. Even when a translator is commissioned by a publisher to do a job, there is usually something linking translator and author, even if it is only as slight as some perceived affinity between the two.

   On a visit to the British Library one summer back then I could find no trace of an existing English translation, which was encouraging. After translating a sample chapter and sending it off to two or three potential

publishers who at that time were publishing Italian literature in translation, it was Quartet who offered me a contract in their "Encounters" imprint. I was particularly pleased about this because it meant that I would be required to write an introduction to the text.

In the midst of the beginnings of this project I heard that Franco Zeffirelli was soon to be filming a version of *Storia di una capinera* in Catania and it occurred to me that Quartet might be interested in timely publication of a translation of a work that would constitute a film tie-in. They were, but just a month or so before publication they heard that we hadn't been the only people to have this idea. Dedalus in London were publishing Christine Donougher's translation as *Sparrow* and Quartet abandoned their plans for my translation. This was not too much of a disappointment because publication of *A Mortal Sin*[2] went ahead and in any case I had come to feel deeply uneasy about Zeffirelli's evident exploitation of the film – by then he was planning to get himself elected as Senator for Catania under Berlusconi's Forza Italia banner, which did happen, and I was also slightly uneasy about my piggy-back attempt to exploit the film to get my translation published. *A Blackcap's Story* remains in my drawer together with a photocopy of the anonymous English translation of 1888 – *The Story of a 'Capinera'*, published serially in the English-language magazine, *Italia*, based in Rome. One day I would like to find the time for the close reading necessary to compare them, together with Christine Donougher's translation and write about them.

Some years ago I did return to look at my translation of *Una peccatrice*, even going so far as to retranslate some excerpts without consulting the work I did back in 1995. The results were interesting.

On rereading *Una peccatrice* I was struck by how juvenile and overblown Verga's style seemed. Although when I first translated the work I did know about Verga's "repudiation" of this work – it was published in 1873 before Verga found his voice as a realist; and is one of a series of works that we might define as fictions of high society manners. I don't recall being so keenly aware of Verga's stylistic sins while translating back then. This new awareness was surely a result of my growth of a reader (and not just a reader of Italian).

The brief extracts below – the original Italian (a truncated sentence because part of Verga's early style was that he liked them very long) followed by my two translations – are intended here only as the slightest of illustrations. In chapter 4 of the novella Pietro Brusio, the young protagonist, has fallen hopelessly in love with Narcisa Valderi, the Florentine *peccatrice* who has come to live in Catania (*Laberinto* was the name given back then by the Catanese to a recreational walk through what would become the Villa Bellini):

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[2] I remember letters exchanged with the book's editor regarding the title. We both felt (perhaps anachronistically) that *A Lady Sinner* was somehow ridiculous as a title and failed to come up with an alternative that maintained the emphasis on the feminine gender. I sent a list of other possible titles and from it she chose *A Mortal Sin*. I agreed.

> Brusio passava i giorni al *Laberinto*, la sera seguendo la donna che gli aveva ispirato questa folle passione o cercando d'incontrarla al passeggio [...]. (1975, p. 75)

> Brusio spent all his days at the *Laberinto*, and all his evenings following the woman who had inspired this mad passion. Sometimes while out walking [...] (1995, p. 47)

> Brusio spent his days in the *Laberinto*, while of an evening he would continue following the woman who had inspired this mad passion. He contrived to meet her as she took her walk [...] (2005, translation exercise – unpublished)

In 2005 I was not the same translator I was when I first tackled the work. In 1995 I enjoyed the repetition (and the addition) of the adjective "all"; in 2005 I was slightly more literal and enjoyed the colloquial "of an evening". In 1995 I skipped (consciously or unconsciously) *cercando*; in 2005 I "contrived" to do better. In truth no translator will ever reproduce an identical translation with even a much shorter span of time between the execution of two translations of the same text. The variables involved in the state of the human mind and the environment are simply too many and language is too volatile an instrument to make any translation or any reading a completely reproducible event.

4. Literary translation

Why translate Verga? Why translate anything? Well, because it's there of course, because of the primal human reflex when faced with any type of challenge; but there are also nobler, more considered reasons for embarking on the arduous task. Among these is the fact that interlingual, literary translation is the human drive to understand another person's linguistic production taken to the nth degree: interlingual literary translation is a paradigm for understanding itself, as George Steiner demonstrates in the first chapter of his seminal *After Babel*. The chapter carries the title, "Understanding as Translation", which encapsulates very effectively Steiner's central thesis, a thesis so fundamental and so demanding in its repercussions that it is often convenient, indeed often necessary, to put it to one side. For to be aware of the fact that "translation is formally and pragmatically implicit in every act of communication, in the emission and reception of each and every mode of meaning, be it in the widest semiotic sense or in more specifically verbal exchange" (Steiner 1992, p. xii). To be aware of all that, all the time, would be to live in a constant state of neurasthenic, of hypersensitive awareness. But in a way that is precisely the state of awareness that is required of the literary translator when he or she is working with texts (and authors, and editors, and publishers): as near full awareness as possible regarding the workings and effect of the language of the

source text, together with as near full awareness as possible of the workings and effect of the language of the target text. Above all it is time, a commodity not always in ready supply, that allows translators to reach and maintain that awareness.

Bionote: Iain Halliday grew up in Scotland and England and studied at the University of Manchester before moving to Catania, Sicily, where he still lives and works as a researcher/lecturer in English language and translation in the Department of Humanities of the university. Over the years he has also worked as a literary translator from Italian, translating works by Giovanni Verga, Valerio Massimo Manfredi and Claudio Magris among others, and has carried out research in the field of Translation Studies that led to the publication of *Huck Finn in Italian, Pinocchio in English: Theory and Praxis of Literary Translation* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2009).

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TRANSLATING JANE AUSTEN'S *MANSFIELD PARK* FOR CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN READERS

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Abstract – My Italian translation of the novel *Mansfield Park* by Jane Austen was published by Rusconi Libri in 2012. The present contribution aims to describe and discuss some aspects of my practical experience in translating this novel. A particular focus will be on the issue of what it means, from both the cultural and the literary point of view, to translate this book into Italian in the 21st century, and on the strategies I adopted in order to translate certain aspects of the author's language and style.

Keywords: Jane Austen; translation; Italian language; contemporary readers.

1. Introduction

According to a survey conducted by Giovanni Peresson and published in 2011 by "AIE" (Italian Publishers Association), the Italian public is abandoning the reading of the classics. Pietro Citati (2012), moreover, observes that most Italians now tend to prefer the lighter reading offered by the "mediocre style" and "banal plots" of certain contemporary authors.[1] In spite of this general trend, the Italian publisher Rusconi Libri has recently decided to publish a new collection of Jane Austen's novels. At the basis of such a decision was the idea of encouraging readers to rediscover one of the most widely read novelists in English literature, by offering a retranslation of her works into Italian, which would improve on some disputable or old-fashioned choices in terms of lexis, syntax, style or concepts to be found in some Italian translations available today (Agorni and Di Giovanni 2004).

2. The Text and the Translator's Choices

I was hired to retranslate *Mansfield Park*, which has become known as Austen's "problem novel", particularly because of the critics' discordant interpretations of the role of its main character, Fanny Price. She is variously

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[1] http://www.corriere.it/cultura/12_marzo_09/dan-brown-coelho-faletti-bestseller-da-non-leggere-pietro-citati_2c4f16a8-69c9-11e1-b42a-aa1beb6952a8.shtml

seen as either a true, passionate heroine with strong moral values, or as a weak and ambiguous figure, who differs from Austen's other, livelier and brighter female protagonists such as Elizabeth Bennet or Emma Woodhouse (Koppel 1999). This seems to be also one of the main reasons why *Mansfield Park* has not enjoyed the popularity of, for instance, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*. It was her only novel not to be reviewed at all on publication in 1814, and it even lost its publisher money (Blackwell 2009, p. 42). Indeed, this is not like Jane Austen's other novels.

It has been defined as Austen's most controversial work, and such a controversial nature, as Jon Spence (2003) argues, probably lies in the fact that *Mansfield Park* is Austen's most engaged attempt to capture the complex inner world of human feelings, and to challenge her readers' feelings about the characters in the novel. But I would argue that it also lies in its more marked political nature, i.e., in the wide variety of themes that, subtly or explicitly, run through the novel: religion, education, slavery, rules of morality and etiquette.

The first Italian edition of *Mansfield Park* was published by Edizioni per il Club del Libro in 1961. Since then, other Italian translations have appeared on the market, e.g., by Edizioni Capitol in 1965 (the only one to have changed the original title into *Villa Mansfield*), by Garzanti in 1983, by Newton & Compton in 1998, by Rizzoli in 2000, and by Fabbri in 2004. If, on the one hand, as Antoine Berman suggests (1990), source texts never age, translations do, because the translation process is influenced by cultural, social and political factors that characterize the receiving culture at a specific time, and change over time. Hence, readers, whose expectations play a role in the translator's mind, have changed as well.

Meanwhile, translation norms have also evolved (Brownlie 2006). These factors certainly contribute to the ageing of translations, and are likely to encourage the choice of retranslating specific texts to adapt the original text to the cultural requirements of a specific language community. To put it simply, what might be accepted as a good translation, or as an effective translation strategy in the 1970s, may well be judged otherwise in the 1990s or 2000s. The role of retranslations, according to Gideon Toury (1999, p. 167), then, is to fill a gap in the target system and to bring in something that was not there before, "no matter how many translations preceded it". My aim as a translator of this time and place, therefore, was to find a new mediation between author, source text, and the receiving cultural system which, in this case, involves the Italian readers of today.

The following pages will explain how I have attempted to achieve such a mediation, starting from the textual analysis of the original work and a general reading of the translations mentioned above.

One of the main features of the novel is the prominence of dialogue. As Sarah Emsley (2007) suggests, Austen presents the action and the characters

"by people acting rather than by narration".[2] In *Mansfield Park*, the author often adopts brilliant colloquial phrasing, as in the following example, in which Edmund tries to encourage his cousin Fanny to be less shy. Table 1 reports an excerpt from the source text and two of its translations into Italian. One was published by Garzanti in 1983, and the other is mine (2012):

Source text	Translation by Garzanti (1983)	My translation (Rusconi Libri 2012)
Your uncle thinks you very pretty, dear Fanny — *and that is the long and the short of the matter*. […] If you cannot bear an uncle's admiration, what is to become of you? […] *You must try not to mind growing up into a pretty woman.* […] *And while my cousins were sitting by without speaking a word, or seeming at all interested in the subject, I did not like —* I thought it would appear as if […]. (pp. 174-175, my emphasis)	Tuo zio ti trova molto graziosa, cara Fanny: *proprio così*. […] Se non puoi sopportare l'ammirazione di uno zio, che ne sarà di te? […] *Suvvia, cerca di non angustiarti per il fatto che stai diventando una donna avvenente.* […] *E mentre le mie cugine sedevano senza dir parola* non mi piaceva … pensavo che avrei dato l'impressione di […]. (pp. 202-203, my emphasis)	Vostro zio vi trova molto graziosa, cara Fanny – *tutto qui*. […] Se anche l'ammirazione di uno zio per voi è insostenibile, che ne sarà di voi? […] *Non abbiate paura di diventare una donna attraente.* […] *E mentre le mie cugine se ne stavano lì sedute senza dir parola, senza manifestare il minimo interesse per l'argomento, non mi piaceva* — ho pensato che avrei dato l'impressione di […]. (p. 182, my emphasis)

Table 1.
Colloquial language: two different translation strategies.

The source text is clearly colloquial. However, the translation published by Garzanti (1983) reported here does not render the same colloquial register. Rather, as will be explained further below, it may be seen as an 'ennobled' version of the original dialogue.

This seems to be in line with what Paola Venturi (2009) observed in her research on the translation of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English literary classics in Italy. Venturi (2009) shows that such translations share a common aspect, i.e., the tendency to reproduce the supposed classical qualities of the classic, even when they are not present in the source. This means that the translated text is often embellished with, for instance, higher-register, formal Italian words that are often selected to translate standard English counterparts, or with "allongement", which Berman (1999, p. 56) identifies as an unnecessary lengthening of the text through addition.

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[2] http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol28no1/emsley.htm

According to Venturi (2009), this phenomenon is due to the high status assigned to classics in the Italian culture, which has an influence on the way these works are translated.

The translation by Garzanti (1983) reveals the use of the refined, but old fashioned *suvvia*, of the verb *angustiarsi* and of complex phrasing that do not quite correspond to the original form. This creates an unnecessary elevation in the register of the target text, and makes the reading pace slower than it would be in English. In my translation, I have tried not to distance the Italian text from the oral mode. Thus, I have translated "the long and the short of the matter" into *tutto qui* which, I believe, is probably as colloquial as the source text, and "You must try not to mind growing up into a pretty woman" into *Non abbiate paura di diventare una donna attraente* which, instead of *Suvvia, cerca di non angustiarti per il fatto che stai diventando una donna avvenente* has the same linguistic register and does not slow down the reading pace.

Moreover, the following sentence *se ne stavano lì sedute* reads more naturally than *sedevano senza dir parola* (Garzanti 1983), and it also involves the slightly more marked sense of criticism towards the behavior of Fanny's cousins Maria and Julia, which seems to emerge from the source text.

Furthermore, I have chosen to use the polite form of the Italian pronoun *voi* instead of the informal *tu* between Fanny and Edmund. This (certainly debatable) choice, which also characterizes the most recent film versions of Austen's novels, is based on a series of considerations: first, some commentators point out that the use of *you* in English, particularly in the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth century, quite often had a very formal meaning. Marzio Barbagli (2000) moreover, shows that the use of formal, polite pronouns in Italian was very common during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries even between brothers and sisters.

The Bertram family, the social environment at Mansfield Park, and, most of all, the rules of etiquette of those times required an extremely formal behavior, both from the verbal and nonverbal point of view. In order to express such a distance, and the artificiality of manners which Austen herself subtly criticizes or satirizes, I decided to employ the Italian *voi*, which sounds stiff enough for the purpose, and helps orient the reader in this particular context.

A further essential aspect of the narrative voice in *Mansfield Park* is the use of the free indirect discourse, which depicts the individual voices of the various interlocutors, and colours the narrative with the idiomatic speech of the various characters. David Lodge (1990, p. 126) explains that this technique allows the novelist to "control and direct the readers affective and interpretive responses to the unfolding story". Moreover, Louise Flavin (1987) actually demonstrates that free indirect speech in *Mansfield Park* occurs two to three times as much as in the other novels. It is therefore crucial

to follow the quick comings and goings of Austen's voice in her characters voice, and to carefully consider whose voice is speaking at a specific point, in order to reproduce it accurately in the target language. The following excerpt (Table 2) is a crucial passage in Maria's mind, after Henry Crawford's departure from Mansfield Park. Maria realizes that her hopes to marry Mr Crawford have vanished, and thus she decides to marry Mr Rushworth not out of love, but because she wants to escape from her father, and the whole social environment of Mansfield Park. Again, one translation is by Rizzoli (2000), and the other is mine (Rusconi Libri 2012):

Source text	Translation by Rizzoli (2000)	My translation (Rusconi Libri 2012)
She was less and less able to endure the restraint which her father imposed. The liberty which his absence had given was now become absolutely necessary. She must escape from him and Mansfield as soon as possible, *and find consolation in fortune and consequence, bustle and the world, for a wounded spirit. Her mind was quite determined, and varied not.* (p. 179, my emphasis)	*Maria si dimostrava sempre più riluttante nel sopportare le costrizioni che il padre le imponeva. Quella libertà che l'assenza di Sir Thomas aveva portato con sé era diventata adesso una questione di vita o di morte.* Doveva mettersi in salvo da lui e da Mansfield il più presto possibile; *doveva trovare consolazione nella ricchezza, nel prestigio sociale, nella confusione mondana, e curare così il suo spirito ferito. La sua mente era più che mai ferma, e determinata a non cambiare risoluzione per niente al mondo.* (p. 274, my emphasis)	*Era sempre meno disposta ad adeguarsi alle restrizioni imposte dal padre. La libertà che aveva conosciuto durante l'assenza di Sir Thomas le era ormai assolutamente indispensabile.* Doveva scappare da lui e da Mansfield al più presto possibile, *e trarre dal lusso, dal prestigio sociale e dal clamore della vita mondana un conforto per la sua anima ferita. Ormai aveva deciso, e non intendeva cambiare idea.* (p. 186, my emphasis)

Table 2.
Free indirect discourse: examples of different renderings.

Dorrit Cohn (1978) explains that free indirect discourse offers a sense of emotional realism that is created by the readers access to the unspoken thoughts of the novel's characters. Such an emotional immediacy, as may be noticed in the excerpt reported, is mediated by the presence of the narrator. The thoughts of Maria are here interspersed throughout a piece of descriptive third-person narrative, and lack the introductory tags that signal indirect speech, such as "she thought". "She" at the beginning of the excerpt refers to Maria Bertram, and here it seems that it is actually Maria who is giving voice to her thoughts. In this passage the narrator inserts words and phrases that articulate Maria's non-verbalized emotional response to the situation while

managing to maintain a language that sounds similar to what Maria might actually use to think to herself. Her reported thoughts are characterized by rapidity and anxiety, as shown by the tight and quick phrasing above. The main challenge, at this point, was to express in Italian not only this narrative voice, but also its rhythm and 'colour'. So, I translated "She was less and less able to endure the restraint which her father imposed" into *Era sempre meno disposta ad adeguarsi alle restrizioni imposte dal padre* and I turned "which her father imposed" into the passive form *imposte dal padre* because, although *Maria si dimostrava sempre più riluttante nel sopportare le costrizioni che il padre le imponeva* is grammatically closer to the original, it would have had a different, probably heavier impact on the Italian reader.

Also, "The liberty which his absence had given was now become absolutely necessary" already seems to be part of Maria's troubled stream of thoughts, and thus *La libertà che aveva conosciuto durante l'assenza di Sir Thomas le era ormai assolutamente indispensabile* creates an effect that is probably closer to the sense of urgency produced by the source text. The Rizzoli translation, *Quella libertà che l'assenza di Sir Thomas aveva portato con sé era diventata adesso una questione di vita o di morte*, has a more complex grammatical structure, which is reminiscent of Alessandro Manzoni's writing style, and also overtranslates "absolutely necessary" into *una questione di vita o di morte* (a matter of life or death). The same considerations are valid for the last part of the excerpt, which expresses not only her speed and the blindness of her desperate conclusions but also her search for material happiness as the definitive solution to her inner pain.

The almost spoken cadence of this last part should have a corresponding Italian version, instead of the more elaborate earlier translation, to allow Italian readers to receive an equivalent message, and, hopefully, an equivalent aesthetic effect. So, for example, *scappare* is semantically closer to *escape* than *mettersi in salvo* (flee to safety), and it is more similar in terms of colloquial register. Also, though *La sua mente era più che mai ferma* ("her mind was quite determined") follows the English word order rigidly, it sounds quite unnatural to the contemporary Italian ear. Finally, Rizzoli's *e determinata a non cambiare risoluzione per niente al mondo* (and nothing on earth would have changed her mind) is more formal, complex and adds further meanings to the original text, losing the desperation, speed and the blindness of the original pithy "and varied not".

Lefevere (1988, p. 176) points out that it is impossible to define, once and for all, what a good translation is. And critics may or may not agree with the particular strategies chosen by the translator for a particular purpose. What is important is that such strategies are coherently adopted throughout the whole translation process, while bearing in mind that translation is no longer a problem of merely finding verbal equivalents, but also of interpreting a text, its style, its properties, and its culture-specific values.

3. Conclusions

My idea of the contemporary Italian target reader, who lives in a fast-paced world, where communication modes and codes are influenced by the Internet and other digital environments, has certainly exerted a major influence on my choices in this translation work. Indeed, I considered it my main reference for preserving coherence in terms of translation strategies. This reader does not need an unnecessarily embellished text featuring complex syntax and register elevation, which, actually, do not have much in common with the language of the source text. Thus, in my translation I have attempted not to alter the aesthetic properties of the source text in order to create a 'classic sounding' target text, because that would have silenced part of Jane Austen's particular and brilliant language and style, which deserve to be appreciated by Italian readers as well.

Finally, as a female translator in line with Gayatri Spivak's principle of women's solidarity (1993), my aim was to reproduce the voice of Jane Austen as faithfully as possible, so that, instead of it being frozen in an artificial, conservative Italian, it could find, I hope, a chance to return to the surface of the text.

Bionote: Simona Sangiorgi graduated with honours in Translation from the Advanced School of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of the University of Bologna at Forlí with a thesis focusing on politeness strategies. In 2008 she obtained a PhD in Languages, Cultures and Intercultural Communication from the University of Bologna. She is adjunct professor at the University of Bologna. She also works as a professional translator. Her experience includes teaching Linguistic Mediation at the Advanced School of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators (University of Bologna at Forlì) and Business Language at the School of Economics, Management and Statistics (University of Bologna). Her research fields are related to contemporary cultural and linguistic manifestations, with a special focus on the language of tourism, translation studies, and the representation of Italianness in American mass media. She has recently published *Fun Factories of Our Times: Amusement Theme Parks, Their Words, and Their Way to Postmodernity* (Otto – Nova americana 2012). Her articles and book reviews have appeared in several international journals and among her most recent publications is "Translate, Explain or Borrow? Culture-specific Terms of Italian *Strade dei vini e dei sapori* in German and English" (*Tourismus-kommunikation*, ed. Doris Höhmann. Bern: Peter Lang, 2013, pp. 163-172).

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"AND AS FOR TEXT WE HAVE TAKEN IT..."
Retranslating Ezra Pound's Renaissance Cantos

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Abstract – Ezra Pound's *Cantos*, a Modernist classic, present many challenges for the translator, who has to follow in Pound's footsteps and often divine the intention and context of the fragments that compose his historic and lyric collage. A new Italian translation of the first extensive installment of the poem, *XXX Cantos* (1930), appeared in 2012; a previous Italian rendering of the same work, by the poet's daughter Mary de Rachewiltz, was published in 1961. By comparing representative excerpts of the two translations, this paper discusses different approaches to one source text. While the 1961 target text aimed at concision at the expense of fluency, the 2012 text employs a more colloquial style, attempting to make an arduous and complex work more reader-friendly. However, the two translations adopt the same strategy when rendering the many passages Pound paraphrased from medieval and renaissance Italian writings. Rather than retranslating Pound's English, they print excerpts from the Italian originals he worked from, with their quaint spellings and often obscure wording. Just as Pound asks his readers and translators to work with him on the texts he presents in the poem, so the translators presuppose a reader who is also a collaborator, and who will be intrigued by the old documents appearing opposite Pound's modernist paraphrases. Translation is always a work in progress, but this is particularly the case when approaching the uniquely intricate and collaborative project of Pound's *Cantos*.

Keywords: translation; poetry; Modernism.

2012, the 90th anniversary of the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and of Ezra Pound's *Eighth Canto* (eventually included in *A Draft of XVI Cantos* of 1925), was a good year for the Italian translation of these monuments of Modernism. A new translation of *Ulysses* was presented by a young scholar, Enrico Terrinoni, in a popular inexpensive edition, with an illuminating introduction and extensive apparatus. Though it may not replace the standard translation, which appeared in 1960, it is a noteworthy contribution by Italian scholarship and by the Italian publishing industry to the long story of the reception of James Joyce.

Later in 2012, in time for Ezra Pound's 127th birthday (and for the 40th anniversary of his death in Venice), I received the first copies of my new translation of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, the volume which in 1930 brought together the two earlier large-format instalments of Pound's "endless" poem

– cantos 1-16 (1925), and cantos 17-27 (1928) – with the bonus of three additional cantos (28-30). The new 853-page Italian *Ulisse* was addressed to the mass market, also because since 2012 Joyce's works are in the public domain, and so the publisher did not have to negotiate translation rights. Instead Pound is still under copyright and certainly *The Cantos* are not as widely admired, read and taught as *Ulysses*. Thus the new Italian *XXX Cantos* (383 pages) was published in a distinguished poetry series and priced at €28,00 (as against €9,90 for the 2012 *Ulisse*). Still, given the current recession in the book market and elsewhere, it was courageous of Ugo Guanda Editore of Parma and Milan to produce an elegant new edition of *XXX Cantos*, with all the work this entailed for the editors that saw the book through press. It must be added that, unlike *Ulisse*, *XXX Cantos*, being a poem, has the English text and the Italian translation on facing pages.

Readers familiar with Pound know how complex is the layout of his highly irregular poem. Even newly setting it up for printing is no small matter. Then, if the translation is to run parallel, care must be taken since the quantity of material Pound gathers in his "rag-bag" (as he once called it), spills over and will not always fit within the same lines or pages. Besides, the 2012 *XXX Cantos*, like the 2012 *Ulisse*, includes an ample apparatus: "Introduction", "Note on the Text", "Annotations" (for each canto), "Chronology", "Bibliography" (i.e., the poem's complex publishing history in the original and translation, as well as a list of sources) – and, importantly, an "Index" of names, places and authors cited. The latter, like the list of sources, is very useful in finding one's way through Pound's labyrinth, and also allows us to locate quickly the passages where, say, T. S. Eliot or Ernest Hemingway are mentioned or referred to. Interestingly, this is the first edition anywhere of a book of *Cantos* which carries an index with it, so the volume could also be useful for non-Italians, and perhaps set a precedent.

In fact, Marianne Moore, reviewing *A Draft of XXX Cantos* in "Poetry" (October 1931), already complained about the lack of an index (Erkkila 2011, p. 188). Passages from this searching review by one of Pound's most canny readers are reprinted in the 2012 *XXX Cantos* after my "Introduction" in a section called "Il poema e i suoi lettori" (The Poem and Its Readers), which offers first Pound's own comments and queries on his project as he was engaged in it, and then a series of responses of different kinds: Ford Madox Ford's rather fulsome eulogy, James Joyce's friendly parody of Pound's barbarous canto-style, Yeats's well-known account of Pound's explanation of the form of *The Cantos* as communicated on his Rapallo terrace to the puzzled great old man, and comments by T. S. Eliot and Allen Ginsberg (the latter as a closing document on how Pound despite his "many errors" continued to inspire later generations). A poem is to some extent a history of its readings, and *The Cantos* do enjoy a mythical status, even for those who have scarcely read them. As Pound's friend Basil Bunting wrote in the poem

"On the Flyleaf of Pound's Cantos": "There are the Alps. What is there to say about them? / They don't make sense" (Bunting 1970, p. 122).

But to translate *The Cantos* one has to read them and try to make sense of them. This means to some extent replicating Pound's own engagement with his material, following his steps through countries, libraries and fantasies, and trying to convey the particular tone of his voice – an epic voice, for he is telling (tall) tales of himself and the "many men" and places he, as a novel Odysseus, has visited. Just as the 2012 *Ulisse* implies a dialogue with the standard 1960 translation, so the 2012 *XXX Cantos* benefitted from reference to the 1961 translation *I primi trenta Cantos* by Pound's daughter Mary de Rachewiltz. The benefits were even greater, since Mary collaborated and consulted with her father, who was living as her guest while the remarkably accurate 1961 edition was being prepared by her and her young friend the publisher Vanni Scheiwiller.[1]

Mary de Rachewiltz's translation is unusual because of its familiar, or in-house, genesis. Mary had worked on it for decades, and her many drafts were profusely corrected by her father. Pound's knowledge of Italian was relatively good, but still very intuitive and uncertain when it came to choosing some unusual term or neologism. He insisted with his Italian translators that just as Dante had made up words, so they should coin words if they did not exist. In principle we would agree with this line of reasoning, because great writers always do violence to the nature of their language. But this is something you can do only in the tongue that you master – otherwise the result may be laughable. Though occasionally archaic in diction, *The Cantos* show a great feeling for current colloquial language in its peculiar Poundian variants. In the Italian translation the result is not always felicitous, and what sounds like a simple pithy statement in English, like "There is no substitute for a lifetime" in a late canto (98/711),[2] becomes sometimes unrecognizable and unquotable in the translation: *Nulla surroga il campar* (Pound 1985, p. 1309).

But Mary did mostly an excellent job and was not intimidated by all of Pound's borrowings from obscure sources that had to be identified, that is, by the need to unearth the original context for his brief quotations. She had the benefit of her father's library, but often he had transcribed passages (accurately or not) from standard collections or manuscripts to be found only, if at all, in special libraries. Today it is a little easier, thanks to the web, to locate books and passages. So I am all admiration for what Mary did more or less singlehandedly. She went on to translate the rest of the poem and in

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[1] The 1961 slip-cased volume was sold for 3,000 Italian lire. Given that in those days one could have a good meal for less than 1,000 lire, the price would seem comparable (or possibly in excess of) the € 28,00 of the 2012 *XXX Cantos*.

[2] References to *The Cantos* are in the standard format: canto number/page number, in the 1995 New Directions edition.

1985, the centenary of her father's birth, published a complete translation of *The Cantos*, which was the first complete edition of the poem anywhere (including the long-suppressed cantos 72-73) and may still be the most accurate edition (of the English text) in print (the current U.S. edition, of 1995, is riddled by mistakes and unauthorized corrections).

The above explains why I submitted the project for a new Italian edition of *XXX Cantos* to Guanda, a publisher long associated with poetry, who courageously brought out a translation of *The Pisan Cantos* in 1953. *XXX Cantos* is a classic of Modernism, belonging to the heroic age of *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses*, with which it has much in common. It is self-contained, like a new *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* through exotic parts of the Mediterranean (with some ironic and damning depictions of the U.S. and England). A new translation would try for a more colloquial tone, and would avoid the asperities dictated by Pound to Mary, and would thus find new readers, and perhaps prove that unimaginable thing: that *The Cantos* can in fact be read for pleasure and instruction, as Pound certainly intended.

Mary de Rachewiltz generously supported the project, her father having always maintained that his work should have multiple translators, clearly agreeing that the main point is finding new readers, circulating the text, and also reminding an audience puzzled and offended by the use of Pound's name in Italy in the last decade by a prominent group with neo-Fascist leanings, CasaPound, which has an intellectual cover but also resorts to violence – reminding these readers that there is another Pound that we can cherish and who has produced one of the most exciting poems of the last century.

Not that *XXX Cantos* is apolitical. Far from it. The contempt for the Fabians (placed in the Inferno of canto 15) already shows the poet's extremism – which would have been shared by the Bolsheviks (to whom he devotes a few pages in canto 16 and again in canto 27 – the lyric about one "Tovarish"), but also and chiefly by the illiberal right. His fulminations against bankers and financiers in cantos 13 and 15 sounded extremely topical in 2012. And in canto 22 he records a discussion with John Maynard Keynes, in which predictably the liberal Keynes is shown as incapable of grasping the reality of the Depression. So cantos 1-30 are no idyll, and we can see in them the well-developed attitudes that would lead Pound to his later aberrations. But here everything is still held in equilibrium, and Pound is never so happy as when he is telling tales of the Renaissance, or just imagining some sensual scene in which the landscape of the old poets and painters comes to life.

In *XXX Cantos* his passion for condensation and cryptic utterance had not yet dried up his style (as in the work of the 1950s) and he wrote generously and at length creating his world of history and vision. These cantos are indeed long (7 pages for canto 20, 14 pages of Venetian annals in 25-26, and 25 pages devoted to Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta in 8-11).

Which doesn't mean that they are boring – but they are certainly a challenge for the translator who has to find equivalents for all those words and gestures. I somehow underestimated the effort necessary when I proposed the project to Guanda. When the publisher accepted with enthusiasm I had to face the music. And when I first reached the precincts of Malatesta's Renaissance squabbles in canto 8, I began to falter. I was daunted by the prospect of traversing twenty-five pages among arcane sources, of trying to make out what Pound extracted from his material, and of checking the poem against countless originals. So I moved on to the easier canto 12 on contemporary subjects (Baldy Bacon, John Quinn, the financiers) and to the magisterial Confucius of canto 13: "Kung walked / by the dynastic temple / and into the cedar grove, / and then out by the lower river". Here was relief, since the translation could proceed directly from source text to the new "verbal manifestation" (a favourite phrase of Pound's), and deal only with questions of rhythm and diction, a translator's true business, without (as often in historical cantos) going from source text to quoted sources, and from this correlation attempt a new version (or triangulation).

Pound's writing in *XXX Cantos* is mostly spatial, a description of a scene or landscape, as in the opening of the Confucius canto mentioned above. It is not easy in translation to suggest all this quiet movement. It may be instructive to compare the 1961-1985 translation (Mary de Rachewiltz) and mine (Table 1):

1925	1961	2012

Kung walked
  by the dynastic temple
and into the cedar grove,
  and then out by the
    lower river,
And with him Khieu, Tchi
  and Tian the low
    speaking
And "we are unknown,"
  said Kung
          (13/58)
	Kung vagò
	  dal tempio dinastico
	Nella cedraia
	  lungo il fiume inferiore,
	Khieu e Tchi con lui e
	Tian dalla voce
	    profonda
	Disse Kung: "siamo
	    ignoti"
	          (p. 129)
		Kung passò
		  accanto al tempio
		    dinastico
		e nel boschetto di cedri,
		  e proseguì a valle
		    lungo il fiume,
		E con lui erano Khieu,
		    Tchi
		  e Tian dalla voce lieve
		E Kung disse: "Siamo
		    sconosciuti"
		          (p. 147)

Table 1.
Confucius Compressed and Expanded.

The 1961 version is more compressed, approaching the source text in using only one verb in the first sentence, *vagò*. "Vagare" ("wandered") is a more literary word than Pound's absolutely prosaic "walked". Hence my choice, in line with my general preference for down-to-earth, everyday, diction: *passò*. Why not *camminò*, which is literally "walked"? Because it does not quite

suggest the vagueness of "walked" – but this is a matter of taste. The most noticeable difference is that the 1961 version makes one sentence out of Pound's three parallel actions, marked by the repetition of "and", from which Mary shied away here and elsewhere (Italian is less tolerant of repetition than English). The 2012 text is closer to Pound's tripartite arrangement, at the cost of adding another verb in line four. In the second sentence about the disciples, 1961 again avoids the "And" and nominalises the sentence: "Khieu and Tchi with him". Whereas 2012 makes the implied verb explicit as if Pound had written: "And with him *were* Khieu, Tchi [...]" Both choices are defensible. 2012 presents a lower-keyed text, more prosaic, as one can see again in the difference of register between the higher *Siamo ignoti* and the lower *Siamo sconosciuti*.

There is a movement away from the literary, which is in accord with Pound's appreciation of the prosaic. These slight variations make for a text more available to the reader today. This reader will not be arrested by a slightly anomalous usage, but will be able to get into the rhythm of the text and proceed in the not easy task of assimilating so much material. The idea is to carry her along, just as easily as Kung walking in the middle of this ideal Chinese landscape. Another example is the "cedar grove", translated as the equally common *boschetto di cedri* rather than the less familiar, semi-technical *cedraia*. "Cedraia" is actually a false friend referring to a winter citrus fruit garden, so it is also a mistranslation.

Returning to the poetry, the choice is always between compactness, which Pound insisted on, and a more relaxed movement for the sake of readability. One could also suppose that the older Pound, who was advising his daughter on the translation, may have been more insistent on condensation, given his late style, than he would have been at an earlier date. Indeed, his *XXX Cantos*, a notably long and effusive 150-page poem, was clearly the result of a desire for amplitude.

So, as mentioned above, I began by drafting the shorter and less intricate cantos before returning to the asperities of the Malatesta sequence and its multitudinous quotations – for the "Malatestiad" (as it has been called) of cantos 8-11, was the section on which Pound expended more labour, using a whole library of references, whereas in his later historical cantos he was content with a handful of sources. It would be interesting to compare the Hell cantos 14-15 in the two translations, since both must take into account Pound's own model, i.e., Dante. One curious detail in the otherwise felicitous 1961 translation of the Hell cantos is that "condom" is rendered as *olla*. I discovered thanks to the web that this is still a current brand of Spanish condoms. *Olla* became *hatù*, a long-familiar brand of Italian condoms, in the 1985 complete translation of *I Cantos*. Perhaps the metonymy (brand for thing) was due to some reticence on the part of Mary, or perhaps to her father's own suggestion. But it is a little forced to put a Trojan (U.S.

equivalent of Hatù) in an Inferno composed around 1920, so I would defend my more literal translation (Table 2):

1925	1961	2012
chewed cigar-butts, without dignity, without tragedy, ...m Episcopus, waving a condom full of black- beetles, monopolists, obstructors of knowledge, obstructors of distribution. (13/63)	mozziconi di sigaro masticati, senza dignità, senza tragedia, ...m Episcopus, agita un olla pieno di nere blatte, monopolisti, intralciano e bloccano sapienza e distributo. (p. 139)	cicche di sigari masticate, senza dignità, senza tragedia, Episcopus .....m, che stringe un preservativo pieno di blatte nere, monopolisti, strozzatori della conoscenza, strozzatori della distribuzione. (p. 157)

Table 2.
The English Inferno.

One can see here that the two translations of this passage are independent. 1961 has a few better choices (*mozziconi* vs. *cicche*, *agita* vs. *stringe*). In the last lines 2012 is closer to the rhythm of the original. Pound makes great use of repetition throughout, as if hammering rhythmically and creating a hypnotic effect. So the repetition of "obstructors" in the final lines (which happen to be the close of canto 14) is worth preserving, as 2012 tries to do. 1961, on the other hand, chooses compactness, and the rendering of "knowledge" as *sapienza* (wisdom) moves into a diction more elevated than the plainer English "knowledge". (And *distributo*, for *distribuzione*, is indeed a strange coinage.) I wonder what Pound was thinking of when he associated his bishop ("episcopus") with a condom. Is the condom one of the "obstructions" to be assailed? Or is it just supposed to convey disgust (black-beetles rather than sperm?). I believe the satisfactory answer is to be found in Pound's essay *The Serious Artist* (1913):

> [...] it is a crime rather worse than murder to beget children in a slum, to beget children for whom no fitting provision is made, either as touching their physical or economic wellbeing. [...] On this count the bishop of London, as an encourager of this sort of increase, is a criminal of a type rather lower and rather more detestable than the souteneur. (Pound 1954, p. 42)

The Bishop of London is associated with condoms precisely because in those days his church apparently assailed the use of contraceptives. Arthur Foley Winnington-Ingram was Bishop of London from 1901 to 1939. His second name Ingram would seem to fit well the five dots followed by the letter 'm' of canto 14. I do not know about his professed opinions on birth-control, but probably evidence could be found for Pound's fulminations. In his Hell,

Pound used this novel system of giving only the final letters of the names of the damned, claiming that the names themselves had been eroded and were unworthy of being recorded. This however makes for difficult reading, and one would like to know how he recited these passages.

The above is an example of the never-ending process of deciphering *The Cantos*, and of the surprises they offer the reader willing to follow Pound's footsteps. For example, after the inferno of 14-15, we find a sort of purgatory, complete with its "Valley of Princes" (as in Dante) in 16, which rather hastily goes on to an extended passage in demotic French describing the disillusion and horror of trench warfare. Pound's English transliteration of French argot is problematic *per se*, even more so for the translator (e.g., "Poo quah? Ma foi on attaquait pour manger" – 16/73). He or she can simply reprint Pound's quasi-French, which is what happens in 1961; or one could transliterate, bearing in mind the reader of the translation ("Pour quoi? Ma foi, on attaquait pour manger"). I opted for an approximate translation in broken Italian (*Perché? Giuro che si andava all'attacco per mangiare*). This seems hard to justify, since (as a general rule) an untranslated quotation in another language in the source text should remain untranslated in the target text. However, given that the passage is somewhat (possibly intentionally) inchoate, I thought the reader of 2012 would be thankful for an Italian rendering, which he or she can compare at discretion with Pound's approximate French. In this case the translation becomes a tool for the reader, who should make selective use of it. It is no use pretending that there exists a naive reader of this kind of work. The reader brings presuppositions, attitudes, and must contribute a willingness to cooperate, to go half way in this strange enterprise. This is what Pound claimed, believing that his audience would wholly participate in the struggles and rewards of his poetic labours.

This concept of the poem as workshop, and the translation as toolbox, is particularly appropriate when we come to the question of how to handle Pound's innumerable quotations and borrowings. Of course a Latin, Provençal or Greek borrowing will remain as in Pound's text, though I have occasionally used a standard version of the quoted original rather than Pound's sometimes faulty transcription. I am quite sure that Pound's own alleged misspellings and other errors should not be corrected (as has happened in some editions), but the translation can help the reader by providing the standard form of names and phrases, when appropriate. Thus in canto 20 we find "peur de la hasle" (fear of sunburn), a mistake for "peur *du* hasle" in the original Pound is recollecting. In the translation on the right-hand side I have used the correct form, again as an aid to the reader. This does not imply a wish to correct Pound, who often quoted from memory and could not care less about correctness. It is just another instrument in the toolbox.

Lingue e Linguaggi

A different problem arises when Pound translates from Italian originals – as he frequently does in the cantos dealing with Italian history. *XXX Cantos* is largely concerned with the Renaissance, following a time-honoured Anglo-Saxon tradition (from Shakespeare to Rossetti and Browning) of making much of Italian subjects. Thus when, after drafting a translation of all the following cantos 12-30, I eventually returned to the daunting Malatesta sequence, I was once again confronted with a series of documents in translation:

> Letter received, and in the matter of our Messire Gianozio,
> One from him also, sent on in form and with all due dispatch,
> Having added your wishes and memoranda.
> As to arranging peace between you and the King of Ragona,
> So far as I am concerned, it wd.
> Give me the greatest possible pleasure (8/28)

It is worth noting that rather than romanticizing the Quattrocento, Pound chooses to present it through the voice of one of its notable figures, an unscrupulous warrior, lover and patron of the arts: Sigismondo Malatesta, with whose ill-fated career (and his fighting on all fronts) Pound clearly identifies. In his translation of the Italian original Pound suggests the qualities of the *condottiere*: his matter-of-fact tone, his getting to the point, his businesslike peremptoriness – all very much Poundian qualities. He wants to arrange peace, not a bad endeavour after all. And (he goes on to say) he wants to offer a stipend to a painter working for him, unnamed in the current text (but in the 1925 limited edition the rubric "*Piero della Francesca*" appears in the margin).

Now, it would be possible to retranslate Malatesta's letter in Italian reproducing the tone of Pound's adaptation, but it would be a highly problematic and artificial procedure. So since the Malatesta original is available, the best procedure appears to be to print the authentic Italian opposite the English, making what small adaptations may be necessary to bring it down to the size of Pound's rendering. This is what Mary de Rachewiltz did in 1961, with her father's approval, and what I again did in 2012 (see Table 3). As usual, 1961 prefers concision over expansion, giving for Pound's six lines five lines that make little attempt to include all the material on which the English is based. 2012 has eight lines, which in fact show all the original segments used in the English. Probably, 1961 works better as an easier read, while 2012 presents a number of obstacles. In particular, the old Italian words and spellings have to be parsed somewhat carefully (for example, the source's lack of accents, as in *seguira* for "seguirà"). In 2012, the Italian text provides the reader with the material, while at the same time attempting to keep the narrative going.

1961	2012
Ho ricevuto vostra lettera et Circha al facto de Messer Gianozzo, Le ho remandato in dietro... Circha la pace tra voi e il Re di Ragona, Me ne farete grandissimo apiacere (p. 69)[3]	Ho ricevuto vostra lettera Et circha el facto de Messer Gianozzo nostro È stato a mi uno suo mandato el quale ho rimandato In dietro spacciato in bonissima forma, Et tanto piu agionti li preghi et recordi vestri. Circha la pratica de la pace tra voi et el Re de Ragona Ve prego de quanto seguira me ne voliate dare aviso Che me ne farete grandissimo apiacere (p. 87)

Table 3.
A Letter of 1449: Translation or Adaptation?

But clearly at this point the reader is expected to do at least some of the work. He or she will have to check the Italian original against Pound's adaptation in order to fully understand what is happening and what kind of person Pound's Malatesta is.

On the other hand, this should also become clear to those who have no English through the selection of the episodes of Malatesta's life that Pound chooses to emphasise. Cantos 8-11 are hard going for any translator who decides to go back to Pound's sources, since he or she will have to mark every page, and hunt down clues, though, fortunately, the letters themselves mainly come from Charles Yriarte's magnificent *Un condottiere au XV siècle* (1882). The on-line PDF of the Yriarte in the Houghton Library is particularly interesting in that there are marks against some of the phrases quoted in Pound's Malatestiad. Clearly at least one other reader of Yriarte at Harvard had tried to follow in Pound's erring footsteps. These are the difficulties. Yet Pound put so much of his passion and energy in resurrecting Malatesta that this tornado of documents does stand up as an attempt at a modern epic, in the footsteps of Byron and Browning. The disreputable and joking, occasionally cruel, finally unfortunate, Malatesta is in the end a very Byronic character, though Pound entertains the illusion that by presenting the original documents he is showing us the man himself.

For the Italian reader, being confronted with the old Italian historical and literary texts that Pound worked from should be revealing. He can listen to these old nearly forgotten voices and words as spoken and written centuries ago and wonder or discover why in the early twentieth-century an American should have been so passionate about reviving them and using them to build up his poet's world of examples to be followed or censured. For

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[3] Sic in the 1985 revision (Pound 1985, p. 55).

Pound is always didactic (a didacticism laced with his raucous humour). The reader will wonder about the principle of selection, and disagree with the emphasis, but he or she should be thankful for this tour, though somewhat laborious, of forgotten annals.

As a matter of fact, precious few Italian scholars have been stimulated by these or any of the other Italian cantos to study in any depth Pound's use of sources, which only specialists of Italian Renaissance history and texts can fully evaluate. Thus the conscientious translator has the pleasure of making many discoveries. For example, canto 26 quotes a letter from the famous painter Pisanello, that Pound presents as addressed to one Sforza. Pisanello writes about horses, and Pound often referred to this document as an example of the artist's practical knowledge: if he is good at drawing horses, as Pisanello doubtlessly was, he can also be trusted to assess them for purchase. The original of this letter has not been located so far as I know, but there is a reproduction of the manuscript in 1961 (pp. 238-39), with a reference in the endnotes (p. 333) to the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan. When I asked a colleague versed in palaeography to transcribe it so that I could use the original on the facing page, she told me that Pound or whoever helped him mistook some word for "Sforza", a worthy who appears in the English paraphrase but not in the original. So the name does not occur in my redaction of the Italian source facing Pound's English. Here, however, the story does not end, since Sforza may have been mentioned in the source from which Pound took the letter and the name may have been added to the text for clarification. So the translator needs to look further, and even into popular accounts which Pound also used, as when he writes about the Medici and Borgia, or the ill-fated lovers Ugo and Parisina.

It's worth mentioning that many of Pound's Renaissance subjects had been well-exploited by previous writers and seekers of the sensational – and that lurid tales of the Borgia are still being broadcast in the twenty-first century for popular television audiences. Pound is very much part of this tradition of Renaissance enthusiasts, unconventional though his way of evoking that glorious and infamous age may be. Like Edwin Arlington Robinson's Miniver Cheevy, he "loved the Medici, / Albeit he had never seen one; / He would have sinned incessantly / Could he have been one". To this quip, one could reply that Pound claimed to have indeed "seen" them, and strong-minded friends like Yeats and Eliot believed him; and that, as for sinning, he did his best, so much so that he still is *persona non grata* in his home country.

Pound had great ambition and belief in his enterprise, and this also carries us across some more arid stretches, as readers and translators. Actually in *XXX Cantos* there is scarcely a page that is not rich in some curious discovery, visionary passage or lyric grace. Everything moves, though everything is rather static. *XXX Cantos* was compared by its author to

the Schifanoia frescos in Ferrara, and indeed one reads these cantos, or rather contemplates them, as a series of set scenes and frozen episodes. In hell as in paradise, one moves from frame to frame, and Pound very much wants us to notice repetitions and parallels between the various compartments of his fresco. "Some hall of mirrors", he called it much later (114/813), for in the end all characters are projections of his likes and dislikes, of his imagination of hell and (Italian) paradise. He believed he had invented or developed a new form that would bring together history, vision and actuality, or, as he put it in canto 11, "the usual subjects of conversation between intelligent men". Nevertheless, he must have been relieved when he put an end to the first ample section of his major opus, with canto 30, and wrote on the last page:

> and as for text we have taken it
> from that of Messire Laurentius
> and from a codex once of the Lords Malatesta...
>
> And in August that year died Pope Alessandro Borgia,
>   Il Papa mori.
>
>   Explicit canto
>   XXX
>
>   (30/148-49)

One can see why it would be easy to parody this, since the Italian phrase, despite its resonance, does not seem particularly significant (and Pound even forgot the necessary accent on *morì* – an accent still missing in the current U.S. edition). The death of the Pope is probably symbolic of the death of the old order. Yet Pound washes his hands of the whole business and, again with an affectation of learning, concludes in Latin with words that amount to saying, "I've done it, believe it or not". We still do not quite believe it, but there is lots of incidental fun and marvel in *XXX Cantos*, Pound's poetic notebook as we might call it.

Pound was probably also intrigued by the coincidence between the magic "XXX" of his title and closing line, and the year in which his friend Nancy Cunard published *XXX Cantos* at The Hours Press in Paris: 1930. The lines about the source of the text are from Gershom Soncino's preface to his great *editio princeps* of Petrarch, published "that year", i.e. 1503. And of course they are particularly apt because they refer both to the Malatesta, the poem's principal heroes, and also to the celebration of printing, publishing and editing – a subject Pound was much concerned with. In both instances a publication is being lauded for its novelty and for its completion.

In a little-known letter to Carlo Linati about the first volume of *Cantos I-XVI*, Pound wrote that this was:

> [...] perhaps the first American book in which author, designer and printer have collaborated to create a unity. Since they could not erect another Parma Baptistery, and didn't have the money for a unity of the arts in a single architectural structure, they have chosen to integrate three arts in a small thing: drawings, capitals, as in the manuscripts of the Middle Ages.[4]

This statement is very representative of Pound's neo-medievalism, and of his program for a unity of the arts in which craftsmen would collaborate. Both the subject and the material form of *XXX Cantos* take their bearings from the "mediaeval dream" (Pound 1960, p. 104), of which John Ruskin had been the great Victorian exponent.

As an end-piece to these notes, let me quote the two translations of the above conclusive passage of *XXX Cantos* (Table 4):

1961	2012

Questo testo abbiamo
Da Messire Laurentius e da un codice
Già dei Signori Malatesta...
 	
Nell'agosto di quell'anno morì
  Alessandro Borgia,
      Il Papa morì.
 	
    Explicit canto
      XXX
         (pp. 318-19)
	Quanto al testo l'abbiamo tratto da un
	  codice
	del litteratissimo homo Messer Laurentio
	  Abstemio,
	qual fu gia degli Signori Malateste.
	
	E ad agosto quell'anno spirò Papa
	  Alessandro Borgia,
	      Il Papa morì.
	
	    Explicit canto
	      XXX
	        (p. 335)

Table 4.
Colophon as Envoi.

The reader can make his or her own observations on the use of sources and the avoidance or duplication of repetition. In any case, reading and translating *The Cantos* is an ongoing and open-ended project, though one may breathe for a moment, with the poet, having at least come this far.

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[4] To Carlo Linati, 6 June 1925 (Pound 1980, p. 96): "Come nel XVI Canto, di Pound, forse il primo libro americano dove l'autore, l'ornatore e lo stampatore hanno collaborato per fare un'unità. Non potendo fare un altro battistero di Parma, non avendo denaro per una unità delle arti in una struttura architetturale, hanno voluto reintegrare tre arti in una cosa piccola, disegni, capitali come nei manoscritti del Medioevo [...]". My English translation.

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TRANSLATING *OLD NEGATIVES* BY ALASDAIR GRAY
Rendering a poetics of "absences and reverses"

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Abstract – The most noticeable feature of Alasdair Gray's first collection of poems is the predominance of loss, absence, and void in all its manifestations. The absence is mostly of love and the beloved ones, either dead or gone, but also of meaning, of God, of light and warmth. So, my translation of *Old Negatives* focused primarily on the analysis of this poetics of what he himself calls "absences and reverses", accounting for the linguistic phenomena of negation. This article concentrates on the translation strategies, as well as the actual solutions, adopted in order to preserve the "un-factor" which permeates Gray's entire poetic production. The translation strategies employed range from the linguistic and etymological study of Italian negative prefixes or periphrases to the creation of neologisms. The purpose is to achieve what Zdanys (1982) called "affective equivalents", namely a type of objective correlative which can capture as many of the cognitive implications of the original as possible.

Keywords: Alasdair Gray; Old Negatives; translated poetry; Scottish poets; Scottish literature.

1. Introduction

The most noticeable feature of Alasdair Gray's first collection of poems is the predominance of loss, absence, and void in all its manifestations. The absence is mostly of love and the beloved ones, either dead or gone, but also of meaning, of God, of light and warmth. Consequently, a good translation of *Old Negatives* should focus primarily on the analysis of this poetics of absences and reverses, accounting for the linguistic phenomena of negation. Before I can proceed with the analysis of these linguistic aspects, I should first account for who Alasdair Gray[1] is and, secondly, outline the structure of the book, both in terms of recurrent themes and of poetic forms.

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[1] http://www.alasdairgray.info/index1.htm

2. The Author

For those who are not familiar with Alasdair Gray, he is one of the most well-known contemporary Scottish artists, and is usually numbered among the Postmodern writers, especially for his 1981 novel *Lanark – A Life in Four Books*. The work I intend to examine, *Old Negatives,* is his first collection of poems. According to his biographer Rodge Glass, the poems are "lean, spare and didn't follow conventional poetic rules: to the untrained eye many of them just looked like prose chopped up into bits." (Glass 2009, p. 193). Furthermore, the abundance of autobiographical material openly used and abused (Glass 2009, p. 13) by the author is immediately evident.

Gray can be regarded as an occasional poet[2] (Glass 2009), since his poetic production is secondary to his more prominent activities as a novelist and as a painter. For this reason, he has been widely criticised for his poetic work, as many literary critics believed his poetry to be of an inferior quality in comparison to his prose. In particular, Iain Crichton Smith (in Glass 2009, p. 194) argued that Gray's poetry failed at being metaphoric, since "what metaphor, after all, is there for the void?". This is a crucial point: I would venture to say that the lack of metaphor is precisely the metaphor for the lack of meaning, of love, of purpose he felt throughout his life, which can be clearly deduced from Rodge Glass's *Alasdair Gray: a secretary's biography* (2009, pp. 12, 56 and 98). At the same time, the existential void is metaphor and exaggeration, both for his own personal losses, and for the atmosphere of loss and despair brought about by the Second World War. The writer partly compensates for the lack of metaphors – which also derives from the Postmodern concern for the insufficiency and unreliability of words – with a juxtaposition of words and images.

3. *Old Negatives*

Since Gray is at the same time a writer and a painter, and he is fond of blending literary and visual arts, let us consider, for a moment, the cover of *Old Negatives* (Image 1). It consists of a series of fifteen alternate black and grey squares, forming a frame inside which, this time on a white background, the subtitle "4 verse sequences by Alasdair Gray" is visible.

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[2] In 2005 Gray published a collection of poems precisely called *Sixteen Occasional Poems*.

Image 1.
Cover of Alasdair Gray's *Old Negatives*.

As Glass states in his biography, "the survival of the delicate in tough circumstances is the main theme" (2009, p. 76). The very meaning of the title is exemplified by this drawing: death is the reverse of life, its "negative", only in the photographic sense of the word. Hence, death is not seen as life's negative counterpart; it is, instead, its matrix, the photographic negative from which life can develop. The theme and the focus are autobiographical, exactly like private photographs are. The collection of poems can thus be regarded as an "intense, explicit, sharply focused series of autobiographical sketches" (2009, p. 193) and the book as a "sketchbook in print" (2009, p. 76). However, it is the author himself who provides the most accurate explanation for the title, saying that *Old* was chosen because many verses were decades old, and *Negatives* because they describe love mainly by its absences and reverses. In an interview the author granted me in 2008, he admitted that:

> The main inspiration of my verses has been loss. I went to Art School shortly after my mother died, and now I think that when writing the poems in the first sequence I was more disturbed by her death than I noticed at the time. I am cold-hearted in many ways, and often take a long time to appreciate events that have made me feel deeply. Or perhaps I'm like a thick-skinned dinosaur with a brain so far from its tail that it only noticed that the tail had been trampled on when the trampler was far away. (Personal interview)[3]

3.1. In a cold room

A closer look at the structure of the book exemplifies Gray's statement: the first section entitled *In a cold room* contains poems written between 1952 and 1957, mainly when he was attending Art School. They deal with the death of his mother, Amy Fleming, to the memory of whom the book is dedicated. An interesting drawing opens the section: a man with a sad, distant expression has a snake coming out of his head. The snake is carrying an egg in its mouth: here reoccurs the theme of the survival of the delicate in tough circumstances.

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[3] On October 12th, 2008, I had the pleasure of being granted an interview with Alasdair Gray at his home at 2 Marchmont Terrace, Glasgow. The interview is still unpublished.

The same image is conveyed by the third poem of the section, called *Loneliness* Gray 1989, p. 15):

> From the soul's proper loneliness love and affection seem
> part substance and part dream
> held in the mouth in the same way the snake carries its eggs […]

The absence of his mother is turned into lack of affection, of warmth, which echo in the last part of the poem *Cries of an unceilinged blood* where he accuses his "lost mother" of letting him "go with so little heat/ into this implacable machine" (1989, p. 25). Even romantic love is de-mythicised and condemned "for the nothing that it leaves inside" and regarded as "a mistake between us two/ because you make as little heat in me/ as I can make in you" (1989, p. 16).

Absence, meaninglessness and emptiness are not only the hallmark of feelings; on the contrary, they constitute the very essence of human beings and even of God. In fact, this first section is almost entirely dedicated to the establishment of what I would call "the cosmogony of the void", where the writer describes the encounter of two human beings in scientific terms: first comes *The Experiment* or "the union of two voids in a cold room" (1989, p. 17), followed by *The Unit*, or the collision of two selves, each defined as "[…] an envelope enclosed by a void/and enclosing a void" (1989, p. 18). If humans are conceived as agglomerates of void, their creator is a screaming cavity, mistaken by the Jews for God (1989, p. 20). "In the beginning was the cavity" – thus opens the previously cited poem *Cries of an unceilinged blood*. The section ends with the image of a God who "cannot fit/ the outer void, the inner pit" (1989, p. 28). We are thus faced with an overturning of the traditional view of God: he (or "she", as the author often refers to the deity) is a "cavity", a "void", rather than pure Being, whose role is compared to that of the artist: both are constantly questioned and challenged, and their authority is always under examination. Life is perceived as "a cancer of the clay" and humanity as a creative mistake (1989, p. 21).

3.2. Between Whiles

The second section, *Between Whiles*, consists of poems written between 1947 and 1957. It opens with a poem called "*Unfit*", which depicts the inhabitants of Glasgow as "unfit" to look at "dawns and gloamings", where the choice of the Scottish term for twilights is not a matter of chance. The city itself becomes an unreal one, "built in time of mutiny" (Gray 1989, p. 35), and later transfigured into its fictional counterpart "Unthank" in Gray's novel *Lanark* (1981). A recurrent image throughout Gray's works is the image of the city as a displaced world, a Western wasteland (Witschi 1989, p. 19). "Unthank" is emblematic: its inhabitants suffer from horrific diseases because they

completely lack the warmth of life, both physically – lack of sun – and psychologically – lack of positive and negative emotions (1989, p. 71).

The poem *Announcement* explores and compresses these themes. The narrative voice is that of Thaw, *Lanark's* protagonist. He claims to "look back without loss to an uncushioned womb" (Gray 1989, p. 41), introducing the theme of the uncomfortable birth, which features another time in this section: namely in the poem *Vacancy*, where a woman gives birth "to a death/ and the casket has collapsed inward on its vacancy" (1989, p. 36). The last part of *Between Whiles* is devoted to the reflection on the theme of love, which will be expanded in the next section. One poem in particular, *Lost absence*, seems to identify the source of love with "the feel of a loved somebody gone" and to anticipate the theme of unsatisfied love, which will be central to the third section of the book. In fact, the third stanza of the poem admits that "this weak true heart did not satisfy who it loved. This flesh is blunt. It cannot feel but by loss" (1989, p. 43).

3.3. Inge Sørensen

It is in the third section that the theme of unsatisfied love reaches its peak, evolving into that of the checkmate of marriage. The section is significantly called *Inge Sørensen*, the name of Gray's first wife. The poem *Married* portrays their relationship as "the solitude of being me and you" (Gray 1989, p. 46) and depicts the couple as a king and a queen walking side by side but utterly separate from each other. The impossibility to communicate ultimately becomes the impossibility to engage in a healthy and satisfactory sexual life. Hence, sexual intercourse is referred to as a "Mishap" (1989, p. 47); home is perceived as "a place minced into tiny words" (1989, p. 49) and love as an evil goddess that rejects the "unlovely" (1989, p. 52).

3.4. To Lyric Light

The last section contains poems written between 1977 and 1983: this is the most heterogeneous section, its themes ranging from philosophy (*The Thinker*), further reflections on life and death (*Wanting*, *Awaiting*); unfulfilled sexuality (*Renewal*, *Ripeness*); the connection between love and God – or, better, the absence of both – (*Cares*, *Lyrical*), and the absence of the beloved ones (*Unlocks*, *A Burning*).

4. The Translation

Absence, loss, void, cavity, vacancy, vacuity, loneliness, cold: this is the semantic area around which *Old Negatives* revolves. Apart from the formal demands of a poetic text (rhythm, rhymes, assonances, syntax, meter), which the translator always has to face, there is something else that s/he should struggle to reproduce at any cost: an equivalent effect. Newmark (2003, p. 49) regards it as "the desirable result, rather than the aim of any translation". At this point, a question might arise: what exactly does equivalent effect mean? How can it be achieved? I believe Jonas Zdanys (1982, p. 38) gives a satisfactory answer:

> Translation, it seems to me, ought to involve a search for and, when necessary, a substitution not of linguistic equivalents but of "affective equivalents", images which, like Eliot's "objective correlatives", capture emotion and as many of the cognitive *implications* of the original as possible. If this search entails changing the "literal" meaning — as defined by some compiled listing of linguistic "equivalents" — then that change ought to be made. This, of course, is not something to be undertaken gratuitously or haphazardly; change is never made for the sake of change [...].

Thus, it becomes clear that the attempt to recreate an equivalent effect in a translated text entails the search for "affective equivalents". Nevertheless, it is also true that, when tackling translation:

> More often than not, the translation process involves initial decisions that determine later decisions. No choice is made without certain costs. [...] Such decisions are neither right nor wrong, but both, always limiting and opening up, closing off certain avenues and possibilities, but simultaneously creating new relations and possible alternatives. (Gentzler 2001, p. 97).

4.1. The "un-factor": a practical example of translation

In other words, affective equivalents have to be found to translate the meaningful, essential aspects of the text. In this case, what is unique to this particular collection of poems is the morphologic rendering of Gray's poetic of absences and reverses, namely the "un-factor". More or less intentionally, the author highlights this aspect by employing an astonishingly high number of adjectives and verbs beginning with the negative prefix "un-", including a wide range of neologisms:

- "untwist" in the poem *Predicting*
- "unceilinged" in *Cries of unceilinged blood*
- "unpick" in *Two*
- "unfit" in the poem of that title

- "unheated" in *Cowardly*
- "uncushioned" and "unschooled" in *Announcement*
- "unoccupied" in *Woundscape*
- "unlovely" and "undo" in *Unlovely*
- "undaunted" in *Notstriving*
- "untrue" in *Ripeness*
- "unlock" in *Unlocks*
- "unstained" in *End*

This choice cannot be a matter of chance: the author conveys a strong feeling of negativity through these adjectives, which are not mere counterparts of positive adjectives, but rather their negation, their antithesis. I have tried to reproduce the same effect in my Italian translation, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.1.1. Verbs

As far as verbs are concerned, *di-/dis-* and *s-* are among the most common negative prefixes in the Italian language. So, for example, "untwist" has been translated as *districare*, "unpick" as *dipanare*, "undo" as *disfa*, and "unlock" as *sblocca*. As often happens when reviewing translations after some time, I have realised that mine is not entirely satisfactory; if we consider the first two verbs, "untwist" and "unpick", it is correct to say that they negate the correspondent un-prefixed verb ("twist", "pick"), but the negation is only morphological, it does not imply a negative connotation of the verb. In fact, I believe that Gray, instead of choosing a verb with a positive connotation, chooses to negate a verb with a negative connotation, thus making it positive. Only in the first case have I been able to reproduce such an effect. In fact, "to untwist" means to loosen, separate, unwind something twisted. In the poem *Predicting*, it refers to a girl untwisting "her soft hair from her lover's beard" (Gray 1989, p. 14). The Italian *districare* is the negation of *intricare*, it has the same semantic content of its English counterpart and is used pretty much in the same contexts (*districare i capelli, districare un filo*).

My translation of "unpick" proved definitely more problematic. First of all, the verb normally applies to the semantic area of sewing, it means to take out stitches. If we read the first lines of the poem *Two*: "who unpick their anatomy/ in ecstasy or agony,/ can find a self within no part/ of backbone, belly, brain or heart" (1989, p. 28), we understand that the writer is trying to give his own answer to the philosophical question of where the "self" lies, whether it can be identified with or found in a part of our body (the brain, the heart or something else) or whether it is, rather, made up of all those parts put

together. Gray leans towards this second hypothesis, affirming that "selfhood is the unity" (poem *Two*). The verb "unpick" is essential to the understanding of the image the writer is trying to convey: that of a man who tries to separate the components of his body by unravelling the connections that bind them together, becoming a dismembered puppet, in which the self is nowhere to be found. The Italian *dipanare* lacks the physical strength of the original, as it is widely used in a metaphorical context (*dipanare la matassa* meaning "to unravel the mystery of a plot"). After revising the text carefully, I wonder why I did not opt for a simple, straightforward "scucire".

4.1.2. Adjectives

As for adjectives, a variety of strategies have been adopted:

1) some adjectives have been formed using the negative prefix *in-/im-*, so that "unfit" has been translated as *inadatti*; "unoccupied" as inoperoso; "undaunted" as *imperterrito*, and "unstained" as *incontaminata*. "Unfit" has been translated with the plural *inadatti*, as obviously the adjective refers to the inhabitants of Glasgow. It is not the city that has become hostile, it is the people who are being punished for some unknown reason, and thus deprived of one of the primary sources of life: light. The poem ends by telling us "I think there is a mystery in dawns and gloamings/ a crime has made us unfit to look upon".

   Unfortunately, the great loss in this poem is the Scottish word "gloaming". What gets lost in translation is the Scottishness of the poem, the fact that this twilight which is impossible to look upon is not an indeterminate twilight, but precisely a Scottish twilight, namely, a gloaming. For this reason, I have decided to keep the pluralised adjective in the title as well, as a reminder, a label imposed on Glaswegians, who later will be similarly described as "unlovely", translated as *inamabili*, the reason for which I will give in the following paragraph.

2) some adjectives could not be negated with a prefix. Consequently, I decided to adopt a periphrasis containing the negative particles *non* or *senza*; thus "uncushioned" has been translated as *senza imbottiture*, "unschooled" as *non addestrato*, "untrue" as *non* è vero;

3) in two cases I opted for a neologism. In the poem *Cowardly* the author distinguishes between cowards, who "die clinging to their sullen heap/ unheated by the light of their desire" and the loving man, who "has made his facts catchfire". The opposition here is not between heat and cold, but between heat and the impossibility of being heated by "the light of desire", something which should include a reference to heating. In order to underline this, I translated "unheated" as *deriscaldati*, where the Italian

term, resembling the English one, insists on the privation of heat rather than on coldness.

Following the same criterion, the poem's title *Unlovely* has been turned into *Inamabili*. The poem starts by saying "'Love is an evil God' the unlovely say",making it clear that the unlovely are not only unpleasant people, but also those who cannot be loved, who are ignored by the goddess of love. Therefore, it is essential to maintain the reference to "love". Translating the adjective with *sgraziati* or *sgradevoli*, would not be enough, because the reference to "love" would be lost. Thus, I decided to use *inamabili*, not be found in the dictionary, but which is perfectly understandable by an Italian reader. In this way, I am not altering the poet's style, but I am compensating for untranslatable neologisms by creating others where the Italian language allows me to.

4) Finally, the adjective "unceilinged" proved extremely problematic to translate. The poem *Cries of an unceilinged blood* is composed of seven parts originally entirely written in capital letters and later transformed into italics.This poem is intended to stand out, to be different from all the others. It begins, with a reminiscence of the Bible, as follows:

> In the beginning was the cavity:
> eye socket in no skull, wound in no flesh,
> the faceless mouth, the coatless pocket. (Gray 1989, p. 20)

Already in these opening lines we find a reversed image of God, imbued with negative attributes. Then, in the second part, it is life's turn to be reversed:

> Then life appeared, a cancer of the clay:
> some molecules shuffled into sense
> which wriggled out in the light of day [...] (Gray 1989, p. 21)

The third part of the poem accounts for the coming to being of man, inferring that:

> Mind is a sky-machine [...]
> the engines of heart and lung sustain
> its wings above the basement of a void.
> Boxed in its skull, brain is the aneroid by which we gauge
> a level through the pressure of our pain
> and struggle hard for some
> degree of stable equilibrium. (Gray 1989, p. 22)

The poem continues with a tirade against corruption and ends with the resumption of the theme of coldness and loneliness caused by the loss of Gray's mother. Nevertheless, it is the image conveyed by the third part cited above that provides a key to understanding the title. Gray writes that the brain

is "boxed in its skull", hinting that it is bound by the constraints of the body, its function reduced to that of an aneroid struggling to find some equilibrium. At the same time, heart and lungs are described as "engines", the energy of which is used to sustain the mind. The mind is different from the brain, it is a "sky machine", however bound as well to the body because it is "kept stable by the breeze of breath" (Gray 1989, p. 22).

In this context, "unceilinged blood" is perceived on the one hand as blood which transcends the "ceiling" of the body (the head, the brain) and circulates freely. On the other hand, the image has a negative side. Blood needs to be "ceilinged", contained, in order to keep the body alive, otherwise it disperses in the void and leaves the body empty. Therefore, these "Cries of unceilinged blood" seem to be both the complaints and the lamentations (the Biblical reference here is intentional and has been maintained in the Italian translation) of blood. It is, in fact, bound not to transcend its limits and doomed to confront the void at the core of every human being, thus beating and keeping a desolate flow (Gray 1989, p. 40).

When I was trying to find an affective equivalent for this adjective, I came up with a variety of solutions, ranging from the neologism *dissoffittato* to the periphrasis *a cielo aperto*, but none seemed to do justice to the original. Doing some research, I realised that behind Gray's expression there was a critique, a lamentation of the conditions of the city of Glasgow during the 1920s and 30s, where Glasgow was seen as a post-industrial city in crisis. We must not forget, in fact, that Gray – especially with his novel *Lanark* – continues the tradition of George Blake, Edwin Muir and Edward Gaitens, who in the first half of the 20th century tried to break the spell of literary silence that hung above the city of Glasgow and give voice to a "literature of crisis", as suggested by Anne Wright (1984).
Consequently, I concluded that this "unceilinged" blood also stands for the people living in unceilinged houses in the slums of Glasgow, and for this reason I translated the word as *scoperchiato*.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, I will stress once more that the aim of this essay has been to give a practical demonstration of how Alasdair Gray's poetic of absences and reverses can be rendered in translation. I have focused primarily on the "un-factor", which is the most prominent translation issue of *Old Negatives*, and have illustrated at least some of the context necessary to understand my choices.

It is certainly true that "a translation is never finished, it is open and could go on to infinity […] because the choices made in translation are never as secure as those made by the author" (Fissore 2001, p. 7), but it is also true

that the crucial role of the translator as a mediator and decoder cannot be ignored. By using the word "decode" instead of "interpret", I align myself with Lefevere (1990) and his notion of texts as complex signifying systems, which have to be continually decoded and re-encoded. This process takes place at the phonological, the morphological, the syntactic and the semantic level at the same time; none of these levels can be neglected if the final aim is to reproduce an equivalent effect (Newmark 2003) or, in this case, an equivalent poetics.

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TRANSLATING *THE INFINITIES*
BY JOHN BANVILLE

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TRANSLATOR

Abstract – John Banville's talent as a prose stylist is widely recognized. The polished elegance of his phrases constitutes a continuing and fascinating challenge for his translator, due to the intricacies of the source text, its manifold registers and lexical choices. In his novel *The Infinities*, in Italian *Teoria degli Infiniti*, John Banville takes cue from Kleist's *Amphytrion* to devise a novel where classicality interweaves with science and science fiction through the invention of a world where the ancient gods intermingle with the humans while waiting for the death of Adam Godley, a famous mathematician who explained how an infinity of worlds exist and interact with each other. To translate this book I had not only to work extensively on lexis and style, but also to do considerable research to render the many literary and non literary references. Some examples of these struggles with the source text during the translation process are given in the present paper.

Keywords: Banville, Infinities, challenge, equivalent, lexical choices.

When the parcel with a brand new book by John Banville arrives from the publisher and I read the first paragraphs thinking of the new translation-to-be, what always strikes me at first is the stylish smoothness of Banville's sentences, where every single word is carefully chosen and nothing is left to chance:

> Of the things we fashioned for them that they might be comforted, dawn is the one that works. When darkness sifts from the air like fine soft soot and light spreads slowly out of the east then all but the most wretched of humankind rally. It is a spectacle we immortals enjoy, this minor daily resurrection, often we will gather at the ramparts of the clouds and gaze down upon them, our little ones, as they bestir themselves to welcome the new day. What a silence falls upon us then, the sad silence of our envy. Many of them sleep on, of course, careless of our cousin Aurora's charming matutinal trick, but there are always the insomniacs, the restless ill, the lovelorn tossing on their solitary beds, or just the early-risers, the busy ones, with their knee-bends and their cold showers and their fussy little cups of black ambrosia. Yes, all who witness it greet the dawn with joy, more or less, except of course the condemned man, for whom first light will be the last, on earth. (Banville 2009, p. 3)

While reading, I immediately start some sort of tentative translation as I go, but I stumble right away on: *Delle cose che abbiamo...* [Of the things we…]. Out of instinct, I'd be tempted to go on by thinking *Delle cose che abbiamo concepito affinché ne avessero conforto*, or *Delle cose che abbiamo creato affinché ne avessero conforto*, but that would be very wrong, since "to fashion" means neither *concepire*, nor *creare*. In English, "to fashion" means the following, as the Oxford Dictionary of English[1] reminds us:

> *make into a particular form*:
> the bottles were fashioned from green glass
> *(fashion something into) use materials to produce (something)*:
> the skins were fashioned into boots and shoes.

Accordingly, the Picchi Dictionary (Hoepli) translates "to fashion" with *modellare*, *foggiare*; or *forgiare*, *plasmare*. Likewise, the Ragazzini Dictionary (Zanichelli) translates "to fashion" with *foggiare*, *fabbricare*; or *formare*, *forgiare*, *plasmare*.

The English verb "to fashion" has nothing to do with the *creatio ex nihilo* of the Biblical god, and in fact we discover pretty soon that the narrator of the novel is Hermes, a Greek god: now everything makes sense, since Greek deities don't create the world, they fashion it.

The problem is now to find the right Italian words. Lamentably,

> *Delle cose che abbiamo plasmato affinché ne avessero conforto*

is unsatisfactory, as is,

> *Delle cose che abbiamo forgiato affinché ne avessero conforto.*

It's not a question of meaning, but of elegance and smoothness: something of the immediate grace of the original incipit is lost here. If I can't find a satisfactory translation for a word or a sentence after thinking about it for a while, I prefer to leave the question open and come back to it later on. It is usually pointless to insist on a certain term or expression when I can't immediately find a good Italian equivalent; the right word may come to me later, while I am revising the previous day's translation before starting the new daily portion or just doing something else, buying groceries or even during the washing up. Whenever I translate a book by Banville I need to do a lot of rethinking and revising, looking for perfect Italian equivalents that do not exist. But it is a task I highly enjoy, this endless battle I engage with my mother tongue to provide a satisfactory translation of the source text.

A battle all the more necessary, since Banville is regarded by critics as one of the finest prose stylists currently writing in English, one whose stated

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[1] http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/fashion?q=to+fashion

ambition is to give his prose "the kind of denseness and thickness that poetry has" (Jeffries 2012).[2] That means that nothing but the same elegance and smoothness of the original will do, nothing but the same kind of denseness and thickness that poetry has.

Think, for instance, of the second sentence: "When darkness sifts from the air like fine soft soot and light spreads slowly out of the east then all but the most wretched of humankind rally". The rhythm of the sentence, the metaphoric language and all alliterations do result in a poetic prose that requires careful attention to lexis and style to be rendered into Italian. The verb "to sift" is particularly difficult to render; I can't simply use the Italian verb *setacciare* because it has no intransitive meaning and I can't paraphrase it if I don't want to spoil the rhythm. So here I decide to allow myself a certain liberty on lexis and focus more on the music of the sentence, where the sibilant 's' and the fricative 'f' alliterate enhancing the softness and the sense of delicacy of the literary image. I thus translate "sift" with *svaporare*, a verb from the literary genre, inaccurate as it may be considered, and I then choose *soffice* for "soft" and *sottile* for "fine", because I need the sound as well as the meaning. I go on with *diffondersi* for "spread"; I prefer alliterating the 'f' sound instead of the 's' – what I could do with *espandersi* or *spandersi* – because *diffondersi* has the vowels 'i' and 'o', the same vowels as in *soffice* and *sottile*. I read my sentence aloud again and again: *Quando le tenebre svaporano nell'aria come soffice fuliggine sottile e la luce si diffonde lentamente da oriente, tutti tranne i più disgraziati del genere umano si rianimano.*

The music is there and the meaning is there too, if not in all its lexical subtleties, at least in the poetic image that it conceives; I am not wholly unsatisfied, if I may say so.

Since Banville likes writing unusually long sentences with a rather complex syntax, the ability of the translator will also require her to write equally long Italian sentences with a rather complex syntax that sound nevertheless genuine and unaffected to the Italian mother-tongue reader.

On the second page I find a beautiful example:

> He is reminded of how when he was a little boy his grandmother would dress him up for Christmas, or his birthday, or some other festival, tugging him this way and that and spitting on a finger to plaster down a stubborn curl, and how he would feel exposed, worse than naked, in those already outmoded scratchy short-trousered tweed suits the colour of porridge that the old woman made him wear, and the white shirts with starched collars and, worst of all, the tartan dicky bows that it afforded him a wan, vindictive pleasure to pull out to the limit of their elastic and let snap back with a pleasingly loud smack when someone was making a speech or singing a song or the priest was holding up the communion wafer like, he always thought, the nurse on the Hospital

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[2] http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2012/jun/29/john-banvill-life-in-writing

Sweepstakes tickets brandishing aloft the winning number. (Banville 2009, p. 4)

When I finished my first, preliminary translation and read it again, I stumbled and tripped in my own version every two or three words.

I must have rewritten it several times, before it became:

Gli ricorda come, quand'era piccolo, sua nonna lo vestiva per Natale o per il suo compleanno o per qualche altra ricorrenza, strattonandolo di qua e di là e sputandosi sul dito per impomatargli un ricciolo ribelle, e come si sentiva esposto, peggio che nudo, in quei completi ruvidi di tweed color porridge già fuori moda con il pantalone corto che la vecchia gli faceva indossare, e le camicie bianche con il colletto inamidato e, peggio di tutto, il farfallino di tartan che gli dava un pallido gusto vendicativo tirare al limite dell'elastico e rilasciare con uno schiocco piacevolmente rumoroso quando qualcuno teneva un discorso o cantava una canzone o il prete reggeva in alto l'ostia della comunione allo stesso modo in cui, pensava sempre, l'infermiera brandiva il biglietto con il numero vincente della lotteria dell'ospedale. (Banville 2011, p. 8)

I often think the translator's job is a bit like climbing a mountain, when you reach the top and enjoy the beautiful view, you forget how hard the climbing was. The problem is, when I am translating a book by John Banville, it is not just one mountain to climb, but every new sentence can be one. And how many mountains can you possibly climb every day, if you want to earn a living from it? While I like the endless battle I need to engage with my mother tongue to render Banville's books into Italian, at times it can be exhausting. The view at the top had better be beautiful indeed, for it to be a worthy exhaustion.

The Infinities is a book with little if any plot, where almost nothing happens. In a nice summer day, in a mansion somewhere in the Irish countryside, a small group of people gathers by the bedside of the dying homeowner, the mathematician Adam Godley, whose renowned theory of infinities gave him endless fame and some money. Clearly the name Adam Godley itself is a wink to the reader, and of the sort you can't possibly translate, since personal names in literary novels stay as they are. The author's wink will be lost, except for those readers who know English enough to catch it, and here there's nothing I can do: in my opinion a translator's note would be seen as a long and pedantic overreaction.

Paralysed by a stroke, motionless but alert in his bed, Adam Godley focuses on his own memories and reflections, reckoning with his own finiteness. By his bedside we find his second wife Ursula and their two children, bulky and awkward Adam (whose name is exactly the same as his father, yes) accompanied by his beautiful wife Helen, and skinny Petra, a troubled young woman. Completing the picture, we have Petra's supposed

boyfriend Roddy, some sort of dandy whose real interest is in fact Petra's famous dad, whose biography he wishes to write; and a couple of peculiar domestic helpers. There are also a handful of Greek deities, who come on stage for different reasons and interfere with human lives and affairs.

And here the expression 'on stage' is not used by accident.

The novel is set in Arden, Adam Godley's estate, and events unfold in the course of a single day, thus respecting the classical unities of Aristotle's *Poetics*, as if it were an ancient tragedy.

But this is surely not the only reference to theatre – on the contrary. We'll soon enough find out that dawn is delayed by Hermes to allow his father Zeus to seduce the beautiful Helen, disguising himself as the young Adam, her own husband. Nothing new, right?

In fact, the resemblance between *The Infinities* and the plot of *Amphitryon* is not at all coincidental, and John Banville lets us realise this very soon. Helen, Adam's wife, is an actress and, as it happens, is soon going to be Alcmena (Amphitryon's wife) on stage.

True, but which *Amphitryon* are we talking about?

Here John Banville impresses us with a master stroke. While talking to Roddy, Helen tells him about the play:

> "It could have been set here [...], here at this house, when it was first built."
> "Oh? But isn't it in Greece, in Thebes, or somewhere? I seem to remember —"
> "The version we are doing all takes place round Vinegar Hill, at the time of the Rebellion."
> "Ah." He frowns. He does not approve of the classics being tampered with, he says. "The Greeks knew what they were doing, after all."
> "Oh, but it's not Greek," she says before she can stop herself, and then to make it worse continues on. "— It was written only a hundred years ago, I think, or two, in Germany." (Banville 2009, p. 192)

With a few lines, Banville reveals to us that of the many existing versions of this classical story he is referring to the *Amphitryon* written in the early nineteenth century by German writer Heinrich von Kleist. But Kleist, in compliance with tradition, set his *Amphitryon* in classical Greece, while the *Amphitryon* Helen will be playing in is set in Ireland at the time of the Rebellion. Is this just a piece of invention? Of course not: this is the author's sly way of telling us that in fact he is not just simply referring to Kleist's *Amphitryon*, but to a reworked Irish adaptation of Kleist's text, set in Ireland in 1789 just after the Battle of Vinegar Hill. What Banville doesn't tell us (but as a translator I am expected to find this out, if I want to correctly understand the text I am translating) is that this particular version, entitled *God's Gift: A version of Amphitryon by Heinrich von Kleist*, does exist and its author is... John Banville.

In cases like this one, Internet resources such as Google and Wikipedia are extremely helpful to find out what lies behind the text or what is implied between the lines. Kleist's *Amphitryon* was not beyond my reach even without their helpful insights, but Banville's *God's Gift* surely was.

Now, since John Banville is also the author of this particular version of the *Amphitryon* that permeates *The Infinities*, he benefits from it.

After her divine – literally divine – intercourse with Zeus, Helen falls asleep again and wakes up when her husband Adam enters the room. Adam is puzzled by her allusions, and Helen flees to the toilet, urged by pressing physiological needs no less than by a sudden shyness. Just after she flushes the toilet, with a sudden conspicuous shift from low language to literary language, we find four lines:

> — oh, such a dream!
> We were upon some golden mountain top,
> The two of us, just we, and all around
> The air was blue, and endless, and so soft!
> (Banville 2009, p. 55)

First thing, when I find lines of a poem in a text, I need to find out whether they are from some other author. Again, the Internet is most helpful and thanks to Google and Google Books I am usually able to find out. In this particular case, since I found no reference for those lines, I assumed they were by Banville himself and, since they reminded me of the language and atmosphere of Petrarca's love sonnets, I decided to render them in Italian hendecasyllables:

> *...oh, che sogno!*
> *In vetta eravamo a una montagna d'oro*
> *Noi due, solo noi due, e tutt'intorno*
> *L'aria era azzurra e sconfinata e dolce!*
> (Banville 2011, p. 61)

But they were in fact cited lines. The idea of them being lines from a poem originally written in a different language and subsequently translated into English didn't occur to me at first. Only during a second stage, revising and editing my translation, did it occur to me that this could be the case.[3] As an e-mail by the author himself finally clarified, the lines are cited from *God's Gift*, Banville's own version of Kleist's *Amphitryon*. Being a version by Banville himself, and given that *God's Gift* is not translated into Italian, I could keep my translation – but I was reminded of a very important rule: you can never check enough when it comes to hidden quotations. Of course, we're not always lucky enough to have our questions answered by the author

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[3] Here I thank my colleague Silvia Sichel for the suggestion.

himself, and this means that we should always be as thorough as possible when it comes to fact checking.

To avoid missing a hidden reference, the translator needs to scrupulously check every single trivial detail. And hidden references can be very tricky, at times.

Old Adam Godley, as we said, is a mathematician, whose fame came from his theory of infinities, postulating the existence of endless interpenetrating worlds. He was able to write equations across those many worlds, incorporating their infinities and opening new possibilities to science. And thanks to the fictional Godley's well-known Brahma equations, cold fusion is a reality and the most of the world's energy is derived from brine.

So when is the novel set? In an invented near future?

When I read:

> Adam was able to tell her of St Ursula of Dumnonia, martyred at Cologne along with her eleven thousand virgins [...] although this Ursula was recently removed from the calendar of saints, in a fit of anti-German pique, by one of the more reform-minded English pontiffs. (Banville 2009, pp. 22-23)

I thought: English pontiffs, what English pontiffs? The first and only Englishman to ascend the papal throne was in the twelfth century. Knowledgeable readers have probably already understood what I am going to explain, but I needed a few other clues.

And when I read:

> It is said [Ivy Blount] is a direct descendant of Charles Blount, eighth Lord Mountjoy and first Earl of Devonshire, that eccentric soldier whom Mary, Queen of Scots, great Gloriana, on her accession to the English throne after the beheading of her cousin, the upstart and treasonous Elizabeth Tudor, sent over at the dawn of seventeenth century to pacify this most distressful country. (Banville 2009, pp. 38-39)

I must admit, painful as it may be, that I was highly puzzled but far from understanding what all this distorted historical account was about.

Not even the strange way used by Banville to refer to the father of the atomic bomb was enough at first:

> Whom did I resemble? Oppenheimer, say, J. Robert, who failed to build the bomb he boasted so much of. (Banville 2009, p. 171)

but when I came, on the same page, to Adam Godley's recollection:

> He says we should get out of here and go to a place he knows on the waterfront, a venerable tavern where Tycho Brahe is said to have stopped for a night on his way to Prague to take up the post of assistant to Johannes Kepler,

the Emperor Rudolf's Imperial Mathematician, long ago. (Banville 2009, p. 171)

all pieces finally fell into place. In our world, as you might be aware of, it was Johannes Kepler who was Tycho Brahe's assistant, and not vice versa. And it was Elizabeth Tudor who was called great Gloriana and had her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots, beheaded. And J. Robert Oppenheimer did build the atomic bomb, in fact.

All these hints – and there are many more – are Banville's subtle way to tell us his novel is set in one of these many parallel worlds postulated in Godley's theory of infinities that only slightly differs from our own.

This is a clear case where knowing history helps a great deal to understand the text, but putting the pieces in the right places is necessary as well. How shameful and disgraceful it would have been for me – and how much I would have wronged the original – had I claimed the author made a couple of trivial historical mistakes and suggested to amend them in the translated book. I can just imagine how this could happen; I would have called the Italian editor and told her: "John Banville made a mistake; he mixed up Kepler and Tycho Brahe. What should I do, should I amend it?" Trusting me, the editor could have said, "Sure, amend it, thank you". I would have made a blunder and made a fool of myself.

This is not to say that mistakes or typos can't occur or never occur in the original text: in fact, the author himself wrote to his translators asking them to slightly change a sentence in the original book, because he found an inaccuracy he wished to amend. So "These are the creatures she carried inside her and gave birth to and fed from her own breast, phoenix-like" (Banville 2009, p. 25) became "These are the creatures she carried inside her and gave birth to and fed from her own breast, like that mythical bird, the phoenix, is it, or some other?", and was subsequently translated as "*Queste sono le creature che ha portato in grembo e che ha dato alla luce e nutrito dal proprio seno, come quell'uccello mitico, la fenice, giusto, o era un altro?*" (Banville 2011, p. 30). I can't be sure here, but I wouldn't be surprised if it was in fact one of his translators who pointed out that the phoenix, according to the myth, has many peculiarities but does not breastfeed.

On another page of the book, the name "Alcmene" had been mistyped as "Alceme", and that was as well duly amended. But if anything doesn't seem to make sense at first, the best thing to do is start from the assumption that the author knows what he is writing and therefore the original is right. Before questioning the author, as a translator I prefer to question myself and my own understanding. Sometimes, this is also a chance to learn something new. When I first read Hermes saying "[men] have called me Argeiphantes, he who makes clear the sky" (Banville 2009, p. 15), I was extremely puzzled.

I knew Hermes was called "Argeiphontes", traditionally interpreted as "slayer of Argus", but I couldn't think that "Argeiphantes" was a typo for "Argeiphontes", since the subsequent explanation wouldn't match. After struggling with Argeiphontes/Argeiphantes for some time, I managed to solve the enigma thanks to the *Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, which explains how "the myth of [Hermes] slaying Argus, later thought to explain the epithet Argeiphontes, [is] a probable deformation of Argeiphantes, he who makes the sky clear" (LEM 1959, p. 133).

Now one could wonder if it might not be possible just to translate word for word, and if that wouldn't be enough. Is this attempt to trace the whole subtle web of internal and external cross-references useful? Is it necessary? Will the final result – the final translated text – be different?

I am convinced that deciphering all the text's multiple layers of meaning is an essential part of the translator's job, and this requires not only a broad expertise in the source language but also a wide education and cultural background and, moreover, much specific research done while translating. This may seem a theoretical, academic statement, but when it comes to translating, for instance, "An early blackbird flies across at a slant swiftly from somewhere to somewhere else, its lacquered wing catching an angled glint of sunlight (...). [Adam] fancies he can hear faintly the fleet-winged creature's piping panic note" (Banville 2009, p. 5), I know that I must thank the Greek I studied at school. As a result I was able to make the analogy with "swift-footed Achilles", which then led me to decide to render "fleet-winged creature" with *creatura rapida d'ala*.

And when it came to translate "grey-eyed Athene", I chose *occhicerulea Atena* over *glaucopide Atena*, because Banville didn't choose to call her "glaukopis" himself. This is however a perfect case where you can't claim one version is right and the other one wrong; rather, it is a matter of translator's choices and tastes. These last two examples show how every word of the source text is not just a word *per se*, but is set in a context and it is through the context that its translation comes. Sometimes it is an easy job – words surface as if the source text was somehow magically hiding them inside – at other times it is a more laborious, painstaking, and occasionally frustrating and exhausting job. But such efforts were well rewarded later, when I happened to read a review that mentioned the "outstanding poetic efficacy" (Magris 2012, p. 28) of the translation.

Antonio Tabucchi (2012) said in an interview that translating is an act both of arrogance and humility.[4] Arrogance in taking over someone else's words, humility in respecting them. I would add that it is also an act of responsibility, the responsibility we take on by rewriting the source text in our own words:

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[4] http://www.scrittoriperunanno.rai.it/scrittori.asp?videoId=113&currentId=8

Delle cose cui abbiamo dato forma affinché ne avessero conforto, l'alba è quella che funziona. Quando le tenebre svaporano nell'aria come soffice fuliggine sottile e la luce si diffonde lentamente da oriente, tutti tranne i più disgraziati del genere umano si rianimano. È uno spettacolo che piace a noi immortali, questa piccola risurrezione quotidiana; spesso ci raduniamo sui bastioni delle nuvole e abbassiamo lo sguardo su di loro, i nostri piccoli, che si ridestano per dare il benvenuto al nuovo giorno. Che silenzio cala allora su di noi, il triste silenzio della nostra invidia. Molti continuano a dormire, certo, incuranti dell'incantevole espediente mattutino di nostra cugina Aurora, ma ci sono sempre gli insonni, i malati irrequieti, gli infelici che si struggono d'amore rigirandosi nei loro letti solitari o anche solo i mattinieri, gli indaffarati, con i loro piegamenti e le loro docce fredde e le loro elaborate tazzine di ambrosia nera. Sì, tutti coloro che la contemplano salutano l'alba con gioia, chi più chi meno, eccetto il condannato, ovvio, per il quale la prima luce sarà l'ultima, sulla terra. (Banville 2011, p. 7)

Bionote: After studying in Turin, Heidelberg and Jerusalem, Irene Abigail Piccinini obtained a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Roma-Tor Vergata. Her dissertation on Hermann Cohen's influence on Leo Strauss's thought is now published as *Una guida fedele. L'influenza di Hermann Cohen sul pensiero di Leo Strauss*, Trauben, Torino, 2007. As a literary translator from English and German into Italian, she has worked for publishers such as Guanda, Longanesi, Il Saggiatore, Marco Tropea Editore, and Cairo Editore. With more than ten years of experience, she has translated fiction and non-fiction, novels, children books, and occasionally poetry; among her authors are John Banville, Jonathan Safran Foer, Sue Miller, Curt Leviant, Iain Pears, Russell Shorto, Eric G. Wilson, and Bettany Hughes (from English); Ferdinand von Schirach, Eric Frey, and Monica Cantieni (from German). After living for several years between Turin and Glasgow, she currently resides in Lecce.

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PART III | The translator's work

Critical analysis of
published translations

"WIT LARDED WITH MALICE"
Translating Shakespeare's Culinary Language

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Abstract – Evidence of Shakespeare's interest in food preparation and cooking is recurrent throughout his works, though the difficulties provided by the translation of such figurative language have attracted much less interest among scholars. Building on some earlier research (Scarpa 1995a, 1995b) and some more recent publications (Fitzpatrick 2007, 2011) on the language of food, taste and cooking in Shakespeare's plays, the paper discusses some instances of the translation into Italian by different translators of this often very culture-specific knowledge and terminology in terms of the difficulty of translating such imagery in the target language when trying to maintain the language of food. This specialized language may in fact be considered to fall into the Bard's language of "things" and, as such, stands most in danger of becoming archaic and posing a problem for translators with a different historical and cultural background. The examples will mainly be drawn from the two practical operations of the baking of bread, cakes and pastry, and the preparation and cooking of meat. It will be argued that the translation approach most suited to all food references in Shakespeare's plays is a reader-centred approach and in the conclusion some remarks will also be made on other reader-centred approaches to Shakespeare's language outside the boundaries of Translation Studies which can have a positive impact on revitalizing Shakespeare for a contemporary audience.

Keywords: Shakespeare translation; language of food; translation of figurative language; reader-centred translation approach.

1. Introduction

Shakespeare's interest in food preparation and cooking is evident throughout his works, as shown by his critics as early as 1935 – i.e. the long list of imagery on food, taste and cooking provided in Caroline Spurgeon's classic *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us* (Spurgeon 1982) – until the two much more recent works by Joan Fitzpatrick focusing specifically on the language of food (2007, 2011). However, the difficulties provided by the translation of such language, which very often brings together different levels of meaning, have attracted much less interest among scholars. This is notwithstanding the fact that Shakespeare is one of the most widely translated writers and the most frequently performed playwrights in world literature;

and the challenge of translating his works has attracted leading writers and many prominent leaders of culture and politics (cf. Delabastita 2009, p. 264). As a general rule of thumb, in Shakespeare's plays the many references to food and cooking occur mostly (but not exclusively) in the comedies and in the 'Falstaff plays' and also as comic relief in the tragedies. These references can be used either literally or figuratively, to describe one thing in terms of something different in order to achieve a rhetorical effect. The sheer difficulty of translating into a foreign language literal references to foodstuffs such as "venison pasty" (*Merry Wives of Windsor* 1.1, pp. 178-179), "carbonado" (*King Lear* 2.2, pp. 35-36) and even a seemingly unassuming "biscuit"[1] (*As You Like It* 2.7.38) is compounded, in the case of figurative language, by the fact that the figurative meaning of the source language (SL) might not work in the target language (TL) and also by the frequent link of the food image to a web of connected meanings in the source text (ST) which often cannot be reproduced in the target text (TT).

Building on some earlier research on the language of food, taste and cooking in Shakespeare' plays (Scarpa 1995a, 1995b), the main objectives of this study are the following two:

1) To investigate the meaning(s) of some instances of non-casual language on the preparation and cooking of foodstuffs that would have been familiar to most Shakespeare's contemporaries but are not readily comprehensible by a modern English-speaking audience, who has lost the ability to understand many of Shakespeare's references to Elizabethan foodstuffs and ways of cooking, let alone by a modern Italian audience, whose experience of the world is totally different from that of the Elizabethans not only in terms of historical background but also, just as crucially, linguistically and culturally.

2) To see some instances of how Italian translators dealt with this specialized – and often very culture-specific – language of "things", which most runs the risk of becoming archaic and irrelevant.

After describing the reader-centred translation approach taken here to be the most suited to all references to food in Shakespeare's plays and tracing it back to its sources in the recent history of Translation Studies, some instances of the translation into Italian of culinary language will be discussed in terms

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[1] A "biscuit", in Shakespeare's time, was "a thin and flat unleavened bread made from flour and water or milk" (Fitzpatrick 2011, p. 47) and stands here for "hardtack", which was part of soldiers' and sailors' daily food rations and was sometimes referred to by different names like "sea biscuit" or "ship's biscuit"; "The Royal Navy was among the first to mass-produce biscuits for sailors. Often made using just salt, water and wheat flour, which contains protein, vitamins and a fair amount of calories, biscuits were often baked as many as four separate times. Once in storage, if kept dry, the biscuits would keep indefinitely" (Mallett 2012).

of the difficulty of translating such imagery in the TL when trying to maintain the language of food. Examples will mainly be drawn from the two practical operations of the baking of bread, cakes and pastry, and the preparation and cooking of meat. In the conclusion, some remarks will also be made on other reader-centred approaches to Shakespeare's language outside the boundaries of Translation Studies which can have a positive impact on revitalizing Shakespeare for a contemporary audience.

2. Translation Approach

Shakespeare mostly wrote for entertainment. This entails that, especially if the translation of his work is meant to be an adaptation for the stage rather than simply be read, when translated into a different language the TT should *work* in the target culture just as the original play worked for Shakespeare's contemporaries. As in all theatre translation, the performance aspect of the text and its relationship with an audience must be the central preoccupation of the translator, who should adapt the ST as deemed necessary in order to preserve the 'playability' of the TT (Bassnett 1991, pp. 122-123). In a contemporary production of a Shakespearean text for an Italian audience, this means that any obscure highly-cultural references should ideally be made accessible to the new audience just as they were to Shakespeare's contemporaries. Given the major shifts in place and time being involved, this could indeed be a very complex translation task entailing the substitution of another system of references for the one on which the ST was based.

This translation approach lies at the opposite end of an ideal spectrum from a SL-oriented approach, which is more suited to drama translation 'for the page', where the translator merely reproduces the highly cultural language of food by achieving accuracy at the linguistic level and providing the necessary background information in footnotes. Instead, in the case of a translation 'for the stage' such as the one envisaged here, the best approach for references to foodstuffs and culinary operations that do not have any obvious equivalents in the TL is a TL-oriented approach, where the translator finds functional equivalents in today's Italian culinary culture having a communicative value in their own right.

Given the vastly different audiences of sixteenth-century England and twenty-first-century Italy, the translator's approach should consequently be socio-cultural, with adjustments being considered as a necessary measure to satisfy the linguistic requirements of 'performability' (cf. Anderman 2009, p. 92). This entails that problematic references to food and its preparation should be 'adapted' and 'actualized' and any instances of tension between the comprehensibility and idiomaticity of the TT, on the one hand, and its relation to the ST, on the other, be resolved in favour of the first.

Being hinged on the performability of the translation for a contemporary Italian audience, the approach to the translation of Shakespeare's images of food envisaged here is also going to be relativistic, as drama is viewed as an integral part of a theatrical production rather than as mere literature, where the words spoken are only one of the elements to be considered.

It should be noted, however, that in the specific case of the language of food and its preparation the creative interventions needed to ensure a successful performance in translation are usually only minor adaptations of the ST, with such references being mainly relegated to only a few words. The instances where food references take the form of iterative imagery and punning requiring a more extensive re-creation by the translator are, in fact, only occasional. With this fact in mind, the translation approach taken here is far from being innovative and can be traced back to many sources in the recent history of Translation Studies in the English-speaking world.

The most influential is the "principle of equivalent effect", an expression first coined by Emil V. Rieu (1953; Rieu and Phillips 1954), founder (with Sir Allen Lane) and general editor from 1944 to 1964 of the Penguin Classics, to describe his approach to translating Homer. Rieu's translation in prose of the *Odyssey* launched the series and went on to sell some three million copies, very possibly because his ambition for the series was that of publishing "new and accessible translations", as can be read in the text "About Penguin Classics" in the Penguin Classics website:

> It is the editor's intention to commission translators who can emulate his own example and present the general reader with readable and attractive versions of the great writers books in modern English, shorn of the unnecessary difficulties and erudition, the archaic flavour and the foreign idiom that renders so many existing translations repellent to modern taste. (http://www.penguinclassics.co.uk/about/)

To make sure this accessible style of translation was carried out in the series, Rieu preferred consistently professional translators to academics, as the latter tended to be "enslaved by the idiom of the original language", sacrificing fluency in the process. In the 1991 revised edition of E.V. Rieu's translation by his son, Dominic C.H. Rieu, some of the liberties his father had taken with Homer's text were amended, though "some of his racier colloquialisms" were kept "to retain the joie de vivre of his version" (Rieu 2003). In his Preface, D.C.H. Rieu also refers to his father's "towering skill" and "his mastery of words" in conveying "the subtle nuances of a complex passage".

E.V. Rieu's reader-centred translation approach for the Penguin Classics originated the expression "Penguinification [of Plato]", which was coined by the classicist Trevor J. Saunders to refer to the 'aids' he himself had used when translating Plato's *The Laws* for Penguin Books in 1970

(Saunders 1975, pp. 39-40, as quoted by Pangle 1980) to make the resulting translation sound as unlike a translation as possible. More crucially, the equivalent-effect approach was taken as an exemplification of the principle of "dynamic equivalence" theorized by E. A. Nida (1964, p. 159) in Bible translation aiming at "complete naturalness of expression". The main concern of the translator aiming to produce a *dynamic* (or 'functional') equivalence, rather than a formal one, is not so much matching the TL message with the SL message but rather a dynamic relationship between target reader and target message. This relationship should be substantially the same as that between the original readers and the original message. Nida considered E. V. Rieu's translations as "the most effective translations of Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad*" and "full of life, vigor, and punch" (Nida and Taber 1982, p. 133) because they reproduced "the liveliness and spontaneity characteristic of Homer's style" (Nida 1964, p. 157).

Much closer to our time, however, E.V. Rieu's approach of making a text fit with the expectations of the TL audience has been held in a somewhat lower esteem by exclusively literary translation theorists, especially on the other side of the Atlantic. Peter Connor (2014, p. 425) has called it an "annexationist philosophy of translation" and Lawrence Venuti has branded it as the type of "domesticating" translation dominating British and American literary translation culture, where an "invisible" translator is expected to produce a translated text that reads fluently and has "the appearance […] that the translation is not in fact a translation but the 'original'" (Venuti 1995, p. 1).

In a reader-centred translation approach to theatre such as the one envisaged here, however, the "visibility" of a translator producing a "foreignizing" translation bringing the lexical and cultural differences of Shakespeare's language of food into an Italian translation would be detrimental to the performability of the play. In other words, Venuti's ethical and political deconstructionist approach is just not suitable for drama translation, just as it is not for technical and scientific translation (Scarpa 2008, p. 325). In both cases, the positive ethical values should in fact be considered "domestication" and "invisibility", as the translator's main loyalty lies with the TL audience rather than with the ST author.

3. Some Instances of Translation of Food References

In this section, some examples of the reader-oriented translation approach described above and considered to be the most suited to achieve a TT that 'works' in the TL will be discussed. More specifically, the examples have been assigned to three different groups, based on the extent to which the variously successful functional equivalents used by translators to translate a

highly cultural food reference in the ST were drawn from today's Italian language of food. The sources for the Italian translations will be two collections of Shakespeare's complete works: the first (Shakespeare 1960) is a collection of translations by the same translator and the second (Shakespeare 1976-1991) is an edited collection of translations by different translators. All instances will be discussed by comparing the translations of the same SL quotation by two different Italian translators.

4. Translation within food domain: *same* foodstuff/culinary operation

In a TL-reader oriented translation approach to theatre, the possibility to use a functional equivalent in the TT which is not only drawn from the food domain but also refers to the same (or a similar) foodstuff or operation as the ST is, of course, the ideal translation strategy to aim for, as the translator's loyalty can be equally split between the SL author and his TL audience. The first instance is drawn from the tragedy *Titus Andronicus* and is one of the relatively few cases where the same image of food is extended throughout a whole paragraph. As in a cookbook narrative, the whole procedure of pie-making is described in a very detailed and extremely gruesome way by Titus baking Chiron and Demetrius's bodies into a pasty; Titus then serves the captured Goth, Queen Tamora, the pie bearing her two sons, concealing the real contents of the pastry until she starts helping herself to the unsavoury dish:

> Hark, villains, I will *grind your bones to dust*
> And with your blood and it I'll make a *paste*,
> And of the paste a *coffin* I will rear,
> And make two *pasties* of your shameful heads.
> (…)
> Let me go *grind their bones to powder small*,
> And with this hateful *liquor temper it*,
> And in that *paste* let their vile heads be *bak'd*.
> (…)
> So, now bring them in, for I'll *play the cook*,
> And *see them ready*, against their mother comes.[2]
> (5.2.186 ff.)

Though the particular ingredients employed here (human bones, blood and heads) are rather unconventional ones, still Titus' madness rests on a sound and realistic knowledge of how to make a pie. For a start, ground bones from the charnel-house instead of wheat were used as adulterants of bread as late

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[2] Here, as in all other quotations, the emphasis is added.

as the 1750s (Wilson 1973, p. 262) and this might well have also been the case with Elizabethan bakers. Likewise, animal blood was employed to colour black puddings and darken pottages and sauces (Wilson 1973, p. 90). The "coffin" Shakespeare mentions here was a normal term to call the pie-crust which, most appropriately in this particular instance, maintains its main funereal meaning, much as in the implied quibble on "coffin" ('model', 'paste', 'cover') in *Richard II*.[3]

The reason behind the culinary sense of this rather gloomy item might be provided by the fact that in the medieval fish-pie, the pastry "coffin" or shell was regarded as merely as a free-standing container and was not always eaten. As evidence of the popularity of meat pies in medieval Britain, in 1378 a special ordinance of Richard II (which, given the previously quoted instance, is a remarkable coincidence!) controlled the prices charged by cooks and pie bakers in London for their roasted and baked meats. For open pies or tarts, the pastry coffin was baked blind and then filled (Wilson 1973, pp. 42, 124, 253-254), as exemplified in a 1597 recipe of "Spinach Flan": "Take three handful of Spinnage […] and lay it in your Coffin, when it is hardened in the oven, then bake it" (Brears 1985, p. 28). In both the Italian translations of Titus' demented monologue, the terminology of pie-making is successfully kept:

> *Lodovici* (Shakespeare 1960)
> Ascoltate, furfanti: io *delle vostre ossa farò un macinato*, da cui, intriso nel vostro sangue, *ricaverò una pastafrolla*; e da questa *pastafrolla* due *pasticci*, *farciti* con le vostre teste di svergognati;
> […] faremo delle loro *ossa una farina fine fine* da *impastare con questo liquido* ripugnante: e rivestite di questa *pasta*, farò *cuocere al forno* le loro due teste stramaledette.
> […] Portateli in casa. Io ora *vado a fare il cuoco* e voglio *che sia pronta questa vivanda* per quando verrà la loro madre imperiale.

> *Tessitore* (Shakespeare 1978b)
> Udite, scellerati: *triturerò le vostre ossa fino a ridurle in polvere*,
> le *impasterò* insieme al vostro sangue,
> e poi con quella *pasta* io *stenderò una sfoglia*
> e farò *due crostate* con quelle vostre teste infami,
> […] Lascia che io *triti in polvere* minuta le loro ossa
> e le *impasti con questo liquido* abominevole;
> in tale *pasta* le loro teste abiette saranno *cotte al forno*.
> […] Ecco, adesso trasportateli dentro, che io *farò da cuoco*,
> e vedrò che essi *siano preparati a dovere*

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[3] "And nothing can we call our own but death, /And that small *model* of the barren earth/Which serves as *paste and cover* to our bones" (Richard II, 3.2.152).

per quando verrà qui la loro madre.

However, the two non-culinary terms "powder" and "dust" are, if anything, over- translated by Lodovici who uses the two baking ingredients *macinato* [meal] and *farina* [flour], whilst the same two terms were both translated by Tessitore simply as *polvere* [dust], a term that – like its ST counterparts – does not strictly belong to the kitchen. On the other hand, Tessitore's translation of the expression "of the paste a coffin I will rear" via the culinary collocation *stenderò una sfoglia* is much more idiomatic than Lodovici's rather stilted *ricaverò una pastafrolla*, possibly because Tessitore is a female translator and consequently is more likely to know the terms for cooking than a male translator.

The second example is taken from *Troilus and Cressida*, a play where the references to food that are tainted by a peculiar disgust for greasy ill-served dishes and food remnants are particularly numerous – to such an extent that Spurgeon notes that this play was probably written "at a time when the author was suffering from a disillusionment, revulsion and perturbation of nature, such as we feel nowhere else with the same intensity" (Spurgeon 1982, p. 320). Spurgeon's observation could also apply, more generally, to why Troilus and Cressida has always been considered by critics as one of the 'problem' plays both concerning its attribution to a specific genre (comedy, tragedy, history etc.) and its ambivalence, which Katan (1993) has explained in terms of "the lack of conversational success between the characters of the play". In the example, Thersites denounces Agamennon's brother, Menelaus, calling him a bull because he has the horns of a cuckold:

> to what form but that he is, should wit *larded* with malice and malice *forced* with wit turn him to? To an ass were nothing: he is both ass and ox. (5.1.63)

> *Lodovici* (Shakespeare 1960)
> in quale altra cosa da quello che è potrebbe trasformarlo l'intelligenza *lardellata* di malizia, o la malizia *farcita* d'intelligenza?

> *Squarzina* (Shakespeare 1977a)
> Che altra forma, se non la sua, potrebbe assumere la furbizia *lardellata* di malignità, o la malignità *infarcita* di furbizia?

"Larding" and "forcing" are two operations for preparing meat. The first refers to the insertion in lean meat of small strips of bacon or fat ("lardons") before cooking in order to fatten or enrich the piece of meat. A special larding needle, called a "lardoine", is used for these techniques. In Shakespeare, "larding" has the figurative meaning of 'to supplement or enrich with something for improvement or ornamentation' (e.g. 'a literary work larded with mythological allusions'), which the literal translation

lardellata used by both translators does in fact not have in Italian, though the resulting original ('foreignizing') metaphor works rather well in both Italian translations. As observed by Fitzpatrick (2011, p. 388), in this example "the culinary image of wit 'larded' with malice leads to the other culinary image of malice 'forced' with wit, that is 'forced' or 'stuffed', as in "force-meat stuffing", where "stuffing" refers to the Elizabethan culinary habit of stuffing the intestine of an animal roasted whole (typically, a suckling pig) with a pudding, i.e. a forcemeat made of meat, spices, blood, onions, fat and breadcrumbs, which nowadays is simply called "stuffing" and survives in the 'black pudding' (cf. Fitzpatrick 2011, p. 250). These expressions are used by Shakespeare especially in reference to Falstaff's considerable bulk and have been successfully translated via the literal translations *farcita* and *infarcita* having the same (standard) figurative meaning also in Italian (e.g. '*discorso infarcito di citazioni dotte*', [speech stuffed/larded with eloquent quotes].

Another instance of a figurative use by Shakespeare of the operation of 'stuffing', this time by using the synonym "cram", is in *Winter's Tale*, where pregnant Hermione's playful plea to Leontes hinged on an image of feeding and slaughtering animals may have a sexual meaning:

> I prithee tell me: *cram*'s with praise, and make's
> As *fat* as tame things. One good deed dying tongueless
> Slaughters a thousand waiting upon that.
> Our praises are our wages. (1.2.91-94)

> *Lodovici* (Shakespeare 1960)
> Per favore: *inzeppami* di elogi come s'ingozza un'oca *all'ingrasso*. Lasciare senza lode un merito sarebbe come soffocare i mille e mille che ne potrebbero seguire. Gli elogi sono il nostro salario.

> *Lombardo* (Shakespeare 1981)
> Dimmelo, ti prego: *inzeppateci* di lodi;
> *ingrassateci* come animali da cortile: una sola
> buona azione, se muore taciuta,
> ne uccide mille che potrebbero seguirla.
> Le lodi sono la nostra mercede.

Both the Italian versions use the literal translation *inzeppare*, which in Italian has the standard figurative meaning of 'stuffing someone with food', in combination with a reference to the fattening up of an animal (both the prepositional phrase *all'ingrasso* and the imperative *ingrassateci*), and in this specific context easily acquires the additional double entendre of the original "cram". All in all, both the Italian translations of the imagery of food evoked here by Shakespeare are to be considered very successful, though the Italian verb *inzeppare* does not have the extra layer of meaning in reference to the culinary operation of stuffing meat [It. *(in)farcire*]. Consequently the

juxtaposition of the feeding of a live animal and the stuffing of a slaughtered one has been necessarily lost in translation.

4.1. Translation within food domain: different culinary/foodstuff operation

Adapting the ST image to the Italian food culture by using a functional equivalent drawn from the food domain but referring to a different foodstuff or operation from the ST is an alternative translation strategy which has been used to overcome difference between the two cultures. In the following example drawn from *All's Well*, Parolles' statement contains a culinary image which the translators had no choice but adapt to the Italian food culture:

> I will confess what I know without constraint:
> *If ye pinch me like a pasty*, I can say no more. (4.3.141)
>
> *Lodovici* (Shakespeare 1960)
> Tutto! Tutto quello che so: ma senza tortura. Ché *se mi trituraste come carne da salsicce*, non potrei dirvi una sillaba di più!
>
> *Melchiori* (Shakespeare 1977b)
> Confesserò tutto quello che so senza coercizioni. Anche *se mi riducete a un colabrodo*, non potrete cavarne altro.

Neither the noun "pasty" nor the operation of its "pinching" have direct equivalents in Italian cooking, a pasty being "A pie where the filling is encased in pastry, which forms a parcel within which the filling is cooked; unlike a pie, a pasty usually contained only one filling and venison was popular",[4] whilst "pinching" refers to "the manner in which the crust of the pasty would be sealed" (Fitzpatrick 2011, pp. 321-322). Even in today's recipe books, "pinch" is the verb still used to define the finishing touches to crimp the edges of pastry or to make decorative leaves out of it.[5] The simile "if ye pinch me like a pasty" was translated by both Italian translators using a different kitchen-related image having in both cases the idiomatic meaning 'to make mincemeat of someone': Lodovici's was drawn from the operation of preparing sausages, while Melchiori's is an Italian standard metaphor using the image of a kitchen tool (the colander). Though both very effective, i.e. suited to a reader-oriented translation which has to work on a stage,

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[4] Cf. "venison *pasty*" in *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1.1, pp. 178-179), which was quoted in Section 1, and its translations as *pasticcio di cacciagione* by Ludovici (Shakespeare 1960) and *pasticcio di selvaggina* by Costa Giovangigli (Shakespeare 1982b), where *pasticcio* is the closest functional equivalent of "pasty", though being only remotely related to it.

[5] Cf. "Now take up the two opposite edges of your pastry circle to meet in the middle over your filling. Pinch or crimp the edge with your fingers in the middle of your pastie and along both edges to seal" (recipe of Turkey and Stuffing Pasty at http://www.smallwalletbigappetite.com/2012/11/turkey-and-stuffing-pasty-sundaysupper.html).

Lodovici's translation seems to be the most successful here because he uses a standard metaphor that has the added bonus of referring to the operation of making sausages, which is typical of the Italian culinary culture though not being uniquely so.

A similar adaptation has been carried out in the following example from *Troilus and Cressida*, where Ajax refers to manipulating the proud Achilles:

> AJAX: I will *knead* him: I will make him *supple*.
> NESTOR: He's not yet through warm: *force* him with praises. Pour in, pour in; his ambition is dry. (2.3.235)
>
> *Lodovici* (Shakespeare 1960)
> Me lo *rimpasto* io, me lo riduco *dolce dolce*.
>
> *Squarzina* (Shakespeare 1977a)
> Io *ne faccio polpette*, io lo *svito*.

The verb "knead" here has a literal meaning, "to firmly manipulate dough by stretching and pressing as a preparation for making bread or cake" (Fitzpatrick 2011, p. 242), and is also used figuratively. Pastry dough should in fact be handled as little and as lightly as possible in order for the dough to become "firm and elastic" (Dixon 1983, p. 382), i.e. 'supple', and therefore rise well in the oven. Here the figurative kneading of bread dough has been translated by Lodovici using the same culinary image in Italian. On the other hand, Squarzina's adaptation into the operation of making meatballs works rather less well in this specific context. Making meatballs is definitely a less gentle an operation than kneading, and is hardly suited to the psychological manipulation of Achilles that Ajax has in mind. More crucially, this image does not work with the even subtler scheme devised in the play by the Machiavellian Ulysses to make Achilles jealous of Ajax when Ajax is sent to fight the Trojan champion Hector in a man-to-man combat instead of him.

To translate the adjective "supple", Lodovici used an image of taste ('sweet') that also works rather well with the deviousness of Ulysses' intentions, whilst Squarzina's image of the unscrewing of a screw or a lid is equally effective but totally unrelated to food, a key domain for the imagery of *Troilus and Cressida*.

In this particular instance, the non-casualness of this food image can in fact be seen in the two other related images referring to the cooking of meat that Ulysses uses a few lines earlier to describe Achilles' arrogance:

> a) "the proud lord" /That *bastes* his arrogance with his own *seam*" (2.3.124-125) (where "seam" means 'grease') and
> b) the argument against Ajax going to Achilles as this would "*inlard* his fat-already pride" (2.3.134-135)

Lingue e Linguaggi

In the following example taken from *Henry IV Part 1*, in making clear that he is no soldier and would prefer to avoid confrontation, Sir John uses the term "carbonado", which in contemporary English cookery has survived only as a near-synonym of beef stew or casserole in "Carbonnade of Beef" and refers to broiled or grilled chunks of meat, fish or poultry which were very popular during Elizabeth's reign (Wilson 1973, p. 100):

> Well, if Percy be alive, I'll pierce him. If he do come in my way, so; if he do not, if I come in his willingly, let him make *a carbonado* of me. (5.2.56-8)

> *Lodovici* (Shakespeare 1960)
> Se è vivo, voglio averlo perso, Percy. Se me lo troverò sulla mia strada, pazienza. Ma che io vada a mettermi di mio sulla sua strada – e che son scemo? – perché di me faccia *una marmellata*!

> *Dallagiacoma/Gorlier* (Shakespeare 1979)
> Bene, se Percy è vivo, lo perseguiterò. [Translator's footnote] Se lui capita sulla mia strada, è un fatto. Diversamente, se io capito sulla sua strada di mia spontanea volontà, faccia pure di me *un grigliato misto*.

The operation to tenderize meat in the preparation of carbonadoes by scoring across and broiling meat is used by Shakespeare to refer figuratively to cutting one's opponent with a blade (cf. Fitzpatrick 2011, pp. 74-75), and in this particular instance means 'slash me all over and grill me' (cf. the footnote in the Arden edition of *Henry IV Part I*). Of the two Italian translations of this image, Dallagiacoma and Gorlier's is the most successful because it manages to keep the figurative meaning of the original expression by using creatively an image drawn from the same operation of grilling meat. The standard Italian metaphor used by Lodovici, on the other hand, though taken from the domain of food ('to make jam of somebody') is totally unrelated to the specific cooking operation of the original. Where Lodovici's translation scores better than the other, however, is in the non-casual assonance of "Percy" with "pierce" in the same quotation, which he recreates in the new assonance of "Percy" and *perso*, the past participle of *perdere* [lose]. Rather less creatively (or usefully) for a play which has to be performed on a stage, Dallagiacoma and Gorlier solve this phonetic translation problem simply by adding an explanatory footnote: "NOTA Falstaff gioca sul nome Percy e sul verbo 'to pierce' [*trafiggere, passare da parte a parte*]".

An interesting example of the creation by the translator of new images related to food and its preparation in modern Italian food culture is provided by the following, drawn from *Twelfth Night* (2.3.124), containing an exchange between anti-Puritan Sir Toby and the Clown:

"Dost thou think because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more *cakes* and ale?"
"Yes, by Saint Anne, and *ginger* shall be hot i'th'mouth too".

Lodovici (Shakespeare 1960)
"Credi proprio, perché sei virtuoso tu, che non ci debba essere al mondo né *focaccia*, né birra?"
"Sì, per la faccia di Giuda, e anche *zenzero* da soffiarsi in bocca."

Costa Giovangigli (1978a)
"E perché sei virtuoso tu, speri che spariscano *pizze* e birra?"
"Sicuro, per Sant'Anna, e *spezie e peperoncino*".

In both Italian translations, Shakespeare's reference to a sweet food ("cakes") – most probably standing here for the classic English "Shrewsbury cakes", which were often spiced with ginger – has been turned into a reference to typically Italian savoury foods (*focaccia* and *pizze*). Of the two, the most successful reader-oriented translation for the stage is Costa Giovangigli's, who translates "cakes" with *pizze*, a more thoroughly 'domesticating' translation being difficult to imagine. Because the link between cakes and ginger would be necessarily completely lost in translation, Costa Giovangigli has also omitted any reference to ginger, which for an Italian audience is a spice mainly connected to Asian cooking, and has replaced the familiarity of Shrewsbury cakes to the Elizabethan (and contemporary) SL audience with a typically Italian hot spice (*peperoncino*). An added bonus in his translation is the collocation *pizze e birra* [pizzas and beer], which works very well in the TL culture where the traditional drink to be had with pizza is in fact beer (rather than wine). In Lodovici's more literal translation, on the other hand, an Italian audience would be more at a loss in making any connection between *zenzero* and *focaccia* (the flat savoury bread typically seasoned with herbs and olive oil) though, admittedly, *focaccia* has the advantage of being more culturally neutral than *pizza*, a food hardly congruent with Elizabethan England .

4.2. Domain of the translation totally unrelated to food

In this last section, one example from *Henry IV Part I* will be discussed to illustrate the strategy of translating a food image by using a functional equivalent drawn from a non-food domain, which is arguably the translation strategy that – all in all – Italian translators resorted to only when absolutely necessary. Also in this example the SL food image is hinged on Shakespeare's figurative use of the culinary operation of 'larding' lean meat, which he uses mostly (but not exclusively) in reference to Sir John's fatness. In both the Italian translations the reference to larding, used by Prince Hal to describe Falstaff running away, was replaced by an image drawn from

agriculture, where the barren soil is manured by Falstaff's sweat:

> Falstaff sweats to death
> And *lards* the *lean* earth as he walks along. (2.2.103)

> *Lodovici* (Shakespeare 1960)
> Falstaff si suda l'anima e *del suo grasso concima* il suolo lungo il suo passaggio.

> *Dalla Giacoma/ Gorlier* (Shakespeare 1979)
> Falstaff suda da morire
> e *concima* la *sterile* terra nel suo andare.

Consequently in both translations the image of larding lean meat has been completely neutralized, though a more literal translation of "lards" using the verb "lardella" would have been an equally transparent and not an excessively bold option ('*Falstaff si suda l'anima/suda da morire e del/con il suo grasso lardella il suolo/la terra...*'). The translation into Italian of the adjective "lean" in reference to the earth, however, poses a much greater translation problem: in Lodovici's translation "lean" was completely omitted with "lean earth" being simply translated as *il suolo* whilst the reference to Falstaff's bulk that was implicit in the verb "lards" was successfully nominalized *e del suo grasso concima il suolo*). On the other hand, in Dalla Giacoma and Gorlier's translation the implicit reference of the original is made even more implicit, as *concima* simply means 'manures', 'fertilizes', with the result that Shakespeare's quibble is made even more indirect than in the original ('Falstaff is sweating copiously and therefore he must be fat'). From the perspective of making the effort of keeping Shakespeare's imagery and at the same time making it work in the Italian translation, the most successful of the two translations is consequently the first.

5. Concluding discussion

Food references in Shakespeare's plays are instances of the socio-cultural differences that translators from different cultures and time periods have had to confront in order to allow the target audience full enjoyment of the play whilst at the same time being as true as possible to Shakespeare's original words (Anderman 2009, p. 95). This study has discussed some examples of the technical problems encountered by translators into Italian in relation to such references and the more or less successful solutions they have found, at times creating new images and verbal associations related to food and its preparation in modern Italian food culture, such as in the cases of *pasticci/crostate* and *pastafrolla"/"sfoglia* to translate respectively "pasties" and "paste" (which in Shakespeare means 'pie crust'), *grigliato misto*

translating "carbonado", and *focaccia"/"pizze* and *spezie e peperoncino* for "cakes" and "ginger". The homely images contained in these references can be included in the customs and habits that differ markedly between Shakespeare's original English audience and the audience of the target culture but also, more often than not, a modern English audience, who can no longer be expected to understand such images as readily as the audience of his time. As Delabastita (2009, p. 265) points out, "many of the problematic features [of Shakespeare's language] […] have at times disturbed Shakespeare's English-speaking readers and rewriters as well, appearing no less perplexing, alienating or unacceptable to them than to his overseas readers and translators".

This goes a long way into explaining the increasing importance in contemporary theatre-productions of modern-language versions in English of Shakespeare's works, providing veritable examples of intra-lingual translations which aim to redress what can be called the "paradox of Shakespearean translation", whereby an English-speaking audience – including the editors, critics and theatrical directors and adapters as well as other English-speaking rewriters of Shakespeare mentioned by Delabastita – is somehow more at a disadvantage in understanding Shakespeare's original language than a non-English audience, which is able to enjoy his works translated into the less alienating and more modern language of an inter-lingual translation. This point was already made by Katan (1993) about the reduction of processing effort for the Italian reader operated by the translators of *Troilus and Cressida,* who have consistently optimized the relevance of the implicatures in the conversation exchanges between the play's characters, with the result that "the modern Italian audience has preferential access to Cressida's beliefs, without though, sacrificing any of the possible weak implicatures – the poetic effect".

An example of simplified versions of Shakespeare plays in English is provided by the Bandanna Books. In the website of the books (http://www.bandannabooks.com), the claim is that: "The total intention is to arouse, not to assume a reader's interest, to place the book firmly within its historical, biographical and social context and, where possible, to point out its relevance to the present day" and also "to connect directly with the earnest reader". To do this, all the apparatus of commentary, expert analysis, elaborate background and notes that has been created by "the scholarly crowd […] eager to preserve Shakespeare's language as much as possible, including 'thee', 'thine', 'ye,' and the rest" has been eliminated in the books of the series, because "the reader's experience is paramount; anything that distracts from the story is eliminated. If obscurities can't be resolved within the text, they are spelled out in the glossary. My question: do you buy a book to read other people discuss Shakespeare — or to read Shakespeare?". Particularly interesting is also the Bandanna Shakespeare Playbooks series:

> designed as workbooks for directors and producers, with ample space for sketching, making notes, placement of sets, designing the playbill, preparing a budget, fundraising, setting a timeline (i.e., deadlines), costumery, auditioning, entrances and exits, stage management, producing, synopsis, keylines, set design, with downloadable customized scripts for the major parts — all the details that actually go into a production. Text is somewhat modernized (no thees and thines — unless it rhymes) and includes glossary. High school, college, or independent theater company will find the playbooks invaluable for two reasons: to envision the play, and to keep track of details.

The increasingly close links between this type of reader-centred intra-lingual translations and inter-lingual translations of Shakespeare's works are beginning to be picked up also by English-speaking Shakespeare scholars, among whom Ton Hoenselaars (2006, p. 50) has pointed out that "a more universal recognition of the merits of the Bard and/in translation has developed", as well as a new realization that translation and adaptation are more akin to one another than had long been acknowledged; translation may be defined as a mode of adaptation, while adaptation may convincingly be defined as a form of translation in a metaphorical sense". A new channel of communication and possible research collaboration seems consequently to have been opened up between the academic communities of different nations in the disciplines of Shakespeare Studies, Cultural Studies and Translation Studies, with the latter being the means by which Shakespeare can be revitalized also for a contemporary English audience.

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GIACOMO CASTELVETRO'S POLITICAL TRANSLATIONS: NARRATIVE STRATEGIES AND LITERARY STYLE

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Abstract – Translations of contemporary polemical and political tracts attributed to or associated with Giacomo Castelvetro (1546-1616) show a rejection of a servile adherence to the source text and the effort to produce an autonomous, readable text, one that in many cases is stylistically elevated and hence 'literary'. Like most Renaissance translators, Castelvetro changes the form of expression of the texts and adopts narrative strategies in order to increase their communicative potential and reinforce the message they convey. An analysis of extracts from the translations of *Discourse of the Maner of the Discovery of this late intended Treason* (1605) and Elizabeth I's proclamation *By the Queen on the Seizure of the Earls of Essex, Rutland, Southampton* (1600) will show how, through changes in emphasis and syntax, the translations give prominence to certain 'characters' in the narratives such as Guy Fawkes and the Earl of Essex. The stylistic elevation of the source text, moreover, shows how Castelvetro's translations respond to a strong rhetorical tradition.

Keywords: translation; Renaissance; polemical texts; narrative strategies; stylistic elevation.

1. Introduction

Translation is central to the Renaissance, a period which is importantly characterized, in Michael Bakhtin's view, by an "interanimation" of languages, involving an awareness of the differences between them, and associated with "increasing linguistic inventiveness and playfulness" (in Burke 2005, p. 17). Categories of Renaissance translators, as envisaged by Peter Burke, include merchants, diplomats, teachers, people living in border regions and displaced people, exiles or refugees who could exploit a double cultural position to get or support their career. John Florio, the translator of Montaigne's *Essais*, exemplifies, even in his name, a condition of cultural hybridity (Burke 2005, pp. 18-24).[1] There is no mention, in Burke's survey,

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[1] On Florio's important role in the Anglo-Italian exchange see Wyatt M. 2005, *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England. A Cultural Politics of Translation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

of Giacomo Castelvetro (1546-1616), an anti-papal Italian exile in England, Renaissance translator of polemical tracts, dealing with issues related to conflicts between Catholics and Protestants. Although his activity as a teacher of Italian in England and his production as a writer have been investigated, his status as a translator and as promoter of English culture in Italy still needs examination.[2] Indeed the whole field of Renaissance translations from English to Italian has been neglected. If the shaping force of Italian culture on Renaissance England has been discussed and documented, much is still to be done to throw light on the permeability of Italy to English culture.

There were few translations from English into Italian in a phase (late sixteenth – early seventeenth century) in which Italy was, in terms of style and poetics, the dominant model. This perhaps explains the scarce critical attention to translations into English, a scarcity which increases the importance of what was translated. Broadly speaking, in the area of Morals and Philosophy only Thomas More and Francis Bacon were translated; there was a project (which was never accomplished) to translate Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* in the field of literary texts, while there were translations of moral literature (by Joseph Hall and by John Barclay) and of travel texts (by Robert Dallington for example). One particular category of translated religious-political texts is associated with Venice, which, at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, was the seat of an English Embassy.

The translations listed below, the focus of this essay, are among the papers of Castelvetro kept at Trinity College, Cambridge: *La Grida pubblicata in Londra*, a translation of Elizabeth I's proclamation *By the Queen on the Seizure of the Earls of Essex, Rutland, Southampton* (London 1600); *Ragionamento intorno alla maniera dello scoprimento di questo ultimamente machinato tradimento*, translation of *Discourse of the Maner of the Discovery of this late Intended Treason, joined with the Examination of some of the Prisoners* (London 1605), an anonymous tract, included in the 1616 edition of James I's *Works*, concerning the Gunpowder Plot. Besides other political tracts, Castelvetro was also the translator of *Déclaration du Sérénissime roi Jacques I* […] *Pour le droit des Rois et independence de leur Couronnes* (London 1615) and possibly (given the corrected draft in his papers, as well as the style and contents) of the pamphlet by William Cecil Lord Burghley *The Execution of Justice in England* (London 1584), a text which intended to support the official policy towards the Catholics. The attribution of the translations to Castelvetro is a thorny problem but, while aware of the difficulties and of the need for caution in defining their status, I

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[2] This essay draws on and develops topics discussed in De Rinaldis M.L. 2003, *Giacomo Castelvetro Renaissance Translator*, Milella, Lecce.

*L*ingue e *L*inguaggi

assume they are his, as biographical and textual indications suggest.[3] Moreover, since the manuscript copies in his papers show his corrections, even if we maintain he was only revising them, he remains the author of the revised versions.

If Renaissance translators generally selected their texts for quality or field, Castelvetro's choices were also motivated by a more specific need to popularise and inform, to communicate and create empathy with his target audience in Venice.[4] In Venice his activity as a translator acquired polemical power, as he identified with the Pro-Reformation movement. He fuelled the enthusiasm of those, both in Venice and Europe, who wished to exploit the conflict between Venice and the Pope (conflict which had caused the Interdict in 1606) and who hoped that Venice could be won over to the Protestant cause. The two events of the *Gunpowder Plot* and of the Interdict certainly caused a convergence of interests, highlighted by translations in both directions, from English and from Italian, as a series of polemical texts were translated as soon as they appeared in the original. These translations were made to inform, but to translate also meant to take sides.

In the context of Anglo-Italian relationships at the end of the sixteenth and in the early seventeenth century Castelvetro is a key figure, shedding light, through his activity as a translator, on the Venice-London connection. In Venice, he acts to reinforce, through translation and through the spread of books, the cultural exchange with England, which in Counter-Reformation Italy was a subversive political act. His involvement in political debates and his ideological position are evident in his prefaces and metalanguage on translation.

The *Atto della Giustizia* (London 1584) is thus introduced: "Traslatato d'Inglese in vulgare, da chi desidera che gli Italiani conoscano quanto i romori, sparti artificiosamente per tutta Italia, dell'Atto sopradetto, sieno bugiardi, e falsi".[5] The translation is due to urgent political-religious preoccupations, to put an end to the false news circulating in Italy about the way Catholics were treated in England. Of the translation of Robert Cecil's

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[3] For a thorough analysis of Castelvetro's translations see De Rinaldis 2003.

[4] He lived in Venice from 1599 to 1611, the year in which, on September 14th, he was arrested, for the second time, by the Inquisition. The ambassador Dudley Carleton made an appeal to the Venetian government: "I am bound to interest myself in the matter which affects one of my servants, who has done nothing amiss so far as I am aware, and which touches the honour of my house, the liberty which all enjoy in this most noble city, and the satisfaction of the King my Master, who is closely bound in Love to this Republic" (*Calendar of State Papers*, *Venetian*, XII, p. 205). As a member of the English Embassy Castelvetro was released, an event which aroused great enthusiasm among the French and Italian Protestant exiles. He went to live in Paris, then in 1613 he went back to London, then to Cambridge, where he taught Italian, to Oxford and finally he went back to London, where he died in poverty in 1616. (See *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, XXII, 1979, pp. 1-4)

[5] "Translated from English into Italian by someone who hopes that the Italians may know how much the rumours, artfully disseminated throughout Italy, of the aforementioned act are false and mendacious" (translation mine here and in following footnotes).

Answere to certaine Scandalous Papers he says: "Vulgarizzata d'Inglese a pro degli amatori del vero. In Vinetia" (Trinity MSS R.4.15).[6] In *Replica al Signor Coeffeteau* (a translation of Pierre du Moulin's reply to a text by Nicolas Coiffeteau on the *Premonition* by James I) we read: "Vulgarizzato di francese da persona desiderosa di giovare a suoi patriotti". The date is 1612 and the purpose of the translator is made explicit: "compiuta di riscrivere a netto per mandarla a fedeli che in Venetiasi dimorano" (Trinity MSS R.4.36: 139r, 191v).[7] In the translation *Pezzi d'historia d'Antonio Perez* Castelvetro reveals the political stance of the translator: "Di spagnolo in puro volgare recata da chi si diletta giovare a Politici" (Trinity Mss R.4.24-25, I: i).[8]

If Philemon Holland, the translator of Pliny, and Thomas North, the translator of Plutarch, considered the act of translating as a service to the newly-born nation,[9] for Castelvetro too it responded to a public function, to prevent the Italians from being cut off from the 'truth'. The language he uses in the "Lettera del vulgarizzatore", introducing his translation of King James I's *Declaration*, is more than a simple statement of the usefulness of translation and reaches a metaphorical level, echoing the language of the translators of the *Authorized Version of the Bible* when they stress the essential role of translation for man's spiritual progress: "Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, that we may looke into the most Holy place; that remooveth the cover of the well, that wee may come by the water" ("The Translators to the Reader" 1611, p. 12).

Castelvetro conventionally offers his work to the King: "Ecco la reale opera di V.M. della mia natia favella rivestita, a lei tutta umile ritornarsi, con certa speranza di dover, sotto a questi, non vili panni, essere alla M.S. non men cara, anzi da quella dover venire con lieta fronte accettata" (Castelvetro 1615, p. 1v).[10] He uses here the *garment* metaphor which is very common in Renaissance metalanguage on translation, and conveys the sense of an increasing awareness of the need to change the *garments* of the texts. Such a metaphor also expressed a hierarchical vision of the relationship between the original text and the translation through the opposition rich/poor garment (Hermans 1985a). Castelvetro is aware of the quality of the translation, whose garments are presented as "non vili", as a result of his able use of

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[6] "Translated from English for those who love truth. In Venice".

[7] "Translated from French by one who wishes to help his compatriots"; "completed in fair copy to be sent to the faithful dwelling in Venice". Here and in the quotes from the manuscripts that follow "r" stands for "recto" (the front of the page), "v" for "verso" (the back of the page).

[8] "Rendered from Spanish into pure vernacular by one who enjoys helping politicians".

[9] See De Rinaldis 2004. *Englishing. La traduzione nel Rinascimento inglese. Prefazioni e scritti.* Lecce: Milella, pp. 24-28.

[10] "Here is the Royal work of Y. H. [Your Highness] reclothed in my native tongue, which returns to Your Grace in the hope that it will be no less dear, in these by no means despicable garments, but received with joy".

language and of the high status of Italian at that time. So he uses the metaphor but subverts its negative connotation and thus defends the translation both in terms of style and of function:

> Supplico adunque humilmente V.M. a non volerla perciò sdegnare, ma più tosto farli gratia, che possa inanzi a prencipi, et a sig.ri d'Italia arditamente comparire, acciocché ignorando essi ogni altro idioma, che il naturale loro, faccia lor vedere le alte e ben fondate ragioni in lei della M.V. addotte per far palese al cieco mondo, quanto fuori di ragione i papi s'usurpino l'autorità di potere (a voglia loro) spogliare i principi delle signorie, e i re delle corone loro.[11] (Castelvetro 1615, pp. 1v-2r)

Whereas Florio, when he addresses the reader of his translation of Montaigne, insists on the derivative quality of the translated text: "a picture of a body, a shadow of a substance" (Florio 1603: A5v). The perception of translation as a highly effective political tool is very clear in Castelvetro, and is reflected in his translation praxis. There is, however, a conventional declaration of fidelity in the introduction to the translation of *Supplica de' catolici d'Inghilterra* in his papers: "Se questa translazione [traduttione] paresse (sì com'è in molti luoghi) aspretta; sappia chi la leggerà che il translatore [traduttore] ha atteso farla piuttosto fedelmente che ornatamente, essendosi per tutto attenuto all'originale inglese" (Trinity MSS R.4.37: 125v).[12] But, in common with other translators of religious and political texts, he manipulates the original versions. In the period of the Reformation, during which religious creeds were being defined, there was a tension between tradition and the emergence of new vernacular translations, and the responsibility of the translator in changing the texts was much debated. Susan Bassnett (1996, p. 15) writes: "[…] there was a fine line between 'englishing' the Bible and rewriting it from a reformist position, and it was the assessment of where a translator stood on that line that meant the difference between life and death". Even the position of a dot could cause heresy, as Daniel Huet states (Huet 1661). An example of the visibility of the translator in the Renaissance, mirrored in the 'visible' status translators have today, is that of Etienne Dolet, a humanist condemned to death for his translation of a platonic dialogue, *Axiocus*, but in reality for promoting a new cultural policy

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[11] "I humbly beg Y.H. [Your Highness, translation of *Vostra Maestà*] not to disdain it, but rather to be indulgent, that it may boldly appear before Italian princes and noblemen, so that, their being ignorant of any language other than their own, it may let them see the high and well-founded reasons herein expressed by Y.M. to reveal to the blind world how unreasonably the popes usurp (at their will) the power to strip princes of their fiefdoms and kings of their crowns".

[12] In square brackets, here as in later quotes, the first version of the text. "If this translation should appear rough (as it is in many places), it is because the translator has made it faithful rather than ornate, having adhered closely to the English original". Declarations of fidelity to the original text were common in the Renaissance metalanguage on translation, see Kelly 1979.

which recognized the importance of translation in the formation of national languages (Bassnett 1996).

2. Translational Strategies

What changes, what manipulation (Hermans 1985a) of the original texts do we find in Castelvetro's translations? The translation *Ragionamento intorno alla maniera dello scoprimento di questo ultimamente machinato tradimento* shows a change in perspective, which Snell Hornby (1988/1995, p. 51) defines "the viewpoint of the speaker, narrator, or reader in terms of culture, attitude, time and place". The initial phrase "While this land and Monarchie" (*Discourse*: E4v)[13] is translated "Mentre che l'Isola della Gran Bretagna" (*Ragionamento*: 191r).[14] In the source text the deictic, and in general the system of reference, includes the reader as part of the source culture, while the change from the deictic to the definite article followed by the name of the place, implicit in the source text, immediately gives the sense of a change of destination. The translator seems to distance himself from the narration, which in the target text loses the direct connection with the speaking I and shifts from a sense of immediacy and urgency to a more meditative tone. The story is re-told from the outside; through the use of modulation on a syntactical level, by changing actives into passives for example, the translator exerts a strong control over the narrative, keeping the focus on the *characters*. The translation of a text which is strongly culture-bound, for the facts, the places and the people it deals with, manages to reach the reader through the use of techniques of dynamic equivalence (oriented 'toward the receptor response'- Nida in Venuti 2000, p. 136) and of particular narrative strategies. The use of these techniques and strategies brings Castelvetro into alignment with the great Elizabethan translators (Matthiessen 1931); for example, he adds details to make the scene more vivid, as did Thomas Hoby in his translation of *Il Cortegiano*: in Castelvetro's translation of the *Ragionamento* "one of his men"-Fr[15]- is translated *uno dei suoi domestici* and then corrected as *uno dei suoi più favoriti servitori*-191r, which is more detailed and also shows a certain intimacy with the whole scene, thus further involving the reader.

The translation of the following passage reveals the strategies used to intensify the original at the climatic point of the discovery of Guy Fawkes outside the Houses of Parliament:

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[13] *A Discourse of the Maner of the Discovery of this late intended Treason*, Barker, London, 1606, E2-M4.

[14] *Ragionamento intorno alla maniera dello scoprimento di questo ultimamente machinato tradimento al quale s'è aggiunto l'essamine d'alcuni de' prigioni*, Trinity College Cambridge, MSS R.4.36, fols. 191-196.

[15] Letters are used as well as numbers in this text, and in early-modern texts, for page references.

> But before his entrie in the house, finding *Thomas Percyes* alleadged man
> standing without the doores, his cloathes and boots on at so dead a time of the
> night, he resolved to apprehend him […]. (*Discourse*: G4r)

> Ma prima ch'entrasse nella casa, trovò quivi quel finto servitore di Tomaso
> Percy, che fermo si stava fuori della porta vestito, et inghivallato da gambali a
> una hora così morta – qual'era quella – di notte, conchiuse di prenderlo […].
> (*Ragionamento*: 195r)

The syntactical transposition from subordination to coordination gives
emphasis to the discovery; the change from the non-finite "finding" to the
finite form of the verb *trovò* alters the sentence shape giving equal weight to
the discovery and to the seizure as well, which increases the sense of
involvement in the character's destiny. The translation of the neutral
"alleadged" [supposto, presunto] with the moral adjective *falso* again reveals
the intervention of the translator.

Also, like North in his translation from Plutarch *The Lives of the Noble
Grecians and Romans*, Castelvetro increases the dramatic quality of the text.
Fawkes, moreover, is given prominence in the translation through the shift of
emphasis from things (clothes and boots) to his character through the use of
two past participles used as adjectives, *vestito, et inghivallato*. The Italian
here is more elegant and literary.

Further prominence is given to Fawkes's character again through
transposition from subordination to coordination later in the text, when he is
examined by the king's counsellors:

> And within a while after, the Counsell did examine him; Who seeming to put
> on a Romane resolution, did both to the Counsell, and to every other person
> that spake with him that day, appear so constant and settled upon his grounds,
> as we all thought wee had found some Mutius Scaevola borne in England.
> (*Discourse*: Hr)

> Un poco dopo il Consiglio lo essaminò. Ma egli dava altrui a vedere che si
> fosse vestito una salda diterminazione romana, fu stimato et dal Consiglio et
> da ogni altro, che quel giorno gli si parlò di star tanto costante et saldo, che
> tutti pensammo d'aver trovato un nuovo Mutio Scevola nato in Inghilterra
> […]. (*Ragionamento*: 195r-v)

Fawkes' strong resolution is highlighted here:

> For notwithstanding the horrour of the Fact, the guilt of his conscience, his
> suddain surprising, the terrour which should have beene stroken in him by
> comming into the presence of so grave a Counsell, and the restlesse and
> confused questions that every man all that day did vexe him with; Yet was his
> countenance so farre from being deiected, as he often smiled in scornefull
> maner, not onely avowing the Fact, but repenting onely, with the said

> *Scaevola*, his failing in the execution thereof, whereof (hee said) the Divell and not God was the discoverer [...]. (*Discourse*: H*r*)

The translation reveals significant changes:

> Perchè non/ostante l'horrore del fatto, l'accusa della sua coscienza, la sua prigione improvisa, il terrore, del quale era verosimile che dovesse rimanere percosso, comparendo nella presenza d'un Conseglio così grave, insieme con le infinite, et confuse domande con [dal]le quali da ogni uno fu quel giorno travagliato; tuttavia tanto era egli [lontano] lungi da mostrar viltà nel volto, che spesse volte sorrideva in guisa di chi si fa beffe, non solamente, approvando il fatto per buono, ma mostrando solamente di pentirsi, come il predetto Scevola, di non haver potuto menare [mancar in essecutione] al disiderato fine il suo percorso […] del quale (diceva egli) il Diavolo, et non Iddio, era stato lo scopritore. (*Ragionamento*: 195*v*)

Emphasis on the character is reinforced through the use of the passive – *dovesse rimanere percosso*, *da ogniuno fu quel giorno travagliato* – and also maintained through the translation of "his countenance" with *tanto era egli*, the use of a personal pronoun substituting an abstract noun. The change from the abstract to the concrete is, also, one of Florio's strategies in translating Montaigne. However, Castelvetro also creates distance from the event: he weakens the sense of immediacy conveyed by "surprising" (OED: "capturing by sudden attack"; and fig. "to find or discover- something- suddenly), which is not conveyed by *prigione*, i.e. "cattura"; the use of *infinite* for "restlesse" again does not communicate the idea of movement, which could have been expressed with "incessanti". The use of the passive *fu* […] *travagliato* instead of the active "did vexe him with "reduces the sense of action, but keeps the focus on the character, while the translation of "deiected" (OED: "depressed in spirits"; "downcast") with *mostrar viltà nel volto* shows a shift from an emotional to a moral term which strengthens Fawkes's heroism. The stress on the character's heroic stance is functional to the communicative power of the translation, rather than detracting from any political aim.

The sense of a greater distance from the events which are being told is, moreover, given by the translation of "in scornefull maner" with in *guisa di chi si fa beffe*, of "repenting onely" with *mostrando solamente di pentirsi*, and of "his failing" with di *non haver potuto menare*. The translation of "avowing" with *approvando il fatto per buono* signals the tendency to rewrite the story/history in moral terms. Thus, the translated text has a more meditative tone, deriving from a moral evaluation and from the interpretation of the "Fact" as an anti-establishment gesture. However, at the same time it reveals a more passionate reading of the story: the neutral word "execution" is rendered with *disiderato fine*, which corrects the first solution in the manuscript *essecutione*. This specific example clearly illustrates that kind of relationship between translator and text defined as subjective, personal, in

that it offers space for the contribution of the translator to the expressive function of the text (Kelly 1979: 206 ff).

The following extract shows another climax in the narrative, the moment in which the Lord Chamberlain tells the king about the discovery of the plot:

> And at the first entrie of the Kings Chamber doore, the Lord Chamberlaine, being not any longer able to conceale his joy for the preventing of so great a danger, told the King in a confused haste, that all was found and discovered, and the Traitor in hands and fast bound. (*Discourse*: G4*v*)

> Nell'entrar nella camera del Re, il Signiore Gran Camariere, non potendo più celar la sua smisurata allegrezza per lo prevenimento di un così tremendo [grande] pericolo, disse al Re con una pressa confusa che il tutto s'era e per ispezial favor di Dio trovato, et scoperto, et che il traditore si trovava in loro potere ben guardato [legato]. (*Ragionamento*: 195*r*)

The adding of *smisurata* and the use of *tremendo* instead of *grande* emphasize the *pathos* of the situation, while "per ispezial favor di Dio" is clearly an interference of the translator's hand. From the plainness and immediacy of the original we get a more emotionally charged target text, which almost encourages the reader to share the feeling of joy at the discovery of the plot. Castelvetro makes history more appealing through a deeper focus on the key characters than in the original. The characters themselves become more prominent in the translation.

Besides Guy Fawkes, another subversive figure is given prominence in the translation of Elizabeth I's proclamation *By the Queen on the Seizure of the Earls of Essex, Rutland, Southampton* (9 February 1600), printed in London by Robert Barker. This proclamation was to inform the people about the betrayal of the Earl of Essex. Essex, pretending to be in danger, kept prisoners in his house, together with the Earls of Rutland and Southampton, the Great Seal of England and other nobles who had come to settle the question of his defection. Many pages in the *Calendar of State Papers* are dedicated to Essex's conspiracy, which defied order and collectivity. Essex was imprisoned in the Tower and condemned to death, while up to a hundred people were arrested. The translation shows significant changes which serve to focus on his character:

> Whereas the Earl of Essex, accompanied with the Earles of Rutland and Southampton, and divers other their complices […] did […] not onely imprison our keeper of our Great Seal of England […] and others both of our Nobilitie and Councell, that were sent in our name to his houses to persuade the said? Earle to lay open any petitions or complaints with promise (if he would disperse his disordered company in his house) that all his iust requests woulde bee heard, and graciously considered: but also did (after strait order given by him to murder our sayd Counsellers and others, whensoever they

would offer to stirre out of that place) traitorously issue into our City of London in armes, with great numbers, and there breaking out into open action of rebellion, devised and divulge base and follish lies, That their lives were sought, spreading out divers strange and seditious inventions, to have drawen our people to their partie […]. (*By the Queen*)[16]

Come il Conte d'Essex accompagnato dai Conti di Rutland, et Suthanton, et di moltri altri lor seguaci […] anno […] tenuto prigione il guardiano del nostro sigillo […] et altri nobili del nostro consiglio, li quali furono da noi mandati a casa sua per persuaderlo a lasciarsi intendere intorno a quello, ch'egli pretendeva, et di che si voleva dolere promettendo essi da parte nostra, che licenziando egli la sua disordinata compagnia, et ragunanza, et stando in casa sua si che tutte le ragionevoli sue domande sarebbero ascoltate. Et non ostante tutto questo il predetto Conte fatto primeramente stretto comandamento a predetti nostri consiglieri, et a gli altri iti a lui da parte nostra, di non moversi di casa sua sotto pena d'essere uccisi. Uscì armato et andò per la nostra città di Londra con grande quantità di armati, dando manifestassimo segno di rubelione, et divulgando bugiarde invenzioni, cioè che si cercava di farlo innocentemente morire, per tirare per questo il nostro popolo alla parte, et divotione sua […]. (*La Grida*: 10v-11r)[17]

The English text is built on the opposition between the Crown and the group of Essex and his friends; an opposition which is signalled through the use of the pronouns "their" and "our". The translation makes two significant changes in order to give prominence to Essex. The first is from reference to the group in the source text (the possessive plural "their" which points to a plural subject in the preceding clause) to the repeated use of the third singular person in the translation (*uscì, andò* – the singular pronoun *lo*, the singular possessive *sua*) which makes him stand out in the group. The second change occurs when the translator starts a new clause – *Et non ostante* – and substitutes the implicit pronoun in the source text with Essex's title, *Conte*.

If reinforcing the pathos of the events makes history more appealing to the Italian readers, on a different level two other strategies should be mentioned in order to show the effort the translator is making to render the text acceptable to his audience. One is the stylistic elevation of the source text. Manuscript 2, the corrected version, tends to improve manuscript 1 on a lexical level: in the *Ragionamento*, "to have blowen him up"(G4v) is rendered with *gittarlo in aria*; and *aria* itself is corrected with the poetical word *aere* (195r); the time phrase "being at that time nere four of the cloche in the morning" (G4v), first translated *essendo in circa alle quattro hore della mattina* is corrected with *essendo intorno alle quattro hore anzi lo*

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[16] Elizabeth I, 1600, *By the Queen, On the Seizure of the Earls of Essex, Rutland, Southampton, etc.*, Barker, London.
[17] *La Grida pubblicata in Londra il Nono di Febbraio 1601*, Trinity College, Cambridge, MSS R.4.37, fols 10-13.

spuntar del giorno (195*r*). Lexical choices in manuscript 2 reject, literally erase, the more direct, and thus less interventionalist, equivalent deriving from the same etymological root in favour of a more thought-out solution. Some examples in the *Ragionamento* are: "absence" – *assenza* – *lontananza*; "pause" – *pausa* – *spazio*; "enformed" – *informato* – *certificato*; "desperate" – *disperati* – *precipitosi*.

The other strategy consists in the use of glosses in the margins, which also reveal that Castelvetro's texts were strongly target-oriented and meant for publication. In the glosses he clarifies the meaning of culture-specific terms, and compensates for a gap of knowledge. Words such as "Term" (session of Parliament), "Papists", "Tower" are explained to the Italian readers:

> Termine, si dee sapere, che nella città di Londra quattro volte l'anno concorre tutto il reame ad [unreadable] le cause loro tanto civili, quanto criminali, tenendosi in [que tempi ragione] e li chiamano Termini. (*Ragionamento*: 191r)[18]

> Acciocchè i puri et buoni Catolici non si scandalizzino di questa parola vogliam che sappiamo come quel Re, et tutti quelli di quella religione fanno una distinzione tra quegli due nomi Catolico et Papista. Chiamando Catolico colui che […] crede che la religione Catolica romana sia la vera. Papisti chiamano coloro che non pure la romana catolica religione esser la migliore ma che anchor sia loro licito zelo di quelli d'ammazzare i re et ogni altro di contraria religione. (*Ragionamento*: 192r)[19]

> Questa torre è un castello molto antico et vogliono che fosse fatto da Giulio Cesare, nel quale è il tesoro, l'arsenale, et tutti i prigioni di lesa maestà si mettono, è sopra il nobile fiume Tamigia, et quivi si può dire che la città cominci […]. (*Ragionamento*: 195v-196r)[20]

These words have different connotations in the English and Italian systems; in the case of "Tower" these connotations in English are strongly emotional as linked to its function as a state prison, while in the case of "Term" there is specific reference to the English political system. Such glosses in the margins reveal the importance of the terms in the texts and their relevance in intercultural communication.

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[18] "Term, one should know, that in the city of London four times a year the whole realm comes to [unreadable] their civil and criminal legal cases, taking place in [those times] and they call them Terms".

[19] "In order not to cause scandal among pure and good Catholics with this word, we want them to know how that king, and those of that religion, make a distinction between those two names, Catholics and Papists. Calling Catholic someone who thinks that the Roman Catholic religion is the true one. They call Papists those who think not only that the Roman Catholic religion is the best but also that it is their righteous zeal to kill kings and any other man of a contrary religion".

[20] "This tower is a very old castle and they say it was built by Julius Caesar, and herein is the treasure, the arsenal and all the prisoners kept for high treason; it is on the noble river Thames, and we may say that here the city begins".

Whether or not he was the translator of the first version, Castelvetro reveals to us the decision to cancel the more obvious solution and to adopt more subjective choices. The desire for self-expression is evident and his changes provide us with the interpretive key to his translation praxis.

3. Conclusion

James Winny has thus commented on the Renaissance translators' 'creative' activity:

> [translators] rather than rendering foreign works into their own language, remade them in the familiar terms of the Elizabethan experience. For them translation was a vicarious form of authorship, not to be undertaken unless they could relive the original excitement of composition (Winny 1960, p. 114)

Octavio Paz (1992, p. 154) has stressed the idea that any translation, even of scientific texts, is a literary activity:

> […] It is a mechanism, a string of words that helps us read the text in its original language. It is a glossary rather than a translation, which is always a literary activity. Without exception, even when the translator 's sole intention is to convey meaning, as in the case of scientific texts, translation implies a transformation of the original. That transformation is not – nor can it be- anything but literary.

Castelvetro rejects the servile adherence to the source text that was generally promoted in the Renaissance discourse on translation (although impracticable) and produces an autonomous and readable text in Italian. The changes are intended for an Italian and particularly Venetian anti-clerical audience and mirror the higher status and solid rhetorical tradition of the Italian language at that time. The status of the Italian vernacular had been a matter of debate ever since the Bruni-Biondo controversy in the fifteenth century. For Biondo, Italian lacked grammatical stability, and Leon Battista Alberti in the first attempt to produce an Italian grammar (*Grammatichetta* was written no later than 1443) stressed the structural relationship of Italian with Latin in order to anchor the language. The most influential text in the *questione della lingua* was Pietro Bembo's *Prose della volgar lingua* (1525), which successfully fixed the parameters for future debates within a conservative linguistic ideology, despite the emergence of opposing visions, such as that of Trissino, who was instead promoting the potentialities of a more fluid literary Italian language.[21]

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[21] I am indebted to Michael Wyatt for discussion of the Italian 'question of the language'. For further references see Wyatt 2005, pp. 204-210; Campanelli 2014.

When Castelvetro was writing, literary Italian was already codified. Within a systemic approach to translation, if on a referential level the English system constituted the dominant model for the target texts in Italian, causing the translations, on a linguistic level this relationship was inverted. The Italian system thus determined translational strategies, since Castelvetro's translations emanate literariness according to a strong Italian literary model. On a lexical level Castelvetro's choices do not reproduce English words with the most direct phonological equivalent, and are moreover more learned. On a syntactical level the tendency is towards a clearer and more fluid text. Techniques of dynamic equivalence are used not only to produce a more readable text but also to create shifts of emphasis that give prominence to the characters involved, thus increasing the communicative potential of the texts. The translator subjectivizes the translation, as he inscribes his ideological viewpoint, translation thus becoming a form of self-expression.

The macrotextual features of Castelvetro's translations show, moreover, his political involvement. In the Renaissance, translations of contemporary texts oscillated between the function of conveying the message and the intent to influence behaviour, or religious beliefs, as happened with many "marketplace" translations, responsible for increasing divisions in Christendom after the Reformation (Kelly 1979, p. 104).

The source texts analyzed here are polemical in themselves, they are meant to reinforce the English establishment, thus the very act of translating them has ideological implications. Critical as he was of the clerical nature of Italy in his own time, Castelvetro perhaps was trying to change a part, if not the whole, of his country through translation, an activity which acquires a subversive character, the translations being part of a project which defied the Italian system, while reinforcing the English one. If sometimes the expressive force of the source texts is attenuated, there is also an intensification of their emotional quality, a duality of strategies which respond to the blocked atmosphere of Italy in the Counter-Reformation, and to the necessity to react to it. Castelvetro was in the middle of events, and his translations reflect his condition as an outsider, experienced both in Italy, religiously and mentally, and in England, were he was materially and physically an outsider. He worked on the margins, inscribing in the translations a sense of exclusion (detachment) and inclusion (emotional involvement), thus revealing the in-betweenness itself of translation, which "puts the original in motion to decanonise it, giving it the movement of fragmentation, a wandering of errance, a kind of permanent exile" (De Man 1986, p. 92).

Many aspects of his activity as a translator require further investigation: for example a juxtaposition of his translation work with that of Florio, as his counterpart in Oxford,[22] would be interesting, as would an

[22] Florio taught Italian in Oxford as did Castelvetro in Cambridge.

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analysis of Castelvetro's role in the translation of *The Execution of Justice in England* (which could be one of the first, given the date, if not the very first translation from English). Given the scarcity of translations from English into Italian, the neglect of this aspect of Castelvetro's career is perplexing. Even more so if we consider the committed nature of his translations and the fact that he constitutes a wonderfully solid example of the passionate Renaissance translator. The scarce critical attention he has received can only be explained through the meagre attention given to minor genres, such as polemical writings, which constitute his portfolio as a translator. The discussion above should trigger a reassessment of what is considered marginal in cultural politics and in the history of translation.

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CALVINO AND WEAVER ON TRANSLATION: IN THEORY AND IN PRACTICE

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Abstract – Italian writer Italo Calvino has played an important role in defining and supporting a new criticism of translation, which, he believed, should be based on rigorous scientific criteria. This new criticism of translation is illustrated here, along with the importance given by Calvino to the cooperation between author and translator, and especially with reference to his relationship with William Weaver. The aim of this paper is to analyse the theories on which the Italian writer bases his "traduzione inventiva" [*inventive translation*] and the method of translation that he proposes in his "Nota del traduttore" for his Italian translation of Queneau's novel *Les fleurs bleues*. Finally, Weaver's adhesion to Calvino's method and his own strategies are discussed in relation to the translation of *Mr. Palomar*.

Keywords: Calvino; criticism of translation; "inventive translation"; Weaver; Palomar.

1. Calvino as a theorist of translation

Italo Calvino is known as one of the most important Italian writers, but few know that he was also an essayist, a translator and a theorist of translation.

Calvino explained his theories of translation in a letter[1] to the editor of the literary journal *Paragone Letteratura*, in reply to the strong criticism of Claudio Gorlier to Adriana Motti's translation of *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster, previously published in the journal:

> Today, more than ever, a criticism that goes deeply into the matter of translation is needed. […] Therefore, many of us are pleased with the coming into use of this new kind of criticism, and we follow it with interest. But, at the same time, we recommend an absolute technical evaluation. […] The art of translating is going through a hard time. Together with technical qualities, moral qualities are becoming rarer […]. But if criticism starts to tear a translation apart in two lines, without caring about how the most difficult parts and the stylistic features have been dealt with, without wondering whether there could be other solutions and which ones, then it is better to ignore it. Critical research on translation must be based on a method, testing enough

[1] Calvino I. 1995a, *Sul tradurre*, in Barenghi M. (ed.), *Saggi*, Mondadori, Milano.

> translations to serve as clear models. Furthermore, it is an exercise that we recommend not only to critics but also to every good reader: as we know, you really read an author only when you translate him, or when you compare his text with a translation, or when you confront versions in different languages. (A comparison between three texts: the original text, the Italian version, and a version in another language, is another very good method for judgement). Technical evaluation, rather than a personal one: the openness to question, always restricted in literary judgment, is much more restricted in translation.[2]

Calvino, here, highlights the need for a new critical theory of translation, which should express a technical judgment, rather than a personal one. Though he also stresses that a translator should have moral qualities as well as technical ones, because translation is an *art*, a way to express personal creativity. Works, however, should be analysed with a sense of absolute technical responsibility, following a strict scientific method, evaluating the translator's final choices by looking into all the possibilities that he rejected. Calvino states that a good criticism of translation should not be a rushed job, which defines a translation "good" or "bad" "in two lines". This letter was written in 1963, when Calvino had not yet translated Queneau's novel *Les fleurs bleues* (1967).

He goes on in the text to write:

> He who writes this letter is one who has never dared translate a book in his life; and entrenches himself, in fact, behind his lack of these particular moral endowments, or better of methodological-nervous resistance; but already in his job as persecutor of translators he suffers enough, for other people's sufferings and his own, and for the bad translations as well as for the good ones.[3]

Calvino underlines that the most important moral quality for a translator is "courage", a courage that he does not yet have, but this lack does not keep him from criticizing the translations of others. The translation critic, the "aguzzino dei traduttori" [*persecutor of translators*], is less courageous than a translator; he will have fewer moral qualities than a translator.

In the same letter, Calvino anticipates the title of his most famous essay on translation, *Tradurre è il vero modo di leggere un testo* [*Translating is the real way to read a text*] (1995b), when he says "si legge veramente un autore solo quando lo si traduce" [*you only really read an author when you translate him*].

So, translation is, first of all, *reading*: a reading that should occur not only at the level of meaning, but also at the level of form. A translator should read beyond the texts, discover all its facets to enter the author's world. His task is to take possession of that world to make it accessible for his readers.

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[2] See Annex 1, n.1, for the original quotation.
[3] See Annex 1, n. 2, for the original quotation.

According to Calvino, the best way to judge a translation is through comparing three texts: the original text, the translation and the translation in a third language. In this way, the good critic (but also the good reader) can note the complexities of the work and see how the two translators solved them; s/he can evaluate their choices and suggest other solutions.

On the 4th June 1982, Calvino attended a meeting about translation from Italian into English. His important statements are included in the essay *Tradurre è il vero modo di leggere un testo*. Here, he goes thoroughly into the concepts expressed (1995b, p. 1825):

> In short, the translator never lacks problems to solve. In the texts where the communication is more colloquial, if he is able to catch the right tone from the beginning, the translator can continue according to this impulse with a fluency that seems – must seem – easy. But translating is never easy. […]. Translating is an art: transferring a literary text, no matter its value, into another language always needs some kind of miracle. We all know that poetry in verses is untranslatable by definition; but the real literature, also in prose, really insists on the untranslatable limits of every language. The literary translator is someone who devotes himself entirely to translating the untranslatable.[4]

"The fluency that seems – must seem – easy" is the definition that we could apply to Calvinian style in general; it is the aim pursued by the author in all his works. Reading them, the fluency and the straightforwardness of the style are evident, but this simplicity is the reward of painstaking work, full of adjustments and revisions.

The aim of the literary translator is "translating the untranslatable" (Calvino 1995b).

Untranslatability, according to George Steiner (1994, p. 292), is usually associated with poetry, because in this case the link between meaning and form is so solid that no dissociation is allowed: ashes are not the translation of fire.

Roman Jakobson (1959, p. 239), too, considers poetry untranslatable by definition:

> In poetry, verbal equations become a constructive principle of the text. Syntactic and morphological categories, roots, and affixes, phonemes and their components (distinctive features) – in short, any constituents of the verbal code – are confronted, juxtaposed, brought into contiguous relation according to the principle of similarity and contrast and carry their own autonomous signification. Phonemic similarity is sensed as semantic relationship. The pun, or to use a more erudite, and perhaps more precise term – paronomasia, reigns over poetic art, and whether its rule is absolute or limited, poetry by definition is untranslatable. Only creative transposition is possible: either intralingual transposition – from one poetic shape into another, or interlingual transposition – from one language into another, or finally intersemiotic transposition – from

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[4] See Annex 1, n. 3, for the original quotation.

one system of signs into another, e.g., from verbal art into music, dance, cinema or painting.

Poetic translation has been the object of many studies which tend to ignore the apparently simpler prose translation. Calvino stresses that "translating is never easy", even in the case of prose, because the translator has to be on the same wavelength as the author, s/he has to take possession of the author's language and give it back to the reader.

Calvino goes on to talk about his bond with his English translator, William (Bill) Weaver:

> Whatever the language and into whatever language you are translating, it is necessary not only to know the language but also to be able to get in touch with the spirit of the language […]. I am lucky to be translated by Bill Weaver, who possesses this spirit of the language at its maximum.[5]

In the essay *Calvino and his Cities* (2011)[6] William Weaver tells us about his relationship with Calvino: they first met in Rome, in the early 1960s. Their meeting was unplanned, but, appropriately, it took place in a bookshop. Gian Carlo Roscioni, then an editor for Einaudi, the publishing house, came over to Weaver and said: "Calvino is here and would like to meet you". A few minutes after their introduction, Calvino asked him if he would be willing to translate his new book; and Weaver immediately accepted. Weaver goes on in the text to write:

> This was the simple beginning of a complex relationship and of my long journey through the world of Calvino, which was to last until his death.[7]

This biographical anecdote is essential to understand an author-translator relationship based on a very deep reciprocal respect. And indeed, their first meeting was followed by a lifelong and deep collaboration: Weaver became Calvino's official English translator, and translated almost all his works under the supervision of Calvino himself (see Appendix 2).

William Weaver also talked about his relationship with Calvino in an interview with Giulia Guarnieri (1996, pp. 129-130):

> At the very beginning I submitted to him the more urgent problems, sometimes his suggestions were really good but sometimes…they were not, they did not work at all. Between the two of us, I surely knew English better than him, so I could more easily understand when something did not work in English. Sometimes he modified the Italian version and he changed the construction so that the English version was better. In general, we could calmly discuss over

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[5] See Annex 1, n. 4, for the original quotation.
[6] http://www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Pajares/calvino/cal.html#essays2
[7] See Annex 1, n. 5, for the original quotation.

the different solutions to adopt. Calvino never got angry…at least, not with me.[8]

According to Calvino, the author-translator cooperation is essential. He writes in *Tradurre è il vero modo di leggere un testo* (1995b, p. 1828):

> I firmly believe in cooperation between author and translator. This collaboration begins with the translator's questions to the author, before the author revises the translation, which is possible only for a limited number of languages within which the author can give an opinion. A translator who has no doubts cannot be a good translator: my first judgement on the translator's quality is based on the questions that he asks.[9]

In an interview with Paul Fournel (2002, p. 24), Calvino talks about his relationship with his translators:

> […] for these three languages [French, Spanish, English] I discuss with my translators. […] I think that the author's intervention is crucial. The author's work is to force the language, to make it say something that the current language does not say. The translator must reproduce this effort. In many cases translation offers only a pale image of the author's work. We can therefore draw two conclusions: either to read only in original languages, or to make an effort to translate conveying something that goes beyond a literal account. I prefer the latter.[10]

In the essay *Tradurre è il vero modo di leggere un testo* we have seen how Calvino esteems his English translator who, in his opinion, "possiede lo spirito della lingua al Massimo grado" [*possesses the spirit of the language at its maximum*]. Yet, Weaver's approach to translation is apparently very different from Calvino's.

2. Calvino the translator vs. Weaver the translator

Calvino translated Queneau's novel *Les fleurs bleues* from the French. It is a work which is very difficult to translate due to its numerous puns and double meanings.

He solved the problems of untranslatability by proposing a new model of translation, which he called "la traduzione inventiva" [*the inventive translation*]. It refers in some ways to the creative transposition proposed by Jakobson for poetry: the only possible solution for the untranslatable.
In the *Nota del Traduttore* (1967) Calvino writes:

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[8] See Annex 1, n. 5, for the original quotation.
[9] See Annex 1, n. 6, for the original quotation.
[10] See Annex 1, n. 7, for the original quotation.

> The translation reprinted here […] is a particular example of "inventive" translation (or better, "reinventive"), which is the only way to be faithful to a text of that kind. The very first pages are sufficient to demonstrate it, with the punning on the names of the ancient people and on the Barbarian invasions […] many of which do not work in Italian and can only be conveyed by replacing them with new ones.[11]

The translator should invent, or better, *re-invent* the work: s/he cannot translate word for word; and cannot report the original complex words in the text, because the text would be too difficult and would sound too "foreign" for the reader.

According to Calvino, translation is *re-creation*: the less literal it is, the more possible it is that the final result is a good text. If the two languages have different roots, as in the case of English and Italian, this aim is easier to obtain, while if the two languages belong to the same family of languages (as in the case of French and Italian) the temptation of the literal calque is stronger, so it is more difficult to have a good translation.

The relationship between Calvino and Weaver is much more complex than the relationship between that of an author-only and his translator. Calvino was a translator himself and had proposed a scientific method of translation. Furthermore, as we have already discussed, he was also a very strong critic of the translations of his day, and he insisted on the need for a new debate on the matter.

Before we proceed with the analysis of the two different approaches to translation, we should consider also the differences between the original works that they translated: *Les fleurs bleues* and *Palomar*. Queneau's novel is very different from Calvino's, so at the outset the two translators cannot adopt the same method and their approach to translation cannot be the same. *Palomar* is Calvino's last literary work. It can be defined as a 'psychological novel', because it is centred on Palomar's intellectual development. His history, Calvino says, can be rendered in two sentences: "Un uomo si mette in marcia per raggiungere, passo a passo, la saggezza. Non è ancora arrivato" [*A man sets off step by step to reach wisdom. He has not yet arrived*].

In *Les fleurs bleues* there are many neologisms, puns, allusions to French (and not only French) literature, history and society. So the translator must solve a number of literary and culture-bound problems. *Palomar*, on the contrary, is written in a clear and apparently simple style; its plot is centred on Palomar's intellectual growth, his reflections and his experiences of the world.

So, Weaver does not need to re-invent the text: "la traduzione inventiva" [*the inventive translation*] suggested by Calvino does not fit a text such as Palomar.

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[11] See Annex 1, n. 8, for the original quotation.

If we consider the beginning of *Mr. Palomar*, we can see that Weaver's translation is quite literal (Table 1). Weaver closely follows the original text, reproducing it in English.

Palomar	Mr. Palomar
Le vacanze di Palomar – Palomar sulla spiaggia – Lettura di un'onda	*Mr. Palomar's vacation – Mr. Palomar on the beach – Reading a wave*
Il mare è appena increspato e piccole onde battono sulla riva sabbiosa. Il signor Palomar è in piedi sulla riva e guarda un'onda. Non che egli sia assorto nella contemplazione delle onde. Non è assorto, perché sa bene quello che fa: vuole guardare un'onda e la guarda.	The sea is barely wrinkled, and little waves strike the sandy shore. Mr. Palomar is standing on the shore, looking at a wave. Not that he is lost in contemplation of the waves. He is not lost, because he is quite aware of what he is doing: he wants to look at a wave and he is looking at it.

Table 1.
Examples of literal translations

In the interview with Giulia Guarnieri (1996, pp. 129-30), Weaver talks about translating the title of the book; he explains why he added the title "Mr.": "*Palomar* became *Mr. Palomar* according to the author's own specific wish to distinguish it from Mount Palomar in California. It would be like entitling a book Bergamo or Roccamare. It is necessary to specify that it concerns a man".[12]

Following Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995, p. 36) figures of translation, Weaver makes much use of transpositions. These are translations whereby one grammatical category is translated with another one (for example: a noun becomes an adjective, a verb becomes a noun and so on), as in Table 2.

Botanical lexicon often occurs in *Palomar*, because Calvino's parents were botanists, and he loved the scientific language. In his interview with Spiegelman (2002), Weaver talks about his problems in translating Calvino's use of scientific language:

> Although he was not a scientist, both of his parents were, and he liked to read scientific works. He had an entire technical and scientific vocabulary that I don't have. He would fall in love with technical terms, and he would rewrite the translation because he was actually rewriting the Italian.

As might be expected, Weaver chose to translate scientific terms literally (Table 3).

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[12] See Annex 1, n. 9, for the original quotation.

Palomar	Mr. Palomar
Il seno nudo	*The naked bosom*
Palomar, *uomo discreto*, volge lo sguardo all'orizzonte marino. Sa che in simili circostanze, *all'avvicinarsi* d'uno *sconosciuto,* spesso le donne *s'affrettano* a coprirsi, e questo non gli pare bello: perché è *molesto* per la bagnante che prendeva il sole tranquilla …	Palomar, *discreet by nature*, looks away at the horizon of the sea. He knows that in such circumstances, *at the approach* of *a strange man*, women often cover themselves *hastily,* and this does not seem right to him: because it is *a nuisance* for the woman peacefully sunbathing…

Table 2.
Examples of transposition.

Palomar	Mr. Palomar
Il prato infinito	*The infinite lawn*
Il prato è costituito di dicondra, loglietto e trifoglio.	The lawn is composed of dichondra, darnel, and clover.
Dal terrazzo	*From the terrace*
Il signor Palomar corre sul terrazzo per far scappare i piccioni che mangiano le foglie della *gazania*, crivellano di beccate *le piante grasse*, s'aggrappano con le zampe alla cascata di *campanule*, spiluccano *le more*, becchettano fogliolina a fogliolina il *prezzemolo* piantato nella cassetta vicino alla cucina, scavano e razzolano nei vasi rovesciando fuori la terra e mettendo a nudo le radici, come se il solo fine dei loro voli fosse la devastazione.	Mr. Palomar rushes onto the terrace to drive away the pigeons, who eat the leaves of the *gazania*, riddle the *succulent plants* with their beaks, cling with their claws the cascade of *morning-glories*, peck at the *blackberries*, devour leaf by leaf the *parsley* planted in the box near the kitchen, dig and scratch in the flowerpots, spilling dirt and baring the roots, as if the sole purpose of their flights were devastation.

Table 3.
Translation of scientific terms.

In the same interview, Weaver talks about the problems in translating Calvino's works:

> Calvino was in some ways not difficult to translate, because the works are very literary, and literary or writerly language is much easier to translate than dialect and popular speech. In another way, he was not easy to translate. With him, every comma and sound has an importance, and it isn't only a question of getting the words right.
> It's a question of not spoiling the rhythm, of getting the cadences and the tone exactly right.

In *Palomar* there are no problems of lexical untranslatability (there are no puns, no neologisms), but the translator's goal is to reproduce the rhythm and the sound; in other words, his aim is to get "the spirit of the language" and, according to Calvino (1995b), Weaver got it.

Lingue e Linguaggi

It is interesting to note how similar Weaver's following assertions about translation are to those by Calvino:

> In my opinion, translation is a literary operation, creative, it is a matter of perceptiveness, one can know all the theories in the world, but when you are faced with a sentence by Pirandello it is not the theory that will help you to translate it but it will be the readings of his books that teach you something of the style, of the tone and of the personality of the author". (Guarnieri 1996, pp. 129-130)[13]

So, Weaver too considers translation a "creative transposition" and he underlines the importance of "sensibility", a moral quality Calvino also referred to. This similarity can be explained by the possible influence of Calvino's theory on Weaver: they first met in the early 1960s, when Calvino wrote his essays on translation, so it is possible that the Italian writer convinced his translator of the rightness of his theories during their cooperation.

In the end, Calvino and Weaver's translations seem to be very dissimilar: the first can be defined as *creative*, the second as *literal*. But if we consider the differences between the original works, we can see how their approach to translation is similar, because translating *Palomar* literally is the best way to be (re)creative.

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[13] See Annex 1, n. 10, for the original quotation.

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1969 *T zero* (1969) [*Ti con zero*, 1967], Harvest/HBJ, New York.
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1974 *Invisible Cities* [*Le città invisibili*, 1972], Harvest/HBJ, New York.
1977 *The Castle of Crossed Destinies* [*Il castello dei destini incrociati*, 1973], Harvest/HBJ, New York.
1981 *If On a Winter's Night a Traveler* [*Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore*, 1979], Harvest/HBJ, New York.
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1988 *Under the Jaguar Sun* [*Sotto il sole giaguaro*, 1986], Harvest/HBJ, New York.
1982 *The Uses of Literature* [*Una pietra sopra*, 1980], Harvest/HBJ, New York.

Annex 1: Original quotations

1. Più che mai oggi è […] sentita la necessità d'una critica che entri nel merito della traduzione. […] Che questo tipo di critica cominci a entrare nell'uso, dunque, siamo in molti a compiacercene, e a seguirla con interesse. E nello stesso tempo a raccomandarle una responsabilità tecnica assoluta.[…] L'arte del tradurre non attraversa un buon momento. […] Insieme alle doti tecniche, si fanno più rare le doti morali […]. Ma se la critica prende l'abitudine di stroncare una versione in due righe, senza rendersi conto di come sono stati risolti i passaggi più difficili e le caratteristiche dello stile, senza domandarsi se c'erano altre soluzioni e quali, allora è meglio non farne niente. L'indagine critica su una traduzione dev'essere condotta in base a un metodo, sondando specimen abbastanza ampi e che possano servire da pietre di paragone decisive. È un esercizio, oltretutto, che vorremmo raccomandare non solo ai critici ma a tutti i buoni lettori: com'è noto, si *legge* veramente un autore solo quando lo si traduce, o si confronta il testo con una traduzione, o si paragonano versioni in lingue diverse. (Altro ottimo metodo per il giudizio: un confronto a tre, testo, versione italiana e una versione in un'altra lingua). Giudizio tecnico, prima che di gusto: su questo terreno i margini di opinabilità entro i quali sempre oscilla il giudizio letterario sono molto più ristretti. (Calvino 1995a: pp. 1776-77)

2. Chi scrive questa lettera è uno che non ha mai avuto il coraggio di tradurre un libro in vita sua; e si trincera, appunto, dietro un suo difetto di queste particolari doti morali, o meglio di resistenza metodologico- nervosa; ma già nel suo mestiere di aguzzino dei traduttori soffre abbastanza, alle sofferenze altrui e di suo proprio, e per le traduzioni cattive come per le buone. (1995a)

3. Insomma, per il traduttore i problemi da risolvere non vengono mai meno. Nei testi dove la comunicazione è di tipo più colloquiale, il traduttore, se riesce a cogliere il tono giusto dall'inizio, può continuare su questo slancio con una disinvoltura che sembra – deve sembrare – facile. Ma tradurre non è mai facile; Tradurre è un'arte: il passaggio di un testo letterario, qualsiasi sia il suo valore, in un'altra lingua richiede ogni volta un qualche tipo di miracolo. Sappiamo tutti che la poesia in versi è intraducibile per definizione; ma la vera letteratura, anche quella in prosa, lavora proprio sul margine intraducibile di ogni lingua. Il traduttore letterario è colui che mette in gioco tutto se stesso per tradurre l'intraducibile. (1995b: p. 1826)

4. Da qualsiasi lingua e in qualsiasi lingua si traduca, occorre non solo conoscere la lingua ma sapere entrare in contatto con lo spirito della lingua […]. Io ho la fortuna di essere tradotto da Bill Weaver che questo spirito della lingua lo possiede al massimo grado. (1995b: p. 1828).

5. All'inizio ero io che gli sottoponevo i problemi più urgenti, a volte i suoi suggerimenti erano davvero ottimi, ma a volte...no, non funzionavano proprio. Tra i due sicuramente ero io a conoscere l'inglese meglio di lui e quindi potevo meglio capire quando qualcosa non funzionava in inglese. A volte lui interveniva sulla parte italiana e cambiava la costruzione in modo che risultasse meglio la versione inglese. In generale discutevamo tranquillamente sulle varie soluzioni da adottare. Calvino non si adirava mai...almeno non con me. (Guarnieri 1996: pp. 129-130)

6. Io credo molto nella collaborazione dell'autore con il traduttore. Questa collaborazione, prima che dalla revisione dell'autore alla traduzione, che può avvenire solo per il limitato numero di lingue in cui l'autore può dare un'opinione, nasce dalle domande del traduttore all'autore. Un traduttore che non ha dubbi non può essere un buon traduttore: il mio primo giudizio sulla qualità d'un traduttore sento di darlo dal tipo di domande che mi fa. (1995b: p. 1828)

7. Per queste tre lingue [francese, spagnolo, inglese] discuto con i miei traduttori. […] penso che l'intervento dell'autore sia decisivo. Il lavoro di un autore consiste nel forzare la lingua, nel farle dire qualcosa che il linguaggio corrente non dice. È questo sforzo che il traduttore deve rendere. In molti casi le traduzioni non offrono che un'immagine sbiadita del lavoro d'autore. Se ne possono trarre due conclusioni: o leggere solo nelle lingue originali o sforzarsi di tradurre restituendo qualcosa di più d'un rendiconto letterale. Io propendo per la seconda soluzione. (Fournel 2002: p. 24)

8. La traduzione che qui si ristampa […] è un esempio speciale di traduzione "inventiva" (o per meglio dire "reinventiva") che è l'unico modo di essere fedeli a un testo di quel tipo. A definirla tale bastano già le prime pagine, coi *calembours* sui nomi dei popoli dell'antichità e delle invasioni barbariche […] molti dei quali in italiano non funzionano e possono essere resi solo inventandone di nuovi al loro posto.(1967: p. 263).

9. Per me la traduzione è un'operazione letteraria, creativa, è una questione di sensibilità, uno può conoscere tutte le teorie del mondo, ma quando ci si trova davanti ad una frase di Pirandello non è la teoria che ti aiuterà a tradurla ma saranno le letture dei suoi libri ad insegnarti qualcosa dello stile, del tono e della personalità dell' autore. (1996: pp. 129-130).

10. Palomar è diventato Mr. Palomar per espresso volere dell'autore, per volerlo distinguere dal monte Palomar in California. Sarebbe come intitolare un libro Bergamo o Roccamare, bisogna specificare che si tratta di un uomo. (1996: pp. 129-130)

DOES BRIDGET JONES WATCH
EASTENDERS OR *THE LOVE BOAT?*
Cultural and linguistic issues
in the translation of chick lit novels

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Abstract – Chick lit is a genre comprised of books chiefly written by women for women. These books are mainly characterized by the tone, which is very confidential and personal, and often relies on the use of colloquial and slangy (and occasionally obscene) expressions, by the use of humour, and by the numerous references to popular culture. This paper aims at analyzing the strategies used in the Italian translation of one of the best-known examples of the genre, Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary*, taking two frames of reference. First of all, the analysis will try to identify in the target text the distinctive universal features observed in computer-based corpus translation (Baker 1996), namely explicitation, simplification and normalization. Secondly, it will consider the translation in terms of Venuti's dichotomy of translation strategies into domestication and foreignization (1995).

Keywords: chick-lit translation; universal features of translation; domestication; foreignization.

1. Chick lit

Chick lit is a genre which comprises novels mainly written by women for women: *chick* is an American slang term for a young woman, and *lit* is the abbreviation of *literature*. The genre became particularly popular in the late 1990s, with bestselling novels such as *Bridget Jones's Diary* by Helen Fielding (1996) and *Sex and the City* by Candace Bushnell (1997), which were also adapted into films and television series (Harzewski 2011, introduction).

The majority of chick lit novels are set in a contemporary world (though there is also historical chick lit) and one of the features that characterize the genre is that the main characters are embedded in pop culture. They are usually single women in their twenties or thirties, who mostly work in the publishing or the advertising sectors, and have an obsession with appearance and especially with their weight.

Since chick lit often includes romantic elements, it has sometimes been considered as a subcategory of the romance novel genre. However, regardless of its romantic features, it differs from the latter, mainly because the sentimental relationships of the protagonists are not the only important issue in the plot. Indeed, their friends (who are usually either female or gay) are very important in their lives, just as their career is. Moreover, chick lit is characterized by a very personal and confidential tone and by the constant presence of humour. The language used is usually informal and colloquial, using slang and occasionally obscene terms (see Baratz-Logsted 2005; Ferriss and Young 2006; Harzewski 2011; Montoro 2012).

2. Translating chick lit. Case study: *Bridget Jones's Diary*

Bridget Jones's Diary is a novel written by Helen Fielding in 1996 and is considered one of the best-known examples of the genre (Ferriss 2006, p. 71; Harzewski 2011, introduction). It is written in the form of a personal diary and narrates the life of the protagonist – Bridget Jones – throughout a whole year.

Bridget is a single woman in her early thirties who lives in London and, as the book begins, works in the advertising sector of a book publishing company, although she later resigns and finds a new job with a television channel. She is obsessed with her love life and is constantly looking for a stable relationship. Moreover, the diary is filled with notes on her weight, on her daily intake of calories, on the quantity of alcohol consumed and on the number of cigarettes smoked.

The tone of the book is very confidential - in line with what would be expected from a diary - humorous and light-hearted, and it often relies on the use of colloquial, slangy, and also taboo words and expressions.

Finally, the novel abounds in references to contemporary popular culture, especially British, as Bridget often mentions names of TV presenters and titles, names of characters of TV programmes, as well as names of brands and shops.

This paper analyses the strategies used in the Italian translation of the book, *Il diario di Bridget Jones*, by Olivia Crosio (1998), taking two frames of reference. First of all, the analysis aims to identify in the target text the distinctive universal features observed in computer-based corpus translation (Baker 1996; Laviosa 2002), namely *explicitation*, *simplification* and *normalization*. Secondly, it will consider the translation in terms of Venuti's dichotomy of translation strategies into *domestication* and *foreignization* (1995).

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3. Universal features of translation

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, several translation scholars noted some specific recurrent features "which typically occur in translated texts rather than original utterances and are not the result of interference from specific linguistic systems" (Baker 1993, p. 243). According to Baker (1993, p. 246), such features can be considered as "a product of constraints which are inherent in the translation process itself, and this accounts for the fact that they are universal" and "they do not vary across cultures".

Indeed, more recent research in corpus based translation research (see Baker 1996) has confirmed the recurrence of three specific features in translated texts, namely the features of *explicitation*, *simplification,* and *normalization.*

The following section will analyze the three universal features of translation mentioned above in the Italian translation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, showing that such features can be observed also in studies based on manual analysis of parallel texts, and not necessarily through the aid of corpus linguistic tools.

3.1. Explicitation

According to Baker (1996, p. 180), the translators' inclination towards explicitation can be seen in the fact that "there is an overall tendency to spell things out rather than leave them implicit in translation". This statement is supported by the fact that translations are usually longer than original texts, regardless of the languages concerned. In translations, indeed, it is common to observe the use of "explanatory vocabulary" and conjunctions which are added to the text (Baker 1996, p. 181). Addition, in fact, is the strategy through which the tendency to explicitate is accomplished. According to Delabastita (1993, p. 36), the insertion in the translated text of information that is absent in the original text can be due to the translators' "concern for clarity and coherence, which prompts them to disentangle complicated passages, provide missing links, lay bare unspoken assumptions, and generally give the text a fuller wording".

In the Italian translation we can observe various cases when the translator has opted for the strategy of amplification with the aim of making what was implicit in the source text more explicit in the translation, to make the text easier to understand by the Italian reader.

In Table 1 we can note that in the source text there is an implicit reference to two of the most popular novels in British literature. Mr Darcy is the name of the male protagonist of *Pride and Prejudice* (by Jane Austen), who is a rather antisocial and snobbish person. This is why Bridget thinks that it is quite bizarre for someone called Darcy (one of the two male

protagonists in *Bridget Jones's Diary*) to stand on his own looking aloof at a party. Then Bridget compares such a situation (being called Darcy and behaving exactly like *Pride and Prejudice*'s Mr Darcy) to another very well-known and recognizable literary context, namely Heathcliff's behaviour in *Wuthering Heights* (by Emily Brontë), calling for his love Cathy. We can notice that in the target text the translator has opted for a strategy of amplification (adding the Italian title of the novel, *Cime tempestose*), making the second reference explicit. Presumably, she assumed that the Italian lay reader would not catch the reference. However, the translation does not maintain the original comparison that Bridget makes between being called Darcy and being called Heathcliff. Hence, the target text not only explicitates the reference to the novel, but it also changes the meaning of the original, saying that Heathcliff would be quite ridiculous doing what he actually does in the book.[1]

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 13) It struck me as pretty ridiculous to be called Mr Darcy and to stand on your own looking snooty at a party. It's like being called Heathcliff and insisting on spending the entire evening in the garden, shouting 'Cathy' and banging your head against a tree.	(p. 21) Chiamarsi Darcy e starsene tutto solo con aria sdegnosa a una festa mi ha subito colpita come una cosa abbastanza ridicola, un po' come se, in *Cime tempestose*, Heathcliff passasse tutta la serata in giardino a gridare 'Cathy' e a sbattere la testa contro un tronco.	Being called Darcy and standing on your own looking snobbish at a party immediately struck me as a pretty ridiculous thing, as if in *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff would spend the night in the garden shouting 'Cathy' and banging his head against a trunk.

Table 1.
Explicitation of a novel title.

In Table 2 we can observe another example of explicitation of an implicit reference:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 19) Alice Cooper eyes	(p. 27) *occhi cerchiati peggio* di Alice Cooper	*circled eyes which were worse than* Alice Cooper's

Table 2.
Explicitation of a singer's trademark feature.

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[1] Interestingly the translator has explicitated the reference to *Wuthering Heights*, whereas she has left the reference to *Pride and Prejudice* implicit.

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In this case we can note that the translator has explicitated the reference to Alice Cooper's eyes, by adding information explaining the singer's trademark eye makeup.

Other examples of explicitation found in the text are listed in Table 3 with the corresponding back translation:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 16) I said	(p. 24) ho ironizzato	I said *ironically*
(p. 20) "Shhh, shhh"	(p. 28) "Zitta! Abbassa la voce!"	*"Shut up! Speak in a lower voice!"*
(p. 70) a nurse	(p. 76) infermiera in un reparto maternità	A nurse *in a maternity ward*
(p. 82) shepherd's pie	(p. 89) torta salata del pastore: una tipica ricetta inglese a base di carne trita e pure di patate	Shepherd's pie: *a typical English recipe with mince meat and mashed potatoes*
p. (101) Poohs and Piggies	(p. 108) orsetti Pooh e maialine Piggy	Pooh *bears* and Piggy *piglets*
(p. 123) all formal and English	(p. 130) formali come solo noi inglesi sappiamo essere	formal *as only us English can be*
(p. 183) Ivana bloody Trump	(p. 189) Ivana ex Trump.	Ivana *Ex* Trump.
(p. 219) she has topped herself	(p. 225) si è buttata giù dalla finestra	she *jumped from the window*
(p. 229) said Una	(p. 235) ha borbottato Una	*muttered* Una
(p. 245) said Jude, burping again	(p. 251) ci ha zittite Jude, con un altro ruttino discreto	Jude *silenced us*, with another *delicate* burp
(p. 295) field telephone	(p. 299) Il telefono da campo sta squillando	The field telephone *is ringing*

Table 3.
Various instances of explicitation.

3.2. Simplification

According to Baker (1996, pp. 181-182), simplification is "the tendency to simplify the language used in translation", so that things are made "easier for the reader (but not necessarily more explicit)". Baker had previously stated that translators often omit translating words or expressions if the meaning is not vital for the development of the text "to justify distracting the reader with lengthy explanations" (1992, p. 40). Indeed, "omitting words, phrases, sentences or sections of the original text is the most direct way of simplifying a translation" (Kruger 2002, p. 91).

As in the case of explicitation, in the Italian version of *Bridget Jones's Diary* we can observe various instances where the translation presents cases of omission to simplify the text, as in the examples reported in Table 4:

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Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 18) such *Sloaney* arrogance	(p. 26) così arroganti	so arrogant
(p. 40) *Sloaney* milch cow	(p.48) vacca da latte	milch cow
(p. 247) blond *Sloane* hair	(p. 253) capelli platinati	platinum blond hair

Table 4.
Simplification by omission of a slang term.

In this case we can note that the translator has omitted translating the adjective *Sloaney* (or the corresponding noun *Sloane*), a slang term used to refer to British girls who go to expensive public schools and are arrogant and snobbish. As in Italian there is no such word with the same denotative and connotative meaning, the translator has probably opted for a strategy of omission to simplify the target text.

Another case of omission can be noticed in the translation of the name of the house where Bridget's parents live, namely The Gables (see Table 5). The references are either omitted, or generalized to *casa* [house], avoiding an element which is not vital to understanding the sentences. The result in both cases is a simplified target text:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 45) Maybe *The Gables* has been cut off by the snow?	(p. 53) Forse sono rimasti isolati dalla neve?	Maybe they have been cut off by the snow?
(p. 281) when we got back to *The Gables*	(p. 285) quando siamo tornati a *casa*	when we got back home
(p. 282) "I think The Gables might be saved…"	(p. 285) "Chissà, forse salveremo almeno la *casa.*"	"Who knows? Maybe we will save at least the house."

Table 5.
Simplification by omission or generalization of a proper noun.

The strategy of omission to simplify the text can be noticed especially in the case of references to brands and household names, as in the examples reported in Table 6. Moreover, this strategy is also common in the case of references to people who might be considered unfamiliar to the Italian lay reader, as in the examples reported in Table 7.

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Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 70) *Baby Gap* G-strings	(p. 77) mutandine ridottissime	tiny panties
(p. 123) credit notes from *Boules, Warehouse*, etc.	(p. 129) note di accredito	credit notes
(p. 128) eight *Cullens* carrier bags	(p. 134) otto borse di carta stracolme	eight bulging paper carrier bags
(p. 132) the witch in the *Whistles* suit	(p. 138) la strega con il tailleur	the witch in the suit
(p. 133) the most wonderful *Joseph* shift dress	(p. 139) il tubino più bello del mondo	the most wonderful sheath dress in the world
(p. 145) my *Gossard Glossies* ones would be perfect	(p. 151) Ho già in mente quali	I already have them in my mind
(p. 228) a *Body Shop* Terracotta Essential Oil Burner	(p. 234) un fornelletto di terracotta per bruciare gli oli essenziali	a terracotta essential oil burner
(p. 242) 1600 volts, *Salon Selectives*	(p. 247) Milleseicento volt	One thousand six hundred volts
(p. 253) a *Lynx* aerosol	(p. 257) un aerosol a ultrasuoni	an ultrasound aerosol
(p. 257) a *Hubble* telescope	(p. 261) un telescopio astronomico	an astronomical telescope
(p. 286) '*Stocking Filla*' catalogues	(p. 290) cataloghi	catalogues
(p. 289) the *PACT* party	(p. 293) una festa	a party
(p. 289) £ 145 *English Eccentrics* knickers in textures black velvet	(p.293) mutandoni lunghi in velluto nero elasticizzato da 145 sterline	£ 145 stretch black velvet long johns
(p. 293) Magda's *Conran Shop* rug	(p. 297) tappeto persiano di Magda.	Magda's Persian rug.

Table 6.
Omission of brands and household names.[2]

[2] Gap is an American clothing retailer and Baby Gap is specialized in collections for babies and children; Boules, Warehouse, Whistles and Joseph are fashion shops; Cullens is a British chain of convenience stores; Gossard Glossies is a collection from the English underwear brand Gossard; The Body Shop is an English chain of cosmetic shops; Salon Selectives is a line of hair care products; Lynx is a brand of male grooming products; The Hubble Space Telescope is a space telescope carried into orbit in 1990; Stocking Fillers are British catalogues that sell toys and other gifts for Christmas; PACT stands for Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television; English Eccentrics is a London-based fashion design label; the Conran Shop is a retailer of household furnishing.

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Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 11) He did a jokey *Bruce Forsyth* step	(p. 18) Ha accennato goffamente a un passetto di danza	He clumsily made a dance step
(p. 15) Una threw herself across the room like *Will Carling*	(p. 23) Una si è lanciata attraverso la stanza nemmeno fosse una centometrista	Una threw herself across the room as if she was a 100 metres sprinter
(p. 30) *Denis Healey* eyebrows	(p. 38) le sopracciglia a cespuglio incolto	unkempt bushy eyebrows
(p. 47) over-exposure to *Noel Edmonds*, popular television	(p. 55) eccessiva esposizione alla TV spazzatura	over-exposure to junk TV
(p. 76) and now suddenly you're *Jeremy Paxman*	(p. 83) E adesso tutto a un tratto ti metti a fare la femminista	And now, you suddenly start acting like a feminist
(p. 100) without the *Frank Bough*-style diamond patterned sweater	(p. 107) senza il maglione a rombi	without the diamond patterned sweater
(p. 166) some crashing *Geoffrey Boycott* character	(p. 172) qualche tipetto tutto azzimato	some dressed up guy
(p. 186) as if I were *Sara* bloody *Keays* or someone	(p. 192) nemmeno fossi chissà chi	as if I were goodness knows who
(p. 197) a denim shirt and red *Christopher Biggins* spectacles	(p. 204) la camicia di jeans e degli occhialini rossi e tondi	a denim shirt and red and round spectacles
(p. 229) exaggerating her lip movements like *Les Dawson*	(p. 235) parlando in punta di labbra	speaking on the tip of her lips
(p. 244) subltle-as-a-*Frankie-Howerd*-sexual-innuendo-style irony	(p. 249) un'ironia sottile tipo allusione sessuale fatta da uno scaricatore di porto	a subtle irony similar to a sexual innuendo by a docker
(p. 254) a fluid sheath of shot-silk-effect *Yves Klein* blue...	(p. 258) a un velo fluente azzurro marezzato tipo seta...	a flowing watery silk-like veil

Table 7.
Omission of references to people.[3]

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[3] Bruce Forsyth is an English TV host and entertainer; Will Carling is a former English rugby player; Denis Healey is a retired British Labour politician; Noel Edmonds is an English broadcaster; Jeremy Paxman is an English journalist, author and broadcaster; Frank Bough is a retired English TV presenter; Geoffrey Boycott is a former England cricketer; Sara Keays is the former mistress and personal secretary of British Conservative politician Cecil Parkinson; Christopher Biggins is an English actor; Leslie "Les" Dawson was an English comedian; Frankie Howerd was an English comedian; Yves Klein was a French artist.

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Moreover, examples of omission as a strategy of simplification are also sometimes found when Bridget refers to fictional characters, presumably, also in this case, in order to make the target text easier and more immediate to the Italian lay reader (Table 8):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 2) Obsess about Daniel Cleaver as pathetic to have a crush on boss *in manner of Miss Moneypenny* or similar.	(p.11) Lasciarsi ossessionare da Daniel Cleaver, nel senso che prendersi una cotta per il capo è patetico.	Letting oneself be obsessed about Daniel Cleaver, meaning having a crush on one's own boss is pathetic.
(p. 30) long curly fingernails like *Struwwelpeter*...	(p. 38) le unghie lunghe e adunche come quelle di un'arpia...	long and hooked nails similar to those of a harpy...
(p. 103) I said, in a pre-programmed *Stepford Wife* sort of way...	(p. 110) ho risposto (una risposta programmata in anticipo)...	I answered (an answer which had been planned in advance)...
(p. 40) I feel as if I have turned into *Miss Havisham*.	(p. 48) mi trasformo in una specie di paguro bernardo.	I turn into a sort of hermit crab.

Table 8.
Omission of names of fictional characters.[4]

3.3. Normalization (conservatism)

According to Baker (1996, p. 183), normalization or conservatism is "a tendency to exaggerate features of the target language and to conform to its typical patterns". Moreover, Baker claims that this tendency is probably influenced by the status of the source text and the source language, so that the higher the status of the source text and the source language, the less the tendency to normalize.

In the translation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, we can observe various cases of normalization. This does not come as a surprise, considering what has been previously mentioned: the low status of the source text and of the source language.

First of all, the chick lit genre has often been dismissed by critics as low literature. As Ferriss and Young (2006, p. 1) state:

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[4] Miss Moneypenny is a fictional character in Ian Fleming's *James Bond* novels and in the film series; Struwwelpeter is the character of a German children's book by Heinrich Hoffman; Miss Havisham is a significant character in Charles Dickens's novel *Great Expectations*; *The Stepford Wives* is a 1972 satirical thriller novel by Ira Levin in which the housewives living in a Connecticut neighbourhood are robots created by their husbands.

> On the one hand chick lit attracts the unquestioning adoration of fans; on the other it attracts the unmitigated disdain of critics. Such criticisms have become almost as common as the genre's ubiquitous pink, fashion-conscious covers. Highbrow critics, perhaps inevitably, have dismissed chick lit as trashy fiction.

Secondly, a personal diary is a kind of text that is not generally written with the intention of being published, and consequently its status is usually not considered high. As Lanford and West (1999, p. 11) claim "few diaries are accepted as canonical cultural documents, and then often only as a result of the public status of their writers".

Last but not least, we cannot but take into consideration the status of the author. Though *Bridget Jones's Diary* was Helen's Fielding second novel, her first one, *Cause Celeb*, (1994) only became famous following the success of *Bridget Jones's Diary*.[5] Thus, when the novel was translated into Italian, Fielding could not have been considered as an important name in the literary world.

The *Diary*'s very colloquial and informal style is achieved partly through the use of abbreviations, interjections, and onomatopoeic words. Abbreviations, in particular, are most often used at the beginning of the entry of each day, where Bridget makes a summary of the situation (in italics) and usually reports her weight, the number of alcohol units that she drank the previous day, the number of cigarettes smoked, the number of calories ingested, and the number of instant lottery tickets bought. She usually puts a comment into brackets after each data, and such comments are usually in an abbreviated form, such as: *v.g.* for *very good*, *v.v.g.* for *very very good*, *v.b.* for *very bad*, *esp.* for *especially*. As a general rule, in these cases the abbreviations have been maintained in the Italian translation. The phrases reported above have been translated as: *m.b.* for *molto bene*, *m.m.b.* for *molto molto bene*, *m.m.* for *molto male*, and *spec.* for *specialmente*.

However, abbreviations sometimes also occur in the text itself, but in most cases they have been normalized in the target text, as can be seen in Table 9.

As far as onomatopoeic interjections are concerned, the translator is not always consistent. In some cases they are transposed with commonly used Italian interjections. However, often they are standardized. The most common onomatopoeic interjections used are *ugh, argh*, *humph*, and *hmmm. Ugh*, used to express disgust, aversion, horror, and the like, is often standardized to *diavolo* [*devil*]. *Diavolo* can be used in Italian as an exclamation (similar to the English exclamation *hell*), even though it is not currently very common in the Italian language with such a function. Nevertheless, in the Italian translation of the book, there are eight cases where the translator has opted

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[5] In fact, all the pictures of the book cover available by browsing Google images report the statement "by the author of Bridget Jones's Diary", not to mention the fact that it was published in the United States for the first time only in 2002 and has never been translated in Italian.

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for this choice.[6] On two occasions,[7] it has been standardized to *ecco*, an Italian adverb used to intensify what the speaker is about to say, more or less equivalent to the English expression *so there*. In other cases,[8] it has been translated with the onomatopoeic interjections *bleah* and *puah*, which well convey the functional and connotative meaning of the original and maintain the same level of informality and colloquialness. Sometimes, however, it is not transposed at all.[9]

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 3) *Poss* start pension also.	(p. 12) *Se possibile* cominciare a pagare anche una pensione.	*If possible*, start paying for a pension.
(p. 77) Have woken up *v. fed up*.	(p. 84) Mi sono svegliata *stufa marcia*.	I have woken up *sick and tired*.
(p. 78) Have had *v.g.* idea about birthday.	(p. 86) Ho avuto un'*ottima* idea per il mio compleanno.	I have had an *excellent* idea for my birthday.
(p. 93) *V. late* now.	(p. 99) Sono in *ritardissimo*.	I'm *very late*.
(p. 106) feeling *v. full* of myself.	(p. 112) Ero *piena* di me.	I was *full* of myself.
(p. 109) A *v. posh* sheep-voice bleated…	(p. 115) Una voce *molto chic* e sottile ha belato …	A *very posh* and sublte voice bleated…
(p. 125) … but creates *v. bad* situation in head.	(p. 131) … ma crea una *pessima* situazione in testa.	… but creates a *very bad* situation in head.
(p. 184) Head state *v. bad* again.	(p. 190) Sono di nuovo in un *pessimo* stato mentale.	I'm in a *very bad* mental state again.
(p. 194) *V. bad* night.	(p. 200) Una *pessima* nottata.	A *very bad* night.

Table 9.
Normalization of abbreviations.

As far as the onomatopoeic interjection *aargh* (or its variation *aaargh*) is concerned, we can see that the translator has not always opted for the same strategy. In some cases she has standardized it by translating it as *aiuto* [help].[10] In two cases,[11] the same interjection has been standardized to *diavolo*, the same translation equivalent that is mostly used in the book to translate the interjection *ugh*. On one occasion,[12] it has been standardized to *oddio* [oh my God]. Finally, in other cases,[13] the onomatopoeic interjection

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[6] Pages 7/15, 10/18, 19/25, 59/66, 68/74, 146/152, 268/271.
[7] Pages 190/196.
[8] Pages 189/195 and 247/252 respectively.
[9] Pages187/193, 215/220, 216/221, 266/270, 272/276, 277/281.
[10] Pages 83/91, 84/91, 152/158, 153/159, 154/160, 295/298, 295/299.
[11] Pages 147/153, 148/154.
[12] Pages 271/275.
[13] Pages 25/33, 118/124, 153/159, 154/160, 261/265.

aargh has been maintained in the target text (although it has been normalized to the Italian *argh*), keeping the informal style of the original.

The onomatopoeic interjection "humph" is most often translated as *uffa*,[14] an Italian interjection which expresses bore or annoyance, more or less corresponding in its functional and connotative meaning to the original interjection. In these cases, the target text successfully transposes the colloquial and informal character of the source text. On one occasion,[15] however, it is not translated at all.

Finally, the onomatopoeic interjection "hmm" (or "hmmm", "mmm", "um") is very common throughout the text to express thoughtful absorption, hesitation, doubt, or perplexity. Also in this case, the translator has not always adopted the same strategy. In many cases,[16] she has transposed it with the equivalent Italian onomatopoeic interjection *mmm*. On other occasions, however, it has not been transposed at all.[17] In one interesting case,[18] the translator has explicitated the interjection, translating it as *Niente male, eh?* [Not bad, eh?].

Examples of normalization can also be observed in some cases when Bridget deliberately distorts word spelling. Such words are sometimes written in italics, so to give a more precise idea of how they are pronounced or to add emphasis. The translator, instead, has translated them with proper Italian spelling, as shown in Table 10.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 50) "*Shud-urrrrrrrp*"	(p. 58) "*Fatela tacere!*"	"*Make her shut up!*"
(p. 26) *Yesssss! Yessssss!*	(p. 34) *Ma sì! Vai così!*	*Yes! Way to go!*
(p. 75) "*Yeeeeees*, next weekend"	(p. 82) "*Sì*, il prossimo"	"*Yes*, the next one"
(p. 75) "*Oooh. Yes, please*"	(p. 82) "*Oh*, ma certo, sicuro!*"	"*Oh*, of course, sure!*"
(p. 96) "*Byeee!*"	(p. 103) "*Addio!*"	"*Farewell!*"
(p. 253) 8st 13lb 8oz (*yesss! yesss!)*	(p. 257) Kg 57,2 e mezzo (*vai!*)	Kg 57.2 and a half (*way to go!*)

Table 10.
Normalization of spelling.

However, we should note that whenever Bridget misspells entire sentences because she is drunk, or because she is reporting utterances spoken by drunk people, the translator has not normalized the target text. Indeed, the Italian

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[14] Pages 43/51, 77/84, 81/88, 104/111, 106/112, 129/135, 142/148, 152/158, 155/161, 229/235, 243/249, 244/249, 256/260, 295/299.
[15] Pages 31/39.
[16] Pages 25/32, 45/52, 104/110, 128/134, 167/173, 218/224, 231/237, 235/241.
[17] Pages 27/35, 84/91, 163/169, 213/219, 235/241, 262/266, 285/289, 293/297.
[18] Pages 58/65.

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translation is misspelt too, managing to convey the connotative meaning implied in the original, as can be observed in Table 11.

Source text	Target text	Target text properly spelt
(p. 68) Argor sworeal brilleve with Shazzan Jude. Dun stupid care bout Daniel stupid prat. Feel sicky though. Oops.	(p. 74) Magnifica scerata mooolto scimpatica con Shazzan e Jude. Basta pensare a quel Daniel sciocchina. Ma come mi sento male. Aiut.	Magnifica serata molto simpatica con Shazzer e Jude. Basta pensare a quel Daniel sciocchina. Ma come mi sento male. Aiuto.
(p. 146) Argo res wororriblr. Am olapassit. Face collapsing.	(p. 152) Una scerata terribile. Sto per svenire. A faccingiù.	Una serata terribile. Sto per svenire. A faccia in giù.
(p. 187) Gor es wor blurry goofun tonight though. Oof. Tumbled over.	(p. 193) Dio se è tardi. Mamela sono spassata un mondo, stascera. Uff. Sciono caduta per terra.	Dio se è tardi. Ma me la sono spassata un mondo, stasera. Uff. Sono caduta per terra.
(p. 245) "Look. Shuddup," said Jude, burping again. "Shagernothebol Chardonnay?"	(p. 251) "Scentite, scmettetela", ci ha zittite Jude, con un altro ruttino discreto. "Ordiniamunaltrosciardonné ?"	"Sentite, smettetela", ci ha zittite Jude, con un altro ruttino discreto. "Ordiniamo un altro Chardonnay?"

Table 11.
Transposition of misspellings.

Last but not least, talking about normalization, in the source text Bridget very often omits subjects, auxiliaries, articles, prepositions, and possessive adjectives, as in a genuine diary. However, in the target text most of the times the translator has standardized these features, by adding the missing words, as shown in Table 12.[19]

Though the subject is not rendered in Italian either, it ought to be noted that Italian is a pro-drop language. Consequently the ellipsis of subject is the default option, and the omission of the subject in the translated version does not convey the connotations of such an omission in the source text. The text, then, is standardized due to the insertion of articles, copulas, and possessive adjectives.

[19] See also Table 9, where in most of the extracts the first singular subject and the definite or indefinite articles are missing.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p.2) Obsess about Daniel Cleaver as *[subject and copula omitted]* pathetic to have a crush on boss…	(p.11) Lasciarsi ossessionare da Daniel Cleaver, nel senso che prendersi una cotta per *il [article]* capo è *[copula]* patetico.	Letting oneself be obsessed about Daniel Cleaver, meaning having a crush on the boss is pathetic.
(p. 82) *[subject omitted]* Have had *[article omitted]* v.g. idea about *[possessive adjective omitted]* birthday.	(p.86) Ho avuto *un' [article]* ottima idea per il *mio [possessive adjective]* compleanno.	I have had an excellent idea for my birthday.
(p. 93) *[subject and copula omitted]* V. late now.	(p.99) *Sono [copula]* in ritardissimo.	I am very late.

Table 12.
Standardization through addition of missing words.

To conclude, we can confirm the presence of universal features of translation (*explicitation*, *simplification* and *normalization*). In the next section we will discuss the use of Venuti's (1995) domestication and foreignization translation strategies in the translation of *Bridget Jones*.

4. Domestication vs. Foreignization in the Italian translation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*

Venuti bases his concepts on Schleiermacher's (in Venuti 2008, p. 15) notion of translation methods, according to which "either the translator leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him", therefore *domesticating* the text, or "the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him" (Venuti 2008, p. 15), thereby *foreignizing* the text.

The scholar states that domestication is by far the strategy preferred by translators in the Western world, where the main aim seems to be making the target text smooth and fluent by trying to avoid any estrangement effect in the reader.

In the Italian version of *Bridget Jones's Diary* we can identify many instances in which the main aim of the translator is apparently just that. This can be observed both on a semantic and on a syntactic level. In this paper I will only focus on the transposition of culture-specific items. The most common translation strategies used to domesticate a text are: omission, generalization, and replacement with other elements deemed to be more familiar. In the Italian translation of *Bridget Jones's Diary* we can observe all such strategies.

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4.1. Omissions

In the section on simplification we have already analyzed many cases where the strategy of omission had been adopted presumably for the benefit of the Italian reader unfamiliar with the British culture.

Indeed, as we could note, the strategy of omission is most commonly implemented in the case of references to brands, household names and people who might be considered unfamiliar to the Italian reader. The translator most probably decided to omit all these references so as to avoid a potential estrangement effect on the Italian reader. Consequently, the strategy of omission has been used in this book in order to domesticate the text.

4.2. Generalization

Generalization is an activity which involves the substitution of an element in the source text with a hyperonym in the target text, usually an expression whose literal meaning is wider and less specific than the expression used in the source text. Also in this case, the text turns out to be domesticated. Indeed, through the strategy of generalization an unfamiliar, and hence potentially disturbing element is replaced with a generic one that can be easily understood without difficulty.

The strategy of generalization with the aim of domesticating the text is sometimes used in the case of references to people (Table 13):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 37) Apparently there is a *Martin Amis character* who is so crazily addicted that he starts wanting a cigarette even when he's smoking one.	(p. 45) Pare che esista un *personaggio televisivo* così nicotina-dipendente che comincia a desiderare un'altra sigaretta quando sta ancora fumando quella precedente.	Apparently there is a *television character* who is so nicotine-addicted that he starts wanting a cigarette when he is still smoking the previous one.

Table 13.
Generalization of a reference to a fictional character.

In the example above, Bridget refers to Martin Amis's character Richard Tull in *The Information* (1995): a frustrated writer, who talks about smoking a cigarette in between each cigarette. In the Italian translation, Bridget generically refers to a television character. So, besides being generalized, the reference has also shifted from the field of literature to that of television. It is interesting to note, however, that in the book there is another reference to Martin Amis and in that case the translator has maintained it in the target text (Table 14). The name of the writer is not contextualized in either case,

therefore the choice to omit it in one case but maintain it in the other appears rather odd:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 96) … saying, "*Martin Amis*! Nelson Mandela! Richard Gere!"...	(p. 103) … dicendo: "*Martin Amis*! Nelson Mandela! Richard Gere!"...	… saying, "*Martin Amis*! Nelson Mandela! Richard Gere!"...

Table 14.
Maintenance of reference to a British writer.

Generalization is also used in the case of specific brands or household names, as can be seen in the examples reported in Table 15:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 18) some *Stilton*	(p. 26) del *formaggio*	some *cheese*
(p. 47) dressed as *a Morris dancer*	(p. 55) vestito come un *ballerino folcloristico*	dressed as a *folk dancer*
(p. 72) *Jaeger* and *Country Casuals*	(p. 78) *boutique di lusso*	*luxury boutiques*
(p. 122) in *Warehouse*	(p. 128) in *un grande magazzino*	in *a chain store*
(p. 122) buy a few choice items from *Nicole Fahri, Whistles, and Joseph*	(p. 128) comprare pochi articoli scelti in *negozi super chic*	buy few choice items from *super chic shops*
(p. 127) three boxes of *Milk Tray*	(p. 134) tre scatole di *cioccolatini*	three boxes of *chocolates*
(p. 135) on to my *River Café cookbook*	(p. 142) sul mio *libro di cucina preferito*	on to my *favourite cookbook*
(p. 159) six cans of *Fosters*	(p. 165) sei lattine di *birra*	six cans of *beer*
(p. 258) "Box of *Milk Tray*?"	(p. 262) "In una scatola di *cioccolatini*?"	"In a box of *chocolates*?"
(p. 304) the *Magimix*	(p. 307) il *frullatore*	the *blender*

Table 15.
Generalization of brands and household names.[20]

[20] Stilton is an English cheese; Morris dance is a traditional English folk dance; Jaeger, Country Casuals, Warehouse, Nicole Fahri, Whistles and Joseph are fashion shops; Milk Tray is an English brand of chocolates; The River Café cookbook is a recipe book by the River Café restaurant founders; Foster's is an internationally distributed Australian brand of beer; Magimix is a French brand of food processors and blenders.

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The references to Princess Diana are interesting, as the translator does not show a consistent behaviour in her translational choices. In some cases she has generalized the reference, as in the extract reported in Table 16:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 53) with a look of melancholy bravery I swear she copied from *Princess Diana.*	(p. 61) con un'espressione di malinconico coraggio che, scommetto, ha copiato da *qualche testa coronata.*	with a look of melancholy bravery that, I bet, she copied from *some crowned head.*

Table 16.
Generalization of reference to Princess Diana.

Here, Princess Diana has been turned into a generic reference to any crowned head (*testa coronata*). Such translational behaviour cannot be easily ascribed to a presumable intention of making the target text more familiar to the Italian lay reader, as Princess Diana was definitely known to Italians. In the extract in Table 17, on the other hand, the reference has been maintained:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 218) We ended up, for some reason, talking about *Princess Diana*.	(p. 224) Chissà perché, abbiamo finito per metterci a parlare della *principessa Diana.*	Goodness knows why we ended up talking about *Princess Diana.*

Table 17.
Maintenance of reference to Princess Diana.

Further on in the text, however, another reference to Princess Diana has been omitted, as reported in Table 18.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 269) she adopted her wounded *Princess Diana* look.	(p. 273) ha adottato lo sguardo da *cucciolo bastonato.*	she adopted her *wounded puppy* look.

Table 18.
Elimination of reference to Princess Diana.

Though functional equivalence is achieved, with the image of a wounded puppy, it is difficult to understand why the reference to Princess Diana has been deleted.

Moreover, towards the end of the book there is one more reference to Princess Diana, which has been eliminated (Table 19):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 297) So glad decided to be festive Home Alone Singleton like *Princess Diana.*	(p. 300) Sono felice di aver deciso di essere una Single che Festeggia in Casa da Sola... come una *reietta.*	I'm glad I've decided to be a Single Woman who Celebrates Staying Home Alone... like an *outcast.*

Table 19.
Elimination of reference to Princess Diana.

As we can see above, in the original version Bridget compares herself to the princess because of their shared status as single women, while in the translation she describes herself as an outcast (*una reietta*).

Other interesting cases of generalization can be noticed throughout the text whenever Bridget refers to the brand of cigarettes she and her friends smoke, namely Silk Cut. Most of the times the translator has generalized the references, referring simply to "cigarettes".[21] It is a fact that Silk Cut cigarettes are not well-known in Italy. However, they are available, and there is also an Italian Silk Cut Wikipedia page.[22]

Interestingly, there are two cases when the original references to cigarettes have been totally omitted and the translation has completely altered the meaning of the source text, as can be seen in Table 20:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 28) Panic stricken, I reached for the *Silk Cut.*	(p. 36) In preda al panico, *avrei voluto tagliarmi le vene.*	Panic stricken, *I wanted to cut my veins.*
(p. 46) I went round the corner, shaking, for some *Silk Cut.*	(p. 54) Sono arrivata tremando fin dietro l'angolo per comprare *da bere.*	I went round the corner, shaking, to buy something *to drink.*

Table 20.
Elimination of reference to cigarettes and alteration of original meaning.

4.3. Substitution

The strategy of substitution in translation involves replacing a culture-specific item or expression in the source text with a target language item that describes a similar concept in the target culture likely to have a similar impact on the target readers. The ultimate aim of this strategy is once again the minimization of the potential estrangement effect that an unfamiliar

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[21] Pages 126/132, 127/133, 188/133, 190/197, 209/214, 301/304.
[22] In the trivia section of the Italian page (but not in the English one), it is reported that the brand is the preferred one by comic book character John Costantine, by writers Warren Ellis and Tom Stoppard, by singer Robbie Williams and by literary and cinematographic character Bridget Jones.

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reference may arouse in the target reader. Here follow some examples of the use of substitution in the Italian translation of the novel (Table 21):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 18) while watching *EastEnders*.	(p. 26) intanto ho guardato *Love Boat*.	while watching *The Love Boat*.
(p. 98) Want to […] watch *EastEnders*.	(p. 104) Voglio […] guardare *Love Boat*.	I want to […] watch *The Love Boat.*

Table 21.
Substitution of reference to a TV show.

In the examples above (to which the title of this essay refers) we can note that the translator has replaced the references to *EastEnders* with *The Love Boat. EastEnders* is a BBC television soap opera set in a fictional borough in the East End of London. It has been broadcast since 1985 and is one of the UK's highest rated programmes. *The Love Boat*, instead, is an American television series set on a cruise ship. Whereas *EastEnders* has never aired on Italian TV channels, and consequently is unknown to most Italians, *The Love Boat* was broadcast in Italy from 1980 till 1990, and is familiar to the majority of Italians who lived in that period. This substitution domesticates the target text, avoiding any estrangement effect in the reader.

Interesting cases of substitution can be observed also in case of references to food items which are thought to be unfamiliar to the Italian reader, and consequently are replaced with other items which are better known in Italy. Throughout the book there are various references to Milk Tray, which we have already noted has been generalised due to the fact that the product is unknown in Italy. There are other cases, however, when the translator has opted for substituting the reference to this specific chocolate product, as well as to others, as can be seen in Table 22:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 7) 12 *Milk Tray*	(p. 15) 12 *Quality Street*	12 *Quality Street*
(p. 51) the last *Milk Tray*	(p. 59) l'ultimo *Quality Street*	the last *Quality Street*
(p. 115) 1 *Milky Way*	(p. 121) 1 *Quality Street*	1 *Quality Street*
(p. 242) You bring me *Diary Box*, please, instead of Quality Street?	(p. 247) Potresti portarmi degli *After Eight* invece delle Quality Street?	Could you bring me some *After Eight*, instead of Quality Street?
(p. 242) Get us a *Twix* and a *Lion* bar	(p. 247) Prendici una *Fiesta* e un *Mars*	Get us a *Fiesta* and a *Mars*

Table 22.
Substitution of brands of chocolate products.

As we can note, in two cases Milk Tray has been replaced with references to Quality Street chocolates, available also in Italy. Thus, by replacing an unknown food item with a familiar one, the translator has domesticated the text.

Quality Street has also been used to substitute a reference to the Milky Way chocolate, which is not available in Italy. Diary Box chocolates (also not available in Italy), instead, have been substituted by After Eight, a British confectionary product which is distributed in Italy. Finally, and oddly, references to Twix and Lion bars have been replaced with references to Fiesta and Mars respectively, even though Twix and Lion bars are also very popular in Italy.

Examples of substitution used as a strategy of domestication can also be found in the case of fashion shops. For instance, a reference to Nicole Farhi has been substituted with Laura Ashley, again better known to Italians (Table 23):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 123) something really nice from *Nicole Farhi*	(p. 129) qualcosa di veramente carino da *Laura Ashley*	something really nice from *Laura Ashley*

Table 23.
Substitution of names of fashion shops.

This strategy is also used on a few occasions when Bridget refers to famous people:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 176) Usually once he gets going he will see things through to their logical conclusion come earthquake, tidal wave or naked pictures of *Virginia Bottomley* on the television.	(p. 182) Di solito, quando comincia, porta le cose alla loro conclusione logica, e questo che venga un terremoto, un'inondazione o che compaia sullo schermo TV l'immagine nuda di *Cicciolina*.	Usually, once he has started, he brings things to their logical conclusion, it doesn't matter if an earthquake comes, a flood, or if the naked image of *Cicciolina* appears of the TV screen.

Table 24.
Substitution of names of people.

In the example above Bridget makes a reference to naked pictures of ultra-Conservative party MP, Virginia Bottomley. She would never appear naked in public, which is why Bridget correlates it to an earthquake and a tidal wave. In the target text the reference to Virginia Bottomley has been replaced with a reference to Cicciolina, a porn star and former politician. Seeing her naked on TV is by no means an extraordinary event. The target text here has

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been domesticated, as Cicciolina is definitely famous in Italy. However, functional equivalence is not achieved.

Another instance of substitution can be observed in Table 25:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 214) I'm thinking studio: *Frank Skinner and Sir Richard Rogers* on furry seats…	(p. 220) Pensate a uno studio televisivo: *Tony Blair e Major* su assi ricoperte di pelliccia …	Think of a television studio: *Tony Blair and Major* on furry seats…

Table 25.
Substitution of names of people.

Bridget's boss refers to two popular British personalities, namely writer and comedian Frank Skinner and architect Sir Richard Rogers. In the target text both have been replaced with references to British politicians who are very well known to all Italians: Tony Blair and John Major.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 76) We stared at each other transfixed like two African animals at the start of a fight on a *David Attenborough* programme.	(p. 83) Ci siamo fissati come due animali selvaggi in procinto di iniziare un combattimento in un documentario di *Richard Attenborough.*	We stared at each other like two wild animals about to start a fight on a *Richard Attenborough* programme.

Table 26.
Substitution of names of people.

An interesting case of substitution can also be observed in Table 26, in which Bridget refers to a TV programme by David Attenborough, who is surprisingly replaced by his older brother, Richard Attenborough. The former is an English broadcaster and naturalist, Richard, instead, was a famous film director (e.g. *Gandhi*). The strategy of substitution in this case, however, does not seem to be ascribable to domesticating purposes and the reasons underlying such a translational choice are rather obscure.

Attenborough's documentaries are also mentioned in another part of the text, though this time they are used in the target text as a substitution strategy when the source text refers to a fictional character unknown to most Italians (Table 27):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 108) Except in the case of *Mr Blobby,* who should have been punctured at birth.	(p. 108) Tranne nel caso dei *documentari di Attenborough* che avrebbero dovuto essere stroncati alla nascita.	Except in the case of *Attenborough's documentaries* which should have been torn apart at birth.

Table 27.
Substitution of a fictional character with a TV programme.

Mr Blobby was a character on Noel Edmond's Saturday night variety television show *Noel's House Party*. He was a bulbous pink figure covered with yellow spots who only said the word "blobby". The translator has replaced the reference with Attenborough's documentaries (this time first names are not mentioned). Although the target text somehow manages to avoid estrangement effects by eliminating potentially disturbing elements (Mr Blobby), functional equivalence is not achieved, as Attenborough's documentaries are highly valued products and the character who is speaking (Perpetua, Bridget's colleague) is an educated person who would not be expected to criticize them.

One more interesting instance of substitution of a reference to a popular person is reported in Table 28:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 47) "I'll just clean the house like *Germaine* sodding *Greer* and the Invisible Woman".	(p. 55) "Darò una bella ripulita in casa … come *Luisa che comincia presto, finisce presto e di solito non pulisce il water.*"	"I will clean up the house... like *Luisa who starts early, finishes early, and usually does not clean the toilet bowl.*"

Table 28.
Substitution of a person with a fictional character.

In this example, the speaker (Bridget's mother) makes reference to outspoken feminist Germaine Greer. "Luisa", on the other hand, is a fictional character from a popular Italian TV advertisement in the 1980s, whose catchphrase was "Luisa comincia presto, finisce presto e di solito non pulisce il water".

5. Conclusions

This study analyzed the Italian translation of the novel *Bridget Jones's Diary* taking two frames of reference, the distinctive universal features observed in computer-based corpus translation, namely *explicitation*, *simplification* and *normalization* and Venuti's dichotomy of translation strategies into domestication and foreignization (1995). The manual analysis has basically

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confirmed the results of previous studies about translational behaviour in both cases.

The analysis reveals numerous cases of explicitation, simplification and normalization, as well as a vast number of examples of domesticating strategies of various kinds, in line with Venuti's assertion that domestication is the strategy preferred by translators in the Western world.

However, it is worth noting that fluency of the text is not the only result of the acts of manipulation that have been observed. In fact, these translational behaviours have also affected characterization, especially that of Bridget.

First of all, Bridget Jones turns out to be less typically British. The original text has a considerable number of references to well-known British people or cultural items, many of which are lost in translation. In fact, out of 69 references to famous British characters, 25 have either been omitted, generalized or substituted, and the same has happened to 36 British culture-specific elements (some of which are referred to many times in the source text), whereas only 11 have been maintained.

Interestingly, not *all* references have been lost. Indeed, some of them have been maintained, many of which are definitely known to most Italians (for example, among the references to British people, Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher, Hugh Grant, Nick Hornby, and, among the references to culture-specific items, Marks & Spencer, Pimms, Quality Street). However, some others are probably not exactly familiar to Italians (such as Bonnie Langford, Kathleen Tynan, Katie Boyle, Wendy Cope or Graham and Greene, *Anne and Nick Show*, *Newsnight*).

Secondly, the Italian Bridget Jones appears to be less educated than the original one. Indeed, in the source text Bridget often mentions or refers to politicians, academics, writers, journalists, documentarists, literary characters, novels, and artists. In the Italian translation many of these references have not been transposed. The general effect is that the Italian Bridget Jones is a more simple and less cultured person than her English counterpart.

To conclude, *Il diario di Bridget Jones* turns out to be a fluent translation, a pleasing, entertaining and amusing book which reads smooth and easily. It also succeeds in maintaining the confidential, humorous and light-hearted tone of the original. However, it is undeniable that the omission of the very many references to British contemporary popular culture, as well as to literary novels, authors, and politicians has an impact on the characterization of the main character.

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