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To Travel through Translation:
A Literary Translation Portfolio

Trinity College Dublin
MPhil in Literary Translation
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Supervised by Dr. Lijing Peng and Dr. Cormac Ócuilleanáin
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Introduction

When, at beginning of the academic year, I was asked to think about a theme for my translation portfolio, a *fil rouge* that would hold together all the text I was going to translate, my mind immediately drifted to the idea of doing something travel-related. After all, is also because of my passion for travels, that I pursued an academic life in the translation field, and that this year I find myself studying in Dublin.

That is why I created a sort of “itinerary” for my portfolio, that would guide the reader through the texts that I chose. Each text, in fact, not only narrates a different story, set in a different place, and part of a different literary genre; it also represents a very specific way to think about travels.

Our journey will begin in the adventurous world of children literature, in a Chinese story specifically created for children that want to learn about traditional tales, but want to do it while having fun.

We will then move to a different setting, a farm in rural Ireland in the 1980s. The second story will show us what it means to travel to meet a different life.

In the imaginative world of the Chinese science fiction, then, we will try to understand how it would feel to travel from one planet to the other, in ways that we could have never even imagined.

Then it is the time of an Italian song, that will accompany us in an exciting journey made of hitchhiking and coach surfing.

With the fifth text, we will learn how to move between the Chinese traditional characters, going back to the places we once visited.

And here comes the road trip, a hilarious journey through vineyards and wine tasting in the wine region in California.
Then a quick trip to Vietnam, where a Chinese father is trying to bring back home the body of his son, but finds himself surrounded by nothing but ghosts.

Eventually, our last stop will be in the Italian Alps, where traveling up and down the snowy hills is nothing but a coping mechanism, a way to deal with grief.

I would like to thank, from the bottom of my heart, Lijing Peng and Cormac Ócuilleanáin, for immediately accepting my theme and the texts I proposed, and for helping me dig inside the core of said texts, to produce the best TTs possible.

And now I would like to thank the readers of my portfolio: I hope you will enjoy my translations, and, while you are at it, enjoy the journey!
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<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Target Text</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>The Little Fox’s Adventures into The Classic of Mountains and Seas</td>
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**Description of Source Text**
- understanding of source text
- knowledge of genre within source contexts
- situation of source text
- familiarity with the formal features of a text (language variation(s), register, dialect) (200 words max)

The ST is an illustrated children book for children aged 3-8 (CITIC Press Group, 2019), created by the collaborative imprint Fox Family (狐狸家).

It is an adaptation of the classic Chinese stories of *The classic of Mountains and Seas*, but does not simply narrate the tales included in it: it also adds a frame narrative, which is a different story that contains the main story (Hinckley 1934, 69), with the little fox Huhu, his sister and his friends as main characters. With a magnifying glass, they travel inside the *Map of the Classic of Mountains and Seas*, and find themselves into the places where the various stories are set.

The book presents the following features:
- simple phrasing, full of repetitions and recurring sentences;
- a tight link to the images, since in this kind of books the verbal and the visual are strongly connected (Trumpener 2009, 55). Therefore, in some cases the words, in order to be fully understood, have to be looked at next to the pictures (e.g. l. 45-46 in the ST);
- pronunciation of some of the Chinese characters (3 in total) put in brackets next to the characters.

**Strategy**
- identification of translation problems

My main TA will be made up of English-speaking children aged 6-9, originally from China but living in Dublin, that wants to learn about Chinese traditional stories.

In order to achieve this goal, I will translate the TT by:
- maintaining the layout and the position of the words as they appear in the ST, in order to keep the link between the text and the images;
- keeping the Chinese name of the characters (except for ‘狐狸爷爷’ [grandpa fox]) even if they may not sound familiar in English (e.g. Taotie, Rushou, Tubo, Shennong, etc...), writing them in pinyin, the primary romanization system for Mandarin Chinese (Masini and Zhang 2010, 3-5), but without using the Chinese tones (ibidem);
- translating the Chinese ‘在很久很久以前’ [a long, long time ago] with ‘Once upon a time’, the English conventional stock phrase that introduces fairy tales and folk tales (Madrid 2018);
- keeping the simple phrasing and the repetition of similar sentences (e.g. l. 80 and l. 87);
- delete the pronunciation of the words in brackets, since, after translating them in English, the readers would already know the pronunciation.

Since the ST was already intended for children, it was easy enough to adapt my translation to a young audience. I submitted it to a group of Chinese English-speaking college students, to have feedbacks on my translation. Although they did not match the TA of my text, they found the TT fairly enjoyable. And, after discussing it with them, I realized that the text, although my translation was originally intended for a very specific age group, could also be enjoyed by a wider audience. In fact, we have many examples, one of which is the global literary case of The Little Prince (De Saint-Exupéry, 1995), literature written for children, could often attract a mixed, much broader, audiences (Gubar 2011, 209). In this particular case, it can be argued that, along with the young readers for whom the translation was intended, the text could also be enjoyed by a readership consisting of adult readers, especially English-speaking people who want to find out more about Chinese classic literature.

**Critical Reflection**
- textual analysis

**Works Cited**
- use of sources and reference material

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“爷爷，天和地是怎么来的呀？”自从小狐狸呼呼去过《山海经》的世界以后，他的小脑袋瓜儿里，就不停地冒出新问题。
“天地就是掰开的两块鸡蛋壳呀。”狐狸爷爷瞪了瞪沙发坐垫，又抱起呼呼的小妹妹吸吸，不紧不慢地讲起来，“在很久很久以前，宇宙就像一颗鸡蛋，里面什么都没有。后来，鸡蛋里长出一个叫盘古的巨人，这个巨人出现时就一直在睡觉，他睡呀，睡呀，一直睡了一万八千年！”

“Grandpa, how did the sky and the earth come about?”
Ever since the little fox Huhu went into the world of The Classic of Mountains and Seas, a lot of new questions kept popping up in his little head.
“The sky and the earth are like two halves of an eggshell cracked in the middle.”
Grandpa Fox made himself comfortable on the cushions of the armchair, took Huhu’s little sister Lili in his arms and calmly began to tell: “Once upon a time, the universe was like one big empty egg. One day, inside this egg, a giant named Pangu was born, and he did nothing but sleep for eighteen thousand years!”
“终于有一天，盘古醒了。他轻轻伸了个懒腰，竟把‘蛋壳’撑破了，‘蛋壳’渐渐分成了两半。轻而清的部分飘起来变成了天，重而浊的部分沉下去变成了地。盘古不愿让两半‘蛋壳’重新合在一起，便用手撑着天，用脚踩住地，把天越撑越高，把地越踩越低。他一直撑了很久，才把天地变得像现在一样广阔。”

“那后来呢？”呼呼问道。
“盘古累了。他躺在床上想休息一下，可是睡着了就再也没有醒。他的身体变成了大山，双眼变成了太阳和月亮，汗水变成了雨滴和露珠，毛发变成了花草。”

“One day, eventually, Pangu woke up. But, when he stretched his legs and arms, he broke the ‘egg’ into two. The ‘shell’ slowly split into two precise halves, and the clear and light half floated up and became the sky, while the dark and muddy one sank down and became the earth.

Pangu didn’t want to let the two halves of the ‘eggshell’ rejoin, so he held the sky with his hands. Pushing it higher, he stamped on the earth with his feet, pushing it lower. It took him a long time, but eventually he made the world as vast as it is now.”

“And then what happened?” Huhu asked.
“Pangu was exhausted. He laid on the ground to rest, but he fell asleep and never woke up again. His body turned into a mountain, his eyes turned into the sun and the moon, his sweat turned into drops of rain and dew, and his hair turned into flowers and plants.”
“后来呀，”爷爷接着说，“山川大地上慢慢有了人，人们到处游历，探索世界，还把自己见到的、听到的记下来。这些内容被收集到书里，取名为《山海经》。《山海经》还有一张地图……”
“是这个吗？”呼呼举着《山海图》问道。
爷爷打了个大大的哈欠：“就是这个，这里面藏着许多故事了。传说呀，那个时候，白天很短很短，黑夜却很长，人们生活在饥饿和寒冷中……”

妹妹睡着了，爷爷也越说越慢……渐渐地，客厅里只剩下细细的鼾声。

Grandpa yawned: "Yes, this is it. There are so many stories hidden in it. Legend has it that, back then, the days were short and the nights were very long, and that people lived in hunger and cold."

While Grandpa spoke more and more softly, Lili fell asleep. Little by little, the only noise in the living room was the soft snoring of the two of them.
In fact, Grandpa Fox had fallen asleep too.
But Huhu really wanted to know the rest of the story, so he took out the Map and, with a magnifying glass, he was catapulted into that secret world in a flash of time.
“嘿，你怎么也来啦？”
呼呼定睛一看，原来是他的老朋友薯薯（túo tiē），两个好朋友激动地紧紧拥抱。
这里是幽都，就像故事里讲的那样，到处是黑漆漆的山崖、河流和森林。人们站在冰冷的山野间，盼望着暮明日出的时刻。

“Hey, you’re here too! What are you doing here?”
Huhu took a closer look at who was talking and saw his old friend Taotie. For the excitement of seeing each other again, the two hugged tightly.
They were in the capital of that kingdom which, just like in the story, was full of dark mountains, rivers and forests. There were people, simply standing on mountain tops or in cold fields, anxiously waiting for one of the suns to rise.
They waited and waited, but as usual the suns were late. First by a minute, then by two, then by an hour, then by two. A full day passed before yawning, a sun lazily wobbled out from behind the mountain.
出太阳啦！阳光洒满山坡，人们激动得又跳又唱。
可才过几分钟，这慵懒的太阳就揉着眼睛往下沉，嘴里还不住地嘟囔：“真无聊，还不如回去睡觉呢！”

One of the ten suns was finally out! And, as it shone and illuminated the whole valley, people began to dance and sing with enthusiasm. But after only a few minutes, lazy as he was, he rubbed his eyes and sank again, muttering. "This is all so boring. I might as well go back to sleep!"
太阳落下，天地一片昏暗，人间都是叹气声和啜泣声。

怪兽气不过，大声嚷嚷着：“太过分了，这十个太阳又懒又任性，很久没有好好工作了，我们去找太阳妈妈（xi）和那里告状吧！”

“去过啦，没用！”人们无奈地摇头，“这个妈妈把十个宝宝宠坏了。”

大家回忆说，几位神人都先后去找过妈妈。

神农去告状：“太阳再不上班，地上的庄稼就要枯萎了，人们都要挨饿啦！”可妈妈只翻了翻白眼回答：“知道了，知道了，我的宝宝们洗完澡就去上班。”

So, as one the suns went down, the sky and the earth were dark again, and people started to sigh and weep.

Taotie then shouted furiously: "This is unacceptable! These ten suns are lazy and capricious. They have worked improperly for too long, we have to go to their mother, Xihe, and complain!"

But the rest of the people shook their heads, looking disconsolate. 'It's all useless. It is the mother that spoils them.'

In fact, everyone recalled that several other deities have already gone to talk to her.

The first that went there to complain was Shennong: "If one the suns does not rise soon, the crops on earth will perish and people will starve!"

But Xihe just rolled her eyes and replied: 'I know. I know. My babies will go to work after bath time.'
土伯去告过状：‘快让太阳上学去吧，这大地上又黑暗又冰冷，人们都染上瘟疫生病了。’
可和不耐烦地抱怨说：‘听到了，听到了，等我的宝宝们休息一会儿就去！’

荨(荨)草也去告过状：‘太阳好几天不上学，万物的范围(yu)都暗无天日了！天帝知道会生气的！’可是，和和还是没给他好脸色看，鼻子里哼哼说：‘行了，行了，没那么严重吧！’

Then went Tubo: ‘Let the suns go to work, the earth is dark and cold and the people are getting sick.’
But Xihe kept procrastinating impatiently: ‘I heard, I heard. I will let my babies go after their nap!’

Then Rushou went to complain as well: ‘The suns have not been at work for days. In the valley west of Yugu people can’t see the twilight anymore! If the Lord of the Sky finds out, he will be furious!’
But Xihe, without even looking at him, simply said with a grunt: ‘It’s okay, it’s okay. It’s not that serious!’
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Foster</td>
<td>Crescere un’estate</td>
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### Description of Source Text
- understanding of source text
- knowledge of genre within source contexts
- situation of source text

familiarity with the formal features of a text (language variation(s), register, dialect) (200 words max)

The ST is an excerpt from the very beginning of Claire Keegan’s novella Foster (2022, 3-8), that was firstly published in 2010 but became globally famous when the movie made from it, The Quiet Girl, was nominated at the 2023 Oscars. The novella, set in the early 1980s, narrates the story of a young girl, whose name we do not know, that comes from a numerous family and is sent to spend the summer with relatives on a farm in rural Ireland. The narration is in the present tense and in the first person, from the point of view of the girl.

Formal features of the text include:
- references (6 in total) to specific Irish locations, towns and Counties (e.g. Clonegal, Wexford, Shillelagh, etc...);
- 1 word in Irish, pronounced by one of the characters: ‘a leanbh’ (l. 74), which means ‘child’ (Ó Dónaill 1992, 509);
- repeated use of ‘the woman’ and ‘the man’, rather than their names, to refer to the characters;
- indications of the socio-economic status of the characters, mostly farmers, expressed through the issues they discuss amongst each other (e.g. l. 53-54, ‘butter mountains, ‘the cost of sheep-dip’, ‘the price of cattle’).

### Strategy
- identification of translation problems
- knowledge of genre within target context and situation of target text

My TA will consist of the judges (10 Italian writers aged 30-45) of the literary translation contest “Racconti dal Sud” [tales from the South], for texts set in Sicily.

In order to move the story from an Irish landscape to a Sicilian one, I will:
<table>
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<tr>
<td>production of genre for target context (200 words max)</td>
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<td>- change the geographical references (e.g. Clonegal -&gt; Alcamo; Wexford County -&gt; provincia di Agrigento; Shillelagh -&gt; Salemi, etc...), and the names of the characters (e.g. Kinsella -&gt; Costanza; John -&gt; Giuvanni, etc...);</td>
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<tr>
<td>- have the characters speak a mild Sicilian dialect, mimicking Andrea Camilleri’s linguistic variations (Magazzù 2018, 114-115) and adjusting the Italian grammar structures to the Sicilian dialect: e.g. for ‘the pram’s broken’, instead of ‘la carrozzina si è rottà’, I will use ‘la carrozzina rottà è’;</td>
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<td>- translate ‘a leanbh’ with the dialectal word, typical of the province of Agrigento (ibid, 115), ‘picciridda’ [little girl];</td>
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<td>- use Sicilian culture-specific elements (e.g. ‘red lemonade’ -&gt; ‘granita’ [shaved ice]);</td>
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<td>- switch the narration to the prospective of an all-knowing, unbiased third person narrator, that will tell the story in the past tense, the most common tense used in Italian (Imperi 2011);</td>
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<td>The narrator will refer to the girl with ‘la bambina’ [the little girl].</td>
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<th>Critical Reflection</th>
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<td><strong>textual analysis</strong></td>
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<td>(200 words max)</td>
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<td>Something that did not occur to me while translating is the fact that the translated text does not read as a translation. I submitted the TT to five Italian sample readers without telling them it was a translation and, although it was clear to me that it was a translation, they all agreed on the fact that, while reading it, they were sure it was originally written in Italian. They also agreed on the fact that they did not feel like it was originally set in rural Ireland, rather than in Sicily. Arguably, he use of the Sicilian dialect, of the Sicilian town and provinces, of the typical Italian names, and of the culture-specific elements, was enough to give the impression that the text was always meant to be set in Sicily. Should I do the translation of the same text again, this time not for such a specific context, I would keep the geographical references and the names of the characters as found in the ST, in the attempt to make it evident to an hypothetical reader that the text they’re reading is a translation.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Source Text</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Foster</em></td>
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Early on a Sunday, after first Mass in Clonegal, my father, instead of taking me home, drives deep into Wexford towards the coast where my mother’s people came from. It is a hot day, bright, with patches of shade and greenish, sudden light along the road. We pass through the village of Shillelagh where my father lost our red Shorthorn in a game of forty-five, and on past the mart in Carnew where the man who won the heifer sold her shortly afterwards.

My father throws his hat on the passenger seat, winds down the window, and smokes. I shake the plaits out of my hair and lie flat on the back seat, looking up through the rear window.

In places there’s a bare, blue sky. In places the blue is chalked over with clouds, but mostly it is a heady mixture of sky and trees scratched over by ESB wires across which, every now and then, small, brownish flocks of vanishing birds race.

I wonder what it will be like, this place belonging to the Kinsellas. I see a tall woman standing over me, making me drink milk still hot from the cow. I see another, less likely version of her in an apron, pouring pancake batter onto a frying pan, asking would I like another, the way my mother sometimes does when she is in good humour. The man will be no taller

| 1 | Una domenica mattina presto, dopo la prima messa ad Alcamo, il padre della bambina, invece di portarla a casa, si addentrò nella provincia di Agrigento, diretto verso la costa, dalla zona originaria di sua moglie. Era una giornata calda, luminosa, con pozze d’ombra e improvvisi esplosioni di luce verdastra che si susseguivano lungo la strada. Superarono il paese di Salemi, dove l’uomo aveva perso la loro vacca Modicana in una partita a Scala Quaranta, e oltrepassarono il mercato di Gibellina, dove il tipo che avevano vinto la giovenca l’aveva rivenduta quasi subito. |
| 2 | Il padre della bambina gettò il cappello sul sedile del passeggero, abbassò il finestrino e si accese una sigaretta. La bambina si sciollse le trecce e si sdraiò sul sedile posteriore, guardando in alto attraverso il lunotto posteriore. |
| 3 | In alcuni punti il cielo era azzurro e spoglio, mentre in altri era ricoperto di nuvole. Più che altro, però, era un esaltante miscuglio di cielo e alberi e cavi sui quali, di tanto in tanto, sfrecciavano piccoli stormi brunastra di uccelli. |
| 4 | La bambina si stava chiedendo come sarebbe stato, andare a stare dai Costanza. Ricordava una donna alta che, in piedi sopra di lei, le faceva bere latte di mucca ancora caldo. Poi la ricordò in un’altra situazione, |
than her. He will take me to town on the tractor and buy me red lemonade and crisps. Or he’ll make me clean out sheds and pick stones and pull ragweed and docks out of the fields. I see him taking what I hope will be a fifty pence piece from his pocket but it turns out to be a handkerchief. I wonder if they live in an old farmhouse or a new bungalow, whether they will have an outhouse or an indoor bathroom with a toilet and running water. I picture myself lying in a dark bedroom with other girls, saying things we won’t repeat when morning comes.

An age, it seems, passes before the car slows and turns into a tarred, narrow lane, then a thrill as the wheels slam over the metal bars of a cattle grid. On either side, thick hedges are trimmed square. At the end of the lane there’s a long, white house with trees whose limbs are trailing the ground.

‘Da,’ I say. ‘The trees.’

‘What about ’em?’

‘They’re sick,’ I say.

‘They’re weeping willows,’ he says, and clears his throat.

In the yard, tall, shiny panes reflect our coming. I see myself looking out from the back seat wild as a gypsy child with my hair all loose but my father, at the wheel, looks just like my father.

A big, loose hound whose coat is littered with the shadows of the trees lets out a few rough, half-hearted barks, then sits on the step and looks forse meno probabile, in cui con il grembiule addosso versava l’impasto delle frittelle dolci in una padella, chiedendole se ne voleva ancora, proprio come faceva sua madre di tanto in tanto, quando era di buon umore. L’uomo non era più alto della donna. Forse l’avrebbe portata in città con il trattore e le avrebbe comprato granita e patatine. Oppure l’avrebbe costretta a ripulire capannoni, raccogliere pietre e strappare erbacce dai campi. Già se lo vedeva, mentre tirava fuori qualcosa dalla tasca, qualcosa che lei sperava fosse una banconota da mille lire, e che invece era solo un fazzoletto. Chissà se vivevano in una vecchia fattoria o in una villetta più recente, se avevano una latrina o un bagno interno con wc e acqua corrente. La bambina si immaginò sdraiata in una camera buia, insieme ad altre bambine, mentre si raccontavano cose che non avrebbero mai ripetuto il mattino successivo.

Passò quasi un’eternità prima che l’auto rallentasse e svoltasse in una stradina asfaltata, vibrando tutta quando le ruote sbatterono contro le sbarre di metallo di una grata per il bestiame. Su entrambi i lati del viale, c’erano fitte siepi ben potate, e alla fine c’era una lunga casa bianca circondata da alberi i cui rami sfioravano il terreno.

«Pa’,» disse la bambina. «L’àrbuli.»

«Chiè?»

«Sunnu malati?»

«Sunnu salici piangenti,» rispose l’uomo, schiarendosi la gola.
back at the doorway where the man has come out to stand. He has a square body like the men my sisters sometimes draw, but his eyebrows are white, to match his hair. He looks nothing like my mother’s people, who are all tall with long arms, and I wonder if we have not come to the wrong house.

‘Dan,’ the man says, and tightens himself. ‘What way are you?’

‘John,’ Da says.

They stand, looking out over the yard for a moment and then they are talking rain: how little rain there is, how the fields need rain, how the priest in Kilmuckridge prayed for rain that very morning, how a summer like it has never before been known. There is a pause during which my father spits and then their conversation turns to the price of cattle, the EEC, butter mountains, the cost of lime and sheep-dip.

It is something I am used to, this way men have of not talking: they like to kick a divot out of the grass with a boot heel, to slap the roof of a car before it takes off, to spit, to sit with their legs wide apart, as though they do not care.

When Mrs Kinsella comes out, she pays no heed to the men. She is even taller than my mother with the same black hair but hers is cut tight like a helmet. She’s wearing a printed blouse and brown, flared trousers. The car door is opened and I am taken out, and kissed. My face, being kissed, turns hot against hers.
‘The last time I saw you, you were in the pram,’ she says, and stands back, expecting an answer.
‘The pram’s broken.’
‘What happened at all?’
‘My brother used it for a wheelbarrow and the wheel fell off.’
She laughs and licks her thumb and wipes something off my face. I can feel her thumb, softer than my mother’s, wiping whatever it is away.
When she looks at my clothes, I see my thin, cotton dress, my dusty sandals through her eyes. There’s a moment when neither one of us knows what to say. A queer, ripe breeze is crossing the yard.
‘Come on in, a leanbh.’
She leads me into the house. There's a moment of darkness in the hallway; when I hesitate, she hesitates with me. We walk through into the heat of the kitchen where I am told to sit down, to make myself at home. Under the smell of baking there’s some disinfectant, some bleach.
She lifts a rhubarb tart out of the oven and puts it on the bench to cool: syrup on the point of bubbling over, thin leaves of pastry baked into the crust. A cool draught from the door blows in, but here it is hot and still and clean. Tall ox-eyed daisies are still as the tall glass of water they are standing in.
There is no sign, anywhere, of a child.
‘So how is your mammy keeping?’

Europea e le sue montagne di burro, sul costo della calce e dei bagni antiparassitari per le pecore.
La bambina era abituata a questo modo che avevano gli uomini di non parlare: loro preferivano prendere a calci le zolle d’erba con il tacco dello stivale, sbattere la mano sul tettuccio di un’autore che questa partisse, sputare a terra e sedersi con le gambe divaricate, come se non gli importasse niente.
Quando la signora Costanza uscì dalla casa, non prestò alcuna attenzione ai due uomini. Era alta, addirittura più alta della madre della bambina, e aveva gli stessi capelli scuri, ma li portava tagliati corti, a caschetto. Indossava una camicetta stampata e un paio di ampi pantaloni marroni.
Apri la portiera dell’autole, fece uscire la bambina e le diede un bacio, facendola arrossire.
«L’ultima volta che t’ho vista, nella carrozzina eri,» disse facendo un passo indietro, in attesa di una risposta.
«La carrozzina rotta è.»
«E che successe?»
«Mio fratello la usò come un carretto e fece cadere una ruota.»
La donna scoppiò a ridere, poi si mise il pollice in bocca e usò la saliva per pulire qualcosa dalla faccia della bambina. Lei sentì che quel pollice, che la stava pulendo da chissà che cosa, era più morbido di quello della madre. Poi la donna osservò i vestiti della bambina, e lei si vide attraverso
‘She won a tenner on the prize bonds.’

‘She did not.’

‘She did,’ I say. ‘We all had jelly and ice cream and she bought a new tube and a mending kit for the bicycle.’

‘Well, wasn’t that a treat.’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th>流浪玛厄斯 (Chuán jiào Mǎèsí)</th>
<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th>My name is Marth, and I’m a space ship!</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year Published</strong></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Author</strong></td>
<td>Hao Jingfang</td>
<td><strong>Word Count</strong></td>
<td>984</td>
</tr>
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<td>Chinese</td>
<td><strong>Word Count</strong></td>
<td>984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Count</strong></td>
<td>1438</td>
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</table>

**Description of Source Text**

- understanding of source text
- knowledge of genre within source contexts
- situation of source text

* familiarity with the formal features of a text (language variation(s), register, dialect) (200 words max)*

The ST is an excerpt from Hao Jingfang science fiction/coming-of-age novel 流浪玛厄斯 [a spaceship called Maearth] (2011, 9-11).

The story is set 100 years from now, and the human kind is divided in two, between Mars and the Earth. The novel narrates the story of a group of young people, born on Mars, that return there after spending several years on Earth.

Hao Jingfang has a deep knowledge of astrophysics (Song 2013a, 19), but the text is not a hardcore science text: science is used to explain her thoughts about contemporary Chinese society (Song 2013b, 88).

The ST presents the following features:

- extensive use of metaphors (e.g. ‘船就像一滴银色的水’ [the ship is like a drop of silvery water]; ‘船就像金属制成的大象’ [the ships were like elephants made of metal]);
- frequent use (27 occurrences) of the word ‘船’ [ship];
- science-related elements (e.g. ‘人靠离心力 行走，金属立柱是向心的辐辏’ [people walk thanks to centrifugal force, and metal columns are centripetal spokes]).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>The TT will be published by an American publishing house that only publishes children literature. My TA will consist of middle grade/early young adult readers, aged 12-13. For my translation, I will focus on the coming-of-age aspects of the text, rather than on the scientific/philosophical/social ones. In order to make it enjoyable for such a young audience, I will make the spaceship the main character of the whole story. I will accomplish this goal by: - shifting the narration from the third person to the first person, from the point of view of the spaceship itself, to balance out the scientific and social references; - preserving the metaphors; - translating occurrences like ‘船不知道’ [the ship does not know] with sentences like ‘I couldn’t remember, but I know because I heard’; - translating, for the same reason, occurrences like ‘提起的’ [nobody talks about] with ‘very few talk about’; - translating the name of the ship with ‘Marth’, reproducing the Chinese: the original 玛厄斯 (Maesi) is a combination of the Chinese phonetic version of the words Mars and Earth, because the ship is the only link between the two planets.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reflection</td>
<td>I read my translation a few weeks after finishing it, and realized that, although the use of the first person, from the point of view of the spaceship was intended to balance the science-related and social elements of the ST, the final effect might actually be alienating, for a young audience. In fact, it can be argued that both the philosophical embedding and the writing style of the TT suggest that the text is intended for an older audience (17-18), while the narration made in the first person, from the point of view of the spaceship, looks like it is intended for a very young readership (8-10). I submitted the TT to a group of four English-speaking teenagers, aged 13-15, and they were all able to go through the text while enjoying the presence of the spaceship as a character itself. Perhaps an older audience would find the translation more compelling.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
船在深空中摆荡，如黑暗中的一滴水，缓缓流入弧形的枢纽。船很旧了，散发黯淡的银光，仿佛一枚被时间陪伴的徽章，留着纹理，模糊了峥嵘。船在黑暗中显得微小，在真空里显得孤单。船和太阳、火星连成一条线，太阳在远端，火星在近前，船走在中间，航路笔直，就像一柄剑，剑刃消隐。黑暗在四面八方包围着，船就像一滴银色的水，微弱地发光。

船很孤独。它在寂静中一点点靠岸，孤独地靠岸。

船叫玛厄斯，是火星与地球之间唯一的联络。

在船诞生之前，这条航线曾经来往喧嚣。船没有见过，那是它前生的记忆。它并不知道，它所在的位置曾被运输船占据，往来穿梭，如河水奔涌，在尘沙里降落。那是二十一世纪后期，人们终于突破了重力、大气层和心理的三重防线，怀着从忐忑不安到得意昂扬的兴奋，马不停蹄地将各种物资运向遥远的梦想星球。竞争从近地太空延伸至火星表面，来自不同国度的士官穿着不同颜色的制服，在不同的开发计划中完成不同的国家任务。那时的运输船很笨重，灰绿色的铁皮包裹着，就像金属制成的大象，步伐缓慢而步调坚韧，一艘接一艘到达，在腾起的赤黄色沙尘中敞开舱门，倾倒机械、卸载食物、送出满舱激情的头脑。
and excitement, they started to transport all kinds of materials to the distant planet of their dreams. Competition extended from the Earth’s orbit to the surface of Mars, where officers from different countries, who wore uniforms of different colors, and spoke different languages, completed different national tasks in different development plans. At that time, the transport ships were heavy and wrapped in thick gray-green iron covers, like elephants made of metal. They moved in a slow but steady pace, arriving one after another, opening their hatches on the red-yellow dusty surface of Mars, unloading machinery, food, and minds full of passion.

And I also heard that, seventy years before my creation, government transports were gradually replaced by private commercial development ships. After thirty years of building the Mars base, the businessmen’s tentacles, just like Jack’s pods, rose inch by inch to reach the sky, and all the Jacks were finally able to climb up, ready to explore this dusty and sandy land, with bills and step-by-step plans. At first, the business focused on physical goods, with an alliance between businessmen and politicians that connected the two planets, acquiring the rights to operate land on Mars, to trade resources, to develop products from space. Then the business began to shift to knowledge itself, the same historical transformation that took place on the Earth, except that the process of two hundred years was compressed into two decades, and intangible
而成，孤身面对星海，在两颗星球间往来，在曾经的络绎商道和炮火征途中往来，独自往来。

船走得平静，走得无声无息。夜空中不再有交错的行者。它像一颗孤独的银色水滴，穿过距离，穿过真空，穿过看不见的冰凉壁垒，穿过两个世界无人提起的层层往昔。

船已出生三十年，磨损的外壳刻着时光的痕迹。

船的内部是一座迷宫。除了船长，没人弄得清它真正的结构。

船很大，楼梯左右穿梭，房间林立，走廊盘曲错杂。船内有许多间仓储大厅，像一座又一座颓唐的宫殿，气势恢宏，器物堆积，廊柱环绕，角落里写满无人问津。走廊是宫殿间细长的通道，串起点室和宴厅，起伏交错，如同错综复杂的情节，来回穿梭。船不分上下，地板是巨大滚筒的侧壁，人靠离心力行走，金属立柱是向心的辐辏。船很古旧，立柱雕刻，地板印花，墙上挂着老式的镜子，天花板有绘画。

这是船向时间的致敬，是纪念。纪念曾经有过一个时代，人类与人类还不曾分离。

42 assets began to dominate the deals. The traders, then, started picking the
43 brains of scientists, until virtual barriers between bases were created.
44 Back then, the ships that surfed the space were filled with magnificent
45 spinning restaurants, that hosted parties and talk of contracts, and that
46 tried to replicate the rush of the Earth.
47 I somehow know that, forty years before I was born, fighting airships
48 began to appear on this channel. For various reasons, the war for Martian
49 Independence broke out, and the explorers and engineers of the various
50 bases formed an alliance to launch a joint resistance to the ruler from the
51 Earth, using used astronautic and exploration technology to fight against
52 money and political power. The warships were set up on the channel,
53 linked like a chain, to resist invasion, strong and magnificent, swelling and
54 silently retreating as the tide. Small, swift airships, coming from far away,
55 crossed the stars powered by the rage of betrayal, both clam and wild,
56 dropping bombs and letting the bloody flowers bloom silently in the dust.
57 I could not remember any of this, I only know because I heard talking
58 about it. In fact, by the year I was born, the war had been over for ten
59 years, and everything had been gone for a whole decade. The night sky
60 went back to silence, and the busy route was now empty. I was born in
61 darkness, the same darkness that had already washed everything away. I
62 was created by assembling the dissipated metal fragments, and I was
facing the sea of stars, alone, moving between two planets, traveling on
the trade route of commerce and war.
I move calmly and soundlessly. There are no more staggering walkers in
the night sky. I’m a lonely silver drop of water, sailing through the
distance, through the space, through invisible barriers, through the layers
of the past that very few talk about, in the two worlds.
I’ve been born for thirty years, and on my worn shell you can see the
traces of time.
My interior is a maze. No one but the captain can figure out my actual
structure.
I’m a huge ship, with staircases weaving from side to side, and with rooms
and corridors that twist and turn. I’m full of storage departments, that
look like one decadent palace after another, where you can find piled up
artifacts, surrounded by corridors and columns, with corners full of words
none cares about anymore. The corridors are long, thin passageways that
connect those palaces with rooms and banquet halls with an intertwined
structure, that goes back and forth like an intricate plot. The floor is the
sidewall of a giant cylindrical hull, and people are able to walk thanks to
centrifugal force, with the metal columns being the centripetal spokes.
My interior is also full of period features, like carved pillars, printed floors,
old-fashioned mirrors on the walls and paintings on the ceiling. Let’s just
say this is my way of paying respect to time, a remembrance that there was a time when mankind was not yet separated from itself.
**Source Text**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Bomba o non bomba</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year Published</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Antonello Venditti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Italian</td>
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<td>Word Count</td>
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**Description of Source Text**

- **understanding of source text**
- **knowledge of genre within source contexts**
- **situation of source text**
- **familiarity with the formal features of a text (language variation(s), register, dialect)**

200 words max

*Bomba o non bomba* is a pop song from Italian songwriter Antonello Venditti (1978). It narrates the journey of Venditti and his friend Francesco De Gregori, another fairly famous Italian songwriter, who are trying to get from Bologna to Rome, despite the bombs going off throughout Italy (70-80, 2019). The song is set during the years of intense political terrorism that took place in Italy during the 1970s (Pirazzoli 2015, 1-2).

The text presents the following features:

- a shift from the third to the first person: l. 1 ‘Partirono’ [they left], and l. 6 ‘arriveremo a Roma’ [We are going to get to Rome];
- specific references to Italian culture (e.g. ‘piadina’ [wrap] - a traditional food from Bologna) and to Italian locations (e.g. Sasso Marconi, Roncobilaccio, Orvieto, etc...);
- Venditti’s idiosyncrasies, like the *topos* of the singers physically carrying an actual piano, instead of an electric one, with them (see, e.g., Venditti 1984);
- a meter and a rhyme scheme that is not regular or precise (5 rhymes in total);
- lines that often have more words than fit the music (e.g. l. 19 contains 20 syllables);
- anaphora of the ‘a...’ (‘A Sasso Marconi’, ‘A Roncobilaccio’, etc...).
**Strategy**
- Identification of translation problems
- Knowledge of genre within target context and situation of target text
- Justification of translation production of genre for target context (200 words max)

An English record company has commissioned the translation of old international songs that talk about political/historical events. These will be sung by young English singers. My TA will be made up of the company’s usual clients: English pop music listeners aged 16-25 on average (AskWonder 2020). I will not focus too much on the historical and cultural references, but more on the general flow and the poetic aspects of the song.

I will render the translation singable by:
- translating the lyrics and then adapting them to the music, by paraphrasing and deleting elements (Franzon 2008, 386): e.g. ‘un pianoforte, una chitarra’ [a piano, a guitar] -> ‘their instruments’, ‘un fazzoletto al collo’ [a cravat] -> ‘a classy handkerchief’;

I will adapt the TT keeping the poetic devices of the ST by:
- maintaining the shift from the third to the first person;
- inserting as many rhymes as possible (3 in total): e.g. ‘handkerchief’/’police’, ‘someone’/’sun’, ‘hands’/’instruments’;
- when rhyming is not possible, I will compensate by placing forced rhymes, assonances, or just similar sounds in other parts of the song (e.g. ‘face’/’place’; ‘speech’/’be it’);
- keeping the anaphora in English with ‘in…’ (‘In Sasso Marconi’, ‘In Roncobilaccio’, etc...).

**Critical Reflection**
- Textual analysis (200 words max)

I asked four English-speaking music students to sing the English version of the song, in order to verify whether my translation did actually sing naturally in English, and they all confirmed they were able to sing it. They find particularly useful the repetition of the anaphora and the fact that the chorus repeats itself almost in the same way after every verse. But, while they had no problems getting the general meaning of the song, like the fact that it narrates the songwriter’s journey, they were not able to identify the specific references I left in my translation (e.g. the fact that ‘Porta Pia’ refers to an historic event, the conquest of Rome from the Kingdom of Italy in 1870 [Battaglia 2015, 1-3]). They also found difficult to pronounce the names of the cities that, apart from Rome and Florence, were mostly left in Italian.
In general, it can be argued that, while the poetic devices and the general rhythm of the song helped making it singable, there were other issues, like the pronunciation of certain words, that were not taken into consideration, but that play a role just as important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works Cited</th>
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<td>Source Text</td>
<td>Target Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bomba o non bomba</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bomb, or no bomb</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partirono in due ed erano abbastanza</td>
<td>1 They left, they were two, and they had enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un pianoforte, una chitarra e molta fantasia</td>
<td>2 They had their instruments, and their imagination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E fu a Bologna che scoppiò la prima bomba</td>
<td>3 In Bologna, then, the first bomb went off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tra una festa e una piadina di periferia</td>
<td>4 While they were partying and eating in the suburbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E bomba o non bomba noi arriveremo a Roma</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malgrado voi</td>
<td>6 And bomb, or no bomb, we are going to get to Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Sasso Marconi incontrammo una ragazza</td>
<td>7 In spite of you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Che viveva sdraiata sull’orlo di una piazza</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noi le dicemmo “Vieni, dolce sarà la strada”</td>
<td>9 In Sasso Marconi we ran into someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lei sfogliò il fiore e poi ci disse “No”</td>
<td>10 She lived by a square, and slept under the sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma bomba o non bomba noi arriveremo a Roma</td>
<td>11 We told her “Come with us, the road will be so nice”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malgrado voi</td>
<td>12 She plucked a flower, and then just said “No”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Roncobilaccio ci viene incontro un vecchio</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo sguardo profondo e un fazzoletto al collo</td>
<td>14 But bomb, or no bomb, we are going to get to Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 In spite of you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 In Roncobilaccio we were met by an old guy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 With a deep gaze and a classy handkerchief</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ci disse “Ragazzi in campana, qui non vi lasceranno andare
Hanno chiamato la polizia a cavallo”

Ma bomba o non bomba noi arriveremo a Roma
Malgrado voi

A Firenze dormimmo da un intellettuale
La faccia giusta e tutto quanto il resto
Ci disse “No, compagni (amici), io disapprovo il passo
Manca l’analisi e poi non c’ho l’elmetto”

Ma bomba o non bomba noi arriveremo a Roma
Malgrado te

A Orvieto poi ci fu l’apoteosi
Il sindaco, la banda e le bandiere in mano
Ci dissero “L’autostrada è bloccata e non vi lasceranno passare
Ma sia ben chiaro che noi, noi siamo tutti con voi”

E bomba o non bomba voi arriverete a Roma
Malgrado noi

He told us “Boys, watch out, they won’t let you go,
They even called the Mounted police”

But bomb or no bomb, we are going to get to Rome
In spite of you
In Florence we were hosted by an intellectual man
With the right face and everything in place
He told us “No, comrades (friends), I can’t come with you
There is no analysis and I don’t have a helmet”

But bomb or no bomb, we are going to get to Rome
In spite of you
In Orvieto, then, there was the apotheosis
Everyone came by, even the mayor and the band
They told us “The motorway is blocked and they won’t let you pass
But it should be clear that we’re all on your side”

And bomb or no bomb, you are going to get to Rome
In spite of us
In spite of us
Parlamentammo a lungo e poi ci fu un discorso
Il capitano disse “Va bene, così sia”
E la fanfara poi intonò le prime note
E ci trovammo proprio in faccia a Porta Pia

E bomba o non bomba noi arriveremo a Roma
Malgrado voi

La gente ci amava e questo è l’importante
Regalammo cioccolata e sigarette vere
Bevemmo poi del vino rosso nelle mani unite
E finalmente ci fecero suonare

E bomba su bomba noi siamo arrivati a Roma
Insieme a voi

42 We talked for hours, and then there was a speech
43 The captain said, “Okay, so be it”
44 The fanfare struck up the first notes
45 And we found ourselves right in front of Porta Pia
46
47 And bomb or no bomb, we are going to get to Rome
48 In spite of you
49
50 Everybody loved us, and that’s all that mattered
51 We gave away chocolate and real cigarettes
52 We then drank red wine straight from our hands
53 And we could finally play our instruments
54
55 And bomb after bomb, we managed to get to Rome
56 Together with you
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Target Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year Published</strong></td>
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<tr>
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**Description of Source Text**
- understanding of source text
- knowledge of genre within source contexts
- situation of source text
- familiarity with the formal features of a text (language variation(s), register, dialect) (200 words max)

後游 [traveling back somewhere] is a poem from Classical Chinese poet, Du Fu.

The ST is a lùshi, the regulated verse, a Classical Chinese poetic form for which Du Fu was famous (Watson 2002, xxi-xxii). The main characteristic of the poem is its realism, because it describes a natural setting to express his life experiences and feelings. A parallelism could be made between this poem and William Wordsworth’s work (Wyman 1949, 517).

The ST, written in traditional characters, presents the following features:
- precise structure of the poetic form, of five characters per eight lines;
- verbal parallelism between second and third couplets, typical of the poetic form (Hinton 1990, xii), where each word in the first line of the couplet must be paired in the second line with a word from the same semantic area, and the syntactic constructions must mirror one another: e.g. l. 3-4, where the structure is noun+noun+adverb+nominal predicate/noun+noun+adverb+verbal predicate;
- ambiguity of the sentences, due to the absence of the grammar structures: e.g. l. 5 野潤煙光薄 [the field, moist, smokey, shines, thin];
- highly crafted way of expressing, derivative of the oral tradition.
### Strategy
- **identification of translation problems**
- **knowledge of genre within target context and situation of target text**
- **justification of translation production of genre for target context**

#### (200 words max)

The translation will be published in an academic Chinese literature textbook, and the TA is formed of Chinese literature scholars that have a basic knowledge of Chinese literature and language. The translations are intended to help them understand the meaning and the structure of classical Chinese poetry.

I will make two different versions of this translation: one meant to understand what is happening the poem (TT1), and another in which I will try to mimic the Chinese classical structure (TT2).

**TT1** will be a simple paraphrase, and I will translate by:
- focusing on the meaning;
- not following any structure.

**TT2** will be translated by:
- keeping the five words per eight lines structure, trying to manage the English use of pronouns, articles and link words (e.g. ‘舍此復何之’ [what else is there to do, here?] -> ‘What better place to rest?’);
- maintaining the syntactic mirroring constructions of the second and the third couplets (e.g. l. 3-4, where the structure is noun+link word+noun+verb+adjective/noun+link word+noun+verb+direct object);
- keeping the ambiguity of the sentences (e.g. ‘橋伶再渡時’ [the bridge is crossed again, it remembers] -> ‘Crossing the bridge, he recalls’).

### Critical Reflection
- **textual analysis**

#### (200 words max)

I tried comparing the final results of the two translations between each other, but they were fairly different, so I decided to look for existing translations. Since I could not find any translation made following the structure of the *lùshi*, I compared both my translations of the poem with an existing one, produced by Burton Watson (2002, 93), and it was interesting to look at the three translations next to one other.

In fact, it may be argued that, since Watson’s translation did not follow the structure of the ST, at first glance it appeared to be more similar to my TT1, both in length and in structure of every line. But, while TT1 did not focus on the poetic elements of the ST, both TT2 and Watson’s translation took into consideration that aspect. The ST leaves a lot to the
imagination of the translator/reader, but both translations managed to maintain the poetic atmosphere of the ST, keeping the general meaning and the ambiguity of each line.

Eventually, I was able to notice that, the only characteristic that all the three translations have in common, is the fact that, despite their strategy, none of them translated word-for-word.

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<th>Works Cited</th>
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<tr>
<td>寺憶曾游处</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>橋伶再渡時</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>江山如有待</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>花柳更无私</td>
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<tr>
<td>野潤煙光薄</td>
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<tr>
<td>沙暄日色遲</td>
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<td>客愁全為滅</td>
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### Description of Source Text
- **understanding of source text**
- **knowledge of genre within source contexts**
- **situation of source text**
- **familiarity with the formal features of a text (language variation(s), register, dialect)**

The ST is an excerpt from the script of the movie *Sideways* (2003), written by Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor. The movie narrates the story of two friends, Miles and Jack, that embark on a road trip in the wine region in California. The text does not conform exactly to the finished movie, but it comes from the original script.

The text presents the following features:
- indications typical of the script for a movie (e.g. ‘INSIDE THE CAR’, ‘INT./EXT. SAAB – DAY’, etc...);
- use of crude and vulgar language (e.g. ‘Where the fuck were you man?’, ‘They’ll think you’re a moron’, etc...);
- uncommon terms referring specifically to wine, mostly known by wine connoisseur (Robinson and Hardin 2015): e.g. l. 115, ‘this juice is free run’;
- inappropriate use of words: e.g. l. 98, ‘tasty’ referred to a wine, while it usually refers to solid food (Merriam-Webster.com);
- 1 reference to a specific Champagne: l. 68, ‘That’s a 1992 Byron’;
- comic effect of the linguistic differences between the two characters: erudite and articulate Miles (e.g. ‘Pinot’s a very thin-skinned grape and doesn’t like heat or humidity’), and ignorant and crude Jack (e.g. ‘Pinot Noir? How come it’s white?’).
| Strategy | My translation will be an adaptation of the movie script, intended for a performance during the Italian wine festival “DiVino Etrusco” [Etruscan divine], that takes place in Tarquinia (near Rome) in August. The festival hosts cultural events, like book readings, concerts, and representations. Since the wine tastings are reserved to the adults, but the access to the festival is free, children may attend the various events. I will therefore edulcorate the swearing and cursing, and eliminate the references to drunkenness and hangovers (e.g. ‘You’re fucking hungover’ -> ‘Ti sei svegliato da poco’ [you just woke up]).
I will transform the movie script into a play script by:
- removing the indications typical of the movie scripts, and adding indications about the surroundings in the dialogues (e.g. ‘The boys now pass vineyards of immaculate grapevines’ -> ‘Guarda questi vigneti, non sono bellissimi?’ [look at these vineyards, aren’t they gorgeous?]);
- adding indications about sounds and lighting;
- removing references to things that happened in the movie before the scene I selected, which is where the play will start (eg. l. 153-158 in the ST);
- mimicking the colloquial and informal language of the ST (e.g. ‘Ehi, ma dov’eri?’ [hey, where were you?]). |
| Critical Reflection | After submitting the TT to a group of four Italian college students of theatre, I was able to reflect on one main comment they all made about my translation. In fact, one of the elements that make the movie funny, is the presence of the swearing, and of the crude and vulgar language. By edulcorating the text, eliminating the curses and the references to the heavy drinking of the characters, in the end in the TT they resulted less entertaining than they are in the ST. The character of Miles in particular, whose use of technical terms is comical in English, in Italian results unmarked, and thus less funny. Moreover, although most of what Miles says is arguably not meant to be understood by people who are not wine experts, the reference to the specific 1992 Byron Champagne (l. 68 in the ST), which I left untranslated in the TT (l. 71 in the TT), to the sample readers appeared fairly unclear and confusing. It therefore occurred to me that, perhaps, a reference to a |
| (200 words max) | |
| (200 words max) | |
| (200 words max) | |
Champagne that was still rare, but more familiar to my TA, like a Cristal or a Dom Perignon (vinatis.it), might have been a valid solution.

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<tr>
<td>• use of sources and reference material</td>
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</table>


INSIDE THE CAR --

JACK
Where the fuck were you, man? I was dying in there. We were supposed to be a hundred miles away by now.

MILES
I can't help the traffic.

JACK
Come on. You're fucking hungover.

MILES
Okay, there was a tasting last night. But I wanted to get us some stuff for the ride up. Check out the box.

Jack turns around, and starts rooting around in a CARDBOARD WINE BOX.

San Diego, 2003. MILES, un uomo di circa quarant’anni, quasi completamente pelato e in sovrappeso, è seduto su una sedia e stringe in mano un volante. C’è un’altra sedia vuota accanto a lui e due sedie dietro, sulle quali è appoggiata una cassa di vino. La disposizione delle sedie, e la presenza del volante, ricordano la struttura di una macchina. MILES è venuto a prendere il suo amico JACK per andare insieme in Napa Valley per passare qualche giorno insieme, in pratica un addio al celibato a base di degustazioni e tour di vinerie.

MILES suona il clacson, avvisando JACK del suo arrivo.

Entra JACK, un uomo più o meno della stessa età, ma con molti capelli e parecchio più in forma,uscendo dal portone di casa della sua futura sposa, Cristina (rumore di un portone pesante che si chiude).

JACK: Ehi, ma dov’eri? Ci stavo per morire, lì dentro. (fingendo di entrare in macchina, sedendosi e mimando il gesto di chiudere lo sportello) A
MILES
Why did you tell them my book was being published?

JACK
You said you had it all lined up.

MILES
No, I didn't. What I said was that my agent had heard there was some interest at Conundrum...

JACK
Yeah, Conundrum.

MILES
...and that one of the editors was passing it up to a senior editor. She was supposed to hear something this week, but now it's next week, and... It's always like this. It's always a fucking waiting game. I've been through it too many times already.

MILES: Non posso mica controllare il traffico.

JACK: Ma smettila. Lo vedo che ti sei svegliato da poco.

MILES: E va bene. Ieri sera ho fatto tardi perché sono andato a una degustazione, ma solo per prendere qualcosa per il viaggio. (indicando la scatola) Guarda dentro la scatola.

JACK si volta verso il sedile posteriore, dove un occhio di bue illumina la scatola di cartone contenente le bottiglie di vino, e inizia a rovistarcì dentro.

MILES mette in moto (rumore del motore che si avvia) e i due partono.

MILES: Perché stai dicendo a tutti che mi pubblicano il libro?

JACK: Perché tu mi hai detto che in pratica era cosa fatta.

MILES: No, non è vero. Ti ho detto che, secondo la mia agente, la casa editrice Conundrum era interessata...
JACK
I don't know. Senior editor? Sounds like you're in to me.

MILES
It's a long shot, all right? And Conundrum is just a small specialty press anyway. I'm not getting my hopes up. I've stopped caring. That's it. I've stopped caring.

Jack sits back in his seat holding up a bottle of CHAMPAGNE and TWO GLASSES.

JACK
But I know it's going to happen this time. I can feel it. This is the one. I'm proud of you, man. You're the smartest guy I know.

Jack now begins to remove the foil from the champagne bottle.

MILES
Don't open that now. It's warm.

JACK: Beh, non saprei. Editor capo? Mi sembra una cosa grossa.

MILES: È molto improbabile che lo pubblichino, va bene? E comunque, la Conundrum è solo una piccola casa editrice di nicchia. Non mi faccio troppe illusioni. Ormai non mi importa più. Ecco, non mi importa più.

JACK torna a sedersi al suo posto con in mano una bottiglia di Champagne e due bicchieri.

JACK: Questa volta andrà bene, me lo sento. È la volta giusta. E io sono comunque fiero di te, amico mio. Sei la persona più intelligente che io conosca.
JACK
Come on, we're celebrating. I say we pop it.

MILES
That's a 1992 Byron. It's really rare. Don't open it now. I've been saving it!

Jack untwists the wire. Instantly the cork pops off, and a fountain of champagne erupts.

MILES
For Christ's Sake, Jack! You just wasted like half of it!

Jack begins pouring two glasses.

JACK
Shut up.
(handing Miles a glass)
Here's to a great week.

MILES
(coming around)
Yes. Absolutely. Despite your crass
behavior, I'm really glad we're finally getting this time together.

   JACK
   Yeah.

   MILES
   You know how long I've been begging to take you on the wine tour. I was beginning to think it was never going to happen.

   They clink and drink.

     JACK
     Oh, that's tasty.

     MILES
     100% Pinot Noir. Single vineyard. They don't even make it anymore.

     JACK
     Pinot Noir? How come it's white? Doesn't noir mean dark?

     MILES: (alla fine accettando l'idea di brindare) Ma sì, assolutamente. Nonostante la tua rozzezza, sono davvero felice che ci facciamo questo viaggio.

     JACK: Infatti.

     MILES: Lo sai che è da tanto tempo che volevo portarti a fare un tour delle vinerie. Iniziavo a pensare che non sarebbe mai successo.

     Sbattono insieme i bicchieri (rumore di bicchieri di vetro che sbattono l'uno contro l'altro) e bevono lo champagne.

     JACK: Wow, è davvero saporito.

     MILES: 100% Pinot Noir. Ed è tutta uva proveniente dallo stesso vigneto. Ormai non lo fanno neanche più.

     JACK: Pinot Noir? Ma è bianco. Noir non vuol dire nero?

     MILES: Oh, Gesù. Ti prego, non fare queste domande stupide, quando saremo nella regione vinicola. O penseranno che sei uno scemo.
Jesus. Don't ask questions like that up in the wine country. They'll think you're a moron.

JACK
Just tell me.

MILES
Color in the red wines comes from the skins. This juice is free run, so there's no skin contact in the fermentation, ergo no color.

JACK (not really listening)
Sure is tasty.

INT./EXT. SAAB - DAY

The boys now pass vineyards of immaculate grapevines.

MILES
Jesus, what a day! Isn't it gorgeous? And the ocean's just right over that ridge. See, the reason this region's
great for Pinot is that the cold air off the Pacific flows in at night through these transverse valleys and cools down the berries. Pinot's a very thin-skinned grape and doesn't like heat or humidity.

Jack looks at Miles, admiring his friend's vast learning and articulateness.

The Saab now pulls off the road and makes its way down a long gravel DRIVEWAY.

JACK
Hey, Miles. I really hope your novel sells.

MILES
Thanks, Jack. So do I.
(noticing)
Here we are.

INT. SANFORD TASTING ROOM - DAY

129
JACK: Ehi, Miles. Spero davvero che il tuo libro sia un successo.
130
131
SCENA 2
132
Un occhio di bue illumina un bacone di legno in fondo al palco. MILES e JACK sono seduti al bancone di una sala degustazione della vineria Sanford, con due bicchieri ancora vuoti davanti a loro. Sembrano aspettare qualcuno.
133
134
Entra CHRIS BURROUGHS, l’addetto al versamento del vino. Ha la coda di cavallo e indossa un cappello da cowboy. Si avvicina a MILES e JACK.
135
136
Saluta MILES, perché chiaramente già lo conosce.
137
138
CHRIS: (indicando JACK) Allora, è lui il condannato a morte?
139
140
CHRIS e JACK si stringono la mano.
141
142
JACK: Come va?
Miles is at the bar, TWO GLASSES in front of him. Jack walks in and bellies up next to him.

**JACK**
(proudly)
Baked with a butter-lime glaze.

**MILES**
Now we're talking.

CHRIS BURROUGHS, a POURER in a cowboy hat and ponytail, comes over.

**CHRIS**
This is the condemned man?

**MILES**
Here he is. Jack, Chris. Chris, Jack.

Chris and Jack shake hands.

**JACK**
How you doing?

**CHRIS**
You guys want to start with the Vin
Gris?

JACK
Sounds good.

TWO GLASSES are filled with small amounts of PINOT NOIR VIN GRIS.

JACK
This is rose, right?

MILES
Good, yeah, it is a rose. Only this one is rather atypically made from 100% Pinot Noir.

JACK
Pinot noir? Not again! (joking, to Chris)
You know, not all Pinots are noir.

They laugh.

Miles swirls his glass in tight circles on the bar, then lifts it to smell. Jack clumsily imitates Miles, perhaps even spilling some wine in the process.
MILES
Let me show you.

We see details of what Miles now describes.

MILES
First take your glass and examine the wine against the light. You're looking at color and clarity.

JACK
What color is it supposed to be?

MILES

JACK
Huh.

MILES
Now tip it. What you're doing here is checking for color density as it thins toward the rim. Tells you how
old it is, among other things, usually more important with reds. This is a very young wine, so it's going to retain its color pretty solidly. Now stick your nose in it.

Jack waves the glass under his nose as if it were a perfume bottle.

**MILES**
Don't be shy. Get your nose in there.

Jack now buries his nose in the glass.

**MILES**
What do you smell?

**JACK**
I don't know. Wine? Fermented grapes?

Miles smells.

**MILES**
There's not much there yet, but you can still find...

(more sniffs)
...a little citrus... maybe some strawberry... passion fruit... and there's even a hint of like asparagus... or like a nutty Edam cheese.

Jack smells again and begins to brighten.

JACK
Huh. Maybe a little strawberry. Yeah, strawberry. I'm not so sure about the cheese.

MILES
Now set your glass down and get some air into it.

Miles expertly swirls the wine. Jack follows suit.

MILES
Oxygenating it opens it up, unlocks the aroma and the flavors. Very important. Now we smell again.

They do so. Jack smiles.
MILES
That's what you do with every one.

JACK
When do we get to drink it?

MILES
Now.

Jack gulps his wine down in one shot. Miles chews his before swallowing.

JACK
How would you rate this one?

MILES
Usually they start you on the wines with learning disabilities, but this one's pretty damn good.
(to Chris)
This is the new one, right, Chris?

CHRIS
Released it about two months ago.

MILES
Nice job.

CHRIS
We like it.

JACK
(to Miles)
You know, you could work in a wine store.

MILES
Yeah, that would be a good move.

Now Miles notices something about Jack.

MILES
Are you chewing gum?

JACK
Want some?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Target Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
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<td>A reunion of Comrades in arms</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year Published</strong></td>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
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<td>English</td>
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<td>Mo Yan</td>
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<td><strong>Description of Source Text</strong></td>
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</table>
| Chinese | The ST is an excerpt from chapter 17 of Mo Yan’s 战友重逢 [a reunion of Comrades-in-arms]. The novel, written in first person, narrates the story of the reunion of the protagonist, a dead army major, with the ghost of his comrade-in-arms, also a childhood friend, who died in the border war between China and Vietnam in early 1979 (Zhang 2005, 860). The story is set in 1992, to give the author some distance to reflect on the historical period (Chen 2002, 242). In this particular passage, we see the protagonist’s father reaching up to his grave, determined to bring his body back home. The text presents the following features:
- deliberately dry language, to reproduce bare aspects of raw life;
- scarce presence of adverbs (9 in total);
- haunted and unreal atmosphere (e.g. ‘他捏亮手电，照着我的墓碑’ [he moved the flashlight and shined it on my grave]);
- presence of spectral voices (Chen 2002, 244) that belong to the deads (e.g. ‘团长说：阻挠他的工作！’ [the commander said: obstruct his work!]);
- use of descriptive language. |
### Strategy
- Identification of translation problems
- Knowledge of genre within target context and situation of target text
- Justification of translation
  - Production of genre for target context
  - (200 words max)

Since Mo Yan is one of the most famous Chinese writers (Der-Wei and Berry 2000, 487), most of his writing has already been translated. This TT will be published by an American publishing house, in an editorial series called “Ghosts from the Far East”, that publishes (and adapts to its readership) ghost stories from Eastern Nations. My TA will therefore be an American readership, aged 20-40, interested in Chinese literature and ghost stories.

In order to adapt the TT to the TA, I will:
- reproduce the Chinese dryness of the language, using as less adverbs as possible (5 in total);
- focus on the “ghostly” aspects of the story, rather than to its poetic and socio-cultural relevance;
- narrate in third person, to recreate the spectral voice in English;
- add, at the very beginning, the phrase ‘It was a stormy night’, that recalls the common incipit of the spooky stories told in American-English (Mumford 2015);
- reproduce the descriptions of the ST (e.g. ‘那些章鱼腿一样的腥冷植物根须’ [fishy and cold roots, like octopus legs] -> ‘the fishy and cold roots that looked like an octopus’ legs’).

### Critical Reflection
- Textual analysis
  - (200 words max)

The incipit of the TT, along with the sudden appearance of the ghosts of the regiment commander and of Yinghao’s comrades in arm, arguably creates an appropriate setting for a spooky/ghost story. Since the English translation lacks of all the political and social elements of the ST, there is no reference whatsoever to the culture of Chinese society of the 1990s (Chen 2002, 242).

Also, because I switched from a first person narrative to a third person one, I was forced to substitute all the occurrences of the pronoun 我 [I/me], with the name of the main character, Yinghao. Therefore, in a text of 738 words, the name of the main character is repeated 15 times. It did not occur to me while translating but, looking at the TT a few weeks after I completed the translation, I realized that, this way, the text may result fairly funny, arguably more than the ST is. Should I translate the same text again, this time I may try to focus on the social/cultural/political aspects of the ST.
<table>
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这天夜里下大雷雨，一道道蓝色的闪电穿透混凝土障壁，照亮了那些章鱼腿一样的腥冷植物根须，雨水沿着根须，泪珠般频频下滴，把我身体周围的土地打成一些水窝窝。我用一块锋利的弹片，砍伐着那些根须，但一会儿功夫，它们又长到原先那般长，南方果然是蓬勃生长的象征。

我无法入睡，听着外边的隆隆雷声，听着雨打芭蕉，一片喧嚣，忽然想起了我爹，他老人家今夜如何安身？

后半夜时，大雨停止，山林中流水声响亮，蓝色闪电疲倦地抖动着，我透过缝隙，看到那些常青植物的水光闪烁的肥大叶片和躲藏在叶背的彩色昆虫。又一道闪电亮起，我万分惊讶地看到一个瘦弱的身影一瘸一拐地出现在墓地里。那熟悉的、从我出生起就在我耳边回响的嘎吱声又响起来了。我的装着木腿的爹来了。他捏亮手电，照着我的墓碑，摸索着我的名字，老泪纵横，与雨水混合在一起。我听到他喃喃自语：“英豪儿，爹来了，爹要把你领回故乡。”

他从背上卸下一个帆布背囊，从里边摸出了锤子、凿子、钻子，全套的石匠家什，还有一把军用短柄钢锹。
he was born. It was his father, walking on his wooden legs. He turned on
the flashlight and illuminated Yinghao’s gravestone, looking for his name,
the tears on his old faces mixed with the rain. Yinghao heard him mumble:
“Yinghao, your dad is here, and he’s going to take you back home.”

From the canvas bag he carried over his shoulder, he pulled out a full set
of stonemason’s tools: a hammer, a chisel, an awl. He also had one of
those military short-handled steel shovels.

He took three laps around Yinghao’s grave, then decided to dig into the
back of the rectangular concrete slab. It was a wise choice, Yinghao knew
that, in that point, the layer of the concrete was thinner. He squatted
down, holding the hammer in one hand and the awl in the other, and
whispered:

“My dear Yinghao, don’t be scared now.”

He pushed the awl on the concrete, lifted the hammer and hit it hard. A
crisp clang of steel shook the quiet of the cemetery and, with a few sparks,
a small hole the size of a peanut appeared in the concrete. Lightning
whirled and rolled in the sky, illuminating his face with emerald green
light. Alarmed, He looked around vigilantly, as if he was afraid to fall into
an ambush. But silence reigned all around the cemetery, like a dark sea
when the lightning fades, with strange birds and insects chirping and
fireflies dancing among the trees. Yinghao’s dad’s face was covered with
pure sweat. He swung the hammer again to strike the steel awl, and
我说：首长，同志们，我也不知道他老人家要干什么，看样子，他似乎想把我的尸骨起出来背回故乡。
团长厉声道：胡闹嘛！如果大家都让家乡的人来起骨，我们的队伍不就散了伙了吗？
我说：我确实不知道这件事，他老人家也许太思念我了……人老了，老观念难免多一些……
团长说：阻挠他的工作！
Yinghao said: “I really don’t know about, but maybe the old man misses me too much...

When people get old, they fall back to old beliefs...”

The commander said: “Stop him!”
The ST is an excerpt from Paolo Cognetti’s novel, *Le otto montagne* [the eight mountains] (2016, 196-199), more specifically the very last pages of the book. The text describes the moment in which the main character finds out that his best friend is probably dead in the mountains. The theme of grief, with which the author tries to deal by walking around the mountains, is strongly present (Invernizzi 2018, 281).

The text also presents the following features:

- presence of words (5 in total) that refer to places and events related to the mountains, more specifically to the Italian Alps (e.g. ‘slavina’ [avalanche], ‘barma’ [mountain shack], ‘vallone’ [big valley], ‘montanaro’ [man who lives in the mountain], ‘ciaspole’ [snowshoes]), and those words often do not have an equivalent in English;
- accurate and detailed description of the landscape: ‘il verde delle risaie domina i fianchi delle valli, un po’ più in alto fioriscono i boschi di rododendri’ [the green of the rice fields overlooks the sides of the valleys, while a little higher up the rhododendron woods bloom];
- dry language and poignantly spare prose (Luczkiew 2022, 192);
- references to specific Northern Italian locations (e.g. ‘Alpi Occidentali’, ‘Grenon’).
<table>
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<th>Strategy</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>identification of translation problems</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>knowledge of genre within target context and situation of target text</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>justification of translation production of genre for target context</strong></td>
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The text is going to be translated in English to be included, along with some other mountains-related books and leaflets, in a preparation package given by an American travel agency to a group going to the Italian Alps. The agency always gives these thematic gift bags to their clients, American tourist generally aged 20-40, to make sure they know something about the places they are going to and will act as responsible tourists (Paunović and Jovanović 2019, 61). To make the TT enjoyable to the TA, I will:
- translate the mountain-related words in English (e.g. ‘slavina’ [avalanche] -> ‘snowslide’; ‘montanaro’ [man who lives in the mountain] -> ‘mountains dweller’, etc...), except for the case of ‘barma’ [mountain shack], where I will keep the Italian word in italic and explain it the first time I encounter it (l. 34 ‘barma, the valley up the mountain sheltered by a rocky wall’);
- keep a colloquial register (e.g. l. 11-12 ‘too sad to think straight’);
- reproduce the dry, yet descriptive language of the ST (e.g. l. 20-21 ‘Just below it I found some ice, a thin and transparent ice that I easily broke’).

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<th>Critical Reflection</th>
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<td><strong>textual analysis</strong></td>
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One of the main peculiarities of the text is the fact the Cognetti manages to describe the landscape with very specific mountain-related terms, while describing fairly clear images (Luczkiw 2022, 193). Most of the words the author uses are not familiar even to Italian readers. By removing almost all the mountain specific words, except for ‘barma’ [mountain shack], this peculiar aspect of Cognetti’s writing is lost. The same happens with the translation in English of the geographical references, like with ‘Alpi Occidentali’ [Western Alps], which was translated with the much more generic ‘Alps’. In fact, in Italian the word ‘Alpi’ [Alps] covers a wide geographical area, that needs to be narrowed down to clearly understand the specific place a hypothetical interlocutor is referring to. And, although the choice to translate those words with words there were more common in English was driven by the necessity to make the TT as clear as possible for the TA, it can be argued that this way the text loses part of its specific features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works Cited</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognetti, Paolo. 2016. <em>Le otto montagne</em> [the eight mountains]. Torino: Einaudi</td>
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<tr>
<td>use of sources and reference material</td>
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Source Text

Le otto montagne

- Me ne vado, - dissi, per la seconda volta in poche settimane. Due volte ci avevo provato e due volte mi ero arreso.
- Sì, mi pare giusto, - disse Bruno.
- Tu dovresti scendere con me.
- Ancora?
Lo guardai. Gli era venuto in mente qualcosa che lo faceva sorridere. Disse:
- Da quanto tempo è che siamo amici?
Mi sa che sono trent’anni l’anno prossimo, - risposi.
- E non sono trent’anni che provi a farmi scendere da qui?
Poi aggiunse: - Non ti devi preoccupare per me. Questa montagna non mi ha mai fatto male.
Mi ricordo poco altro di quella mattina. Ero scosso e troppo triste per pensare con lucidità. Mi ricordo che non vedeva l’ora di lasciarmi il lago e la slavina alle spalle, ma che più tardi, nel vallone, cominciai a godermi la discesa. Ritrovai la mia traccia del giorno prima e scoprii che con le ciaspole potevo andar giù a grandi balzi anche nei tratti più ripidi, tanto la neve fresca mi teneva. Anzi: più ripido era il pendio, più potevo buttarmi e lasciarmi andare. Mi fermai solo una volta, attraversando il torrente, perché avevo pensato una cosa e volevo vedere se era vera. Scesi tra le

Target Text

The Eight Mountains

1 “I’m leaving,” I said, for the second time in just a couple of weeks. Twice
2 I had tried, and twice I had given up.
3 “Seems fair,” said Bruno.
4 “You should come down with me.”
5 “You want to do this again?”
6 I looked at him. He was thinking about something that made him smile.
7 Then he said, “How long have we been friends?”
8 “I think next year it’s going to be thirty years,” I replied.
9 “And haven’t you been trying to get me to leave for thirty years? You
don’t have to worry about me. This mountain has never hurt me.”
10 I don’t remember much about that morning. I was shocked and too sad
to think straight. I remember that I couldn’t wait to get past the lake and
the snowslide, but also that later, when I reached the valley, I began to
enjoy descent. I had found the tracks I left the day before, and found out
that with my snowshoes I could go down in great leaps even in the
steepest sections, thanks to how well the fresh snow took my weight. In
fact, the steeper the slope was, the more I could freely let myself go. I
only stopped once, to cross the creek, because I had thought of something
I wanted to check. I descended between the two snowy banks and dug
due sponde innevate e scavai nella neve con i guanti. Appena sotto trovai del ghiaccio, un ghiaccio sottile e trasparente che ruppi senza sforzo. Scoprii che quella crosta proteggeva una vena d’acqua. Non si vedeva né sentiva dal sentiero, ma era ancora il mio torrente che scorreva sotto la neve.


Un giorno di marzo Lara mi scrisse di telefonarle appena potevo. Mi disse poi a voce che Bruno non si trovava più. I suoi cugini erano andati su a vedere se stava bene, ma alla barma nessuno aveva più spalato da parecchio tempo, la casetta era scomparsa sotto la neve e anche la parete di roccia si distingueva a fatica. I cugini avevano chiamato aiuto, e una squadra di soccorso portata dall’elicottero aveva scavato fino a raggiungere il tetto. Avevano fatto un buco nelle tavole e a quel punto si aspettavano, come a volte succedeva con i vecchi montanari, di trovare Bruno nel suo letto, colto da un malore e morto congelato. Solo che in

20 into the snow with my gloves. Just below it I found some ice, a thin and transparent ice that I easily broke. I found out that the layer protected a vein of water. It couldn’t be seen or heard from the trail, but it was still my creek flowing under the snow.

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The winter of 2014 turned out to be one of the snowiest of the last half century, in the Alps. In the high-altitude ski resorts they measured three meters of snow at the end of December, six at the end of January, eight at the end of February. Reading these figures from Nepal, I could not imagine what eight meters of snow really looked like, up in the mountains. It was enough to cover the woods, and much more than it takes to bury a house.

One day in March Lara wrote and told me to call her as soon as I could.

She then told me that Bruno was nowhere to be found. His cousins had gone to the barma, the valley up the mountain sheltered by a rocky wall, to see if he was all right, but apparently no one had shoveled the snow for a long time, and the cottage had disappeared under it. Even the rock wall was barely distinguishable. The cousins had called for help, and a helicopter rescue party had dug down until they’d reached the roof. They had made a hole in the wooden boards and expected, as sometimes happened with old mountain dweller, to find Bruno in his bed, seized by a stroke and frozen to death. Only there was no one inside. And after the
casa non c’era nessuno. Né lì intorno, dopo le ultime nevicate, si vedevano tracce di passaggio. Lara mi chiese se avevo qualche idea, dato che ero l’ultimo ad averlo visto, e io dissi di guardare se in cantina si trovavano dei vecchi sci. No, non c’erano nemmeno quelli.

Il soccorso alpino cominciò a battere la zona con i cani, così per una settimana la chiamai ogni giorno per avere notizie, ma c’era troppa neve sul Grenon e con la primavera si entrava nella stagione peggiore per le slavine. In marzo le Alpi ne furono martoriate: e dopo tutti gli incidenti di quell’inverno, in cui i morti sui versanti italiani arrivarono a ventidue, a nessuno interessò più molto di un montanaro disperso in un vallone sopra a casa sua. Né a me né a Lara, a quel punto, sembrò importante insistere perché continuassero a cercare. Bruno l’avrebbero trovato col disgelo. Sarebbe spuntato in qualche canalone in piena estate, e sarebbero stati i corvi a scoprirlo per primi.

- Secondo te era quello che voleva? - mi chiese Lara al telefono.
- No, non credo, - mentii.
- Tu riuscivi a capirlo, vero? Voi due vi capivate.
- Spero di sì.
- Perché a me certe volte sembra di non averlo nemmeno conosciuto.

E allora, mi chiesi, chi l’aveva conosciuto oltre a me sulla terra? E chi mi aveva conosciuto oltre a Bruno? Se era segreto a chiunque altro, quello latest snowfalls, there weren’t traces of his footsteps anywhere around the house. Lara asked me if I had any ideas of where he could be, since I was the last one who had seen him. I told her to see if they could find a pair of old skis. No, they weren’t there.

The mountain rescue team began to search the area with dogs, so for a week I called Lara every day to get news, but there was too much snow on the Grenon. And spring was the worst season of all, because of the snowslides. In March the Alps were battered by them: and after all the accidents of that winter, during which on the Italian slopes there had been twenty-two deaths, no one cared much about a mountain dweller lost in a valley above his house. And at that point, Lara and I thought we shouldn’t insist that they kept looking. They were going to find Bruno when the snow melted. He would have shown up during the summer in some gully, and the crows would have been the firsts to find him.

“Do you think that was what he wanted?” Lara asked me on the phone.
“Non, I don’t think so,” I lied.
“You could understand him, couldn’t you? You two understood each other.”
“I hope so.”

“Because sometimes I feel I didn’t know him at all.”

Who in the world had known him, besides me? I wondered.
che di noi avevamo condiviso, che cosa ne restava adesso che uno dei due
non c’era più?
Quando quei giorni finirono la città mi divenne insopportabile, e decisi di
andare a fare un giro da solo in montagna. È una stagione splendida la
primavera in Himalaya: il verde delle risaie domina i fianchi delle valli, un
po’ più in alto fioriscono i boschi di rododendri. Ma non volevo tornare in
qualche posto conosciuto, né risalire il corso di nessun ricordo, così scelsi
una zona in cui non ero mai stato, comprii una mappa e partii. Da tanto
tempo non provavo la libertà e la gioia dell’esplorazione. Mi capitò di
lasciare il sentiero, risalire un pendio e raggiungere un crinale solo per la
curiosità di scoprire che cosa c’era di là, e di fermarmi senza averlo
previsto in un villaggio che mi piaceva, passando un pomeriggio intero tra
le pozze di un torrente. Quello era il modo di andare in montagna mio e di
Bruno. Pensai che sarebbe stato, negli anni a venire, il mio modo di
conservare il nostro segreto. Mi veniva in mente invece che c’era una casa,
su alla barma, con un buco nel tetto, e questo non le dava molto da vivere,
ma sentivo anche che lei non serviva più a niente, e ci pensavo come da
dontano.
Da mio padre avevo imparato, molto tempo dopo avere smesso di seguirlo
sui sentieri, che in certe vite esistono montagne a cui non è possibile
tornare. Che nelle vite come la mia e la sua non si può tornare alla
montagna che sta al centro di tutte le altre, e all’inizio della propria storia.

64 And who had known me, besides Bruno? If what we shared was a secret
65 hidden from everyone else, what was left of it now that one of us was
gone?
66 When those days were over, I couldn’t bear to stay in the city, so I decided
to take a trip to the mountains. The Himalayan spring is a splendid season:
the green of the rice fields overlooks the sides of the valleys, while a little
higher up the rhododendron woods bloom. But I didn’t want to go back
to some familiar place, or retrace the course of a memory, so I picked a
random area I’d never been to, bought a map, and started walking. It had
been a long time since I experienced the freedom and joy of exploration.
Sometimes I just left the path, went up a hill and reached a ridge just out
of curiosity, to find out what lay on the other side. Or I stopped in a village
I liked, even if I hadn’t planned to, and spent the afternoon in the pools
of a mountain stream. That was our way to go to the mountains, Bruno’s
and mine. I thought that, in the years to come, this would be my way of
keeping our secret. Instead, I only thought, like from a distance, that there
was a cottage, up at the barma, with a hole in the roof. Because of that,
it wouldn’t last very long, but I also felt that it was no longer of any use.
I had learned from my father, long after I had stopped following him up
the mountain paths, that in some lives there are mountains to which it is
not possible to return. People like him and me can’t go back to the
mountain that is at the center of all the others, the beginning of our story.
E che non resta che vagare per le otto montagne per chi, come noi, sulla prima e più alta ha perso un amico.

For people like us, there is nothing left but to wander around the eight mountains, because we lost a friend on the first and highest one.