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THE WRITER AS TRANSLATOR:

The Einaudi series

Scrittori tradotti da scrittori

by Simona Rossi

A dissertation submitted to the University of Dublin,
Trinity College, in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2015

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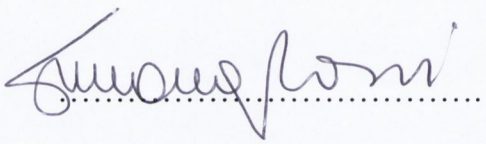

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SUMMARY

This study investigates translation by creative writers as a separate instance from translation by 'ordinary' (professional) translators. The research takes its cue from the Einaudi series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'. The obvious questions raised by that most unusual publishing project – 'Do translators translate differently?', 'Do they translate better?', 'In what way?', 'Why?', etc. – are central to the study. In order to frame these general questions in a real-world context, the research is structured in such a way that the theoretical debate relates as far as possible to an analysis of translations by writers. The thesis therefore is divided into two parts.

The first part starts with questioning the theoretical assumptions underpinning the 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' project: the close relationship between the practice of writing and the practice of translating, and the overlap or fusion between the professions of writer and translator. Are translating and writing similar practices? Can translation be considered a form of original writing, and vice versa? What role does 'affinity' play in the commissioning and production of translation? This section provides a historical account of the STS series within the context of twentieth century translation in Italy.

The second part of the study roots the theoretical and historical discussion within the detailed analysis of actual translations by writers. Three translations are presented, by Giorgio Manganelli's translation of Edgar Allan Poe's tale 'The Fall of the House of Usher', Cesare Pavese's translation of Herman Melville's novella *Benito Cereno* and Lalla Romano's translation of Gustave Flaubert's short story 'Un cœur simple'. These authorial translations are analyzed in comparison with translations of the same texts by translators who are not 'writers', or at least not as well-known. Examining the lexical and syntactical choices that writer-translators make, the analysis verifies whether writers translate differently from their fellow professional translators, highlighting their distinctive translation practices, and assesses the results of their approach.

The study shows how the special status of writers can influence their translation work leading them to adopt a strategy that often appears to be aimed at imprinting the writer's signature on the Italian text rather than concentrating on what the source text says.

The originality of this study lies in approaching a much debated issue in the field of literary translation, the relationship between translation and creative writing, from an unusual point of view. Previously, the topic of authorial translation has been investigated mainly from two perspectives. One is represented by numerous studies which focus on the translations done by individual authors, often considering their translations as part of their original work. The other is represented by the relatively recent rise of studies concentrating on the creative presence of the translator within the text translated. This study explores the relationship between writing and translating from a different perspective: that of writer-translators as a separate category, with particular emphasis on the figure and role of the writer as translator.

Finally, this is also a study in the history of Italian translation practice, and shows 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' as a valuable document mapping the bridging role of the Italian writer-translator, between Italian and foreign cultures.

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This research would have not been possible without the help of some people, at different levels and at different stages. Firstly I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin who expertly guided me through the various phases of my thesis. I would also like to thank him for his very helpful editorial comments on my bad English. My thanks also go to Dr Kate Briggs who initially suggested I should do a PhD, and Professor Lawrence Venuti with whom I discussed my idea of researching this topic. I would also like to thank the A. J. Leventhal Scholarship Fund, the various libraries I have consulted, especially the Library of Trinity College Dublin, the library of the School for Interpreters and Translators of Trieste, the National Library of Florence and the Einaudi Archive in Turin. Very special thanks are due to my two examiners, Professor George Talbot and Professor Corinna Salvadori Lonergan, for their enlightening comments and for their constructive and detailed criticism. My sincere thanks go to Professor Valerio Magrelli, who was extremely helpful when I asked if I could interview him, and to Professor Guido Bonsaver and Mr John O'Brien who responded generously to queries. I would like to thank my parents for respecting my choice to continue studying ('When are you going to get a job?') and supporting me through this research by looking after my children. A very special thanks to my husband Brian for the love and patience shown during these years. A last thought goes to my three girls, without whom I would have finished long ago.

ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS AND NUMBERING SYSTEM FOR TRANSLATION ANALYSES

ST = source text

TT = target text

SL = source language

TL = target language

STS = 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'

AE = Einaudi Archive

Missing text = *[< >]*

Bracketed numbers *(1), (2), (3)* given in the texts analyzed in chapters 3, 4 and 5 are used to link passages in the original text and the same points in the translations that are being compared.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Writers create national literatures with their language,
but world literature is written by translators
– José Saramago[1]

1. What can we learn by looking at writers translating writers?

The subject of the present study is literary translations by established writers. The research is thematically linked by a specific geographical, historical and cultural location, namely translations by Italian writers within a most unusual publishing project: 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' (STS), a prestigious series exclusively dedicated to authorial translations, initiated by the Einaudi publishing house in 1983. The study explores this cultural project through recent theories from the domain of translation studies, through material from the publisher's archives and through a detailed comparative analysis of translations produced by established writers side by side with translations of the same texts done by relatively anonymous translators.

As well as undertaking close critical readings of key texts from the STS project, the research presents a discussion of the ethics of translation from several points of view: the linguistic accuracy and professional probity of translators and editors, the treatment of different categories of translators by the Italian publishing houses and Giulio Einaudi's conception of the series as a continuation of his firm's historic mission to bring the highest quality of literary culture, international as well as national, to the Italian public – a tradition which had, in the 1930s, amounted to an important form of resistance to the suffocating parochialism of Italian fascism. While dealing with these questions, the thesis also provides a thorough investigation of the general concept of affinity between writer, translator and work translated, and tests the 'Retranslation Hypothesis', with sometimes surprising results. On a wider cultural

[1] Remark by José Saramago, the Portuguese novelist and winner of the 1998 Nobel Prize for literature, during a speech to the Fourth Latin American Conference on Translation and Interpretation in Buenos Aires in May 2003. Quoted on <http://translorial.com/category/literary.translation/ > [accessed December 2014]

level, it throws light on processes which can lead to certain translations becoming canonical, independently of their intrinsic value.

The study is divided into two parts: a first part introducing the historical, theoretical and methodological foundations of the research, and a second one where I examine in detail selected passages from three translations published in the STS series, illustrating how in terms of accuracy, tone and style the original is better rendered by the 'ordinary' translator than by the famous author.

Drawing on readily available sources, the present chapter briefly[2] introduces some relevant issues in translation studies which are central to the analysis of translations by writers, and discusses what scholars, writers and translators have said about them. It is organized into six parts, each divided into subsections and dealing with such questions as how we distinguish between writing and translation, various types of writer-translators, their status and working conditions, the effects on a writer of being a translator, and some criteria that will shape the present study.

The first part of the study also includes the second chapter, an introduction and assessment – largely based on the documents I consulted during my visit to the Einaudi archives in Turin – of the series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'. This chapter locates the series in the historical and social context out of which it developed: the oblique relationship between Italian fascism and literary culture in the 1930s, and specifically the large number of American novels and shorter prose works translated in that period, often by writers who were suspect in the eyes of the regime in power; and the prestige of the Einaudi publishing firm and the lack of respect for the 'ordinary' translator, obvious in minutes of meetings, in correspondence sprinkled with offensive prejudices, and not least with a substantial pay differential.

The second and longer part of my research is a close detailed analysis of the characteristic linguistic choices and general attitude towards the source text in three translations produced by some well-established Italian writers. The analysis aims at identifying patterns in the voice and speaking position of the broader category of

[2] Most of the issues introduced here will be treated again in detail in the following chapters.

Italian writer-translators,[3] an enquiry that will incidentally identify patterns and trends in Italian literary translations by non-writers. The following questions are central:

• Is there a traceable difference between translations by successful writers in comparison with translations by 'non-writer' translators? What are the common patterns emerging from the analysis of the writer-translator's linguistic choices in comparison with those by 'non-writer' translators?

• How far is it possible to determine and evaluate the influence of external sociocultural factors[4] (e.g. literary fame, the translator's standing, Italian publishing traditions and practices, the audience being addressed, etc.) and internal factors such as affinity, language and individual poetics on the writer's linguistic choices when translating?

• What insights might our analysis provide into general issues and frequent assertions in translation studies such as the status of the literary translator ('only poets should translate poetry'), the visibility/invisibility of the translator, the problem of authorship, etc.?

---

[3] There are published works within translation studies similar to mine, in the sense that they look for the translator's discursive presence in translations. These include: 1) works studying translations by an individual writer and mapping them onto the wider corpus of his or her original poetics and creative work (normally as an isolated case). For instance, Federico Federici, *Translation as Stylistic Evolution: Italo Calvino Creative Translator of Raymond Queneau* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009); Maria Stella, *Cesare Pavese traduttore* (Roma: Bulzoni, 1977); George Talbot, *Montale's 'Mestiere Vile'* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1995); 2) works (to my knowledge, not very numerous), that reject the conventional way of speaking about translation while largely overlooking the trace of the translator, and set out instead to investigate the distinct style and speaking position of individual translators. E.g. Mona Baker, 'Towards a methodology for investigating the style of a literary translator', *Target*, 12:2, (2000), 241-266 <http://www.tracor.ufsc.br/seminario/uploads/texto/texto_target-2000-style_2011_05_29_20_26_08.pdf> [accessed 7 March 2013]; Jeremy Munday, *Style and Ideology in Translation, Latin American Writing in English* (New York; London: Routledge, 2008); Theo Hermans 'The translator's voice in translated narrative' in *Critical Readings in Translation Studies* edited by Mona Baker (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 193-212; Giuliana Schiavi, 'There is always a teller in a tale' in *Target* 8 (1) (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1996), pp. 1-21.

[4] For instance, the publication of a translation in the Einaudi STS series would appear to have a considerable impact both on the translator's attitude towards the ST (in cases where the translation has been commissioned especially for the series, as often happens) and on the reader's attitude and expectations with regard to the translation (whether the translation was commissioned for the series or whether it is an old translation, re-published for the series).

The ultimate aim of the present study is to provide an 'objective' investigation of the widely-held belief (at least among common readers who do not translate) that established writers are inherently more gifted translators compared to their less famous fellow-translators. An experienced translator might intuitively be aware of the uncertainty and frequent incorrectness of this prejudiced belief, and might also recognize that the best translation, in the sense of the most representative of the original author's voice, is seldom that of the creative writer, whose own personal voice may well be the louder of the two. It is the aim of the present work to provide a study that actually tests this hypothesis, within certain parameters, while also providing a critical reading of the process which has allowed flawed translations to become canonical in Italy.

I should start by acknowledging the complexity of the task and admitting that this research, while tackling some of the theoretical issues of translation studies, will raise more questions that it can possibly answer. This is due to the variety of factors concerned in writing and translating, and the range of variables associated with translation (which is ultimately dependent to a considerable extent on the particular taste, tact, sensitivity and individuality of the translator). The Einaudi series title, for instance, 'writers translating writers' immediately points to the complexity and uncertainty of one of the big premises of this study and a much debated theoretical issue in translation studies: the division between writing and translating and consequently between writer-translators and non-writer translators. How is it possible to establish whether a translator is or is not a writer? Is a translator not in fact a writer and a writer not a translator by definition – or at least by some definitions?

2. Translating and writing: similarities and differences

2.1 In the past

Susan Bassnett, in an essay on 'Writing and Translating',[5] argues that while today writing and translating are separate practices, in the past they were often considered as the same:

> I have never satisfactorily worked out exactly when there began to be an hegemonic distinction made between writing and translating. All I know is that such distinction exists and seems to have been in operation for some time now, which has led to translation being seen as the poor relation of writing, often referred to as 'original' or 'creative' writing and widely perceived as superior. [...]
>
> Yet in the Middle Ages, that distinction did not exist, so we find writers like Chaucer engaging in a variety of literary activities that included original composition, translation, rewriting, pseudo translation and imitation without there being an apparent hierarchy of textual practice.[6]

Bassnett argues that the distinction between writing and translating must partly depend on the invention of printing, the complexities of copyright laws, and the fascination of post-Renaissance with the idea of the mighty Original. Besides, the instrumental use of translation to teach children about language might have played a part in shaping the idea that translation is a derivative inferior practice compared to original writing.[7]

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[5] The essay is published in *The Translator as Writer*, a collection of essays edited by Susan Bassnett and Peter Bush, tackling the complex relation between translating and writing, and stressing the similarity of the two activities insofar they both involve creative processes. The study, although focusing on some of the issues involved in my research, does not discuss all the factors at stake in being a writer-translator and has not been very useful to me for my project. While it considers the figure of the translator as a writer – also showing the influence that translation might have on original writing and work as a source of inspiration –, my focus is on the writer as translator and the implications that the translator's status might have on his or her translation practice. Biguenet and Schulte's anthology *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida* was also very helpful, as will become clear in the pages that follow.

[6] Susan Bassnett, 'Writing and translating' in *The Translator as Writer* edited by Susan Bassnett and Peter Bush (London: Continuum, 2006), pp. 173-183 (p. 173).

[7] Bassnett writes: 'Part of the answer must surely lie in the invention of printing, in the complexities of copyright laws that accompanied the spread of print, and in the fascination of post-Renaissance world with the idea of the mighty Original, the text that raised like a colossus towering over all derivatives. Perhaps another part of the answer lies in the steady increase in the number of people being formally educated, for translation has been frequently used in the classroom as a means of teaching children about language. This instrumentalist

In the past, translation often served as a stimulus to produce original creative writing. Friedrich Nietzsche in 'On the Problem of Translation' discusses how in Europe, since the times of the Romans, translation was seen as a means to conquer the foreign original, to surpass it in the new language and to create new original literature, thereby expanding and enriching the target language:

> In those days, indeed, to translate meant to conquer – not only in the sense that one would omit the historical dimension but also in the sense that one would add a hint of comtemporaneousness to the material translated and, above all, in the sense that one would delete the name of the poet and insert the translator's name in its place. And this was done with the very best conscience as a member of the Roman Empire without realizing that such action constituted theft.[8]

Hugo Friedrich takes a similar line:

> The goal is to surpass the original and, in doing so, to consider the original as a source of inspiration for the creation of new expressions in one's own language. [...] the purpose of translation is to go beyond the appropriation of content to a releasing of those linguistic and aesthetic energies that heretofore had existed only as a pure possibility in one's own language and had never been materialized before. [...] The original is brought over in order to reveal the latent stylistic possibilities in one's own language that are different from the original.[9]

Rita Copeland argues that in the Middle Ages the appropriation of texts through translation involved a process of differentiation from the original:

> The object of translation is difference with the source, and the act of translating is comparable to the act of inventing one's own argument out of available topics. The aim of translation is to reinvent the source, so that, as in rhetorical theory, attention is focused on the active production of a new text endowed with its own affective powers and suited to the particular circumstances of its reception. [...] As a rhetorical act,

---

usage of translation, seen as a means to a pedagogic end may also have played a role in creating the idea of translation as somehow less creative than other forms of writing, less original and, in an age that sets high value upon originality, consequently less important.', p. 173.

[8] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'On the Problem of Translation' translated by Peter Mollenhauer in *Theories of Translation, an Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida* edited by John Biguenet and Rainer Schulte (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 68-70 (p. 69).

[9] Hugo Friedrich 'On the Art of Translation' translated by Biguenet and Schulte in *Theories of Translation*, pp. 11-16 (p. 13).

> literary translation seeks to erase the cultural gap from which it emerges by contesting and displacing the source and substituting itself [...][10]

2.2 Translation as a form of original writing, and the concept of 'creativity' applied to translation

This subsection will accumulate a number of statements that assimilate translation to creative writing, and vice versa, together with other theories that assign them to distinct and separate spheres. In 'The task of the translator', an extremely complex and much debated essay by Walter Benjamin, the philosopher identifies the essential link between translation and original writing, two writing practices which are substantially different. He writes: 'Translatability is an essential quality of certain works, which is not to say that it is essential that they be translated; it means rather that a specific significance inherent in the original manifests itself in its translatability.'[11] Translation uncovers meanings that are present in the original but cannot manifest themselves in the source language. Translation, even if it will never succeed in reproducing the same original text as it represents it in the new language, can go behind – and sometimes beyond – the first textual formulation.

However, according to Benjamin, original writing and translating are sharply distinct practices and the same is true for the figure of the translator and the poet: 'As translation is a mode of its own, the task of the translator, too, may be regarded as distinct and clearly differentiated from the task of the poet.'[12] Paul de Man, in a chapter dedicated to Benjamin's essay, explains that difference in a way that may seem somewhat too categorical and depersonalized:

> Of the differences between the situation of the translator and that of the poet, the first that comes to mind is that the poet has some relationship to meaning, to a statement

---

[10] Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 30. On medieval ideas of appropriative translation see also Ivana Djordjevič, 'Mapping Medieval Translation' in *Medieval Insular Romance, Translation and Innovation* edited by Judith Weiss, Jennifer Fellows and Morgan Dickson (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), pp. 7-24; *The Medieval Translator. Traduire au Moyen Âge* edited by Roger Ellis and René Tixier, vol. 5 (Bruxelles: Brepols, 1996).

[11] Walter Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator' translated by Harry Zohn, *Selected Writings*, vol.1, 1913-1926, edited by Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 253-263 (p. 254) <http://ebookbrowsee.net/gdoc.php?id=658542999&url=b3b482d8bb699963f0adf3e5bd7cde0c. > [accessed 3 March 2013]

[12] Benjamin, p. 258.

> that is not purely within the realm of language. That is the naiveté of the poet, that he has to say something, that he has to convey a meaning which does not necessarily relate to language. The relationship of the translator to the original is the relationship between language and language, wherein the problem of meaning or the desire to say something, the need to make a statement, is entirely absent.[13]

Translation is different from the original yet vitally connected to it,[14] its creativity is different from the creativity of original writing and, according to Benjamin, lies in the difference between two languages, in the power of the new language to uncover meanings that are dormant in the original.

Octavio Paz's concept of translation is not distant from Benjamin's. In 'Translation: Literatures and Letters' he writes that 'translation overcomes the difference between one language and another, it also reveals them more fully.'[15] For Paz the creative nature of translation lies in the very nature of language, deeply rooted within the culture which produces it. Translation, in the passage from one language to another, 'unroots' the original language, feeds the roots with different water and gives life to other forms of foliage.[16]

Translation is often described as a process analogous to original writing. John Felstiner, a professor of English, literary critic, translator and poet, adds an important dimension of creative imagination to the rather depersonalized process hypothesized by De Man. Felstiner writes:

> Translating a poem often feels essentially like the primary act of writing, of carrying some preverbal sensation or emotion or thought over into words. Anyone who has slowly shaped an original sentence knows what it feels like to edge toward a word or

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[13] Paul de Man, *The Resistance to Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), pp. 81-82.

[14] '[…] by virtue of its translatability the original is closely connected with the translation; in fact, this connection is all the closer since it is no longer of importance to the original. We may call this connection a natural one, or, more specifically, a vital connection.' Benjamin, p. 254.

[15] Octavio Paz, 'Translation: Literature and Letters' in *Theories of Translation*, pp. 152-162 (p. 153).

[16] Arthur Schopenhauer perceptively describes the implications of this interlingual process for our ways of thinking and feeling when he claims that 'one thinks differently in every language, that our thinking is modified and newly tinged through the learning of each foreign language, and that polyglotism is […] a direct means of educating the mind by correcting and perfecting our perceptions through the emerging diversity and refinement of concepts. At the same time polyglotism increases the flexibility of thinking since, through the learning of many languages, the concept increasingly separates itself from the word' in 'On Language and Words' in *Theories of Translation*, pp. 32-35 (pp. 34-35).

> phrase and then toward a more apt one – one that suddenly touches off a new thought. The same experience holds for poets, generating a line of verse, who find that the right rhyme or image when it comes can trigger an unlooked-for and now indispensable meaning.[17]

Felstiner's welcome emphasis on creative processes is obviously one which pinpoints an issue central to any study looking at translations done by 'real writers'. How far can one take this 'creative' slant? In some writings on translation theory, the similarity between translating and writing is pushed as far as being fully symmetrical:[18] original writing is considered a form of translation because language is a form of translation of the non-verbal into verbal. Here is how Octavio Paz opens the essay that was cited earlier:

> When we learn to speak we are learning to translate; the child who asks his mother the meaning of a word is really asking her to translate the unfamiliar term into the simple words he already knows. In this sense, translation within the same language is not essentially different from translation between two tongues. [...]
> No text can be completely original because language itself, in its very essence, is already a translation: first from the nonverbal world and because each sign and each phrase is a translation of another sign, another phrase.[19]

And Marcel Proust, in *Le temps retrouvé*, famously stated that the task of the writer is the same as the task of a translator: '[...] je m'apercevais que ce livre essentiel, le seul livre vrai, un grand écrivain n'a pas, dans le sens courant, à l'inventer, puisqu'il existe déjà en chacun de nous, mais à le traduire. Le devoir et la tâche d'un écrivain sont ceux d'un traducteur.'[20]

Similarly, in a novel by Italo Calvino, the character of the writer describes the act of writing as a translation of the unwritten world: 'Alle volte penso alla materia del libro da scrivere come qualcosa che già c'è: pensieri già pensati, dialoghi già

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[17] John Felstiner, *Translating Neruda: the Way to Macchu Picchu* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1980), p. 32.

[18] In practice, as we will see, the similarity is asymmetrical because writers do not need to translate, but translators do need to write.

[19] Paz, p. 154. Roman Jakobson makes a similar point, which challenges the originality and the strength of its connection with meanings that lie outside 'the realm of language' (to use Paul de Man's phrase). Jakobson writes: 'the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further sign [...]'. See Roman Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' (1959), reprinted in Lawrence Venuti (ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 113-118 (p. 114).

[20] Marcel Proust, *Le temps retrouvé* (Paris: La Pléiade, 1927), p. 890.

pronunciati, storie già accadute, luoghi e ambienti visti; il libro non dovrebbe essere nient'altro che l'equivalente del mondo non scritto tradotto in scrittura.'[21]

Recent translation theory frequently stresses the similarities between translating and writing; sometimes, indeed, translation is considered almost an independent form of creative writing and not a derivative, subservient practice. For instance, the collection of essays *The Practices of Literary Translation: Constraints and Creativity* edited by Boase-Beier and Holman,[22] covering a wide variety of genres, cultures and languages, addresses a central issue in literary translation: the relationship between the creative freedom enjoyed by the translator and the numerous constraints to which translation is subject. The main argument emerging from the contributions is that in translation, similarly to what happens in original writing, the constraints imposed by the presence of a source text (not only constraints inherent to the text but also, for instance, the different way in which SL and TL encode reality, the ideological expectations of the target culture etc.) enhance and empower the creativity of the translation act forcing the translator to strive to overcome them, thus bringing out the 'extra' potential of the TL.

Eugenia Loffredo's edited collection of essays on *Translation and Creativity*[23] discusses the relationship between translation and creative writing from linguistic, cultural and critical perspectives.

> This fresh perspective can be explained by the significance increasingly bestowed upon the creativity inherent in rewritings, such as literary translation, and upon the mental processes occurring during these rewritings. [...] in other words towards the translator's creative input in the process of 'writing' a translation, and the creativity inscribed in the products generated by this subjectivity. The newly scrutinized agency of the translator, as a 'reader-creator' and as 'self-writer', is a recurring concept throughout these new approaches.[24]

The eleven essays by well-established scholars present a wide range of topics such as 'self-translation', autobiography, 'transgeneric translation', 'pop translation' etc. The link between translation and creative writing is brought into focus by theoretical,

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[21] Italo Calvino, *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore* (Torino: Einaudi, 1979), p. 171.
[22] *The Practices of Literary Translation: Constraints and Creativity* edited by Boase-Beier and Michael Holman (Manchester: St. Jerome, 1998).
[23] (London: Continuum, 2007).
[24] Loffredo, *Translation and Creativity*, p. 2.

pedagogical and practical applications. Loffredo's book also investigates the importance of creative writing workshops as part of the translator's training, as well as case studies and practices of experimental translation.

Marylin Gaddis Rose, the editor of *Translation and Literary Criticism*,[25] explores the creative nature of translation illustrating through a discussion of individual texts how translations reveal hidden parts of literary works. Gaddis Rose demonstrates that 'literary texts are fuller when read with their translations [...], this is because when taken together these texts and translations loosely enclose an interliminal space of meaning, allusion and sound'.[26] For this reason, Gaddis Rose argues, translation can be a valuable tool for the analysis and teaching of literature.[27]

At this stage it should be admitted that the assimilation of translation and creative writing is rejected by some authorities. As we will see in the Conclusion, Eliot Weinberger remarks that 'some translators now claim that they are authors (or something like authors), which strikes me as a Pirandellesque (or Reaganesque) confusion of actor and role'.

How do theoretical statements on translation as creative writing or statements that accord it dignity and status equivalent to original writing in certain contexts, work out in practice? Is translation really to be considered a creative form of writing on the same level as original writing? Do ideas of creative transposition and freedom of translation relate more to verse (or verse drama or plays in general) or do they frequently apply also to ideas about prose translation?[28] What are the criteria to establish whether a translation is or is not 'creative'? What is 'creativity' exactly, on a practical level? What determines our common perception that some translations are

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[25]Marylin Gaddis Rose (ed), *Translation and literary criticism* (Manchester: St. Jerome, 1997).

[26] Gaddis Rose, p. 73.

[27] See also *The Translator as Author* edited by Claudia Buffagni, Beatrice Grazelli and Serenella Zanotti (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011). Some of the essays included stress 'the creative role of translators and affirm a view of translation as work of interpretation and re-creation or, in other words, as artistic or intellectual endeavour.' (introduction, p. 7). For instance, Christiane Nord's essay, 'Making the source text grow: a plea against the idea of loss in translation' (pp. 21-30) shows 'that from a functionalist point of view and contrary to the widespread idea of loss in translation, the translator is someone who gives the source-language a wider scope, making it accessible to a new audience' (abstract, p. 21).

[28] Because the main texts studied in my thesis are prose works, and because the obvious creativity of poetry translation is different from the less obvious challenges of prose, previous studies of poetry translation were of less use to me.

more creative than others? How is creativity commonly measured? In order to evaluate a translation objectively, a traditional assumption was it should be carefully compared to the original text but, in practice, how consistently has this really been done? And what exactly have been the criteria used to evaluate a translation in the market? And (to anticipate the precise focus of the present study), should questions of translation quality be calculated differently if the translation was done by an established writer?

2.3 'Translators do not get much credit'

Tim Parks is an established writer[29] and leading translator from Italian. His reputations in these two fields seem to have developed independently of each other. He is also an academic scholar of translation issues. In a polemical article in 2010, 'Why translators deserve some credit', Parks argues that the widespread theoretical acknowledgement of translation as a form of creative writing has little or no effect on general readers. In practice, translations are often obscured as an invisible practice rather than a creative one, and translators are a category little acknowledged and underpaid. The category of creative writing and translating are quite separate in the popular mind, with the 'creative' aura reserved only for original writing.

> The translator should do his job and then disappear. The great, charismatic, creative writer wants to be all over the globe. And the last thing he wants to accept is that the majority of his readers are not really reading him.
>
> His readers feel the same. They want intimate contact with true greatness. They don't want to know that this prose was written on survival wages in a maisonette in Bremen, or a high-rise flat in the suburbs of Osaka. Which kid wants to hear that her J. K. Rowling is actually a chain-smoking pensioner? When I meet readers of my novels, they are disappointed I translate as well, as if this were demeaning to an author they hoped was 'important'.[30]

According to Parks, translation, although requiring the same, if not higher, skills than original writing, remains generally unacknowledged, unless the translator has the good luck to be the translator of a star writer. The translator

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[29] His *Europa* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize.

[30] Tim Parks, 'Why translators deserve some credit', *The Observer*, Sunday 25 April 2010, pp.1-2. <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2010/apr/25/book-translators-deserve-credit > [accessed 4 January 2014]

> sets out to rewrite this impossibly complex thing in his own language, re-elaborating everything, changing everything in order that it remain the same, or as close as possible to his experience of the original. In every sentence the most loyal respect must combine with the most resourceful inventiveness. [...] Writing my own novels has always required a huge effort of organization and imagination; but, sentence by sentence, translation is intellectually more taxing. [...] Occasionally, the translator is invited to the festival of individual genius as the guest of a great man whose career he has furthered; made, even. He is Mr Eco in New York, Mr Rushdie in Germany. He is not recognised for the millions of decisions he made, but because he had the fortune to translate Rushdie or Eco. If he did wonderful work for less fortunate authors, we would never have heard of him.[31]

The factors involved in the evaluation and acknowledgement of a translation or a translator seem to have little to do with the actual job performed by the translator.

Before investigating further the criteria for evaluating a translation, I would like to reflect a little more on the concept of creativity in translation and how this applies in practice to different kinds of writing.

2.4 Translation of poetry and translation of prose: some kind of miracle?

The Russian poet Valerii Briusov claims that translation of poetry is strictly speaking impossible, despite the achievements of some enormously gifted poet-translators like Pushkin and Lermontov:

> never (or with very rare exceptions) do poems in a foreign language leave the same impression as in the original. Apart from a *knowledge* of the language, one needs a special *feel* for its mysteries in order to understand fully the poet's hints, hints hidden in the actual meaning of the word and its sounds. [...] To transmit a poet's creation from one language into another is impossible [...].[32]

Similarly, Roman Jakobson argues that poetry is by definition untranslatable, although he does allow for an alternative solution:

> In poetry, verbal equations become a constructive principle of the text. Syntactic and morphological categories, roots, and affixes, phonemes and their components

[31] Parks, pp. 2-3.

[32] Valerii Briusov, 'Violets in a Crucible' translated by Susmita Sundaram in *Russian Writers on Translation* edited by Brian James Baer and Natalia Olshanskaya (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2013), pp. 68-69.

> (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 (…).[33]

The Italian writer Italo Calvino in 'Tradurre è il vero modo di leggere un testo', expands Jakobson's theory to all literature, and fully embraces the impossible 'miracle':

> 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.[34]

So literary prose, too, requires a miraculous form of translation. Ros Schwartz, a professional translator, also stresses the similarities between poetry and prose. They are both untranslatable, as prose is a form of poetry. The only difference is that the translator of poetry works within tighter constraints:

> It's interesting to make the connection between prose and poetry. I see the translation of poetry as the distillation of the translator's art, doing exactly what one does in prose, but within a much tighter framework. I think it is useful to emphasize the similarities, because some people separate the two.[35]

There is a technical reason why prose also needs miraculous translators. The English novelist David Lodge agrees with Jakobson when he points out that prose writers play on the sound value of language just as poets do:

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[33] Roman Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' in Roman Jakobson, cit., pp. 117-18. But he does allow for the power of creativity, believing that language itself can be seen as a communal act of creative translation, as in his example of the 'newborn literary language of the Northeast Siberian Chukchees' where '"screw" is rendered with "rotating nail", "steel" as "hard iron", "tin" as "thin iron", "chalk" as "writing soap", "watch" as "hammering heart."', p. 115.

[34] Italo Calvino, 'Tradurre è il vero modo di leggere un testo' in *Mondo scritto e mondo non scritto* (Milano: Mondadori, 2002), pp. 78-84 (pp. 79-80).

[35] Ros Schwartz and Nicolas de Lange, 'A dialogue: on a translator's interventions' in *The Translator as Writer*, p. 9.

> Shelley includes some prose writers in the category of 'poets'; and it is certainly untrue to say that prose writers do not exploit the sound-value of words. [...] The high degree of phonological activity in poetry is not, in other words, a valid reason for regarding its language as essentially different from that of prose.[36]

Poetry and prose cannot be translated without a creative intervention as prose is also a form of poetry. How do we measure the degree of creativity needed in a translation? Are there translations more creative than others? What are the factors determining a higher or lower creative intervention in a literary work? How do we measure the creativity of a translation?

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[36] David Lodge, *Language of Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1984), pp. 24-25. Most of the valid points made by critics on the phonological richness of prose can be traced back to Leonardo Bruni (1374-1444), the Italian humanist, historian and translator. In his landmark essay on translation, 'De interpretatione recta', Bruni argues that, in order to translate faithfully the prose of Plato and Aristotle, the translator must have very good ears to catch its sound and rhythm, a most fundamental aspect of that elegant and harmonious prose, and one that must necessarily be reproduced in the second language. He writes: 'Hec omnia, que supra diximus, necessaria sunt. Et insuper ut habeat aures earumque iudicium, ne illa, que rotunde ac numerose dicta sunt, dissipet ipse quidem atque perturbet. Cum enim in optimo quoque scriptore, et presertim in Platonis Aristotelisque libris, et doctrina rerum sit et scribendi ornatus, ille demum probatus erit interpres, qui utrumque servabit.'['Tutte queste cognizioni fin qui esposte sono necessarie. Inoltre è necessario che colui che traduce abbia orecchie e il loro giudizio per non disperdere e scompigliare, proprio lui, quanto è stato detto in maniera elegante e armoniosa. Dal momento che nei libri di tutti i migliori scrittori, e soprattutto in quelli di Platone e di Aristotele, c'è profondità di dottrina ed eleganza di stile, buon traduttore sarà colui che conserverà l'una e l'altra caratteristica'. Italian translation by Paolo Viti] in Leonardo Bruni, 'De interpretatione recta' in *Opere letterarie e politiche* edited and translated by Paolo Viti (Torino: UTET, 1996), par. 12, pp. 145-194 (pp. 158-159). Bruni again stresses the rhytmic qualities of good prose writing, which to the modern reader obviously suggest that the skills required to translate it are very similar to those required for poetry: 'Sed cum sit difficilis omnis interpretatio recta propter multa e varia, que in ea, ut supra diximus, requiruntur, difficillimum tamen est illa recte transferre, que a primo auctore scripta sunt numerose atque ornate. In oratione quippe numerosa necesse est per cola et commata et periodos incedere ac, ut apte quadrateque finiat comprehensio, diligentissime observare. ['Ma ogni traduzione corretta è difficile per molte e varie cose che in essa, come abbiamo detto di sopra, si richiedono; difficilissimo poi è tradurre correttamente le opere che dal primo autore sono state scritte in maniera ritmica e raffinata. In una prosa ritmica è necessario procedere per membri, per incisi, per periodi, e stare molto attenti a che la proposizione finisca ben composta e connessa.] par. 15, (pp. 162-163). Viti, somewhat inaccurately, translates *interpretatio* as *traduzione*.

2.5 Two categories of translations; two categories of translators

In what we have seen already, a distinction is emerging between creative translation as opposed to close or literal translation. Some critics also argue for a strong division between creative and ordinary translators.

D.S. Carne-Ross, a critic of classical literature in translation, introduces a group of articles called 'Penguin Classics: A Report on Two Decades' by condemning the Penguin Classics prose versions of Greek texts. He wants the best half-dozen Greek tragedies to be translated by real writers, and the rest 'turned over to service translators'. He writes:

> The proper course for a series of this sort would be to set up two flexible but well-defined categories. In the first category come the masterpieces, that is creative translations by writers of strong original gift. In the second come the service translations, competent versions by men with some scholarship and a decent prose style. With these two categories in mind, the editor could draw a rough balance sheet, the available talent on one side, the work to be done on the other.[37]

Carne-Ross not only makes a distinction between creative translation and literal, service translations (of the same text), but also between creative translator and service translator. Creative translators are writers 'of strong original gift' and non-creative translators are 'men with some scholarship and a decent prose style'. Carne-Ross believes in the positivity of creative translation as against close literal translation. At a theoretical level we have seen that all translation of literature cannot but involve a creative transposition. Carne-Ross categorically asserts that writers are better creative translators than non-writers. One important aim of my research is to test Carne Ross's quite generalizing distinction. Are writers really better translators by definition? What does Carne-Ross mean by 'writers of strong original gift'? Writers with a strong original distinctive style? Are writers with a strong original style better translators than writers with a more invisible style? And, are the translators in the second

[37] D.S. Carne-Ross, 'Introduction', *Arion*, vol. 7, no. 3 (Autumn, 1968), pp. 395-399 (p. 398). For a broader discussion of this issue see Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin, '"Boccaccio could be better served": Harry McWilliam and translation criticism', in *Italian Culture: Interactions, Transpositions, Translations*, edited by Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin, Corinna Salvadori and John Scattergood (Dublin: Four Court Press, 2006), pp. 45-68 (pp. 52-54).

category meant to be devoid of any form of style? (As we shall see, the present study will strongly challenge these assumptions.)

2.6 The measurement of creativity re-formulated

'Creative' as used in translation criticism often means re-formulated, non-literal, 'as if it had been written in the new language.'[38] Margaret Sayers Peden in 'Building a translation: the reconstruction business' uses a quite effective metaphor to represent this idea of creativity in translation:

> I like to think of the original work as an ice cube. During the process of translation the cube is melted. While in its liquid state, every molecule changes place; none remains in its original relation to the others. Then begins the process of forming the work in a second language. Molecules escape, new molecules are poured in to fill the spaces, but the lines of molding and mending are virtually invisible. The work exists in the second language as a new ice cube – different, but to all appearances the same.[39]

Italo Calvino, in an essay 'Sul tradurre', discusses what the skills of the ideal translator should be (and, given that he was a very influential figure in the Einaudi publishing, his preference for translated prose that reads as if it had been conceived and written in the target language is extremely relevant to the present study):

> Doti di agilità, sicurezza di scelta lessicale, d'economia sintattica, senso dei vari livelli linguistici, intelligenza insomma dello stile (nel doppio aspetto del comprendere le peculiarità stilistiche dell'autore da tradurre, e del saperne proporre equivalenti italiani in una prosa che si legga *come se fosse stata pensata e scritta direttamente in italiano*): le doti appunto in cui risiede il singolare genio del traduttore.[40]

This idea of creative transposition as a two-stage process – one of deconstruction, the other of re-creation – seems quite close to the idea of translation as

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[38] But the most creative work can also be scrupulously close to the original. On this see George Steiner's praises of Pierre Leyris's translations of Gerard Manley Hopkins in *After Babel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 431-433 and Phyllis Gaffney's article on the same translator '"The achieve of, the mastery of the thing!" Pierre Leyris's Verse translation of Gerard Manley Hopkins' in *The Practices of Literary Translation*, pp. 45-58.

[39] Margaret Sayers Peden, 'Building a Translation, the Reconstruction Business: poem 145 of Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz' in *The Craft of Translation* edited by John Biguenet and Rainer Schulte (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 13-27 (p. 13).

[40] Italo Calvino, 'Sul tradurre' in *Mondo scritto e mondo non scritto* (Milano: Mondadori, 2002), pp. 44-56 (p. 46).

going back to the genesis of the original text and from there, within the constrictions of the existing text, re-creating the same text as if it were thought in the new language. Paul Valéry in 'Variations on the *Eclogues*' describes this kind of process:

> The work of translation, done with a certain approximation of form, causes us in some way to try walking in the tracks left by the author; and not to fashion one text upon another, but from the latter to work back to the virtual moment of its formation, to the phase when the mind is in the same state as an orchestra whose instruments begin to waken, calling to each other and seeking harmony before beginning their concert. From that vividly imagined state one must make one's way down toward its resolution in a work in a different tongue.[41]

This transformation of the original text into an *avant-texte* 'unfinishes' it and brings the translator back to the moment before writing, thereby reconnecting the translator with the problem of meaning from which Paul de Man's formula claimed to exclude him or her. It is at this point that the essential difference between original writing and translation emerges, as Paz points out:

> The second phase of the translator's activity is parallel to the poets, with this essential difference: as he writes, the poet does not know where his poem will lead him; as he translates, the translator knows that his completed effort must reproduce the poem he has before him.[42]

If we consider the original text as a constraint, then translating involves more creativity than original writing. Jeremy Munday, in an article on 'The Creative Voice of the Translator' writes:

> The creative voice does not, however, exist unbounded. It is countered or exaggerated by the concept of constraints – the greater the constraint, the greater the potential creativity demanded on the translator. In this respect, the existence of a source text presents an imposing and sometimes overriding constraint against which the translator must struggle, a form of 'pre-text' or 'intertext'.[43]

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[41] Paul Valéry, 'Variations on the *Eclogues*' in *Theories of Translation*, pp. 113-126 (pp. 120-121). Clive Scott in 'Translating the Literary: Genetic Criticism, Text Theory and Poetry' writes 'The translator transforms the text of the ST into an avant-texte (draft), transforms the text back into a process of writing' in *The Translator as Writer*, pp. 106-118 (p. 107).

[42] Octavio Paz, 'Translation: Literature and Letters', p. 159.

[43] Jeremy Munday, 'The Creative Voice of the Translator of Latin American Literature', *Romance Studies*, vol.27, No. 4, November, 2009, pp. 246-258 (p. 250).

In the light of the foregoing we may well ask whether 'creative' versus 'literal' is not a false opposition. Creativity, after all, can be used to come closer to the original, or to move farther away. As there can never be a single 'definitive translation', either approach could be justified. Also, does the level of necessary distance from the original text not often largely depend on the lesser or greater degree of 'similarity' between SL and TL syntactic structures? While translating from English into Italian might entail radical manipulation of original syntax and lexis,[44] it would not be the same from French into Italian. Should a translator take departures from the original, when a literal rendering is effective and at hand? Should 'adding something new and fresh' to the original be the creative translator's main concern? Or should translators aim at reproducing the original text as faithfully as possible, considering themselves lucky when a literal transposition is a good working version?

The detailed analysis of translations conducted in the main body of my thesis will show that, while many attempts at freedom end up in second-rate prose and a needless loss of important ST features, a literal rendering is often a highly effective way of proceeding, particularly when one is translating texts whose carefully crafted internal arrangement is a fundamental generator of their meaning.

2.7 'Visibility' as a badge of freedom

Different from this idea of creativity, whose main aim is to re-create the original text as if it had been written in the new language, is Venuti's concept of translation as visibility of the translation process and foreignization of the text in the new language. According to Venuti, translation must be a visible process, the reader must be aware that reading a translation is a completely different experience from reading an original

[44] See Paola Biancolini Decuypère, *Equivalenze letterarie, tradurre il testo narrativo dall'inglese all'italiano* (Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2002): this book on translation of narrative and communicative texts from Italian into English has proved a useful support in the evaluation of some of the translators' linguistic choices during the analysis of the Italian translation of the English source text. See also Tim Parks, *Translating Style: the English Modernists and Their Italian Translations* (London and Washington: Cassel, 1998): this text sets out to show what translating literary style really means through lively practical examples of comparative analysis of English texts translated into Italian, thus providing valuable insights into some of the problems concerned in rendering English stylistic features into Italian.

work. Translation should push the boundaries of the new language, enrich it. But how does this work? Should a translator maintain as many foreign elements as possible in the new text, in order to give it a foreign colour and to stress that it is a translation, not an original?

Tim Parks in 'The mysteries of the Meta-task' does not seem very positive about Venuti's statements:

> [...] he appears to be encouraging translators to be unconcerned that their work seem originally written or effortlessly fluent in the language into which they translate, and encouraging readers to accept the idea that reading a translation is a different experience from reading a text originally written in their language, requiring on the contrary a more "thoughtful" rather than "spontaneous and immediate" response. [...] He continues to advocate a form of translation that sees the text to be translated at least in part as a source of inspiration for altering the way in which we use our language.[45]

I agree with Parks that the way this approach to creative translation works is quite problematic, and Venuti seems more intent on advocating a general approach to translation which could liberate translators rather than on suggesting an actual strategy for translating a particular text. In any case, Venuti's model of visibility through foreignization is very different from the kind of visibility through appropriation that we will find in the examples studied in chapters 3, 4 and 5. These conform more to Calvino's model.

3. Varieties of 'writer-translators'

While it will be the aim of the following chapters to investigate in detail the differences between writer-translators and non-writer translators, this section of the introduction briefly sets out some of the issues at stake when one defines oneself as a 'writer-translator'.

Firstly, I would like to stress that although there is a widely shared belief that writers make more creative translators than translators who are not writers, and although it is quite common in many cultures for poets to translate foreign poetry, prose authors in many cultures are much less likely to undertake translations. This

[45] Tim Parks, 'Mysteries of the Meta-Task', IULM University, Milan, p.1 <http://iowareview.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/Mysteries%20of%20the%20Meta-Task.pdf > [accessed 8 January 2014]

difference might be influenced by several factors, including the status and function of translation within different cultures.

In 'Un mot d'un poète-traducteur', Vaclav Renč writes that is only very seldom that we find a famous English author who is also a translator, while in Czechoslovakia it was almost the rule that an established writer is also a translator. The reason for this, Renč contends, is the difference of status of the translators:

> J'aimerais signaler une différence assez délicate qui distingue l'activité du traducteur professionnel de l'activité traductrice qui accompagne une autre profession littéraire, celle d'écrivain-poète, de romancier, de dramaturge, et, en même temps, une autre différence, à savoir celle qui oppose la situation dans ce qu'on appelle les "grandes cultures" à la situation des cultures à faible expansion. [...] Vous savez bien qu'on ne trouve que rarement un grand auteur – anglais, français – exerçant le métier de traducteur, tandis que dans les cultures nationales "plus jeunes", où la profession littéraire proprement dite date, disons, de l'époque du romantisme, la situation est tout à fait différente. Le métier de traducteur constitue, au contraire, une partie intrinsèque de l'oeuvre des poètes (et, souvent, des plus grands d'entre eux). Une question de nécessité extérieure, de ressources financières? Mais, en outre, une question de formation intérieure, personnelle aussi bien que sociale.[46]

If the English and French literary cultures produce few writer-translators the Russian situation is far more favourable to this phenomenon.[47] Lauren G. Leighton, in the introduction to her translation of Korney Chukovsky's *The Art of Translation*, comments on cultural differences and emphasizes the lower status translation has in the Anglo-American world compared to Russia, where translation has long been seen as a necessary means to produce new literature, and where the separation between writer and translator is not as clear-cut as in bigger cultures:

> Translation is not generally considered an art in the Anglo-American world, and English language publishers still tend to treat translation as a skill (inferior) to be hired [...] under commercial conditions. [...] In Soviet letters instead [...] translation is not only considered an art, but a high art indeed. The major Russian writers –

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[46] Vaclav Renč, 'Un mot d'un poète-traducteur' in *The Nature of Translation, Essays on the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation* edited by James Holmes (The Hague; Paris: Mouton, 1970), pp. 170-175 (p. 170).

[47] From the collection of writings *Russian Writers on Translation* (cit.) it emerges clearly that Russian writers saw translating as part of their personal formation as well as their national duty.

> Pushkin, Dostoevsky – have always been translators, and did not consider themselves writers unless they translated.[48]

Another reason why in the Anglo-speaking world writers do not usually translate surely lies in the fact that Anglophones, whose language is culturally hegemonic, know few other languages, and local publishers tend not to be interested in commissioning translations from 'lesser' languages.

John O'Brien, commissioning editor of Dalkey Archive Press – one of the English-speaking world's leading publishers specializing in translations of foreign literature – laments the fact that so few of his authors do translations into English:

> I do not think that any of our English-speaking writers are also translators, which is a great misfortune. Many translators have tin ears, as do most people, but they are often armed with degrees and knowledge of the language. But it is not just Dalkey's authors who are non-translators, but most English-speaking writers, especially American ones. Like most Americans, the language skill just is not there.[49]

He also believes that creative writers ought to be more skilled translators, as they can be expected to be better attuned than professional translators to grasp all the features of the original. O'Brien's belief in free translation emerges from his comments on the translation of a major American poet:

> W. S. Merwin, the poet, is a great exception [...], but his translations get criticized for not staying close enough to the original text. I think the objection is hogwash. The text has already been violated by coming into a new language: the role of the translator is, I think, to create a parallel experience for the new reader that the original reader had. And so, the translator should approach a work in this way: how would you say this in English? That becomes an act of interpretation, and a creative one.[50]

Tim Parks too believes that writers, at least in principle, should be good translators: 'It is a loss that few writers "stoop" to translation these days'.[51] Parks

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[48] Lauren G. Leighton, 'Introduction' to Korney Chukovsky, *The Art of Translation: Kornei Chukovsky's A High Art*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1984), p. ix. Also Anthea Bell in 'Walking the tightrope of illusion', an essay published in *The Translator as Writer,* writes about 'the well-known fact that translation is a low-profile profession. Perhaps particularly so in the English speaking world, where a huge disproportion notoriously exists between books translated out of and into English', p. 60.

[49] Personal communication, John O'Brien to my supervisor, 23 December 2013.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Parks, 'Why translators deserve some credit', p. 2.

seems to suggest, though not explicitly, that a writer might be the ideal translator, whom he goes on to describe in the following terms:

> Of course, if the translator is poor there will be awkward moments of correspondence (you get the content but not the style); alternatively the prose will be fluent but off the mark (you get style but not content). The translator who is on song – the one who has the deepest understanding of the original and the greatest resources in his own language – brings the style and content together in something altogether new that is also astonishingly faithful to its model.[52]

4. Status and working conditions

4.1 Freedom and the authority of the writer-translator

As already mentioned, my research is going to raise some searching questions about the widely accepted difference between writer-translators and their lesser-known rivals. Are writers really better translators? Are they really more creative in their translations? In chapter 3, in particular, a comparative analysis of the chosen authorial and non-authorial translations allows us to establish that original writers feel much freer to take what might be termed 'unforced' or 'unnecessary' departures from the ST as compared with their fellow translators who are not writers, or at least not as famous. These departures do not always lead to better writing. What are all the factors – apart from the assumption of superior writing skills – contributing to the writer-translators' more 'authoritative' attitude towards the source text? And are they acting under a compulsion to prove their status by introducing changes for the sake of change? We shall give some strong evidence for this hypothesis in the last chapter, when we find Lalla Romano changing for the worse a translation that she had done earlier in her career.

One of the most obvious factors contributing to writers' 'freer' attitude towards translation is their fame and establishment as original writers (and the inflationary effect that this can have on their egos). Their high status as original writers might give them extra confidence in translating another writer's work and make them feel as co-authors rather than 'mere' channels of transmission. A famous writer, when translating, might not perceive the original text as a high authority he must respect, but

[52] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

rather as an occasion to create a work where his personal contribution is as important as (if not more than) the original author's.

While such an excess of authority and confidence towards the original might result in unnecessary changes of the source text, on the other hand, an excessive lack of confidence and authority might result in a pedantic literal rendering. As John Rutherford, a novelist and a translator from Spanish into English, explains in his article on translating *Don Quixote*, it is of paramount importance that the translators feel confident, and should not be too subservient to the original author:

> The only way in which I could pay Cervantes proper homage by writing a worthy English version of his masterpiece was by refusing to think of myself as a payer of homage. I would not grovel at his feet but rub shoulders with him as his co-author. He did not think of his book as a Spanish bible when he was writing it to make some money! I needed to write in a creative and playful way, just as he wrote: to enjoy myself, to be bold, to experiment, to take risks. Run-off-the-mill fluency and facile readability should not be my aim: great writers do not restrict themselves to bland, every day, unobjectionable language, so nor should their translators, even though it is difficult for us not to succumb to this temptation, encouraged by publishers and reviewers with their requirement that the translator be invisible and translate 'seamlessly' in 'idiomatic' English.[53]

4.2 Working conditions and editorial revision

Another fundamental factor in determining the degree of authority of an established writer who translates derives from the different 'working conditions' offered by the publisher. This issue will be investigated in detail in the next chapter, on the basis of some interesting and relevant documents that were made accessible to me at the Einaudi Archive in Turin, uncovering strikingly different treatment of the two categories of translators and the extremely advantageous privileges accorded to famous writers.

The detailed analysis of authorial versus non-authorial translations brings up the important question of revision. Are translations by famous writers edited with the same criteria used for translations by professional translators? What are the criteria used in commissioning and evaluating a writerly translation? As we shall see, the

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[53] John Rutherford, 'Translating fun: *Don Quixote*' in *The Translator as Writer*, pp. 71-83 (pp. 76-77).

reviews of translations by established writers are usually extremely positive. Is the final evaluation of a writer's translation based on an accurate comparative analysis of the whole text?

Of course the normal reader will never know what exactly the translator has done, nor whether a translation has been thoroughly revised in the publisher's editorial department. In most cases, the reader of a translation does not compare it to the original text (which he usually does not know) and does not normally read more than one translation. Reading a translation is therefore still an act of faith, more or less conscious, in the publisher. As a consequence, it could be said that editing translations is a process lacking in transparency. And as we will discover, the stringent processes of revision that make life very hard for 'ordinary' translators in Italy were not applied to the writer-translators in the Einaudi series.

It is my belief that in order to give an objective evaluation of a translation, it should be carefully compared to the original text and, ideally, to other translations of the same text in the same language. And this evaluation would still remain quite unreliable, because, as David Lodge states, in order to test the closeness of any translation to its original:

> one would have to be not only bi-lingual but – to coin a rather ugly phrase – bicultural, i.e. possessed of the whole complex of emotions, associations, and ideas which intricately relate a nation's language to its life and tradition, but possessed not only of one such complex – as we all are to some extent – but of two.[54]

Yet, the editing of a translation can sometimes be based on subjective and untested assumptions, such as the feeling that a translation by a famous writer ought not to be edited as aggressively as a translation by a professional. In the following chapters we shall see how the Einaudi publishing company's revisions of translations by professional translators tend to be severely and thoroughly edited, while the same does not seem true of translations by writers which, at times, seem not to have been revised at all or, at least, not revised by comparing them to the source text. In particular, in chapter 4, in the section 'Freedom for the few', we will discuss how professional translators were not allowed the same freedom as writers. Quite the contrary – they were asked to translate literally, staying close to the source text. This discrepancy in

[54] David Lodge, *Language of Fiction*, p. 20.

the concessions made to the two categories of translators stresses that something more than a translation is expected from a writer.

This kind of attitude is certainly one of the fundamental reasons why writers translate more freely than non-writers: the former are allowed (and even expected) to be "free" while the others are certainly not.

Calvino stresses the importance of accuracy and professionalism in reviewing translations, and shows real empathy for the professional vulnerability of translators:

> Più che mai oggi è dunque sentita la necessità di 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. Perché se questo senso di responsabilità manca, non si fa che aumentare la confusione, e si provoca nei traduttori uno scoraggiamento che si trasforma subito in *pis aller*, in abbassamento del livello generale. Non è la prima volta che ci sentiamo dire da un bravo traduttore: "Sì sì, ci lascio l'anima per risolvere delle difficoltà che nessuno s'è mai posto e di cui nessuno s'accorgerà, e poi il critico X apre il libro a caso, butta l'occhio su una frase che non gli garba, magari senza confrontare il testo, senza chiedersi come altrimenti poteva esser risolta, e in due righe liquida tutta la traduzione...".[55]

4.3 Commissioning and affinity

Affinity, as we will see in detail in the following chapters, plays a fundamental role in the commissioning of translations from writers at Einaudi.

Firstly, an extremely relevant factor is that well known writers can often choose the work to be translated. They can either suggest to the publisher a text they would like to translate, or the commissioning editor might suggest something he thinks the writer will successfully translate. A professional translator, on the other hand, is not equally free to choose what to translate and is often working in very tight time-frames compared to the established writer whose delivery schedule, as we will see in chapter 2, can be more flexible.

On what basis should an original text be matched to its ideal translator? What are, in fact, the criteria used? Are they the same for the two categories of translators?

[55] Italo Calvino, 'Sul tradurre', p. 45.

There has long been a widespread belief that the best scenario for producing a successful translation is when there is affinity between translator and work translated. The earl of Roscommon, Wentworth Dillon, famously wrote in 1684:

> Then seek poet who your way do's bend,
> And chuse an author as you chuse a Friend,
> United by this sympathetic bond,
> You grow familiar, intimate and Fond;
> Your Thoughts, your Words, your Stiles, your Souls agree,
> No longer his interpreter, but he.[56]

In 1930 Chukovsky recommended: 'A translator should avoid authors whose temperament or literary bent he finds alien or hostile. A translator partial to Hugo should not be translating Zola: he would be doomed to failure.'[57] Justin O'Brien restates this position when he writes '*Never translate anything one does not admire.* If possible, a natural affinity should exist between translator and translated.'[58]

Parks stresses the crucial role of affinity (which he distinguishes from admiration), while pointing also to the fact that translators of prose often have no choice:

> [...] my experience is that one does not choose. One is offered a book to translate and has a week or so to decide whether to accept it or not, at which point the issue of good literature may arise, but so do questions of length, difficulty, deadline, pay, and above all, affinity. I declined to translate a number of books that I thought were good literature but for which I felt I was not the right translator; I couldn't imagine an appropriate voice in English. I translated some I thought were not good literature, because I knew I could do them well and because the money was welcome (Pavese felt the same about one or two works now considered masterpieces). [...] one is bound to become aware of the fatality of affinity: it will occasionally happen that this or that personality simply meshes more creatively with the original voice.[59]

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[56] Wentworth Dillon, *An Essay on Translated Verse* (London: Judges Head, 1684), p. 7 < http://books.google.it/books?id=sHEJAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=wentworth+dillon+essay+on+translated+verse&hl=en&sa=X&ei=vFIcU7u0L6T9ygPuiIHgCw&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=wentworth%20dillon%20essay%20on%20translated%20verse&f=false> [accessed 4 September 2014]

[57] Chukovsky, *The Art of Translation*, p. 29.

[58] In Reuben A. Brower, *On Translation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 85.

[59] Parks, 'Mysteries of the Meta-Task', pp. 2-5.

An established writer and academic like Parks, even if he might not be able to choose what he would like to translate, can refuse to translate something he thinks he cannot successfully render. Often, the professional translator who translates for a living is not in a position to refuse, but will translate anything the commissioner might suggest, regardless of affinity.

In any case, 'affinity' is a rather slippery concept. What is it exactly, and how does it work in translation? 'Affinity' is often taken to denote some kind of 'similarity' between the translator and the writer being translated.

Chukovsky sees affinity as synonymous with 'similarity of styles' and as a necessary condition to produce a successful translation, although he admits that certain 'mature masters' can in fact transcend the incompatibility of their own styles with an 'alien' source text. Chukovsky comments on a translation that the Russian poet Konstantin Balmont made of Walt Whitman :

> [...] even without knowing these translations, anyone can predict that Whitman's literary personality has been distorted in a most perfidious manner, because in the entire world there is no poet more remote from him than Balmont. [...] I repeat: only mature masters, persons of high culture and finely refined taste, can take upon themselves the translation of foreign writers who are alien to them in style, and in conviction and in temperament. These masters possess a very rare gift – they know how to curb their individual biases, sympathies, tastes for the sake of a most bold revelation of the creative personality they must recreate in translations.[60]

But what kind of 'similarity' can be established? One kind of similarity may be closely related to a deep understanding that the translator has of the original text. This may not necessarily be visible in the surface features of the original. On what basis, then, is a commissioning editor supposed to judge that type of 'affinity' between a certain text and the translator? From his or her translations, or from original works? From the fact that he or she has already successfully translated a work by the same

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[60] Chukovsky, *The Art of Translation*, p. 40. Balmont's bad performance as a translator is stressed also by Vladimir Nabokov in 'The Art of Translation': 'What Balmont's numerous translations look like may be readily understood when I say that his own work invariably disclosed an almost pathological inability to write one single melodious line.' < http://www.newrepublic.com/article/113310/vladimir-nabokov-art-translation > [accessed 13 February 2014]

author? 'Affinity' might include the need to try out new things. It could come from the stimulus of difference. In creative work, there is room for the unexpected.

Peter Cole, in 'Making Sense in Translation', argues against this overtly ambiguous concept of affinity, intended as a similarity of some kind, as a necessary condition for producing a successful translation:

> but what about needing or wanting to translate someone to whom your spirit or humor does *not* incline? Are there ethical and possibly artistic disadvantages in that? Does it necessarily guarantee failure? What about the power of assuming someone else's skin, for a moment, or a month, or a year, and trying to form something from that point view that will last perhaps longer than you will?[61]

According to Cole, sympathy is a far more invisible and deep than a 'superficial' similarity of styles, ideology and personal feelings:

> Sympathy involves not a matter of parallel personal feeling so much as what I think of as *making sense* – though I should note, at this point, that by "sense" I'm talking not only about "meaning" and "common sense", or even "sense for sense" renderings (as opposed to "word for word renderings, as the classic formulation has it), but something that happens along, or under, the skin: a tangential sensation, one that is rooted not in ideology, not even in good will or fellow feeling, but in syntactical, rhythmic, and acoustic experience, as well as the ambient aspects of a culture.[62]

In chapter 4, where I investigate the role played by the translator's style through the analyses of Cesare Pavese's translation of *Benito Cereno* by Herman Melville, some of these questions will arise again. Does 'affinity' lead the writer-translator to rewrite the original in his own style? If we believe that affinity of styles makes it easier to recreate the literary work in a new language, does that assumption not imply that writers have difficulties in stepping out of themselves to write in another style? Thus, is affinity not also a danger and a limiting factor?

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[61] Peter Cole, 'Making Sense in Translation. *Toward an Ethics of the Art*' in *In Translation*, edited by Esther Allen and Susan Bernofsky (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp. 3-16 (pp. 7-8).
[62] Cole, 'Making Sense in Translation', p. 8.

Vladimir Nabokov distinguishes three categories of translators and, while stressing the lack of imagination and style of the first two categories – the scholar and the professional translator[63] – he also points out the pitfalls of genius and creativity:

> Now comes the authentic poet who has the two last assets and who finds relaxation in translating a bit of Lermontov or Verlaine between writing poems of his own. Either he does not know the original language and calmly relies upon the so-called "literal" translation made for him by a far less brilliant but a little more learned person, or else, knowing the language, he lacks the scholar's precision and the professional translator's experience. The main drawback, however, in this case is the fact that the greater his individual talent, the more apt he will be to drown the foreign masterpiece under the sparkling ripples of his own personal style. Instead of dressing up like the real author, he dresses up the author as himself.[64]

According to Nabokov, the greater the 'strong original gift' the greater the likelihood that originals will be distorted into becoming part of the writer-translator's own work.

Chukovsky offers another example of a Russian poet translator, Vasily Zhukovsky, who is said to be an excellent translator even if he cannot escape his own ego:

> he is the greatest translator and yet the system of departures from the original in which Zhukovsky indulged again results in the original author's personality sometimes being replaced by the personality of the translator. [...] All of poetry translated by Zhukovsky has become his own poetry because it reflects his own quiet, eloquent, splendid, sentimental-melancholic, puritan personality.[65]

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[63] 'the scholar who is eager to make the world appreciate the works of an obscure genius as much as he does himself; the well meaning hack; and the professional writer relaxing in the company of a foreign confrère. The scholar will be, I hope, exact and pedantic: footnotes – on the *same* page as the text and not tucked away at the end of the volume – can never be too copious and detailed. The laborious lady working at the eleventh hour the eleventh volume of somebody's collected works will be, I am afraid, less exact and less pedantic; but the point is not that the scholar commits fewer blunders than a drudge; the point is that as a rule both he and she are hopelessly devoid of any semblance of creative genius. Neither learning nor diligence can replace imagination and style.' Nabokov, 'The Art of Translation'.

[64] Nabokov, 'The Art of Translation', ibid..

[65] Chukovsky, *The Art of Translation*, p. 27. In Russia, Zhukovsky is unanimously considered one of the greatest Russian translators. Nikolai Gogol writes of Zhukovsky's translation of *The Odissey*: 'Those endlessly long sections, which in the hands of another would be limpid and dark, or those short dense sections, which in the hands of another would be stale, choppy, and hard, lie gently beside one another in Zhukovsky's text. All transitions

Is Chukovsky asserting that a gifted poet should not translate? Octavio Paz makes the counter-intuitive statement that in practice poets are rarely good translators:

> In theory, only poets should translate poetry; in practice poets are rarely good translators. They almost invariably use the foreign poem as a point of departure toward their own. A good translator moves in the opposite direction: his intended destination is a poem analogous although not identical to the original poem. He moves away from the poem only to follow it more closely. [...] The reason why many poets are unable to translate poetry is not purely psychological, although egoism has a part in it, but functional: poetic translation [...] is a procedure analogous to poetic creation, but it unfolds in the opposite direction.[66]

The writer's literary ego stands in the way of a successful rendering of the original text. In the aforementioned example of Balmont-Whitman, Chukovsky compares two well-known poets whose styles, convictions and temperaments can be easily identified and compared. But what happens when the translator has not produced any original writing? How can his or her affinity to the original author be identified? Are they not supposed to have a style of their own? Even the most self-effacing translator must create a sort of style in the new language.

4.4 Ways of approaching the issue of the translator's voice

In fact, there are studies focusing on the style of translators in general that reject the conventional way of speaking about translation while deleting any trace of the

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and meeting of opposite are presented with such harmony [...]', 'Letter to M. A. Maksimovich' translated by Brian James Baer in *Russian Writers on Translation*, p.30; Vissarion Belinskii, a leading literary and social critic of early nineteenth century, writes: 'Zhukovsky's translations and borrowings from German and English poets represent his crowning poetic achievement. In this he stands alone as the sole leader and representative of his own school.', Belinskii, 'Review of the Works of Aleksandr Pushkin, Article 2' translated by Anthony Wesolowski in *Russian Writers on Translation*, p. 35; the writer and journalist Aleksandr Druzhinin commenting on Russian translations of Schiller, writes: 'Zhukovsky's efforts have resulted in excellent, well-written translations, though a fault-finding critic with no feeling for poetry might accuse him of numerous deviations from the original. However, such critics have never had much authority, nor has Zhukovsky's talent been in need of any instruction.', Druzhinin, 'Schiller as Translated by Russian Poets' translated by Natalia Olshanskaya in *Russian Writers on Translation*, p. 53.

[66] Paz, 'Translation: Literature and Letters', p. 158.

translator. These studies set out instead to investigate the distinct style and speaking position of individual translators. Most of these studies deal with the concept of creativity as an intrinsic process in translation which is extremely similar to the role of original writing, and which does not depend on the translator being an established creative writer. For example, Mona Baker in 'Towards a methodology for investigating the style of a literary translator',[67] provides useful models of analysis and valuable insights in the investigation of the style of translators of literature, not in the traditional sense of whether the style of an original author is adequately conveyed, but whether literary translators can be shown, in measurable ways, to use distinctive styles of their own. Although its methods are very different, this paper is very relevant to my research as it approaches the analysis of translation from the same point of view: the individuality of the translator.

Theo Hermans, in 'The translator's voice in translated narrative',[68] attempts to understand the style of the translators in terms of their presence in the texts where their voice can be more or less overtly present. Hermans illustrates the mechanics of how the translator's voice manifests itself in the text through the analysis of different translations of the Dutch novel *Max Havelaar*. The study has supplied a model of textual analysis of the translators' different voices similar to the one conducted in my study. Beyond illustrating the mechanics of the presence of the translator's voice, Hermans explores the ideological motivations for assimilating the translator's voice with one of the narrator in existing narratological models.

In 'The translator as a creative being',[69] Irma Sorvali addresses the translation process from the translator's point of view. She feels that in order to understand a translation the translator, where possible, should be interviewed. This would allow the

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[67] Mona Baker, 'Towards a methodology for investigating the style of a literary translator' 2000 < http://www.tracor.ufsc.br/seminario/uploads/texto/texto_target-2000-style_2011_05_29_20_26_08.pdf > [accessed 5 January 2013]

[68] In *Critical Readings in Translation Studies* edited by Mona Baker (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 193-212. The essay was written in parallel to Giuliana Schiavi's 'There is always a teller in a tale' as companion pieces: while Schiavi addresses the theoretical issue of locating the Implied translator as a counterpart to the Implied author, Hermans explores particular cases to show how the translator's voice manifests itself in the translation.

[69] Irma Sorvali, 'The translator as a creative being' in *Babel, Revue International de la Traduction*, vol. 44, 1988, pp. 234-243.

reader of translations to be provided with very useful material. She claims that aesthetical and emotional values are of great importance in literary translation, that every translator has his principles of translating, but it is very difficult to measure this. I find her approach intuitively attractive, and would even wonder whether the study of the translator's biography can sometimes be fundamental to understanding the translation.[70]

Jeremy Munday, in 'The Creative Voice of the Translator of Latin American Literature', attempts to explain the factors determining the translator's individual voice, referring to a process termed by Michael Hoey 'lexical priming' which is 'crucial in the selection of new lexical configurations' and 'which is in part individual and based on our own individual experiences with language':

> I am particularly interested in the concept of lexical priming for the translator's language and the possibility that it may at least in part explain the individual translator's orientation towards specific lower-level elements of the text, such as a preference for certain lexical collocations, or idiolectal, dialectal, sociolectal, or genre-specific lexical choices.[71]

Although my approach and method do not coincide with all of these scholars, their diversity shows that the translator's voice is very much a live issue today, and one which is going to be investigated further.

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[70] To take one example, Elena Baibikov in the article 'Revised translations, revised identities' – a study of three Japanese versions of Anton Chechov's letters to his wife, all produced by Yuasa Yoshiko, a female translator of Russian literature – discusses the shifts in translators' professional behaviour at different stages of the translator's life in relation to changing social and personal settings. <https://www.academia.edu/4224681/Revised_translations_revised_identities_Auto_biographical_contextualization_of_translation >[accessed November 2014]. Apart from possible biographical influences, ideological beliefs can potentially play an important role in shaping the translator. The question is too large to explore fully at this point.

[71] In Jeremy Munday, 'The Creative Voice of the Translator of Latin American Literature', p. 251.

5. The mingling of voices

5.1 Influences of translation on original writing

Another aspect that this study will touch on is the influence translation might have on original writing. There are many studies focusing on the crucial role translation plays in the creative growth of writers. For instance, Mark Pietralunga in his study of Fenoglio analyses some of the writer's translations of English authors as determinant works in shaping his own original style:

> The translations I have chosen to analyse best illustrate the writer's approach to language and style that corresponds to the experiments in his creative writings. I intend to demonstrate how Fenoglio's decision to translate these particular texts was not the mere consequence of a fascination with a tradition but the result of an attraction to works that enabled him to explore and expand his own artistic expression.[72]

Taking a personal, autobiographical approach, Susan Bassnett discusses how, in her own translations of the Argentine poet Alejandra Pizarnik, the boundary between translating and writing becomes imperceptible and translation often merges into her 'original' writing:

> For me, the periods when I have not felt any strong impulse to produce my own poetry have been periods of extended reading, of different kinds of writing, and, most obviously, of translation. I believe this has been the case over the centuries for many writers: translating serves as a way of continuing to write and to shape language creatively, it can act as a regenerative force. [...] Translation was a means [...] of discovering new ways of writing.[73]

Does creativity work in the same way for 'real' writers as for 'mere' translators? Bassnett stresses the influence Pizarnik had on her own writing:

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[72] Pietralunga, *Beppe Fenoglio and English Literature*, p. 16.
[73] Bassnett, 'Translating and Writing', pp. 179 and 174.

> Then I realized that not only had I stopped translating Pizarnik, but also my whole style of writing had changed and I was writing not so much like her, but in a style that echoed her.[74]

Translation always implies a 'carrying over' of different voices, and it is not always easy to separate them and identify their different provenances. But, does this crossing of voices not complicate and compromise our ability to separate out, and clearly identify, the translator's voice in translation? For instance, in chapter 4, I analyse the style of Pavese in his translation of Melville's *Benito Cereno* and attempt to verify whether Pavese's original style is passed on in his translation. Now, before Pavese translated *Benito Cereno*, he had translated Melville's most famous novel *Moby Dick* (and the translation was unanimously considered a masterpiece). How far did translating *Moby Dick* influence Pavese's original style? And, how far did Pavese's early translation of *Moby Dick* influence his translation of *Benito Cereno*? If Melville's voice and Pavese's are already partly fused before he comes to *Benito Cereno*, is it possible to establish whether Pavese's *Benito Cereno* is more similar in style to his *Moby Dick* than the original works were in Melville's English? Similarly, in my last chapter I examine the translation Lalla Romano did of Flaubert's 'Un cœur simple'. She translated that work at the very beginning of her career as a writer. She was extremely influenced by Flaubert's story. In fact, soon after her translation she wrote a story, *Maria*, which presents extremely similar features in content and form to Flaubert's 'Un cœur simple'. Romano, after many years, revised that translation for its re-issue in the Einaudi series STS: how far is it possible to establish whether her revision choices are closer to her original style if that had been deeply influenced by Flaubert's tale in the first place? Analysis works largely by distinction; can we also cope with a fusion of voices?

The question is harder to define with non-writer translators, as they are less likely to project a strong authorial identity across different works. I do not propose to pursue it in the present study. A related question is: is it right to have only one voice translating one author into a foreign language? If it is true that an original in a new language can best be represented by its infinite possible translations, is it not a

[74] Bassnett, 'Translating and Writing', p. 181.

contradiction to have one voice representing all of one author's works? And what happens when this translator also translates another writer? William Weaver, for instance, translated most of Calvino's works into English. He also translated some of Umberto Eco's works. Do Weaver's Calvino and Eco have a more similar style in English than they have in Italian? Or is the versatility of the skilful 'hack' translator a good guarantee against that possibility?[75]

5.2 Market expectations and the greater authority of writerly translations

The general belief that a famous writer's translation may offer something positively 'extra', over and above a literal version, is certainly a factor conferring additional self-confidence and authority on the writer when translating. The writer might feel more free to change the original because this is what is expected from him. An Italian publisher issuing a translation by a famous writer would hardly advertise it as 'extremely faithful and close to the original', because the reader would probably see this as being beside the point. The 'famous writer' bonus derives from two factors. Firstly, the reader who admires the original writer's works might expect to find something similar in the translation. Secondly, the reader who has not read anything by the writer-translator might purchase the translation believing that a translation by an acclaimed author is a guarantee of 'good quality'.

Ted Goossen describes the extraordinary authority of Haruki Murakami's translations. Murakami is an internationally successful writer and a translator of American writers. In Japan his translations are best-sellers too, because

> Japanese readers tend to select books based on their translators, something hard to imagine in a culture such as ours in which the name of the translator seldom registers in a reader's mind. A few years ago, for example, when Murakami's version of Carver's complete works was just out, I saw red banners flying in front of the Kinokuniya bookstore in Shinyuku promoting the series; not surprisingly, perhaps,

[75] Tim Parks points to another, more practical danger of having a large amount of literature translated by a star translator like Weaver: 'in the past, certain star translators translated hundreds of titles, but quite probably this was done at the expense of other equally fine translators who remained without work and of whom we know very little. I seriously doubt whether it is a good thing to have a large percentage of a country's literature all interpreted by the same man or woman (as was the case with Italian literature and William Weaver through the 1970s and 80s). If one does translate regularly, constantly, it becomes extremely hard to keep one's work alert and fresh.' In Parks, 'Mysteries of the Meta-Task', p. 1.

> Murakami's name was placed above Carver's and printed in larger characters. The Japanese profile of American authors whom Murakami translates thus soars the moment his translation appears – even the original English texts are snapped up, though few can read them easily.[76]

The detailed analysis of translations in the following chapters will incidentally show that in Italy the prestige of established writers can be 'passed on' into their translations as an extension of their original work. The analysis shows that often translations done, or sometimes just signed, by famous Italian writers may enjoy a greater authority than translations by lesser-known translators. Sometimes, the patterns in translational choices identified during the analysis seem to suggest that the translation by a famous writer can enjoy even more authority than the original text. Translations by writers seem to last for a very long time in the Italian market, almost as if they belonged to the writer's original works.

One of the main aims of my research is to investigate the factors that build up an established writer's greater authority over the text that he or she is translating (at times matching the authority of the original writer), compared to the authority of a lesser known translator. In this way I address, from a specific point of view, the more general question of the translator's authority.[77] And this leads to an important related question: does the higher authority enjoyed by writers facilitate or hinder a faithful creative rendering of the original in the new language?

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[76] Ted Goossen, 'Haruki Murakami and the Culture of Translation' in Esther Allen and Susan Bernofski (eds.), *In Translation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp. 183-186 (p. 184).

[77] Tim Parks in *Translating Style* discusses the opposing positions regarding the question of authority in translation, from Kundera who asserts the paramount rights of the author, to Venuti who asserts the autonomous responsibilities of the translator. Parks says: 'Lawrence Venuti [...] declares that the original itself, far from embodying any "supreme authority", has only the status of a translation (in that it is created as a selection from a huge body of thought and memory) and concludes that the translator has a right to impose his own individuality on the text, not by returning it to the conventional idiom of the language he is working in, but, on the contrary, by following his own genius, his own interpretation and finding a unique style of his own. While this position is anathema to Kundera and indeed to publishers, who have much to gain from the idea of the international superstar author and wish readers to believe they are getting the real thing, we should nevertheless note that at a deeper level Kundera and Venuti have much in common. Both of them are chiefly concerned with promoting individual as against conventional usage, only that in Kundera's case it is the writer's, in Venuti's the translator's.' Parks, *Translating Style*, p. 246.

Is it true that writers have extra skills, or do writers tend to use the source text as a point of departure for their own? Is the Einaudi experience justified by the practical analysis of the texts by writers?

According to Benjamin, as summarized by Paul de Man, there is no relation between being a good poet and being a good translator, because their practices are completely different:

> At any rate, for Benjamin there is a sharp distinction between them. It is not necessary for good translators to be good poets. Some of the best translators – he mentions Voss (translator of Homer), Luther and Schlegel – are very poor poets. There are some poets who are also translators: he mentions Hölderlin, and George, who translated Baudelaire – Dante also, but primarily Baudelaire, so Benjamin is close to George. But then, he says, it is not because they are great poets that they are great translators, they are great poets *and* great translators.[78]

The success of a translation in the end comes down to the translator's individual choices based on his or her understanding of the original, personal experience, and taste. Each translator reads the ST in his or her own way. And it is in this act of reading that the creative force of translation emerges, as observed by Peter Bush in 'The writer of translations':

> Translatorly readings of literature provoke the otherness within the subject of the translator, work at a level not entirely under the control of the rationalizing discourse of the mind, release ingredients from the subconscious magma of language and experience, shoot off in many directions, provoked by the necessity of the creation of new writing. A professional translator is one who is aware of this process, gives it full rein, and is able to hold it in check as one lateral level for meaning and a source for potential language.[79]

My thesis will attempt to verify whether and how being an established writer affects the translator's way of reading, understanding and reproducing a text in a new language.

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[78] Paul de Man, *The Resistance to Theory*, p. 81. (This text derives from the transcription of a spoken lecture.)

[79] Peter Bush, 'The writer of translations' in *The Translator as Writer*, pp. 23-32 (p. 25).

6. Subdivisions and criteria of the present study

The study is divided into four more chapters, followed by a brief conclusion.

Chapter 2 looks closely at the Einaudi series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', and through an examination of some major extra-textual factors (the writer-translators and original authors, modalities of commissioning, the paratext),[80] formulates hypotheses, raises further questions and situates the series within the sociocultural coordinates in which it is produced.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 present three case studies of translations by established Italian writers. This is organized around the close linguistic analysis of a large amount of material,[81] allowing some of the important patterns associated with 'writerly translation' to emerge. The study looks at a large amount of text. It is my belief that an objective judgement of a translation can be given only after analysing the whole translation carefully compared to the original. For reasons of space, however, the analysis as presented covers the beginning of each source text (where the translator establishes the tone of his or her work), and a selection of symptomatic moments from later on in the text.

My criteria for choosing the texts to analyse were that I identified three translations that are most representative of the different typologies of the works published in the STS series. Chapter 3 analyses a translation made especially for the series (and also one of its inaugural texts); in chapter 4 I consider the re-issuing of an old translation by one of the most famous Italian writers, who had already died at the time of the publication of his translation in STS; finally, in chapter 5, I examine a re-issue of an old translation which was revised by its original writer especially for the series.

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[80] Eg. titles, the 'Nota del traduttore' at the end of the book, publisher's jacket copy etc. Gérard Genette in *Paratexts*: *Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) investigates liminal devices and conventions, within and outside the book, that mediate between book, author and reader.

[81] The need for thorough, although selective, analysis of STs and TTs considered has, for obvious space reasons, made it impossible to provide a major number of case studies and consequently has limited my capacity to uncover large-scale patterns and trends in Italian writerly translations and draw more universal conclusions. However, it is my hope that this work might prove a useful reference in theoretical discussion on translations by writers, offer a useful example of how to analyse translations, and point to areas that might benefit from further study.

I have also privileged texts where a 'free' creative intervention by the translator was not made too visibly necessary by the nature of the source text. On the contrary, I have chosen original works where the detailed arrangement of syntax and choice of lexis is of paramount importance to the production of a certain effect on the reader (in particular chapters 3 and 5 with Poe and Flaubert). I have done this in the hope that it would make it easier to track down, if present, 'unnecessary' creative interventions by the translator. In chapter 4, the choice has been made on the basis of certain characteristics of the writer-translator: as it is the aim of this chapter to analyse original style in translation I have chosen a translator 'of strong original gift', Cesare Pavese, who was one of the most representative writer-translators not only within the Einaudi publishing house but across the whole mid-twentieth century Italian cultural scene.

In chapter 3 the comparative analysis of the translations by Giorgio Manganelli and Maria Gallone of 'The Fall of the House of Usher' by Edgar Allan Poe, together with translations of the same work by Elio Vittorini and Gabriele Baldini, allows us to establish that original writers feel much freer to take 'unnecessary' departures from the source text as compared with their fellow translators who are not writers, or at least not as well known.

Chapter 4 investigates further the difference uncovered in the previous chapter, by analysing Cesare Pavese's translation of *Benito Cereno* by Herman Melville. The central question here is whether the writer rewrites the original in his own style. This chapter allows us to compare what we know of Pavese's authorial style, and what has been established through published scholarship on this topic, to what we can learn by examining a translation. To counterbalance the study, four other translations are taken into consideration: *Benito Cereno* translated by Ruggero Bianchi, Massimo Bacigalupo, Roberto Mussapi and Giancarlo Buzzi.

Finally, chapter 5 examines writerly creativity from a different perspective. The works taken into consideration this time come from Lalla Romano's three versions of Flaubert's 'Un cœur simple': the first published by Einaudi in 1944; the second with minor revisions by the writer for its reissue in the series 'Centopagine' in 1980, the third more heavily revised by the writer for its re-issue in the 'Scrittori tradotti da

scrittori' series in 2000. In this chapter I compare the three texts, identify the differences and try to evaluate their nature. What are the differences between the first and second revision? Does Romano revise her text, especially in the second revision for the STS, in an attempt to shift it closer to the source text and to the style of its original author or does she take freer departures from the original?

My criteria for judging the quality of the translations rest on certain assumptions. One of these is that if the source text was worth translating, its stylistic features are probably also worth preserving, within the limits of the target language, and without suppressing all signs of naturalness and creativity. Another is that translation choices can be right, acceptable, or absolutely wrong (or at least severely impoverished, if one considers translation to be connected with meanings and equivalences). Lastly, I do not accept that there is a simple binary choice to be made between creativity and accuracy; often, the most creative translation solution is one which is beautiful in itself while also remaining, in Tim Parks's phrase, 'astonishingly faithful to its model.'[82]

[82] Tim Parks, 'Why translators deserve some credit', pp. 2-3

CHAPTER 2: 'SCRITTORI TRADOTTI DA SCRITTORI'

Occorre evitare che gli STS diventino
una collana di sole buone traduzioni.

– Giorgio Manganelli

1. Authorial translation at Einaudi

The aim of the present chapter is to introduce the Einaudi series, 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' (STS), founded in 1983. Before investigating this unique publishing project, in an effort to identify and discuss its main relevant features (what texts are published in the series? How are they chosen? Who chooses them? What are the criteria to match a writer with the text to translate? etc.), I would like to sketch a brief outline of the practice of authorial translation within the publishing house, in order to map the series within the well-established practice at Einaudi of commissioning translations by authors. This prehistory can explain a lot about the STS project.

Translations by famous writers were a well-established feature within the publishing house from its beginnings. One of the earliest series of the publishing house, the first dedicated exclusively to foreign works in translation, was 'Narratori stranieri tradotti', founded in 1938, a series that 'grazie al lavoro di Pavese, di Mila, di Leone e Natalia Ginzburg, acquistò subito prestigio per la scelta dei testi e il livello delle traduzioni.'[1] Many of the translations published in the series are by writers or intellectuals, or specialists in a certain language. If we only take a look at the first ten translations issued in the series, we can observe the 'writerly' status of the translator. Among the ten titles feature: two translations by the writer and journalist Alberto Spaini (1892-1975), Goethe's *I dolori del giovane Werther* (1939) and Hoffman's *La principessa Brambilla* (1940); three translations by the writer Cesare Pavese (1908-1950), Daniel Defoe's *Fortune e sfortune della famosa Moll Flanders* (1938), Charles Dickens' *La storia e le personali esperienze di David Copperfield* (1939) and Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno* (1940); one translation by the scholar of Slavic literature

[1] These are the few lines introducing the series 'Narratori stranieri tradotti' in the Einaudi catalogue *Le edizioni Einaudi negli anni 1933-2003* (Torino: Einaudi, 2003), p. 942.

and literary critic Ettore lo Gatto (1890-1983), Ivan Goncharov's *Oblomov* (1938); a translation by the writer and poet Luigi Berti (1904-1964), William Thackeray's *La storia di Henry Esmond* (1939).

Let me say from the outset that the following subsections do not purport to be an exhaustive introduction to authorial translation at Einaudi, but only an outline of certain elements that might cast some light on the origins of STS. I would also like to take the opportunity to point out that a study on the development of translation activities at Einaudi from the 30s to today, would in my opinion represent a very interesting object of further research, and it would be an essential contribution to the contemporary history and theory of translation in Italy, given the prominent intellectual role played by this publishing house in the Italian cultural context, and its influence in reshaping the concept of translation in Italy. The potential for such research became clear to me during my visit to the Einaudi Archives in Turin,[2] when I saw the abundance of documents relating to the different phases of the translation process (commissioning, revising, reviewing, etc.).[3] But the scope of the present chapter is far more limited.

1.1 Translation and Fascism

The practice of translation at Einaudi dates back to the earliest beginnings of the publishing house, which was founded in 1933. Translation formed part of Einaudi's cultural resistance to Fascism. A number of existing studies stress the crucial role played by Fascist cultural autarchy in the unprecedented proliferation of translations in Italy. Translation of foreign works was often seen as a political act against the

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[2] Located in Turin within the State Archive. My visit was funded by the A. J. Leventhal Scholarship, Trinity College Dublin.

[3] I was there for a limited time, and consulted a very small number of items compared to the great wealth of documents kept in the archive. I consulted: The 'Verbali Editoriali' from 1975 onwards; within the 'Corrispondenza con Collaboratori e Autori Italiani', the files: 'Riccardo Bacchelli', 'Massimo Bontempelli', 'Paola Capriolo', 'Gianni Celati', 'Fausta Cialente', 'Gianfranco Contini', 'Eduardo De Filippo', 'Giulio Einaudi', 'Franco Fortini', 'Mario Fortunato', 'Carlo Emilio Gadda', 'Natalia Ginzburg', 'Rosetta Loy', 'Clara Lusignoli', 'Mario Luzi', 'Giorgio Manganelli', 'Massimo Mila', 'Eugenio Montale', 'Cesare Pavese', 'Sandro Penna'. Unfortunately, some of the files I wanted to consult (e.g. 'Lalla Romano') were not available.

regime. Mark Pietralunga, in his study on the Italian writer Beppe Fenoglio and translation, points out that during those years when the Fascist regime was firmly consolidated (after 1930) as a cultural regime, when any form of western bourgeois art was condemned as immoral and anti-patriotic, and the production of Italian art was greatly encouraged, translation of foreign works assumed a prominent role in the publishing market. At this time in Italy numerous new publishing houses or new series dedicated to translation of foreign works were founded:

> In Milan in 1929 Valentino Bompiani founded the Bompiani publishing house, which introduced several British and American writers and published the famous anthology *Americana* in 1942. In 1932 Carlo Frassinelli launched a publishing firm in Turin that made its debut by publishing Cesare Pavese's translation of Herman Melville and Sherwood Anderson. The Mondadori publishing house formed a new series in 1933, "Medusa", reserved exclusively for foreign novels [...]. The Turin-based Einaudi Publications, founded in 1933 in direct opposition to the Fascist regime, introduced immediately to the Italian public such writers as Edgar Lee Masters and Ernest Hemingway.[4]

Christopher Rundle, in *Publishing Translations in Fascist Italy*, stresses the unprecedented proliferation of translations during Fascism in Italy:

> It was galling to those who supported the Fascist cultural 'revolution' and who paid credence to the myth that it had brought with it a period of cultural and intellectual fertility and *dominance* to find out that Fascist Italy was also the largest consumer of translations in the world. [...] Italy was *the most receptive* European country during the 1930s, it published more translations and translations took up a larger proportion of its overall production; the most frequent kind of translation being published in Italy was of narrative literature; and English was consistently the language most frequently translated from, closely followed by French and then by German.[5]

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[4] Mark Pietralunga, *Beppe Fenoglio and English Literature*, p. 27.

[5] Christopher Rundle, *Publishing Translations in Fascist Italy* (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2010), pp. 45-46. For other interesting studies on the subject see also: Elisa Cattaneo, 'Borgese e la "Biblioteca Romantica" Mondadori' <http://www.fondazionemondadori.it/cms/culturaeditoriale/497/2010-2>, pp. 12-17 [accessed March 2013]. Cattaneo gives a historical perspective of the beginning of the Mondadori series 'Biblioteca Romantica' (1930-1942) directed by the writer Giuseppe Antonio Borgese. In her brief analysis Cattaneo offers some interesting insights on the policies and practices governing translations and their commission within a prestigious publishing house during Fascism in Italy.

The practice of translation at Einaudi, especially translation of American literature, started as a political act against Fascism.[6] In a speech he gave in New York in 1964 at the new Modern Art Gallery, Giulio Einaudi stressed the importance of America and American culture in Italy in opposing Fascism, stressing the fundamental role played by young Italian intellectuals in translating American literature:

> L'America era dunque per i miei giovani amici di allora se stessa ed anche altro, un'allegoria letteraria, un ideale morale, un mito politico. Forse riuscirà difficile a chi non ha vissuto l'esperienza culturale di cui vi parlo, rendersi conto di quale immensa forza di opposizione al fascismo fosse carica questa immagine dell'America. [...] la letteratura Americana alimentò l'opposizione al fascismo e fu combattuta dal fascismo [...]. Questa naturale alleanza tra la cultura e l'antifascismo giovò alla conoscenza in Italia della cultura americana perché i più preparati fra quegli intellettuali non si limitarono ad accogliere i romanzi che venivano in quel periodo dagli U.S.A., ma vollero rintracciare le radici della pianta e si misero a studiare e tradurre anche i classici americani: Melville, Whitman, Poe, Hawthorne. Cesare Pavese fu tra gli iniziatori di questo lavoro al quale collaborò con le sue magistrali traduzioni delle opere di Melville e i suoi saggi critici.[7]

The political role of translation surely contributed to the shaping of authorial translation at Einaudi. In the first place, the political mission of translation in bringing new ideals in the Italian cultural context might explain the fact that a great number

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[6] The position of Einaudi was not always admittedly in opposition with the regime, especially so when the censorship became more severe and Einaudi needed to maintain 'good' relations with the regime, as also Luisa Mangoni observes in her study on the Einaudi publishing house: 'Ma ovviamente i rapporti con Ambrogio Bollati rappresentavano anche, in un momento in cui era anche in discussione che Einaudi potesse proseguire la sua attività editoriale, una garanzia nei confronti del fascismo, resa più urgente da quando il controllo sull'editoria si rafforzava con l'obbligo di ottenere autorizzazioni preventive sui libri da pubblicare. Non era evidentemente eludibile la questione di intrattenere rapporti col regime, tanto più utili quanto più i controlli si facevano occhiuti, e la cui necessità era resa ancora più stringente da difficoltà materiali, come la carenza di carta che si farà sentire drammaticamente durante la guerra.' in Luisa Mangoni, *Pensare i libri* (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1999), pp. 22-23. Jane Dunnett observes: 'If publishers were in danger of finding themselves exposed politically as a result of a book being sequestrated, financially they faced an even greater risk, since in that event they would be compelled to pulp their warehouse stock. In order to avoid such an unfavourable outcome, firms weighed up carefully what to publish and what *not* to publish' in Jane Dunnett, 'Translating under pressure: the censorship of foreign fiction in Italy between the wars' in *Translation and Censorship* edited by Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin, David Parris (Dublin: For Courts Press, 2009), pp. 107-118 (p. 108).

[7] 'Intervento di Giulio Einaudi alla nuova Galleria di Arte Moderna per l'Associazione Culturale Italiana', 9 aprile 1964 (AE, Giulio Einaudi).

were done by (or entrusted to) writers and intellectuals in general. In those years the political role of the writer in opposing Fascism came to coincide with the profile of the translator of foreign literature. Hence the common practice of entrusting translations to writers, and hence also the high status of these translations, which may have been influenced by the widely appreciated political importance of translation at the time. Secondly, this beginning might also have influenced the establishment of certain features characterizing translations by writers. In those years the main aim of certain translations was a political one, and this presumably had its effects on the writer's strategy of translation. One might suppose that the primary aim of these translations was not merely to render a faithful reproduction of the original, but also to absorb and relay ideals opposed to Fascism, so that they might be able to penetrate the minds of Italian readers. The duty of the writer-translator was to domesticate those ideals to make them understood by the Italian public.

In fact, one of the main aims of the new series 'Narratori stranieri tradotti' was to reach a wider public. As Mangoni observes in her study, in the

> "tono molto popolare" delle prefazioni, Einaudi illustrava le caratteristiche della collana e del pubblico a cui essa intendeva rivolgersi.[8]
> Si pensava a un pubblico più ampio di quello degli uomini di cultura. Si guardava anche a potenziali lettori giovani in formazione o a ceti medi in crescita numerica [...] ai quali offrire traduzioni curate del testo originale, con una presentazione che fornisse in modo chiaro e sintetico gli elementi essenziali per la comprensione del testo stesso.[9]

The writer was the person best placed to introduce new ideals. He had the chance to convey them as part of his original production. It might have been easier for a writerly translation to escape Fascist censorship (or at least manoeuvre around it),[10] to hide the

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[8] Mangoni, p. 31.
[9] Mangoni, p. 29.
[10] Jane Dunnett observes: 'It is important to bear in mind that, during the early years of Fascism, book censorship was not accorded a high degree of priority by the regime, which, instead, directed its efforts towards gaining overall control of the press. In a country where nearly 21 per cent of the population was illiterate, newspapers were deemed to represent a far greater threat to public order than did books, still regarded as the preserve of an educated elite.' (pp. 106-107). On this topic see also George Talbot, *Censorship in Fascist Italy 1922-1943* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). On translation as a political act see Werner Winter, 'Translation as a political action' in *The craft and context of translation* edited by William Arrowsmith and Roger Shattuck (New York: Anchor Books, 1964), pp. 172-176.

foreign work under the writer's name of an already published Italian writer. And, in this sense, a strong original style of the writer-translator would play to advantage of better hiding dangerous ideals from the eyes of censorship. (Needless to say, these suggestions are purely speculative, but regardless of whether such factors were effective in practice, they may have formed part of the ideological backdrop of translation work.)

It might have been in this context that Pavese claimed a right to his domesticating translation strategy at the beginning of the famous letter (where he expresses his theory of translation as re-creation) to the Italian publisher Bemporad:[11]

> Mi preme farle osservare che il mio sforzo è stato appunto di far sì che "i lettori capissero il pensiero e gli atteggiamenti dei personaggi del romanzo". E ad ottener questo non c'era che un mezzo: intendere il più fedelmente possibile il testo e rendere quel che s'era inteso, non colla laterale equivalenza linguistica, ma col più italiano, col più *nostro* sforzo di ri-creazione possibile [...].[12]

Finally, it was a common practice at Einaudi that translations were done by writers as well as by professional translators; and often it was they who chose the texts to translate.

1.2 Special conditions for writer-translators: the case of Montale

Another important factor that should be considered when trying to trace the origins of STS series, is that, not only at Einaudi, it was quite common for writers to translate, but they also enjoyed special conditions compared to professional translators.

To illustrate the special status that writers enjoyed as translators, I will quote from a few documents that highlight the regard in which they were held. These come from

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[11] Bemporad had accused Pavese of using too many dialectal and slang expressions in his translation of *Our Mr. Wrenn* by Sinclair Lewis (Bemporad, 1930). This letter will be quoted again more extensively in chapter four.

[12] Pavese to Enrico Bemporad, 4 Aprile 1931, in *Lettere 1924-1944*, a cura di Lorenzo Mondo (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 290.

the correspondence between the Italian poet Eugenio Montale and the publisher Giulio Einaudi which I consulted during my visit to the Einaudi Archive.[13]

In a letter that Giulio Einaudi wrote to Eugenio Montale in 1940, commissioning a translation of Flaubert's *L'éducation sentimentale*, the publisher offers a higher fee than normal: 'Prendendo come base il livello consueto dei compensi della mia casa, ma aumentandolo com'è giusto, io le proporrei 4.000 mila lire.'[14]

This translation of Flaubert was never to happen. In the years that followed, Montale repeatedly declined the offer to translate Flaubert. It is interesting to observe the exaggerated insistence with which Einaudi tries to persuade the poet, and his determination to publish a Flaubert translated by Montale. In one letter, the publisher suggests that Montale himself should decide on the right level of payment:

> Ho ripensato nel frattempo a Flaubert. È un vero peccato che le ragioni finanziarie debbano avere così grave peso sulle sue decisioni al riguardo. Sono venuto quindi nella determinazione di proporle un sostanziale mutamento nelle forme di compenso, proporzionato al tempo che lei impiega nella versione. Lei dovrebbe stabilirmi il numero di mesi che potrebbe dedicare, anche solo parzialmente, a questo lavoro, e chiedermi liberamente la retribuzione mensile che per tale periodo di tempo le farebbe comodo. Spero che così ci intenderemo.[15]

In a letter dated 25/9/41[16] Montale declines again, explaining that he is already engaged in three translations from English. Einaudi replies that he is very sorry about the decision but he does not abandon hope, asking the poet whether there is anything else he would like to translate: 'Non avrebbe in mente nulla di più breve che la tenti? Manterrei il compenso offertole per *L'éducation*.'[17]

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[13] In the file 'Giulio Einaudi' – where most of the documents relating to the person of Giulio Einaudi are kept – there is a copious correspondence concerning different translations between the publisher and many of his collaborators and writers. I imagine that these documents have been published in various places, but as I have not come across them in print, I will just give the archival reference.

[14] Einaudi a Montale 2 aprile 1940, (AE, Eugenio Montale).

[15] Einaudi a Montale 22 luglio 1941 (AE, Eugenio Montale).

[16] Montale a Einaudi 25 settembre 1941, (AE, Eugenio Montale).

[17] Einaudi a Montale 10 ottobre 1941, (AE, Eugenio Montale).

Why is Einaudi so interested in having a translation by Montale? He presumably thought that Montale's translations would sell well, and was also no doubt anxious to have a continuing association with such a well-regarded poet. A fact supporting this latter hypothesis is that most of the insistent letters asking the poet for a translation[18] are dated after the successful publication of Montale's second collection of poems *Le occasioni*, published by Einaudi in 1939.

In another letter Einaudi offers to publish a translation Montale had done of Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude*, where the original publishing deal had fallen through.

> Caro Montale,
>
> Ho sentito dire che avrebbe portato a compimento una versione di *Strange Interlude* di O'Neill che per una serie di curiose circostanze non verrebbe più pubblicata dall'editore per il quale è stata preparata. Sarei lieto se mi informasse se questa voce corrisponde a verità, nel quale caso le proporrei di rilevare io la versione che senza dubbio sarà un'ottima cosa. Ho letto proprio in questi giorni il suo bellissimo *Billy Budd*, e mi spiace solo che anche per il suo lavoro di traduttore la mia casa non riesca ad impiegarla in esclusiva. La prego di nuovo di darmi la risposta per il dramma di O'Neill, e speriamo che sia questa l'occasione buona per iniziare anche in questo settore della Sua attività una collaborazione continuativa e fruttuosa.[19]

The translation in question has an interesting history which is told by George Talbot in *Montale's 'Mestiere Vile'*. In 1942 Montale

> was consulted as an expert by Edizioni Teatro dell'Università di Roma to read an Italian translation of Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude.* The translation was the work of Bice Chiappelli, a young scholar from Reggio Emilia. Montale rejected the translation maintaining that it failed to reach professional standards. Several months later Edizioni Teatro dell'Università published Montale's translation of *Strange Interlude.* Linguistic analyses of the two translations have suggested that Montale's

[18] In a letter dated 30 marzo 1940 Einaudi proposes that Montale should translate Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and *The Awkward Age* by Henry James (in AE, Eugenio Montale).

[19] Einaudi a Montale, 10 giugno 1942 (AE, Eugenio Montale). There are more letters of insistence Einaudi writes to Montale. For instance, after Montale has declared that he has already an agreement with another editor for *Strange Interlude* (Montale a Einaudi, 15 Giugno 1942), Einaudi replies on 26/6/42 'Caro Montale, mi spiace che si è fatto un buco nell'acqua con Strange Interlude. Ma non dovrebbe dimenticarsi di noi' (Einaudi a Montale, 22 giugno 1942).

version was produced by retouching Chiappelli's translation. Montale was successfully sued over this in the 1950s.[20]

What did Einaudi know about the story of this translation? His reference to 'una serie di curiose circostanze' most likely points to the fact that Einaudi knew about Montale's retouching of Chiappelli's version. If this were true, then it would strongly suggest that what Einaudi was hunting with such relentless insistence was not so much a good translation, but a translation signed by a famous writer, regardless of its history.

After many failures in trying to obtain a translation by the famous poet, Einaudi, on the 18th of November 1942, makes another exceptional proposal. He commits to publish anything the poet wishes to translate, with no time deadlines and extremely promising financial conditions:

> Caro Montale,
>
> mi dice che deve ancora smaltire vecchi impegni di traduzioni: chissà che non riesca anch'io ad avere qualcosa da lei? Le faccio anzi una proposta che dovrebbe sorriderle. Qualunque opera di poesia o di prosa le venisse l'estro di rendere in italiano, la riservi a me, anche senza avere il mio preventivo benestare e senza quindi fissare scadenza e obbligarla in alcun modo. Mi impegno a pubblicarla. Alla consegna del lavoro le offrirò un compenso adeguato alla fatica e all'impegno che solo lei sa metter in una traduzione.[21]

At last, Montale informs Einaudi that he is working on a translation of *Green Mansions* by Hudson, and that he will give that to him.[22] Einaudi asks Montale to *swear* that he will give the work to his publishing house:

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[20] George Talbot, *Montale's 'Mestiere Vile'* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1995), p. 35.
[21] Einaudi a Montale, 18 novembre 1942 (AE, Eugenio Montale).
[22] 'Sto lavorando a un romanzo inglese che quando sarà possibile darò alla sua collezione: *Green Mansions* di Hudson (ma non ne parli con nessuno).' Interestingly, George Talbot observes that 'Montale translated a large number of novels and short stories by English and American writers during the 1930s and 1940s, but the circumstances of *La vita nella foresta* differ from those of the other translations in one important respect: this translation was not commissioned by a publisher' (Talbot, p. 157). As the letters between Einaudi and the poet show, there had at least been a sort of attempted 'commissioning' (albeit rather anomalous) of the translation: by Einaudi for whom Montale had decided to translate *Green Mansions*. Talbot points out that Lucia Rodocanachi (the ghost translator who sometimes provided translations of texts in English for Montale and for other famous writers) was involved in the

> Il caso Hudson m'ha riempito di gioia, e quasi non credo ai miei occhi. [...] Stia certo che non ne parlerò con nessuno, ma vorrà scusare il mio cinismo se insisto per farle giurare l'impegno. Le offro 4000 lire pagabili a consegna: va bene? Ma lei mi deve rispondere formalmente che "accetta".[23]

2. Different conditions for non-writers

From the examination of some files of professional translators working for Einaudi, it emerges that the conditions and consideration of professional translators were quite different from those for writer-translators. A quite visible difference is that Giulio Einaudi himself does not seem involved in this; dealings with professional translators were entrusted to other colleagues, at least in the files I consulted.

In the file of Clara Lusignoli, a professional translator from French, there are letters between the translator and the publishing house showing substantially different terms compared to the ones offered to an eminent writer-translator such as Montale. In a letter dated 3/11/66, a substantial difference of the translator's attitude is visible. The translator is humble, considers herself lucky in having been commissioned to do a

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translation of *Green Mansions* and that Montale 'had originally suggested to his ghost translator, Lucia Rodocanachi, that they collaborate on the work without contacting a publisher, because a publisher would inevitably set them a deadline.' Montale appears to be concealing something from Rodocanachi, by not telling her about his 'quite advantageous' agreement with Einaudi.

[23] Einaudi a Montale, 23 gennaio 1943 (AE, Eugenio Montale). On the 25th of January 1943, Montale asks for a supplement to pay for typewriting: 'Circa il compenso, sta bene; nessuno, mi offrirebbe di più. Ma c'è il guaio della dattilografia; non posso continuare a lavorare su copia unica fatta da me, in un periodo di smarrimenti e di rischi. Perciò vorrei chiederle un supplemento di 4/500 lire (si vedrà) per queste spese. D'accordo?' Is Montale thinking of the payment for Rodocanachi? Montale's translation would be finally published by Einaudi in 1987 in the series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'. There are more letters between the publisher and the poet witnessing the same insistence by Einaudi to obtain translations signed by the poet. Parts of the correspondence reveal a certain amount of suspicion, as when, in a letter dated 14/4/1950, Montale writes: 'Caro Einaudi, vorrei sapere se Lei ha autorizzato il prof. Errante (o la casa Sansoni) a riprodurre nell'antologia ORFEO dell'Errante numerose poesie tradotte dal cinese...da me! Trattasi dell'antologia della Valensin di cui feci la prefazione, senza pretendere di tradurre dal cinese né di conoscere quella lingua.' in Montale a Einaudi, 14 aprile 1950 (AE, Eugenio Montale). (Einaudi's reply was quite vague.) But the publisher remained determined to pursue every possibility: on 15/1/59 he writes 'Caro Montale, come t'ha detto Aldovrandi ci terremmo molto a pubblicare la tua versione del CID di Corneille. Finalmente avremo il modo di presentare una delle tragedie del Seicento francese sulle quali il tabù dell'intraducibilità può essere smentito solo dall'incontro con un traduttore d'eccezione [...]' in Einaudi a Montale, 15 gennaio 1959 (AE, Eugenio Montale).

translation, and is quite cautious in asking for money, accepting the offer without asking for more.

> Illustre editore Einaudi,
>
> ricevo la sua lettera del 26/10, gliene sono molto grata e accetto con vivo piacere quanto mi si propone in essa. Vorrei soltanto aggiungere come clausola che il conguaglio da definirsi al 30 settembre 1967 venga stabilito su un minimo di L. 1200 a cartella dattiloscritta (circa 2000 battute); e vorrei pure che mi venisse al più presto inviata la somma dovutami per le traduzioni non ancora saldate (*Autour de Mortin* di Pinget e *Le Vice-Consul* della Duras), da me consegnate in mesi precedenti il presente accordo, somma di cui ho urgente bisogno per i miei improrogabili impegni. P.S. Sarò gratissima di un cortese cenno di risposta. Sto intanto traducendo (con grande divertimento) il romanzo *L'auberge espagnole* di J.L.Bergonzo, affidatomi dal Dott. Neri.[24]

In a later letter (12/6/67) Lusignoli complains about the reduction of her fees without any previous discussion. She also makes the point that translations are not all the same, there are some more difficult than others and this should be taken into consideration in the payment conditions:

> Caro dott. Davico,
>
> [...] Mi succede questo: a un certo punto (mi pare all'epoca della mia traduzione di Bergonzo) la vostra amministrazione aveva spontaneamente portato il mio compenso a 1300 per cartella. Ne sono stata felice e scrissi anche due righe per ringraziare. Ma nei contratti seguenti il mio compenso è tornato a 1200... . Perché questa retrocessione? Eppure non avevo lavorato con minore impegno né meno puntualmente. [...] Un secondo punto: sto ora traducendo Fibrillas di Michel Leiris. La prego: se non l'ha già fatto, dia una scorsa al libro o lo guardi ad apertura di pagina. Vedrà che si tratta di una traduzione eccezionalmente difficile, la più massacrante che si possa immaginare. Le confesso che mi costa in tempo e in fatica il triplo di quante ne ho fatte finora (e sì che non mi avete mai dato autori "facili"!) [...] non le pare giusto che una traduzione di eccezionale difficoltà venga retribuita in modo eccezionale?[25]

On 4/7/1967 Davico Bonino replies in a friendly tone, making a small concession:

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[24] Lusignoli a Davico Bonino, 3 novembre 1966 (AE, Clara Lusignoli).

[25] Lusignoli a Davico Bonino, 12 giugno 1967 (AE, Clara Lusignoli). The values of money had shifted in the years since the Einaudi-Montale correspondence, so the L. 1200 is even worse than it looks.

> Cara signora, quel brutto 1200 l'ho fatto correggere d'ufficio su tutti i contratti; e ho fatto riconteggiare le due traduzioni già consegnate. Ma non mi chieda 1500 su Leiris! Lo so che è difficile! Ma lei ha già una buona media, cioè 1300, e in quella media ci sono anche libri facilini, come la Beauvoir, ecc.[26]

Lusignoli does not insist and replies 'Benissimo!! Mi dichiaro soddisfatta e la ringrazio di cuore.'[27]

3. Revision and editing

From my brief sampling of some documents at the Einaudi Archive, I have observed that seldom do we find letters referring to the revision of an authorial translation, while letters revising or referring to the revision of professional translators are quite frequent. And usually comments on non-authorial translations are not as positive as the ones made on translations by writers. As we have seen, Giulio Einaudi would accept blind to publish anything the poet Montale might decide to send, certain that it must be an excellent translation. In the following chapters, the close examination of writerly translations compared to non-writerly translations of the same text will allow us to investigate the possible different revisions to which the different texts were subjected. Were translations by famous writers revised at all?

On the other hand, there are documents witnessing that revisions of non-writerly translations were very detailed and strict. They were usually done by intellectuals, writers and people who had themselves done work for the publishing house.[28] Often,

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[26] Davico Bonino a Lusignoli, 4 luglio 1967 (AE, Clara Lusignoli). A letter from Giulio Einaudi to the poet and literay critic Franco Fortini, dated during the same time as the letters to Lusignoli, shows the difference in the payment of writer-translators: (letter dated 29/2/68) 'Caro Fortini [...], grazie soprattutto di aver aderito a tradurre per noi le *Svendborger Geschichte*. Ho riflettuto a lungo al compenso perché fosse adeguato al lavoro e al tuo prestigio di traduttore. Può andare 2500 a cartella?' Einaudi a Fortini, 29 febbraio 1968 (AE, Franco Fortini).

[27] Lusignoli a Davico Bonino, 11 luglio 1967 (AE, Clara Lusignoli).

[28] Mangoni observes (and supports her observation with archival material) that for the series 'Narratori stranieri tradotti' 'è evidente (...) l'accurata revisione a cui Ginzburg e Pavese sottoponevano le traduzioni' in *Pensare i libri*, p. 29. Celebrated writers like Ginzburg, Pavese, Calvino, Manganelli, etc. all had a prominent role as editors of translation at Einaudi. Their view could be trenchant, as in this letter of 12 November 1945 from Pavese to Segreteria Einaudi: 'Per quanto riguarda la traduzione dello Hayek, sia Giolitti che Ceriani

translations by professionals would be revised more than once by different editors, as we see in a letter that Carlo Carena, an in-house translator and editor,[29] sent to the novelist and academic Manganelli (10/3/1972):

> Caro Manganelli,
>
> una studiosa di letteratura inglese segnalataci da amici della casa ha tradotto una scelta di liriche di Thomas Wyatt, che presenta per la collezione di poesia. Le abbiamo lette qui e ci paiono versioni assai fini, anche se un po' distese, ma rimettiamo l'ultimo giudizio a te e a Roscioni,[30] a cui ti prego di passare il dattiloscritto dopo averlo esaminato.[31]

Writers enjoyed a higher status not only as translators, but also as editors of translations. It is quite logical to suppose that a good translator may be also a good editor of translations. But, going back to the main question of this research, is it logical to think that a good writer is also a good translator? At Einaudi the practice of translation seems to rest partly on that assumption.

From a letter from Clara Lusignoli to Davico Bonino (14/1/69) we can see that the professional translator could not expect to have much authority on his or her translation. The editor has more decision-making power on non-writerly translations than does the translator.

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hanno esplicitamente dichiarato che la traduzione della Marra era insoddisfacente sotto tutti i punti di vista e Giolitti ha incaricato la segreteria di restituire il manoscritto alla traduttrice comunicandole che era da rifare interamente.' In Pavese a segreteria, 12 novembre 1945 (AE, Cesare Pavese). In a letter from Giovanni Nicosia to Pavese: 'Caro Pavese, ho rivisto le Mille e una notte (Notti 681-738) tradotte da Costantino Pansera e ti mando le mie impressioni: la traduzione è infame. Si vede che il Pansera ha in un primo tempo tradotto molto alla lettera. Poi, ha cercato di dare una forma italiana decente al testo, ma lo ha reso ancora più infernale. [...] Consiglierei di dare in lettura il testo a qualche altro competente.' In Nicosia a Pavese, 30 agosto 1945 (AE, Cesare Pavese). Giovanni Nicosia was a friend of Calvino from the time of the Resistenza. He became proofreader at Einaudi. In *L'Unità,* 11/12/2013 <http://cerca.unita.it/ARCHIVE/xml/2600000/2598040.xml?key=f.v.g.&first=161&orderby=1&f=fir&dbt=arc> [accessed 10/2/2014].

[29] Carlo Carena is a scholar of classical antiquity and translator. In Guido Davico Bonino 'Leggere come editare' <http://aig.humnet.unipi.it/rivista_aig/baig4/Davico.pdf>, p. 2 [accessed March 2014]

[30] Giancarlo Roscioni (1927-2012) was a literary critic and a scholar of seventeenth century literature and collaborator of the Einaudi publishing house. He was one of the most authoritative critics of Carlo Emilio Gadda. In < http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/gian-carlo-roscioni/ > [accessed 10/2/2014]

[31] Carena a Manganelli, 10 marzo 1972 (AE, Giorgio Manganelli).

> [...] Quanto alla sua richiesta di mettere in parentesi quadre le frasi e locuzioni troppo "avvocatesche"...Ho sempre cercato nelle mie traduzioni di mettermi nei panni dell'autore, anche a costo di sentirmici a disagio, e forse per questo ho avuto la gioia di contentarvi finora. [...] Naturalmente, dò carta bianca ai vostri revisori e son certa che faranno per il meglio.[32]

Sometimes the authority of the revision of the translation seems based more on the fact that the revisor is an authority of some sort than on accurate comparison of the translation with the original, as a letter from Nicosia to Pavese shows: 'Caro Pavese, ti mando il vol. di Delitto e castigo. Ho avuto l'impressione che il libro, salvo la scocciantissima loquela Toscana, in genere è tradotto abbastanza bene. L'ideale sarebbe stato un controllo con l'originale. Comunque credo che così ora possa andare.'[33]

The problem of the unprofessional and arbitrary character of some revisions is often stressed by translators in general. For instance, Angelo Morino, Italian translator from Spanish,[34] complains that one of the biggest problems for a translator is his or her

> rapporti con le case editrici: è quello il vero punto dolente e non solo per il problema determinato dal compenso, mai adeguato al lavoro che uno si ritrova a fare. Purtroppo, accade spesso di ritrovarsi catturati in contese con gente che nelle case editrici ci lavora, che magari non conosce neppure la lingua da cui è stato tradotto un testo, ma che si arroga competenze che non possiede e insiste per introdurre correzioni perlomeno arbitrarie. [...] E non parliamo delle correzioni fatte d'ufficio, senza neppure interpellare il traduttore: sono cose che, quando poi il traduttore le vede, spesso si sente gelare il sangue nelle vene.[35]

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[32] Lusignoli a Davico Bonino, 14 gennaio 1969 (AE, Clara Lusignoli).

[33] The translation in question must not be the one by Alfredo Polledro a quite renowned russianist at the time whose *Delitto e Castigo* came out first in 1930 for Slavia publishing house and then for Einaudi in 1947, 1964, 1981 and 1992 (in the catalogue *Le edizioni Einaudi negli anni 1993-2003,* p. 254).

[34] Translator of Allende, Arguedas, Benet, Donoso, Garcìa Marquez, Vargas Llosa etc.

[35] Angelo Morino, 'Traduttore per caso' in *Gli autori invisibili*, edited by Ilide Carmignani (Lecce: BESA, 2008), pp. 102-11 (p. 107). In this book there are other translators expressing their negative consideration of revision. For instance, to the question 'Qual è il tuo editore ideale?', Glauco Felici (translator of Lorca, Paz, Borges, J. Marìas etc.) answers: 'Quello che mi sottoporrà un contratto dove non sia scritto che la mia traduzione verrà revisionata e corretta a insindacabile ed esclusivo giudizio dell'editore (ed eventualmente a mie spese). Non ne ho ancora incontrati...' Glauco Felici, 'Una voce altra', pp. 149-155 (p.154). To the question 'Com'è il tuo redattore ideale?', Vincenzo Mantovani (translator of Bellow, Roth,

Natalia Ginzburg in her 'Nota' to *La strada di Swann* tells the story of the revision of her version. When the *Pleïade* edition of *La recherche* came out in France, the whole Italian translation of Proust's work was revised on the basis of that edition, including Natalia Ginzburg's contribution to the volume. She was not consulted.

> Molti anni dopo uscì in Francia *La Recherche* nelle edizioni della *Pleïade.* Fu allora deciso, nella casa editrice Einaudi, che venisse riveduta l'intera traduzione italiana sul testo della *Pleïade*. Venne riveduta allora anche la mia traduzione. Io non abitavo più a Torino ma a Roma, ed ebbi il torto di non chiedere qualche notizia.
>
> Nella mia traduzione c'erano degli sbagli, e sono stati corretti. Di questo ringrazio. Però penso che i revisori avrebbero dovuto sottopormi le loro correzioni. Non l'hanno fatto.
>
> Questa mia traduzione, se devo giudicarla oggi, la giudico una traduzione difettosa ma appassionata. Penso che i revisori, quando una traduzione è difettosa ma appassionata, se ne dovrebbero accorgere, correggere gli sbagli ma sottoporre al traduttore le correzioni. Se non lo fanno maneggiano qualcosa che non dovrebbe essere maneggiato senza consenso.[36]

A translator has a sentimental attachment to his or her translation as a writer has to his or her original work:

> Correggere gli sbagli era sacrosanto, ma alcune correzioni le ho trovate arbitrarie. [...] per esempio, riguardo alla *petite madeleine*, io avevo tradotto *maddalenina,* e i revisori hanno corretto sostituendo col termine francese, *madeleine*. Perché? *maddalenina* non è mica brutto. E per esempio ancora: "Nell'entusiasmo gridai brandendo l'ombrello chiuso: Zut zut zut zut", dice la mia traduzione; i revisori al posto di quello "zut zut" hanno corretto "Nespole!" *Nespole*, perché? [...] "e soprattutto, la povera piccina è tanto stupida!" dice la mia traduzione: *la pauvre petite*, in francese; hanno corretto: "soprattutto, povera piccina, è tanto stupida!" Ma a quell'articolo io ci tenevo moltissimo. È stato un dispiacere che me l'abbiano tolto. Qualcuno mi troverà forse matta, ma i traduttori, nelle loro traduzioni, amano certe cose minime che gli altri non sanno.[37]

Hemingway, Bukovski, Faulkner etc.) answers: 'Sordomuto (e magari cieco).' Vincenzo Mantovani, 'Vita marginale di un capitano di ventura', pp. 70-77 (p. 75).

[36] Proust, *La strada di Swann*, p. 562.

[37] Ibid., pp. 562-563. For a happier story of revision (told by the revisor), here is Professor Magrelli's encounter with Franco Fortini, who gratefully accepted his suggestions: 'Einaudi mi propose di scrivere la prefazione di un libro di Gide, *Viaggio al Congo*. Io feci un lavoro

4. First-class and second-class translators

From the study of some of the Archivio Einaudi documents it appears that within the publishing house there is a clear-cut distinction between two different types of translators: the writer, or critic, or individual with some culture, and the professional translator, employed only for translations. The writer-translator is better paid, enjoys better conditions in general and does not need a careful thorough revision as is the case for the professional one. Some letters also stress the effort at Einaudi to employ and to form translators who are reliable and professional, making a distinction between translators who can engage in stylistically difficult translations, and translators who cannot. In a letter to Aldo Peluffo dated 6/12/1945 Pavese writes:

> Caro Aldo,
>
> ho visto la prèva del tuo amico Ronzello. Di essa non si può dire né bene né male. È comune. Non gli si possono affidare libri d'impegno stilistico e, quanto a quelli più andanti, la Casa Editrice è infestata come il formaggio dai vermi, da pretendenti innumerevoli.[38]

In another letter (12/1/1946) that Pavese wrote to the Einaudi headquarters, he draws a distinction between translators who need revision and translators who do not, and argues that the aim of the publishing house should be in the direction of employing and training only the second type:

> Vi inviamo le liste di traduttori canonici [...]. La direzione di queste ricerche dovrebbe essere nel senso di costituire una lista di traduttori non necessitanti revisione. I direttori editoriali e di sede dovrebbero svolgere un'opera pedagogica presso i

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enorme. [...] Ma diedi una condizione, cioè di rivedere la traduzione. [...] Il traduttore era nientemeno che Franco Fortini, il quale aveva fatto questo lavoro tempo prima. La traduzione filava bene, però c'erano alcuni errori, delle sviste. E mi ricordo che Einaudi mi disse di sì, fai come ti pare, eccoti il numero di Fortini. Io non l'ho mai incontrato in vita mia, tranne una volta [...]. Gli telefonai, gli dissi come stavano le cose e devo dire che lui, con una grandissima eleganza... Gli mandai tutte le mie obiezioni. Lui se le segnò, una dopo l'altra. Le accettò quasi tutte, per altro. Questo per dire che una persona che aveva fama di essere permaloso, difficile. E con me si comportò in maniera esemplare.' Personal communication, 15 March 2014.

[38] Pavese a Peluffo, 6 dicembre 1945 (AE, Cesare Pavese).

> traduttori onde farli passare dalla lista di soggetto a revisione a quella di non soggetti, oppure indurli a cambiar mestiere.[39]

In a letter from Mario Alicata, one of the publishing house's editors, to Giulio Einaudi, dated 7/8/1943, the distinction between two different types of translation is stressed:

> Caro Einaudi, Ginzburg approva l'idea di affidare traduzioni dal francese a Calamandrei. Egli desidera un contratto tipo Poe. Decidi tu, curando che nella lettera gli sia raccomandato di tradurre uno storico con la stessa eleganza e accuratezza con cui ha tradotto Nerval. Che non traduca quindi come un negro qualunque, perché Einaudi si rivolge apposta a degli scrittori "laureati".[40]

In these letters there is a notable level of contempt for external translators, as in some other letters that have been quoted here. There is also a tacit assumption that 'negri qualunque' do much of the translation work on the market. And, who are the 'negri qualunque'? The 'negro' in question does not seem to be an openly acknowledged hack translator. Is he a concealed ghost translator whose work is destined to appear, suitably amended, under the name of a more illustrious colleague?[41]

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[39] Pavese a sedi Einaudi, 12 gennaio 1946 (AE, Cesare Pavese).

[40] Alicata a Einaudi, 7 agosto 1943 (AE, Giulio Einaudi). It is not clear which Ginzburg had made the decision about employing Franco Calamandrei, which Alicata is now trying to question. Both Natalia Ginzburg and Calamandrei translated Proust for Einaudi. Franco Calamandrei (1917-1982) was an Italian senator and journalist. <http://www.archivionline.senato.it/scripts/GeaCGI.exe?REQSRV=REQPROFILE&REQCARDTYPE=24&ID=1939582 > [accessed 3/3/2014]

[41] This kind of accepted contempt for the 'ordinary' translator is well represented by the ironic and spiteful comments by Augusto Frassineti in an article that appeared in the *Corriere della Sera,* in a page dedicated to the (then) forthcoming Einaudi series STS: 'Dei traduttori professionali preferirei non parlare. Salvo pochi, pochissimi, credo che siano molto tristi e con forti cariche di aggressività repressa. Può bastare un niente per fare di un traduttore professionale un infanticida. Essi sono i paria dell'industria culturale, costretti al malfare, umiliati, torchiati e vilipesi. In un recente convegno a Monselice Fruttero proponeva di sterminarli. A me sembrava eccessivo. Essi, è vero, e non di rado, sfigurano e debilitano, nel trasloco, capolavori di tutte le letterature, e, quel che è peggio, in modo che quasi non pare, in modo obbiettivamente subdolo anche se non premeditato. Al confronto del professionale, nella repubblica delle lettere, il traduttore è un gran signore: può darsi delle arie da libero cittadino, benportante, euforico, sportivo.' Augusto Frassineti, 'Non esiste una teoria' in *La Stampa*, 10 agosto 1983.

5. The commissioning process

The small sample of archival documents which I consulted makes several points clear, and among these is the crucial role in commissioning translations by writers played by Giulio Einaudi,[42] and also by some writers and collaborators of the publishing house (especially Cesare Pavese, and later Italo Calvino). What were their criteria? It is difficult to say with certainty, but some combination of financial viability and cultural prestige must come into the equation. There may also be the practical consideration that if the publisher is happy to issue a writer's translation unrevised, on grounds of artistic freedom, that saves a huge amount of editorial time as against checking and revising a full-time translator's work. And then there is a general question of ethos, an idea of what a writer is supposed to be. As a general principle, Einaudi writers were expected to be able to translate. Writing original works and translating are parallel practices. Translating is fundamental training for a writer. The series STS might be considered as a sort of framework encapsulating the continuity of identity between writer and translator.

What were the criteria for matching writer and text to translate? Some kind of affinity between the writer and the work could be important, both to facilitate the translation and to create a plausible pairing when the book appeared before the reading public. In his already mentioned letter to Montale, Einaudi explains why he had suggested the poet to translate Flaubert: 'Penso piuttosto che Flaubert e Montale stiano benissimo insieme su una copertina, e che questo particolare avrà certo valore

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[42] Giulio Einaudi emerges as an indefatigable scout for possible writer-translators: on the 1st October 1965 he writes to Mario Luzi: 'Caro Luzi, apprendo dalla stampa che lei ha acconsentito a tradurre per gli amici del Teatro Stabile di Torino, Riccardo II di Shakespeare. Tengo molto a precisarle che sarei lieto di pubblicare questo Suo lavoro'. Einaudi a Luzi, 1 ottobre 1965 (AE, Giulio Einaudi). And when someone else is put in charge of chasing a writer for a translation, Einaudi usually appears to have suggested the writer and often also the text to translate, as when Natalia Ginzburg writes to Einaudi: 'Caro Giulio, Umberto Eco ha un contratto con noi per fare Queneau: *Exercices de style.* Non vuol fare Walter Scott, vuole fare Queneau. Soldati saprà, fra una quindicina di giorni, se deve fare o non deve fare un programma televisivo. Se lo deve fare, sarà impegnato per molto tempo. Se non lo deve fare, è invece contento di tradurre Stevenson. Anzi verrà a Torino a parlarti. Ti saluta intanto affettuosamente. Arbasino: non può, ha troppo da fare, deve riscrivere completamente grazie per le magnifiche rose e altri suoi libri. Scusa di scriverti una lettera per spiegare che non può, io gli ho detto che può fare la traduzione anche più in là, ma dice che non si sente di prendere impegni.' Natalia Ginzburg a Einaudi, undated letter (AE, Natalia Ginzburg).

per lei, nel momento in cui prenderà in esame la mia vagliatissima offerta.'[43] But, what kind affinity does Einaudi see between Montale and Flaubert?

In fact, the Montale-Flaubert match turned out to be an unhappy one, as Montale declares in a letter dated 18/1/41:

> Per *l'Éducation* il disastro è completo. Son sempre fermo al I capitolo. Risultato scarso. Penso che sarebbe meglio un altro libro, un libro che unisse l'utile e il dilettevole, che mi facesse guadagnar 3000 lire in 3 mesi, anziché 4000 in 2 anni. Il James che avevo in mente (The awkward age) è difficilissimo, lunghissimo [...]. Non ho la tranquillità necessaria, inoltre tradurre dal francese è molto più difficile. Peccato, però! Vuole che ne accenni a Carlo Emilio Gadda?[44]

Even when faced with the poet's admission of failure, Einaudi insists:

> Per l'Éducation soffro, ma senza protestare. Io desideravo proprio l'abbinamento Flaubert + Montale che, come già le scrissi, suonava meglio di quello Steinbeck + Montale. Perciò la prego di parlarne a Carlo Emilio Gadda tra un paio d'anni, nel caso in cui lei si trovasse sempre fermo al primo capitolo.[45]

From a letter (26/5/1942) that Giulio Einaudi writes to Alicata, an interesting practice of commissioning emerges:

> [...] In merito alla consulenza, cioè ai rapporti su libri che noi abbiamo in lettura a competenti, la casa abitualmente non dà retribuzione, in quanto, di regola se il libro è buono, è lo stesso consulente che lo tradurrà.[46]

To know whether this practice favoured writers over translators, one would need to have a detailed tabulation of all foreign books sent out for readers' reports.

Finally, the documents examined suggest that at Einaudi the practice of translations by writers was quite a common one from the beginning, and that the

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[43] Einaudi a Montale, 2 aprile 1940 (AE, Eugenio Montale).
[44] Montale a Einaudi, 18 gennaio 1941 (AE, Eugenio Montale).Translating from French more difficult than from English? It is hard to agree, from a purely linguistic point of view. But Montale clearly felt an 'affinity' with the English language, although he had studied French at school. Translating Flaubert might indeed be difficult, but is Montale saying this because in English someone else does the literal version for him?
[45] Einaudi a Montale, 27 gennaio 1941 (AE, Eugenio Montale).
[46] Einaudi a Alicata, 26 maggio 1942 (AE, Giulio Einaudi).

unique editorial experiment of a series dedicated exclusively to authorial translations was a logical extension of a tried and tested practice of translation by writers within the publishing house.

With regard to this, it is interesting to read the reason given by Montale for taking so long to translate something for Einaudi:

> Creda pure che se finora non le ho dato nessuna traduzione è stato non per cattiva volontà, ma per un eccesso di riguardo verso la Sua casa e verso me stesso. Ho cominciato con autori tipo Steinbeck, Dorothy Parker… . Pubblicati da Bompiani, tutti capivano di che si trattava: un pot boiler per il povero traduttore; stampati da Einaudi (se pur li avesse voluti) diventavano tutt'altra cosa, acquistavano di pretesa.[47]

Montale, who published his original works with Einaudi, does not seem very inclined to publish his translations with the same publisher. Does the poet fear that his translations do not live up to the prestige of his original work? Is Montale questioning that a good writer is also a good translator? Or is he keeping the two spheres separate because, as a poet, he was happy to be an Einaudi author, whereas translation was, in his view, a 'mestiere vile' to which he was forced by the senseless demands of some 'coglioni'?[48]

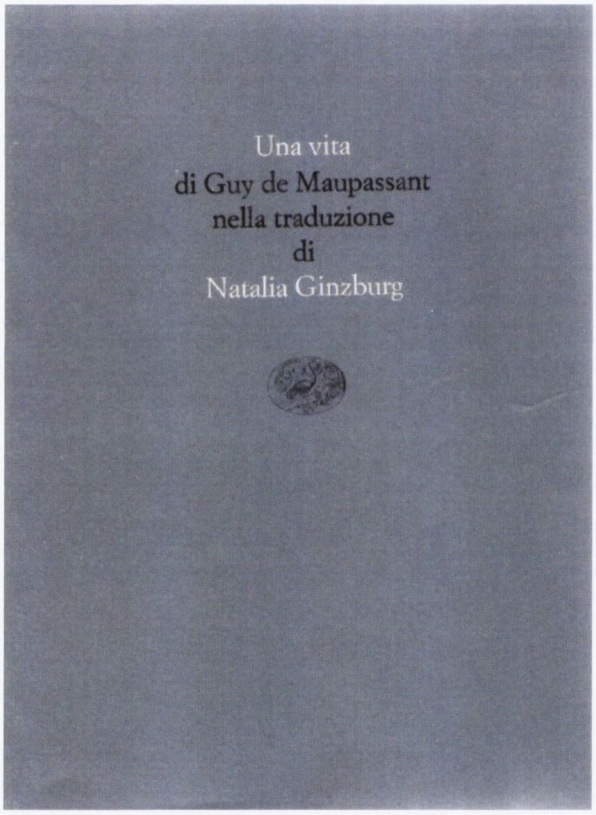
[47] Montale a Einaudi, 15 giugno 1942 (AE, Eugenio Montale).

[48] George Talbot in *Montale's 'Mestiere Vile'* puts as epigraph to his study the posthumous poem written by Montale in 1943: 'Addio addio crudele,/ti ho dato troppo spago,/se manchi non ti pago,/volgo altrove le vele./Lascia i pesci in *barile*/e a Camillo al rabarbaro,/per me ha tanto di barba/questo mestiere vile/ma solo traduzioni/mi chiedono i coglioni!'

6. The series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'[49]

Up to now, we have looked at the prehistory of our topic. Turning to the series itself, it is the aim of this section to investigate some of the most relevant paratextual features of the books that emerged from the STS projects, representative of the main ideas behind the series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'.

6.1 The paratext: authorship transferred to the translator



[49] The documents I was allowed to consult in the Einaudi Archive have been fundamental to understanding the whole basis of the STS. Even though few of the documents I saw related directly to the STS (and in order to have an objective idea of the documents referring to the STS, one would have to do a complete reading of the entire archive – which would have been impossible in the time available) the consultation proved extremely helpful in gaining a working understanding of the whole project. In 1993 a new trilingual series was inaugurated within the STS and was directed by the Italian poet Valerio Magrelli. The trilingual book featured three texts: the original, a translation by a foreign writer (or a self-translation by the original author) and the Italian translation in footnotes. My observations are limited to the original (non-trilingual series).

From a quick look at the cover of an STS book (illustrated in the picture above), it is immediately evident that it is designed in order to stress the importance of the writer-translator. In fact, the name of the translator is more visible than the name of the original writer.

The colour of the cover is blu 'carta zucchero' (Air Force blue); and on the front cover appears in white ink, very visible, the title of the book.

Under the title appears in black, poorly visible for lack of contrast, the name of the original author.

Under the name of the author, also in black '*nella traduzione di*' ('in the translation by'). Black on dark blue, poorly visible.

Under '*nella traduzione di*' appears very visibly, in white, the name of the translator.

On the cover there are no illustrations.

On the spine there is the title and the name of the original author, again in black, and poorly visible.

On the back cover nothing appears except for price and ISBN barcode.

On the inside front flap there is, in black (poorly visible) an extract from the 'Nota del traduttore', which appears in full at the end of the book, or a general comment on the translation and/or the translator. Interestingly, this comment is anonymous, so as not to superimpose other authorial names on the name of the writer-translator. There is no introduction.[50]

At the end of the book, there is the 'Nota del traduttore', a space especially dedicated to the translator, where he or she has the chance to say something about his or her translation.

In a series dedicated to translations, the reader would probably expect the translational act to be evident, visible. It would be natural to expect a translation with

[50] While having no introduction is common in mass-market books in English, in Italy there is a tradition of classics, published as general books, having introductions by known specialists.

parallel text. Instead, in this unique book series dedicated to authorial translations the translational act is moved to the background. The design of the book induces the reader to forget that this is 'only' a translation. Quite exceptionally, in this case, rather than obscuring the translator in favour of the original author, the author is obscured in favour of the translator.

The absence of features pointing to the original author is clearly a homage to the writerly translation considered on the same level of the original work because translated by an original writer. In a letter that Giulio Einaudi wrote to Franco Fortini in 1976, a few years before the STS series was inaugurated, he was already expressing basic ideas that would later sustain the series:

> Caro Fortini, sono molto lieto di avere potuto pubblicare l'edizione delle poesie di Svendborg. Come vedrai non abbiamo dato il testo originale a fronte: questo vuole essere un omaggio alla tua traduzione, un modo di privilegiare in tutto il suo rilievo la traduzione di un poeta da un poeta.[51]

One could argue that the intention of 'privilegiare la traduzione' might equally well have been expressed by presenting the 'testo a fronte' and letting the reader admire how well Fortini had succeeded in transforming the original. But the intention is what counts. As the later STS series was generally not presented in a 'testo a fronte' format,[52] this 'omaggio' to Fortini's literary standing might suggest a hint of flattery on the publisher's part. Parallel texts are not common in literary translation even today, so the non-inclusion of an original text would not in itself have been considered unethical or exceptional.

At an editorial meeting of the publishing house[53] on the 29/4/1986, a discussion took place on an idea put forward by two of Einaudi's best-selling authors, Fruttero

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[51] Einaudi a Fortini, 25 maggio 1976 (AE, Franco Fortini).

[52] Out of 69 volumes there are only two translations published in the STS, both issued near the end of the STS series, which are exceptions to this and feature a parallel original text: Shakespeare's *Riccardo III* translated by Patrizia Valduga (1998) and Nerval's *Sylvie* translated by Umberto Eco (1999).

[53] The 'riunioni del mercoledì' were weekly meetings where books were discussed. They are all recorded and filed in the Archive. Looking for information on the 'background' of the series I first went to check all the files of meetings in the years before and during the series. But, to my surprise, I very rarely found any record of the books to be published in the series.

and Lucentini, for a translation to be published in STS. In the extract from the minutes below, we see something of the dynamics of the commissioning process and something of the assumptions about literary translations concealing their production process and appearing as natural original productions:

> Ferrero: 'Avendo sollecitato Fruttero e Lucentini a far qualcosa per la STS, sono saltati fuori con un'idea molto sconcertante: il I canto dell'Odissea, in traduzione interlineare, sostenendo che le traduzioni esistenti, per esempio quella della Calzecchi Onesti, sono talmente barocche che danno un senso completamente distorto, mentre con l'interlinearità si avrebbe tutt'altro risultato.'
>
> Bollati: 'Mi sembra un'idea lucentiniana, che anni fa si era entusiasmato per una proposta analoga che veniva da Villa per la Bibbia. Non so poi cosa ne pensano i filologi.'
>
> Cerati: 'Non è un libro per gli STS comunque; lo facciamo per la poesia piuttosto.'[54]

Fruttero and Lucentini have failed for various reasons. They see their project as a correction for other bad translations. They want to stress the accuracy of their work by tying it closely to the original. And perhaps most decisive in the rejection of their suggestion is the fact that it proposes to translate only part of a text. Some of the same criteria are stressed in the correspondence between Fossati of Einaudi, and one of their most valued authors, Professor Gianfranco Contini. Contini wrote:

> Caro Fossati, ho riletto per la prima volta dalla pubblicazione il mio Lazarillo e gli darei l'imprimatur. Ma è solo parziale: bisognerebbe intitolarlo "Due capitoli del Lazarillo de Tormes tradotti da G. C.". Va bene?[55]

Fossati replies that the suggested formula would not fit the series:

> Caro professore, [...] La ringrazio molto della Sua offerta del Lazzarillo. Purtroppo per la collana 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' la formula che lei pensa non è adatta.

But we have already seen correspondence showing Giulio Einaudi's personal commitment to driving the series and commissioning the books; he may have been managing the project outside the structures of the Wednesday meetings.

[54] Riunione del 29 aprile 1986 (AE, Verbali Editoriali). A new translation of the *Odyssey* never materialised. The one by Rosa Calzecchi Onesti has been re-issued in different series in 1989, 1995 and 2003.

[55] Contini a Fossati, 15 novembre 1987 (AE, Gianfranco Contini).

> Questo però non vuol dire che non prendiamo in considerazione questa Sua traduzione.[56]

Although Contini's suggested formula does place the translator in prime position, in keeping with the idea behind the series, the determining factor in his rejection (at least from the STS series) is that, like Fruttero and Lucentini, he has proposed an extract rather than a complete work. On the 12/1/1988 Fossati writes to Contini: 'Per ciò che concerne il Lazzarillo, la questione è questa. Nella collana 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' la consuetudine è di dare testi completi.'[57]

To sum up, then, what we have learned about 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' from this brief look at the company archives: STS is obviously a series dedicated to translation and to translators, in a special sense. The name of the translator is made unusually visible, but not in order to emphasize the technical point that the text is a translation, that there has been a process of interpretation by another individual rather than the original author. Instead, what this series does, in its paratexts and through its editorial policies, is to replace the name of the author with that of the translator, who takes on the aura of the original writer. And this is legitimate, the series seems to state, when the translator is already a writer.

But most of all, the series seems to state that when a writer translates he or she gains possession of the text. How does this happen? Is it a licit act? How are these special translators to be chosen? Who chooses them? What is the relationship between the original writer and translator? Between the text translated in this appropriative way, and the chosen translator's writing career?

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[56] Fossati a Contini, 17 novembre 1987 /AE, Gianfranco Contini).

[57] Fossati a Contini, 12 gennaio 1988 (AE, Gianfranco Contini). Another consideration, in Contini's case, was that he mentions that his *Lazarillo* translation is already in print. This might have been enough to exclude him from STS even without other factors.

6.2 What they published

On looking through the titles published in the series,[58] one has to admit that Einaudi assembled a huge range of writing talent, drawing on their own authors (living and dead) as well as some from other houses, and found many interesting pairings of text and translator:

Franz Kafka, *Il processo*, traduzione di Primo Levi [1]. 1983.

Robert Louis Stevenson, *Lo strano caso del Dr. Jekyll e del Sig. Hyde*, Traduzione di Carlo Fruttero e Franco Lucentini [2]. 1983.

Gustave Flaubert, *La signora Bovary*, traduzione di Natalia Ginzburg [3]. 1983.

Voltaire, *Candido ovvero l'ottimismo*, traduzione di Riccardo Bacchelli [4]. 1983.

Edgar Allan Poe, *I racconti*, traduzione di Giorgio Manganelli [5].

1. 1831 – 1840. 1983.

2. 1841 – 1843. 1983.

3. 1844 – 1849. 1983.

William Shakespeare, *La tempesta*, traduzione in napoletano di Eduardo De Filippo [6]. 1984.

Raymond Queneau, *I fiori blu*, traduzione di Italo Calvino [7]. 1984.

Gustave Flaubert, *L'educazione sentimentale*, traduzione di Lalla Romano [8]. 1984.

Nikolaj Gogol', *Racconti di Pietroburgo*, traduzione di Tommaso Landolfi [9]. 1984.

Denis Diderot, *Il nipote di Rameau*, traduzione di Augusto Frassineti [10]. 1984.

Henry James, *Giro di vite*, traduzione di Fausta Cialente [11]. 1985.

Eschilo, *L'Orestiade*, traduzione di Pier Paolo Pasolini [12]. 1985.

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[58] This list is taken from *Le Edizioni Einaudi negli anni 1933-2003*, Torino, Einaudi, 2003. I have consulted all of these publications making my selection of examples to study in chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Benjamin Constant, *Adolphe*, traduzione di Oreste del Buono [13]. 1985.

Jorges Louis Borges, *Finzioni*, traduzione di Franco Lucentini [14]. 1985.

Aleksandr Puškin, *Mozart e Salieri e altri microdrammi*, traduzione di Tommaso Landolfi [15]. 1985.

Lope de Vega, *La nascita di Cristo*, traduzione di Carmelo Samonà [16]. 1985.

Franz Kafka, *Nella colonia penale e altri racconti*, traduzione di Franco Fortini [17]. 1986.

Prosper Mérimée, *Carmen e altri racconti*, traduzione di Sandro Penna [18]. 1986.

Jack London, *Il Richiamo della foresta*, traduzione di Gianni Celati [19]. 1986.

Gertrude Stein, *Autobiografia di Alice Toklas*, traduzione di Cesare Pavese [20]. 1987.

Molière, *Il misantropo*, traduzione di Cesare Garboli [21]. 1987.

Alphonse Daudet, *I tre libri di Tartarino*, traduzione di Aldo Palazzeschi [22]. 1987.

William Henry Hudson, *La vita nella foresta*, traduzione di Eugenio Montale e Rossana Bonadei [23]. 1987.

Arthur Schnitzler, *Le sorelle ovvero Casanova a Spa*, traduzione di Claudio Magris [24]. 1988.

Isaak Babel', *Racconti di Odessa*, traduzione di Franco Lucentini [25]. 1988.

Fernando Pessoa, *Il marinaio*, traduzione di Antonio Tabucchi [26]. 1988.

Jules Verne, *Viaggio al centro della terra*, traduzione di Carlo Fruttero e Franco Lucentini [27]. 1989.

Raymond Radiguet, *Il diavolo in corpo*, traduzione di Francesca Sanvitale [28]. 1989.

Guy de Maupassant, *L'eredità*, traduzione di Massimo Mila [29]. 1989.

William Beckford, *Vathek*, traduzione di Giaime Pintor [30]. 1989.

Jonathan Swift, *I viaggi di Gulliver*, traduzione di Lidia Storoni Mazzolani [31]. 1989.

Charles-Louis Philippe, *Bubu di Montparnasse*, traduzione di Vasco Pratolini [32]. 1989.

Gustave Flaubert, *La tentazione di sant' Antonio*, traduzione di Agostino Richelmy [33]. 1990.

Eugène Fromentin, *Dominique*, traduzione di Rosetta Loy [34]. 1990.

Marcel Proust, *La strada di Swann*, traduzione di Natalia Ginzburg [35]. 1990.

William Shakespeare, *Riccardo II*, traduzione di Mario Luzi [36]. 1990.

Henry James, *Fiducia*, traduzione di Giorgio Manganelli [37]. 1990.

Thomas Mann, *La morte a Venezia*, traduzione di Paola Capriolo [38]. 1991.

Christopher Morley, *Il cavallo di Troia*, traduzione di Cesare Pavese [39]. 1991.

Ernst T. A. Hoffmann, *Mastro Pulce*, traduzione di Giorgio Vigolo [40]. 1991.

Apuleio, *L'asino d'oro*, traduzione di Massimo Bontempelli [41]. 1991.

Pierre de Marivaux, *Il villan rifatto*, traduzione di Alessandro Bonsanti [42]. 1992.

Guy de Maupassant, *Boule de suif. La maison Tellier*, traduzione di Mario Fortunato [43]. 1992.

William Shakespeare, *Misura per misura*, traduzione di Cesare Garboli [44]. 1992.

Jules-Amédée Barbey d'Aurevilly, *La stregata*, traduzione di Gian Piero Bona [45]. 1992.

Gil Vicente, *Trilogia delle barche*, traduzione di Gianfranco Contini [46]. 1992.

Jacques Cazotte, *Il diavolo innamorato*, traduzione di Franco Cordelli [47]. 1992.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Le fantasticherie del passeggiatore solitario*, traduzione di Andrea Canobbio [48]. 1993.

Friedrich Schiller, *Wallenstein*, traduzione di Massimo Mila [49]. 1993.

Joseph Conrad, *Typhoon. Typhon. Tifone*, serie trilingue, traduzione francese di André Gide, versione italiana di Ugo Mursia [50]. 1993.

Lewis Carroll, *Humpty Dumpty. L'arve et l'aume. Bindolo Rondolo*, serie trilingue, traduzione francese di Antonin Artaud, versione italiana di Guido Almansi e Giuliana Pozzo [51]. 1993.

Petronio, *Satyricon*, traduzione di Edoardo Sanguineti [52]. 1993.

Juan Ruiz de Alarcón, *La verità sospetta*, traduzione di Carlo Emilio Gadda [53]. 1993.

Antiche poesie cinesi: Cathay, serie trilingue, traduzione inglese di Ezra Pound, versione italiana dall'inglese di Mary de Rachewiltz, versione italiana dal cinese di Alessandra C. Lavagnino e Maria Rita Masci [54]. 1993.

Virgilio, *Bucolica. Les Bucoliques. Le Bucoliche*, serie trilingue, traduzione francese di Paul Valéry, versione italiana di Carlo Carena [55]. 1993.

Gottfried Keller, *Romeo e Giulietta al villaggio*, traduzione di Paola Capriolo [56]. 1994.

Guy de Maupassant, *Una vita*, traduzione di Natalia Ginzburg [57]. 1994.

Samuel Beckett, *Mal vu mal dit. Ill seen ill said. Mal visto mal detto*, serie trilingue, traduzione inglese di Samuel Beckett, versione italiana di Renzo Guidieri [58]. 1994.

André Gide, *I nutrimenti terrestri*, traduzione di Gianni D'Elia [59]. 1994.

Herman Melville, *Benito Cereno*, traduzione di Cesare Pavese [60]. 1994.

Virginia Woolf, *Le onde*, traduzione di Nadia Fusini [61]. 1995.

Paul Valéry, *Le cimitière marin. El cementerio marino. Il cimitero marino*, serie trilingue, traduzione spagnola di Jorge Guillén, versione italiana di Mario Tutino [62]. 1995.

Sherwood Anderson, *Riso nero*, traduzione di Cesare Pavese [63]. 1995.

Edgar Allan Poe, *The Raven. Ulalume. Annabel Lee. O corvo. Ulalume. Annabel Lee. Il corvo. Ulalume. Annabel Lee*, serie trilingue, traduzione portoghese di Fernando Pessoa, versione italiana di Antonio Bruno, Gabriele Baldini, Elio Chinol [64]. 1995.

James Joyce, *Anna Livia Plurabelle. Anna Livie Plurabelle. Anna Livia Plurabelle*, serie trilingue, traduzione francese di Samuel Beckett, versione italiana di James Joyce e Nino Frank [65]. 1996.

Heinrich von Kleist, *Käthchen di Heilbronn ovvero La prova del fuoco*, traduzione di Giaime Pintor [66]. 1997.

Oscar Wilde, *Il ritratto di Dorian Gray*, traduzione di Franco Ferrucci [67]. 1996.

Sofocle, *Αντιγόνη. Antigonae. Antigone*, serie trilingue, traduzione tedesca di Friedrich Hölderlin, versione italiana di Giuseppina Lombardo Radice [68]. 1996.

William Blake, *Selected poems. Poèmes choisis. Poesie scelte*, serie trilingue, traduzione francese di Georges Bataille, versione italiana di Giuseppe Ungaretti [69]. 1996.

Karen Blixen, *Babette's Feast. Babettes Gaestebud. Il pranzo di Babette*, serie trilingue, traduzione danese di Karen Blixen, versione italiana di Paola Ojetti [70]. 1997.

William Shakespeare, *Sogno di una notte di estate*, traduzione di Patrizia Cavalli [71]. 1996.

Jack London, *La strada*, traduzione di Maurizio Maggiani [72]. 1997.

Charles Baudelaire, *Lo spleen di Parigi*, traduzione di Gianni D'Elia [73]. 1997.

Edgar Allan Poe, *Abitazioni immaginarie (The Domain of Arnheim. Landor's Cottage. Philosophy of Furniture. Le Domaine d'Arnheim. Le Cottage Landor. Philosophie de l'ameublement. Le terre di Arnheim. Il villino di Landor. Filosofia dell'arredamento)*, serie trilingue, a cura di Antonio Prete, traduzione francese di Charles Baudelaire, versioni italiane di Giorgio Manganelli, Ludovica Koch e Elisabetta Mazzarotto [74]. 1997.

William Shakespeare, *Riccardo III*, traduzione di Patrizia Valduga [75]. 1998.

William Faulkner, *Non si fruga nella polvere*, traduzione di Fernanda Pivano [76]. 1998.

Antoine François Prévost, *Manon Lescaut*, traduzione di Silvia Ballestra [77]. 1998.

Gérard de Nerval, *Sylvie*, traduzione di Umberto Eco [78]. 1999.

William Shakespeare, *Quaranta sonetti*, serie trilingue, traduzione francese di Yves Bonnefoy, versione italiana di Giuseppe Ungaretti [79]. 1999.

Gustave Flaubert, *Tre racconti*, traduzione di Lalla Romano [80]. 2000.

Madame de La Fayette, *La principessa di Clèves*, traduzione di Rosetta Loy [81]. 1999.

William Shakespeare, *Re Lear*, traduzione di Emilio Tadini [82]. 2000.

6.3 Testi 'classici' and the death of the author

In a letter to Giorgio Manganelli, dated 17/12/1980, Giulio Einaudi introduces and outlines the STS project, stressing its continuity with the tradition of the publishing house since its beginnings:[59]

> Caro Manganelli,
>
> sai che sto pensando a una grossa iniziativa di "traduzioni d'autore": testi "classici" con traduttori d'eccezione, secondo una linea che ci lega indietro fin alle origini della casa editrice.
>
> Tu sei stato messo in prima linea. Ti ha già accennato anche Calvino del nostro desiderio di avere una tua accoppiata con i Racconti di Poe, impegno grosso, ma non grossissimo.
>
> Ti stuzzicherà certo il cimento con uno scrittore così importante e a te, credo, congeniale. Per favorire il connubio anche sul piano pratico, sono disposto ad accordare, in via del tutto eccezionale, per traduzioni di tale spicco e affidate a una

[59] The serious involvement of Manganelli as an editor of translations (and of original texts) emerges from a reading of the correspondence between the writer and Giulio Einaudi.

rosa ristrettissima di nomi, condizioni economiche particolari: una percentuale quasi d'autore (8% per un'edizione rilegata e 5% per un'edizione economica quale gli Struzzi; anticipo di 20.000 lire a pagina da versare a consegna della traduzione).

Conto molto sulla tua collaborazione.[60]

The plan is to feature authorial translations of classics entrusted to a very restricted shortlist of names, under excellent conditions of payment. The letter could prompt many questions. For a start: why classics? Or, as Einaudi labels them, 'classici'?

There might be several reasons behind the choice of featuring translations of classics. One reason must surely lie in the fact that such a strongly re-authorizing process, taking possession of the original text on behalf of the translator, would not appear as illicit in the translation of a classic. The text translated would be well known by the general public and other translations could easily be found. The translated classic published in the STS would not distort the original author's reception as much as a translation of a little known work.

Against this supposition, it might be argued that while most of the books published in the series are established classics, such as one would find in Penguin, others are in fact little known works. For instance, the books inaugurating the series are undisputed classics: Kafka's *Il processo*, Stevenson's *Lo strano caso del Dr. Jekyll e del Sig. Hyde*, Flaubert's *La signora Bovary,* Voltaire's *Candido* and Poe's *I racconti*. All these texts had many other translations and the readers would probably know the original texts, or have other translations on their shelves. The same cannot be said for works such as *Dominique* by Fromentin, Morley's *Il cavallo di Troia* or Cazotte's *Il diavolo innamorato.* But then, one of the functions of a 'classics' series is to discover new 'classics'.

Another reason explaining the choice of classics could be that with well-known, or even less well-known, 'classics' whose authors had died more than half a century previously, one did not have to pay copyright fees to the author's heirs. This reason had already been expressed by Giulio Einaudi in a letter he wrote to Montale in 1940: 'Per i miei "narratori stranieri tradotti" pensi a un libro insigne, se non classico:

[60] Einaudi a Manganelli, 17 dicembre 1980 (AE, Giorgio Manganelli).

non soltanto perché così è più facile non aver da pagare i diritti d'autore, ma perché questo è il carattere generale della collezione.'[61]

On the other hand, many translations published by Einaudi in other series were of contemporary work. Why would copyright payment be a main issue in such a prestigious series where translators were paid almost as much as original authors?

The 'classics' criterion may be clarified a little more by looking at a translation that was considered for some Einaudi imprints, but not for STS, at the editorial meeting of the 26th of January 1983. This was the translation of Raymond Quenau's *Exercices de style* by the star writer Umberto Eco. The possibility of having his translation published in the series is not even considered. Why? Is the reason only because the original book is not considered a classic? Queneau's extraordinary book, a re-telling of the same trivial observation in 99 different styles, cannot be translated except through some extremely creative intervention by the translator. Would such a necessarily creative rendering not fit beautifully into a series featuring translations by writers? Would this not be the perfect work to highlight the writer-translator's skills? In fact, for this text Calvino very sensibly suggests the inclusion of a parallel French text.[62] Why a parallel text, if not to make Eco's skills as a translator visible? Is *Exercices de style* excluded from consideration for the STS because, despite the extremely brilliant creative work of its translator, it remains a book that would be difficult to re-authorize or rebrand as the property of Eco? The structure and content of the book might not allow a strong re-authorization because all its ramifications issue from one main idea (the same story told 99 times in different styles); its structure, and the plot of the core event, cannot be freely adapted by the translator or the text would make little sense.[63]

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[61] Einaudi a Montale, 2 aprile 1940 (AE, Eugenio Montale).

[62] In the *Verbale editoriale* of 26/1/83 is recorded: Calvino introduces and explains the book./ Einaudi: 'Si potrebbe mettere in Einaudi Letteratura col testo a fronte?'/Calvino: 'forse è più un Nuovo Corallo. Se si vuole si può metter il testo a fronte, anzi, mettendocelo, si distanziano ancora di più le soluzioni di Eco.' Riunione del 26 gennaio 1983 (AE, Verbali Editoriali).

[63] Of course we cannot be certain why the Eco translation was not immediately claimed for STS, when its 'qualifications' seem so obvious. Maybe there was no particular reason. In any case, it cannot be because Queneau was not a 'classic' enough, since in the following year Calvino's translation of *Les fleurs bleues* by the same author, was published in STS.

A quite noticeable feature of the books published in STS, is that the author is always dead at the time of the publication of the book in the series,[64] including those cases where the book is a little known work. The original author is not alive to see the translation of his or her work published in this strongly re-authorizing series. Had the author been alive, would permission have been granted?

As Alice Kaplan points out in 'Translation, The Biography of an Artform', living authors can be quite present, and a nuisance, in the process of translation:

> I enjoyed an article I read several years ago by an excellent translator called 'The Only Good Author is a Dead Author', explaining the headaches she had working with a difficult and demanding author. [...] there are many stories of prominent writers who insist on challenging the translations of their work into languages they barely know. Writers want to control language – this is their job – and they're only too ready to believe that their talent for words extends across all linguistic boundaries. [...] the problems that translators have with living authors are well known, and we can understand what it means to want to work on a writer whose life's work is complete, and who is no longer around to pass judgement on a translation. Fortunately, there are many dead authors who have yet to be translated. And unfortunately, the opposite can never be true: a dead author can have a living translator, but no living author can ever work with a dead translator. Some would like to![65]

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[64] With only one exception: in the case of Jorge Luis Borges' *Ficciones,* when Franco Lucentini's translation (an old translation) came out in STS in 1985 Borges was still alive. He died the year after, in 1986.

[65] Alice Kaplan, 'Translation, The Biography of an Artform' in *In Translation*, pp. 67-81 (p. 68). On the relation between translator and original author, see the very interesting book edited by Ilide Carmignani, *Gli autori invisibili*. The volume includes a series of interviews Carmignani did with professional translators. Among other questions, Carmignani often asks the translators whether they have met the authors of the books they translated and if they consider the experience useful. The opinions are different. Yasmina Melaouah, the Italian voice of the French writer Daniel Pennac, tells us about her extremely positive experience with the author. To the question 'Che rapporti hai con i tuoi autori?', she answers 'I rapporti più stretti sono ovviamente con Daniel Pennac, che incontro periodicamente, con cui sono in contatto telefonico e che si è sempre dimostrato, non solo con me, di una disponibilità più unica che rara. Lui è proprio un caso un po' eccezionale, che temo non faccia testo nella media dei rapporti fra traduttori e autori. Basti dire che da parecchi anni ricevo, DALLE SUE TASCHE, i diritti d'autore sulle traduzioni italiane dei suoi romanzi, cosa che avviene normalmente in quasi tutti i "paesi civili" ma che in Italia è affidata solo al buon cuore di qualche rarissimo autore.' Yasmina Melaouah, 'Come un'esploratrice', pp. 123-126 (p. 125). Vincenzo Mantovani however, did not have such a positive experience. To Carmignani's question 'Intrattieni rapporti con i tuoi autori? Se sono ancora vivi, naturalmente', he answers: 'Grazie per la precisazione. Prima o poi intratterrò rapporti anche con gli altri, suppongo. I vivi, comunque, vanno presi con le pinze. Il primo libro che ho tradotto era di Doris Lessing. Quando terminai la traduzione, ansioso di fare una bella figura, stesi un elenco dei miei dubbi e senza dire niente a nessuno lo inviai all'autrice (...). Ero convinto che

What living author would allow his or her original work to be published in the STS? For most writers, being translated may already represent a very difficult (if not nightmarish) experience, certainly an experience to which he cannot remain indifferent. With regards to this, Primo Levi writes:

> Vale la pena di dire una parola anche sulla condizione dello scrittore che si trova ad essere tradotto. Essere tradotti non è un lavoro né feriale né festivo, anzi, non è un lavoro per niente, è una semi-passività simile a quella del paziente sul lettino del chirurgo o sul divano dello psicoanalista, ricca tuttavia di emozioni violente e contrastanti. L'autore che trova davanti a sé una sua pagina tradotta in una lingua che conosce, si sente volta a volta, o a un tempo, lusingato, tradito, nobilitato, radiografato, castrato, piallato, stuprato, adornato, ucciso. È raro che resti indifferente nei confronti del traduttore, conosciuto o sconosciuto, che ha cacciato naso e dita nelle sue viscere: gli manderebbe volentieri, volta a volta o a un tempo, il suo cuore debitamente imballato, un assegno, una corona di lauro, o i padrini.[66]

Does the author being dead make a literary work into more of a 'free property', more suitable to be freely reinterpreted? If the author were alive might he or she not stand as the owner of the right interpretation of the text, leaving less freedom for the translator? Certainly to be published in a series like STS by a famous writer would probably be perceived first of all as a great honour by the original author. When I asked the Italian poet and general editor of the STS trilingual series Valerio Magrelli,[67] 'Le piacerebbe essere pubblicato come scrittore originale nella STS?', he answered:

> Beh, ma certo! Sí, per il fatto che si venga tradotti, diciamo così, da traduttori d'eccezione, anche se io personalmente essendo un francesista sono molto polemico con gente che il francese non lo sa. Da Raboni a Ginzburg, per essere chiari. Sono

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avrebbe apprezzato i miei scrupoli e la mia pignoleria. Apriti cielo! Doris Lessing, ricevuta la mia lettera, scrisse a Erich Linder, che era il suo agente per l'Italia, per sapere chi era l'asino al quale Feltrinelli aveva assegnato la traduzione dei suoi racconti. Il suo traduttore italiano doveva essere una bestia, un ignorante e un incapace, perché le aveva rivolto una lunga serie di stupide domande.' Vincenzo Mantovani, 'Vita marginale di un capitano di ventura' pp. 70-77 (p. 76). See also, in *The Translator as Author*, Claudio Groff, 'Tradurre Grass con Grass' pp.151-156; Barbara Ivancic, 'Dialogue between translators and authors. The example of Claudio Magris' pp. 157-174.

[66] Primo Levi, 'Tradurre ed essere tradotti', in *L'altrui mestiere* in *Opere* (Torino: Einaudi, 1997), p.1544.

[67] Valerio Magrelli was general editor of the trilingual STS series.

> persone che avrebbero dovuto prima studiare e non l'hanno evidentemente fatto. Mettiamoci pure Garboli. Erano questi dilettanti. Quindi io non è che voglio difendere una corporazione piuttosto che l'altra, anche perché faccio parte di tutte e due. Però è ovvio che un autore per il quale viene chiamato un altro scrittore deve prendere questa scelta come un segno di omaggio. Di massimo omaggio.[68]

This reaction beautifully sums up the ambiguities of the relationship.

6.4 Profiles of STS writer-translators

Although more contemporary than an STS author, an STS translator can be dead or alive at the time when his or her translation appears. Even though most translations were commissioned especially for the series, there are cases where the translation published is a re-issue of an old version previously issued in another Einaudi series or by another publishing house. Two situations occur: 1) the translator is still alive at the time of the publication of his translation in STS. In this case two situations are possible: a) the translator translates a book especially for the series. This is the most common situation: out of 69 translations, 38 were the ones commissioned for STS; b) the translator is asked to allow (with or without revisions) the re-issue in the STS of an old translation (13 texts out of 69); 2) the translator is dead and an old translation is re-issued (18 texts out of 69).

6.4.1 What kind of writers are the STS translators?

The translators published in the series are not all very famous writers. There are worldwide superstars of the stature of Primo Levi, Umberto Eco, Cesare Pavese, Italo Calvino, Pier Paolo Pasolini, and less celebrated writers like Augusto Frassineti, Fausta Cialente, Francesca Sanvitale, Agostino Richelmy, Giorgio Vigolo, Franco Cordelli. Some writers had well-deserved reputations in Italy but were less well known abroad. Some did their STS translations while at the start of very promising careers.

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[68] Personal communication, 15 March 2014.

Some of the translators are not writers 'in senso stretto', as Giulio Einaudi points out in an interview with Severino Cesari:

> Cesari: *Un fatto creativo, hai detto. Per questo sostieni tanto la collana "Scrittori tradotti da Scrittori"? Ma chi stabilisce quando si è o non si è "scrittori"? Un buon traduttore non lo è, anche se non è scrittore famoso?*
>
> Einaudi: Lo è. Infatti se guardi bene non ci sono solo scrittori in senso stretto, tra i nomi di quella collana. Al tempo stesso, più che mai le nuove generazioni di narratori hanno bisogno di allenarsi nella palestra della traduzione, come quasi tutti i grandi narratori hanno fatto. E invece: con li argani devi smuovere oggi uno scrittore a fare traduzioni, anche se capisco che è più redditizio andare a esibirsi in televisione.[69]

From looking at the translators, there does not seem to be a special criterion in the choice of the translators. Writers of different literary genres appear in the series. Eduardo de Filippo was a playwright (and actor and director), Giuseppe Ungaretti, Eugenio Montale and Sandro Penna were poets; Gianfranco Contini was an extraordinarily authoritative critic and philologist; Fruttero and Lucentini were crime fiction authors. Several were competent in more than one language. Most were certainly capable of working without the help of undervalued 'nègres'. Some, like Eco or Magris, held the highest level of academic expertise while also having made the leap into creative writing as a career. Valerio Magrelli points out that, in fact, there was not always a precise criterion for choosing the writer-translators:

> Io posso dire questo, diciamo una voce di corridoio, che io in qualche occasione dissentii profondamente con Einaudi perché lui, nel suo slancio, dimenticava il senso del primo dei due sostantivi "*scrittori* tradotti da scrittori". Cioè lui a volte voleva addirittura chiedere dei testi a persone con cui aveva simpatia che non avevano mai pubblicato un libro. Oppure a traduttori, oppure a persone che non potevano definirsi scrittori. Lui diceva, "Come sei esagerato, sei sempre così pignolo." Certamente lui aveva questa grandezza di sguardo che faceva parte del suo infinito talento di editore. Io però, anche se non c'entravo nulla con l'azzurra,[70] in un caso gli dissi: "Ma tu non puoi pubblicare una traduzione di una persona che non ha mai pubblicato nulla in vita sua." Lui diceva: "Eh, ma diventerà una scrittrice." "Appunto, aspetta che lo diventi

[69] Severino Cesari, *Colloquio con Giulio Einaudi*, (Torino: Einaudi, 2007), pp. 139-140.
[70] The monolingual STS series.

almeno all'anagrafe." Lui si disinteressava a questi dettagli. E forse aveva ragione lui, intendiamoci. Anche se non sempre.[71]

Type 1 (a): Translator alive and translation commissioned especially for the series

The most common situation in the STS project was a translation especially commissioned for the series. Therefore, it is not a translation which has already been evaluated 'special' for some reason, and therefore worth being framed in the STS. The only feature of the translation qualifying it for the series is that the translator chosen can be classified as a writer.

Who chooses the translators and the text to translate?

From some of the Einaudi Archive documents that I consulted, from some of the Translators' 'Notes' at the end of the volumes, and from my interview with Valerio Magrelli, it emerges that Einaudi was often in charge of commissioning translations for STS. Lalla Romano in her 'Nota' writes that the series was an invention of Giulio Einaudi, and points to the fact that its suppression was closely related to the publisher's death: 'questa prestigiosa collana, grande invenzione di Giulio Einaudi (e mi dispiace che, a quanto mi dicono, dopo la morte di Giulio questa sua creatura stia per scomparire).'[72]

Einaudi was often in charge of choosing the translator and, as stressed by many translators in their Notes, of asking them to translate either a particular author or something they would like. Unfortunately, only in a very limited number of cases does

[71] Personal communication, 15 March 2014.

[72] Gustave Flaubert, *Tre racconti*, nella traduzione di Lalla Romano, Torino, Einaudi ('Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'), 2000, p. 135. In an article that appeared in *La Stampa* on 20 December 2011, the decisive role of Einaudi in taking charge of the STS series is stressed: 'Il prossimo anno sarà l'anno del Centenario. Giulio Einaudi nacque il 2 gennaio 1912, e per celebrarne la figura nell'anno che s'approssima fioriranno mille iniziative. Comincia La Stampa, con precisione sabauda, nel giorno della nascita. Ogni lunedì, allegato al giornale, diretto da Mario Calabresi, si potrà avere un volume della collana "Scrittori tradotti da scrittori". [...] La collana fu molto importante; fu l'ultima davvero pensata da Einaudi e da lui seguita.' Federico Novaro, untitled article, *La Stampa*, 20 december 2011. <http://federiconovaro.wordpress.com/2011/12/20/editoria-notizie-brevi-39-scrittori-tradotti-da-scrittori-einaudi-la-stampa/> [accessed December 2013]

the writer-translator, in the 'Nota', describe the background to the commissioning of the translation.

Sometimes the reason behind the choice of the work to be translated is quite obvious (whether this choice has been made by the writer or not), even if not expressed in the 'Nota'. For instance, in the case of Levi's translation of Kafka's *Der Prozess*, there seems to be a perfect match between translator and work translated (Primo Levi having also been a victim of monstrous injustice). In the case of Fruttero and Lucentini, bestselling authors of thrillers, translators of Stevenson's *The strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the criterion in matching writer and book to be translated lies in the similarity of literary genres. Sometimes it is the scholarly knowledge a writer might have of another writer that determines the choice, as in the case of Tabucchi, a major scholar of the Portuguese writer and poet Fernando Pessoa, for translating Pessoa.

Other times, the reason behind the writer's choice of a particular work to translate is not so clear whereas in some cases, the Notes reveal that the writer's choice was dictated by the writer's personal liking of the foreign work.

A few examples: in the case of Eduardo De Filippo's *La tempesta*, the writer was asked by Einaudi to translate something from Shakespeare, even if not the exact work which was chosen by De Filippo. In his interview with Cesari, Einaudi himself tells the story of commissioning the translation from De Filippo:

> Andai a trovarlo, e gli dissi: non tradurresti niente, magari Shakespeare, per questa grande collana, gli Sts? «Ah, mi piacerebbe *La tempesta*, la faccio in napoletano». Bene, dico io, il napoletano è una lingua ricca... Ed è venuta un'opera che è un piccolo gioiello.[73]

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[73] Severino Cesari, *Colloquio con Giulio Einaudi*, p. 142. In the Archive there are documents, letters between Einaudi and De Filippo, witnessing the seriousness, care and assiduity with which Einaudi followed this particular project. In a letter dated 18/4/1983 Giulio Einaudi writes: "Caro Eduardo, ti mando il Processo di Kafka nella versione di Primo Levi, volume che inaugura la collana Scrittori tradotti da Scrittori, dove vorrei vedere non tra molto il tuo Shakespeare". Einaudi a De Filippo, 18 aprile 1983 (AE, Eduardo De Filippo). On the 28/9/83 the secretary of the Turin headquarters writes to Einaudi: 'Eduardo De Filippo ha finito La Tempesta di Shakespeare in napoletano. Vuol sapere quando si prevede di farla uscire. Credo che, data l'età del vegliardo, e la precarietà della Sua salute, bisognerebbe cercare di accelerare l'uscita. Mi ha fatto capire, tra le righe, che ci terrebbe a vederla

For Lalla Romano's *L'educazione sentimentale*, the commissioning process seems to have been analogous to De Filippo's, even if it is not completely clear. Romano writes in her 'Nota':

> Nell'autunno del 1982 persistevo nel rifiuto ad accettare un lavoro di traduzione, perché mi avrebbe richiesto troppo tempo, e avevo lavori in corso. Ma a un certo punto mi venne fatto di dichiarare, incautamente, la mia predilezione per L'éducation sentimentale. Sono convinta che ognuno – o per lo meno qualcuno – è responsabile del suo destino, cioè di se stesso, nonostante, o meglio attraverso le circostanze; e che quando abbiamo paura è segno che qualcosa ci attrae, ci tenta, e che la tentazione parte proprio da noi. Dopo qualche giorno (e notte) abbastanza angosciosi, compresi che non potevo sottrarmi.[74]

Einaudi had possibly asked Romano to translate something from Flaubert, whose *Trois contes* she had already translated in 1944 at Pavese's suggestion. Or did Einaudi specifically suggest *L'éducation*?

In the case of Mario Fortunato's translation of Maupassant's *Boule de suif,* Einaudi asked the writer to translate something he would like to translate, as Fortunato recounts in the 'Nota':

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stampata presto.' Sede a Einaudi, 28 settembre 1983 (AE, Eduardo De Filippo). On the 21/10/83 Einaudi writes a telegram to congratulate De Filippo for his translation: 'Felicità poetica e inventiva tua ricreazione Tempesta ci ha colmato di gioia STOP ti sono gratissimo di averci trasmesso questa tua stupenda prova STOP Un abbraccio Giulio.' Einaudi a De Filippo, 21 ottobre 1983 (AE, Eduardo De Filippo); De Filippo replies 'Caro Giulio, sono tornato ieri sera da Napoli [...] e ho trovato il tuo telegramma. È stato il "ben tornato a casa" più bello che potessi desiderare e te ne ringrazio con tutto il cuore. Allora la traduzione ti è piaciuta... Questo tuo autorevole giudizio mi conforta e m'incoraggia. Sebbene il lavoro di traduzione non sia stato facile, mi ha entusiasmato assai [...].' De Filippo a Einaudi, 1 novembre 1983 (AE, Eduardo De Filippo); the 11/1/84 when De Filippo was already sick (he was to die shortly after) the Einaudi secretary writes to De Filippo's wife: 'Le ricordo che aspettiamo la noterella finale alla *Tempesta* che ho passato alla tipografia per le correzioni e che va avanti a vele spiegate'. Sede Einaudi a Isabella De Filippo, 11 gennaio 1984 (AE, Eduardo De Filippo). On the 18/1/1984 Einaudi writes to De Filippo: 'Caro Eduardo, faccio seguito al mio biglietto di ieri per dirti che mi sono preso la libertà di modificare la prima versione del frontespizio della Tempesta, "Traduzione napoletana di E. D. F." in "Traduzione in napoletano" che mi pare più bella e più elevata' Einaudi a De Filippo, 18 gennaio 1984 (AE, Eduardo De Filippo).

[74] Gustave Flaubert, *L'educazione sentimentale*, nella traduzione di Lalla Romano (Torino: Einaudi, 1984), p. 596.

> Ero in taxi, un paio d'anni fa. A Roma. Il traffico, come al solito, paralizzava la città. Mi chiedevo quale autore francese proporre a Einaudi per la sua amatissima collana Scrittori tradotti da scrittori (e già suonava imbarazzante sentirsi iscritti alla categoria). In taxi non ero solo. C'era Giovanni Buttafava, un carissimo amico, raffinato cinofilo, slavista notevole: un uomo tanto colto quanto spiritoso. A un certo punto (il fatto di essere imbottigliati nel traffico deve aver giocato il proprio ruolo) lui disse: «Traduci Maupassant». Domandai: «Perché?» Lui: «Perché è una specie di Dino Risi dell'Ottocento». Non so a voi: a me sembrò un buon motivo."[75]

In many other situations (the majority of cases), the translator does not write anything about the commissioning of the translation. Sometimes, however, the writer's emotional statements about the great importance of the translated work give us the impression that this translation was very much a personal choice.

Francesca Sanvitale describes some of the possible reasons that make a book important for a writer, inducing him or her to translate it, and the reason why she chose Raymond Radiguet's *Le diable au corps*:

> Decidiamo di tradurre un testo perché ci piace oppure pensiamo di conoscerlo. Perché sembra facile o arduo. Perché è stato importante per noi. Perché è un classico. [...] ognuno comincia con un'idea preconcetta e precostituita del "suo" autore e del "suo" libro. Ognuno ha un'idea dell'altro rigida e precisa. Lo ha scelto per questo. L'idea si è costruita sia sulla lingua originale che sulla o sulle traduzioni. È, dunque, un'idea mista, confusa. Poi bisogna vedere quando è nato il rapporto. Ci possono essere state infiltrazioni depistanti: gusto di epoca, mentalità letterarie, entusiasmi in seguito

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[75] In Guy de Maupassant, *Boule de suif* nella traduzione di Mario Fortunato, Torino, Einaudi, 1992, pp. 102-103. Sometimes, but not very frequently (at least this is the impression I got from the examination of the *Verbali editoriali* before and during the years of the STS project) the books are discussed between members of the publishing staff, as shown by this memo from Ernesto Ferrero to Fossati, Cerati, Cattaneo, Bongiovanni and Varetto: 'Pratolini mi scrive che, date le sue condizioni di salute, peggiorate [...] non è in grado di consegnare la revisione della sua vecchia traduzione e la nota finale prima della fine dell'anno. L'uscita dal piano 88 è dunque definitiva. In attesa di vedere che roba è Beroaldo, mi domando se non sia il caso di tornare a pensare ai racconti di Flaubert tradotti da Lalla Romano. È vero che le giacenze sono ancora sostenute, ma sarebbe un modo di riportare l'autrice sotto le nostre bandiere. Tra le altre disponibilità, c'è L'eredità di Maupassant tradotta da Massimo Mila, pronta e in casa (Mila dovrebbe provvedere, se consenziente, a stendere la nota finale). Peraltro su Maupassant vorrebbe lavorare anche Natalia, quest'estate. Non mi è chiaro se il Maupassant valga tanto per la firma di Mila quanto per la serietà della traduzione e per il valore dell'originale, che non conosco. Farei qualche indagine prima, magari con un'expertise di Roscioni. Se il Flaubert non è eccedente in magazzino, bene per la Romano.' Ferrero a Fossati, Cerati, Cattaneo, Bongiovanni, Varetto, 15 marzo 1988 (AE, Ernesto Ferrero).

> modificati; ragioni di età o momenti emotivi autobiografici, clima di gruppo. Per esempio, la giovinezza elabora, ha sempre elaborato, poetiche e scelte comuni, alcune delle quali vengono poi a coincidere nella propria storia con personali preferenze. Spesso non sono state più rivisitate. Spesso restano come incrostazioni letterarie nel proprio carattere. Può essere un libro che ci ha seguito da sempre o un incontro casuale ma anche un libro che sta là, in un punto preciso della vita, magari la giovinezza. È il caso, per quanto mi riguarda, del *Diavolo in corpo* di Radiguet.[76]

In the 'Nota' to his translation of Jack London's *The Road*, Maggiani tells the reader about his deep passion for London:

> London è per me fratello e compagno. Fratello e compagno. E nel ripeterlo mi riempie di orgoglio la certezza di coprirmi di ridicolo. Così rincaro la dose: vorrei averlo conosciuto, vorrei avergli potuto toccare la spalla, sorridergli aspettandomi di essere ricambiato; vorrei che non fosse morto mai, ma che avesse potuto trovare una compagna migliore, una barca migliore, un paese migliore, un'epoca più buona. Vorrei, una volta all'anno, finché dovessi vivere, comprare dal cartolaio una sua storia nuova, perché, da quando ho finito di leggere la sua ultima, soffro di un'assenza grande.[77]

Finally, most of the translations featuring in the STS have been especially commissioned for the series. The translator knows he is translating for the 'prestigiosa collana Einaudi'. Does this allow the writer more freedom? Does he or she make an effort to be more creative in view of the expectations of the STS reader? Are the translations published in the series much freer than the translations of the same text translated by other writers, but not for the series? Are these translations much freer than professional translations of the same text? This is what I will attempt to investigate in the following chapters, in particular in chapter 3, in the analysis of Manganelli's translation of Poe compared to other authorial and professional translations of the same text.

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[76] Raymond Radiguet, *Il diavolo in corpo* nella traduzione di Francesca Sanvitale (Torino: Einaudi, 1989), pp. 137, 139.

[77] Jack London, *La strada* nella traduzione di Maurizio Maggiani (Torino: Einaudi, 1997).

Type 1 (b) Translator alive and re-issue of an old translation

Another typology of translation published in the series is the re-issue of an old translation by a writer who is still alive. This is the case of: Italo Calvino translating Raymond Queneau (*I fiori blu*, STS 1984); Oreste del Buono translating Benjamin Constant (*Adolphe*, STS 1985); Franco Lucentini translating Jorge Luis Borges (*Finzioni*, STS 1985); Lidia Storoni Mazzolani translating Jonathan Swift (*I viaggi di Gulliver* STS 1989); Vasco Pratolini translating Charles-Louis Philippe (*Bubu di Montparnasse*, STS 1989); Rosetta Loy translating Eugène de Fromentin (*Dominique*, STS 1990); Natalia Ginzburg translating Marcel Proust (*La strada di Swann*, STS 1990); Mario Luzi translating William Shakespeare (*Riccardo II*, STS 1990); Giorgio Manganelli translating Henry James (*Fiducia*, STS 1990); Fernanda Pivano translating William Faulkner (*Non si fruga nella polvere*, STS 1998); Lalla Romano translating Gustave Flaubert (*Tre racconti*, STS 2000).

Natalia Ginzburg's translation *La Strada di Swann* of Marcel Proust's *Chez Swann*, is a translation dating as far as 1937 and published many times in different series before landing in the STS in 1990.[78] In the 'Nota', Natalia Ginzburg begins by recounting the circumstances when she did the translation. She was asked to translate Proust in 1937 by Leone Ginzburg and Giulio Einaudi:

> Questa mia traduzione è nata nelle circostanze seguenti. Nel '37, Leone Ginzburg e Giulio Einaudi mi proposero di tradurre *À la recherche du temps perdu*. Accettai. Era folle propormelo e folle fu da parte mia accettare. Fu anche, da parte mia, un atto di estrema superbia. Avevo vent'anni. Non avevo mai tradotto niente. Ero, allora, nello stesso tempo spavalda e insicura. Essendo insicura, cercavo delle sicurezze. Proust e la *Recherche* mi attraevano fortemente (ne avevo sentito parlare in casa) ma ne avevo un'idea confusa e non ne avevo letto una sola riga. Quanto a Leone Ginzburg e a Giulio Einaudi, non so cosa li abbia spinti ad affidarmi quella impresa immane. Era un'epoca in cui a volte si progettavano cose folli.[79]

[78] Her translation first appeared in 1946 in the edition 'Narratori stranieri tradotti' and it is still in print.

[79] Marcel Proust, *La strada di Swann,* nella traduzione di Natalia Ginzburg (Torino: Einaudi, 1990), p. 559.

A crazy thing, certainly, to entrust Proust's first volume to a complete beginner, but it turned out well for both sides: Natalia Ginzburg's *La strada di Swann* has served Einaudi for more than half a century, which is a long life for a translation.

The translation published in the series STS is the old one: 'Oggi, questa mia traduzione esce così com'era nel '46: con qualche rara correzione dei revisori, che ho accettato, e qualche rara correzione mia. Nel definirla "difettosa ma appassionata" credo di definirla giustamente'.[80] The re-publishing of the original version highlights the STS book's character as a document in the history of a famous writer. The minutes of the staff meeting of 18/11/87, record Manganelli's insistence on preserving the character of the series as a repository of authors' history – the authors being translated:

> Manganelli insiste sulla necessità di mantenere per gli STS il carattere originario (di documento importante della storia di un autore). Occorre evitare che gli STS diventino una collana di sole buone traduzioni.[81]

In this example of the translator's authorship, it is relevant that the translator had become much more famous as a writer by the time of the re-issue of her translation, than at the time when she had done the work. When Natalia Ginzburg was asked to translate Proust she had only published one story, 'I bambini', in the magazine *Solaria.* There are other similar cases published in the series, like Rosetta Loy's translation of Eugène Fromentin's *Dominique*, Lalla Romano's translation of Flaubert's *Trois Contes* (which I analyse in chapter 5) or Giorgio Manganelli's translation of Henry James's *Confidence.* At the time when she did her first translation, which was first published in 1972 by Einaudi in *I millenni* and then again in STS in 1990, Rosetta Loy was not yet a published writer:

> *Dominique* è stata la mia prima traduzione e con lei ho vissuto per molti mesi, con gioia ma anche con una specie di febbre. Alcune pagine mi hanno accompagnato per

[80] Proust, *La strada di Swann,* p. 563.
[81] Riunione del 18 novembre 1987 (AE, Verbali Editoriali). Unfortunately, I could not find any record pointing to what prompted Manganelli's warning.

anni; al cambiare di una stagione o lungo una strada di campagna, o per ragioni che niente avevano a che fare col paesaggio.[82]

Romano too was a beginner at the time of her first translation. Einaudi had just refused to publish her collection of poems *Fiore*:

> Era stato Pavese durante la guerra, a propormi la traduzione dei *Trois contes*. Chissà perché proprio a me. Pavese aveva molto apprezzato il mio libretto di poesie *Fiore* e si era rammaricato che la Einaudi non l'avesse potuto pubblicare.[83]

Ginzburg, Loy, Romano were not established writers at the time when they did their translations, and yet their translations appear in a series called 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'. Should it not be 'Scrittori tradotti da futuri scrittori'? What makes their translations writers' translations? The works the two writers have published later? This would suggest that a translation by a writer is 'different', and worth being framed in a series of its own, because it can be put in relation to the writer's original works. Or, perhaps, as Magrelli pointed out, the determining factor is that their authorial status has been prophetically determined by Einaudi.

Have Ginzburg and Loy's translations been considered part of their own original work? Did those translations influence the two writers' original style? Their future novels?

Rosetta Loy writes at the end of her 'Nota':

> Tradurre *Dominique* è stata per me una grande lezione di scrittura. Sulle sue pagine ho imparato a controllare e a semplificare i giri di frase, a ubbidire a un ritmo. Ho anche capito, dallo sguardo di Fromentin che coglieva di ogni cosa dei piccoli tratti essenziali, che l'eccessivo è insignificante. Quando terminai la traduzione era il 1972. Riscrissi allora da capo *La bicicletta*, il mio primo romanzo. Lo capovolsi, se così si può dire, trovandogli finalmente la strada su cui camminare. Questo è il mio debito verso Fromentin.[84]

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[82] Eugène Fromentin, *Dominique* nella traduzione di Rosetta Loy (Torino: Einaudi, 1983), p. 264.
[83] Gustave Flaubert, *Tre racconti* nella traduzione di Lalla Romano (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), p. 132.
[84] Loy, p. 266.

Type 2: Old translations and translator dead at the time of publication

The last scenario is the re-issuing of an old translation by a writer who is dead at the time of its publication in the STS.[85] In this case, the translator does not have the possibility of commenting on the translation or revising it. Often, where possible, in the place of the 'Nota', there is an old introduction or a comment the writer had written on the translation. Failing that, an essay by the editor of the text and/or a critical essay on the author or work translated, may be offered.

This is the case of: Tommaso Landolfi translating Nikolai Gogol (*Racconti di Pietroburgo*, STS 1984) and Pushkin (*Mozart e Salieri e altri microdrammi*, STS 1985); Pier Paolo Pasolini translating Aeschylus (*L'Orestiade*, STS 1985); Sandro Penna translating Prosper Merimée (*Carmen e altri racconti*, STS 1986); Cesare Pavese translating Gertrude Stein (*Autobiografia di Alice Toklas*, STS 1987), Christopher Morley (*Il cavallo di Troia*, STS 1991), Herman Melville (*Benito Cereno*, STS 1994), Sherwood Anderson (*Riso nero*, STS 1995); Aldo Palazzeschi translating Alphonse Daudet (*I tre libri di Tartarino,* STS 1987); Massimo Mila translating Guy de Maupassant (*L'eredità,* STS 1989) and Friedrich Schiller (*Walleinstein*, STS 1993); Giaime Pintor translating William Beckford (*Vathek*, STS 1989) and Heinrich von Kleist (*Käthchen di Heilbronn ovvero La prova del fuoco*, STS 1997); Massimo Bontempelli translating Apuleius (*L'asino d'oro*, STS 1991); Alessandro Bonsanti translating Pierre de Marivaux (*Il villan rifatto*, STS 1992); Carlo Emilio Gadda translating Juan Ruiz de Alarcòn (*La verità sospetta*, STS 1993); Natalia Ginzburg translating Guy de Maupassant (*Una vita*, STS 1994).

6.5 The contradictory character of the series

Manganelli warns that the STS book must preserve the character of a document in the history of a writer. One might wonder: would this character of documenting the history of a writer not be much more authentically preserved in those old translations that were reissued in the STS, but had originally been translated without self-

[85] This typology will take up chapter 4 of my thesis, with the analysis of Cesare Pavese's *Benito Cereno.*

consciously proposing to fulfil that function of self-documentation? Would a translation especially made for the series not be a sort of manufactured document, a kind of 'antiquariato su misura'? And if the translation is supposed to be an authentic spiritual document, how can one ask the writer to revise and change it?

From Manganelli's warning about originality emerges clearly the fundamental premise of a series like the STS: that translations by writers are 'special', and worth being framed separately from translations by non-writers, not only because they are good, but because they are also creative. The character identifying a writerly translation is the degree of extra creativity closely dependent on the author's original writing.

From various sources there emerges a certain surprise, or a questioning of the basis of this unique project. Ernesto Ferrero, in his introduction to *Gli autori invisibili*, points out a paradox in the whole idea of STS:

> Anni fa Giulio Einaudi, che già curava personalmente e con speciale passione la collana "Scrittori tradotti da scrittori" (una tautologia a ben vedere: ogni buon traduttore è di per se stesso uno scrittore; sarebbe come dire: musica eseguita da musicisti)[86]

Novaro too, in his article in *La Stampa*, points to the contradictory or limiting character of the main idea behind the STS project:

> se lentamente si fa strada l'idea, quando leggiamo testi tradotti, che ne stiamo leggendo una versione la cui responsabilità è da spartire con chi lo tradusse, è anche merito di questa collana, che anche graficamente fu significativa, poiché *metteva sullo stesso piano nome di chi scrisse il testo originale e di chi ne aveva dato quella versione.* Certo, il limite fu di circoscrivere l'operazione agli scrittori, ma si può pensare che fu un grimaldello per rendere evidente il discorso sulla traduzione (i testi erano sempre seguiti da una nota di traduzione).[87]

In another article in *La Stampa*, Mauro Baudino comments on the STS project:

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[86] Ernesto Ferrero, *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 10.
[87] Federico Novaro, *La Stampa*, 20 dicembre 2011.

> Con la collana «Sts» ideata da Giulio Einaudi, l'editore trasformatosi in curatore provò a dimostrare [...] che gli scrittori in proprio potevano essere dei grandi traduttori. Il fenomeno è ovviamente sempre esistito, l'idea fu di renderlo visibile all'interno di una sua propria cornice, di ipotizzare un canone per questa spesso segreta letteratura a quattro mani. La Sts, scrittori tradotti da scrittori (il che se vogliamo è una tautologia) pubblicò 82 libri...[88]

Most interestingly, the writer-translators frequently tend to distance themselves, in the Notes to their translations, from the implicit presumptuous pronouncement of the series (that writers are better translators). Very often, this is done by putting only a brief comment stressing that their translation strategy was to keep as faithful as possible to the ST. For instance, Silvia Ballestra, who uses her 'Nota' to say something on the work she has translated (*Manon Lescaut* by Antoine-François Prévost), concludes with a short comment on her translation:

> Un cenno conclusivo sulla traduzione: si è cercato di rendere il più fedelmente possibile vicino al testo originale, tentando solo di alleggerire qualche costruzione di frase troppo pesante e inserendo qualche virgolettato in dialoghi altrimenti in forma indiretta. È sembrato importante rispettare la lingua del testo senza abbassarla troppo in registri moderni ed eccessivamente disinvolti per mantenere quel cortocircuito che caratterizza l'umanissimo narratore Des Grieux, il contraddittorio Des Grieux, uomo colto e studioso che decide di piombare nel vizio mantenendo sempre una lucida e, talvolta, ironica, consapevolezza.[89]

Antonio Tabucchi, in his very brief 'Nota' to his translation of Pessoa's *O Marinheiro*, stresses the limits of translation (also of his authorial translation), which cannot replace the original work, but, at its very best, can let a little of the original splendor shine through:

> Sullo smalto quasi klimtiano di questo linguaggio si è posata inevitabilmente una pellicola che lo opacizza. La pellicola della traduzione. Ma la traduzione non è certo l'opera, né il calco di un'opera; semmai, come diceva Ortega, è solo un viaggio verso l'opera. Mi auguro perciò che inoltrandoci nel paesaggio immobile e smagliante del

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[88] Mario Baudino, 'Gli scrittori lo fanno meglio', *La Stampa,* 28 dicembre 2012 <http://www.lastampa.it/2011/12/28/cultura/libri/gli-scrittori-lo-fanno-meglio-3jgm4YkKdkzqbpL2mvu6PJ/pagina.html > [accessed January 2014]

[89] Antoine-François Prévost, *Manon Lescaut* nella traduzione di Silvia Ballestra (Torino: Einaudi, 1998), p. 213.

Marinaio si riescano ancora a scorgere, anche se dalla nostra vettura con i vetri un po' appannati, alcuni bagliori delle gemme di cui questo prezioso cammeo è composto.[90]

Franco Lucentini, in his extremely brief 'Nota' to the revised version of his old translation of Borges' *Ficciones*, mentions that his revisional changes were aimed at increasing the literality of his old translation:

> Quando uscì nei "Gettoni" Einaudi trent'anni fa, questa traduzione – la prima in italiano di un'opera di Borges – sollevò obiezioni come troppo letterale, troppo spagnoleggiante. Rivedendola ora non ho mancato di apportarvi ritocchi qua e là, per aumentare la letteralità e i presunti spagnolismi.[91]

Gianni D'Elia, in the 'Nota' to his translation of André Gide's *Les nourritures terrestres*, points to the main risk of writerly translation:

> Se, come si è ripetuto più volte, tradurre è tradire, per un autore che ne traduca un altro si pone anche e soprattutto un'ulteriore questione: come interrompere il proprio fare senza rinunciare al fare, come adeguarsi allo spirito e alla lettera di un altro fare senza "rifare" il verso a quello stile, ma anche senza sovrapporvi in aderenza il proprio, piegando l'altrui fino ad ignorarlo.[92]

Sometimes the translator openly questions the premise of the STS project. For instance, Primo Levi, in the 'Nota' to *Il processo*, emphasizes the risks concerned in being a writer-translator, especially when translating a work affine to his original work and experience:

> Spesso in questo lavoro di traduzione ho provato la sensazione di una collisione, di un conflitto, della tentazione immodesta di sciogliere a modo mio i nodi del testo: insomma di correggere, di tirare le scelte lessicali, di sovrapporre il mio modo di scrivere a quello di Kafka. A questa tentazione ho tentato di non cedere.[93]

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[90] Fernando Pessoa, *Il marinaio* nella traduzione di Antonio Tabucchi (Torino: Einaudi, 1988), p. 62.
[91] Jorge Luis Borges, *Finzioni (1935-1944)* nella traduzione di Franco Lucentini (Torino: Einaudi, 1985), p. 151.
[92] André Gide, *I nutrimenti terrestri* nella traduzione di Gianni D'Elia (Torino: Einaudi, 1994), p.163.
[93] Franz Kafka, *Il processo* nella traduzione di Primo Levi (Torino: Einaudi, 1983), p. 254.

Natalia Ginzburg too in her 'Nota' points to the possible contradictory character of the STS premise. It is not true that a writer is always a better translator, but, in order to translate well, he must behave as translator and not as writer taking possession of the text:

> Alcuni pensano che gli scrittori traducano meglio degli altri. Io non lo penso. Penso che qualche volta traducono bene e qualche volta male. Penso che per uno scrittore, il tradurre un testo amato possa essere un esercizio quanto mai salubre, corroborante e vitale. A patto, però, che lo prenda come un esercizio, e si comporti non da scrittore ma da traduttore, tirandosi in disparte il più possibile, cacciandosi il più possibile in un punto nascosto [...] Non penso che lo scrittore debba compiere, nel tradurre, un atto di appropriazione. Credo che debba il più possibile far sparire se stesso. Il suo stile, che non adopera, gli langue nelle mani come uno strumento inutile. Tuttavia non se ne può separare nel pensiero, essendogli impossibile nel pensiero separarsene mai, e di tanto in tanto lo accarezza dentro di sé in segreto, pensando al tempo in cui lo userà di nuovo.[94]

[94] Gustave Flaubert, *La signora Bovary* nella traduzione di Natalia Ginzburg (Torino: Einaudi, 1983).

CHAPTER 3: THE DIFFERENCE OF WRITERLY TRANSLATION, AND THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

> *It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression.*
>
> – E.A.Poe, 'The Fall of the House of Usher'

1. Introduction

The purpose of the present chapter is to introduce the detailed investigation of translations by creative writers, and thereby to legitimate their study as a separate instance from translations by translators who have not published any original work. The chapter aspires to cast some light on the question '*Is there* a difference between writerly and non-writerly translation?' through a comparative analysis of two Italian translations of Edgar Allan Poe's tale 'The Fall of the House of Usher': the one by the well-established Italian writer Giorgio Manganelli, published in 1983 by Einaudi in *I racconti*[1] in the series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', and the one by Maria Gallone, a translator who does not appear to have published any original work, first published by Rizzoli in *Racconti del terrore*[2] in 1950. The study aims at identifying and examining possible differences between the two translations in reproducing the source text and at inquiring whether these differences may be adducible to the professional status of the translators.[3] I must apologize to the reader for the awkward and repetitious layout of my analysis. Unfortunately, fluency has to be sacrificed at this very basic (but necessary) level of comparison.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first (section 2) is a translation-oriented analysis of the source text aiming at identifying the content of the original text to be translated and the stylistic devices through which it is produced. The purpose of this section

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[1] Edgar Allan Poe, *I racconti*, nella traduzione di Giorgio Manganelli (Torino: Einaudi, 1983). The book is a work in three volumes containing all Poe's tales.
[2] Edgar Allan Poe, *Racconti del terrore*, nella traduzione di Maria Gallone (Milano: Rizzoli, 1950).
[3] The findings of such analysis do not claim to be of universal validity, and their relevance is limited to the present study.

is to produce a hypothesis for the translator and by no means intends to be an analysis of the tale in the abstract. All the questions in the first section stem from the translator's point of view, and some are necessarily naive: what is the essence of Poe's work? What is the subject matter on the page to be transposed into the target language? What are the stylistic devices which underlie the content and which the translator needs to reproduce? The translator needs to form a working hypothesis.

The second section (section 3) is divided into two subsections. The first is a detailed analysis of the two Italian translations, investigating how the translators deal with the original stylistic devices identified in the previous section. Do they recognize the importance of these devices in the production of the tale's essential features and strive to reproduce them? The analysis is structured into two parts: the first is a detailed analysis of the two versions of Poe's original opening, highlighting all the relevant translational choices that might or might not be part of the translator's strategy; the second is a selective analysis of the entire translation to verify and confirm the previous findings. The findings – a substantial difference in degree of freedom towards the original between Manganelli, who appears quite free to change the source text, and Gallone, who, on the contrary, is extremely respectful of the original – are then productively investigated. Is Manganelli's freedom part of a strategy of translation? What is the purpose of his changes? What is the result? What is the result of Gallone's translation? Can we hypothesize that Manganelli feels more free to change the original because he is a famous Italian writer? Is a creative writer allowed an extra margin of creativity in translation? Are translations by writers generally given higher authority than translations by non-writers? These general questions are too broad to be answered on the basis of a single example, but they will arise again throughout the present study.

The second subsection investigates the question of authority of writerly translation through the comparative analysis of two other Italian versions of 'The Fall of the House of Usher': by the famous Italian writer Elio Vittorini, 'La rovina della casa degli Usher', published in 1937 in *Racconti e arabeschi* by Mondadori; and by the Anglicist Gabriele

Baldini,[4] 'Il Crollo della Casa Usher', published in 1949 in *Prose e poesie* by Garzanti. The study of Vittorini's text confirms the extra creativity of the writer-translator found in the comparison between Manganelli and Gallone; Vittorini too feels quite free to change Poe's text. The comparative analysis of Vittorini's and Baldini's versions identifies a striking similarity between the two translations, which could perhaps be taken as pointing to the high authority attributed by Baldini to a translation by a famous writer.

2. The source text. A translation-oriented analysis of 'The Fall of the House of Usher'

What follows does not purport to be a scholarly analysis of Poe's text; it is a survey of certain features to which the translator might properly give priority.[5] My findings will be prescriptive as well as descriptive; this is inevitable when approaching the translation from its inception.

From the very beginning of Edgar Allan Poe's tale, 'The Fall of the House of Usher', as in the overture of a musical piece, all themes and instruments are introduced. The translator is immediately faced with unavoidable questions of content and form. What is the content of this tale? What is Poe writing about? What form he uses to express it?

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[4] Gabriele Baldini (1919-1969) was a scholar, but is also the author of fictional works that he wrote late near the end of his life and were published posthumously. At the time that he published his Poe's translations he was not known as a creative writer.

[5] For a study of Poe's stylistics and 'The Fall of the House of Usher' see: in Charles Baudelaire, *Œuvres complètes* (vol.ii) (Paris : Gallimard, 1976), the following essays: 'Edgar Poe, sa Vie e ses Oeuvres', pp. 296-318; 'Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe', pp. 319-337. See also, in Kevin J. Hayes (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Edgar Allan Poe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), the following essays: Scott Peeples, 'Poe's constructiveness and "The Fall of the House of Usher', pp. 178-192; Peter Thomas, 'Poe's Dupin and the power of detection', pp. 133-147; Benjamin Franklin Fisher, 'Poe and the Gothic Tradition', pp. 72-91. In Eric W. Carlson (ed.), *The Recognition of Edgar Allan Poe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1966), the following essays: J.Brander Matthews, 'Poe and the detective story', pp. 81-93; Stephen L Mooney, 'Poe's Gothic Waste Land', pp. 278-296; Wystan Hugh Auden, 'Introduction', pp. 220-231; Allen Tate, 'The Angelic Imagination', pp. 236-253; Charles L. Sanford, 'Edgar Allan Poe', pp. 297-308. In Claude Richard (ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe* (Paris : Lettres Modernes, 1969), the essay by Darrel Abel, 'La Clef de la Maison Usher', pp. 113-129. In J. Gerald Kennedy (ed.), *A Historical Guide to Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001): David Leverenz, 'Spanking the Master: Mind-Body Crossings in Poe's Sensationalism', pp. 95-128.

'The Fall of the House of Usher' is a fantastic tale told in the past tense and written in the first person. The narrator-protagonist goes back in his mind to the visit he has paid to Roderick Usher, an old friend, who in an agitated letter has begged him to come. Roderick Usher hopes that the company of his friend might bring him some comfort for a strange illness that affects him. When he arrives at the House of Usher, a gloomy and decadent mansion surrounded by a tarn, the narrator-protagonist is escorted by a valet to Usher's studio and on the way, on one of the staircases of the house, he quickly passes a puzzled-looking physician. When entering the studio he is struck by the ghastly aspect of Usher who tells him he is suffering from an acuteness of the senses, a constitutional and a family evil. He also tells his friend of the sufferings caused by the illness and approaching death of his sister, Lady Madeline, who is suffering from apathy: 'A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptic character, were the unusual diagnosis,' Roderick Usher tells his friend.[6] At that very moment, Lady Madeline passes through the room and, without noticing the presence of the visitor, disappears. After several days, during which the narrator-protagonist tries to improve his friend's melancholy by entertaining him with different activities, mainly music and reading, Usher informs his friend of Lady Madeline's death and of his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight in one of the vaults of the building, the family graveyard being quite far from the house. While depositing the coffin in the vault, the narrator observes that Usher's sister was his twin. Then they screw the coffin down and leave. Seven or eight days later, during a stormy night, a terror-stricken Usher enters the bedroom of his friend who tries ineffectually to calm him by reading aloud to him the "Mad Trist" by Sir Launcelot Canning, a story in which a brave hero slays a dragon, thereby winning a shield that hangs on a wall behind the beast. As he reads, terrifying noises from the vault where the coffin has been placed echo the incidents of the story. All at once, a bloody enshrouded Lady Madeline appears on the threshold and with a cry of pain falls on her brother killing him. The terrified protagonist flees from the mansion. In the rage of the storm and under the light of a blood-red moon, the visitor gazes back at the House of Usher as it falls into the deep black waters of the tarn.

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[6] Edgar Allan Poe, *Collected Works*, edited by Thomas Ollive Mabbott, (Cambridge, Mass. – London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1978), p. 404, ll. 16-18 .

In the plot of 'The Fall of the House of Usher', a tale more than twenty pages long whose action can be summarized in detail in thirty lines, many of the main coordinates of the story are left undefined. For instance, what is the protagonist's name? Where does he come from? Where is the mansion? What is the exact nature of Usher's illness? And so on. 'The Fall of the House of Usher' is a psychological thriller whose content and themes unfold in the narrator-protagonist's mental experience of the past visit to his friend. The tale is an extraordinary life drawing of the indefatigable activity of the narrator's mind trying to unravel the mystery of the past events at the House of Usher and their effects on the human soul. The reader, hypnotized by Poe's masterly manipulation of language, follows the narrator through the maze of hypotheses and deductions, always kept in suspense by the unpredictability of the mind's next moves. This suspense, a fundamental ingredient of the thriller, does not issue from the facts narrated, but is intrinsic to Poe's representation of the mind's *modus operandi*. As Brander Matthews points out in his essay 'Poe and the Detective Story',

> it is not in the mystery itself that the author seeks to interest the reader, but rather in the successive steps whereby his analytic observer is enabled to solve a problem that might well be dismissed as beyond human elucidation. Attention is centred on the unravelling of the tangled skein rather than on the knot itself.[7]

The knot itself is in fact not relevant in Poe's tale. The plot is quite insubstantial; almost nothing happens. The content of the tale lies in Poe's skilful representation of the mental processes through a meticulous arrangement of every single element of the text, at the narrative and linguistic levels.

Poe describes his rigorous method of composition of a work in his 1846 essay, 'The Philosophy of Composition', where he fosters the image of the writer like a mechanic working his verbal material and with always present in his mind the effect he wants to attain:

> It is my design to render it manifest that no one point in its composition is referable to accident or intuition – that the work proceeded, step by step, to its completion with the

[7] Brander Matthews, 'Poe and the Detective Story' in *The Recognition of Edgar Allan Poe* (Toronto: University of Michigan Press, 1966), pp. 85-86.

> precision of a mathematical problem.[8] [...] There is a radical error, I think, in the usual mode of constructing a story. [...] I prefer commencing with the consideration of an *effect.* Keeping originality *always* in view [...] I say to myself, in the first place, "Of the innumerable effects, or impressions, of which the heart, the intellect, or (more generally) the soul is susceptible, what one shall I, on the present occasion, select?"[9]

As Charles Baudelaire observes in 'Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe', according to Poe the writer should not adjust his thoughts to a plot, but he should invent and combine the incidents in view of the intended effect:

> L'artiste, s'il est habile, n'accomodera pas ses pensées aux incidents, mais, ayant conçu délibérément, à loisir, un effet à produire, inventera les incidents, combinera les événements les plus propres à amener l'effet voulu. Si la première phrase n'est pas écrite en vue de préparer cette impression finale, l'œuvre est manquée dès le début. Dans la composition tout entière il ne doit pas se glisser un seul mot qui ne soit une intention, qui ne tende, directement ou indirectement, à parfaire le dessein prémédité.[10]

In Poe's text nothing is left to chance, as Baudelaire writes in 'Edgar Poe. Sa vie et ses Oeuvres', and every single word performs the function of pushing the reader to follow the author in his driving deductions:

> Son admirable style, pur et bizarre, serré comme les mailles d'une armure, complaisant et minutieux, et dont la plus légère intention sert à pousser doucement le lecteur vers un but voulu (...) Et lentement peu à peu se déroule une histoire dont tout l'intérêt repose sur une hypothèse audacieuse, sur un dosage impudent de la Nature dans l'amalgame des facultés. Le lecteur, lié par le vertige, est contraint de suivre l'auteur dans ses entraînantes déductions.[11]

The effect planned by Poe in 'The Fall of the House of Usher' is the immediate and absolute identification of the reader with the narrating voice. The reader never senses the presence of a real or fictional narrator telling the story of something happened in the past. From the very first line of the tale the reader becomes the protagonist investigating a dream-like reality

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[8] Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Philosophy of Composition' in *Essays and Reviews* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1984), pp. 14-15.
[9] Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Philosophy of Composition', p. 13.
[10] Charles Baudelaire, 'Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe', *Œuvres Complètes*, p. 329.
[11] Charles Baudelaire, 'Edgar Poe. Sa Vie et ses Oeuvres', in *Oeuvres Complètes*, p. 316.

half-way between the external world and the world of imagination. The reader is constantly spurred to use his imagination, and the imaginary is the content of Poe's masterpiece. In his essay, while discussing Poe's detective story 'Murders in the Rue Morgue', Matthews refers to it as to a 'tale of ratiocination', where the detective's most important faculty is his extraordinary acumen in working out an acceptable answer to the puzzle propounded. On the other hand, Matthews refers to 'The Fall of the House of Usher' as to a 'tale of Imagination' where the unravelling of the mystery is conducted under the guide of imagination, a most essential faculty in the production of Poe's tale.[12] Charles Baudelaire, in 'Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe', clarifies what Poe means by Imagination:

> Pour lui, l'Imagination est la reine des facultés; mais par ce mot il entend quelque chose de plus grand que ce qui est entendu par le commun des lecteurs. L'Imagination n'est pas la fantaisie; elle n'est pas non plus la sensibilité, bien qu'il soit difficile de concevoir un homme imaginatif qui ne serait pas sensible. L'Imagination est une faculté quasi divine qui perçoit tout d'abord, en dehors des méthodes philosophiques, les rapports intimes et secrets des choses, les correspondances et les analogies.[13]

The subject matter of 'The Fall of the House of Usher' is what eludes the control of reason, what only Imagination can grasp. As Baudelaire writes, Poe

> analyse ce qu'il y a de plus fugitif, il soupèse l'impondérable et décrit, avec cette manière minutieuse et scientifique dont les effets sont terribles, tout cet imaginaire qui flotte autour de l'homme nerveux et le conduit à mal.[14]

Finally, the content of Poe's tale issues from the meticulous arrangement of the text and not from the narration of some facts. The reader's imagination is constantly spurred by the skilful organization of narrative and by the highly visionary power of Poe's language. Consequently, it seems that the most appropriate approach to translating a text whose essence lies in the stylistic devices with which its author has worked his narrative and verbal material, would be a source-oriented translation aiming at identifying and reproducing those essential stylistic devices.

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[12] Brander Matthews, 'Poe and the Detective Story', p. 87.
[13] Charles Baudelaire, 'Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe', pp. 328-329.
[14] Charles Baudelaire, 'Edgar Poe: sa Vie et ses Oeuvres', p. 317.

It is the aim of the following subsections to identify some of the stylistic devices on which Poe's tale is built.

2.1 Control of narrative

In order to attain such an extraordinary involvement of the reader, Poe hides all those elements that could mark a distance between the reader's and the narrator-protagonist's mind. In 'The Fall of the House of Usher' the narrator-protagonist is not a persona with a face and a name whom the reader perceives as separate from himself. In fact, his name is never mentioned and there is no physical description of him. He is the point of view, the "camera", the eyes open on that particular portion of reality, and he immediately assumes the reader's name and face. There is no staged narrator and, in a sense, there is no narration. The almost complete absence of action gives the reader the impression that there is no story of objective events to be narrated. The story does not seem to exist in reality, outside the mind. That illusion is skilfully enhanced by the omission of all sort of geographical coordinates: where is the House of Usher? In America? England? Where does the visitor come from? Even if the tale is written in first person in the past tense, Poe triumphantly succeeds in severing all distance between time of narration and time of the story, rendering the story present, unfolding in the very moment it is read. There is no separation between facts happening in a determinate time and space and facts happening in the mind. The mind is the space and time of the story, and facts, terrible facts, Poe seems to suggest, happen only in the mind.

Finally, Poe's organization of narrative enables the reader to identify completely with the words written on the page, thereby maximizing the effect produced by Poe's exquisite manipulation of language at lexical and syntactical level.

2.2 Manipulation of language: lexis and syntax

Christiane Nord's *Text Analysis in Translation*, in the sections 'Lexis' and 'Sentence structure', points to the important role played by the two categories of lexis and syntax in all approaches to translation-oriented text analysis.[15]

It is through a certain choice of lexis and a certain organization of the phrase that Poe achieves the hypnotic effect that 'The Fall of the House of Usher' has on its readers. This section focuses on two relevant linguistic devices, lexical and syntactical, through which Poe builds his story: firstly, on Poe's liberal use of adjectives and their function in creating the extraordinary effect of indefiniteness, secondly, on the syntax of the sentence and some stylistic devices through which Poe organizes its complexity and their relevance in producing a text which perfectly beats the time and marks the processes of the mind.

2.2.1 Lexis. The liberal use of adjectives

In 'The Fall of the House of Usher' nouns rarely stand by themselves signifying only their denotative meaning, but they are usually accompanied by *at least* one adjective. Poe's liberal use of adjectives serves the function of creating the blurred atmosphere pervading the pages of this visionary tale. Usually the function of the adjective in this story is not to add

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[15] See Christiane Nord, *Text Analysis in Translation* (Amsterdam, Rodopi B.V., 2005), 'Lexis' (pp. 121-129) and 'Sentence structure' (pp. 129-131). In 'Lexis/general considerations' Nord writes: 'The characteristics of the lexis used in a text play an important part in all approaches to translation-oriented analysis. The authors underline the importance of the semantic, stylistic and formal aspects. Based on a semiotic concept of syntax, Thiel (1974a, 1978b) and Wilss (1980a) stress the interrelation between lexis and syntactic structures, while the other authors discuss several individual examples regarding particular aspects of lexis, such as the affiliation of a word to stylistic levels and registers (Thiel 1974b, 1978a, Reiss1974a, 1984, Koller 1979), word formation (Wilss 1977, Thiel 1978b) or certain rhetorical figures, e.g. metaphors or repetition of lexical elements (Wilss 1977, Thiel 1978b)' (p. 122). In 'Sentence structure/General considerations' Nord writes: 'The formal, functional and stylistic aspects of sentence structure are mentioned as an important factor in almost all approaches to translation-relevant text analysis, although they are not dealt with in any systematic way. The construction and complexity of sentences (Wilss 1977), the distribution of main clauses and subordinate clauses in the text (Thiel 1978a), the length of the sentences (Thiel 1978b), the use of functional sentence perspective (Thiel 1974b), and the cohesive linking devices on the text surface (Bühler 1984) are some of the features considered to be relevant to translation-oriented text analysis' (p.129).

definition to the noun it refers to, thereby conferring a greater degree of meaningfulness, but, on the contrary, to reduce the noun by enshrouding its denotative meaning in an aura of elusiveness. The blurring effect of the adjective is visible in the copious use of indefinite adjectives and its determinant function is evident from the very first line:

During the whole of a ***dull, dark*** *and* ***soundless*** *day.*[16]

Phonetically the 3 adjectives echo and expand the 'd' of 'day', like a bell tolling for the dead. Something terrible is going to happen. Semantically they produce indefiniteness – it is hard to see or hear anything – and they introduce one of the main themes of the tale: the fallaciousness of the five senses as access channels to reality. 'Dull', 'dark' and 'soundless' introduce the impossibility of objectively knowing reality by means of two of the most important senses in the story: sight and hearing.

2.2.2 Syntax and linking devices[17] *(cataphora, phrases indicating thought, repetition, anaphora)*

The extremely complex and ramified structure of sentences in 'The Fall of the House of Usher' serves the function of mirroring the labyrinthine paths the mind follows in trying to unravel the mystery of reality. The sentences in the story are usually very long and articulated and the main clause, as with the noun modified by the adjective, is usually modified by many subordinates. A mathematical representation of Poe's sentence would be a very long expression where every element is related to the rest through a mathematical operator. Every single element of the sentence acts upon the others and is acted upon by them, directing the reader towards the intended final effect. In particular, the exceptional driving force towards an end which, from the very first line, captures the reader in this tour de force of imagination, derives from a distinctive use of linking devices, and especially

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[16] Edgar Allan Poe, *Collected Works*, p.397, l.1.

[17] Christiane Nord in *Text Analysis in Translation*, cit., defines the category of 'Linking Devices' and highlights their relevance in the analysis of the content of a text: 'Linking Devices (cohesion): The linking devices which appear in a text, such as anaphora, cataphora, substitutions, recurrence (i.e. repetition of elements or patterns), paraphrase (i.e. expressing the same content in a different form), proforms, etc. (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1977: 14ff., and similarly de Beaugrande & Dressler 1981: 48ff), can also be used to analyse the content' (p.100).

from Poe's cataphoric[18] organization of the sentence and its parts. This is evident from the very beginning where the suspense produced by the three subordinates preceding the main clause immediately captures the reader's attention and impels him towards the end of the sentence:

> *During the whole of a dull, dark and soundless day, in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone,*[19]

In organizing his sentences Poe makes extensive use of cataphora, of phrases containing a verb of thought or referring to the process of thinking, of repetitions, of anaphora,[20] all essential devices for producing original content and for conducting the reader through the intricate map of directions traced by the mind at work.

(i) **Cataphora**, because it reaches beyond what we already know, is used to mirror the deductive process, from a series of premises to conclusions, and to create the psychological suspense of the sentence. It is in always deferring and indirectly hinting that Poe creates the unreal atmosphere. Cataphors reproduce at a linguistic level one of the main themes of the tale: thus contact with reality is never direct and objective, but always contaminated by the filtering body, and the principal clause of a sentence is rarely directly accessible and objectively visible, but almost always filtered through a thick curtain of subordinates.

(ii) **Phrases indicating thought.** Phrases referring to the process of thinking (eg.: 'I imagined', 'I doubted', 'I know not how') are widely used by Poe and usually are found in cataphoric position. Such phrases, besides the function already described for cataphora, serve the purpose of confining the story in its psychological setting (the mind of the narrator) and not in the actual geographical location of the

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[18] Definition of cataphora *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, ed. by Lesley Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 351: 'the use of an expression which refers to or stands for a later word or group of words.'

[19] Edgar Allan Poe, *Collected Works*, p. 397, ll. 1-3.

[20] Definition of anaphora in Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 73: 'the use of an expression which refers or stands for an earlier word or group of words.'

mansion. In particular, the abundant use of locutions referring specifically to doubt (eg.: 'I do not know how', 'I doubted') reproduces at a linguistic level the impossibility of the intellect to take control over reality and increases the suspense, lack of control being the main cause of terror as the visitor points out at the beginning of the tale:

I know not how it was *– but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit.*[21]

(iii) **Repetition**. The abundant use of repetitions (of words or patterns) skilfully mirrors the movements of the mind at work. Repetitions continuously spur the reader to be an active thinker, not to lose the thread, to move back and forward and to follow (and identify with) the protagonist's mental pathways. They also serve as fundamental musical devices, conferring on the text its particular singsong rhythm which reproduces at a phonetic level the gloomy and melancholic atmosphere.

(iv) **Anaphora**: anaphors produce the same effect as repetitions.

I have suggested, then, that the priority of the translator preparing to produce a faithful translation of 'The Fall of the House Usher', a tale where every single element has been carefully arranged with a view to the production of a certain effect, should be to reproduce those stylistic devices with which Poe attains his effect on the reader. It is the aim of the following section to investigate how the Italian translators deal with the translation of these devices. Do they recognize their importance? Do they strive to reproduce them in Italian?

[21] Edgar Allan Poe, *Collected Works*, p. 397, ll. 6-7.

3. Giorgio Manganelli's and Maria Gallone's translation of 'The Fall of the House of Usher'

The present section is divided into two subsections. The first investigates how the Italian translators deal with the reproduction of the original adjectives and of the syntax and the linking devices articulating Poe's sentences. This analysis is structured in two parts, a) and b). Part a) is a detailed analysis of the two versions of Poe's opening paragraph organized into three categories: the first, 'The translation of adjectives', investigates instances of how the translators reproduce the abundance of adjectives in the source text; the second, 'The translation of syntax and linking devices', examines how they reproduce the original syntax and the linking devices. A third category, 'A certain freedom', highlights other instances where the translator considerably changes the source text. Part b), a general survey of the entire translations,[22] verifies and confirms what was found in part a): whereas Gallone strives to reproduce every single element of the original, Manganelli shows from the start a tendency to reduce the original number of adjectives, to simplify the original complexity of syntax and in general to assume a certain freedom, often arbitrary, to change the original. In particular, Manganelli's strategy of translation, a strategy of 'lightening' of the source text, as clarified by the writer in the 'Nota del Traduttore' at the end of the third volume of *I Racconti*, appears to undermine the essential elements on which the original text lays its foundations, and to clash with Manganelli's own theoretical considerations on Poe's poetics.

The second subsection tries to cast some light on possible reasons for the difference between writerly and non-writerly translation through the comparative analysis of two other Italian translations of 'The Fall of the House of Usher', by Elio Vittorini and by Gabriele Baldini.

[22] For space reasons, in the second part of the analysis Gallone's translation appears in footnotes.

3.1 The translation of the opening paragraph

Edgar Allan Poe (The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1978)

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was – but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me – upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain – upon the bleak walls – upon the vacant eye-like windows – upon a few rank sedges – and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees – with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveller upon opium – the bitter lapse into everyday life – the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart – an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it – I paused to think – what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there are *combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression; and acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down – but with a shudder even more thrilling than before – upon the remodelled and inverted images of the grey sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.*[23]

[23] All quotations from the original text are from 'The Fall of the House of Usher' in *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe,* cit., pp. 392-421 (p. 397).

Manganelli (Einaudi STS, 1983)

Per un intero giorno, caliginoso, taciturno e spento, un giorno autunnale, greve di basse nuvole, avevo proceduto, solo, a cavallo, per una campagna sommamente tetra; e, con le ombre lunghe della sera, ero giunto, alla fine, in vista della malinconica Casa degli Usher. Non appena scorsi l'edificio, mi invase l'anima un sentimento di intollerabili tenebre, di cui non potrei dar ragione. Intollerabili, dico; poiché non medicava il sentimento nessuno di quegli affetti, cattivanti perché poetici, con cui la mente per solito accoglie le più crude immagini del terribile e della desolazione. Contemplavo il luogo: quella casa, il nudo disegno del paesaggio, le mura spoglie, le aggrovigliate càrici, i radi, decidui tronchi; e pativo uno sfinimento dell'anima, che non posso paragonare a nessuna sensazione terrestre, se non al ridestarsi dell'oppiomane dal fasto dei suoi sogni: il tristo precipizio nella vita quotidiana, l'orrore del velo che cade. Era gelido il cuore, affranto, infermo; tetra, sconsolata meditazione, che nessuna sevizia dell'immaginazione poteva adizzare al sentimento del sublime. Che mai dunque – sostai a meditare – che mai dunque a tal punto mi stremava mentre contemplavo la Casa degli Usher? Insolubile mistero; né potevo tener testa alle fantastiche larve che mi stringevano da presso mentre ero così assorto . E fui costretto a ripetermi, frustrante conclusione, che mentre, senza dubbio, semplici immagini della natura possono siffattamente comporsi da conseguire un tale effetto su di noi, pur sempre ci resta preclusa l'analisi di tanta efficacia. Poteva forse bastare una diversa disposizione dei particolari del paesaggio, dell'immagine, per alterare, forse cancellare, quell'angoscioso potere; e, mosso da codesto pensiero, guidai il cavallo verso la ripida riva di una pozza nera e fosforica, liscio, immoto barlume accanto alla dimora, e chinai lo sguardo a rimirare – con un brivido più inquieto che per l'innanzi – l'immagine rovesciata, ridisegnata delle scialbe càrici, i tronchi lividi, le vacue occhiaie delle finestre. [24]

[24] All quotations from Manganelli's translation are from Edgar Allan Poe, *I racconti*, nella traduzione di Giorgio Manganelli (Torino: Einaudi, 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', 1983), pp. 237-260 (pp. 237-238).

Gallone (Mondadori, 2007)[25]

Durante un giorno triste, cupo, senza suono, verso il finire dell'anno, un giorno in cui le nuvole pendevano opprimentemente basse nei cieli, io avevo attraversato solo, a cavallo, un tratto di regione singolarmente desolato, finché ero venuto a trovarmi, mentre già si addensavano le ombre della sera, in prossimità della malinconica Casa degli Usher. Non so come fu, ma al primo sguardo che io diedi all'edificio, un senso di intollerabile abbattimento pervase il mio spirito. Dico intollerabile perché questo mio stato d'animo non era alleviato per nulla da quel sentimento che per essere poetico è semi-piacevole, grazie al quale la mente accoglie di solito anche le più tetre immagini naturali dello sconsolato e del terribile. Contemplai la scena che mi si stendeva dinanzi: la casa, l'aspetto della tenuta, i muri squallidi, le finestre simili a occhiaie vuote, i pochi giunchi maleolenti, alcuni bianchi tronchi d'albero ricoperti di muffa. Contemplai ogni cosa con tale depressione d'animo ch'io non saprei paragonarla ad alcuna sensazione terrestre se non al risveglio del fumatore d'oppio. L'amaro ritorno alla vita quotidiana, il pauroso squarciarsi del velo. Sentivo attorno a me una freddezza, uno scoramento, una nausea, un'invincibile stanchezza di pensiero che nessun pungolo dell'immaginazione avrebbe saputo affinare ed esaltare in alcunché di sublime. Che cos'era, mi soffermai a riflettere, che cos'era che tanto mi immalinconiva nella contemplazione della Casa degli Usher? Era un mistero del tutto insolubile; né riuscivo ad afferrare le incorporee fantasticherie che si affollavano intorno a me mentre così meditavo. Fui costretto a fermarmi sulla insoddisfacente conclusione che mentre, senza dubbio, esistono *combinazioni di oggetti naturali e semplicissimi che hanno il potere di così influenzarci, l'analisi tuttavia di questo potere sta in considerazioni che superano la nostra portata. Poteva darsi, riflettei, che una piccola diversità nella disposizione dei particolari della scena, o in quelli del quadro sarebbe bastata a modificare, o fors'anche ad annullare la sua capacità a impressionarmi penosamente; e agendo sotto l'influsso di questo pensiero frenai il mio cavallo sull'orlo scosceso di un oscuro e livido lago artificiale che si stendeva con la sua levigata e lucida superficie in prossimità dell'abitazione, e affissai lo sguardo, con un brivido però che mi scosse ancor più di prima, sulle immagini rimodellate e deformate dei grigi giunchi, degli spettrali tronchi d'albero, delle finestre aperte come vuote occhiaie.*[26]

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[25] The translation was first published in 1950 by Rizzoli.

[26] All quotations from Gallone's translation are from Edgar Allan Poe, *Racconti,* traduzione di Maria Gallone e introduzione di Giorgio Manganelli (Milano: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, 2007), pp. 311-332 (pp. 311-312).

3.1.1 The translation of adjectives:

Poe (p. 397, ll.11-14) *I looked upon the scene before me – upon the* ***mere (1)*** *house, and the simple landscape features of the domain – upon the bleak walls –* ***upon the vacant eye-like windows (6)*** *– upon a* ***few (2) rank (3)*** *sedges – and upon a* ***few (4) white (5)*** *trunks of decayed trees –*

Manganelli (p.237, ll.11-13) *Contemplavo il luogo :* ***quella (1)*** *casa, il nudo disegno del paesaggio, le mura spoglie,* ***[< >] (6),****le* ***[…] (2) aggrovigliate (3)*** *càrici, i* ***radi (4) [< >] (5),*** *decidui tronchi*

(1) Substitution of adjective 'mere' with 'quella' [that]. In the original 'mere' points at the analytical way the visitor is looking upon the objects of the scene, separately.

(2) Deletion of indefinite adjective 'few' and consequent reduction of indefiniteness.

(3) Translation of 'rank' with 'aggrovigliate' [tangled]. The original adjective 'rank' refers more likely to the bad smell of the plants near the tarn than to their being tangled (the sense of smell is quite important here as detector of putrefaction, death). While the original adjective 'rank spurs the reader's imagination with its suggestive power, the Italian adjective 'aggrovigliate' describes and clarifies the image of the plants.

(4) Substitution of indefinite adjective 'few' with adjective 'radi' [sparse] and consequent reduction of indefiniteness: again, while the reader of the original is spurred to imagine the few trees (not necessarily sparse in their configuration), the reader of the translation is told how the trees are positioned.

(5) Deletion of adjective 'white' and consequent reduction of gloominess: in the original the whiteness of the dead trees contributes to enhance the spectral ghostly atmosphere. In addition, in the original the trees (as for the House with eyes) are almost alive, like ghosts, and the life of inorganic matter is one of the main themes of the tale.

(6) Deletion of '*upon the vacant eye-like windows*' – an image which will be repeated at the end of Poe's opening paragraph – and consequent loss of original content: the life of the House and the significant similarity between the building and the person of Roderick Usher is skilfully introduced in the first description of the House. This is lost in the translation. Also: the symmetry underlying the original

description is lost. Probably an oversight, but it is interesting that at the beginning of one of Poe's most famous tales such an oversight has passed unnoticed: was Manganelli's version revised by the publisher?

Gallone: (p. 311, ll.14-17) *Contemplai la scena che mi si stendeva dinanzi: la* ***[< >] (1)****casa, l'aspetto della tenuta, i muri squallidi, le finestre simili a occhiaie vuote, i pochi giunchi maleolenti, alcuni bianchi tronchi d'albero* ***ricoperti di muffa (2)***

(1) Deletion of 'mere'.

(2) Translation of 'decayed' with 'ricoperti di muffa' [covered with mildew]. The original hints at the dead or dying condition of the trees enhancing their similarity to ghosts. The translation does not render the same allusion to death.

3.1.2 The translation of syntax and linking devices

Poe (ll. 6-7, p. 397) ***I know not how it was (1)****– but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit.*

Manganelli (ll. 5-7, p. 237) *Non appena scorsi l'edificio, mi invase l'anima un sentimento di intollerabili tenebre,* ***di cui non potrei dar ragione (1)***

(1) Substitution of cataphoric 'I know not how it was' with anaphoric 'di cui non potrei dar ragione' and consequent loss of original suspense: in the original the reader is kept on the edge, he is told that something (probably mysterious because unexplainable) has happened and that the visitor does not know how to explain it. In the translation the suspense is reduced, as the object causing the narrator's inexplicable reaction, the building, is there already, at the beginning of the phrase.

Gallone (ll. 7-9, p. 311) *Non so come fu, ma al primo sguardo che io diedi all'edificio, un senso di intollerabile abbattimento pervase il mio spirito.*

Literal translation.

Poe (ll. 5-8, p. 398) ***It was possible (1)***, ***I reflected (2)***, *that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression;*

Manganelli (ll. 5-8, p. 238) ***[< >] (2)*** *Poteva* ***forse (1)*** *bastare una diversa disposizione dei particolari del paesaggio, dell'immagine, per alterare, forse cancellare quell'angoscioso potere;*

> **(1)** Substitution of cataphoric 'It was possible' with 'forse' and consequent loss of original suspense. In addition, the phrase 'It was possible' is functional to set the story in the mind of the characters, to make it into a psychological thriller. The deletion of such locutions untie the story from its psychological setting.
>
> **(2)** Deletion of cataphoric phrase of thought 'I reflected' and consequent detachment of the story from its psychological setting.

Gallone (ll. 8-12, p. 312) *Poteva darsi, riflettei, che una piccola diversità nella disposizione dei particolari della scena, o in quelli del quadro sarebbe bastata a modificare, o fors'anche ad annullare la sua capacità a impressionarmi penosamente;*

> Literal translation.

3.1.3 A certain freedom

Poe (l. 1, p. 397) *During the whole of a* ***dull***, ***dark***, *and* ***soundless*** *day,*

Manganelli (l. 1, p. 237) *Per un intero giorno,* ***caliginoso***, ***taciturno*** *e* ***spento***,

> Manganelli changes the order of the 3 adjectives: *'dull, dark and soundless'* is translated *'caliginoso, taciturno e spento'* [sooty, soundless and dark].
>
> The original adjective 'dull' semantically includes both the following adjectives 'dark' and 'soundless' and is an excellent choice to introduce the fallaciousness of the five senses, particularly sight and hearing – the two most important senses in the story – as access channels to reality. The same meticulous

arrangement of the adjectives is not reproduced in the translation where 'dull' is translated with 'caliginoso' [sooty, obscure, murky] an adjective not containing the meanings of the following two.

In the original there is the repetition of the sound [d]. In the translation Manganelli attempts to reproduce the musicality of the overture by substituting the voiced sound [d] (probably impossible to reproduce in Italian) with the voiceless sound [t] (in 'in*t*ero', '*t*aci*t*urno' and 'spen*t*o'). The 't' sound gives the impression of deafness, lack of sound, lack of life.

Gallone (l. 1, p. 311) *Durante un **[< >]** giorno triste, cupo, senza suono,*

Deletion of 'the whole of'.

In Gallone there is no attempt to reproduce the original string of sound.

Poe (ll. 2-3, p. 397) ***when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens,***

Manganelli (l. 2, p. 237) ***greve di basse nuvole,***

Here we see a certain unjustified freedom in rephrasing and compressing the original, with consequent loss of original content: the original plural 'heavens' has a religious connotation (the same could have been reproduced in Italian with the plural 'cieli') and the image suggests to the reader that something diabolical is going to happen. In the translation the religious reference and consequent suspense are lost.

Gallone (ll. 2-3, p. 311) *un giorno in cui le nuvole pendevano opprimentemente basse nei cieli,*

Literal translation

Poe (ll. 4-6, p. 397) *and at length* ***found myself****, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher .*

Manganelli (ll. 4-5, p. 237) *e, con le ombre della sera,* ***ero giunto****, alla fine, in vista della malinconica Casa degli Usher .*

> Translation of 'found myself' with 'ero giunto' [I had arrived] with consequent loss of original content and suspense. The original 'found myself' denotes a certain lack of control over the situation (the visitor *finds himself* in view of the House of Usher, almost without expecting it) which should be reproduced as it introduces, at the beginning, a main theme of the tale: the impossibility to take control over the elusiveness of reality. Throughout the tale the visitor constantly and unsuccessfully tries to understand rationally what is happening. Straight after in the text the lack of control over the situation is verbalized by the cataphoric '*I know not how it was*' (a very important moment in the incipit as it is the phrase immediately following the sight of the House of Usher).

Gallone (ll. 5-7, p. 311) *finché ero venuto a trovarmi, mentre già si addensavano le ombre della sera,* ***in prossimità*** *della malinconica casa degli Usher.*

> Gallone translates 'within view' with 'in prossimità' [in the proximity of], failing to maintain the term 'view' and consequently to convey the importance of the first glance of the House and of the sense of sight in the story.

Poe (ll. 8-11, p. 397) *I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the* ***desolate*** *or* ***terrible****.*

Manganelli (ll. 7-11, p. 237) *Intollerabili, dico; poiché non medicava il sentimento nessuno di quegli affetti, cattivanti perché poetici, con cui la mente per solito accoglie le più crude immagini del* ***terribile*** *e della* ***desolazione*** *.*

> Effective inversion of original order of 'desolate' and 'terribile'.

Gallone (ll. 9-14, p. 311) *Dico insopportabile perché questo mio stato d'animo non era alleviato per nulla da quel sentimento che per essere poetico è semi-piacevole, grazie al quale la mente accoglie di solito anche le più tetre immagini naturali dello sconsolato e del terribile.*

Literal.

The analysis of the two versions of the incipit highlights a certain difference in degree of freedom towards the original between the two translators: while Manganelli appears quite free to change the source text, Gallone usually appears quite literal. In particular, Manganelli does not seem to struggle to reproduce the original number of adjectives and the linking devices structuring Poe's sentences.

3.2 Relevant examples from the analysis of the entire translations

3.2.1 The translation of adjectives

Poe, (ll. 16-17, p. 398) *but **many** years had elapsed since our last meeting*

Manganelli, (l. 18, p. 238) *ma **lunghi*** [long] *anni erano trascorsi dal nostro ultimo incontro*

Substitution of indefinite adjective 'many' with 'long' and consequent reduction of indefiniteness.[27]

Poe (l. 26, p. 398) *it was the* **apparent** heart *that went with his request*

Manganelli (ll. 28-29, p. 238) *il **[< >]*** cuore *con cui accompagnava la sua richiesta*

Deletion of 'apparent'. The original adjective is ambiguous: it can mean both 'seeming' and 'clear' ('evident', 'visible'). The ambiguity of meaning justifies and

[27] Gallone (ll. 23-24, p. 312) *ma molti anni erano passati dal nostro ultimo incontro*
Literal translation.

emphasises the italics: the reader is held in a suspense, 'is it his heart or something else?' With the deletion of the adjective 'apparent' the italics of *'cuore'* (heart) in Manganelli's translation loses the function of creating mysteriousness and of pushing the reader to wonder and ask questions.[28]

Poe (l. 31, p. 398) *that his **very** ancient family*

Manganelli (ll. 3-5, p. 239) *che questa **[< >]** antica famiglia*

Deletion of 'very' and consequent loss of excessive emphasis (and misreading of 'his' as 'this').[29]

Poe (ll. 32-33, p. 398) *had been noted, time out of mind, for a **peculiar** sensibility of temperament*

Manganelli (ll. 4-5, p. 239) *era sempre stata illustre, da tempo immemorabile, per un temperamento **[< >]** sensibile*

Deletion of 'peculiar'. The effect produced by the original adjective is that of surrounding the temperament and the nature of the illness of Usher with an aura of mystery. The reader of the source text is intrigued by the adjective and is pushed to wonder why the sensibility is said to be peculiar. [30]

Poe (l. 33, p. 398) *displaying itself, through **long** ages*

Manganelli (ll. 5-6, p. 239) *si era espresso nel tempo **[< >]***

Deletion of adjective 'long' and consequent loss of emphasis.

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[28] Gallone (ll. 34-35, p. 312): *era il* cuore *che apparentemente accompagnava una tale richiesta*
Explanatory translation.

[29] Gallone (l. 42, p. 312): *che la sua famiglia, di origine antichissima*
Literal translation.

[30] Gallone (l. 43, p. 312) *per una particolare sensibilità di temperamento*
Literal translation.

'Ages' in English has connotations of extended historical time which are not easy to reproduce here as the possible Italian translations 'secoli' (centuries), 'epoche' (epochs) would be pointing too exclusively to the extended historical time of the family rather than to Usher's past years of life.[31]

Poe (l. 33, p. 398; l. 1, p. 399) *in **many** works of exalted art*

Manganelli (l. 6, p. 239) *in **[< >]** stravaganti opere d'arte*

Deletion of indefinite adjective 'many' and consequent reduction of profusion and emphasis on time.[32]

Poe (ll. 1-2, p. 399) *in **repeated** deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity*

Manganelli (ll. 7-8, p. 239) *in **[< >]** gesti di munifica quanto occulta carità*

Deletion of 'repeated', again diminishing the emphasis on time.[33]

Poe (l. 7, p. 399) *the **entire** family*

Manganelli (ll. 12-13, p. 239) *la **[< >]** famiglia*

Deletion of adjective 'entire', reducing the over-emphatic character of the text.[34]

Poe (ll. 5-6, p. 400) *The discoloration of ages had been **great.***

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[31] Gallone (l. 44, p. 312) *e si era manifestata attraverso le età*
Deletion of 'long'.

[32] Gallone (l. 44, p. 312; l. 1, p. 313) *in molte opere di un'arte esaltata*
Literal translation.

[33] Gallone (l. 2, p. 313) *in ripetute e munifiche elargizioni benefiche.*
Translation of 'unobtrusive' with 'benefiche' [charitable].

[34] Gallone (l. 9, p. 313) *l'intera famiglia*
Literal translation.

Manganelli (l. 14, p. 240) *Gli anni l'avevano spallidito*

Deletion of 'great', and over-specific nature of 'spallidito'(discolouration of a bulding does not necessarily imply whiteness or paleness).[35]

Poe (l. 8, p. 401) ***black oaken*** *floor*

Manganelli (ll. 19, p. 241) *suolo* ***[< >]***

Deletion of the two adjectives 'black' and 'oaken' and consequent loss of gloominess and original content.[36]

Poe (l. 20, p. 401) *with a* ***vivacious*** *warmth*

Manganelli (l. 31, p. 241) *con* ***generoso*** *calore*

Translation of 'vivacious' with 'generoso' [generous]. The original 'vivacious' is more in contrast with Usher's illness and justifies better the consequent reaction of the visitor: *'which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality'* (Poe, l. 20, p. 401).

In addition, the relevance of a faithful reproduction of 'vivacious' is furthermore stressed by the fact that it is one of the repeated adjectives in the original.[37]

Poe (l. 19, p. 402) *from his* ***peculiar*** *physical conformation*

Manganelli (ll. 1-2, p. 243) *dall'* ***[< >]*** *aspetto fisico*

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[35] Gallone (ll. 9-10, p. 314) *Lo scolorimento del tempo era stato enorme.*
Literal translation.

[36] Gallone (ll. 13-14, p. 315) *pavimento di quercia nera*
Literal translation.

[37] Gallone (ll. 29-30, p. 315) *con una vivacità e un calore.*
Literal translation

Deletion of 'peculiar', again, one of the adjectives that are repeated in the original.[38]

Poe (ll. 12-13, p. 403) *I shudder at the thought of* ***any,*** *even the most trivial, incident*

Manganelli (ll. 1-2, p. 244) *Rabbrividisco al pensiero di un* ***[< >]*** *incidente, anche il più triviale*

Deletion of 'any'.[39]

Poe (ll. 32-33, p. 403) *he admitted, however, although with hesitation, that* ***much*** *of the peculiar gloom*

Manganelli, (ll. 21-22, p. 244): *ammise anche, sebbene con qualche esitazione, che* ***[< >]*** *quella speciale tristezza*

Deletion of 'much' and consequent loss of nuance.[40]

Poe, (l. 32, p. 403): *could be traced to a more natural and* ***far more*** *palpable origin*

Manganelli, (l. 23, p. 244): *poteva ricondursi ad una causa* ***[< >]*** *più naturale e concreta*

Deletion of 'far more' and consequent loss of emphasis.[41]

Poe, (ll. 28-29, p. 404): *I was busied in* ***earnes****t endeavours to alleviate the melancholy of my friend*

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[38] Gallone (ll. 33-34, p. 316) *dalla sua costituzione fisica e dal suo temperamento specialissimi.*
Literal Translation (a slightly longer phrase has been cited to show why a plural adjective was required).

[39] Gallone (ll. 25-27, p. 317) *rabbrividisco al pensiero di un fatto qualsiasi, anche il più comune*
Literal translation

[40] Gallone (l. 4, p. 318) *Ammetteva tuttavia, seppure con esitazione, che gran parte della caratteristica tristezza*
Literal translation.

[41] Gallone (ll. 6-7, p. 318) *poteva esser fatta risalire a un'origine più naturale e assai più tangibile.*
Literal translation.

Manganelli, (l. 24, p. 245): *cercai **[< >]** di alleviare la malinconia del mio amico*

Deletion of 'earnest', with loss of alliteration, sense of effort, rhetorical balance of the sentence.[42]

Poe, (l. 8, p. 405): *an idea of the **exact** character of the studies*

Manganelli, (p. 246, l. 5): *un'idea della **[< >]** qualità degli studi*

Deletion of 'exact'. Loss of the sense of memory groping for solid detail. Poe's story is vividly remembered, yet unclear in many respects. Manganelli appears too hasty in discarding this feature.[43]

Poe, (ll. 17-18, p. 408): *and its reduplication in the **still** waters of the tarn.*

Manganelli, (p. 249, l. 20): *e nel doppio che se ne specchiava nella **[< >]** pozza.*

Deletion of the adjective 'still' and consequent loss of gloominess. The stillness of the black waters might suggest to the reader the madness of Usher and the stagnation of the family's life.[44]

Poe, (ll. 5-6, p. 410) *It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and, in later days, as a place of deposit for powder, or **some** other **highly** combustible substance*

Manganelli, (l. 20, p. 251): *Era stata usata, evidentemente, in remoti tempi feudali, per le peggiori destinazioni che potesse avere una segreta; era stata più tardi deposito di polveri, o **[< >]** altre sostanze **[< >]** combustibili*

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[42] Gallone (l. 44, p. 318; l. 1, p. 319) *feci del mio meglio per alleviare la malinconia del mio amico.*
Literal translation.

[43] Gallone (ll. 15-16, p. 319) *l'idea esatta del carattere degli studi*
Literal translation.

[44] Gallone (ll. 27-28, p. 322) *e dal suo rifrangersi e sdoppiarsi nelle immote acque dello stagno.*
Literal translation.

Deletion of 'some' and 'highly'. In the original the visitor-reader-detective is investigating what was the function of the vault. He *imagines* what the purpose of the place could have been in the past. In the translation the visitor-narrator narrates to the reader what the purpose of the room was, hands him a finished product so considerably reducing the involvement of the reader's imagination.[45]

Poe, (ll. 7-8, p. 410): ***as (1)*** *a portion of its floor, and the* ***whole (2)*** *interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper.*

Manganelli, (l. 21, p. 251): ***così che (1)*** *una parte del pavimento, e* ***[< >] (2)*** *l'interno di un lungo corridoio a volta per il quale la raggiungemmo, erano totalmente rivestiti di rame.*

(1) Translation of 'as' with 'così che' [so that] and consequent reduction of the reader's involvement: in the source text the visitor-reader is deducing, from some clues (the sheets of copper) to a possible explanation (the vault had served as a deposit for gunpowder). In the translation the deductive reasoning is considerably reduced: the visitor-narrator seems to proceed from the narration of a main fact (the description of the evident purpose of the vault in the past) to the narration of other consequential facts (the fact that the place is lined with copper becomes an ulterior description following the narration of the purpose of the vault): the suspense and the involvement of the reader are noticeably reduced.[46]

(2) Deletion of 'whole'.[47]

Poe, (l. 8, p. 411): *I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for* ***long*** *hours*

Manganelli, (l. 29, p. 253): *lo osservavo contemplare il vuoto per* ***[< >]****ore*

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[45] Gallone (ll. 5-9, p. 324) *Doveva essere probabilmente servita, negli antichi tempi feudali, agli oscuri e biechi scopi cui sono destinate le prigioni sotterranee, e in epoca più recente, come deposito di polveri o di qualche altra sostanza ad alto potere combustibile.*

[46] In Gallone's translation the reader is involved in the investigation of the past purpose of the vault as in the original

[47] Gallone (ll. 10-14, p. 324) *poiché un tratto del pavimento della cripta, e tutta la parte interna di un lungo passaggio coperto attraverso il quale si raggiungeva la cripta stessa, erano accuratamente ricoperti di lamine di rame.*

Literal translation.

Deletion of adjective 'long' and consequent reduction of suspense.[48]

Poe (ll. 4-5, p. 416): *Long – **long** –**long** – many minutes, many hours, many days have I heard it*

Manganelli (ll. 18-19, p. 258): ***Da gran tempo**, da molti minuti, molte ore, molti giorni lo odo*

Double deletion of adjective 'long' losing the hypnotic rhythm of the source text.[49]

3.2.2 The translation of demonstrative adjectives

In Manganelli's translation of adjectives there is a tendency to transform proximal demonstrative adjectives ('this', 'these') into distal demonstrative adjectives ('that', 'those'). Poe's use of proximal 'this' and 'those' is a device to set the story in the mind of the character, close: inside, not outside, here, not there. Everything is happening here and now. Manganelli's replacement of the proximal demonstratives with the distal 'that' and 'those' creates a distance between 'time of narration' and 'time of the story' consequently reducing the involvement of the reader. The illusion carefully created by Poe is broken. Some relevant examples:

Poe, (l. 16, p. 403): ***In this (1)** unnerved, **in this (2)** pitiable condition*

Manganelli, (l. 5, p. 244): *In **tale (1)** condizione, **[< >] (2)** sfinita e pietosa* (literally: in such condition, unnerved and pitiable)

(1) Replacement of 'this' with 'tale' [such] and consequent creation of a distance between time of narration and time of the story and reduction of the reader's involvement.

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[48] Gallone (ll. 12-13, p. 325) *lo sorprendevo a fissare nel vuoto per lunghe ore,*
Literal translation.

[49] Gallone (ll. 11-12, p. 330) *E da tanto...tanto...tanto..., da molti minuti, da molte ore, da molti giorni, io lo odo,*
Literal translation.

(2) Deletion of repetition of 'this' and consequent loss of original rhythm and suspense.[50]

Poe, (ll. 28-29, p. 404): *and during **this** period I was busied in earnest endeavours to alleviate the melancholy of my friend*

Manganelli, (l. 24, p. 245): *e in **quel** periodo cercai di alleviare la malinconia del mio amico*

Substitution of proximal demonstrative 'this' with 'distal' demonstrative 'quel' [that] and consequent creation of a distance between time of the narration and time of the story and reduction of the reader's involvement.[51]

Poe (l. 17, p. 406): *The words of one of **these** rhapsodies I have easily remembered.*

Manganelli (l. 15, p. 247): *Ricordo con chiarezza le parole di una di **quelle** rapsodie.*

Substitution of proximal demonstrative 'these' with 'distal' demonstrative 'quelle' [those] and consequent creation of a distance between time of the narration and time of the story and reduction of the reader's involvement.[52]

Poe (ll. 27-28, p. 414): *for there could be no doubt that, in **this instance**, I did actually hear*

Manganelli (l. 3, p. 257): *poiché non v'era possibile dubbio, **[< >]**, che avessi udito*

Deletion of deictic clause 'in this instance' and consequent reduction of the reader's involvement.[53]

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[50] Gallone (ll. 29-30, p. 317) *In questo stato di smarrimento dei nervi, in questa pietosa condizione,*
Literal translation.

[51] Gallone (ll. 43-44, p. 318; l. 1, p. 319) *e in questo periodo di tempo io feci del mio meglio per alleviare la malinconia del mio amico.*
Literal translation.

[52] Gallone (ll. 30-31, p. 320) *Sono riuscito a ricordare facilmente le parole di una di queste rapsodie.*
Literal translation.

3.2.3 Syntax, the translation of linking devices

Poe, (ll. 25-26, p. 398): ***It was the*** *manner in which all this, and much more, was said –* ***it was the*** *apparent* heart *that went with his request*

Manganelli, (ll. 28-29, p. 238): ***[< >]*** *Il modo in cui si esprimeva –* ***[< >]*** *il* cuore *con cui accompagnava la sua richiesta*

> Double deletion of 'it was' which in the original performs the function of inscribing the discourse in the mind of the narrator who is thinking, explaining to himself why he decided to visit his friend without hesitation, trying to understand. The visitor-reader-protagonist is deducing, not listening to a story being narrated. The reader is also held waiting in suspense. Such effect is increased by the repetition of the proleptic 'It was'. The double deletion of 'it was' considerably reduces the closeness between time of narration and time of the story and consequently the involvement of the reader. The deletion of the repetition causes a loss of the original singsong rhythm which contributed considerably to the gloomy, melancholic atmosphere.[54]

Poe (l. 29, p. 398): ***Although,*** *as boys, we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend.*

Manganelli (ll. 1-2, p. 239): ***[< >]*** *Da ragazzi eravamo stati assai intimi; ma veramente del mio amico io sapevo ben poco.*

> In the source text the conjunction 'although' at the beginning of the sentence stresses the fact that the protagonist is discerning, explaining to himself the fact that, *although* they had been close friends, he did not know his friend very much. The original hints at the surprise of the protagonist in being now so important for his friend and also at how mysterious the friend used to be. With the deletion of 'although' it is not the visitor-reader's mind at work, but an objective fact narrated, a finished product

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[53] Gallone (ll. 40-41, p. 328) *poiché non vi era dubbio (...) che in quel preciso istante anch'io sentivo*

[54] Gallone (ll. 33-35, p. 312) *Era il modo in cui tutto ciò, e molt'altro ancora, era detto, era il* cuore *con cui apparentemente accompagnava la richiesta*

Literal translation.

handed to the reader, reality made directly accessible. The deletion reduces the involvement of the reader and consequently the suspense.[55]

Poe, (ll. 2-3, p. 399): *as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies,* ***perhaps even*** *more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties,* ***of*** *musical science*

Manganelli, (ll. 8-10, p. 239): *non meno che in una devozione passionale per le ambagi,* ***[< >]*** *più che per le bellezze limpide e ortodosse della dottrina musicale*

The deletion of adverbs 'perhaps', 'even' changes the original representation of the narrator's mind at work. The visitor is unravelling Usher's love for music. In the translation the protagonist tells the reader of Usher's love for music. In addition, while in the original Usher loves the intricacies of music 'perhaps even more' than the orthodox beauties of it: it may be inferred that he loves the orthodoxy very much. In the translation he does not love the orthodox part very much.[56]

Poe, (ll. 9-14, p. 399) ***It was this deficiency (1)****; I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people,* ***and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other (2) – it was this deficiency (3), perhaps (4),*** *of collateral issue...*

Manganelli (ll. 16-17, p. 239) ***[< >] (1)*** *E mentre meditavo sul perfetto accordo tra l'ambiente e quanto si sapeva degli umori della stirpe pensavo* ***[< >] (2) [< >] (3)*** *che* ***[< >] (4)*** *tale mancanza di rami collaterali*

(1) Deletion of proleptic 'it was' and consequent dilution of psychological setting and involvement of the reader.

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[55] Gallone (ll. 39-40, p. 312) *Benché da ragazzi fossimo stati direi persino intimi, in realtà io sapevo assai poco del mio amico.*
Literal translation.

[56] Gallone (ll. 3-5, p. 313) *come pure in un fervore appassionato per le complicazioni, quasi più che per le bellezze ortodosse e facilmente riconoscibili, della dottrina musicale.*
Literal translation.

(2) Deletion of three lines: Manganelli, by noticeably simplifying and compressing the complex structure of the original sentence, which meticulously reproduces the labyrinthine paths followed by the speculating mind, reduces for the Italian reader the effect of a story unfolding in the moment when it is read, and consequently his involvement.

The passage deleted by Manganelli is quite relevant in this story as it verbalizes one of the main themes of the tale: the life of inorganic matter and its mysterious influence on the human soul. Here the similarity between the House and Usher is clearly stated. Was this an oversight? Interestingly it has passed unnoticed.

(3) and **(1)** Deletion of double repetition of 'it was this deficiency' and consequent reduction of psychological setting, active role of the reader and original singsong rhythm enhancing at a phonic level the dreariness and melancholy of the atmosphere.

(4) Deletion of adverb 'perhaps' and consequent dilution of psychological setting. In the original the protagonist-reader is not sure, he is sorting out, nothing is sure, reality is not accessible. [57]

Poe (ll. 23-24, p. 399): ***There can be no doubt*** *that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition – why should I not so term it? – served mainly to accelerate the increase itself.*

Manganelli, (ll. 26-29, p. 239): *[< >] La superstizione – come altrimenti chiamarla? – eccitata ed esasperata, conquistò la mia coscienza e ciò valse ad intensificarla ulteriormente.*

Deletion of cataphoric phrase indicating thought 'There can be no doubt' and consequent dilution of psychological setting and suspense. The phrase confers to the

[57] Gallone (ll. 12-18, p. 313) *Era forse questa mancanza, rimuginavo mentre riandavo col pensiero all'accordo perfetto tra il carattere del luogo e il carattere universalmente noto delle persone che vi abitavano (e frattanto riflettevo sul possibile influsso che il primo, in così lungo trascorrere di secoli, poteva avere esercitato sul secondo), era forse questa mancanza di rami collaterali.*

Literal translation.

sentence a tension towards a final end, a driving force which captures the reader's attention.[58]

Poe (ll. 26-27, p. 399): *Such, **I have long known**, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as basis.*

Manganelli (ll. 29-30, p. 239): ***[< >]** Da sempre sapevo che questa è la regola paradossale di tutti i sentimenti fondati sul terrore.*

The deletion of the cataphoric 'such' and the simplification of the original structure considerably flattens the original skilful reproduction of the rhythm of the mental process. In addition, the replacement of the present perfect ("have...known") with the imperfect trivializes and distances the text.[59]

Poe, (ll. 33-35, p. 399): *about the whole mansion hung **an atmosphere** peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity – **an atmosphere** which had no affinity with the air of heaven*

Manganelli, (l. 6, p. 240): *attorno a quella dimora si raccoglieva un'atmosfera specifica a quel luogo, che **[< >]** non aveva affinità*

Deletion of repetition and consequent dilution of psychological setting: repetition represents the memory's attempt to retain the thread of thought which is a major problem of this story. The smoother rhythm of Manganelli's version fails to capture the important factor.[60]

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[58] Gallone (ll. 30-33, p. 313) *Non può esservi dubbio che la consapevolezza del rapido aumentare della mia superstizione – infatti per quale motivo dovrei definirla altrimenti? – era servita principalmente ad accelerare quest'aumento.*

Literal translation.

[59] Gallone (ll. 33-34, p. 313) *Tale, lo sapevo da tempo,è l'assurda legge di tutti i sentimenti aventi come base il terrore.*

Literal translation.

[60] Gallone (ll. 42-44, p. 313; l. 1, p. 314) *che su tutta la dimora e sulla tenuta pendesse un'atmosfera caratteristica ad esse e alle immediate vicinanze, atmosfera che non aveva alcuna affinità con l'aria del cielo,*

Poe, (ll. 20-21, p. 401) *with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, **I at first thought**, of an overdone cordiality...*

Manganelli, (l. 1, p. 242) *con un generoso calore che a me parve **[< >]** innaturalmente cordiale*

> Deletion of cataphoric 'I at first thought' and consequent reduction of suspense and dilution of psychological setting. (The inappropriate rendering of 'vivacious' has already been noted.)[61]

Poe, (ll. 18-19, p. 402): ***In the manner (1)** of my friend **I was at once struck (2)** with an incoherence*

Manganelli (l. 27, p. 242): ***I modi (1)** del mio amico **[< >] (2)** avevano un che di incoerente* (literally: the manners of my friend were somehow incoherent)

> **(1)** The suppression of the tentative prepositional beginning of the sentence makes the statement too detached and definite.
>
> **(2)** Deletion of 'I was at once struck' and consequent dilution of psychological setting and closeness between time of the story and time of narration. Reduction of suspense and reader's involvement.[62]

Literal translation.

[61] Gallone (ll. 29-31, p. 315) *con una vivacità e un calore in cui mi parve a tutta prima di intuire una cordialità eccessiva*

The deletion of the two commas enclosing 'I at first thought' partially reduce the suspense.

[62] Gallone (ll. 25-26, p. 316) *In quanto ai modi del mio amico fui subito colpito da una specie di incoerenza*

Literal translation.

3.2.4 A certain freedom

This section offers, as examples of Manganelli's general freedom to change the original, only a few of the most visible cases. Some of the most striking examples involve major deletions from the original text. We have already noted his excision of a clause from a lengthy sentence, but as that may have been an oversight rather than an assumption of artistic freedom, we do not need to repeat it here (see pp. 134-135).

Poe writes of Roderick Usher's musical impromptus (ll. 11-16, p. 406): ***They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rhymed and verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement.***

Manganelli (l. 15, P. 247) ***[< >]***

> Deletion of seven lines. Another oversight? Interesting that such an oversight could have passed unnoticed by the publisher's editorial staff.[63]

Poe (ll. 14-15, p. 411): *It was especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day* ***after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon,*** *that I...*

Manganelli (l. 6, p. 253) *Fu specialmente al momento di andare a dormire, a notte alta, nel settimo o ottavo giorno* ***[< >]*** *che io...*

> Deletion of an important and striking clause. Does Manganelli consider it unnecessary? Or is it an oversight?[64]

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[63] Gallone (ll. 22-30, p. 320) *Questi devono essere stati, ed erano in realtà, nelle note come pure nelle parole delle sue vagabonde fantasie (poiché non di rado egli si accompagnava con improvvisazioni verbali rimate), il risultato di quella padronanza intensa di sé di quella concentrazione mentale cui già ho alluso e che è osservabile soltanto in alcuni particolari momenti, allorché l'eccitamento artificiale raggiunge il suo colmo.*

Literal translation.

[64] Gallone (ll. 20-22, p. 325) *Fu soprattutto nel ritirarmi per la notte, la sera del settimo ed ottavo giorno dopo la deposizione nella cripta di lady Madeline.*

3.3 A lightening strategy of translation

The analysis of the two Italian versions of 'The Fall of the House of Usher' shows a fundamental difference in degree of freedom towards the original text. Manganelli appears quite free to change considerably the original arrangement of the text, reducing the number of adjectives, simplifying the complexity of the sentence and, in general, changing and omitting elements of the source text. Why all these changes? Were they dictated by the conventions of Italian literary style? This does not seem the case as the comparison with Gallone suggests: her respect of the original and her effort to reproduce every single element of Poe's arrangement of the text does not produce a translation that clashes with the Italian literary conventions. What is, then, the aim of Manganelli's strategy?

An answer to the questions is offered by the translator himself; in the 'Nota del Traduttore', at the end of the third volume of *I racconti*, Manganelli clarifies what are the reasons behind some of the changes he made to the original. He writes:

> Il suo tono orrido-grottesco e iterativo, cantilenante, linguisticamente prezioso o stravagante, allusivo, fluttuante (...).In ogni caso questo registro pone sempre lancinanti crucci lessicali (*wild! wild! wild!*), e sollecita qualche astuzia per manovrare frasi essenzialmente suggestive, eccitanti, oniriche o ludiche; pertanto talora l'iterata gravezza dell'aggettivo suggerisce uno stemperamento compensato da una maggiore pregnanza del sostantivo. [65]

He continues:

> L'inglese tollera ripetizioni meno accette all'italiano, lingua naturalmente non laconica, e dunque amorosa se non di sobrietà almeno di velocità, di nitide ambagi.[66]

According to Manganelli, Italian is a more sober or at least more rapid language than English, and does not tolerate the same amount of repetitions. Not everyone would agree. Without opening a linguistic debate on the differences between English and Italian, of which over the centuries numerous and different opinions have been given, it is very interesting, and relevant to the aim of the present study, that Manganelli's stated reason for

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Literal translation.

[65] Edgar Allan Poe, *I racconti*, cit., p.1036.

[66] *Ibidem*, p.1036.

diluting the excesses of the original text is that they would not sound natural in Italian, but would slow and weigh down the target language. But is the aim of Manganelli's strategy not in contradiction with the original text? Does Poe's language not sound very unnatural, slow, extremely complex and overcharged with adjectives even to English ears? Why does Manganelli want to push the text towards a standard form of Italian when the original deliberately deviates from standard English, not only in its occasionally rarefied and recondite vocabulary but also in its languid, over-elaborate sentence structure? Is the slowness produced by the throng of subordinates enshrouding the main clause, and of adjectives modifying a substantive not part of the final effect so meticulously arranged by Poe?

Italian, according to Manganelli, is a 'language fond of clear obscurities', but, is clarity not an effect completely opposite from the one of indefiniteness so deliberately produced by Poe? The original heaviness produced by the liberal use of adjectives suggests to the Italian writer a dilution of their number, a loss which will be compensated, as Manganelli writes, by investing the noun with a greater depth of meaning. Manganelli's strategy of translation appears in opposition to Poe's strategy of composition: the liberal use of adjectives in the original is a stylistic device functional to create indefiniteness, to blur the contours of the noun, to *reduce* its depth of meaning, thereby helping to render the style of the tale 'prezioso', 'allusivo', 'fluttuante' ['precious', 'allusive', 'vacillating'], as Manganelli describes it.

The aim of the Italian writer's strategy appears even more oddly in contradiction with the aim of the source text as Manganelli himself, in his introduction to Maria Gallone's translation of Poe's tales in 1980,[67] had recognized as fundamental to Poe's poetics those very effects produced by the stylistic devices that his own translation later undermines. He writes:

> Poe è stato accusato di "eccesso"; nella prefazione ai *Tales of the Grotesque and the Arabesque*, parlando della accusa di indulgere ad una fantasia morbosa, Poe notava: "è come accusar un astronomo di occuparsi troppo di astronomia". Con Poe l'eccesso, il disconoscimento dei confini, il rovesciamento della realtà diventano un elemento

[67] Edgar Allan Poe, *Racconti*, introduzione di Giorgio Manganelli, prefazione di Attilio Brilli, traduzione di Maria Gallone, Milano, BUR, 1980.

> qualificante della identità letteraria (…). La sua figura retorica fondamentale è l'iperbole (...).[68]

> Nei racconti di Poe non c'è buon gusto perché la realtà non deve entrare; il mondo di Poe è dominato dal vaneggiamento, dalla calcolata imprecisione, e l'andamento della sua prosa ha l'iterata, ecolalica morbidezza della favola ipnotica, della cantilena.[69]

> In tutti i racconti la condizione verbale è estremamente suggestiva, e lo stile di Poe si rivela nella sua essenza come una tecnica destinata a provocare una visione. Dunque Poe è essenzialmente un incantatore, non un seduttore e neppure un narratore, ma un tecnico dell'irreale (…).[70]

Excess to Poe is like astronomy to the astronomer, it is the qualifying element of the literary identity of the American poet. According to the Italian writer, to accuse Poe of excess is like accusing an astronomer of caring too much about astronomy. But, is this not what Manganelli himself does in his strategy of lightening, implicitly accusing Poe of excess? By simplifying and diluting Poe's excess Manganelli deletes from the tale the imprints of its author. The Italian writer recognizes as a fundamental effect of Poe's tales the indefiniteness ('il disconoscimento dei confini') and the 'calculated imprecision' ('calcolata imprecisione'), the calculated impossibility of the noun to signify precisely its denotative meaning. Indeed, Manganelli, states that Poe's style reveals itself as a technique designed to produce a vision. Why then does he translate with a strategy whose aim is to dilute the visionary? Is Manganelli aiming at perfecting Poe? In the 'Nota del traduttore' to his own version, the Italian writer clarifies the purpose of his translation:

> Poe non ha avuto in Italia traduzioni francamente passionali né schiettamente filologiche. La presente si confessa passionale, con qualche scrupolo filologico: diciamo una passione legalitaria.[71]

Manganelli seems to imply that of all the translations of Poe into Italian, the ones with philological scruples lack passion and the passionate ones lack philological scruple. His intention is to produce a passionate version with some degree of philological scruple. What

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[68] ibid, p.7.
[69] ibid, p.9.
[70] ibid.
[71] Edgar Allan Poe, *I Racconti*, cit., p. 1035.

does Manganelli mean by passionate translation? Does he mean a creative translation bearing the imprints of the translator's passion? Manganelli seems to find Gallone's faithful version lacking in passion.[72] Is a translation struggling to reproduce the original as faithfully as possible not passionate? Gallone's version might be accused of being too literal at times and failing to reproduce those supra-segmental features of words, like the sound, but what about Manganelli's changes and omissions? What is the final result of Manganelli's strategy of translation?

Manganelli's strategy of lightening produces an irreparable loss of the original imaginary, the original vision. Firstly, the dilution of the number of original adjectives considerably reduces the effect of indefiniteness. The noun does not gain greater depth of meaning, but instead loses its kaleidoscopic potential, its poetic aura. Secondly, by simplifying the structure of the sentence and failing to reproduce the linking devices through which Poe creates the setting of the story and reproduces the mechanisms of the mind at work, Manganelli uproots the story from its psychological setting. In the original work the reader is never able to peer out of the psyche, to see things unfiltered. The reader is never allowed to sit back and to listen to a story. The narrative framework of the tale is skilfully hidden so that the reader's thoughts are never distracted by the voice of the real or fictional narrator. Such effect appears considerably reduced by the Italian translator who uncovers the presence of a narrator (both real and fictional) so turning on the lights in the movie theatre and breaking the illusion.

Manganelli's strategy has clipped the wings of the original text and his Italian translation struggles to rise as an original, independent work, but remains half-way between the original and a horror story, and while the reader of the original, at the end of the dream-like journey, stands amazed in front of the House of Usher falling into the deep and dark waters of the tarn, the reader of Manganelli's translation, who has not been as involved and captured in the vision, and who has not been able to identify fully with the narrator's mind, might not fully appreciate such an imaginary and elusive ending, where the mysterious happenings of the story remain mysterious. The reader of that translation might expect to be

[72] It seems plausible to assume that when Manganelli alludes to translations lacking in passion he is referring to Gallone's translation (to which he had written an introduction in 1980), as it seems very unlikely that he considers Gallone's version lacking in philological scruple.

handed a solution, a rational and realistic explanation of the factual happenings at the House of Usher.

Finally, it is interesting to notice how the effect produced by Manganelli's strategy, considerably dissipating the fogs enshrouding the original and giving prominence to its plot, seems to agree with Manganelli's own interpretation of *The Fall of the House of Usher.* When summarizing the plot of the tale, he writes:

> Lady Madeline viene lasciata nella tomba dal fratello che sa che essa è ancora viva, lasciata perché ne esca da sola e lo uccida.[73]

According to Manganelli there is a precise plot, a solution, albeit partial, to the mystery: Roderick Usher had a plan, that of burying his sister alive, being aware of her cataleptic illness, so that she could come out and kill him. Manganelli's own interpretation of the tale might in fact be concordant with his translation strategy.

Ultimately, is the difference between the two translators detected in this section adducible to their different professional status? Is Manganelli freer than Gallone because he, as a famous writer, is allowed more freedom?

A partial answer to the questions might lie in the fact that the considerable oversights found in Manganelli's translation have passed unobserved by the publisher. As we have seen in the previous chapter, and will investigate further in the next chapter, at Einaudi the standards of revision of translations were considerably different for the two categories of translators: while a translation by a creative writer was allowed creativity, a translation by a non-writer was expected to be quite literal and extremely accurate. But, can a mistake, a flaw, an imprecision by a writer-translator be considered a rightful act of creativity, of passion?

It is the aim of the following subsection to cast some more light on the question of the authority of writerly translation.

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[73] Edgar Allan Poe, *Racconti*, introduzione di Giorgio Manganelli, premessa al testo di Attilio Brilli, traduzione di Maria Gallone, *op. cit.*, p.12.

3.4 The question of authority. The Vittorini-Baldini case

A careful analysis of Elio Vittorini's 'La rovina della casa degli Usher' published in 1937 in *Racconti e arabeschi* by Mondadori shows how the famous Italian writer was also left free to modify the original, often quite arbitrarily, but, unlike Manganelli, his creative changes do not seem part of a strategy of translation, on the contrary, the analysis of Vittorini's identifies two opposite tendencies, one creative and one literal. Probably, such coexistence of creativity and literality is traceable back to the writer's translation practices.[74] When Vittorini was commissioned by Mondadori in 1934 to do a translation of Poe's short stories, he did not know English very well, as Valerio C. Ferme points out in his article 'Che ve ne sembra dell'America? Notes on Elio Vittorini's translation work and William Saroyan':

> Mondadori had commissioned Delfino Cinelli to translate the short stories of Edgar Allan Poe. However, Cinelli had quit the project mid-way through and Mondadori asked Vittorini if he would be willing to complete Cinelli's work. Vittorini accepted and in the meanwhile "he learned English" (*I Libri 99).*[75]

For this reason Vittorini availed himself of the help of a shadow-translator, Lucia Rodocanachi who would provide the first literal draft for the writer's translation. Guido Bonsaver writes:

> From Vittorini's letters, it appears that Rodocanachi was asked to provide a first, hand-written, literal translation from which Vittorini would develop a typed, final draft for the publishers.[76]

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[74] For obvious space reason a detailed analysis of Vittorini's translation cannot be included. For a study of the work and practice of Vittorini as a translator see: Guido Bonsaver, 'Vittorini's American translations: parallels, borrowings and betrayals' in *Italian Studies* (vol.53), Society for Italian Studies, 1998, pp. 67-93; Francesco De Nicola, *Introduzione a Vittorini* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1993); Valerio C. Ferme, 'Che ve ne sembra dell'America?: Notes on Elio Vittorini's Translation Work and William Saroyan', in *Italica* (vol.75, no.3), American Association of Teachers of Italian, 1998, pp.377-398; Gian Carlo Ferretti, *L'editore Vittorini* (Torino: Einaudi, 1992); Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Lettere a una gentile signora* (Milano: Adelphi, 1983); Giuseppe Marcenaro, *Una amica di Montale: vita di Lucia Rodocanachi* (Milano: Camunia, 1991); Anna Panicali, *Elio Vittorini: la narrativa, la saggistica,le traduzioni, le riviste, l'attività editoriale* (Milano: Mursia, 1994).

[75] Valerio C. Ferme, *op.cit.,* p. 379.

[76] Guido Bonsaver, *op. cit.,* p. 71.

Unfortunately, all of Rodocanachi's letters to Vittorini have been lost and it is not possible to establish the paternity of each of Vittorini's translation solutions[77] and whether the opposite tendencies identifiable in Vittorini's text are legitimately traceable back to the presence of two translators (Rodocanachi and Vittorini) and two strategies behind the text.

Rather than investigating the extent to which Vittorini felt free to change the original text, the present subsection aims to focus on a comparative analysis of Vittorini's translation with the one by the renowned anglicist Gabriele Baldini, 'Il Crollo della Casa Usher', published in 1949 in *Prose e Poesie* by Garzanti. The study identifies a considerable similarity between the two versions and, most interestingly, that similarity persists in those instances where Vittorini takes very arbitrary departures from the source text as the following examples (only a few of the most relevant cases) clearly show:

Poe (ll. 17-18, p. 397) *the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart*

Vittorini, (ll. 19-20, p. 94) ***l'orribile momento in cui il velo dilegua***. *Era* ***un gelo nel cuore; e una oppressione, un malessere***[78]

Baldini, (ll.17-18, p.219) ***l'orribile momento del velo che dilegua***. *Era* ***come un gelo al cuore, un'oppressione, un malessere***[79]

A very similar choice of lexis can be observed.

Poe (ll. 26-28, p. 400) *While the objects around me* – ***while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floor*** *and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies*

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[77] See *Ibidem,* pp. 70-74.

[78] All quotations from Vittorini's translation are from Edgar Allan Poe, *Racconti del terrore*, Milano, Mondadori, 1985, traduzioni di Delfino Cinelli e Elio Vittorini (the translation of 'The fall of the House of Usher' is by Vittorini).

[79] All quotations from Baldini's translation are from Edgar Allan Poe, *Racconti*, Milano, Garzanti, 2008, traduzioni di Gabriele Baldini e Luciana Pozzi (the translation of 'The fall of the House of Usher' is by Baldini).

Vittorini, (ll. 7-10, p. 98) *sebbene le cose fra cui passavo – i* ***foschi arazzi alle pareti, i pavimenti color ebano, e gli intarsi dei soffitti,*** *e i trofei fantasmagorici le cui armature*

Baldini, (l. 22, p. 222) *quantunque gli oggetti framezzo a cui dirigevo il passo –* ***i cupi arazzi che pendevano dalle pareti, i pavimenti d'ebano, i soffitti intarsiati,*** *i fantasmagorici trofei le cui armature*

Vittorini arbitrarily changes the order of the objects in the original description of Usher's studio. The same arbitrary change of order is found in Baldini. In Poe's text the visitor describes first the ceiling, second the tapestries, third the floor; in the two Italian versions the visitor describes first the tapestries, second the floor, third the ceiling. That change appears even more arbitrary, and consequently the similarity even more relevant, when we note that Poe's original follows the path followed by the eyes, from the top (ceilings), to the middle (tapestries on the walls), to the bottom (floor).

The persistence of such an arbitrary change may suggest that Baldini when translating this passage was looking at Vittorini's 'original' rather than Poe's.

Poe (p. 403, ll. 32-33) *He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom* ***which thus afflicted him*** *could be traced to*

Vittorini, (p. 101, ll. 27-28) *Esitando, egli ammetteva tuttavia che gran parte della sua singolare tristezza* ***[< >]*** *proveniva da*

Baldini (p. 225, ll. 21-22) *Egli ammetteva, nondimeno, esitando, che una gran parte della sua stravagante malinconia* ***[< >]*** *gli proveniva da*

An arbitrary deletion of the phrase '*which thus afflicted him*' is found in both versions.

Poe (p. 404, ll. 11-12) *When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought* ***instinctively and eagerly*** *the countenance of the brother*

Vittorini (p. 102, ll. 9-10) *Allorché, infine, una porta si fu richiusa dietro di lei, il mio sguardo cercò* ***con ansia istintiva*** *lo sguardo del fratello*

Baldini (p. 225, ll. 35-36) *ed allorché, alle sue spalle, una porta fu chiusa, i miei occhi ricercarono,* ***con istintiva ansia****, quelli del fratello*

In both version the two adverbs 'instinctively' and 'eagerly' are compressed and translated very similarly by 'with instinctive eagerness'.[80]

Poe (p. 405, ll. 19-21) *By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention.*

Vittorini (p. 103, ll. 20-22) *Il pittore* ***afferrava, teneva stretta l'attenzione*** *attraverso un'estrema semplicità e quasi* ***nudità di mezzi****.*

Baldini (p. 226, ll. 38-39, p. 227, l. 1) *Quel pittore* ***afferrava*** *e* ***teneva avvinta l'attenzione*** *con una estrema semplicità e addirittura* ***nudità di mezzi****.*

A similarity in the translation of lexis and syntax of the sentence can be observed.

Poe (p. 405, ll. 29-31) *A small* ***picture (1)*** *presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular* ***vault (1)*** *or* ***tunnel (1)****, with low walls,* ***smooth, white (2)*** *and without interruption or* ***device (1)****.*

Vittorini (p. 103, ll. 34-35, p. 104, l. 1) *Si trattava di una piccola* ***tela (1)*** *con un interno di* ***cantina (1)*** *o di* ***sotterraneo (1)*** *rettangolare, immensamente lungo, dalle pareti basse;* ***bianco, liscio****,* ***(2)*** *senza interruzioni né* ***ornamento (1)****.*

[80] The similarity of the two translations might suggest that they were imposed by Italian literary convention (perhaps in this case Italian would not readily tolerate the two long adverbs – but does English? –), a suggestion that seems discredited by the fact that Gallone and Manganelli translate the adverbs (even if Manganelli translates only one): Gallone (ll. 22-23, p. 318) 'Quando finalmente un uscio si chiuse alle sue spalle, il mio sguardo cercó **istintivamente** e **ansiosamente** il volto del fratello'; Manganelli (ll.5-6, p.245) 'Quando alla fine una porta si chiuse alle sue spalle, **istintivamente** mi volsi a scrutare il volto del fratello'.

Baldini (p. 227, ll.10-13) *Era una piccola* ***tela (1)*** *che figurava un interno di* ***cantina (1)****, ovvero d'un* ***sotterraneo (1)*** *rettangolare, dalle pareti basse,* ***bianco, liscio (2)****, senza interruzione né veruno* ***ornamento (1)****.*

(1) A similarity in the translation of lexis can be noticed: both translate 'picture' with 'tela' [canvas]; both translate 'vault' with 'cantina', a term that reminds the reader more of a wine-cellar than of a gloomy dungeon; both translate 'tunnel' with 'sotterraneo' [basement; vault]; both translate 'design' with 'ornamento' [ornament].

(2) In both versions the order of the two adjectives 'smooth' and 'white' is arbitrarily inverted.

Poe (p. 409, ll. 20-24) *The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased,* ***of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family.***

Vittorini (p. 108, ll.14-19) *Mi disse che lo guidava il pensiero della stranezza della malattia che gli aveva rapito la sorella,* ***e della importuna e violenta curiosità scientifica dei suoi medici, che avrebbero potuto approfittare per questo della situazione remota e indifesa della tomba di famiglia.***

Baldini (p.231, ll.3-9) *Il fratello era stato consigliato a quella misura – così fui informato – dopo aver considerato il carattere insolito della malattia della morta e* ***la insistente curiosità scientifica dei medici che l'avevano curata, i quali, da quella sospinti, avrebbero potuto anche approfittare della collocazione remota e indifesa della tomba di famiglia.***

In the original the link between eager inquiries of the doctors and the distant location of the family graveyard is not explicit. The task of putting clues together is left to the imagination of the reader. In both translations the risk of the doctors stealing the 'corpse' from the isolated graveyard is made explicit, in remarkably similar language.

Poe (p. 410, l. 13; l. 25) *we partially turned aside the yet* ***unscrewed*** *lid of the coffin (……)We replaced and* ***screwed down*** *the lid*

Vittorini (p. 109, ll. 9-11 and p. 109, l. 24) *spostammo leggermente il coperchio della bara, non ancora* ***inchiodato*** [nailed down] *(……) Rimettemmo al suo posto e* ***fissammo con le viti*** [screwed down] *il coperchio*

Baldini (p. 231, ll. 33-35 and p. 232, l. 9) *rialzammo leggermente il coperchio della bara che non era stato ancora* ***inchiodato*** [nailed down] *(……) Rimettemmo il coperchio al suo luogo,* ***lo avvitammo*** [screwed down]

> In Vittorini's translation there is an incoherence that is not in Poe: while in the original the coffin has screws and not nails, in Vittorini's and in Baldini's version the coffin has first nails and then screws. The two terms appear very close in the text and the incoherence is considerable.

Poe (p. 411, ll. 10-11) ***It was no wonder that his condition terrified – that it infected me.***

Vittorini (p. 110, ll. 10-12) ***Ci si può meravigliare che il suo stato mi opprimesse e che, anzi, provocasse in me una specie di contagio?***

Baldini (p. 232, ll. 29-31): ***Che c'è di straordinario, quindi, che il suo contegno avesse il resultato di opprimer me, a mia volta, e malignamente crescere e addirittura d'arrivare quasi a contagiarmi?***

> Both translators transform the original affirmative sentence into an interrogative and neither of them becomes 'terrified'. Both translations show signs of haste; their results are strikingly similar.

Poe (p. 417, ll. 3-4) *The storm* ***was still abroad in all its wrath*** *as I found myself crossing the old* ***causeway****.*

Vittorini (p. 116, ll. 26-28) *L'uragano* ***sfogava ancora tutta la sua ira****, quando mi trovai sul* ***terrapieno****.*

Baldini (p. 238, ll. 9-10) *La tempesta* ***disfogava ancora tutta la sua ira*** *allorché mi trovai sul* ***terrapieno.***

> Almost identical translation.

Poe (p. 417, l. 7) *for the vast* ***house*** *and its shadows were alone behind me...*

Vittorini (p. 116, ll. 30-31) *giacché soltanto la vasta ombra del* ***castello*** *stava dietro di me*

Baldini (p. 238, ll. 12-13) *dal momento che, alle mie spalle, io sospettavo soltanto l'immane ombra del* ***castello***

> In both versions 'house' is translated with 'castello' [castle]. Such translation not only is incoherent with the original, where there is no mention of a castle, but also with the rest of the translations were the House of Usher is always translated with 'casa'. Such incoherence assumes even more relevance as the passage is at the closure of the tale when the house is falling, the House-building and the House - family. The final transformation of the building into a castle produces almost a comic effect.

The examples above point to the high authority of a writerly translation and identify in it a possible cause of the extra 'creativity' of writerly translation shown in the present chapter. At times, the translator Gabriele Baldini seems to raise Vittorini's version to the rank of source text and forget about Poe's, a fact which assumes even more relevance when one considers that Baldini wasa well known scholar of English literature and language, and when one considers Vittorini's poor knowledge of English at the time when he translated Poe. What are the possible explanations for the striking similarities found in Vittorini and Baldini? In the 'Nota bibliografica' of his study on Edgar Allan Poe, Baldini, listing the translations of Poe into Italian, writes of Vittorini's and Cinelli's *Racconti e arabeschi*: 'È la raccolta piú ricca e anche meglio tradotta delle opera strettamente narrative del Poe.'[81] Is this, the high consideration Baldini has for Vittorini's translation, the reason why the two

[81] Gabriele Baldini, *Edgar A. Poe* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1947), p. 246.

translations are so similar? Is the high consideration attributed to Vittorini's translation an objective evaluation or is it a consequence of the high status of Vittorini as a translator? According to Guido Bonsaver:

> Baldini's attitude is perhaps a combination of respect for the figure of Vittorini (as a writer *and* as an editor since at the time he was still working for various important publishers) and a touch of laziness due to the low esteem with which translations were considered in those years. I'm saying the latter since that's the impression I got when working on Vittorini and on censorship. It was typical with publishers such as Arnoldo Mondadori, who had no time for the literary integrity of the translation and were more preoccupied with making sure that the book would sell well among the Italian readership. [...]
>
> I would say that in the 1920s-1940s the prevalent assumption was that translation was a poorly-paid job to be done quickly in order to earn some easy money (hence Vittorini's venturing into translation from English at a time in which he did not have enough knowledge of that language). No doubt a good 'Bella infedele' was preferred to a philologically accurate translation (not that one can't have a good compromise between the two, [...] but I think the assumption at the time was that the literary creativity of the translator could help the quality of the writing and the marketing of the book). [...] the degree of liberty taken by translators was often proportionate to their status as writers. Baldini is somehow in a mid-way position, more scholarly and knowledgeable than an ordinary translator but without the literary status of a Vittorini.[82]

Bonsaver points to two main factors as a possible cause of Baldini's attitude towards Vittorini's translation: the low status, and consequent low ethical requirements, of translation at mid-century and the high authority of Vittorini as a creative writer. How much of the extra creativity observed in an authorial translation is a consequence of the degree of freedom conceded to creative writers? How much is it instead a consequence of the flexible standards of publishers? It would be very interesting and relevant to the aim of the present study to be able to calculate the two factors with precision, but unfortunately that is not possible. What can be concluded here, as the findings of this section have shown, is that the high authority accorded to a writer-translator seems to be, at least in this instance, one of the factors of the extra 'creativity' found in authorial translations.

[82] Guido Bonsaver, personal communication to my supervisor, 26 February 2011.

4. Conclusion

The comparative analysis between the translation of Poe's tale 'The Fall of the House of Usher' by the Italian writer Giorgio Manganelli and by Maria Gallone has established an obvious difference between the two versions: the writer Manganelli appears more free to depart from the original than the non-writer Gallone who, on the contrary, appears very faithful.

We have seen how Manganelli's creativity does not aim at a faithful reproduction of the source text, but at a 'lighter' version of it in order to fit the common standard of Italian which, according to the writer, is faster, less obscure, and denser than English. Such strategy seems to be in flagrant contradiction with the original text whose language is quite distant from a common standard of English. In truth, Manganelli's strategy undermines those very stylistic devices, the liberal use of adjectives and the extreme complexity of sentence structure, through which Poe created his extraordinary tour de force of imagination. As a result 'Il crollo della Casa Usher' has lost a considerable part of its imaginative power compared to Poe's masterpiece. It has also been established that not all of Manganelli's changes are part of a strategy: often the writer changes and cuts Poe's text quite arbitrarily, thereby irreparably compromising it.

Next, the question whether Manganelli's greater freedom is adducible to his professional status as a writer, and whether it depends on the higher authority generally conferred to translations by famous writers, has been investigated. The arbitrary omission of long passages of text suggested that Manganelli's version has not been revised by any editor and it pointed to the high authority conferred on a translation by a famous writer, at least in this instance.

Finally, the comparison between Vittorini's and Baldini's translations of 'The Fall of the House of Usher' has further suggested the surprisingly high authority conferred on the work of a writer-translator, even by a later translator who had more expertise and enough authority to make his own decisions. In these pages we have had a brief chance to glimpse, at close quarters, a significant cultural process that allowed flawed translations, such as Vittorini's Poe, to take on a canonical status in the literature of twentieth-century Italy.

The next stage of the research is to investigate, through the analysis of another writerly translation published in the series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', Cesare Pavese's translation of Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno*, the nature of the difference between writerly and non-writerly translation identified in this chapter, and to decide how far this difference is attributable to the writer's own strongly developed style. Does the higher degree of freedom of a writerly translation depend on the writer's inability to abandon his own style? Does a writer when translating naturally distort the original in the movement from one language to another and into his own idiolect?

CHAPTER 4: STYLE IN TRANSLATION . PAVESE'S MELVILLE

> *... dissi che la versione pavesiana di Moby Dick di Melville era bellissima ma conteneva numerose inesattezze. Toccare Pavese agli inizi degli anni Sessanta significava esporsi, non al sospetto ma alla certezza d'eresia.*
>
> – Vincenzo Mantovani, explaining how he lost his translating work at Einaudi (Carmignani, p. 72)

1. Introduction

The aim of the present chapter is to investigate further the difference between writerly and non-writerly translation 'uncovered' in chapter 3, through an analysis of Cesare Pavese's translation of Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno,* published in 1940 by Einaudi in the series 'Scrittori stranieri tradotti' and reissued in the series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' in 1994. Does the writer rewrite the original in his own style, or does he adjust to the original?

Chapter 3 established that original writers possibly feel much freer to take 'unnecessary' departures from the ST than their fellow translators who are not writers or not as famous; now chapter 4 will allow us to compare what we know of Pavese's authorial style to what we can learn by examining a translation.

To counterbalance the study four other translations will be taken into consideration: *Benito Cereno* by Ruggero Bianchi[1] (Garzanti, 1974), *Benito Cereno*

[1] A scholar of American literature, translator, editor and literary critic. He was the first translator of Steiner's *After Babel* into Italian. For his interest in American literature, see his article on Faulkner in *Studi Americani* 8 (1962), pp. 243-280.

by Massimo Bacigalupo[2] (Mondadori, 1988); *Benito Cereno* by Roberto Mussapi[3] (Feltrinelli, 1992), *Benito Cereno* by Giancarlo Buzzi[4] (Castoldi Dalai, 2005).

Firstly, it seems opportune to premise that the present is *not* a study of Pavese's style, but a study of Pavese's style in translation: only those elements of his poetics which are relevant to the analysis of his translation will be taken into consideration. Secondly, the findings of the analysis do not purport to be of universal validity, but an insight into the authorial translation of Melville's *Benito Cereno* by Pavese.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section is a theoretical discussion, which takes its cue from the Russian scholar, writer and translator Kornei Chukovsky's observations in *The Art of Translation* on the role of the writer's style in translation. The second section is a translation oriented outline of Pavese's original style, divided into two subsections: the first, 'Lexis', considers some important factors in Pavese's use of vocabulary; the second, 'Syntax', covers some important aspects in his sentence construction. The third section introduces the source text, *Benito Cereno.* The fourth section is divided into four subsections. The first is an analysis of the opening of Pavese's *Benito Cereno*, with footnotes comparing it to the translations of the opening by Bianchi, Bacigalupo, Mussapi and Buzzi; the second is a selective analysis of isolated examples from the whole text confirming what was found in the previous subsection, again with footnotes on the other four versions. The third sub-section, 'The "Pavesization" of Melville', draws conclusions from the analysis, while the fourth subsection does the same for the other translations.[5]

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[2] Scholar and teacher of American literature and translation, experimental filmmaker. <http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massimo_Bacigalupo> [accessed March 2013]

[3] Translator, playwright, essayst, academic and fiction writer. <http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roberto_Mussapi> [accessed March 2013]

[4] Translator, businessman, author of literary essays, biographies and original fiction <http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giancarlo_Buzzi> [accessed March 2013]

[5] The methodology of analysis of the translations does not take into account the time factor. As the modes of reception of a language change continuously, some words that may sound 'antiquated' or 'oral' to us sounded literary in 1940. On the contrary, it seems true that if a translation is present on the market and accessible to the reader today, then we can assume as legitimate to consider these translations as being in one sense contemporary and to analyse them according to the contemporary Italian standard.

I offer the same apology as for chapter 3. The reader may at times find the level of analysis overly detailed and minute; however, this is the kind of microscopic examination that is needed in order to validate the broader findings of my thesis.

2. Style in translation

Dealing with 'The factor of style' in her *Translation Studies* (1988), Mary Snell-Hornby observes that style is 'nominally an important factor in translation, but there are few detailed or satisfactory discussions of its role within translation theory.'[6] When discussing the rendering of the ST style into the TL, she indicates as relevant the differentiation, made by Leech and Short in 1981 in their study on style, between '*transparent style*, which shows the meaning of the ST easily and directly (1981:19), and *opaque style*, where the meaning of the text is obscured by means of foregrounding and its interpretation is hence obstructed',[7] and she argues how opaque style is often hard to reproduce and is usually flattened into transparent style:

> Obviously the more obscure opaque style, where there is more danger of misunderstanding the text and of introducing incongruous elements in the target language, presents greater difficulty for the translator than does transparent style, and where the pitfalls are recognized and actual errors avoided, the translation is usually made transparent. This is often the cause of what reviewers like to call "Verflachung" or "lack of stylistic contour" in a translation.[8]

Snell-Hornby investigates the reproduction of the original style as a matter of succeeding or failing in rendering the original opacity of language (variable in intensity from text to text) in the target language. A similar idea of 'lack of stylistic contour' in a translation is found in Lawrence Venuti's image of the translator's invisibility and the general tendency to write the translation in fluent, transparent

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[6] Mary Snell-Hornby, *Translation Studies. An Integrated Approach* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1988), pp. 119-130.
[7] Snell-Hornby, p. 120.
[8] Snell-Hornby, p. 123.

prose.[9] The translator flattens any obstruction or incongruity in order to hand the reader an illusion of transparency, as if the words were made of glass and the reader could see through and access directly the source text. Both Snell-Hornby and Venuti seem to refer to the figure of the English professional translator who seldom is a famous original writer, a situation that changes drastically in different cultures, as Lauren Leighton contented, in her introduction to Kornei Chukovsky's *The Art of Translation*, where the translator is often also a creative writer, as often happened in the Soviet Union. [10]

Chukovsky highlights the fact that when the translator is also a writer the translation presents an 'excess of stylistic contour', often depending on the translator's original style as a writer rather than on the ST writer's style. The Russian scholar argues that the opacity of the TL is not the result of a 'faithful but creative' transposition of the SL into the TL (as it should be according to Snell-Hornby and Venuti), but an act of appropriation and transformation of the SL opacity in the opacity of the writer-translator's original language not always in tune with the source text. The writer-translator's style often stands in the way of a successful translation. The biggest danger and outrage of translation is when the writer-translator distorts the whole work by imposing an entirely different face on the author.[11] This is more likely

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[9] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility* (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 4-5: 'A fluent translation is written in English that is current ("modern") instead of archaic, that is widely used instead of specialized ("jargonization"), and that is standard instead of colloquial ("slangy"). Foreign words or English words and phrases imprinted by a foreign language ("pidgin") are avoided, as are Britishisms in American translations and Americanisms in British translations. Fluency also depends on syntax that is not so "faithful" to the foreign text as to be "not quite idiomatic", 'that unfolds continuously and easily ("breezes right along" instead of being "doughy") to insure semantic precision with some rhythmic definition, a sense of closure ("not a dull thud"). A fluent translation is immediately recognizable and intelligible, "familiarized", "domesticated", not "disconcertingly" foreign, capable of giving the reader unobstructed "access to great thoughts", to "what is present" in the original.'

[10] See p. 32.

[11] Chukovsky, pp. 19-20: 'This happens far more often than one might think. The translator puts a mask of his own making on the author, so to speak, and he represents this mask as his real face. (...) It is therefore useless for reviewers to criticize a translation merely by noting its slips of vocabulary. It is far more important to catch the pernicious departures from the original which are linked organically to the personality of the translator and which by reflecting the personality of the translator in the aggregate, shunt the original author aside. It is far more important to find the dominant of the departures from the norm by which the translator foists his own literary "I" on the reader'.

to happen when the writer-translator's style is opaque and deviates very individually from the norm and is different from the original writer's: 'the more expressive the translator's personality, the more the original author is shunted aside.'[12] But can this be considered a valid universal assumption? If we cannot presuppose this as dogmatic we can at least assume that if a poet translator with a very expressive style used it in his translations, his style would be more easily detectable in the translation than if the same work had been rendered by a translator with a more neutral, 'transparent' style. The ideal situation would be, in Chukovsky's view, if the style of the poet translator and of the original author are very similar. And, on the other hand, the least ideal situation occurs when they are very distant. Conclusively, according to Chukovsky, being a writer is not necessarily an advantage when translating, but it is only in the case of similarity of styles that the writer might produce a successful translation.

It might be argued that similarity of styles is a rather difficult fact to establish, especially for two different languages, and that in translation it might represent a greater obstacle than 'difference', as the writer-translator could be tempted to transform the original author completely into himself or herself, thus deleting traces of the original style. On the other hand, if the translator and original writer were very different it could be easier for the translator to 'step out of himself'.

The risk involved in the situation of 'similarity' is stressed by some of the writer-translators published in the series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', especially in those cases where there is an evident similarity if not of styles, of 'themes' between translator and work translated.[13] If we consider that, often, it was the translator who chose the work to translate for the series (in the case of translations commissioned especially for the series), as we have seen in chapter 2, and that in most cases the writer chose a work he or she admired,[14] then we could conclude that the Einaudi series represents the best example of the writer's risk of 'shunting the original author aside', which may have been what Einaudi was looking for when he started the series.

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[12] Chukovsky, p.23.

[13] Primo Levi's concern not to impose his style on Kafka's was noted in chapter 2, above.

[14] As emerging from most of the 'Nota del traduttore' examples analysed in chapter 2 of the present study.

Octavio Paz in an essay defending the translatability of poetry, already cited in chapter 1, observes that the poet-translator's own style might obstruct rather than facilitate a good translation: 'in theory only poets should translate poetry; in practice, poets are rarely good translators. They almost invariably use the foreign poem as a point of departure toward their own.'[15] Being a poet does not imply being a good translator of poetry: 'the good translator of poetry is a translator who is also a poet or a poet who is also a good translator.'[16] The reason why many poets are unable to translate poetry, according to Paz, 'is not purely psychological, although egoism has a part in it, but functional: poetic translation [...] is a procedure analogous to poetic creation, but it unfolds in the opposite directions'; it is an act involving creativity and a poet cannot help creating in his own way.

The same is observed by Yves Bonnefoy in an essay on 'Translating poetry', where he admits that a translator does not need to be a poet in order to translate poetry, but 'if he is himself a writer he will be unable to keep his translating separate from his work.'[17]

Finally, at a theoretical level the creative writer's inability to abandon his original style when translating is often stressed.[18] The writer-translator's visible creative intervention is an established fact and not necessarily a positive one. Original style is a factor that might hinder rather than facilitate the rendering of the original author's opacity of language with its own excess of opacity, difficult to mould into something different.

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[15] Octavio Paz, 'Translation: literature and letters', p. 83.
[16] Paz, p. 83.
[17] Yves Bonnefoy, 'Translating poetry' translated by John Alexander and Clive Wilmer in Schulte & Biguenet (eds), *Theories of Translation,* p. 189.
[18] e. g.: Ruggero Bianchi writes: 'Non è affato scontato che un bravo scrittore sia un buon riscrittore, anzi è più spesso vero il contrario' and '(Proprio qui, sia detto tra parentesi, sta il grosso equivoco di operazioni sul tipo di quelle degli "scrittori tradotti da scrittori")' in 'La traduzione come messinscena. Appunti di viaggio melvilliani' in Sergio Perosa, *Le traduzioni italiane di Herman Melville e Gertrude Stein: secondo seminario sulla traduzione letteraria dall'inglese: Venezia, 25 e 26 Settembre 1995* (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti), p. 29.

It is the aim of the following sections to verify those theoretical assumptions by studying the translation of Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno* by Cesare Pavese, a celebrated writer-translator, in contrastive analysis with his original poetics.

3. A translation-oriented outline of Pavese's style

The aim of the present section is not an overall and exhaustive survey of Pavese's poetics, but an outline of those elements of the writer's style which are most 'visible', 'external', assuming these to be the ones more easily identifiable, if present, in the translation. Inevitably, in order to frame a clear and functional model of the writer's style, some elements of his poetics will be left unconsidered or only indirectly considered: even though they might be central factors in his original works they are pushed into the background in his translation. Rhythm, for instance, Pavese's extensive use of repetition of a word or image, even though a relevant factor in his poetics,[19] in a translation oriented analysis of his style might become of secondary importance as its presence or absence in the TT is powerfully dictated by the ST. The same can be said for content, 'what the story is about', the plot, characters and setting, central elements of Pavese's poetics that are not central in a translation oriented analysis of his style as they are factors depending almost completely on the ST and are only considered indirectly, through the analysis of those stylistic components 'more easily modifiable' in the passage from SL to TL.[20]

The aspects of Pavese's style that this section highlights are his use of lexis and syntax. The survey is based on the studies by Gian Luigi Beccaria on lexis and by Elisabetta Soletti on syntax. The reason behind such restricted choice, among the extensive amount of studies on the subject, apart from Beccaria and Soletti's

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[19] See Gian Luigi Beccaria, 'Introduzione' a Cesare Pavese *La luna e i falò* (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), pp. v-xxxiii; Guglielminetti, Marziano e Giuseppe Zaccaria, *Cesare Pavese: introduzione e guida allo studio dell'opera pavesiana* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1982); Leonard Gregory Sbrocchi, *Stilistica nella narrativa pavesiana* (Frosinone: Tipografia di Casamari, 1967), pp. 20-21;

[20] Another factor that will not be considered in this translation oriented survey is the change and development of Pavese's style throughout his writing career.

established authority in the field,[21] is an attempt to formulate a clearly drawn functional outline of the author's style so that the reader might easily compare it to the findings of the translation analysis.

3.1 Lexis and the influence of dialect

Gian Luigi Beccaria, in a study of Pavese's lexis[22] identifies the most relevant aspect of the writer's lexical choices as the influence of dialect, allusive forms of Piedmontese dialect, or slang, belonging to the sphere of spoken language:

> Nel caso specifico di Pavese il fatto piú vistoso è l'incidenza che il dialetto ha nel condizionare le scelte, le forme aberranti dalla 'norma'. Qualora tra le componenti stilistiche s'intenda esaminare la piú esterna, vale a dire gli aspetti del lessico, quel che ci porge, a lavoro finito, il procedimento di schedatura anagrafica, è una serie grandissima (e che sarebbe lungo, e forse noioso, elencare) di dialettismi, di forme allusive calcate sul piemontese o sul gergo, popolari comunque.[23]

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[21] Vittorio Coletti, scholar and professor of history of Italian language at the university of Genova, in his essay "Lo 'stile' di Pavese" [in Margherita Campanello (a cura di), *Cesare Pavese: atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Torino, Santo Stefano Belbo, 24-27 Ottobre 2001* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 2005), pp-209-221] writes: 'Negli studi su Cesare Pavese quelli dedicati all'esame della lingua occupano un posto autorevole, con esiti, diversamente da quelli di altri tipi di interventi, mai messi in discussione. Beccaria, Mutterle, Testa, Soletti, per citare solo gli autori dei saggi piú importanti e completi, hanno proposto analisi esaurienti, pienamente condivisibili e di grande affidabilità', (p. 209). For a study of Pavese's poetics see also: Gianfranco Colombo, *Guida alla lettura di Pavese* (Milano: Mondadori, 1988); Gigliucci, Roberto, *Cesare Pavese* (Milano: Mondadori, 2001); Grassi, Corrado 'Osservazioni su lingua e dialetto nell'opera di Cesare Pavese' in *Sigma* 3/4, 1969, pp. 49-71; Gregory Lucente, *The narrative of realism and myth: Verga, Lawrence, Faulkner, Pavese* (Baltimore; London: John Hopkins University Press, c1981); Marziano Guglielminetti e Giuseppe Zaccaria, *Cesare Pavese: introduzione e guida allo studio dell'opera pavesiana* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1982); Lorenzo Mondo, *Cesare Pavese* (Milano: Mursia, 1984); Anco Marzio Mutterle, *L'immagine arguta: lingua, stile, retorica di Pavese* (Torino: Einaudi, 1977); Sergio Pautasso: *Guida a Pavese* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1980) and 'Il laboratorio di Pavese' in Pautasso, *Il laboratorio dello scrittore: temi, idee, tecniche della letteratura del Novecento* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1981), pp. 3-20 ; Leonard Gregory Sbrocchi, *cit.;* Novelli Silverio, 'Agosto con Cesare' in http://www.treccani.it/magazine/lingua_italiana/percorsi/percorsi_11.html; Michele Tondo, *Invito alla lettura di Cesare Pavese* (Milano: Mursia, 1985).

[22] Gian Luigi Beccaria, "Il lessico, ovvero la 'questione della lingua' in Cesare Pavese", *Sigma*, 3-4 (1964), pp. 87-94.

[23] Beccaria, p. 87.

Beccaria points out, however, that the influence of popular forms, especially Piedmontese or Tuscan dialect, do not lead Pavese in the direction of neo-realism; his lexis is half-way between dialect and standard Italian,[24] part of his search for a new vernacular capable of infusing new energy into the dead Italian literary language. In Pavese the influence of dialect on lexis is very subtle, delicate, never abrupt. It entails

> lievi spostamenti [...] di genere e di numero a far sí che la risonanza del lessico dialettale si avverta in trasformazioni operate senza quelle scosse troppo violente quali teme il delicato organismo di una lingua. Spesso si tratta semplicemente di scelte lessicali 'periferiche', non toscane, senz'essere quelle specificatamente piemontesi (*piana*, per esempio, è anche voce emiliana e meridionale; *bricchi* è d'area settentrionale), e, qualora lo siano, per lo piú non si possono delimitare ad una zona circoscritta (la *Langa*, il torinese poniamo).[25]

Pavese's lexis echoes spoken language and maintains a certain distance from polished literary Italian, as Beccaria observes in his masterly introduction to *La luna e i falò*:

> L'ideale di Pavese (...) era uno stile scarno, disadorno, rapido e netto, misurato, privo di fronzoli, e sempre calcolato, sostenuto e sostanzioso (...) Prende le distanze (...) da ogni tipo di prosa che avesse il grado zero della naturalezza discorsiva, della freschezza convenzionale, o il grado plurimo del libresco, del prezioso, dell'allusivo. Resta distante tanto dalla tradizione espressionistico-preziosa quanto dal neorealismo.[26]

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[24] 'Il lessico pavesiano preferisce collocarsi a metà strada, librato tra dialetto e lingua, ed appartiene ad entrambe. È vero che molte delle adozioni lessicali si giustificano proprio per il rimando alla veste originaria del dialetto, e fonologicamente la conservano: interviene difatti il piemontese a decider la scelta tra "coppi" (piem. *cup*) e "tegole", "cavagni" (piem. *cavañ)* e "ceste" (...). Ma è soprattutto vero che l'allusione opera in ossequio a forme ed eccezioni tradizionali, oppure è il semplice plurale, *i fieni, i grani, le uve, le melighe,* il plurale femminile, *le albere,* il femminile ancora in luogo del maschile, *la tina*', Beccaria, p. 89; the same concepts are stated also in his later introduction to Pavese's *La luna e i falò,* the novel where, according to Beccaria, the writer reaches his best stylistic achievement. The critic highlights a moderate use of dialect, a choice of lexis half-way between dialect and literary Italian: 'ne *La luna e i falò* sceglie le forme ambivalenti, che guardano insieme al dialetto e alla lingua italiana generale (o alla letteratura)' in Cesare Pavese, 'Introduzione', *La luna e i falò* (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), pp. xx-xxi.

[25] Beccaria, p. 89.

[26] Beccaria, 'Introduzione' in C. Pavese, *La luna e i falò* (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), p.xxvi.

In his autobiographical *Il mestiere di vivere*, Pavese explains his ideal of language:

> Come in tutte le cose della poesia, è anche qui questione di un certo equilibrio. Non certo che le grandi epoche scrivano in dialetto. Esse adoperano un volgare rialzandolo con ogni sorta di accorgimenti retorici, di formule poetiche: in esse *il passaggio dal dialetto alla lingua avviene direttamente in nome della poesia*, che utilizza e rialza tutta la vivacità del dialetto.[27]

He disapproves of the current separation between literary language and dialect:

> Ormai il dialetto è distinto dalla lingua, e non si può tornare indietro se non mascherandosi da strapaesani. Il problema è inventare (freq. da *invenire*) una nuova vivacità (leopardian. *naturalezza*) senza folclore.[28]

And he writes of Berto in *Paesi tuoi*:

> la lingua... è tutt'altra cosa da un impressionismo naturalistico. Non ho scritto rifacendo il verso a Berto – l'unico che parli – ma traducendo i suoi ruminamenti, i suoi stupori, i suoi scherni ecc., come li direbbe lui *se parlasse italiano*. (...) Non ho voluto far vedere come parla Berto sforzandosi di parlare italiano (che sarebbe impressionismo dialettale) ma come parlerebbe se le sue parole gli diventassero – per Pentecoste – italiane. [29]

From this passage emerges and idea of the writer as an interpreter and translator of reality, a concept often stressed at a theoretical level in translation studies.

3.2 Syntax and the modalities of spoken language

Scholars of Pavese stress the relevance of the influence of spoken language also at a syntactical level. Enrico Testa, in *Lo stile semplice* highlights the extreme essentiality

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[27] Pavese, *Il mestiere di vivere*, 5 ottobre 1943 (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), p. 261.
[28] ibid.
[29] Pavese, *Il mestiere di vivere*, 4 dicembre 1939, p. 164.

of Pavese's microphrastic and paratactic syntax 'che coincide quasi interamente con le procedure dell'elementarità discorsiva.'[30]

The same observations are found in Coletti who in *Storia dell'italiano letterario* defines Pavese's typical sentence structure as 'rude e volutamente spezzato' ('crude and deliberately broken') and points to the 'fragmentary and rapid movement of his syntax'[31] in 'a language that does not pretend to be written down, and has no fear of seeming like spoken expression.'[32]

A study on Pavese's syntax which proved very helpful for drawing an outline of Pavese's charateristic syntactical constructions is the essay by Elisabetta Soletti 'Nota linguistica, appunti sulla sintassi di Pavese'.[33] Soletti, after highlighting the extreme incidence of spoken and popular Italian on the morphosyntactic features of the writer's prose,[34] makes a list of the most common and effective stylistic expedients through which Pavese builds his syntax:

- **inversion of subject and predicate** ('In alcuni casi i costrutti sono ulteriormente marcati dall'uso straniante della virgola'). Examples from *Il compagno*: 'Cominciò subito a parlare, Linda' ['She started talking at once, did Linda'] [35] (ch. II, p. 159), 'Sanno tutto, i compagni' ['They know everything, my mates do'] (ch.XXII, p. 279);[36]
- **inversion of principal and subordinate phrase**. Examples from *Il compagno*: 'fargli coraggio non sapevo' ['Cheer him up? I couldn't do that'] (ch. I, p. 152);

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[30] Enrico Testa, *Lo stile semplice, discorso e romanzo* (Torino: Einaudi, 1997), p. 234.
[31] 'frammentazione e velocità della sintassi', Coletti, *Storia dell'italiano letterario* (Torino: Einaudi, 1993), p. 348.
[32] 'lingua che non finge di non essere scritta e non teme di sembrare parlata', Coletti, *Storia dell'italiano letterario,* p. 349.
[33] Elisabetta Soletti, 'Nota linguistica, appunti sulla sintassi di Pavese', in Cesare Pavese, *Tutti i romanzi* (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), pp. 1147-1157.
[34] Soletti writes: 'un dettato essenziale e scarno, dominato da un periodare paratattico ora brevissimo, ora piú ampio, ma denso e complesso (...) per effetto e in virtú dell'alleggerimento e della semplificazione sintattica' and observes the 'incidenza, notevolissima, di tratti e di costrutti morfosintattici che appartengono alla dimensione del parlato colloquiale o popolare', p. 1152.
[35] The literal translations into English appearing in square brackets were suggested by my supervisor, Professor Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin.
[36] Soletti, p. 1153.

'Non li legge, i giornali' ['He doesn't read them – the newspapers'] (ch. II, p. 162);[37]

- **generic condensed formulae for launching a new topic**: *Com'è che; Fortuna che; C'è di bello che; C'era di nuovo che; Il brutto è che, Sarà che, Restava dunque che, Fatto sta che, Che c'è da, etc.* [38]

Next, Soletti makes a list, taking examples from *La luna e i falò,* of the most visible expedients used by Pavese to create a colloquial linguistic ambience:

- **extremely diffuse use of the interrogative '*cosa*' ;**
- **widespread use of the emphatic *mica* in negative clauses;**
- **extremely widespread use of the colloquial pronoun *noialtri/voialtri*** (which now sounds rather dated);
- **use of *gli* with the meaning 'a loro';**[39]

Finally, Soletti points to the **wide use of the generic conjuction 'che'** as another stylistic expedient used by Pavese in building his language; and to his **use of the indicative instead of the subjunctive** especially in hypothetical clauses, which at the time he was writing represented a marked departure from the formal register. [40]

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[37] Soletti, p. 1153.
[38] Soletti, p. 1153.
[39] This indirect pronoun traditionally meant 'to him', although in the decades since Pavese's death the singular masculine indirect pronoun 'gli' has begun to cover the plural of both genders, even in 'correct' standard Italian.
[40] Soletti, p. 1153.

4. *Benito Cereno* [41]

Benito Cereno is a short story written by the American writer Herman Melville, printed in *Putnam's* in 1854 and later slightly revised[42] for republication, one year later, in *The Piazza Tales.* Pavese most likely used the version published in the *The Piazza Tales* which is the version usually anthologized. I will refer to the edition published in English by Giunti in 2001.

The story is based on a real event; its source is *A narrative of voyages and travels in the northern and southern hemispheres* by Amasa Delano, a well known American navigator and trader, which appeared in 1817.

The story opens when Delano, captain of the *Bachelor's Delight*, at anchor in a small harbour near the Chilean coast, spots a ship which seems in trouble. Moved by an invincible sense of good will, Delano approaches the ship to offer his help. When he boards the ship, a Spanish cargo vessel transporting African slaves on the way to America, Delano is struck by the mysterious and hallucinatory atmosphere pervading

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[41] The present section does not purport to be an exhaustive survey of *Benito Cereno*, but a translation oriented outline of some aspects relevant to our analysis of Pavese's translation. For a study of *Benito Cereno* see also: Gabriele Baldini, *Melville o le ambiguità* (Milano; Napoli: R. Ricciardi, 1952); Williams Bartley, 'The creature of his own tasteful hands: Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno* and the "Empire of Might"' in *Modern Philology* 93 (1996) pp. 445-67; Ruggero Bianchi, *Invito alla lettura di Melville* (Milano: Mursia, 1997); Guy Cardwell, 'Melville's Gray Story: Symbols and Meaning in Benito Cereno' in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Herman Melville. Modern critical views* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1986), pp. 67-77; William B. Dillingham, 'A dark similitude: *Benito Cereno*' in *Melville's Short Fiction 1853-1856* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2008), pp. 227-271; Rosalie Feltenstein, 'Melville's *Benito Cereno*' in *American Literature* 19 (1947), pp. 245-255; Richard Harter Fogle, 'Benito Cereno' in Richard Chase (ed.), *Melville: a Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), pp.116-124; Valeria Bonita Gray, *Invisible's Man's Literary Heritage: Benito Cereno and Moby Dick* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1978); Dana D. Nelson, '"For the Gaze of the Whites": The Crisis of the Subject in "Benito Cereno"' in *The World in Black and White: Reading Race in American Literature 1638-1867* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 109-131; Sergio Perosa, a cura di, *Le traduzioni italiane di Herman Melville e Gertrude Stein: secondo seminario sulla traduzione letteraria dall' inglese* (Venezia: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 1988); Ole Wagner, *Racial Attitudes in Melville's 'Benito Cereno' and Twain's 'Huckleberry Finn'*, (Norderstedt: Grin, 2008).

[42] The original version, almost identical to the revised one, except for some small changes, was serialized in the issues of October, November and December of the *Putnam's Monthly* of 1855 (and is available for reading at http://ebooks.library.cornell.edu/p/putn/putn.1855.html).

the ship. The miserable aspect of the Spanish captain Benito Cereno, constantly shadowed by his over solicitous black servant Babo, betrays some kind of mental and physical depression. The same misery and mystery is reflected on board of the ship where the blacks, outnumbering the whites, are, quite strangely, not kept in chains and appear busy in disparate aimless activities.

For the most part of the tale Delano investigates, quite unsuccessfully, trying to understand what has happened on board the San Dominick. His numerous questions are often given elusive and contradictory answers by the Spanish captain, who appears more and more a puppet in the hands of his servant.

Only at the end Delano, faced with striking evidence, discovers that the San Dominick has had a mutiny of the blacks who, commanded by Babo, have killed most of the whites and taken possession of the ship. Delano and his men succeed in freeing the ship and the story ends with an appendix where the happenings on the San Dominick before the arrival of captain Delano, still unknown to the reader, are unveiled at the trial through the deposition of Benito Cereno.

From the very beginning the story is wrapped in an atmosphere of mystery and suspense[43] where the natural elements reflect the events on the ship and ultimately the vicissitudes of human soul. From the opening the dominant colour of the story is a blend of black and white, grey, absence of colour which is reflected in the absence of wind, movement, life. All is pervaded by a persistent calm foreshadowing a storm as Pavese observes in the introduction he did to the translation: 'un'intensa atmosfera di bonaccia che non è pace ma presentimento dell'abisso'.[44] The story is charged with ambiguity; on board the ship the colour of the blacks and the whites alternates, especially at lexical level, in a play of chiaroscuro that melts into the general 'no-colour'. Magowan writes: 'black and white are subsumed, by that greater gray which

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[43] For a study of the effects of ambiguity, spectrality and suspense in *Benito Cereno* see also Williams Stanley, '"Follow your leader", Melville's *Benito Cereno*' in *Virginia Quarterly Review*, vol. 23, no. 1 (1947), pp. 61-77.

[44] Cesare Pavese, *Benito Cereno* (Torino: Einaudi, 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', 1994), p. 127, ['an intense atmosphere of dead calm, representing not peace but a foreboding of the abyss'].

is, in effect, the atmosphere enshrouding the tale from its beginning.'[45] The alternance of colours in the story is a determinant factor to build up the 'ambiguous' atmosphere. As Richard Fogle points out in his essay on *Benito Cereno*: '"Benito Cereno" has a decorative colour scheme of white, black and gray (...) this use of colour motifs has both an immediate function of design and along with it a deeper significance in theme.'[46]

Onboard the ship, characters act their roles in order to hide reality. In his heart Delano fails to tell the difference between black and white, evil and good, and cannot discern the truth of what has really happened aboard the San Dominick. William Dillingham in a study on Melville's short fiction observes that

> The theme of ultimate futility (...) is stressed in "Benito Cereno" through the constant play between appearance and reality. On the literal level of action, the apparent situation is not the real one. That simple dichotomy is misleading, however, for despite the insistence of numerous critics that "Benito Cereno" *contrasts* appearance with reality, the underlying conclusion reached in the story is that both appearance and what passes for reality are false and thus in a sense not opposites but similitudes. Whenever one layer of false perception has been cut away in order for bare reality to be seen below, that reality proves to be only another layer of appearance.[47]

The story is highly symbolical, a 'foresta delle corrispondenze e dei simboli', [48] Pavese writes in his introduction. From the very beginning Melville creates linking images and correspondences between things, every single element of the narration has been meticulously arranged[49] to reverberate and expand the intensity of the imagery in

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[45] Robin Magowan, 'Masque and symbol in *Benito Cereno*' in *College English*, vol. 23, no.5 (Feb., 1962), p. 350.

[46] In Richard Harter Fogle, *cit.*, p. 121. For the symbolism of colours see also and Nelson, Dana D., 'The grayness of everything' in *The world in black and white: reading race in American literature 1638-1867* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 110-112.

[47] William B. Dillingham, *Melville's short fiction 1853-1856* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2008), pp. 229-230.

[48] Pavese, *Benito Cereno*, Introduzione, p.123.

[49] The precise calculation behind Melville's arrangement of his prose is a fact unanimously stressed by the critics. E.g. Rosalie Feltenstein in her review of the tale reiterates Melville's careful and precise calculation in arranging the text, claiming that 'there is not one careless, useless, weak or redundant touch in the whole tale' (*cit.*,p.252).

a story where every part mirrors every other in a constant mise en abîme. Pavese writes:

> Accade quindi che in questo perfettissimo tra i suoi racconti, come del resto in ogni capolavoro di poesia, la ricchezza dell'invenzione va anzitutto goduta nella singola frase. In altre parole, ogni singola immagine di questa fantasia rifrange in se stessa, come l'idolo nell'occhio, il panorama di tutta l'opera.[50]

To produce this effect of correspondences and mise en abîme Melville makes wide use of repetition. An example from the opening:

> Everything was mute and calm; everything gray. The sea, though undulated into long rods of swells, seemed fixed, and was sleeked at the surface like waved lead that has cooled and set in the smelter's mould. The sky seemed a gray surtout. Flights of troubled gray fowl, kith and kin with flights of troubled gray vapors among which they were mixed, skimmed low and fitfully over the waters, as swallows over meadows before storms. Shadows present, foreshadowing deeper shadows to come.[51]

Repetition of words and sounds are not only found close in the text, but rebounce from one end of the story to the other, 'to make tangible the idea that similitude rather than difference is the essence of experience, Melville ingeniously built into his story a number of echoes. Situations with variations repeat themselves; the same words and phrases turn up in different contexts', Dillingham writes.[52]

The effect of mirrors and echoes is enhanced also by Melville's masterly articulation of the narrative voices. According to Dillingham in the story there are four different narrative perspectives: one that reports facts (the travel journal, eg. 'In the year...'), the 'reportorial narrative voice' which 'is largely neutral in tone and informational in function. It embodies no worldview or any character's viewpoint. It furnishes facts and is nonevaluative.'[53] This neutral and objective voice occurs many

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[50] Pavese, *Benito Cereno,* Introduzione, p.127.
[51] Herman Melville, *Bartleby, Benito Cereno* (Milano: Giunti, 2001), p. 57.
[52] Dillingham, p. 235. For the use of repetition in *Benito Cereno* see also Robert Kiely, *Reverse tradition: the nineteenth century novel* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1993), ch. 3, pp. 61-81.
[53] Dillingham, p. 243.

times within the action of the story and often reports information Delano is unaware of. Secondly, the authorial voice which, for instance, is the voice mocking with irony Delano's ingenuity (eg. 'a person of singularly undistrustful good nature'), and the voice from which originate many of the elaborate similes and metaphors characterizing the style of Melville's work. Thirdly, Delano's individual narrative voice. Lastly, the official narrative voice appearing at the end of the story at the deposition, written in a completely different style, the bureaucratic legal style of the nineteenth century, the voice appointed to unveil the truth, which, however, remains doubtful.

In Melville's story the general tone is never low or colloquial, not even in dialogues, but austere, and it can reach lyrical peaks. The lexis is literary, never colloquial, though rarely precious or sophisticated and, *Benito Cereno* being a sea-tale, there is a vast use of sea-related vocabulary. The syntactical structure of the period can be quite complex and articulated, usually composed of one or two principal clauses surrounded by groups of subordinate clauses. An example from the text:

> But drowning criticism in compassion, after a fresh repetition of his sympathies, Captain Delano, having heard out his story, not only engaged, as in the first place, to see Don Benito and his people supplied in their immediate bodily needs, but, also, now further promised to assist him in procuring a large permanent supply of water, as well as some sails and rigging; and, though, it would involve no small embarrassment to himself, yet he would spare three of his best seamen for temporary deck officers; so that without delay the ship might proceed to Conception, there fully to refit for Lima, her destined port.[54]

[54] Herman Melville, *Benito Cereno* (Milano: Giunti, 2001), p. 71.

5. The translations

In this section I will analyze Pavese's translation of *Benito Cereno*,[55] first published in 1940 by Einaudi in the series 'Scrittori stranieri tradotti', with the view of evaluating whether Pavese's original use of lexis and syntax, as outlined in section 3.2, influences his choices when translating Melville's work from English into Italian.

As a counterweight to the study, four translations by non-creative or less celebrated writers will be analyzed in comparison with Pavese's *Benito Cereno*. Respectively, in chronological order of publication: *Benito Cereno* by Ruggero Bianchi (Garzanti, 1974); *Benito Cereno* by Massimo Bacigalupo (Mondadori, 1988); *Benito Cereno* by Roberto Mussapi (Feltrinelli, 1992); *Benito Cereno* by Giancarlo Buzzi (Castoldi Dalai, 2005). The purpose of the contrastive analysis of the 'less authorial' translations is to facilitate a more secure analysis of Pavese's translational choices. For reasons of space, the analysis of the four translations will appear in footnotes.

[55] The edition of the original work used here is: Herman Melville, *Bartleby/Benito Cereno* (Milano: Giunti, 2001). The edition of Pavese's translation used here is: Cesare Pavese, *Benito Cereno* (Torino: Einaudi, 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', 1994).

5.1 The opening

Melville (Giunti, 2001)

In the year 1799, Captain Amasa Delano, of Duxbury in Massachusetts, commanding a large sealer and general trader, lay at anchor with a valuable cargo in the harbor of St Maria – a small, desert, uninhabitated island toward the southern extremity of the long coast of Chile. There he had touched for water.

On the second day, not long after dawn, while lying in his berth, his mate came below, informing him that a strange sail was coming into the bay. Ships were then not so plenty in those waters as now. He rose, dressed, and went on deck.

The morning was one peculiar to that coast. Everything was mute and calm; everything gray. The sea, though undulated into long rods of swells, seemed fixed, and was sleeked at the surface like waved lead that has cooled and set in the smelter's mold. The sky seemed a gray surtout. Flights of troubled gray fowl, kith and kin with flights of troubled gray vapors among which they were mixed, skimmed low and fitfully over the waters, as swallows over meadows before storms. Shadows present, foreshadowing deeper shadows to come.

Pavese (Einaudi, 1940)

Correva l'anno 1799 e il capitano Amasa Delano, di Duxbury nel Massachusetts, comandante di un grosso legno da foche e da carico che trasportava merci di valore, gettò l'ancora nel porto di Santa Maria – che è un isolotto deserto e disabitato all'estremità meridionale della lunga costa del Cile. Voleva rifornirsi d'acqua.

Il giorno dopo, l'alba era sorta da poco e lui ancora disteso in cuccetta, scese il secondo a informarlo che una vela sconosciuta entrava nella baia. Erano tempi che le navi non abbondavano in quelle acque come ora. Il capitano si levò, si vestí, e salí sul ponte.

Faceva una delle mattinate caratteristiche di quella costa. Tutto intorno era calmo e silenzioso; tutto era grigio. Il mare, per quanto scorresse in lunghe ondate rigonfie, sembrava immobile, e alla superficie era lucido come piombo ondulato quando si raffredda e deposita nello stampo di fusione. Il cielo pareva uno scuro pastrano. Stormi di uccelli grigi inquieti, in tutto simili agli inquieti stormi grigi di vapori cui erano mischiati, sfioravano bassi e a scatti le acque, come rondini il prato prima del temporale. Ombre presenti, che adombravano piú cupe ombre future.

Bianchi (Garzanti, 1974)

Nell'anno 1799, il Capitano Amasa Delano, di Duxbury nel Massachusetts, al comando di un grosso bastimento di caccia alle foche e di commercio, era all'ancora con un carico di valore nel porto naturale di Santa Maria, un'isoletta deserta e disabitata verso l'estremità meridionale della lunga costa del Cile. Aveva toccato lí per fare l'acquata.

Il secondo giorno, poco dopo l'alba, mentre era in cuccetta, il suo primo ufficiale scese a informarlo che una vela sconosciuta stava entrando nella baia. In quelle acque, allora, le navi non erano numerose come adesso. Si alzò, si vestí e salí sul ponte.

Era un mattino tipico di quella costa. Tutto era calmo e silenzioso; tutto grigio. Il mare, pur scanalato dalle onde lunghe del mar vecchio, pareva immobile, e aveva la superficie levigata come il piombo ondulato dopo che si è raffreddato e solidificato nello stampo del fonditore. Il cielo era come un mantello grigio. Nugoli di grigi uccelli inquieti, del tutto simili ai nugoli di grigi inquieti vapori cui si mischiavano, sorvolavano le acque a scatti radenti, come rondini i prati prima delle tempeste. Ombre presenti, adombranti future ombre piú fitte.

Bacigalupo (Mondadori, 1988)

Nell'anno 1799, il capitano Amasa Delano,[56] *di Duxbury nel Massachusetts, comandante d'una grossa nave per la caccia delle foche e per il commercio in genere, era all'ancora con un carico di valore nel porto di S. Maria,*[57] *un'isola piccola, desertica e inabitata verso l'estremità meridionale della lunga costa del Cile. Qui aveva fatto tappa per rifornirsi d'acqua.*

Il secondo giorno, poco dopo l'alba, mentre stava disteso in cuccetta, il secondo scese a informarlo che una vela sconosciuta stava entrando nella baia. Le navi erano allora meno numerose in quelle acque di adesso. Egli si alzò, si vestí e salí sul ponte.

Il mattino era caratteristico di quella costa. Tutto era muto e calmo, tutto era grigio. Il mare, percorso dai lunghi rigonfiamenti delle ondate, pareva tuttavia immobile ed era lustro in superficie come piombo ondulato, raffreddato e depositato nello stampo di fusione. Il cielo sembrava un mantello grigio. Stormi di uccelli grigi, irrequieti, parenti stretti degli stormi di vapori grigi irrequieti ai quali erano mescolati, sfioravano bassi e repentini le acque, come rondini sui campi prima del temporale. Ombre presenti, adombranti piú cupe ombre future.

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[56] In Bacigalupo's version here a footnote appears: 'Noto navigatore e commerciante, 1763-1823 (pron. /Dèlano/), combatté giovanissimo nella Guerra d'indipendenza e pubblicò *A Narrative of Voyages...* (cfr. fonti), opera già utilizzata da M. per la descrizione delle Galapagos in *The Encantadas (1854)*, schizzo 5. La fonte di Benito Cereno, segnalata e ristampata da Harold H. Scudder in "PMLA" 43 (1928), 502-32, è il cap. 18: *Particulars of the Capture of the Spanish Ship Tryal, at the Island of St. Maria; with the Documents Relating to That Affair* (pp. 317-52). L'episodio avvenne nel febbraio 1805, non nel 1799. Dalla lettera di M all'editore Dix and Edwards del 16 febbraio 1856 si desume ch'egli avesse scritto una nota, che poi preferí omettere, in cui indicava la fonte e forse ammetteva di averla alquanto modificata'.

[57] Here a second footnote appears: 'Nella realtà geografica l'isola di S. Maria si trova nei pressi di Concepciòn, non è cioè un luogo remoto come M. la fa apparire ai fini del racconto. "[M.] comincia fin dall'inizio a tessere un'atmosfera di suspense, presentimento, persino terrore, del tutto assente in Delano" (Oliver)'.

Mussapi (Feltrinelli, 1992)

Nell'anno 1799 il capitano Amasa Delano, di Duxbury, Massachusetts, comandante di un grande legno da foche e da carico, stipato di merci di valore, dovendo far provvista d'acqua gettò l'ancora nel porto di Santa Maria, un'isoletta desertica e disabitata verso l'estremità meridionale della lunga costa cilena.

Il giorno seguente, poco dopo l'alba, mentre se ne stava ancora in cuccetta, il suo secondo scese per informarlo che una vela sconosciuta stava entrando nella baia. A quell'epoca le navi non erano cosí frequenti come ora da quelle parti. Il capitano si alzò, si vestí e salí sul ponte.

Era un mattino tipico di quei luoghi, tutto era muto e calmo, tutto grigio. Il mare, pur ondulato in are di rigonfiamenti vasti e compatti, sembrava immobile e in superficie lustro come piombo ondulato dopo essersi indurito e raffreddato nello stampo del fonditore. Il cielo era simile a un manto grigio. Stormi di grigi volatili nervosi, affini e consustanziali agli stormi di grigi vapori nervosi in cui si confondevano, volavano basso radendo a scatti irregolari le acque, come rondini i prati prima della tempesta. Ombre presenti, che adombravano piú fonde ombre a venire.

Buzzi (Castoldi Dalai, 2005)

Era il 1799. Il capitano Amasa Delano, di Duxbury, nel Massachusetts, comandante di una grossa nave per la caccia alle foche e da carico, che trasportava merci di valore, si era ancorato nel porto di Santa Maria, un'isoletta deserta e disabitata, all'estremità meridionale della lunga costa del Cile, per fare rifornimento d'acqua.

L'indomani, poco dopo l'alba, mentre se ne stava ancora in cuccetta, il suo secondo scese a informarlo che una vela sconosciuta stava entrando nella baia. Allora le navi erano meno numerose di adesso in quelle acque. Il capitano si alzò, si vestí e salí sul ponte.

Era una delle mattinate tipiche di quella costa. Silenzio, calma e grigiore. Il mare, pure percorso da lunghi rigonfiamenti d'onde, sembrava immobile. In superficie era lucido come piombo ondulato quando raffreddatosi si deposita nello stampo. Il cielo sembrava un soprabito grigio, e grigi erano gli uccelli che irrequieti, a stormi, simili agli stormi di grigi vapori in cui erano immersi, volavano bassi, sfiorando a scatti le acque, come le rondini i prati prima del temporale. Ombre incombenti, anticipatorie di piú cupe ombre future.

We will start with a detailed commentary on Pavese's decisions at the start of the text:

Melville (p. 57, ll. 1-6): ***In the year (1) 1799, (2)*** *captain Amasa Delano, of Duxbury in Massachusetts, commanding* ***(3)*** *a large* ***sealer (4)*** *and general trader,* ***lay at anchor (7) with a valuable cargo (5) (6)****, in the harbour of St Maria –* ***(8)*** *a small* ***(9)****, desert, uninhabitated island* ***toward the (10)*** *southern extremity of the long coast of Chili.* ***There he had touched for water (11)****.*

Pavese (p. 2, ll. 1-6) ***Correva l'anno (1)*** *1799* ***e (2)*** *il capitano Amasa Delano, di Duxbury nel Massachusetts,* ***comandante (3)*** *di un grosso* ***legno da foche (4)*** *e da carico* ***che trasportava merci (6) di valore, gettó l'ancora (5) (7)*** *nel porto di Santa Maria –* ***che è (8)*** *un* ***isolotto (9)*** *deserto e disabitato* ***all' (10)*** *estremità meridionale della lunga costa del Cile.* ***Voleva rifornirsi d'acqua (11).***[58]

> **(1)** from the very beginning a certain freedom and non literality of translation can be noticed: the travel journal objective starting formula 'in the year' [nell'anno] is translated withe the more narrational 'correva l'anno' [The year was...].[59]
>
> **(2)** substitution of the comma with the paratactic conjunction 'and' and consequent lowering of objective informational tone of the ST. [60]

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[58] Before the analysis of the translation it must be observed that the analysis of Pavese's choices has sometimes presented considerable difficulties due to the impossibility of giving it an objective evaluation of the perception of Pavese's language, a factor – the perception of a language – subject to multiple variables. In some occasions has been difficult to establish whether a term or expression used by the writer which sounds antiquated to us sounded antiquated also at the time of Pavese's translation. The difficulty of evaluation has been compounded by the fact that in Pavese's style, as pointed out by Beccaria (see section on lexis), the use of dialect is never abrupt, but subtle, and sometimes his terms are half-way between spoken language and literary Italian. In this light, the reader of this study should keep in mind that some evaluations of Pavese's choices may be imprecise. However, in most cases the evaluation has not presented such difficulties, thus allowing us to reach a fairly objective final view of the text.

[59] Bianchi, Bacigalupo and Mussapi translate literally 'Nell'anno'. Buzzi freely translates 'Era l'anno' [it was the year] similar to Pavese's 'correva l'anno'.

[60] Bianchi and Bacigalupo faithfully reproduce the comma, Mussapi suppresses it and Buzzi substitutes it with a fullstop.

From **(1)** and **(2)** the resulting effect is that while the ST is and sounds as a travel journal, the TT sounds more like the narration of some story by an omniscient narrator. The reportorial narrative voice with its objective informational function in the TT almost coincides with the authorial voice. Melville's meticulous arrangement of the multiple narrative perspectives appears compromised from the beginning.

(3) translation of 'commanding' [al comando di] with 'comandante di' [commandant of] and consequent slight enlargement of the importance of Delano in the opening. [61]

(4) translation of 'sealer' with 'legno da foche'. From the very beginning Pavese's will to use a technical sea terminology, in this case 'legno' [wood] for 'ship', is evident. Pavese succeeds in reproducing what happens in the original where the reader is plunged immediately in a sea tale also at linguistic level, ('sealer', 'trader', 'lay at anchor', 'had touched for water'). 'legno' meaning 'ship' [nave] is a word that today sounds rather antiquated. [62]

(5) Pavese changes the order of the original 'lay at anchor with a valuable cargo' by placing 'valuable cargo' before 'lay at anchor', and by putting it directly after 'da carico' plus translating the compressed 'valuable cargo' with the explicative 'che trasportava merci di valore', rendered even more explicative by the fact that is directly behind 'da carico' as to explain straight away what the cargo is: the opening image is changed and its suspense considerably reduced.[63]

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[61] Interestingly, all translators, except Bianchi (who translates literally 'al comando di') follow Pavese in the translation.

[62] Bacigalupo and Buzzi translate sealer with 'grossa nave per la caccia alle foche', Bianchi with 'grosso bastimento di caccia alle foche' and Mussapi maintains Pavese's 'legno' translating with 'grande legno da foche'.

[63] Bianchi and Bacigalupo respect the original order and translate faithfully 'era all'ancora con un carico di valore'; Mussapi and Buzzi respect Pavese's arbitrary change of the original order. Also: Mussapi translates 'with a valuable cargo' with 'stipato di merci di valore'. Buzzi translates identically to Pavese 'che trasportava merci di valore'.

(6) The translation of 'cargo' with 'merci' [goods] also contributes to reduce the suspense. The term 'merci' is less obscure than 'cargo'. 'Merci' in Italian usually points to objects, goods, hence the reduced possibility for the reader to think of a human cargo. While the English reader is immediately intrigued by the 'cargo', it is not the same for the Italian one. Pavese's choice is dictated by the fact that he cannot use the word 'carico' as he has already used it.[64]

(7) free and wrong translation of 'lay at anchor' [era all'ancora; era ancorato] with 'gettò l'ancora' [dropped anchor/anchored] and consequent change of the original picture: where the ST reader pictures in his mind an image of stillness and consequent quietness, the Italian one hears the 'splash' of an anchor being dropped and sees the consequent movement of the waves. The motionless sea, the 'intensa atmosfera di bonaccia che non è pace ma presentimento dell'abisso'[65] pervading every layer of Melville's story and introduced in such masterly fashion at the beginning, is compromised in the TT.[66]

(8) Arbitrary addition of the explicative 'che è' and consequent flattening of the reportorial narrative voice (which, again, almost collides with the authorial voice) and lowering of the general tone (more spoken, less literary).[67]

(9) Translation of 'small island' with the more familiar 'isolotto' and consequent lowering of the register and reduction of the officiality of the reportorial narrative voice.

(10) Translation of 'toward the' with 'all'' [at the] and consequent change of the original picture. The ST is less definite and precise. 'toward the' in the ST gives the reader a perspective, a distance. The ST opening image is a large painting with some depth: a large gray sea and in the distance toward the coast

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[64] Bianchi and Bacigalupo translate 'cargo' with the more suitable 'carico'; Mussapi and Buzzi are forced, like Pavese, to use another word, 'merci', as they too have already used 'carico'. Some important elements of the ST are lost.

[65] Cesare Pavese, *Benito Cereno*, cit., p. 127 ['an intense atmosphere of dead calm, representing not peace but a presentiment of the abyss'].

[66] Bianchi and Bacigalupo translate correctly 'era all'ancora'; Mussapi follows Pavese also in this error and translates identically 'gettò l'ancora'; Buzzi translates 'si era ancorato'.

[67] Interestingly, nobody follows Pavese in a quite visible stylistic translational choice.

a ship lying at anchor. In the TT the depth is reduced and with it its indefiniteness, its *non-lieu* dimension and universality hence its symbolical capacity. The original place could be anywhere, the TT is more a place with exact geographical coordinates.[68]

(11) translation of 'there he had touched for water' with 'voleva rifornirsi d'acqua'. The original expression and the use of the verb 'to touch' reinforces the mystery and suspense of the opening and detaches the scene from any reality and makes it more universally symbolical, making what will follow all the more uncanny. The TT, on the other hand, is more geographically descriptive, less 'visionary'. [69]

Melville (p. 57, ll. 7-10): ***On the second day (1), not long after dawn (2), (3) while lying in his berth (4), his mate came below (5),*** *informing him that a strange sail was coming into the bay.* ***(6)*** *Ships were then not so plenty in those waters as now.* ***He (7) rose (8),*** *dressed, and went on deck.*

Pavese (p.3, ll. 7-11): ***Il giorno dopo (1), l'alba era sorta da poco (2) e (3) lui ancora disteso in cuccetta (4), scese il secondo (5)*** *a informarlo che una vela sconosciuta entrava nella baia.* ***Erano tempi che (6)*** *le navi non abbondavano in quelle acque come ora.* ***Il capitano (7)*** *si* ***levò (8),*** *si vestí, e salí sul ponte.*

(1) Free translation of 'On the second day' [il secondo giorno] with 'Il giorno dopo' [the day after] resulting in the flattening of the informational function of the reportorial voice and consequent reduction of suspense (in the TT the narrative voice is the omniscient one of the author). Pavese is forced not to

[68] Bianchi, Bacigalupo and Mussapi translate faithfully 'verso l'estremità'; Buzzi translates like Pavese 'all''.

[69] Bianchi tries to render the ST with 'aveva toccato lí per fare l'acquata' succeeding in maintaining the implications of the ST expression. Bacigalupo translates 'Qui aveva fatto tappa per rifornirsi d'acqua' partly succeeding in conveying the sense of chance by using the expression 'fare tappa' [to stop off] like in the ST. Mussapi changes the ST independent clause into a causal subordinate coming after 'merci di valore'. Buzzi translates with a subordinate 'per far rifornimento d'acqua'.

translate 'second' with 'second' because he decided to use 'secondo' for 'mate'. He seems to sacrifice faithfulness to the ST to his lexical choice (and not viceversa as sometimes happens in literal translations).[70]

(2) Pavese reformulates 'not long after dawn' [non molto dopo l'alba] with 'l'alba era sorta da poco' [dawn had not long risen] modifying the original image: the ST's expression 'not long after dawn' does not illuminate the opening picture as does the use of the verb 'to rise' in the TT, immediately triggering in the reader's mind the association with 'sun' so partially reducing the greyness of Melville's opening.[71]

(3) Arbitrary deletion of a comma substituted by the paratactic conjunction 'e' [and] and consequent change of the narrative voice's tone.[72]

(4) Translation of 'while lying in his berth' with 'lui ancora disteso in cuccetta' [him still lying in his berth]. Arbitrary addition of the pronoun 'lui' and of the adverb 'ancora' [still] which changes the original meaning: the TT reader might think that captain Delano has overslept. In the expression 'e lui ancora disteso in cuccetta' there is an ellipsis in the verb/verbal predicate ('era disteso') more proper of spoken language than written. The manipulation of the original lexis and syntax reduces the neutrality and nonevaluative character of the reportorial narrative voice whose marked distinction from the authorial voice fades in Pavese's version.[73]

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[70] Bianchi and Bacigalupo literally translate 'Il secondo giorno' and use another word for 'mate'; Mussapi and Bacigalupo seem to translate with two different versions of Pavese, respectively, 'Il giorno seguente' and 'L'indomani'. They are forced to find an expression different from 'secondo' because they have decided to translate 'mate' with Pavese's 'secondo'.

[71] All translate 'poco dopo l'alba'. Interestingly, in this very visible deviation from the ST, deviation but not mistake (more correct than other previous arbitrary changes to the ST followed by some of the translators), nobody follows the writer.

[72] Nobody follows Pavese in this very personal and visible change.

[73] Bianchi and Bacigalupo translate faithfully, respectively, 'mentre era in cuccetta' and 'mentre stava disteso in cuccetta'. Mussapi and Buzzi follow Pavese in the arbitrary and compromising addition of 'ancora'.

(5) Arbitrary inversion subject-predicate in translating 'his mate came below' with 'scese il secondo' [below came his mate].[74]

(6) Translation of the adverb 'then' with one of Pavese's generic condensed formulae for launching a new topic (as seen in section 3. 2.2).[75]

(7) Arbitrary translation of 'he' with 'the captain'. Melville leaves the pronoun to 'float' without a secure referent.[76]

(8) Translation of the verb 'to rise' with the Italian reflexive 'levarsi', a verb slightly more colloquial, less standard than 'alzarsi' and consequent slight lowering of register.[77]

Melville (p. 57, ll. 11-19): ***The morning was one (1)*** *peculiar to that coast.* ***Everything (2)*** *was* ***mute and calm (3)****; everything* ***gray****. The sea, though* ***undulated (4)*** *into long roods of swells, seemed fixed, and was sleeked at the surface like waved lead that has cooled and set in the smelter's mold. The sky seemed a* ***gray (5) surtout (6)****. Flights of troubled* ***gray*** *fowl, kith and kin with flights of troubled* ***gray*** *vapors among which they were mixed, skimmed low and fitfully over the waters, as swallows over meadows. Shadows present, foreshadowing deeper shadows to come.*

Pavese (p.3, ll. 12-22): ***Faceva una delle mattinate (1)*** *caratteristiche di quella costa.* ***Tutto intorno (2)*** *era* ***calmo e silenzioso (3)****; tutto era* ***grigio****. Il mare, per quanto* ***scorresse (4)*** *in lunghe ondate rigonfie, sembrava immobile, e alla superficie era lucido come piombo ondulato quando si raffredda e deposita nello stampo di fusione. Il cielo pareva uno* ***scuro (5) pastrano (6)****. Stormi di uccelli* ***grigi*** *inquieti, in tutto simili agli inquieti stormi* ***grigi*** *di vapori cui erano mischiati, sfiravano bassi e a scatti*

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[74] Interestingly nobody follows him in this very 'pavesian' arbitrary inversion of subject and predicate.

[75] Nobody follows Pavese in the very personal and visible choice. Bianchi, Bacigalupo and Buzzi translate 'then' with 'allora'; Mussapi with 'a quell'epoca'.

[76] Bianchi, correctly, does not translate the English pronoun; Bacigalupo translates it with 'egli'; Mussapi and Buzzi translate 'Il capitano' (again, following Pavese in an arbitrary choice which does not appear too personal).

[77] All translators translate with the verb 'alzarsi'. Interestingly nobody follows Pavese in this personal yet correct choice.

le acque, rondini il prato prima del temporale. Ombre presenti, che adombravano piú cupe ombre future.

(1) Translation of 'the morning was one' with 'faceva una delle mattinate' [the coast was having one of its typical mornings]. The more colloquial expression lowers the register ST and tones down the reportorial narrative voice.[78]

(2) Arbitrary addition of 'intorno' [around] compromising the ST rhythm of the repetition. Reduction of objectivity of reportorial narrative voice by introducing an implied impression on a subjective viewer.[79]

(3) Arbitrary inversion of 'mute' and 'calm' (probably a matter of rhythm – in Italian it sounds better to put the longest word last -) and free translation of 'mute' [muto] with 'silenzioso' [silent] and slight change of original picture: mute is a strongest term to indicate absence of sound; while in 'silence' there can still be some sound, muteness is the complete absence of all sound.[80]

(4) Addition of the verb 'scorresse' [flow] and consequent slight increase of movement. In the TT the picture struggles to remain mute and still. [81]

(5) Pavese fails to reproduce the second of four repetitions of the word 'gray' so compromising the original content and rhythm of the opening passage. In the ST everything [ogni cosa] is the same colour, gray, a highly symbolic colour in the story.[82]

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[78] Nobody follows Pavese in a very stylistically personal choice. Buzzi keeps the more colloquial term 'mattinate' in 'Era una delle mattinate tipiche di quella costa'.

[79] All translate 'tutto'.

[80] Bianchi also inverts the two terms because translating with 'silenzioso'. Bacigalupo and Mussapi, even if the latter substitutes a fullstop with a comma, translate literally 'muto e calmo'. Buzzi translates very creatively with 'Silenzio, calma e grigiore' failing to maintain 'mute'.

[81] Bacigalupo and Buzzi also add movement to the picture, even if less than Pavese, by translating with the verb 'percorrere', respectively 'Il mare, percorso dai lunghi rigonfiamenti...' and 'Il mare, pure percorso da lunghi rigonfiamenti...'. Bianchi and Mussapi respect more the absence of movement of the ST translating the passage respectively with 'Il mare, pur scanalato dalle onde lunghe...' and 'Il mare, pure ondulato in are di rigonfiamenti...'.

[82] All other translators reproduce the repetition of the colour 'gray'.

(6) Translation of surtout with 'pastrano': a term meaning 'heavy coat', but not very common, especially outside Tuscany.[83] The Tuscan aura of the term makes it regional in register compared to the ST 'surtout'.

The analysis of the opening of Pavese's translation highlights a certain freedom claimed by the writer-translator to change the ST, at times compromising Melville's original intention. More pertinently to the aim of the present study, it has been observed how some of the lexical and syntactical manipulations of the ST, when a literal transposition would have been easily possible, are in accordance with aspects of Pavese's original poetics which were noted earlier. For instance, the double use of the paratactic conjunction 'e', the double use of the generic conjuction 'che', an inversion of subject and predicate, a short condensed formula used in the writer's original writing for launching a new topic ('Erano tempi che'). Pavese translates some English words and expressions with more colloquial or familiar Italian equivalents (eg. 'levarsi', 'faceva una delle mattinate'). Pavese's changes to the ST tend to lower the general tone of the ST and to simplify the complex narrative system meticulously arranged by Melville by failing to reproduce the original marked distinction between the reportorial narrative voice (the travel journal) and the authorial narrative voice which in the Italian version almost coincide. The original effect of ambiguity, mistery, suspense, allegorical universality, etc. of the opening of such a highly symbolical text produced by Melville's careful arrangement of each textual element appears weakened by Pavese's changes.

Finally, the comparative analysis of the four translations has unveiled two interesting facts: firstly, it has confirmed what was already found in chapter two, that less famous writers may display a higher level of faithfulness and literality in translating the ST compared to more famous writers and, secondly, that those

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[83] In Treccani vocabulary: 's.m. (ant. **pastrana** f.) [prob. dal nome di un duca di Pastrana (città della prov. spagn. di Guadalajara)]. – Pesante soprabito invernale per uomo; sinonimo quindi di *cappotto* o *paltò*, di cui è assai meno com. (spec. fuori Toscana), ma abbastanza diffuso per indicare il cappotto portato da ufficiali e truppa dell'esercito." In< http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/pastrano/> [accessed March 2013]

translators who, at times, follow Pavese's choices, seem inclined to do so predominantly when the translation does not reveal the writer's hand too visibly.

5.2 Relevant examples from the whole text

The aim of this second part of the analysis is to investigate further what was found in the previous section. For reasons of space, I will highlight only a few examples, out of many, from my paradigmatic analysis of the first twenty pages. The frequency and regularity with which certain changes recur within the text should give the reader a good idea of what happens within the whole translation.

• At a syntactical level the analysis of the first twenty pages of the TT has established that:

- Pavese frequently introduces paratactic constructions, notably with the conjunction 'e':

Melville (p. 58, ll. 10-13): *This seemed to prove her a stranger, indeed, not only to the sealer, but the island; consequently, she could be...*

Pavese (p. 4, ll. 20-22): *Di qui pareva chiaro che l'isola le fosse sconosciuta, come lei all'altra nave;* ***e*** *quindi da escludersi che fosse...;*

Melville (p. 59, ll. 1-3): *But, some time ere the boat came up, the wind, light though it was, having shifted, had headed the vessel off...*

Pavese (p. 5, ll. 23-25): *Ma un poco prima che la lancia accostasse, la brezza, per quanto leggera, mutò direzione* ***e*** *la nave si allontanò;*

Melville (p. 59, ll. 38-39): *These tops hung overhead like three ruinous aviaries, in one of which was seen perched, on a rattlin...*

Pavese (p. 7, ll. 2-3): *Queste coffe pendevano in alto come tre uccelliere cadenti,* ***e*** *in una di esse si vedeva appollaiata su una grisella...;*

Melville (p. 60, ll. 36-38): *Climbing the side, the visitor was at once surrounded by a clamorous throng of whites and blacks, but the latter outnumbering the former*

Pavese (p. 8, ll. 13-15): *Issatosi in coperta, il visitatore venne immediatamente circondato da una calca clamorosa di bianchi e di neri;* ***e*** *i secondi erano piú numerosi che non ci si sarebbe aspettato;*[84]

- Pavese often introduces generic turns of phrase to launch a sentence. A few examples:

Melville (p. 58, l. 9): ***This seemed to prove*** *her a stranger, indeed, not only to the sealer, but the island;*

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[84] This is, in any case, a definite mistranslation. More examples of the conjunction 'e' from the first twenty pages: Melville (p. 60, ll. 4-5): *the scurvy, together with the fever, had swept off a great part of their number, more especially the Spaniards.*/Pavese (p. 8, ll. 20-22): *Lo scorbuto,* ***e*** *insieme la febbre, avevano fatto grandi vuoti tra loro,* ***e*** *specialmente fra gli spagnoli*; Melville (p. 62, ll. 5-7): *... sat along in a row, separated by regular spaces, the cross-legged figures of six other blacks; each with a rusty hatchet in his hand*/Pavese (p. 9, l. 31; p. 10, ll. 1-2): *sedevano (...) in una sola fila,* ***e*** *separate da intervalli regolari, le figure accoccolate di altri sei negri;* ***e*** *ciascuno aveva in mano un'accetta rugginosa*; Melville (p. 62, ll. 18-19): *All six, unlike the generality, had the raw aspect.../*Pavese (p. 10, ll. 13-15): ***E*** *tutti e sei, diversamente dalla massa, avevano la schietta figura...*; Melville (p. 63, ll. 16-18): *... Captain Delano sought, with good hopes, to cheer up the strangers, feeling no small satisfaction that*/Pavese (p. 11, ll. 24-25): *...Capitan Delano cercò con ogni speranza di far coraggio agli stranieri,* ***e*** *non era poca la sua soddisfazione di...*; Melville (p. 66, ll. 13-15): *this appearance (...) might have been but an attempted disguise to conscious imbecility – not deep policy, but shallow device.*/Pavese (p. 15, ll. 30-31; p. 16, ll. 1-2): *quella parvenza (...) non era altro che il voluto travestimento di una consapevole inettitudine – volgare stratagemma* ***e*** *non politica sapiente*; Melville (p. 66, l. 26): *These Captain Delano could not but ascribe.../*Pavese (p. 16, ll. 12-13): ***E*** *queste Capitan Delano poteva soltanto ascriverle...*; Melville (p. 71, l. 3): *Still, relatively to the pale history of the voyage.../*Pavese (p. 22, ll. 20-21): ***E*** *tuttavia, rispetto allo smorto racconto del viaggio*; Melville (p. 71, ll. 26-28): *so that without delay the ship might proceed to Conception, there fully to refit for Lima, her destined port.*/Pavese (p. 23, ll. 16-18): *onde la nave senza indugio potesse far rotta su Conceptión,* ***e*** *qui riallestirsi a tutto punto per Lima, sua destinazione.* Bianchi, Bacigalupo, Mussapi and Buzzi generally do not follow Pavese's addition/introduction of 'e'.

Pavese (p. 4, l. 20): ***Di qui pareva chiaro che*** *l'isola le fosse sconosciuta, come lei all'altra nave;*

Melville (p. 58, l. 23): ***Ere long*** *it seemed hard to decide...*

Pavese (p. 5, l. 5): ***Non andò molto che*** *riuscí difficile decidere*

Melville (p. 59, l. 27): ***As*** *the whale-boat drew more and more nigh*

Pavese (p. 6, l. 19): ***Via via che*** *la lancia accostava*[85]

- On numerous occasions Pavese tends towards the expressive distortion of the usual order of phrases. This 'awkwardness' and singularity of style, often bordering on the ungrammatical, is part of his own writing, and he seems to use this approach in his translation. A few examples:

Melville (p. 58, ll. 33-34): *an hour or two* ***before daybreak***

Pavese (p. 5, l. 16): *un'ora o due* ***avanti l'alba***[86]

Melville (p. 59, l. 16): *Upon a still nigher approach,* ***this appearance was modified***

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[85] More examples from the first twenty pages: Melville (p. 59, ll. 30-31): *Her keel seemed laid, her ribs put together*/Pavese (p. 6, ll. 23-24): ***Si sarebbe detto che*** *la chiglia era stata gettata e le coste intravate;* Melville (p. 63, l. 21): *While left alone with them*/Pavese (p. 11, l. 29): ***Una volta che*** fu solo con loro; Melville (p. 65, l. 9): ***But ere long*** *Captain Delano*/Pavese (p. 14, l. 12): ***Ma non andó molto che*** *Capitan Delano;* Melville (p. 65, ll. 24-25): *Whatever special orders were necessary*/Pavese (p. 14, l. 30): ***Ogni volta ch****'erano necessary degli ordini speciali*; Melville (p. 66, ll. 28-29): *True, the old oakum-pickers appeared at times to act*/Pavese (p. 16, l. 17): ***È vero che*** *i vecchi stoppai parevano a volte fare.* Bianchi and Bacigalupo tend to be more literal than Mussapi and Buzzi who at times follow, even if not always literally, Pavese's version.

[86]The canonical Italian expression translating 'before daybreak' would have been 'prima dell'alba'. None of the other translators follow Pavese, but translate more canonically with 'prima dell'alba'.

Pavese (p. 6, l. 8): *Accostandosi dell'altro,* ***questa parvenza dileguò***[87]

Melville (p. 62, ll. 9-10): *a small stack of hatchets,* ***their rusted edges turned forward***

Pavese (p. 10, l. 5): *una piccola catasta di accette,* ***rivolte i tagli rugginosi innanzi***[88]

Melville (p. 59, ll. 17-18): *a Spanish merchantman of the first class,* ***carrying*** *negro slaves,*

Pavese (p. 6, ll. 9-10): *una mercantile spagnola di prima classe* ***in trasporto di*** *schiavi neri*[89]

> The canonical expression would be 'che trasportava'; 'in trasporto di' is very unusual and may even seem incorrect to the average Italian reader, although the sense is clear. Some phrases bordering on the incorrect include: 'come antiquati palazzi italiani, conservavano tuttora, **scadute di padrone**, tracce della passata grandezza';[90] '**chiunque si fosse**';[91] '**diede di piglio a un coltello**';[92]

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[87] Unusual use of the verb 'dileguare' [dissipate, vanish, disappear] that is usually used in Italian as as an intransitive reflexive verb [dileguarsi], as should have been the case here, (ex: la nebbia si dileguò [the fog vanished]). Bacigalupo (p. 7, l. 35): *Da piú vicino ancora* ***tale aspetto mutò,*** Mussapi (p. 23, l. 36): *Avvicinandosi ulteriormente* ***quest'apparenza mutò***. An analogous use of the verb 'dileguare' can be found few times throughout the translation as in the following eg: Melville (p. 63, ll. 22-23): *but surprise* ***was lost*** *in pity*/Pavese (p. 11, l. 31): *ma la sua sorpresa* ***dileguò*** *in compassione.*

[88] None of the fellow-translators follow Pavese in his atypical arbitrary inversion subject-verb and with the arbitrary concordance of the predicate 'rivolte' with 'accette' instead of with 'tagli' (the canonical phrase would be 'i tagli rugginosi rivolti innanzi').

[89] All translate with the standard expression 'che trasportava'.

[90] Pavese (p. 6, ll. 16-18): cf. Melville (p. 59, ll. 23-25): *like superannuated Italian palaces, still,* ***under a decline of masters****, preserved signs of former state.* None of the fellow-translators follow Pavese in this stylistically personal choice.

[91] Pavese (p. 10, l. 20): cf. Melville (p. 62, l. 23): ***whomsoever it might be.*** None of the translators follows Pavese in the personal expression.

[92] Pavese (p. 25, ll. 5-6): cf. Melville (p. 72, ll. 29-32): ***seized the knife.*** Pavese's expression would correspond more to "caught hold of the knife". None of the fellow translators reproduce the awkward expression.

• At a lexical level, the analysis highlights how Pavese's choice of words tends towards a lower register and more colloquial tone than the original. Some examples from the first twenty pages:

Melville (p. 60, l. 21): ***Rudely*** *painted or chalked as in a sailor freak*

Pavese (p. 7, l. 26): *Dipinta o biaccata* ***alla meglio*** *come per ghiribizzo d'un marinaio*[93]

Melville (p. 61, l. 33): ***sphynx-like***

Pavese (p. 9, ll. 18-19): ***a mo' di sfingi*** [94]

Melville (p. 62, l. 8): ***a rag***

Pavese (p. 10, l. 4): ***un cencio*** [95]

Melville (p. 62, ll. 33-34): *a black* ***of small stature***

Pavese (p. 10, l. 30): *un negro* ***piccolotto***

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[93] Bianchi, Bacigalupo and Mussapi translate more literally. Buzzi follows Pavese in translating 'rudely' with the colloquial expression 'alla bell'e meglio' (p. 43, l. 20).

[94] Bianchi, Bacigalupo and Mussapi translate 'come sfingi'. Buzzi translates with 'in guisa di sfingi' (p. 45, l. 8), a less colloquial version of Pavese's 'a mo' di sfingi'.

[95] 'Cencio' is 'rag' in regional dialect (Tuscan, but also widely used elsewhere). All translate with the standard 'straccio'. In Treccani: céncio s. m. [forse affine al lat. cento -onis 'centone, insieme di pezzi disparati']. – 1. Sinon. di straccio in quasi tutti i suoi sign., di uso soprattutto tosc. ma largamente noto anche altrove. In partic.: a. Pezzo di panno o d'altro tessuto, vecchio e logoro. b. Pezzo di panno che s'adopera per spolverare i mobili (passare il c.), per pulire i pavimenti (dare il c. in terra), o quello di canapa, lino o tela con cui s'asciugano le stoviglie. c. Al plur., brandelli d'abiti usati e ritagli di sartoria che hanno varie utilizzazioni nell'industria, spec. tessile e della carta, e che pertanto sono oggetto di raccolta e di commercio. **2.** È largamente usato in molte locuzioni fig. e più o meno spreg. (nelle quali si alterna spesso con *straccio*), per indicare abiti miseri o logori, roba di scarso valore, o anche persone mal ridotte di salute o di spirito. <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/cencio/> [accessed March 2013]

The diminutive 'piccolotto' is more familiar and patronizing than the ST expression [lit. 'di piccola statura'].[96]

Melville (p. 64, ll. 2-3): *His* ***mind*** *appeared unstrung, if not* ***more seriously affected***

Pavese (p. 12, ll. 23-24): *Il suo* ***cervello*** *pareva sfasato, se non* ***tocco*** *in modo anche piú grave*[97]

Melville (p. 64, ll. 17-18): *or* ***took his handkerchief out of his pocket for him***

Pavese (p. 13, ll. 11-12): *o* ***gli cavava per lui il fazzoletto di tasca***[98]

Melville (p. 65, l. 5): *as if forced to* ***black bread*** *themeselves*

Pavese (p. 14, ll. 8-9): *come se, costretti a* ***pan bigio***[99]

Melville (p. 65, l. 30): *invalid* ***gliding about***

Pavese (p. 15, ll. 5-6): *invalido* ***che andava a zonzo***[100]

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[96] All translate more literally [Bianchi (p. 9, ll. 23-24): *un nero* ***di piccola*** statura; Bacigalupo (p. 11, l. 34): *un nero* ***di piccola statura;*** Mussapi (p. 28, ll. 4-5): *un negro* ***di bassa statura***; Buzzi (p. 46, ll. 14-15): *un negro* ***di bassa statura***].

[97] Bianchi, Bacigalupo and Mussapi translate more literally and less colloquially [Bianchi (p. 11, ll. 1-2): *La sua mente sembrava svagata, se non colpita in maniera piú seria;* Bacigalupo (p. 13, l. 15-16): *La sua mente appariva smarrita, se non compromessa ancor piú seriamente*; Mussapi (p. 29, ll. 20-21): *La sua mente appariva snervata, se non anche piú gravemente malata*]; Buzzi follows Pavese in translating 'affected' with the colloquial 'tocca': *La sua mente sembrava in preda al nervosismo, se non* ***tocca*** *in modo ancor piú grave* (p. 47, ll. 30-33).

[98] Bianchi, Bacigalupo and Mussapi translate more literally [Bianchi (p. 11, ll. 19-20): ***o gli tirava fuori di tasca il fazzoletto***; Bacigalupo (p. 13, ll. 35-36): ***o gli toglieva di tasca il fazzoletto;*** Mussapi (p. 30, l. 2): ***o gli prendeva di tasca il fazzoletto***]; Buzzi follows Pavese in translating the colloquial term 'cavare': ***gli cavava di tasca e*** *gli porgeva il fazzoletto* (p. 48, ll. 15-16).

[99] All translate with 'pane nero' except Mussapi who translates with 'pane e acqua'.

Melville (p. 67, l. 20): *turned **suddenly** from him*

Pavese (p. 17, l. 21): *gli volse **di botto** le spalle*[101]

Melville (p. 70, ll. 26-28): *The servant wore nothing but **wide trousers (1)**, apparently,from their coarseness and patches, made out of some old top sails; they were clean, and confined **at the waist (2)***

Pavese (p. 22, ll. 3-6): *Il servitore non aveva indosso che un **gran paio di brache (1)**, cosí grossolane e rappezzate che parevano fatte di vecchio telo di gabbia; ma erano pulite e strette **alla cintola (2)***[102]

Melville (p. 71, l. 25): *he **would spare** three of his best seamen*

Pavese (p. 23, l. 15): ***d'imprestargli** tre dei suoi uomini migliori*[103]

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[100] 'andare a zonzo' is a familiar and colloquial term. [Bianchi (p. 12, l. 37; p. 13, l. 1): *quell'invalido poco espansivo **che si trascinava in giro** apatico e silenzioso*; Bacigalupo (p. 15, ll. 15-16): *questo invalido taciturno **ciondolare** apatico e muto*; Mussapi (p. 31, ll. 21-22): *questo inespressivo invalid **muoversi oscillando**, apatico e muto*; Buzzi (p. 50, ll. 3-4): *poco appariscente invalido **che si trascinava** apatico e muto*].

[101] Nobody follows Pavese and all translate with a more standard expression (Bianchi with 'di colpo'; Bacigalupo and Buzzi with 'bruscamente'; Mussapi with 'di scatto').

[102] in Treccani dictionary: braca (ant. e sett. braga) s. f. [lat. braca, di origine gallica; per lo piú al plur., bracae-arum]. – 1. Nome con cui si indicò in origine (comunem. al plur., *brache*) un indumento maschile simile ai calzoni, ma piú corto e meno ampio, già in uso presso i popoli antichi, e poi nel medioevo, e da cui, nel sec. 16, ebbero origine le mutande. Oggi la parola sopravvive nell'uso region. o scherz. come sinon. di *pantaloni*, o, meno spesso, di *mutande*. <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/braca/> [accessed march 2013] All translate 'brache' for 'trousers', nobody uses 'cintola' for 'cintura'.

[103] Nobody follows Pavese, but all translate with more standard Italian expressions.

• *The translation of colours and the weakening of original symbolism*

As has already been observed in the analysis of Pavese's translation of the opening of *Benito Cereno,* in the Italian writer's version can be identified a certain lack of precision when translating ST elements quite relevant at a symbolical level. A very good example is the way in which Pavese translates colours (as observed from the very start when the writer fails to translate the second of four repetitions of 'gray'):

Melville (p. 72, ll. 29-32): *Suddenly, one of the* ***black boys****, enraged at a word dropped by one his* ***white*** *companions, seized the knife*

Pavese (p. 25, l. 4): *A un tratto uno dei* ***moretti*** *[little dark men], incollerito da qualche parola sfuggita a qualcuno dei compagni* ***bianchi****, diede di piglio a un coltello*

The above is one example, out of the many within the text, of failure in reproducing the lexical opposition white-black when blacks or whites are mentioned. Pavese often does not reproduce literally the ST word and translates 'black' with 'negro' instead of 'nero'.[104] A representative example is the one from the passage where the king of the blacks, head of the mutiny together with Babo, is introduced to the reader:

Melville (p. 75, ll. 16-18): *when Captain Delano's attention was caught by the moving figure of a* ***gigantic black****, emerging from the general crowd below...*

Pavese (p. 29, ll. 26-2): *e l'attenzione del Capitano cadde sulla mobile figura di un* ***negro gigantesco*** *che emergeva dalla comune folla sottostante...*

The Italian reader's imagination goes suddenly to the 'negro', the individual, with its social connotations, and not to the blot of black colour and its visually

[104] In Italian in order to refer to an individual with black skin one can use: 1) 'nero', the most frequently used term with no racial discrimination (in http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/nero2/, no. 4); 2) 'negro', a term referring to the African individual with black skin, but also is an antiquated form for the colour black. Today the word 'negro' has a denigratory connotation and is the equivalent of the Anglo-American 'nigger' (in http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/negro/. no. 2 and no. 1).

symbolical effect.[105] The distinction made by Melville, he calls the black 'black' or 'negro', is not casual but carefully arranged in order to produce an effect on the reader, and should be reproduced in the translation as happens in the translations by Bianchi, Bacigalupo, Mussapi and Buzzi.

In many occasions Melville defines Cereno as 'dark' with the meaning 'cupo/tenebroso'. At a symbolical level is another mix of black and white, as he is supposed to be white, but yet he is said to be dark. Sometimes Pavese fails to reproduce the opposition when translating 'dark' with 'tenebroso' as he feels free to go beyond the literal level and use a word with moral nuance.[106] It is important to reproduce the dichotomy in some way.

Finally, I will just offer a few examples, to show how at times we can also find in the Italian translation terms that sound more literary and refined than Melville's original as Maria Stella points out in her review of Pavese's translation of *Benito Cereno*.[107]

Stella examines passages in which Delano, aboard Cereno's ship, is trying to chase away the thoughts of death that have been prompted by the situation:

Melville (p. 116, ll. 35-37): *...and more than all, as he saw the benign aspect of nature taking her innocent repose in the* ***evening,*** *the screened sun in the quiet* ***camp*** *of the West...*

[105] The symbolical relevance of this passage is frequently stressed by the criticism on *Benito Cereno* also in relation to *Moby Dick:* the gigantic mass of black might remind Melville's reader of the gigantic mass of white of Moby Dick and highlights the indistinction between black and white.

[106] Melville (p. 84, l. 30) **dark** Spaniard/ Pavese (p. 41, l. 24) **tenebroso** spagnolo.

[107] Maria Stella, 'Dai contemporanei ai classici: ritorno a Melville' in *Cesare Pavese traduttore* (Roma: Bulzoni, 1977), pp. 193-210. Stella's analysis of Pavese's *Benito Cereno* seems conducted only on the basis of few isolated passages and does not consider any other Italian version.

Pavese (p. 86, ll. 8-10): *...e soprattutto si incontrava il viso benevolo della natura, abbandonata nel suo innocente riposo* ***serotino****: il sole che nella tranquilla* ***plaga*** *di occidente...*

As Stella points out 'serotino' and 'plaga' are terms more literary and refined (not used in standard Italian) than the corresponding 'evening' and 'camp'. The effect produced is the one of weighing down the original, compromising its sobriety and the simplicity which in the original mirrors the processes of Delano's mind. This attitude of the translator, even if it is not as frequent as the introduction in the TT of terms and constructions echoing spoken language, produces the effect of encumbering the ST and compromising its original style. A couple of more examples from the whole text:

Melville (p. 61, l. 31): their heads like black, **doddered willow tops**

Pavese (p. 9, ll. 17-18): dalle teste che sembravano **neri capitozzi barbati di salici**

Melville (p. 68, l. 7): Here there was a **sudden fainting attack**

Pavese (p. 18, l. 17): Qui lo prese un **repentino deliquio**

5.3 The 'Pavesization' of Benito Cereno

The foregoing analysis of Pavese's translation has revealed numerous significant instances where the writer does not respect the internal coherence of the original text, at times introducing in the Italian text his own lexis and syntactical constructions which are not always in tune with Melville's original intentions. Pavese's re-creation of the ST often results in changing the original tone of the story. Taken together, the use of a lexis belonging to the sphere of spoken language,[108] and syntactical constructions and expressions moulded on the modalities of spoken language, tend to

[108] Examples from the whole text include terms as 'avvezzo', 'ci tocca', 'la cintola', 'passar per le verghe', 'blusa inzaccherata', 'dar le traveggole', 'vecchio zuccone', 'vecchio Baciccia', 'stare accosto', the verb 'ficcare' used frequently, 'aria pecoreccia', 'vizzo', 'rintontito', 'uomo molliccio', etc..

reduce and flatten the original effects intended by Melville, lowering the general tone and making it more colloquial. The solemnity and allegorical character of the ST language are transposed into a more familiar tone. The lightness and inconsistency of the dream-like atmosphere pervading the whole picture is at times drastically compromised. The ST reader feels as if confronted by an hallucination, now black, now white, now black and white. The ST reader struggles with Delano to unveil the truth. He is put on the wrong track by the many perspectives and voices that overlap throughout the tale. The Italian reader is faced with a different picture. Some of Pavese's linguistic choices give the prose sharper and clearer contours, partly reducing the original ambiguity.

Why does Pavese rewrite *Benito Cereno* in his own manner? Is Pavese unable to escape from his original literary ego? Is he asserting his independence? Is he asserting creativity in translation?

5.3.1 Translation as re-creation

Pavese's idea of translation emerges from a letter he wrote to the editor Enrico Bemporad, who, commenting on the writer's translation of *Our Mr. Wrenn* by Sinclair Lewis (Bemporad, 1930), had accused him of presenting to Italian readers a work containing incomprehensible pages.[109] Here Pavese defends the colloquial tone of his translation (his first one) and explains the necessity of using 'solecisms' and 'Italian dialectal expressions':

> Mi preme farle osservare che il mio sforzo è stato appunto di far sí che 'i lettori capissero i pensieri e gli atteggiamenti dei personaggi del romanzo'. E ad ottenere questo non c'era che un mezzo: intendere il piú fedelmente possible il testo e rendere quel che s'era inteso, non colla letterale equivalenza linguistica, ma col piú italiano, col piú *nostro* sforzo di ri-creazione possibile [...] Poiché, ci sono due generi di traduzione. L'uno, quello da me scelto; l'altro il metodo *scientifico*, ed allora l'ideale è, senza mezzi termini, la versione interlineare che serve agli studentini. O la traduzione precisa, fredda, impersonale, ed allora, se pure è impossibile ottenerla, il pubblico ci capirebbe poco

[109] In Luisa Mangoni, *Pensare i libri* (Torino: Bollati-Boringhieri, 1999), pp. 32-33.

> davvero, o una traduzione che sia una seconda creazione, esposta ai pericoli di ogni creazione e soprattutto conscia del pubblico a cui parla.[110]

Translation, according to Pavese, is an act of re-creation in this case necessary to engraft a different culture onto the Italian one. In another letter, which Pavese wrote to the publisher Bompiani to justify his refusal to translate *In dubious battle* by Steinbeck, he writes:

> Non dubito che una volta tradotto esso potrà avere un grande successo (...), ma si tratta di quel tipo di libri senza stile, che io detesto. Per tradurre bene bisogna innamorarsi della materia verbale di un'opera, e sentirla rinascere nella propria lingua con l'urgenza di una seconda creazione. Altrimenti è un lavoro meccanico che chiunque può fare; e un libro formalmente neutro come questo non perderà nulla ad essere trattato giornalisticamente. Badate, che non escludo un ricco interesse umano in quest'opera, un appello sociale di larga risonanza, ma semplicemente dico che quanto a me mi lascia freddo. [111]

Translating is a creative act to all intents and purposes. The translator, he is saying, must fall in love with the verbal material of the work he chooses to translate in order to give it a second birth in his own language. For Pavese, as for many Italian writers who translated (as seen in chapters 1 and 2), translating is never separated from his original work, but often the two activities collide. The presence of his own idiolect, his style of language, in the translation is caused not only by his effort to render the meaning of the ST, but is also an expression of the writer searching for his own poetics by mirroring himself in another writer's work. As George Talbot observes in his study of Montale as translator, a writer might tend to rethink the work he is translating into his own thoughts. Montale translated 'not just into Italian but into his own Montalian Italian, his idiolect.'[112] Montale might use 'a particular word in

[110] Pavese a Enrico Bemporad, 4 Aprile 1931, in *Lettere 1924-1944*, p. 290.
[111] Pavese, *Lettere 1924-1944* cit., p. 554.
[112] George Talbot, *Montale's mestiere vile*, p. 251.

translation because of its echo in his poetic memory rather than because of its propriety in a given context.'[113] The same could be said for Pavese.

In the numerous studies on Pavese, his interest in America[114] and his activity as a translator are considered essential to his poetics: Pavese translated because of his political interest in America, he translated authors whose works could almost have been his and he was highly influenced by them.[115]

Armanda Guiducci's study of Pavese highlights as relevant aspects of Pavese's translations the linguistic similarity between his original works and the works he chose to translate:

> Tradurre lo aiutò in un senso tecnico molto importante, nel senso di saggiare le resistenze che una lingua come l'italiano offriva alla resa degli effetti 'slangy'. Lo sforzo piú interessante del suo mestiere di traduttore consistette proprio nel tentativo di rendere gli effetti dello slang con equivalenze di vivacità italiane: siccome nella lingua scritta poetica non esisteva appiglio possibile, le cavò, le adattò al parlato italiano anche regionale. In questo senso fu un traduttore onesto, non tanto verso il testo – che è il minimo che si richiede – quanto verso se stesso e il proprio programma di scrittore. Usò tournures piemontesizzanti belle e buone perfino per tradurre il biblico Melville.[116]

Pavese, Guiducci observes, was an honest translator, in the sense that he translated works that were similar to his own original programme as a writer. Many of the works Pavese translated were a linguistic challenge, written in a style which could be

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[113] Talbot, p. 252. One very influential factor here, as seen in chapter 1, is the higher freedom of choice that a famous writer might have regarding which work to translate, and the possibility of choosing a work he likes.

[114] For a study of Pavese and America see also: Italo Calvino, Prefazione a *La letteratura americana ed altri saggi* (Torino: Einaudi, 1951); Dominique Fernandez, *Il mito dell'America,* traduzione dal francese di Alfonso Zaccaria (Caltanissetta, Roma: Salvatore Sciascia editore, 1968); Elio Gioanola, *Cesare Pavese. La poetica dell'essere* (Milano: Marzorati, 1971); Claudio Gorlier, 'Tre riscontri sul mestiere di tradurre' in *Sigma 3,* 1964, pp. 72-86; Mark Pietralunga, *Cesare Pavese and Anthony Chiuminatto, Their Correspondence* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2007); Lawrence G. Smith, *Cesare Pavese and America. Love, Life and Literature* (USA: Thomson-Shore, 2008);

[115] In Lawrence G. Smith, pp. 11-12: 'It was his immersion in American culture that helped him form his own artistic voice and shape his literary persona. (...) These American artists came to represent personal ideals for Pavese.'

[116] Armanda Guiducci, *Il mito di Pavese* (Firenze: Vallecchi, 1967), pp. 109-110.

successfully rendered using his own original style. These works helped Pavese to find his own style.[117] The works by Lewis, Anderson, Faulkner, Gertrude Stein and also many parts of Melville's *Moby Dick* that Pavese translated are works where slang and spoken language sometimes play a central role. According to Chukovsky these would be situations of similarities of styles where the translator is in the position of producing a creative and successful translation.

Benito Cereno cannot be considered part of those works which could be successfully transposed into Pavese's idiolect because its style is never colloquial. In this sense, *Benito Cereno* might be considered an ideal case study for investigating the presence of Pavese's original style because when present, it does not melt into Melville's, but stands out visibly distinct from it. In some cases Pavese's re-creation of *Benito Cereno* has led to a flattening or loss of Melville's original intentions. 'Re-creation', as Pavese intended it, in *Benito Cereno* is not a necessary act to transpose the ST into Italian culture, but more an appropriation of Melville's text by a famous Italian writer.

Finally, Pavese's language in *Benito Cereno* echoes in the imagination of the Italian reader of his original works those themes strictly related to his own idiolect: the Piedmontese Langhe, its characters and life, thus producing a clashing contrast with the spectral, gothic atmosphere of Melville's sea. The analysis of Pavese's translation stresses that Pavese's language cannot be separated from its original 'contents' and 'themes', style cannot be separated from the writer's individuality as Pavese himself frequently observed. In 'Raccontare è monotono' he writes: 'Del resto, dire stile è dire cadenza, ritmo, ritorno ossessivo del gesto e della voce, della propria posizione entro la realtà'[118] and in his diary: 'Narrerà ora non chi "conosce la natura umana" e ha fatto scoperte di psicologie significative e profonde, ma chi possiede blocchi di realtà, esperienze angolari che gli ritmano e cadenzano e ricamano il discorso.'[119]

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[117] The influence of slang on Pavese's poetics is unanimously stressed by most of the critic.
[118] In 'Raccontare è monotono' in *La letteratura americana e altri saggi* (Torino: Einaudi, 1990), p. 308.
[119] In *Il mestiere di vivere* (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), p. 330.

Pavese's style is inevitably drenched with his own individuality which in *Benito Cereno* has 'shunted Melville's aside' and foisted Pavese's literary 'I' on Melville's.

5.3.2 Freedom for the few

Is the creativity Pavese asserts a general requirement for translation? Or a privilege for writers?

Luisa Mangoni in *Pensare i libri*, commenting on Pavese's work as an editor of translations, points out that not everybody was allowed to be creative in translation:

> non era questo che veniva richiesto alle traduzioni previste per la collezione. O meglio, questo tipo di versione poteva essere riservato a Pavese stesso, o a Ginzburg, presupponeva cioè una fiducia assoluta nelle capacità del traduttore. (...) ciò a cui si tendeva era comunque il conseguimento di un livello omogeneo, che non escludesse le punte piú alte, ma definisse con chiarezza per i traduttori lo standard medio comune. Da ciò l'insistenza per una traduzione letterale e la revisione, accurata e fin minuziosa, alla quale i testi venivano sottoposti.[120]

Re-creation was only for writers, for translators whose writing skills could be completely trusted. Professional translators were not allowed the same freedom as writers, rather the opposite, they were asked to translate literally, close to the ST. Pavese, Ginzburg, Einaudi, assertors of re-creation in translation[121], were very severe editors of translations by minor writers or non-writers and criticized every minimal departure from the ST. The correspondence between Einaudi and Luigi Berti, the translator commissioned to do the translation of Melville's *Pierre*, witnesses the discrepancy of attitude towards 'non famous writer-translators' and 'famous writer-translators'. In a letter Einaudi wrote to Berti, the editor criticizes Berti's creativity which attempted to

> render piú sciolta e rapida la versione. Ora invece, come lei sa, il carattere della mia collezione di Narratori è quello di offrire delle versioni che rispettino il piú possible il

[120] Luisa Mangoni, *Pensare i libri*, pp. 32-33.
[121] Luisa Mangoni, pp. 14-15, 32; Severino Cesari, p. 137.

> testo originale, onde sovratutto conservarne il pregio stilistico. [...] perché semplificare le complicate costruzioni barocche [...]; perché abolire aggettivi o avverbi minuziosamente stillati; perché impoverire, volgarizzandole, quelle concettose immagini cosí caratteristiche di Pierre?[122]

Berti, in his answer to Einaudi, protests about the numerous corrections made to his translation, and bitterly observes that in Pavese's translation of *Benito Cereno* the editors had allowed 'terminologie marinaresche sbagliate [...] oltre a locuzioni introvabili nel dizionario della lingua italiana.'[123]

It seems, as already observed in the previous chapter, that a translation by a famous writer is rarely revised, or not revised by comparing it to the ST. Writerly translations seem to be allowed the creative freedom of an original. The discrepancy between concessions made to writer-translator and to a translator who is not an established writer seems to state that something more than a translation is expected from a writer.

The translation by a famous author becomes his own, and assumes a status quite different from the other translations, as we have already seen for the case of Vittorini's translation of Edgar Allan Poe. The analysis of the translations of *Benito Cereno* by Bianchi, Bacigalupo, Mussapi and Buzzi, has confirmed the high consideration in which authorial translations are held.

5.3.3 Fear of plagiarism?

The analysis of the 'non-authorial' translations – the four versions done by writers less well known than Pavese – has confirmed what was already observed in chapter 3: a general higher degree of literality and faithfulness to the ST. In addition, it has revealed 1) that for some translators Pavese's version has been a reference almost as

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[122] This letter is found in Luisa Mangoni (footnote 104, p. 32) in a dossier that she consulted in the Einaudi Archive.

[123] This is in the same dossier. Luigi Berti in the Einaudi Archive, quoted in a footnote by Mangoni (p. 32).

influential as Melville's original; 2) a certain inclination of the translators, especially those who more often adopt Pavese's choices,[124] to follow Pavese's version quite exclusively in those instances where the original Pavese is less visible, and to take their distance from the Italian writer's translation when it becomes too evidently 'Pavesian'. Thirdly and consequently, the analysis has stressed again the extremely high authority of the famous writer's translation.

The major degree of literality of the translations does not need further examples here, but appears visible throughout the comparative analysis: there are many more deviations from the ST in Pavese than in the other translators; Bianchi and Bacigalupo appear to be more respectful of the ST than Mussapi and Buzzi who at times seem more inclined to follow Pavese's choices when he is arbitrarily and unnecessarily changing the ST – but doing so in 'a neutral hand' – than when he is translating correctly, and sometimes brilliantly, albeit in his own style.

Pavese is rarely followed by his fellow-translators when he forces the language of the ST into his distinctive idiolect. This attitude is so recurrent within the text, that the comparative analysis of Pavese's translation with the non writerly translations could serve the purpose of detecting exactly where Pavese is rewriting in his own style: when the Italian writer uses an unusual or non-canonical term or expression or when he changes the syntax of the ST and he is not followed by the non-writer translators, then, we could often assume that it is one of those instances in which he is transposing Melville's language into his own style.

The analysis has revealed how at times the translator – similarly to what was seen in the Baldini-Vittorini case in the previous chapter – follows Pavese in arbitrary changes that modify and compromise the ST intention.

But perhaps the most frequent evidence of the authority of Pavese's translation is all a series of (invisible) instances where the translator's choices seem to be more a version of Pavese's than a translation of the ST. This can be observed from the very

[124] Mainly Mussapi and Buzzi, as Bianchi's version is very literal and Bacigalupo's also tends to the literal.

first lines. A few examples from the opening: Buzzi's translation of 'In the year 1799' with 'Era l'anno 1799' is closer to Pavese's 'Correva l'anno 1799' than to the ST; Mussapi's translation of 'On the second day' with 'Il giorno seguente' and Buzzi's with 'L'indomani' seem different versions of Pavese's 'Il giorno dopo'; Buzzi's translation 'Era una delle mattinate tipiche di quella costa' for 'The morning was one peculiar to that coast' seems a cleaned-up version – from traces of original style – of Pavese's 'Faceva una delle mattinate tipiche di quella costa'.

Finally, the analysis of the 'less authorial translations' has revealed something more than the high authority of Pavese's text: the tendency of some translators to follow the writer's version only where he is not too similar to his original writing, might be compared to one's refrain from copying from an original work and this attitude might suggest that Pavese's *Benito Cereno* has attained, at least among his fellow translators, the status of one of the writer's original works.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of the translation of *Benito Cereno* has revealed again, as for chapter 3, a difference in degree of freedom from the ST in writerly and 'non-writerly' translation. The writer is freer to change the ST, and tends to transform the ST language into his own idiolect.

The analysis has brought out in Pavese's translation a system of 'departures from the original which are linked organically to the personality of the translator', departures through which 'the translator foists his literary "I" on the reader'.[125] This might reflect Pavese's idea of translation as re-creation, as an urge to rethink the text and give it a second birth as if it were his own work.

The analysis has revealed that Pavese's idiolect does not always fit Melville's style, and often compromises it irreparably. As Chukovsky would have argued, this seems to be because, as Pavese's personality was very expressive, 'he is incapable,

[125] Chukovsky, p. 20.

despite all his talent, of mirroring the individuality of another poet in translations,'[126] unless the styles are very similar.

In addition, it has been argued that the freedom to re-create an original text is a privilege accorded to writers, while the same is not allowed to a non-writer or a less famous writer-translator; on the contrary, their translations are expected to be as literally faithful as possible to the original.

The analysis of the four 'non-authorial' translations has brought to light, again as for the previous chapter, the very high status attained by Pavese's translation, at least among his fellow-translators.

Finally, Pavese's version is bound to be generally acknowledged by the Italian public as a better translation than the others because it was done by a famous writer, and happens to be very well written. The reader buying the translation by a famous writer expects to read something of the writer-translator himself. The reader buying a translation by a non original writer expects to read the original. And, paradoxically, the reader buying a translation by a famous writer trusts this to be a better translation, a translation with a guarantee.

[126] ibid., p. 23.

CHAPTER 5: LALLA ROMANO'S 'UN CUORE SEMPLICE'

Le mot ne manque jamais
quand on possède l'idée

– Gustave Flaubert

1. Introduction

The aim of the present chapter is to investigate authorial creativity from a different perspective, through the analysis of Lalla Romano's translation of Gustave Flaubert's 'Un cœur simple', first published by Einaudi in 1944, and of the two revisions done by the same writer in 1980 for the Einaudi series 'Centopagine' and in 2000 for 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'.

The availability of three versions of the same translation by the same author allows a privileged perspective in the investigation of authorial translation. Revision, especially after a long time, functions as an additional comment by the writer-translator on her strategy of translation. After a careful analysis of her first version (as was done for the other case-studies), our analysis of the translator's revisional choices might reinforce the findings of previous chapters, or call them into question. Did Romano in her revisions enhance her translation strategy? Did she change it? Finally, the analysis of Romano's revisions to her first translation directly raises the fascinating issue of retranslation, and in particular the retranslation of translations by celebrated writers – and we will remember that chapter 2 showed how Einaudi regarded creative writers as exempt from revision and correction in their translation work. Why is Romano's translation revised and not retranslated? How does the analyisis of her revisions inform us on the authority of writerly translations and their position in the process of retranslation? What are the reasons pushing Romano to revise her translation? Does Romano revise her text in an attempt to shift it closer to the source text and to the style of its original author, or does she take freer departures from the original? If the second alternative is true, are those departures truly free, or are they obligatory? In the normal way, one might expect a retranslation to be more accurate than its predecessors, as claimed in the 'Retranslation Hypothesis', whereby

'later translations tend to be closer to the source text',[1] but perhaps if one is invited to contribute to a series of 'writers translated by writers' one should expect to be freer in one's approach?

The chapter is divided into five main sections. Section 2 introduces Flaubert's 'Un cœur simple' stressing two important stylistic aspects of the story: the impersonality of its prose and its highly pictorial quality. Section 3 is a translation-oriented outline of some of the stylistic devices which are determinant in the production of impersonality and visual effect. Section 4 is an analysis of Romano's translation of 'Un cœur simple' published in 1944 by Einaudi, and this is divided into two subsections. The first is an analysis of the opening of 'Un cœur simple' compared to the non-writerly translation by Roberta Maccagnani (Mondadori, 1990). In this stage of the analysis I will also survey, where relevant and in footnotes, an English translation of 'Un cœur simple" (Krailsheimer, 1991) in an effort to evaluate better the Italian translators' departures from the original; the second subsection is a selective analysis of isolated examples within the text confirming and expanding what has been previously observed. Section 5 discusses if and how certain affinities between Romano and 'Un cœur simple' might have influenced her translation and how the translation might have influenced her original writing. Is some sort of affinity between the translator and the work translated a necessary factor for the production of a successful translation? Section 6 is divided into three subsections. The first two subsections discuss the possible reasons which may push a translator to revise his or her translation and revision as a form of retranslation, and introduce Romano's two revisions; the third is a comparative analysis of the three different versions of 'Un cœur simple' divided into two subsections. The first of these lists some relevant examples from the analysis of the opening of the two revisions while the second lists some relevant examples from the selective analysis of the whole texts of the two revisions.

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[1] Andrew Chesterman, 'Hypothesis about translation universals' in Gyde Hansen, Kirsten Malmkjaer, Daniel Gile (eds.) *Claims, Changes and Challenges in Translation Studies* (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2004), pp. 1-13 (p. 8).

2. The source text. The pictorial aspect of 'Un cœur simple'

The aim of the present section is not an overall and exhaustive survey of Flaubert's 'Un cœur simple',[2] but to provide a working functional model of the original, focusing on some of those aspects most relevant to the analysis of its translations.

'Un cœur simple' was published, together with other two tales, 'La légende de Saint Julien l'hospitalier' and 'Hérodias', in 1877 in *Trois contes*, Flaubert's last finished work, often acknowledged as his most successful and representative production.[3] 'Un cœur simple' is a realist novella told in the third person and set in nineteenth-century Normandy, divided into five small chapters narrating the life of Félicité, a humble servant who spends her life serving others. The plot is reduced to

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[2] Published articles on 'Un cœur simple' are so extremely abundant that an accounting of critical literature would make an article in itself. I will just mention some of those articles which I have found particularly interesting and relevant to my translation-oriented analysis of the tale. See, for instance articles by: Nathan Cervo, 'Flaubert's Un Coeur Simple" in *Explicator*, Jan 01, 1997, Vol. 55, No. 2, pp. 80-81; Andrea Greenbaum, 'Flaubert's Un Coeur Simple' in *Explicator*, Jun 01, 1995, Vol. 53, No. 4, pp. 208-211; Mary Jehlen, 'Félicité and the Holy Parrot' in *Raritan*, Mar 01, 2007; Vol. 26, No. 4, pP. 86-95; Deborah Jenson, 'The Persons and Things School: Parrots, Peasants and Pariahs in "Un Coeur Simple" and "La Chaumière Indienne"' in *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, Sep 01, 2006; Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 107-125; Rachel Killick, '"The power and the glory"? Discourses of authority and tricks of speech in *Trois Contes*' in *Modern Language Review*, Apr 01, 1993; Vol. 88, No. 2, pp. 307-320; Mihaela Marin, 'Un Coeur Simple: Variations sur un paysage Normand' in *Romanic Review,* Nov 01, 2007, Vol. 98, No. 4, pp. 375-385; Cecile Matthey, '"Poussière de religions": le culte domestique dans "Un Coeur Simple"' in *Nineteenth Century French Studies*, May 01, 2004, Vol. 32, No. 3/4, pp. 267-281; Leonard Marsh, 'Visual perception in Flaubert's Un Coeur Simple' in *Studies in Short Fiction*, Mar 01, 1986; Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 185-189; Lewis Overaker 'Manifestations of the Holy Ghost in Flaubert's Un Coeur Simple' in *Renascence*, Jan 01, 2001, Vol. 53, No. 2, pp. 119-148; James Reynolds, 'Flaubert's Un Coeur Simple' in *Explicator*, Sep 01, 1996; Vol. 55, No. 1, pp. 26-29 ; Ingrid Stipa, 'Desire, Repetition and the Imaginary in Flaubert's Un cœur simple' in *Studies in Short Fiction*, Sep 01, 1994, Vol. 31, No. 4, pp. 617-626; Kris Vassilev, 'Le père absent et le problème de la croyance dans "Un Coeur Simple"' in *Nineteenth Century French Studies*, Nov 09, 2005; Vol. 34, No. 1/2, pp. 89-106.

[3] See, for instance: in the preface by Michel Tournier to G. Flaubert, *Trois contes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), 'Dernière oeuvre de Gustave Flaubert, ce petit livre est considéré parfois comme son chef-d'oeuvre...' (p. 5); in G. Flaubert, *Three Tales* (London: Hesperus Classics, 2009) see the foreword by Margaret Drabble: 'These three tales by Gustave Flaubert, written and published late in his life, are a distillation of his genius...' (p. vii) and the introduction by Howard Curtis: 'Three tales has been considered one of Flaubert's finest works, with "A simple heart" often singled out as one of the summits of his output.'

essentials and best summed up by Flaubert in a letter he wrote to Mme Roger des Genettes in 1876:

> L'histoire d'Un Coeur Simple est tout bonnement le récit d'une vie obscure, celle d'une pauvre fille de campagne, dévote mais mystique, dévouée sans exaltation et tendre comme du pain frais. Elle aime successivement un homme, les enfants de sa maîtresse, son neveu, un vieillard qu'elle soigne, puis son perroquet; quand le perroquet est mort, elle le fait empailler et, en mourant à son tour, elle confond le perroquet avec le Saint-Esprit. Cela n'est nullement ironique comme vous le supposez, mais au contraire très sérieux et très triste. Je veux apitoyer, faire pleurer les âmes sensibles, en étant une moi-même.[4]

2.1 The painstaking stylist

The unique style of 'Un cœur simple', strikingly impersonal, elliptical, essentially reflecting the economy of the plot,[5] is the result of Flaubert's meticulous arrangement of every single element of his prose in order to obtain the sought-after effect.

Flaubert's effort to obtain perfection in style, his painstaking search for the perfect word and the arrangement of the perfect sentence is an aspect often emerging from his correspondence and widely acknowledged by the critics.[6] While working on

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[4] 'À Edma Roger des Genettes', Lettre du 19 Juin 1876 in Gustave Flaubert, *Correspondance* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), vol. v, pp. 56-57. Alan Krailsheimer writes that '*A Simple Heart,* was written in response to a plea, or a challenge, by his close friend George Sand, who, with some justification, found the underlying tone of his novels negative and depressing'. See the 'Introduction' to G. Flaubert, *Three Tales* translated by A. J. Krailsheimer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. vii.

[5] Arthur MacDowell, in the preface to his translation of the *Trois Contes* (Gustave Flaubert, *Three tales* (Mineola, New York: Dover, 1924)) wrote: 'he gets an astonishing blend of economy and meaning. (...) Anyone who presumes to translate these stories becomes aware of the risk very soon: (...) his intense compression, which is of the kind that an English writer seldom tries to rival.' p. 2.

[6] On Flaubert's aim at syilistic perfection see studies on the subject, for instance: Victor Brombert, *The novels of Flaubert: a study of themes and techniques* (Princeton (N.J.): Princeton University Press, 1966); Arthur McDowell: 'He [Flaubert] works sixteen hours one day and the whole of the next, and at the end of it he has mapped the first page of "A Simple Heart" (...) he gets an astonishing blend of economy and meaning. Under all his deceptive simplicity there is not one unweighed word' (p. 2); in his *Correspondance* the writer's painful search for the right word is evident: 'depuis trois semaines, j'ai fait sept pages', à sa niece Caroline, 8 juillet 1876, *Correspondance*, vol. v, p. 67.

'Un cœur simple', in answer to George Sand, who accused him of being concerned only about the formal aspect of his works,[7] he writes:

> Ce souci de la beauté extérieure que vous me reprochez est pour moi une méthode. Quand je découvre une mauvaise assonance ou une répétition dans une des mes phrases, je suis sûr que je patauge dans le faux. À force de chercher, je trouve l'expression juste qui était la seule et qui est en même temps l'harmonieuse. Le mot ne manque jamais quand on possède l'idée.[8]

To Flaubert, 'Une bonne phrase de prose doit être comme un bon vers, *inchangeable*',[9] and in order to achieve such unchangeable perfection he worked very slowly, continuously correcting and revising, as observed also by Lalla Romano in the introduction to her translation of *Trois contes*: 'Procedeva nel suo lavoro lentissimamente (soltanto la stesura, ad esempio, della prima pagina del *Coeur simple* gli costò alcuni giorni di lavoro); e le infinite minute correzioni e pentimenti testimoniano la sua "matta e disperatissima" pazienza nell'elaborare i testi.'[10]

2.2 Flaubert's ideal style

Flaubert's ideal of perfect style is expressed in a letter he wrote to Louise Colet:

> Ce qui me semble beau, ce que je voudrais faire, c'est un livre sur rien, un livre sans attache extérieure, qui se tiendrait de lui-même par la force interne de son style, comme la terre sans être soutenue se tient en l'air, un livre qui n'aurait presque pas de

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[7] The same accusation was made, thirty years earlier, by his fiancée, Louise Colet who reproached him for caring too much about the form and little about the substance. In response, Flaubert explained that there cannot be separation between form and content which, instead, are vitally dependent from one another: 'Pourquoi dis-tu sans cesse "poète de la forme!" c'est là le grand mot à outrage que les utilitaires jettent aux vrais artistes. Pour moi, tant qu'on ne m'aura pas, d'une phrase donnée, séparé la forme du fond, je soutiendrais que ce sont là deux mots vides de sens. Il n'y a pas de belles pensées sans belles formes et réciproquement. La Beauté transsude de la forme dans le monde de l'Art.' Lettre à Louise Colet, 18 Septembre, 1846, vol. i, p. 350.

[8] À George Sand, 10 Mars 1876, *Correspondance*, vol. i, p. 26.

[9] À Louise Colet, 22 Juillet 1852, *Correspondance,* vol. ii, p. 135.

[10] In Lalla Romano, 'Introduzione' to Gustave Flaubert, *Tre racconti,* nella traduzione di Lalla Romano, p. x.

> sujet ou du moins où le sujet serait presque invisible si cela se peut. Les oeuvres les plus belles sont celles où il y a le moins de matière; plus l'expression se rapproche de la pensée, plus le mot colle dessus et disparaît, plus c'est beau.[11]

The ideal style is one where the mechanics of narration are kept as invisible as possible and the illusion for the reader is complete.[12] In order to achieve this ambitious effect, the author must keep outside his work, an attitude best summed in Flaubert's famous pronouncement:

> L'auteur, dans son oeuvre, doit être comme Dieu dans l'univers, présent partout, et visible nulle part. L'art étant une seconde nature, le créateur de cette nature-là doit agir par des procédés analogues. Que l'on sente dans tous les atomes, à tous les aspects, une impassibilité cachée et infinie. L'effet, pour le spectateur, doit être une espèce de ébahissement. Comment tout cela s'est-il fait? doit-on dire, et qu'on se sent écrasé sans savoir pourquoi.[13]

The French writer constantly advocates the authorial impersonality of art. The novelist's task is the objective representation of reality, free from any comments, expression of feelings or convictions by its author who must not put his personality forward, but 'se transporter dans les personnages, et non les attirer à soi'.[14]

2.3 Impassibility and the pictorial aspect of 'Un cœur simple'

In 'Un cœur simple' Flaubert, with masterly skill, achieves an impersonal, impassive quality of prose, where the narrator (mostly) keeps his persona outside the story.[15] An

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[11] À Louise Colet, 16 jan 1852, vol. ii, p. 31.

[12] Illusion is the main end of all art, as Flaubert often states: 'La première qualité de l'art et son but est l'illusion' (Lettre à Louise Colet, 16 septembre 1853); 'L'illusion (s'il y en a une)' he wrote of Madame Bovary 'vient de [...] l'*impersonnalité* de l'œuvre. C'est un de mes principes, qu'il ne faut pas s'*écrire*. [...] Et puis, l'Art doit s'élever au-dessus des affections personnelles et des susceptibilités nerveuses!' (Lettre à Mlle Leroyer de Chantepie, 18 mars 1857, vol. ii, p. 691).

[13] À Louise Colet, 9 Dec 1852, vol. ii, p. 204.

[14] À George Sand, 15-16 Dec 1866, vol.iii, p. 579.

[15] Bearing witness to the extraordinary successful achievement of impersonality, is the fact that the nature of Flaubert's position towards Félicité remains one of the issues most discussed by scholarly critics on 'Un cœur simple'. Is Flaubert being sympathetic or cruel

extremely representative aspect of this story I would like to focus on, closely related to the impersonality of Flaubert's prose, is its striking pictorial quality. The reader of 'Un cœur simple' experiences a visual journey through the life of Félicité. The story is laid out fragmented as a series of different images like shots from a camera, and each can be read independently from the other. As Mihaela Marin observes: in 'Un cœur simple' 'le style descriptif de Flaubert est comparable au geste originaire du peintre' and transforms 'le réel synéstésique en une construction purement visuelle.'[16] Allen Brooke, in her review of Davis' translation of *Madame Bovary* ('Un cœur simple" is often compared to *Madame Bovary* for its style and the autobiographical element present in both works) chooses a highly pictorial passage from the text as most representative of Flaubert's prose, and comments:

> Let's look at one passage – an important one in that it introduces Charles and Emma Bovary's visual world. It's a world that a painter, or someone like Flaubert with a painterly eye, might find beautiful but that is, above all else, *grey*. We know that this overall greyness is vital because Flaubert has said so. 'The story, the plot of a novel is of no interest to me. When I write a novel I aim at rendering a color, a shade.'[17]

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towards Félicité? Is he telling the story of her good simple heart or of her irremediable stupidity? Just to mention one testimony of the general discussion, Greenbaum, at the beginning of his study of the tale, writes: 'Frequently, critics such as Victor Brombert believe that Flaubert, in writing 'Un cœur simple' 'set out "to move and make cry all tender-hearted readers, being – as he affirmed – tender-hearted himself", and that "any denial of the authenticity of this tone, on the assumption that goodness is here shown to be inept and that Flaubert could not possibly feel anything but contempt for as stupid a creature as Félicité, is most emphatically a misreading of the work" [...] the critics have neglected the satirical implications of this text' in A. Greenbaum, p. 209. Rejecting this view, Nathan Cervo in 'Flaubert's Un Coeur Simple' writes: 'In Andrea Greenbaum's opinion, "Un Coeur Simple" is quite plainly a monumental satire [...] The view that "Un Coeur Simple" is a satire fails to take the tenderness of the story's tone into account' in N. Cervo, p. 80.

[16] In 'Un Coeur Simple: variations sur un paysage normand', *Romanic Review*, Nov 2007, Vol.98 Issue 4, pp. 375-385, p. 382. Here Marin compares Flaubert's descriptions of Norman landscapes to 'tableaux en prose' and discusses the 'perspective picturale of 'Un cœur simple' which 'reste sans doute (...) le plus pictural de ses texts de fiction' (p. 382).

[17] Allen Brooke, 'Bovary' & le mot juste', *New Criterion,* Oct. 2010, Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 10-14 (p. 11).

Nick Fraser, in his review of Davis' translation, praises the translator for catching 'for the first time in English the powerfully filmic aspect of Flaubert's narrative.'[18]

Most effectively, in the story, reality is seen through the eyes of the main character whose mode of perception is not elaborate but remains extremely basic and simple. Félicité, as Margaret Drabble writes, 'sees the world in simple pictorial terms'[19] rather than through concepts. Flaubert achieves his masterly focalization of the story through Félicité's sense of perception.Victor Brombert observes that it is 'Flaubert's masterstroke that he can present a central character who is basically inarticulate and yet let the reader participate in the way she perceives the world'.[20] Leonard Marsh, in 'Visual perception in Flaubert's "Un Coeur Simple"' argues that, unlike for *Madame Bovary*, it is not by using free indirect discourse that Flaubert enables the reader to slip easily from the narrated text to the mind of the main character, as he hardly uses this stylistic device here; 'instead, Flaubert lets the readers know Félicité by letting them participate in her limited powers, not of conception, but of sense perception'.[21] Also Ingrid Stipa, in her study of 'Un cœur simple', observes how the crafted structure of the tale 'allows the protagonist to process reality primarily through images, visual projections, and material objects rather than through a symbolic system based on arbitrary linguistic signs.'[22]

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[18] A positive remark made at the end of a not so positive review of Davis' new translation. *The Observer*, Sunday 28 November 2010 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2010/nov/28/madame-bovery-flaubert-lydia-davis-review> [accessed 20 February 2014].

[19] Margaret Drabble in the foreword to Gustave Flaubert, *Three tales* translated by Howard Curtis, p. xi.

[20] Victor Brombert, *The Novels of Flaubert: A Study of Themes and Techniques* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 240.

[21] L. Marsh, p. 185. On the investigation of Flaubert's use of a limited point of view see also R. J. Sherrington, *Three Novels by Flaubert: A Study of Techniques* (London: Clarendon Press, 1970) (p. 340).

[22] Ingrid Stipa, p. 617.

3. A translation-oriented outline of some (relevant) stylistic features of 'Un cœur simple'

The present section does not purport to be an exhaustive survey of 'Un cœur simple', but to outline and focus only on those stylistic features, used by Flaubert to produce the impersonal visual or pictorial effect of the prose, which are relevant to my analysis of Lalla Romano's versions of the story, and which make it clear that any translators can enhance the quality of their version simply by staying close to Flaubert's exact forms of expression – which is not difficult.

3.1 Visual layout of the text: division into paragraphs and sentences

In 'Un cœur simple' the division into short paragraphs is a very evident visual factor of the text. The separation of one chunk of text from the other is also fundamental to the production of meaning (textual and subtextual). Each paragraph can be read independently from the others; it represents an independent shot of reality and is often determinant in structuring the story's time frame. In Flaubert, 'voids' or blank spaces seem to be as important as the text itself. Proust, in his famous essay on Flaubert's style wrote: 'À mon avis la chose, la plus belle de *L'éducation sentimentale*, ce n'est pas une phrase, mais un blanc.'[23]

The same can be said, at a more microscopic level, for the division into sentences. Howard Curtis, in the Introduction to his translation of *Trois contes,* commenting on the filmic aspect of 'Un cœur simple', advises the reader to 'think of each sentence less as an element in a smooth narrative sequence than as a description of a separate image in a shooting script, and it may make more sense. Not for the first

[23] 'Flaubert vient de décrire, de rapporter pendant de longues pages, les actions les plus menues de Frédéric Moreau. Frédéric voit un agent marcher avec son épée sur un insurgé qui tombe mort. "Et Frédéric, béant, reconnut Sénécal!" Ici un "blanc", un énorme "blanc" et, sans l'ombre d'une transition, soudain la mesure du temps devenant au lieu de quarts d'heure, des années, des décades' in M. Proust, 'À propos du "style" de Flaubert', http://www.kufs.ac.jp/French/i_miyaza/publique/litterature/PROUST__A_Propos_du_Style_de_Flaubert.pdf, pp. 17-18. [accessed February 2014]

time in his career, Flaubert seems like a precursor of the cinema'.[24] Roger Whitehouse, in the introduction to his translation of the *Three tales*, writes: 'This translation (...) seeks to maintain the precisely focused details of description and imagery, the tight ordering of sentences and the use of short detached paragraphs as Flaubert wrote them'.[25] Paul de Man, in the Note to his extensively revised version of Eleanor Marx's translation of *Madame Bovary* (1965), stresses the importance of Flaubert's division into sentences and paragraphs: 'Flaubert's original paragraphs, a fundamental and subtly measured unit of composition, have been restored throughout.'[26]

3.2 Use of parataxical constructions and the use of 'et'

Often, in 'Un cœur simple', sentences, when not separated by a full stop, are separated by a comma. Lydia Davis highlights this as a fundamental stylistic device of Flaubert's prose: 'Flaubert also regularly wrote sentences containing what is called the comma splice, in which clauses are strung together in a series, separated only by a comma and without a conjunction'.[27] In fact, as Proust observes, Flaubert does not make a canonical use of the conjuction 'et':

> La conjonction "et" n'a nullement dans Flaubert l'objet que la grammaire lui assigne. Elle marque une pause dans une mesure rythmique et divise un tableau. En effet partout où on mettrait "et", Flaubert le supprime. C'est le modèle et la coupe de tant de phrases admirables. [...] en revanche là où personne n'aurait l'idée d'en user, Flaubert l'emploie. C'est comme l'indication qu'une autre partie du tableau commence [...]. En un mot, chez Flaubert, "et" commence toujours une phrase secondaire et ne termine presque jamais une énumération.[28]

The use of the comma to divide different parts of the sentence and such non-canonical use of the conjuction 'et' are fundamental stylistic devices impressing upon the prose

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[24] Gustave Flaubert, *Trois contes,* translated by Howard Curtis, p. xvi.
[25] 'Translator's note' by Roger Whitehouse in G. Flaubert, *Trois contes* (London: Penguin, 2005), p. xxxii.
[26] In G. Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* (New York and London: Norton, 1965), p. xvi.
[27] In her introduction to her translation of *Emma Bovary*, (London: Penguin, 2010) p. xxiv.
[28] Proust, pp. 9-11.

its pictorial quality. The sparing use of logical connectors enhances the impersonality of the prose. The absence of a defined relation of dependence between different parts of the phrase equalizes the weight and function of each sentence,[29] thereby keeping out the narrator's intervention. This syntactical and ontological levelling of different elements contributes to the production of irony, a factor pervading the whole story. Finally, even when Flaubert uses figures or devices linking the different parts of a sentence in a relation of finality, causality etc., he does it in a way that a wide range of possible interpretations is always maintained open. Jed Deppman, in a study on the impassibility of Flaubert's writing, stresses that in Flaubert one common technique of impassibility, among others,[30] is 'the peculiarly Flaubertian use of "sans doute" phrases – ambiguous phrases such as, in English, "no doubt," "probably" or even "perhaps" – to suggest that the narrator, too, is guessing at the characters' thoughts.' In Flaubert, says Deppmann, 'the tropes of finality, drama, causality, and clarity are put into play, but they maintain only the widest range of interpretation.'

3.3 Flaubert's elliptical style and use of (personal) pronouns

Lydia Davis' comments on the workings of the economy of style in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* can also be applied to 'Un cœur simple':

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[29] 'One effect of this construction is to give each clause equal weight and value. Another effect is sometimes to speed the action forward, speed our thoughts as readers through time or material. (...) It is a habit of Flaubert's that I have, again, chosen to retain', Lydia Davis, pp. xxiv-xxv.

[30] 'This technique of impassibility is often most often achieved through the fluctuation, within any given text, of the powers accorded to the free indirect style: at times the narrator is privy to innermost thoughts and at other times excluded. [...] Another common Flaubertian technique is the use of a vocabulary in the free indirect style that does not belong to the experience of the character. Félicité's medical vocabulary in the final pages of "Un cœur simple", for example [...]. Similarly, the summoning use of irony in free indirect style often forces the "thoughts of the character" away from the narrator, drawing attention to the distance between them and making us question the reliability and interestedness of the narration in general.' In Jed Deppman, 'History with style: The impassible writing of Flaubert' in *Style*, Spring 96, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 28-50 (pp. 30-31).

> Many of Flaubert's transitions are imperceptible, while others are abrupt; at still other points in the novel, the narration suddenly makes a rapid advance, covering months or years in a paragraph or two. But there is a tight unity to the novel as a whole, arising not only from its extreme economy – in which every element serves more than one function – but also from its recurring words, phrases, images and actions.[31]

The second paragraph of the beginning of 'Un cœur simple' is a very good example of the extreme economy of Flaubert's prose:

> Pour cent francs par an, elle faisait la cuisine et le ménage, cousait, lavait, repassait, savait brider un cheval, engraisser les volailles, battre le beurre, et resta fidèle à sa maîtresse, – qui cependant n'était pas une personne agréable.[32]

This is one of the innumerable passages in the tale where Flaubert brilliantly manages to sum up in a few lines the description of a long lapse of time. Here the writer outlines the routine of the structuring of fifty years of Félicité's adult life as a servant in thirty-eight words. Such economy allows the writer by means of just a few signs, a selective representation of reality that produces a subtext independent of the personal and constricting comments of its author. The use of ellipsis contributes to the production of ambiguity, an absolutely fundamental factor in 'Un cœur simple", as is also observed by Krailsheimer in the introduction to his translation of the *Trois contes*: 'The ellipsis so characteristic of his narrative style undoubtedly conveys a sense of tension and immediacy, but [...] often leads to obscurity.'[33]

A stylistic device frequently found in 'Un cœur simple' is the widespread use of pronouns whose referent is often ambiguous. 'Pronouns are habitually used in preference to proper names, and [...] *elle* or *il* is used three times in the same sentence, referring each time to a different person', Krailsheimer observes.[34] Personal pronouns

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[31] Lydia Davis, 'Introduction' to G. Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* translated by Lydia Davis, p. 31.
[32] G. Flaubert, *Trois contes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), p. 17.
[33] In G. Flaubert, *Three Tales* A new translation by A. J. Krailsheimer, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. xvi.
[34] Krailsheimer, p. xvi.

are often used in cataphoric positions[35] in the place of proper names, a device that in addition to ambiguity and osmosis between different persons, and between persons and things, produces cohesion, as was also observed by Proust.[36] The cohesive function of the pronoun can also be observed in the effect of reducing in a third person narration, the distance between reader and character. For example, when reading Félicité's name the reader is compelled to picture her in his or her mind as an objectified physical character of the story, but the pronoun 'elle' allows the reader to take a position inside the character's eyes, without slipping out, thereby making the narration and the presence of a narrator less obvious.

A prime example of this use of the personal pronoun is found at the start, on the opening page where the personal pronoun 'elle' is used five different times, referring firstly to Félicité, then to Mme Aubain and then to the house:

> Pendant un demi-siècle, les bourgeoises de Pont-l'Evêque envièrent à Mme Aubain sa servant Félicité.
>
> Pour cent francs par an, ***elle*** faisait la cuisine et le ménage, cousait, lavait, repassait, savait brider un cheval, engraisser les volailles, battre le beurre, et resta fidèle à sa maîtresse, – qui cependant n'était pas une personne agreeable.

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[35] 'The use of a pronoun or other linguistic unit to refer ahead to another word in a sentence', Richard Nordquist <http://grammar.about.com/od/c/g/cataphoraterm.htm>. [accessed February 2014]

[36] Proust writes of the use of the personal pronoun in *L'éducation sentimentale*: 'Pour arriver à ce même but Flaubert se sert souvent des règles qui régissent l'emploi du pronom personnel. [...] Ainsi dans la deuxième ou troisième page de *L'éducation sentimentale*, Flaubert emploie "il" pour désigner Frédéric Moreau quand ce pronom devrait s'appliquer à l'oncle de Frédéric, et quand il devrait s'appliquer à Frédéric pour désigner Arnoux. [...] dans cette deuxième page de *L'éducation*, s'il agit de relier deux paragraphes pour qu'une vision ne soit pas interrompue, alors le pronom personnel, à renversement pour ainsi dire, est employé avec une rigueur grammaticale, parce que la liaison des parties du tableau, le rythme régulier particulier à Flaubert, sont en jeu' (Proust, p. 4). On the use of cataphoric pronouns and production of textual cohesion see also 'Some observations on pronominalization' by Knud Sørensen, *English Studies*, Apr 01, 1981; Vol. 62, No. 2, pp. 146-155 where he argues that the textual cohesion produced by cataphoric pronouns is analogous to the syntactical situation where a subordinate clause comes before the main clause: 'if the subordinate clause comes first we are forced to be attentive, we are kept in suspense till we have heard or read the main clause, this suspense reflects a special form of cohesion which makes it possible to defer the question of identity (of coreferentiality or non coreferentiality) till the main clause.' p. 146; Nozar Di Niazi, *How to Study Literature: Stylistic and Pragmatic Approaches* (New Delhi: PHI, 2010), p. 22.

> ***Elle*** avait épousé un beau garçon sans fortune, mort au commencement de 1809, en lui laissant deux enfants très jeunes avec une quantité de dettes. Alors ***elle*** vendit ses immeubles, sauf la ferme de Toucques et la ferme de Geffosses, dont les rentes montaient à 5000 francs tout au plus, et ***elle*** quitta sa maison de Saint-Melaine pour en habiter une autre moins dispendieuse, ayant appartenu à ses ancêtres et placée derrière les halles.
>
> Cette maison, revêtue d'ardoises, se trouvait entre un passage et une ruelle aboutissant à la rivière. ***Elle*** avait intérieurement des différences de niveau qui faisaient trébucher. [37]

Here Flaubert, through an ambiguous use of the personal pronoun 'elle', makes it difficult for the reader to distinguish grammatically between Félicité, her mistress and the house. Such ambiguity might be read in different ways. Deborah Jenson observes that such misuse of personal pronouns at the opening of the tale serves the purpose of introducing the problem of the servant's autonomy and social status and, at the same time, marks a refusal to accept the bourgeois class division of Madame Aubain's society: 'The near confusion of Mme Aubain and Félicité in the beginning of the story can be read not just as an interrogation of Félicité's autonomy and equality, but, conversely, as a refusal to support on the level of narrative framing the master/servant segregation structured into Mme Aubain's bourgeois social world.'[38]

What seems certain is that such ambiguity is a calculated effect and that the translator should strive to reproduce it.

3.4 Use of the imperfect tense

The wide use of the imperfect tense, a form of past tense which expresses an ongoing or prevailing condition or a repeated action, is another relevant stylistic device used by the writer in 'Un cœur simple'.

Proust observes the importance of Flaubert's use of the imperfect tense:

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[37] Gustave Flaubert, *Trois contes*, p. 18. The bold italics are mine.
[38] Deborah Jenson, 'The Persons and Things School', p. 107.

> cet éternel imparfait, composé en partie des paroles des personnages que Flaubert rapporte habituellement en style indirect pour qu'elles se confondent avec le reste [...] cet éternel imparfait, si nouveau dans la littérature, change entièrement l'aspect des choses et des êtres, comme font une lampe qu'on a déplacée, l'arrivée dans une maison nouvelle, l'ancienne si elle est presque vide et qu'on est en plein déménagement.[39]

In 'Un cœur simple' the use of the imperfect confers on the images the sense of immutability, stillness and universality. It transforms images of daily acts into something immutable, universal, like a symbolic representation of a universal condition. As Pierre-Marc De Biasi observes: 'l'imparfait proliférant de Flaubert induit chez le lecteur la sensation, anormalement dévéloppée pour un récit de fiction, d'une pression presque constante des temporalités longues, des cycles de grande amplitude et des récurrences statistiques (...) la toute-puissance de ce duratif essentiel, de ces rythmes lents, de ces inerties structurales, de ces récurrences de comportement que l'imparfait nous donne à comprendre comme l'essentiel de l'Histoire.'[40] And for an Italian translator, there is very little difficulty in maintaining the same stylistic effect in the new language.[41]

3.5 The importance of objects in 'Un cœur simple'

Lastly, I would like to stress the importance of objects in the production of the impersonal 'painterly' effect in 'Un cœur simple'. Firstly, objects are the way Félicité perceives reality, as Stipa also observes: 'the protagonist processes reality primarily

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[39] Proust, pp. 7-8. See also Lydia Davis in the introduction to her new translation of *Madame Bovary*: she observes that the particular use of this tense expresses 'a continuing state or action, and thereby signalling the continuity of time itself, it perfectly creates the effect Flaubert was seeking – what Nabokov describes as "the sense of repetition, of dreariness in Emma's life"', p. 31.

[40] In 'Roman et histoire: une écriture subliminale' in T. Logé and M-F. Renard (eds.), *Flaubert et la théorie littéraire: en homage à Claudine Gothot-Mersch* (Bruxelles: Publications des Facultés Universitaires Saint-Louis, 2005), pp. 223-242 (p. 228).

[41] In analysing a passage from Proust in English translation, David Lodge notes that 'English lacks an exact equivalent to the French imperfect tense'; see *Language of Fiction*, p. 22.

through images, visual projections, and material objects.'[42] Objects are often used in highly visual elliptical functions representing what is absent. For example, in the description of Mme Aubain's house the portrait of 'Monsieur' and the two children's beds without mattresses represent the absent family members.[43] Such representations of objects often confer them with a human 'aura'; they appear like 'characters' as in a still life painting. The personification of objects is obvious at a grammatical level in individual sentences, where objects are often the grammatical subjects of the action. Proust writes, 'Les choses ont autant de vie que les hommes [...] dans ses grandes phrases les choses existent non pas comme l'accessoire d'une histoire, mais dans la réalité de leur apparition; elles sont généralement le sujet de la phrase, car le personnage n'intervient pas et subit la vision.'[44] A representative passage, among the many passages that could have been considered, is, again in the opening, the description of Madame Aubain's house:

> Contre le lambris, peint en blanc, s'alignaient huit chaises d'acajou. Un vieux piano supportait, sous un baromètre, un tas pyramidal de boîtes et cartons. Deux bergères de tapisserie flanquaient la cheminée en marbre jaune et de style Louis XV. La pendule, au milieu, représentait un temple de Vesta, – et tout l'appartement sentait un peu le moisi, car le plancher était plus bas que le jardin.[45]

Deborah Jenson argues that in 'Un cœur simple' 'hierarchies and distinctions of persons and things are overturned'[46] and stresses how the ambiguous use of pronouns contributes to produce the overlap of persons and objects. Commenting on the pronoun 'elle' in the opening page she observes how this is used to create osmosis between things and people: 'The subject pronoun "elle" in the fourth paragraph of the

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[42] Ingrid Stipa, p. 617.

[43] 'Au premier étage, il y avait d'abord la chambre de "Madame", très grande, tendue d'un papier à fleurs pales, et contenant le portrait de "Monsieur" en costume de muscadin. Elle communiquait avec une chambre plus petite, oú l'on voyait deux couchettes d'enfant, sans matelas.' *Trois contes*, p. 18.

[44] Proust, p. 5. Also: 'Notons en passant que cette activité des choses, des bêtes, puisqu'elles sont le sujet des phrases (au lieu que ce sujet soit des hommes), oblige à une grande variété de verbes.' (p. 5).

[45] Flaubert, *Trois contes*, pp. 17-18.

[46] Jenson, p. 110.

story, which clearly refers back literally to the feminine noun 'house', also symbolizes the stumbling of characters (and readers) over uneven hierarchical levels in the household: "Elle avait intérieurement des différences de niveau qui faisait trébucher."'[47]

4. Lalla Romano's first version of 'Un cœur simple'

The aim of the present section is the analysis of the first version of 'Un cœur simple' by the Italian writer Lalla Romano (Einaudi,1944). Firstly, a detailed study of Romano's linguistic choices in this first version will allow us to identify the translation attitude of a then young, not yet established writer, investigating further what was observed in the previous chapters. Secondly, such an investigation is necessary to provide us with a pattern of a translation strategy against which we can analyse the writer's later versions and establish whether there is a change in her attitude towards the source text and towards her own role as a translator.

As with the previous translations, I will follow my usual practice of presenting a detailed analysis of the opening of the translation and then some salient features from the rest of the text. I will analyse Romano's version, comparing it to another Italian translation by the non-writer translator Roberta Maccagnani for Mondadori (1990).

It is my belief that in order to translate successfully the extraordinary visual character of Flaubert's story, the translator must be careful to preserve, where possible, within the limits of the new language, those fundamental aspects of the original outlined in the previous section. In order to evaluate better the translator's choices and his or her effort to preserve the original features, my analysis of Romano's translations will also refer, only where relevant, to an English translation of Flaubert's story, 'A Simple Heart' by A. J. Krailsheimer (1991). The comparison with translations in a different language from Italian, the consideration of the different resources available to an Italian translator from French, as opposed to the resources of

[47] Flaubert, *Trois contes*, p. 18.

an English translator, should allow me to evaluate better, more objectively, whether departures from the ST are necessary departures dictated by the strict requirements of the target language, or derive from the translator's free choice. As we will see during the analysis, for an Italian translator it should prove easier than their English counterparts to keep close to the source text, as Italian grammar and syntax are more similar to French. For instance, while an Italian translator would have no problems reproducing the imperfect tense in Italian, English notably lacks this tense, a linguistic difference that makes some original effects much more difficult to reproduce. Again, the technique of stringing clauses together with only a comma to separate them is something that might work more acceptably in Italian than in English. The English version will be also useful in the analysis in clarifying some points of meaning.

4.1 An analysis of the opening

Flaubert (Gallimard, 1996).

Pendant un demi-siècle, les bourgeoises de Pont-l'Evêque envièrent à Mme Aubain sa servante Félicité.

Pour cent francs par an, elle faisait la cuisine et le ménage, cousait, lavait, repassait, savait brider un cheval, engraisser les volailles, battre le beurre, et resta fidèle à sa maîtresse, – qui cependant n'était pas une personne agréable.

Elle avait épousé un beau garçon sans fortune, mort au commencement de 1809, en lui laissant deux enfants très jeunes avec une quantité de dettes. Alors elle vendit ses immeubles, sauf la ferme de Toucques et la ferme de Geffosses, dont les rentes montaient à 5000 francs tout au plus, et elle quitta sa maison de Saint-Melaine pour en habiter une autre moins dispendieuse, ayant appartenu à ses ancêtres et placée derrière les halles.

Cette maison, revêtue d'ardoises, se trouvait entre un passage et une ruelle aboutissant à la rivière. Elle avait intérieurement des différences de niveau qui faisaient trébucher. Un vestibule étroit séparait la cuisine de la salle *où Mme Aubain se tenait tout le long du jour, assise près de la croisée dans un fauteuil de paille. Contre le lambris, peint en blanc, s'alignaient huit chaises d'acajou. Un vieux piano supportait, sous un baromètre, un tas pyramidal de boîtes et cartons. Deux bergères de tapisserie flanquaient la cheminée en marbre jaune et de style Louis XV. La pendule, au milieu, représentait un temple de Vesta, – et tout l'appartement sentait un peu le moisi, car le plancher était plus bas que le jardin.*

Lalla Romano (Einaudi, 1944) [R44].

Per mezzo secolo, le signore di Pont-l'Evêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la serva Felicita.

Per cento franchi all'anno, Felicita cucinava e accudiva alla casa, cuciva, lavava, stirava, sapeva imbrigliare un cavallo, ingrassare il pollame, fare il burro, e rimase fedele alla sua padrona, che per altro non era una persona amabile.

La signora Aubain aveva sposato un giovane bello ma senza beni di fortuna, che era morto all'inizio del 1809, lasciandole due bambini molto piccoli e parecchi debiti. Allora vendette le sue terre, salvo la fattoria di Toucques e quella di Geffosses, le cui rendite ammontavano a cinquemila franchi al massimo, e lasciò la sua casa di Saint-Mélaine per andare ad abitare in un'altra meno costosa, che era appartenuta ai suoi avi ed era situata dietro il mercato.

Questa casa, dal tetto d'ardesia, era posta tra una strada e un viottolo che metteva capo al fiume. Vi erano all'interno differenze di livello che facevano incespicare. Una stretta anticamera separava la cucina dalla sala dove la signora Aubain se ne stava tutto il giorno, seduta vicino alla finestra su un seggiolone di paglia. Contro la parete tinta di bianco erano allineate otto sedie di mogano. Sotto il barometro un vecchio pianoforte sosteneva una piramide di scatole di legno e di cartone. Ai lati del caminetto di marmo giallo stile Luigi XV vi erano due grandi poltrone ricamate. La pendola, nel mezzo, rappresentava un tempio di Vesta; e siccome l'impiantito era più basso del giardino, tutto l'appartamento aveva un leggero sentore di muffa.

Roberta Maccagnani (Mondadori, 1990).

Durante mezzo secolo le borghesi di Pont-l'Evêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la serva Felicita.

Per cento franchi all'anno cucinava, teneva dietro alla casa, cuciva, lavava, stirava, sapeva imbrigliare un cavallo, ingrassare il pollame, sbattere il burro; e rimase fedele alla padrona, che pure non era una persona amabile.

Aveva sposato un bel giovane squattrinato, morto all'inizio del 1809, lasciandole due bambini molto piccoli e una quantità di debiti. Vendette allora le sue proprietà, tranne il podere di Toucques e il podere di Geffosses, le cui rendite ammontavano a 5000 franchi al massimo, e lasciò la casa di Saint-Melaine per abitarne un'altra meno costosa, appartenuta ai suoi antenati e situata dietro il mercato.

Questa casa ricoperta d'ardesia si trovava tra un viottolo e una stradina che portava al fiume. Aveva all'interno dei dislivelli che facevano inciampare. Una anticamera stretta separava la cucina dalla "sala" dove la signora Aubain se ne stava tutto il giorno, seduta accanto alla vetrata in una poltrona di paglia. Contro l'intonaco bianco si allineavano otto sedie di mogano. Sotto un barometro un vecchio pianoforte reggeva una piramide di scatole e cartelle. Due "bergères" ricamate a piccolo punto erano poste ai lati del caminetto di marmo giallo in stile Luigi XV. La pendola nel mezzo rappresentava un tempio di Vesta, e tutto l'appartamento sapeva un po' di muffa perché il pavimento era più basso del giardino.

A.J. Krailsheimer (Oxford University Press, 2009)

FOR half a century the good ladies of Pont-l'Évêque envied Madame Aubain her servant Félicité.

For one hundred francs a year she did the cooking and the housework, sewing, washing, and ironing, she could bridle a horse, fatten up poultry, churn butter, and remained faithful to her mistress, who was not however a very likeable person.

She had married a handsome but impecunious young man, who died at the beginning of 1809, leaving her with two very young children and heavy debts. So she sold her properties, except the farms at Toucques and Geffosses, which brought in five thousand francs a year at the very most, and moved out of her house at Saint-Melaine into a less expensive one, which had been in her family for generations and stood behind the market-hall.

This house, faced with slates, lay between an alley and a lane running down to the river. Inside there were changes of level which could make you stumble. A narrow entrance hall separated the kitchen from the living-room, where madame Aubain sat all day long in a basketwork armchair by the window. Against the white-painted panelling were ranged eight mahogany chairs. On an old piano, beneath a barometer, rested a pyramid of piled-up boxes and cartons. A tapestry-wing chair stood on each side of a yellow marble mantelpiece in Louis XV style. The clock in the middle of it represented a temple of Vesta – and the whole place smelled slightly of mildew, for the floor was lower than the garden.

Fl (p. 17, ll. 1-3): *Pendant* ***un demi-siècle (1), (2)*** *les* ***bourgeoises (3)*** *de Pont-l'Evêque envièrent à Mme Aubain* ***sa (4) servante (5) Félicité (6).***

R44 (p. 5, ll. 1-2): *Per mezzo secolo, le* ***signore (3)*** *di Pont-l'Evêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la* ***[< >] (4)*** *serva* ***Felicita (6).***

Mac (p. 21, ll. 1-2): *Durante mezzo secolo* ***[< >] (2)*** *le borghesi di Pont-l'Evêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la* ***[< >] (4)*** *serva* ***Felicita (6).***

R44: **(3)** Romano's translation of 'bourgeoises' with 'signore' rather than with 'borghesi' produces a substantial loss of original meaning. Considering the extreme relevance of the 'bourgeois versus peasant' theme in Flaubert's,[48] and considering that this is the very first line of a painstakingly arranged tale,

[48] There are innumerable studies stressing a possible reading of 'Un cœur simple' as a satire against bourgeois society. The unequal relationship bourgeoise-peasant, mistress-servant is established at the very beginning and is reflected throughout the whole story at different levels. It seems important to reproduce the term as faithfully as possible in order to reproduce the social satire present in the original. This is possible in Italian as the Italian term 'borghese', even if it is not the exact equivalent of the French 'bourgeois', carries more or less the same meanings as in French: in the Larousse online dictionary 'bourgeois' = '1) Relatif aux bourgeois, à la classe moyenne: *Éducation bourgeoise;* 2) Qui sert les intérêts de la bourgeoisie, de la classe dominante: *Presse bourgeoise;* 3) Péjoratif. Qui est préoccupé de sa seule sécurité matérielle, de son confort au détriment de toute forme d'idéal ou d'esthétique. Qui va dans le sens du conservatisme, du respect des conventions sociales'<http://www.larousse.com/it/dizionari/francese/bourgeois/10633?q=bourgeois#10498> [accessed October 2013]; in the Treccani online dictionary 'borghese' = 1) In origine, abitante di un borgo, di una città, soprattutto con riferimento alla Francia; quindi, in genere, cittadino (contrapposto ai villani, ai rustici): *uno b. di Francia avea una sua moglie molto bella* (*Novellino*); 2) Appartenente alla borghesia come entità sociale, politica, economica: *un grasso b.*, *un modesto b.*; anche agg.: *la classe b.*; *di famiglia b.*; per estens., che si ispira o prende argomento dalla vita della borghesia: *il romanzo b. dell'Ottocento*; 3) Partecipe dello spirito della borghesia, talvolta con più o meno forte accentuazione polemica, che si precisa in due diverse accezioni: da un lato, uomo amante del vivere quieto e ordinato, attaccato al proprio benessere materiale, anche modesto, e perciò conservatore, cioè ligio all'ordine politico e morale costituito; e dall'altro, uomo amante di forme d'arte e di cultura tradizionali, avverso al nuovo e all'audace, e quindi assunto spesso come simbolo polemico di una certa aridità e angustia mentale. Come agg., ha sign. analoghi: *spirito*, *morale*, *mentalità b.*; *pregiudizî b.*; o equivale a gretto, meschino, privo di distinzione e raffinatezza: *maniere b.*; *gusti borghesi*. Con l'una e con l'altra accezione, sia come sost. sia come agg., è frequente la locuz. *piccolo-borghese* (calco del fr. *petit-bourgeois*), che in origine e in senso proprio significa appartenente alla piccola borghesia, ma che nell'uso com. è intesa con valore restrittivo, attribuendo all'agg. *piccolo* la funzione di sottolineare le idee accessorie di angustia, meschinità, grettezza che a *borghese* si attribuiscono' <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/borghese/> [acessed October 2013]

should Romano not have kept the word 'bourgeoises', translating it with 'borghesi'?[49] The word 'signora' in Italian does not so directly convey the same level of social class criticism than 'borghese'. In addition, Romano's lexical departure from the original produces a repetition of a the word 'signora' ('signora' follows four words after) absent in the original opening; **(4)** Romano does not translate the original possessive adjective, but translates only with 'la' probably in order to respect the original rhythm. **(6)** The Italianization of the main character's name, although it might sound rather out of date today, was quite normal practice under Fascism. If one considers the importance of the protagonist's name ('félicité' means 'happiness' in French), its translation becomes essential to transfer its subtextual implications into Italian. [50]

Mac: **(2)** The pause present in the ST, which could have been easily transposed into Italian, has been deleted by Maccagnani. **(4)** The French possessive adjective 'sa' ('la sua' in Italian) has been translated only with the determinative article 'la', probably in order to respect the original rhythm. **(6)** The Italianization of the name 'Félicité' may sound rather 'outdated', considering that the translation was written in 1990, but it is necessary to transfer fully its original implications into Italian.

Fl (p. 17, ll. 4-8): *Pour cent francs par an, **(1) elle (3)** faisait la cuisine et le ménage, cousait, lavait, repassait, savait brider un cheval, engraisser les volailles, battre le beurre, **(5)** et resta fidèle à sa maîtresse, – qui cependant n'était pas une personne agréable.*

R44 (p. 5, ll. 3-7): *Per cento franchi all'anno, **Felicita (3)** cucinava e accudiva alla casa, cuciva, lavava, stirava, sapeva imbrigliare un cavallo, ingrassare il pollame,*

[49] Krailsheimer tries to reproduce the connotation of social class criticism present in the word translating it with 'the good ladies' (p. 3, l. 1), evocative of those of Mrs Gaskell's *Cranford.*

[50] The name of the servant is charged with irony, but also with the author's tenderness towards his main character: although Félicité's story is definitely not a happy one, the 'simple minded' servant seems quite happy about her life.

fare il burro, e rimase fedele alla sua padrona, che per altro non era una persona amabile.

Mac (p. 21, ll. 3-6): *Per cento franchi all'anno **[< >] (1)** cucinava, teneva dietro alla casa, cuciva, lavava, stirava, sapeva imbrigliare un cavallo, ingrassare il pollame, sbattere il burro; **(5)** e rimase fedele alla padrona, che pure non era una persona amabile.*

> **R44**: **(3)** Romano, despite Flaubert's use of the personal pronoun 'elle' (which as we have seen is a distinctive Flaubertian stylistic device) referring to the story's main character, substitutes it with the proper name 'Felicita', considerably changing the opening of this story.[51]
>
> **Mac**: Maccagnani's version is literally faithful to the ST with the exception of the deletion of a comma at the start **(1)**, and the substitution of the original comma with a semicolon before the second last sentence **(5)**. This last change slightly alters the original effect so cleverly created by Flaubert: in the ST the fact that Félicité remained faithful to her mistress, who is not a pleasant person, is ironically mentioned just as another element of the list of the things Félicité can do.

Fl (p. 17, ll. 9-17): ***Elle (1)** avait épousé un beau garçon **(2)** sans fortune, **(3)** mort au commencement de 1809, en lui laissant deux enfants très jeunes avec une quantité de dettes. Alors elle vendit ses immeubles, sauf la ferme de Toucques et **la ferme (4)** de Geffosses, dont les rentes montaient à 5000 francs tout au plus, et elle quitta sa maison de Saint-Melaine pour en habiter une autre moins dispendieuse, **(5)** ayant appartenu à ses ancêtres et **(5)** placée derrière les halles.*

R44 (p. 5, ll. 8-17): ***La signora Aubain (1)** aveva sposato un giovane bello **ma (2)** senza beni di fortuna, **che era (3)** morto all'inizio del 1809, lasciandole due bambini molto piccoli e parecchi debiti. Allora vendette le sue terre, salvo la fattoria di*

[51] Krailsheimer faithfully translates 'elle' with 'she'.

Toucques e ***quella (4)*** *di Geffosses, le cui rendite ammontavano a cinquemila franchi al massimo, e lasciò la sua casa di Saint-Mélaine per andare ad abitare un'altra meno costosa,* ***che era (5)*** *appartenuta ai suoi avi ed* ***era (5)*** *situata dietro il mercato.*

Mac (p. 21, ll. 7-14): *Aveva sposato un bel giovane squattrinato, morto all'inizio del 1809, lasciandole due bambini molto piccoli e una quantità di debiti. Vendette allora le sue proprietà, tranne il podere di Toucques e il podere di Geffosses, le cui rendite ammontavano a 5000 franchi al massimo, e lasciò la casa di Saint-Melaine per abitarne un'altra meno costosa, appartenuta ai suoi antenati e situata dietro il mercato.*

R44: Romano's translation of the passage appears to be less literal than Maccagnani's.[52] **(1)** Again, Romano chooses to clarify the subject of the third paragraph with a considerable loss of the original effect: in the original it is not immediately clear that the subject of this third paragraph is Mme Aubaine, and the French reader for a moment might think that 'elle' refers to Félicité, the subject of the preceding paragraph.[53] Then he soon realizes, not without a hint of irony (who might have married Félicité?; she could not possibly own properties of her own; etc. etc.), that 'elle' refers to Mme Aubain. In addition, in the ST this small misunderstanding confers on the following story of Félicité's ill-starred love affair (told at the start of ch. 2) an aura of irony absent in the Italian version: (when a French reader reads about her love affair he will be reminded of this initial misunderstanding); **(2)** the arbitrary addition of the adversative conjuction 'ma' produces a (slight) reduction of original irony issuing from the oxymoronic opposition between 'beau' and 'sans fortune'.

[52] For example, Maccagnani translates 'avec une quantité de dettes' literally with 'con una quantità di debiti' while Romano translates more freely substituting the preposition 'avec' with the conjunction 'e' and 'una quantità di' with 'parecchi'; Maccagnani translates literally 'pour **en** habiter une autre moins dispendieuse' with 'per abitar**ne** un'altra meno costosa'; Romano translates 'per andare ad abitare **in** un'altra meno costosa'.

[53] Jenson observes how important is this initial confusion between Félicité and her mistress: 'Her thing-like status is compounded by passages in which her identity seems to fuse with or fade in and out of that of her employer. On the opening page of the story, Flaubert makes it difficult to distinguish grammatically between the subject status of Félicité and that of her mistress, Mme Aubain, by alternating descriptions of the two women, each of whom is designated only by the pronoun "she"' in cit., p.111.

More importantly, Romano's use of 'ma' introduces in the text the voice and comment of a narrator absent in the ST;[54] **(3)** unnecessary addition of the explicative relative pronoun 'che' absent in the ST: the translator's choice introduces, again, a comment of the narrative voice, thereby reducing the original impersonality;[55] **(4)** arbitrary deletion of the original repetition of 'la ferme' substituted with the demonstrative pronoun 'quella' and consequent loss of original rhythm;[56] **(5)** further arbitrary rephrasing adding the relative pronoun 'che' plus verb and consequent reduction of original impersonality.

Mac: Maccagnani's version is quite literal.

With regard to the last paragraph of the story's beginning (as selected for the purposes of our analysis), the description of Mme Aubain's house, we can see that, in general, Romano continues to maintain a lower degree of literality than Maccagnani.[57] I would also like to highlight Romano's strategy of 'de-personification' of the objects described. A few examples from the passage:

Fl: ***Elle avait*** *intérieurement des différences de niveau qui faisaient trébucher.*

R44: ***Vi erano*** *all'interno differenze di livello che facevano incespicare.*[58]

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[54] Krailsheimer too adds the adversative conjunction 'but': 'a handsome but impecunious young man' (p. 3, l. 8).

[55] For Krailsheimer instead the introduction of the relative pronoun is necessary: 'who died at the beginning of 1809' (p. 3, l. 9).

[56] Krailsheimer too deletes the original repetition and translates 'except the farms at Toucques and Geffosses' (p. 3, l. 11).

[57] For example, Maccagnani translates the French 'revêtue d'ardoises' (literally 'rivestita d'ardesia) with 'ricoperta d'ardesia', Romano interprets the original much more freely translating 'dal tetto d'ardesia' [with a slate roof]; Romano unnecessarily inverts the French 'un vestibule étroit' translating 'una stretta anticamera': while a syntactical adjustement is necessary for English (Krailsheimer translates 'A narrow entrance'), the same is not true of Italian where a literal translation of the noun and adjective would sound most natural. Maccagnani, more respectful of the ST, translates 'una anticamera stretta';

[58] Maccagnani translates faithfully 'Aveva all'interno dei dislivelli che facevano inciampare'. Krailsheimer translates 'Inside there were changes of level which could make you stumble'.

Fl: *Contre le lambris, peint en blanc,* ***s'alignaient*** *huit chaises d'acajou.*

R 44*: Contro la parete tinta di bianco* ***erano allineate*** *otto sedie di mogano.*[59]

Fl: *Deux bergères de tapisserie* ***flanquaient*** *la cheminée en marbre jaune et de style Louis XV*

R 44: ***Ai lati*** *del caminetto di marmo giallo stile Luigi XV* ***vi erano*** *due grandi poltrone ricamate*[60]

In this highly pictorial passage, dense with psychological subtext,[61] the syntax confers on the objects described the role of protagonists of the scene. Grammatically, these objects are the active subjects of the verbs. On the most literal, naïve level of reading they are perceived as personified. This might be the way Félicité perceives these objects as she lives and moves silently among them for so many years. The perception of objects as protagonists might imply the high status given to these by the humble servant. Or it may be designed to produce a beautiful subtextual image of the silent dialogue and relationship of devoted service that Félicité has established with these familiar objects. The extraordinary effect is that of a scene wrapped in an atmosphere of presence-absence, where the transitory life of people lingers in the longer-lasting objects that surrounded them. Romano, by not reproducing faithfully Flaubert's arrangement of syntax, waters down the original effect, introducing a more obvious authorial perspective.

In general, the analysis of the opening of Romano's translation reveals a major degree of freedom compared to the more literal non-writerly translation by

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[59] Maccagnani faithfully reproduces the chairs as active subjects of the verb 'Contro l'intonaco bianco si allineavano otto sedie di mogano.' In this passage Krailsheimer does not make an effort to transfer in the English text the objects' role of subjects depersonalizing them similarly to Romano.

[60] Maccagnani translates 'Due "bergères" ricamate a piccolo punto erano poste ai lati del caminetto'.

[61] See Jenson, pp. 111-113. In Flaubert the distinction between inanimate/animate is subtle and significant. For example, Jenson cites the parrot appearing in the story in three different forms: alive (real), dead/stuffed (real), transfigured (unreal).

Maccagnani.[62] In particular, Romano changes the original text by systematically retouching the original punctuation and syntax: making explicit what is implicit in the source text (filling in ellipsis); adding inopportune narrator's comments; introducing logical connectors to link sentences, substituting nouns to original pronouns and depersonalizing the original description of the objects present in Mme Aubain's house. Finally, a careful examination of Romano's version compared to the original and to a non-writerly translation shows that the writer's freer linguistic choices tend to normalize the original author's distinctive style.

It is the aim of the next section, selecting a few of the most relevant examples from a careful analysis of the whole text, to verify whether what was found for the beginning can also be observed throughout the whole story, and to investigate further the translator's strategy in the hope of identifying an objective pattern in Romano's linguistic choices.

4.2 A few relevant examples from the selective analysis of the whole text

4.2.1 Subversion of the original division into paragraphs and sentences

The examples listed below show how Romano can change the original layout of the text and its punctuation where it could have been easily reproduced. In order to show the reader the frequency of Romano's manipulations, and the objectivity of the analysis, I will consider some examples taken only from the first 20 pages.

- From the beginning of the first paragraph of chapter 2.

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[62] The same conclusion of a difference in degree of freedom towards the source text by the two translators is also stated by Ida Porfido's study on Romano translating 'Un cœur simple' where she compares a brief passage of Romano's translation to Maccagnani's: 'les deux traductions [...] se situent [...] aux antipodes: l'auteur de la première, qui figure à juste titre dans la collection 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' (il n'aurait pu en être autrement), subvertit ponctuation et syntaxe flaubertiennes [...]; la deuxième traductrice, en revanche, s'efforce de rester au plus près du texte de départ.' See Ida Porfido 'Lalla Romano traductrice de Flaubert' in *Autour de la retraduction. Perspectives littéraires européennes*, edited by E. Monti e P. Schnyder (Paris: Orizons, 2011), pp. 113-126 (p. 120).

In the first paragraph of chapter 2, after the first sentence (which states that Félicité has had her love story like anybody else), Flaubert gives a quick account of Félicité's personal history. This is all in one paragraph:

Elle avait eu, comme une autre, son histoire d'amour. ***(1)*** *Son père, un maçon, s'était tué en tombant d'un échafaudage.* ***(2)*** *Puis sa mère mourut, ses soeurs se dispersèrent,* ***(3)*** *un fermier la recueillit, et l'employa toute petite à garder les vaches dans la champagne.*[63]

Romano translates:

> *Aveva avuto anche lei, come qualunque altra, la sua storia d'amore.* ***(1)***
>
> *Suo padre, che era muratore, si era ucciso cadendo da un'impalcatura,* ***(2)*** *poi era morta la madre, e le sorelle si erano disperse.* ***(3)*** *Fu raccolta da un mezzadro che la mandò, piccola com'era, nei campi a pascolare le mucche.*[64]

(1) Romano arbitrarily transforms the original one paragraph into two paragraphs, isolating in one single paragraph the opening sentence '*Elle avait eu, comme une autre, son histoire d'amour*'. **(2)** She freely changes the original punctuation and division into sentences: Flaubert, in the second sentence tells the story of Félicité's father: '*Son père, un maçon, s'était tué en tombant d'un échaufadage.*', and then, in the third sentence, he compresses into one the story of the rest of the family and of Félicité going to work as a cowherd on a farm: '*Puis sa mère mourut, ses soeurs se dispersèrent, un fermier la recuillit, et*

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[63] Fl (p. 20, ll. 1-11).

[64] R44 (p. 7, ll. 1-13). Although the phrase 'se tuer' does not impute deliberate intentionality to the victim – *Le Petit Robert* [(*Dictionnaire alphabétique e analogique de la langue française* (Paris : Le Robert, 1973), p. 1849] specifically lists accidental death among the meanings of 'se tuer' ['Être victim d'un accident mortel (surtout quand la personne a une part de responsabilité dans l'accident) 'Au risque de se tuer, il se laissa tomber' (Zola)] – the element of possible carelessness, and the feelings of anger that bereaved relatives are sometimes said to feel against the departed, would allow Romano's 'si era ucciso' as a simplified but valid version of 's'était tué'. Krailsheimer's English version 'had been killed', is neutral in this regard; perhaps a hint of resentment could have been appropriate here: 'had got himself killed'?

l'employa toute petite à garder les vaches dans la campagne.' Romano, after separating the first sentence ('*Elle avait eu, comme une autre, son histoire d'amour*') from the rest in one paragraph of its own, puts the story of the family all together: '*Suo padre, che era muratore, si era ucciso cadendo da un'impalcatura, poi era morta la madre, e le sorelle si erano disperse.*' and then isolates in one sentence of its own Félicité going to work in a farm: '*Fu raccolta da un mezzadro che la mandò, piccola com'era, nei campi a pascolare le mucche*'. Romano's changes seriously compromise the textual implications of the original text where Flaubert dedicates a separate sentence only to the story of Félicité's father dying when she was a girl. The original arrangement might be functional to the production of psychological subtext: is Félicité's ill-starred love story related to the death of the father? We do not know, but by reading the original some readers might wonder about the importance of the father in the woman's life. There are studies focusing on the fact that 'Un cœur simple' is a fatherless story.[65] Surely, the death of the father is important as it determines Félicité's future as a cowherd and subsequently as a servant. In Romano the sequence of spotlights on different scenes is changed and a considerable part of the psychological story of Félicité is lost.[66]

- At the beginning of chapter 2 Romano makes one single paragraph of four originally separate ones.

In the original we read:

Un autre soir, sur la route de Beaumont, elle voulut dépasser un grand chariot de foin qui avançait lentement, et en frôlant les roues elle reconnut Théodore.

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[65] See for instance Kris Vassilev, 'Le Père absent', cit.; Winifred Woodhull, 'Configurations of the Family in "Un cœur simple"' in *Comparative Literature*, Spring 1987, Vol. 39, Issue 2, pp. 139-162.

[66] Maccagnani respects the original arrangement. Krailsheimer too isolates the first sentence in one independent paragraph, respecting the original arrangement of sentences.

Il l'aborda d'un air tranquille, disant qu'il fallait tout pardonner, puisque c'était "la faute de la boisson".

Elle ne sut que répondre et avait envie de s'enfuir.

Aussitôt il parla des récoltes... [67]

Lalla Romano translates:

Un'altra sera, sulla strada di Beaumont, volle oltrepassare un carro di fieno che avanzava lentamente, e nel passare accanto alle ruote, riconobbe Teodoro. Lui le rivolse tranquillamente la parola, dicendo che bisognava perdonare, perché era stata "colpa del vino". Lei non sapeva cosa rispondergli, e aveva voglia di scappare. Ma lui incominciò a parlare dei raccolti...[68]

> Flaubert's division into small paragraphs creates pauses and silences, "blancs" as Proust observed. Within the silences, the French reader shares the protagonist's experience: her embarrassment, inexpertise, naivety, her fear and desire to escape. The last silence, when Félicité wants to run away, lends irony to the following scene: Théodore, immediately starts talking of other matters taking advantage of her confusion. The sequence of movie-like "shots" in this scene, creating its irony, is considerably compromised by Romano's unnecessary and arbritary deletion of its pauses and silences.[69]

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[67] Fl (p. 20, l. 26; p. 21, ll. 1-10).

[68] R 44 (p. 7, ll. 29-34; p. 8, ll. 1-2).

[69] Krailsheimer and Maccagnani respect the original arrangement. More examples from the following page where Romano compresses in only one paragraph three original paragraphs, reworking the original separation of sentences and not respecting the original full stops (I indicate the separation into different paragraphs with a slash). **Fl** (p. 22, ll. 8-10): *Le moment arrivé, elle courut vers l'amoureux./À sa place, elle trouva un de ses amis./Il lui apprit qu'elle ne devait plus le revoir....* ; **R 44** (p. 9, ll. 1-4): *Giunto il momento Felicita corse incontro al suo innamorato,* ***ma,*** *al suo posto, trovò uno dei suoi amici,* ***dal quale*** *seppe che non l'avrebbe piú riveduto...* Again, the original effect is considerably compromised. The silences, produced by the separation into different paragraphs, are charged with unstated meaning. The reader of the original experiences all the eagerness of Félicité towards her lover, all her disappointment and the cruel irony of her destiny. The whole scene is kept very impersonal and there is no narrator's intrusion. Romano deletes the pauses, introducing the narrator's explanatory voice and watering down the powerful visuality of the scene. A few lines further on Romano compresses into one paragraph two original ones. **Fl** (p. 22, ll. 21-

4.2.2 Substitution of the original personal pronoun 'elle' with 'Félicité'

Often, Romano explicitates the original pronoun 'elle' (referring to the protagonist) as 'Felicita', obviously compromising the original style and effect. As we have already seen from the analysis of the opening, Romano often resolves the ambiguities of Flaubert's pronouns, naming persons or things that the original leaves unnamed, [70] but here I will limit the examples to the use of the protagonist's name as it is a very effective illustration of how Romano changes the whole perspective of the original text: whereas in the original Félicité may be perceived more as a point of view, a perspective through which the reader experiences the story rather than a visible, autonomous, three-dimensional character, in Romano this skilful effect ('se transporter dans les personnages, et non les tirer à soi')[71] is compromised. Romano's changes weaken this movement of the reader towards the main character, compromising the reader's identification with Félicité, putting a distance between them. As the organizing, explanatory dimension of the narrator's voice is increased, Romano's Félicité becomes more an acting character in a narrated story, seen from the narrator's point of view.

I would also like to stress that the cases where the substitution of the original pronoun is necessary for the sake of clarity are really few in number, and that most of the time, the original pronoun could have been maintained. In fact, since in Italian the

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28): *Devant l'auberge, elle questionna une bourgeoise en capeline de veuve, et qui précisément cherchait une cuisinière. La jeune fille ne savait pas grand-chose, mais paraissait avoir tant de bonne volonté et si peu d'exigences, que Mme Aubain finit par dire: - "Soit, je vous accepte!"/Félicité, un quart d'heure après, était installée chez elle.* ; **R 44** (p. 9, ll. 16-22) : *Davanti alla locanda si rivolse a una signora in mantellina da vedova, che cercava precisamente una cuoca. La ragazza non sapeva fare gran che, ma si vedeva che aveva tanta buona volontà e cosí poche pretese, che la signora Aubain finí per dire: – Va bene, vi prendo – . Un quarto d'ora dopo, Felicita aveva già preso posto in casa sua.* The original pause before the last sentence enhances the irony of the passage: it took only fifteen minutes to decide the whole of Félicité's life. The decision was determined by a series of unfortunate circumstances (the father's death, her unlucky love story, etc.) and finally taken not by Félicité but by somebody else (Mme Aubain). Maccagnani and Krailsheimer reproduce the original arrangement.

[70] And she keeps doing this throughout the text (eg. Fl (p. 18, ll. 9-10) (E.g. ***Elle*** *communiquait avec une chambre plus petite,/*R44 (p. 6, l. 6): ***Questa camera*** *comunicava con un'altra più piccola*),

[71] Flaubert, *Correspondance*, à George Sand 15-16 Dec 1866.

personal pronoun is often omitted (because it is not necessary for conjugating the verb), Flaubert's effect of ambiguity could sometimes even have been enhanced in Italian. That might be seen as an unjustified deviation from the source text, but is 'toning down' the ambiguity any less of a deviation?

As we have already seen, after translating 'elle' with 'Felicita' in the second paragraph of the opening, Romano does it again soon after, at the start of the third last paragraph of the first chapter:

Fl (p. 18, l. 22): ***Elle*** *se levait dès l'aube,*

R44 (p. 6, l. 18):***Felicita*** *si alzava all'alba;*[72]

Other examples from the text:

Fl (p. 22, l. 8): *Le moment arrivé,* ***elle*** *courut vers l'amoureux,*

R44 (p. 9, ll. 3-4): *Giunto il momento,* ***Felicita*** *corse incontro al* ***suo*** *innamorato*[73]

Fl (p.29, ll.29-30): ***Cette*** *faiblesse agaçait M.me Aubain,*

R44 (p.16, ll.5-6): *La debolezza di* ***Felicita*** *irritava la signora Aubain*[74]

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[72] For all the examples listed here Maccagnani translates accurately, respecting the ST use of the pronoun. Krailsheimer too translates faithfully 'She would get up at dawn'.

[73] The ST is much more subtle and rapid: Félicité runs towards her lover not only physically but istinctively without second thoughts, and with all her inner self. This is a beautiful psychological description of the protagonist's love experience, one of the many occasions in which so much human subtext is implied in Flaubert's prose. The prodigious effect of this line is completely lost in the translation where the introduction of the name introduces a distance, a narrator describing Félicité's action; the possessive 'suo' also over-emphasizes her thought-process.

[74] Here Romano decides to refer explicitly to Félicité. This choice appears even more in contrast with the ST as it introduces a repetition of the name Félicité absent in the ST, as this second added Félicité comes shortly after the 'Félicité' starting the first sentence of the paragraph: ***Félicité*** *se prit d'affection pour eux. Elle leur acheta une couverture, des chemises, un fourneau; évidemment ils l'exploitaient. Cette faiblesse agaçait Mme Aubain.* One might observe that 'Cette faiblesse' is a more general category than 'La debolezza di

For space reasons, I will put more examples in footnotes.[75]

4.2.3 Depersonification of objects

As already observed in our analysis of the opening, the central role played by objects in certain passages of the 'Un cœur simple' appears completely or partially compromised by Romano's manipulation of Flaubert's syntax. A survey of the whole text shows other situations where Romano re-adjusts the role of objects. Here is one example from the passage describing the Toucques farm:

Felicita' – the point being that her employer, struggling to maintain her position, cannot afford any kind of weakness, her own or anybody else's, so 'this' weakness is an instance of a general threat, not something she dislikes about her servant.

[75] For the examples listed here Maccagnani and Krailsheimer respect the ST use of the pronoun. Fl (p. 31, ll. 1-2): *Quand* ***elle*** *avait fait à la porte une génuflexion, elle s'avançait sous la haute nef,* / R44 (p. 17, ll. 1-2): *Dopo aver fatto la genuflessione sulla porta,* ***Felicita*** *avanzava sotto l'alta navata* [Again, Romano introduces the name 'Félicité' absent in the ST at a very important moment in the story: at the start of a new chapter, chapter 3, the central one. The masterly effect created by Flaubert's use of 'elle', instead of the maid's proper name, immediately links the beginning of this chapter with the end of the previous one (*Mais une occupation vint la distraire; à partir de Noël, elle mena tous les jours la petite fille au catéchisme* Fl (p. 30, ll. 3-5). This immediate link with the end of previous chapter enhances the effect of making the reader aware of the extreme simplicity with which Félicité takes on religion (with not much questioning, like everything else). Again, the extraordinary subtextual description of Félicité's simple psychology (which is, in the end, what the story is about) obtained by a skilful stylistic arrangement, is seriously compromised by Romano's arbitrary adjustments.]; Fl (p. 34, ll. 14-15): *Tout de suite,* ***elle*** *dressait son couvert,* / R44 (p. 20, ll. 5-6): *Subito* ***Felicita*** *metteva un piatto per lui,*; Fl (p. 37, ll. 34-35): ***Elle*** *se pencha sur la carte;*/ R44 (p. 23, l. 24): ***Felicita*** *si chinò sulla carta,*; Fl (p. 38, ll. 35-36): *En les apercevant par les carreaux,* ***elle*** *se rappela sa lessive;*/ R44 (p. 24, ll. 20-21): *Scorgendole attraverso la finestra,* ***Felicita*** *si ricordò del suo bucato,*; Fl (p. 42, ll. 27-28): ***Elle*** *arrosait leurs feuilles,*/ R 44 (p. 28, l. 1): ***Felicita*** *innaffiava le foglie,*; Fl (p. 45, ll. 1-3): *Il mourut;* ***elle*** *fit dire une messe pour le repos de son âme.*/ R '44 (p. 30, ll. 16-17): *Quando morí,* ***Felicita*** *fece dire una Messa per la pace della sua anima.*; Fl (p. 47, ll. 30-31) ***Elle*** *l'avait posé sur l'herbe*/ R 44 (p. 32, l. 26): ***Felicita*** *l'aveva posato sull'erba*; Fl (p. 51, l. 8): ***Elle*** *l'enferma dans sa chambre*/ R 44 (p. 35, l. 32): ***Felicita*** *se lo chiuse nella sua camera*; Fl (p. 53, l. 37) ***Elle*** *chancela* / R 44 (p. 38, l. 18) ***Felicita*** barcollò; Fl (p. 54, l. 8): ***Elle*** *avait une rente de trois-cent quatre-vingt francs*/ R 44 (p. 38, l. 28): ***Felicita*** *aveva una rendita di 380 franchi.*

Fl (p. 27, ll. 13-14) *Un dressoir en chêne* ***supportait*** *toutes sortes d'ustensiles, des brocs, des assiettes...*;

R44 (p.13, ll.41-41) ***Su di una*** *scansia di quercia* ***vi erano*** *ogni sorta di utensili: brocche piatti, scodelle....*[76];

4.2.4 General manipulation of original syntax, reducing impersonality and watering down the pictorial quality of the source text

In general, as already observed for the beginning, Romano tends systematically to manipulate the original syntax, thus reducing some of the effects carefully arranged by Flaubert. In particular, she tends, with all a series of small adjustments, to make explicit, clarify and bring to the textual level what in the source text is subtextual, unsaid, left to the reader to interpret, and in doing this she compromises the impersonality of the original, making the presence of a narrator more visible.[77] At the

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[76] Just one more example from Flaubert's masterly description of Félicité's room in ch 4. In this description of Félicité's bazaar-like room, the most disparate objects crowding her bedroom play the role of characters. This personification is weakened by Romano's failure to reproduce the table's grammatical role as active subject of the verb 'supporter': Fl (p. 51, ll. 15-17) *une table; près du lit de sangle,* ***supportait*** *un pot à l'eau, deux peignes...*; R (p. 35, ll. 39-40) ***su di un tavolo****, vicino alla branda,* ***c'erano*** *una brocca, due pettini....*

[77] One of the most common arbitrary changes is the introduction of logical connectors to link different sentences in a determined relation absent in the ST. A few examples: Fl (p. 24, ll. 32-35) *Le taureau avait acculé Félicité contre un clairevoie; sa bave lui rejaillissait à la figure, une seconde de plus il l'éventrait. Elle eut le temps de se couler...* / R 44 (p. 12, ll. 23-25) *Il toro aveva serrato Felicita contro un cancello;* ***già*** *la sua bava la spruzzava sul viso, ancora un istante e l'avrebbe sventrata.* ***Ma*** *ella ebbe il tempo di infilarsi...* ; two lines later: Fl (p. 25, l. 38; p. 26, ll. 1-2) *Cet événement, pendant bien des années, fut un sujet de conversation à Pont-l'Evêque. Félicité n'en tira aucun orgueil.../* R44 (p. 12, ll. 27-29) *Questo avvenimento, per parecchi anni, fu argomento di conversazione a Pont-l'Evêque.* ***Ma*** *Felicita non ne trasse motivo di orgoglio...*; three lines further on: Fl (p. 26, ll. 4-9) *Virginie l'occupait exclusivement; – car elle eut à la suite de son effroi, une affection nerveuse, et M. Poupart, le docteur, conseilla les bains de mer de Trouville./ Dans ces temps-là, ils n'étaient pas fréquentés. Mme Aubain pris des renseignements.../* R 44 (p. 12, ll. 32-38) *Si occupava esclusivamente di Virginia, che aveva avuto, in seguito allo spavento provato, un disturbo nervoso,* ***tanto che*** *il* ***dottor Poupart*** *consigliò i bagni di mare a Trouville./A quell'epoca* ***la spiaggia di Trouville*** *non era* ***ancora*** *frequentata. La signora Aubain prese* ***ogni sorta di*** *informazioni...*; the description of Virginie's reaction to be sent to boarding school: Fl (p. 33, ll. 15-16) *L'enfant n'objecta rien. Félicité soupirait, trouvant Madame insensible. Puis elle songea que sa maîtresse, peut-être, avait raison. Ces choses dépassaient sa compétence./* R

risk of being repetitious, I want to follow this same trend through the story, showing how Romano's decisions often reveal failures of reading and interpreting. Claudio Magris writes that translation is 'la prima forma di critica letteraria, tanto è vero che scopre subito i punti deboli di un testo'. The study of mistranslations can, on the other hand, highlight the strong points of a great writer like Flaubert.[78]

The following example highlights how 'small' changes to the original syntax can produce considerable losses of original implications (this points to the fact that there is an exact calculation behind the arrangement of every element of Flaubert's original text in order to produce a certain effect). Here Flaubert 'describes' the disappearance from sight of the chariot and horses on the second meeting of Félicité and Théodore:

> Fl. (p. 21, ll. 22-23): *Puis* ***sans commandement****, ils tournèrent à droite*
>
> R 44 (p. 8, l. 18): *Poi,* ***istintivamente*** *svoltarono a destra*
>
> The translation of 'sans commandement' [without a command] with 'istintivamente' [istinctively] introduces the narrator's filter, his interpretation of the narrated scene rather than Flaubert's impassive observation of facts. Romano's change reduces the original impersonality and the pictoriality of the scene.[79]

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44 (p. 19, ll. 9-11) *La bambina non disse nulla;* ***ma*** *Felicita sospirava,* ***e, secondo lei, la Signora era troppo severa****.* ***Ma poi*** *pensò che la Signora forse aveva ragione: queste cose oltrepassavano la sua competenza*; Fl (p. 35, ll. 31-32) *"Victor!" Il leva la tête; elle s'élançait, quand on retira l'échelle tout à coup./*R44 (21, ll.22-24) – *Vittorio! – Lui alzò la testa* ***e allora*** *lei gli si slanciò incontro,* ***ma*** *fu improvvisamente ritirata la scala.*; Fl (p. 25, l. 21) *Virginie s'affaiblissait./* R44 (p. 25, l. 3) ***Intanto*** *Virginia deperiva*; Fl (p. 48, ll. 28-32) *le petit cercle de ses idées se rétrécit encore, et le carillon des cloches, le mugissement des boeufs, n'existaient plus. Tous les êtres fonctionnaient avec le silence des fantômes./* R44 (p. 33, ll. 19-22) *Il* ***già*** *piccolo cerchio delle sue idee si restrinse ancor* ***piú. Per lei*** *non esisteva* ***ormai né*** *lo squillo delle campane* ***né*** *il muggito dei buoi,* ***ma*** *tutti gli esseri* ***si muovevano*** *in un silenzio di fantasmi.*

[78] Carmignani, *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 32.

[79] Another example where the impersonality is compromised by a non-respect of the original economy of expresssion: Fl (p. 36, ll. 31-33): *Les bonnes soeurs trouvaient qu'elle était affectueuse, mais délicate. La moindre émotion l'énervait. Il fallut abandonner le piano./* R44 (p. 22, ll. 22-25): *Le brave suore la trovavano affettuosa, ma* ***troppo*** *delicata. La minima*

A similar example of a small change considerably changing the original comes at the very end of the story, in Romano's translation of the description of the expression on Félicité's lips as she is dying:

Fl: *Une vapeur d'azur monta dans la chambre de Félicité. Elle avança les narines, en la humant avec une sensualité mystique; puis ferma les paupières.* ***Ses lèvres souriaient***

R44 ... ***con le labbra sorrideva***

> The source text ambiguity produced by the description of Félicité's lips, without connecting them to her personality or will, allows the French reader to wonder whether she died happily, in peace and smiling, or whether the smile is only an involuntary movement of the body. If the second possibility is the correct one, then the smile points not to a final state of happiness, but to the continuing limitations and misery of her life, conferring additional irony on this last image of Félicité. In Romano's translation the ambiguity is lost, and the irony substantially reduced. Maccagnani and Krailsheimer succed in reproducing the source text effects of ambiguity and irony by literally reproducing Flaubert's original arrangement.[80]

Sometimes, the change to the original picture is caused by a non literal-translation of the original tense, as happens in the translation of the following passage:

Fl (p. 22, ll. 14-16): *Ce fut un chagrin désordonné. Elle se jeta par terre,* ***poussa des cris (1), appela (2)*** *le bon Dieu, et* ***gémit (3)*** *toute seule dans la campagne jusqu'au soleil levant.*

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emozione ***le dava una crisi di nervi. Si dovette anche farle abbandonare lo studio del piano***/Maccagnani (p. 39, ll. 7-9): *Le suorine la trovavano affettuosa, ma delicata. La minima emozione la prostrava. Dovette smettere il pianoforte.*

[80] Maccagnani (p. 59, l. 28): *Le sue labbra sorridevano.* Krailsheimer (p. 40, l. 4)*:Her lips smiled.*

R44 (p. 9, ll. 9-12): *Fu un dolore sregolato. Si gettò per terra,* ***gridava (1), chiamava (2)*** *il buon Dio e* ***stette tutta la notte****, sola, in mezzo alla campagna,* ***a gemere (3)*** *fino al levar del sole.*

> Flaubert's use of the remote past skilfully inscribes and isolates the scene, stressing its fundamental role determining the servant's future. The event is thus masterfully placed in Félicité's consciousness as well as at a visual level (the small figure of Félicité, almost lost in an enormous dark landscape).This is the only moment where Félicité pours out her feelings in such a resounding manner. Her limited sense of perception could indeed have been determined by this event. The visual effect and subtextual relevance of this fundamental passage, which will echo troughout the whole story, is watered down by Romano's use of the imperfect tense and the transformation of 'gémit' in 'stette tutta la notte a gemere'. The high visual quality of the original text gets muffled by the more visible mediation of a narrative voice.

Lastly, a representative example of a passage showing that while in the source text the reader, as pointed out by Marsh, participates in Félicité's limited powers of perception, the same does not happen for the Italian reader:

Fl (p. 24, ll. 21-22): *La cour est en pente, la maison dans le milieu; et la mer, au loin, apparaît comme une tache grise.*

R44 (p. 11, ll. 12-14): *Il cortile* ***della cascina*** *è in pendenza,* ***e*** *la casa* ***è posta*** *nel mezzo:* ***il*** *mare, in lontananza, pare una macchia grigia.*[81]

[81] This is the same passage taken by Marsh to demonstrate Flaubert's masterly skills in driving the reader to see through Félicité's mode of limited visual perception: 'Félicité, M.me Aubain, Paul and Virginie would picnic from time to time at the old, memory-filled farmhouse in Geffosses. Flaubert neatly slips in a detail letting the reader know that these trips were made "Quand le temps était clair" (...). On a clear day long-distance sight is easy but not for Félicité, and this we are very skilfully led to perceive as we follow Félicité's line of sight to a near focal point and off to some vague distance'. See Marsh, p. 186. The original could have been easily reproduced as Maccagnani does (p. 29, ll. 27-28): *L'aia è in pendenza, la casa nel mezzo; e il mare, in lontananza, appare come una macchia grigia.*

> In Romano's translation the reader is not seeing any longer through Félicité's eyes, but, the addition of the explanatory 'della cascina', of the conjuction 'e', of the verb 'è posta' (implied in the ST) and of the colon, changes the rhythm of reading, slowing it down, making it hard for the reader to see the scene at the moment when Félicité herself is looking at it. The addition irreparably adds the narrator's organizing voice and transforms the scene from a cinematic shot of a piece of landscape seen by Félicité, into a rational description by a narrator of that same piece of landscape.[82]

The analysis of Lalla Romano's translation of 'Un cœur simple' reveals a higher degree of independence from the original compared to the non-writerly translation by Maccagnani and the English translation by Krailsheimer. In particular, we have observed that her constant manipulation of the original layout of paragraphs, punctuation and syntax considerably compromises the style of the original and its

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[82]Another example of a passage where the 'visual perception of the reader' is compromised in translation: Fl (p. 24, ll. 35-37): *Virginie donnait à manger aux lapins, se précipitait pour cueillir des bleuets, et la rapidité de ses jambes découvrait ses petits pantalons brodés./*R44 (p. 11, ll. 26-28): *Virginia dava da mangiare ai conigli, si precipitava a cogliere i fiordalisi e* ***nel correre faceva vedere le mutandine ricamate*** [This is, in my opinion, a beautiful passage, visually describing Virginie at play. Flaubert makes the reader see the scene 'objectively' through Félicité's eyes, a scene which finally comes to focus on the detail of Virginie's embroidered underpants showing as a result of the speed of her legs running. Romano's manipulation of the camera shot introduces again the inopportune filter of the narrator.] Maccagnani translates the passage literally and more effectively (p. 28, ll. 6-8): *Virginia dava da mangiare ai conigli, si buttava a cogliere i fiordalisi e la velocità delle gambe le scopriva i calzoncini ricamati.* Another passage where Romano compromises Félicité's limited perspective is the beautiful description of the end of Félicité's trip to Honfleur to bring the package containing Loulou which must be sent by boat to be embalmed. This is a passage charged with pathos and subtextual imagery, because it is the second time Félicité says goodbye to a beloved 'person' in front of the sea (she had previously gone to the harbour to say farewell to her nephew, but she arrived a moment too late): Fl (p. 51, ll. 22-25) *Arrivée au sommet d'Ecquemauville, elle aperçut les lumières de Honfleur qui scintillaient dans la nuit comme une quantité d'étoiles; la mer plus loin, s'étalait confusément.*/ R44 (p. 35, ll. 9-12) *Arrivata in cima a Ecquemauville,* ***vide*** *le luci di Honfleur che scintillavano nella notte come innumerevoli stelle; lontano il mare si stendeva indistinto* ***nell'oscurità.*** [Félicité's limited sense perception of the original is compromised by Romano's use of the more normal, unproblematic verb 'vedere' [to see] in the place of a correct Italian equivalent such as 'intravedere/scorgere' and by her gratuitous addition of the final 'nell'oscurità'. Romano seems to add 'nell'oscurità' to explain the reason why the sea appears indistinct. Romano does not seem to see the subtext (F's limited eyesight), hence she does not translate it.

effects on the reader. The most significant loss is the reduction of authorial impassibility and the watering-down of the highly pictorial quality of the source text, transforming it from a sequence of separate cinematic shots into a more standard narration by a more visible narrator. The result is that the source text is somewhat flattened by the normalization of Flaubert's style. As we have seen, style is central in his literary production. Brooke Allen, in commenting on the new Lydia Davis translation of *Madame Bovary*, highlights what an incredibly difficult task translating Flaubert is because of the centrality of his style: 'To translate Flaubert takes a confidence that amounts to audacity, for no author was ever so obsessed with style.'[83] Why, then, does Romano manipulate so significantly the original style of the text? Did she not realize how much of the original effect is lost in her translation? Had she not read Flaubert's *Correspondance* and his theories on style? Did she not see the highly pictorial quality of 'Un cœur simple'?

5. Lalla Romano the painter-writer-translator

In the present section I would like to pause on some aspects of Romano's career and of the history of her translation of 'Un cœur simple', in an effort to cast some more light on the writerly aspect of her translation and on translation by writers in general. In particular, I would like to focus on some interesting factors involved in the relation between Lalla Romano and 'Un cœur simple' which, in theory at least, should have guaranteed a very successful rendering of the original story, especially of its pictorial quality.

5.1 Affinity and influence between translator and work translated

It was Cesare Pavese, during the second World War, who suggested to Lalla Romano that she should translate Flaubert's *Trois contes*. In the 'Nota del traduttore' of the STS edition, Romano wonders why Pavese chose precisely her: 'Era stato Pavese,

[83] Brooke Allen, p. 10.

durante la Guerra, a propormi la traduzione dei Trois contes. Chissà perché proprio a me.'[84] Romano, at the time, was in her forties, and was not a published writer yet (she had written only a collection of poems, *Fiore,* which Einaudi did not accept for publication)[85] and had a career as a painter behind her. Had Pavese seen in the painter an ideal translator for the highly pictorial Flaubert? Had he seen a promising affinity between Romano and Flaubert?

In fact, there seems to have been a "pre-translation" affinity between Romano and Flaubert, even if, at the time, she had not read *Trois contes*, as she declares in different parts of the 'Nota':

> Non li conoscevo. Avevo letto *Madame Bovary*, che mi era parso naturalistico, e *L'Éducation sentimentale* che, come voleva Flaubert mi aveva "fatto sognare".
>
> *Un cœur simple* non mi fece sognare. Tradurlo fu come lavorare sulla pietra, e con strumenti inadeguati. Da Torino ero sfollata a Cuneo, in casa di mia madre, e disponevo soltanto di un dizionario scolastico. Ma avevo molto amato Flaubert (e di questo mio amore probabilmente con Pavese si era parlato): lo sentivo congeniale e forse questo mi aiutò.
>
> Del resto mi dovevo misurare non tanto sul lessico quanto sulle frasi, sul taglio. La rapidità e l'intensità, l'importanza delle "cose" e i sentimenti assoluti (l'amore come identificazione: Félicité e la bambina). Tutto era forte e, cosí mi apparve, nuovo. Ma anche come era avvenuto per le idee, stranamente "mio"".[86]

The translation of the *Trois contes*, Romano writes, had a considerable impact on her writing career:

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[84] G. Flaubert, *Tre racconti* nella traduzione di Lalla Romano, p. 132.

[85] 'Pavese aveva molto apprezzato il mio libretto di poesie Fiore e si era rammaricato che la Einaudi non l'avesse potuto pubblicare. (Uscí da Frassinelli nel 1941)' see G. Flaubert, *Tre racconti*, p. 132.

[86] Romano, pp.132-133. Also: " [Flaubert] si è sempre introdotto nella mia vita mentale con una sorta di violenza. La prima volta fu mediante la sua Corrispondenza. Sono solita trascurare le notizie biografiche, anche quelle forse indispensabili: cosí mi attaccai solo alle idee (tratto del resto flaubertiano). Rimasi sconvolta, in quanto le riconobbi come "mie". Se esistevano in qualche modo dentro di me, quelle idee avevano pure una preistoria, che magari risaliva proprio a lui, per qualche via; certo è che le riconoscevo." See Romano, p. 131.

> La traduzione dei *Trois contes* non è stata per me soltanto un lavoro: posso dire che ha cambiato la mia vita.
>
> La traduzione di questa prosa semplice ed essenziale mi consentí la scoperta che la prosa può essere altrettanto rigorosa della poesia, che prosa e poesia, anzi, sono la stessa cosa. Un cuore semplice fu decisivo per me: la fine del pregiudizio che avevo verso il romanzo. Devo a Flaubert anche il mio passaggio dalla pittura alla narrativa.

These dramatic changes in her life and art were brought about particularly by the experience of translating 'Un cœur simple'. [87] The importance of that translation is recalled also by Ernesto Ferrero in the introduction to Romano's biography:

> Dalla pittura alla poesia il passo è stato breve, così come è stato naturale e conseguente il passaggio dalla poesia alla prosa, con la complicità di una traduzione da Flaubert (*Un cuore semplice*) che Pavese le aveva affidato negli anni Quaranta. Traducendo Flaubert, maestro di rigore e d'economicità di stile, Lalla capì che tra poesia e prosa non corrono sostanziali differenze.[88]

5.2 Similarity of styles

The impact Flaubert had on Romano's works is an aspect often stressed by critics who study the Italian writer. An exhaustive survey of Flaubert's influence is not possible here, but one may note some obvious effects such as, for instance, the fact that Romano's first narrative work, after *Le metamorfosi*, a collection of dreams the writer had recorded over the years, was a novel called *Maria*, a story told through the protagonist's eyes. Maria is a servant who spends her life working for a young family. The influence of Flaubert's tale is plain to see:

> Proprio come nel racconto di Flaubert, un cuore semplice Lalla Romano lo aveva sotto gli occhi: Maria, la donna di servizio che era arrivata in casa Monti da una valle

[87] Romano in the 'Nota' tells the reader about the greater importance of the translation of 'Un cœur simple' than of the other two tales, e.g. 'Gli altri due racconti erano perfetti, ma non illuminarono il problema: quello della narrativa che avevo sempre eluso, rimandato', cit., p. 135.

[88] Ernesto Ferrero, *Vita di Lalla Romano raccontata da lei medesima* (a cura di Antonio Ria) (Lecce: Manni, 2006), p. 7.

> del Cuneese, e vi resterà quarant'anni, diventando presto parte integrante ed essenziale del paesaggio degli affetti familiari.[89]

Fiora Vincenti in her study of Lalla Romano stresses the influence 'Un cœur simple' had in inspiring the writer to write *Maria:*

> Riuscire a cogliere la poesia di queste piccole storie famigliari è appunto il segreto del libro e non è risultato da poco se si tien conto della lezione di alcuni ottocentisti francesi, in primo luogo Flaubert, del quale va qui menzionato l'esemplare racconto *Un cuore semplice*, che la Romano ebbe occasione di tradurre, per incarico di Pavese, durante gli anni di guerra e che costituisce l'ideale modello cui la scrittrice si è ispirata nel dar vita al suo personaggio.[90]

Romano scholars identify the influence of Flaubert, or her affinity with him (not necessarily based on her knowledge of Flaubert's works), and draw attention to aspects of Romano's prose style which resemble Flaubert's. Several commentators on Romano's style – Zampa, Zeri, Ria, Vicenti and others – have identified features strongly reminiscent of Flaubert. Giorgio Zampa in '*Maria* o del rispetto' points to the deep influence of Flaubert on this work and stresses the impersonality, the ambiguity, economy and elliptical character of its style:

> Il richiamo a Flaubert sembra inevitabile per la Romano, quando si parla del mot juste, del disegno rigoroso del racconto, della distanza tenuta dal narratore nei confronti della materia, per eliminare ogni rischio di pathos, per prosciugare la prosa da rugiada sentimentale.[91]

And Zampa's account of Romano's *Maria* could almost have been written of 'Un cœur simple':

> La narrazione [...] è limpida, distaccata rappresentazione di una vita umile. [...] Opera di esordio della Romano narratrice, essa contiene [...] i caratteri della sua arte, fondata su un riserbo che evoca e rivela con velature, chiaroscuri, mezze luci. Maria,

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[89] Ferrero, *Vita di Lalla Romano*, p. 74.
[90] Fiora Vicenti, *Lalla Romano* (Firenze: la Nuova Italia, 1974), p. 19.
[91] See Lalla Romano, *Maria* (Torino: Einaudi, 1995), postfazione di Giorgio Zampa, p. 150.

per l'energia che emana, è al centro del racconto, il punto su cui convergono le linee tirate con levità e sicurezza da chi sa molto di più di quanto rivela [...] Il carattere della donna, il suo senso del dovere, la sua malinconia, tutto è in poche righe. Con altrettanta intensità e concisione si conclude il racconto.[92]

Pietro Citati in his review of *Maria* observes that Romano here learnt that

> l'arte suprema dello scrivere era la discrezione, il rispetto, il riserbo: che, per saper dire, bisognava apprendere a "non dire". Nulla doveva essere approfondito: l'analisi non poteva mai penetrare nelle intimità delle persone: doveva accennare e subito ritirarsi [...]. Non c'è, nella nostra letteratura di quegli anni, libro più severo, più spoglio, più essenziale, più nudo: dove si rinunci a qualsiasi commento intellettuale, a qualsiasi eco musicale attorno ai fatti.[93]

A stylistic element of Romano's prose, repeatedly stressed by the critics, is its highly pictorial quality, the influence painting had on her narrative style. Federico Zeri commenting on Romano's paintings writes

> L'accento sofferto (ma senza lacrime), silenzioso, quasi tragico di queste effigi è quello che ritrovo sempre negli scritti di Lalla Romano: il suo è un raro caso d'identità tra espressione letteraria e creazione d'immagini, nel medesimo solvente severo, scarno, privo di compiacimenti, nitido ed essenziale.[94]

Mirella Bandini writes:

> La misura, l'equilibrio, la stessa costruzione sintattica della sua scrittura rispecchiano sempre l'organizzazione formale dei suoi quadri, la sua visione pittorica e sintetica del reale [...] le descrizioni rapide, concise dei luoghi e delle persone sono nate con

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[92] See Zampa, 'postfazione' to *Maria* pp. 148-149.
[93] *Corriere della Sera*, 14 dicembre 1980.
[94] Federico Zeri, 'Tra espressione letteraria e creazione di immagini' in A. Ria, *Intorno a Lalla Romano* (Milano: Mondadori, 1996), pp. 7-9 (p. 9). This aspect has been widely commented by the critic, see for instance Giulio Einaudi in 'L'amore per la realtà': 'C'è nella Romano un amore del comunicare le cose, i luoghi, le persone insieme ai sentimenti, un amore che affiora nei quadri e che è caratteristica delle sue opere letterarie.' In A. Ria, *Intorno a Lalla,* p. 5.

> l'occhio del pittore; la sua memoria letteraria è costituita principalmente da percezioni, sensazioni essenzialmente visive.[95]

Fiora Vicenti writes of the style of one of Romano's novels, *Tetto Murato*: 'Il romanzo procede non tanto per analisi bensì per immagini fra le quali occupano un posto di rilievo quelle riguardanti il paesaggio'.[96] Antonio Ria in 'Bellezza come rivelazione' writes of the close relation between painting and writing in Romano's works:

> Fermiamoci alle parole – poche, come nel suo stile – di Lalla: "In realtà io *dipingo sempre* mentre guardo: allo stesso modo *scrivo sempre*" [...] Ma non è, la sua, una scrittura *dello sguardo*, come non è autobiografia. È, piuttosto, una scrittura – una pittura – che "descrive, non narra". [97]

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[95] Mirella Bandini, 'L'immagine e la parola' in A. Ria, *Intorno a Lalla*, pp. 22-30 (p. 30). The influence translating Flaubert had on Lalla Romano is often marked as one of the milestones of the writer's career. For instance, Antonio Ria in a 'scheda biografica' of Romano for the Regione Piemonte writes: 'Durante la guerra, sfollata nelle campagne del Cuneese, ha tradotto, su richiesta di Cesare Pavese per conto della Einaudi, i Tre racconti di Flaubert: esperienza per lei fondamentale. Infatti proprio traducendo Flaubert ha superato la sua diffidenza verso il romanzo, scoprendo che anche la prosa può essere poesia. Aveva già scritto molte poesie (alcune confluite nella raccolta *Fiore*, del 1941); ma dopo questa esperienza ha incominciato a dedicarsi alla narrativa.' See Nota bio-bibliografica e critica per la regione Piemonte <https://www.google.it/search?hl=it&q=intorno+a+lalla+romano&meta=#hl=it&q=lalla+romano+e+flaubert> [accessed December 2013]; in the introduction to the documentary film on Lalla Romano by William Farnesi, the importance of Romano's translation of Flaubert in her shift from painting to writing is pointed out: 'Una lettura dell'opera della scrittrice italiana Lalla Romano attraverso il tema dell'inverno che è uno dei temi più poetici della sua opera. La telecamera, spesso in soggettiva, accompagna uno sguardo interiore e inquieto. Come se il respiro di Lalla Romano rivisitasse tutti gli inverni della sua esistenza e specialmente un inverno in cui avrebbe cambiato vita: lasciando la pittura per la scrittura, con la stessa esitazione di chi, in una strada di campagna, si trova davanti a un bivio. In questo inverno, durante la seconda guerra mondiale, quando è sfollata nel cuneese, Lalla Romano traduce quelli che diventeranno i suoi maestri di vita e pensiero: Flaubert e Delacroix. Flaubert, Delacroix e Lalla Romano compaiono in questo documentario come personaggi e non solo come figure storiche. In questo dialogo immaginario di Lalla Romano con i suoi maestri francesi, brani dei Tre Racconti di Flaubert e dei Diari di Delacroix si mescolano alla poesia, ai romanzi o alle interviste di Lalla Romano come se fossero un unico flusso di coscienza.' <http://www.fctp.it/movie_item.php?id=1259> [accessed December 2013].

[96] Vicenti, p. 32.

[97] A. Ria, 'Bellezza come rivelazione' in Ferrero, *Vita di Lalla Romano*, pp. 139-145 (p. 139).

Romano herself recognizes the pictorial as a fundamental characteristic of Flaubert's mode of composition of 'Un cœur simple'. In the 'Nota' she writes 'Si sa come Flaubert lavorava: metteva sulla pagina certe parole essenziali, e poi intorno e su quelle armonizzava, sovrapponendo, con tutto un reticolato di toni, proprio come fanno i pittori.'[98]

In the light of the deep affinity of Lalla Romano's style with Flaubert's, of her visual sensibility as a painter, and of her not yet being an established writer (with works written in her own distinctive style), how can it be that in translating 'Un cœur simple' she does not faithfully translate elements of the source text so meticulously arranged by Flaubert in order to produce the distinctive visual effect in the tale?

Her attitude towards the visual character of Flaubert's tale seems even more striking if we consider that the visual layout of *Maria* is as important as it is in 'Un cœur simple'. The division into paragraphs, the fact that the novel 'si presenta diviso in tanti capitoli, ciascuno dei quali è però a sua volta diviso in frammenti', is a fundamental aspect of the story and this is immediately visible when we look at the opening of *Maria:*

> Quando entrammo nella nostra casa, c'era già Maria.
>
> Eravamo di ritorno dal viaggio, e camminammo in punta di piedi, perché era mezzanotte.
>
> Io non conoscevo *Maria*, se non per averla vista, quando era venuta a presentarsi. Affrontare la conoscenza delle persone mi metteva in grande imbarazzo; così, da una stanza vicina, avevo spiato, attraverso l'uscio socchiuso.
>
> Stava seduta sull'orlo della sedia, con i piedi incrociati e le mani raccolte nel grembo;...[99]

Why does Romano gratuitously modify the original highly visual paragraph division? Why does she add narratorial elements which compromise the impersonality of the original, one of the most sought-after and laboriously-arranged effect of Flaubert's prose? Should not all these factors make of Romano an excellent translator

[98] *Tre racconti*, p. 141.
[99] *Maria*, p. 4.

of Flaubert? Is this not the reason why Pavese asked her? How does it happen then that she seems to compromise those very aspects that she should have seen better than other translators?

Our analysis of the first version of Romano's translation might help to provide some possible answers to the complex questions. Chukovsky's theoretical assumption, that the ideal situation for a successful translation is when the style of the poet translator and of the original author are very similar,[100] does not seem to be at work in this case-study.

Chukovsky seems to establish an affinity between translator and work translated on the grounds of the two writers' styles. But when considering 'affinity' should other factors not be taken into account? Can there not be affinity between two very different writers? Must there be a similarity of a certain kind? This is difficult to answer as 'affinity' can arise from all sorts of needs and forms, or the writer, the translator, the text. Giuliano Dego, in his introduction to Lord Byron's *Don Juan*, argues the necessity of a spiritual affinity between translator and original author in the translation of rhymes:

> Perché il miracolo della traduzione in rima possa accadere, oltre a una conoscenza approfondita delle due lingue è necessaria una profonda affinità spirituale tra autore e interprete.[101]

'Spiritual affinity' does not necessarily imply a similarity of styles. One can be spiritually 'close' to something one dislikes. For instance, Allen Brooke observes how Lydia Davis's self-admitted dislike for *Madame Bovary* may have worked just as effectively as a positive affinity:

> Some of Flaubert's aficionados have been deterred by her admission that *Madame Bovary* is not actually a favourite book of hers: she has always been put off, she says, by the author's coldness and his obvious contempt for his characters and their milieu.

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[100] And, on the other hand, the least ideal situation occurs when they are very distant. According to Chukovsky, being a writer is not necessarily an advantage when translating, but it is only in the case of similarity of styles that the writer might produce a successful translation.

[101] Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, traduzione in ottava rima, introduzione e note di Giuliano Dego, ottave inglesi a fronte (Milano: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, 1992), p. 42.

> But this alienation doesn't seem to have harmed her rendition, which displays a cool detachment not at all dissimilar to Flaubert's own.[102]

Translators' view vary on the question of affinity. At the other extreme from Dego, Martina Testa, a translator and editor, claims with regret that her personal affinities with the writers she translated did not guarantee an easier or better translation. Often, according to Testa, the opposite would be true:

> Il fatto è che, per come la vivo io, la traduzione è un'attività tecnica e artigianale in cui l'aspetto dell'istinto, dell'ispirazione, della creatività, è minoritario. E quindi, il paragone che mi viene di fare è: un meccanico sicuramente prova più gusto a mettere le mani su una Ferrari che su una Punto, ma non è che riparare una Punto dato che la ama di meno gli viene più difficile, o che lo fa peggio: anzi, sicuramente è più facile e c'è meno probabilità che sbagli! [103]

We have seen that the privileged position of a painter-writer-translator who can claim an affinity of styles and views with the author she translates, and whose translation of the work is a landmark in her career, does not seem to guarantee a successful reproduction of the original. Does Romano's perceived affinity with Flaubert give her permission to disregard some characteristics of his actual text and rewrite the translation in her own style?

5.3 'Un cœur simple' *'stranamente mio'.*

The fact that Romano constantly undermines the impersonality of Flaubert's prose might point to the irresistible temptation for a writer to rewrite the work she loves the way she would have written it, as if it were her own, just as Robert Lowell felt entitled, in his volume *Imitations*, to write as his authors might have done if they had been writing 'now and in America'. Primo Levi, in the 'Nota' to his translation of Kafka's work, *Il processo*, observes that a deep affinity (like the one between his experience and Kafka's work) between writer-translator and work translated might

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[102] Brooke Allen, p. 14.

[103] Martina Testa, 'La fedeltà come criterio supremo nel tradurre' in Carmignani, *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 162-171 (p. 165). Some readers might regard Martina Testa's modesty as being overstated here.

hinder rather than facilitate a faithful rendering of the original. The writer-translator is tempted to superimpose his way of writing on the original author:

> Spesso in questo lavoro di traduzione ho provato la sensazione di una collisione, di un conflitto, della tentazione immodesta di sciogliere a modo mio i nodi del testo: insomma di correggere, di tirare le scelte lessicali, di sovrapporre il mio modo di scrivere a quello di Kafka. A questa tentazione ho tentato di non cedere.[104]

'Affinity' between translator and work translated can thus work to the detriment of a faithful translation, the writer being too tempted to see translation as an opportunity to rewrite the original work as if it really were his or her own. This seems to be what happens to Haruki Murakami, the Japanese writer author also of the best selling thriller *1Q84*, when he translates his favourite novel, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. While Murakami states his intention of translating Fitzgerald's work as precisely as possible,[105] the importance this work has for him seems to push him to rewrite it in a most personal way, in an effort to present the reader with his understanding of *The Great Gatsby*:

> I translated *Gatsby* at an extremely personal level. I wanted to make my long-standing image of *Gatsby* clear and concrete [...]. To do this I strove to eliminate anything that was the slightest bit obscure or that might leave the reader feeling as if they had somehow missed something. [...] until *Gatsby*, I had always tried to keep the fact that I was a writer far from mind when translating.[106]

Murakami's liking for the work he has chosen to translate, his affinity with it, brings him as far as taking the freedom to change fundamental features of the original, as the time setting: 'The first was to make *Gatsby* a modern tale. [...] the story had to live in the present day. Thus I kept only those old-fashioned turns of phrase and

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[104] Levi, 'Nota del traduttore', *Il processo*, p. 254.
[105] 'Given *Gatsby*'s importance to me, I wanted my translation to be as precise and thorough as possible so that I would have no regrets', Murakami, 'As translator, as novelist: the translator's afterword," translated by Ted Goossen, in Allen and Bernofsky (eds), *In Translation*, pp. 169-183 (p. 169).
[106] Murakami, p. 173.

descriptions of the period that I considered essential and eliminated the rest, or at the very least toned their colors down.'[107]

Does Romano introduce the shadow of the narrator's point of view because this is the way she herself would have liked to write 'Un cœur simple'? In support of this speculation it may be noted that Romano's style differs greatly from Flaubert's in the fact that she always wrote in the first person. And in her novel *Maria* the voice of the author is constantly present, most unlike Flaubert's practice in 'Un cœur simple'. As one perceptive reviewer remarked of Romano's narrative practice in the novel *Maria*, 'la voce della scrittrice che narra in prima persona costituisce un commento continuo.'[108] Antonio Ria, introduces Lalla Romano's self-portraits at the end of her biography, emphasizing the significance of Romano's use of the first person in her works:

> Se, come scrive Lalla Romano [...] "mi sento nella realtà, con i piedi sulla terra soltanto se dico 'io'"; se, nella sua scrittura – come ha osservato Cesare Segre [...] – "si assiste alla progressiva installazione dell'io come portatore e punto di riferimento del racconto"; se insomma, consideriamo la scrittura come specchio dell'anima, l'autoritratto diventa come la verifica iconica dell'io rispecchiato nella scrittura.[109]

The continuous reduction of impersonality of the Flaubertian prose in her translation, may conceal Romano's wish to rewrite Flaubert's work as her own. In this light, *Maria*, might almost be considered as her 100% translation of 'Un cœur simple'.

6. The two revisions of the translation

Without going into detail on the many reasons why a retranslation of classis texts is often considered necessary,[110] Romano's two revisions of 'Un cœur simple" seem

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[107] Murakami, p. 174.
[108] Francesca Sanvitale, *Giornale del Mattino*, 27 gennaio 1954.
[109] See Ria in Ferrero, *Vita di Lalla Romano*, p. 139.
[110] On this see for instance Enrico Monti, 'Introduction', in Enrico Monti e Peter Schnyder (eds.), *Autour de la retraduction, perspectives littéraires européennes*: 'Les motivations derrière une traduction: l'insatisfaction à l'égard des traductions existantes' and 'D'autres raisons pour retraduire' pp. 113-126; pp. 14-18; Berman too points out in his essay 'La

determined by a certain dissatisfaction with the previous existing version/s, dissatisfaction being the most frequent and general reason calling for a new translation to be done, and that dissatisfaction depends in turn on different factors within existing translations. Certainly, the 'age factor'[111] has been determinant in the case of Romano's revision of her old translation. The different versions are punctuated by a long lapse of years: thirty-six years between the first version (1944) and the first revision (1980), and twenty years between the first and the second revision for 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' (2000). In the 1980 revision, the translator's effort to modernize the language is immediately evident in the restoration of the French names of characters: Felicita becomes Félicité.

Another reason behind the revisions is certainly a dissatisfaction with certain linguistic choices made in the past, a will to be more precise, as Romano writes explaining why she decided to revise the translation for the STS:

> Ma per la presente edizione, in questa prestigiosa collana, grande invenzione di Giulio Einaudi (e mi dispiace che, a quanto mi dicono, dopo la morte di Giulio questa sua creatura stia per scomparire), ho ripreso in mano quel vecchio lavoro. [...] Mi accorgo ora che quella mia traduzione qua e là era imprecisa. Soprattutto il primo racconto, *Un cuore semplice*. L'ho rifatta, l'ho corretta.[112]

Romano revises her previous version for 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' with a view to achieving a higher degree of precision, so as to get closer to the source text. Such

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retraduction comme espace de la traduction' that retranslation is intrinsic to the nature of translation as 'aucune traduction ne peut prétendre être "la" traduction, la possibilité et la nécessité de la retraduction sont inscrites dans la structure même de l'acte de traduire' in *Palimpsestes*, 4, 'Retraduire, Publications de la Sorbonne Nouvelle', 1990, pp. 1-7 (p. 1).

[111] The age factor seems to be the most frequent reason behind retranslation. See for instance Berman: 'phénomène lui-même assez mystérieux: alors que les originaux restent éternellement jeunes (quel que soit le degré d'intérêt que nous leur portons, leur proximité ou leur éloignement culturel), les traductions, elles, "vieillissent" (...) Il faut alors retraduire car la traduction existante ne joue plus le rôle de révélation et de communication des œuvres', p. 1; Geoffrey Wall, 'Flaubert's voice: retranslating Madame Bovary' in *Palimpsestes*, № 15 'Pourquoi donc retraduire?', pp. 93-98: 'A good literary translation will probably last for thirty years. Within that time it will begin to show its age, betray its origins. The dialogue will date first, because the colloquial is essentially ephemeral. Then the translator's unspoken cultural and literary assumptions will slowly fade into view. Revealing, merely, a period piece', p. 9; Monti: 'Cependant la plus forte raison justifiant l'insatisfaction vis-à-vis d'une traduction existante est sans doute le fait que les traductions "vieillissent"', pp. 15-16.

[112] *Tre racconti*, p. 135.

attitude of revision is in accordance with the *retranslation hypothesis*, a hypothesis formulated by Paul Bensimon and Antoine Berman in 1990, according to which each retranslation moves progressively towards the original: the first translation usually tends to be target language oriented, while the later translations are in general more foreignizing and therefore more source-text oriented.[113]

6.1 Retranslation as revision

Before listing a few examples from the detailed analysis of Romano's revised texts, some general points should be noted, starting with the particular position of a revision within retranslation. A revision is a special case of retranslation: the translator reworks the old translation, rather than writing it *ex novo*. The old text is retouched, but its fundamental structure is preserved. Yves Gambier in 'La retraduction, retour et détour', identifies the difference between a revision and a retranslation as consisting simply in the number of changes made: while in a revision the translator usually makes only a few changes, in a retranslation the whole text has to be changed.[114]

Another factor marking a difference between retranslation and revision I would like to stress, is that a revision is more likely done by the same translator,[115] while a retranslation is not. Also, their commercial value might be quite different: a new

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[113] 'later translations tend to be closer to the source text' in Andrew Chesterman, 'Hypothesis about translation universals' in Gyde Hansen, Kirsten Malmkiaer, Daniel Gile (eds.) *Claims, Changes and Challenges in Translation Studies* (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2004), pp.1-14 (p. 8); Monti points out that this hypothesis is quite reductive and generalizing, and within the extensive debate that it generated, contrary views prevail, pp.20-21.

[114] Yves Gambier, in 'La retraduction, retour et détour' in *Meta: journal des traducteurs*, vol. 39, no. 3, 1994, pp. 413-417, <http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/002799> [accessed February 2014] discussing the difference between three types of retranslation (adaptation, retranslation and revision) writes: 'On aurait alors comme un continuum du moins vers le plus: de la **révision** (peu de modifications) vers l'**adaptation** (tant de modifications que l'original peut être ressenti comme un prétexte à une rédaction autre), en passant par la retraduction (beaucoup de modifications, telles que c'est presque entièrement tout le texte qu'il faut revoir)', p. 413.

[115] Even if this might not always be true as in the case of Paul de Man's revision of Eleanor Marx's translation of *Madame Bovary*. And Carmignani's collection contains examples of drastic revision by editorial staff in the publishing house. Other dubious practices may include in-house revisions of an old translation for commercial reasons.

translation is meant to sell better than the old one (and it would make little sense if it were done by the old translator).[116] A revision is more likely required when re-publishing an already established translation – a criterion that certainly applies to the present case-study, a translation by a famous writer.

The distinction between revision and retranslation is also relevant when considering the fact that a retranslation of a text by the same translator might be more similar to the previous version than one made by a different translator.

6.2 Lalla Romano's revisions for 'Centopagine' and for 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'

Interestingly, the first revision Romano did for the reissue of her translation in the Einaudi series 'Centopagine' (1980) does not seem acknowledged anywhere by the writer or by the scholars who have studied her work.[117] In the 'Nota' following her STS translation, Romano writes: 'quando Calvino nel 1980 ha riproposto questi racconti nella sua collana "Centopagine" mi disse che andavano bene così.'[118]

The STS version is very openly acknowledged – or indeed claimed – as a revision especially made for the series. One important reason why the status of the 1980 revision was not equally emphasized may be because it was a rather minor one, whereas the 2000 revision, 'specially' made for a flagship series, was in fact much

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[116] This emerges from Gambier's speculation: 'la nouvelle traduction est-elle un argument de vente alors qu'une traduction révisée est moins chère?', p. 414.

[117] In all the scholarly criticism on Romano, only the revision for STS is mentioned. Ida Porfido in her article on Romano's translation seems unaware of the 1980 revision. She writes of Romano's first version 'la prémière, de 1944 mais rééditée telle quelle jusqu'en 1994' (I do not know why she puts 1994 as a year, because her second revision appeared in 2000 in STS and not before); see 'Lalla Romano traductrice de Flaubert' in *Autour de la retraduction*, pp. 113-126 (p. 117).

[118] See Romano, p. 134. The only written acknowledgment of this first revision that I could find is a note in square brackets at the end of the small biographical introduction to Flaubert before the translation, appearing in the 1980 edition for 'Centopagine': 'Traduzioni e introduzione furono pubblicate la prima volta nell'Universale Einaudi, nel 1944; per questa seconda edizione sono state riviste dalla traduttrice, a cui appartengono anche le note ai testi' in G. Flaubert, *Tre racconti* (Torino: Einaudi, 1980).

more extensive.[119] As a publishing event, this second revision is quite different from the previous one. Romano is now revisiting a translation that she had made when she was not yet an established writer, for the prestigious series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', and she is doing this as a celebrated Italian author. So, what changes can we expect for Romano's two reissues of *Tre racconti*? Both moving in the same direction, or should we expect significant changes of route? Will Lalla Romano, translating for the series of writers translated by writers, revise her text in an attempt to shift it closer to the source text and to the style of its original author, or will she opt for freer departures from the original?

As has been established in the previous chapters, translations by established Italian writers tend to assume a certain authority and 'classic' status, in some respects similar to, if not higher than the original texts. The availability of translations by famous authors might therefore tend to delay the process of retranslation in two ways: firstly, because of their authority, there might not be as many retranslations made in the decades following their first appearance, and, secondly, because the following retranslations might not diverge too much from the writerly ones (because of their enduring authority), as we saw in the previous chapters.[120] In the present case, it seems that Romano's translation may have strongly influenced her fellow translators,[121] as she herself claimed: 'ho ripreso in mano quel vecchio lavoro. Vedo

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[119] The suppression of any reference to the first revision is very interesting if one gives serious consideration to the marketing function of publishing, which is particularly relevant to a series such as STS. In marketing, how is a 'new' version of a product normally introduced? Often, for example, new software versions involve changes made purely for the sake of differentiation, including the loss of useful functional features found in previous versions. Smaller revisions may have already been made, but the new version has to present itself as radically new and different. Does the same rule of differentiation apply to revised translations?

[120] This is a much discussed factor in the theory of retranslation. For instance, see Berman: 'l'Histoire nous montre qu'il existe des traductions qui perdurent à l'égal des originaux (...) le Shakespeare de Schlegel, l'*Antigone* de Hölderlin, le *Don Quichotte* de Tieck, le *Paradis perdu* de Milton par Chateaubriand ...', p. 2; Monti : 'Une autre source d'inquiétude pour le retraducteur concerne ses illustres prédécesseurs, qui ont laissé une traduction devenue canonique: qu'ils soient des écrivains ou des traducteurs célèbres, ces prédécesseurs ont parfois la capacité de retarder, voire de bloquer, le processus de retraduction', p. 23.

[121] For space reasons, it has not been possible in the present chapter to provide detailed examples from a comparative analysis of several Italian versions of Flaubert.

ora che le traduzioni venute dopo l'hanno tenuto in gran conto. Alcune mie "invenzioni" sono state riprese di sana pianta: è segno che erano ancora valide dopo anni.'[122] It might indeed be that they were still valid linguistic choices, as Romano believes, or that her translation of Flaubert had already taken on a sort of 'classic' authority.

The present case-study, rather than comparing different translators, allows us to look at a writerly translation from a privileged perspective: through two revisions by the same author. How much and what did Romano change in her revisions? How did she behave towards her first version? Did she relate to it as to a first draft, or did she respect it as a work which has earned its own rights as a kind of literary original? Can Romano see the faults of her old translation? Does Romano restore the impersonality of Flaubert's style, or replace the pictorial dimension? Does Romano compare her old translation to the original in order to revise it? Finally, does a comparative analysis of the quantity and quality of the changes in her various versions assist us in understanding some general issues concerning translation by writers?

6.3 A comparative analysis of Lalla Romano's two revisions of 'Un cuore semplice'

In the following section I will list some examples from the detailed analysis of the two revisions (compared with the the 1944 version, the source text and between each other). These examples are useful in showing Romano's strategy of revision.

[122] See Romano's 'Nota', p. 135.

6.3.1 Relevant examples from the analysis of the openings of the two revisions of 'Un cuore semplice': for 'Centopagine' (1980) and 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' (2000)

If we look at the 1980 and 2000 versions of Romano's translation, we can see that no improvements of translation quality were made.

All the changes Romano made in her first revision (R80) were kept in her second revision for STS (RSTS). But as we will now see, the departures from the original which she introduces in the 2000 STS version are so systematic that they seem to require an explanation that goes beyond the normal translation decisions that a writer-translator might make on the basis of personal taste.

Romano (Einaudi, 1980) [R80]

Per mezzo secolo, le signore di Pont-l'Evêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la sua serva Félicité.

Per cento franchi all'anno, Félicité cucinava e accudiva alla casa, cuciva, lavava, stirava, sapeva imbrigliare un cavallo, ingrassare il pollame, fare il burro, e rimase fedele alla sua padrona, che per altro non era una persona amabile.

La signora Aubain aveva sposato un giovane bello ma senza beni di fortuna, che era morto all'inizio del 1809, lasciandole due bambini molto piccoli e parecchi debiti. Allora vendette le sue terre, salvo la fattoria di Toucques e quella di Geffosses, le cui rendite ammontavano a cinquemila franchi al massimo, e lasciò la sua casa di Saint-Mélaine per andare ad abitare in un'altra meno costosa, che era appartenuta ai suoi avi ed era situata dietro il mercato.

Questa casa, dal tetto d'ardesia, si trovava tra una strada privata e un viottolo che metteva capo al fiume. Vi erano all'interno differenze di livello che facevano incespicare. Una stretta anticamera separava la cucina dalla sala dove la signora Aubain se ne stava tutto il giorno, seduta vicino alla finestra su un seggiolone di paglia. Contro la parete tinta di bianco erano allineate otto sedie di mogano. Sotto il barometro un vecchio pianoforte sosteneva una piramide di scatole di legno e di cartone. Ai lati del caminetto di marmo giallo stile Luigi XV vi erano due grandi poltrone ricamate. La pendola, nel mezzo, rappresentava un tempio di Vesta; e siccome l'impiantito era più basso del giardino, tutto l'appartamento aveva un leggero sentore di muffa.

Romano (Einaudi, 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', 2000) [R STS]

Per cinquant'anni le signore di Pont-l'Évêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la sua domestica Félicité.

Per cento franchi l'anno, Félicité cucinava e accudiva la casa, cuciva, lavava, stirava, sapeva imbrigliare un cavallo, ingrassare il pollame, fare il burro e rimase fedele alla sua padrona, che fra l'altro non era una persona amabile.

La signora Aubain aveva sposato un giovane di bell'aspetto ma senza beni di fortuna, che era morto all'inizio del 1809, lasciandole due bambini molto piccoli e parecchi debiti. Allora vendetta le sue terre, salvo la fattoria di Toucques e quella di Geffosses, le cui rendite ammontavano a cinquemila franchi al massimo, e lasciò la sua casa di Saint-Melaine per andare ad abitare in un'altra meno costosa, che era appartenuta ai suoi avi ed era situata dietro il mercato.

Questa casa, dal tetto d'ardesia, si trovava tra una strada privata e un viottolo che portava al fiume. Vi erano nell'interno differenze di livello che facevano incespicare. Una stretta anticamera separava la cucina dalla sala dove la signora Aubain se ne stava tutto il giorno, seduta vicino alla finestra su un seggiolone impagliato. Contro la parete tinta di bianco erano allineate otto sedie di mogano. Sotto il barometro c'era una piramide di scatole di legno e di cartone posata su un vecchio pianoforte. Ai lati del caminetto di marmo giallo stile Luigi XV c'erano due grandi poltrone ricamate. L'orologio a pendolo aveva, nel mezzo, una raffigurazione di un tempio di Vesta; e siccome l'impiantito era più basso del giardino, tutto l'appartamento aveva un leggero odore di muffa

Fl (p. 17, ll. 1-3): *Pendant un demi-siècle, les bourgeoises de Pont-l'Evêque envièrent à Mme Aubain sa servante Félicité.*

R44 (p. 5, ll. 1-2): ***Per mezzo secolo (1), (2)*** *le signore di Pont-l'Evêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la* ***[< >] (1) serva (3) Felicita (2).***

R80 (p.5, ll. 1-2)*: Per mezzo secolo, le signore di Pont-l'Évêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la* ***sua (1)*** *serva* ***Félicité (2).***

RSTS (p. 5, ll. 1-2): *Per* ***cinquant'anni (1) [< >] (2)*** *le signore di Pont-l'Evêque invidiarono alla signora Aubain la sua* ***domestica (3)*** *Félicité.*

R80 (1) and **(2)**: Romano makes two ST oriented changes: she translates the French possessive 'sa' with 'la sua'; she reconverts the main character's name into French.

RSTS (1): Romano changes the literal translation 'mezzo secolo' of 'demi-siècle' into a less literal 'cinquant'anni' [fifty years]. Flaubert's use of the epochal phrase 'demi-siècle' confers a touch of irony on the opening sentence, as it inscribes a humble personal record into the course of history, as though it were a significant fact. This is lost in RSTS. And the revised wording introduces a noticeable and awkward repetition of numerical formulae with the phrase 'per cento franchi' which starts the next paragraph, absent in the ST. **(2)** Romano deletes the comma, thereby reducing the stress placed by Flaubert on the time frame. **(3)** Romano replaces her previous literal translation of 'servante' as 'serva' with the more modern term 'domestica' [maid]. Admittedly, 'serva' might seem a strong term to be used in 2000. But as this celebrated story is set in the 19th century, the modern word 'domestica' might conjure up in an Italian reader's mind, an in appropriate, almost comical image of Félicité as a modern domestic placed in a modern environment, thus producing an effect that differs considerably from the original.

Fl (p. 17, ll. 4-8): *Pour cent francs par an, elle faisait la cuisine et le ménage, cousait, lavait, repassait, savait brider un cheval, engraisser les volailles, battre le beurre, et resta fidèle à sa maîtresse, – qui cependant n'était pas une personne agréable.*

R44 (p. 5, ll. 3-7): *Per cento franchi **all' (1)** anno, Felicita cucinava e accudiva **alla (2)** casa, cuciva, lavava, stirava, sapeva imbrigliare un cavallo, ingrassare il pollame, fare il burro**, (3)** e rimase fedele alla sua padrona, che **per altro (4)** non era una persona amabile.*

R80 (p. 5, ll. 3-7)[123]

RSTS (p. 5, ll. 3-6): *Per cento franchi **l' (1)** anno, Félicité, cucinava e accudiva **la (2)** casa, cuciva, lavava, stirava, sapeva imbrigliare un cavallo, ingrassare il pollame, fare il burro **[< >] (3)** e rimase fedele alla sua padrona, che **fra l'altro (4)** non era una persona amabile.*

> **RSTS**: **(1), (2), (4)** The minor changes made by Romano to her previous versions seem to improve the fluency of the TT. She changes 'all'anno' with 'l'anno' **(1)** and 'alla casa' with 'la casa' **(2)** making the reading smoother and faster. **(3)** She decides to eliminate the original comma before the conjunction 'et', partially compromising the original ironical effect created by Flaubert.

Fl (p. 17, ll. 9-17): *Elle avait épousé un beau garcon sans fortune, mort au commencement de 1809, en lui laissant deux enfants très jeunes avec une quantité de dettes. Alors elle vendit ses immeubles, sauf la ferme de Toucques et la ferme de Geffosses, dont les rentes montaient à 5000 francs tout au plus, et elle quitta sa maison de Saint-Melaine pour en habiter une autre moins dispendieuse, ayant appartenu à ses ancêtres et placée derrière les halles.*

[123] Except for the name, in French in this version, this passage is identical to the 1944 version.

R44 (p. 5, ll. 8-17): *La signora Aubain aveva sposato un giovane* ***bello (1)*** *ma senza beni di fortuna, che era morto all'inizio del 1809, lasciandole due bambini molto piccoli e parecchi debiti. Allora vendette le sue terre, salvo la fattoria di Toucques e quella di Geffosses, le cui rendite ammontavano a cinquemila franchi al massimo, e lasciò la sua casa di* ***Saint-Mélaine (2)*** *per andare ad abitare in un'altra meno costosa, che era appartenuta ai suoi avi ed era situata dietro il mercato.*

R80[124]

RSTS (p. 5, ll. 7-15): *La signora Aubain aveva sposato un giovane* ***di bell'aspetto (1)*** *ma senza beni di fortuna, che era morto all'inizio del 1809, lasciandole due bambini molto piccoli e parecchi debiti. Allora vendette le sue terre, salvo la fattoria di Toucques e quella di Geffosses, le cui rendite ammontavano a cinquemila franchi al massimo, e lasciò la sua casa di* ***Saint-Melaine (2)*** *per andare ad abitare in un'altra meno costosa, che era appartenuta ai suoi avi ed era situata dietro il mercato.*

> **RSTS: (1)** she changes 'bello' (literally translating 'beau' [handsome]) with the synonymous 'di bell'aspetto', slightly altering the rhythm of the original (she uses a three words adjective to translate a one word one); **(2)** she corrects her earlier misspelling of Saint-Melaine.

Fl (p. 17, ll. 18-26; p. 18, ll. 1-5): *Cette maison, revêtue d'ardoises, se trouvait entre un passage et une ruelle aboutissant à la rivière. Elle avait intérieurement des differences de niveau qui faisaient trébucher. Un vestibule étroit séparait la cuisine de la* salle *où Mme Aubain se tenait tout le long du jour, assise près de la croisée dans un fauteuil de paille. Contre le lambris, peint en blanc, s'alignaient huit chaises d'acajou. Un vieux piano supportait, sous un baromètre, un tas pyramidal de boîtes et cartons. Deux bergères de tapisserie flanquaient la cheminée en marbre jaune et de style Louis XV. La pendule, au milieu, représentait un temple de Vesta, – et tout l'appartement sentait un peu le moisi, car le plancher était plus bas que le jardin.*

[124] Identical to R44.

R44 (p. 5, ll. 18-30; p. 6, ll. 1-2): *Questa casa, dal tetto d'ardesia, era posta tra una strada e un viottolo che metteva capo al fiume. Vi erano nell'interno differenze di livello che facevano incespicare. Una stretta anticamera separava la cucina dalla sala dove la signora Aubain se ne stava tutto il giorno, seduta vicino alla finestra su un seggiolone* ***di paglia (1)****. Contro la parete tinta di bianco erano allineate otto sedie di mogano. Sotto il barometro* ***un vecchio pianoforte sosteneva una piramide (2)*** *di scatole di legno e di cartone. Ai lati del caminetto di marmo giallo stile Luigi XV vi erano due grandi poltrone ricamate.* ***La pendola, nel mezzo, rappresentava (3)*** *un tempio di Vesta; e siccome l'impiantito era più basso del giardino, tutto l'appartamento aveva un leggero* ***sentore (4)*** *di muffa.*

R80[125]

RSTS: *Questa casa, dal tetto d'ardesia, si trovava tra una strada privata e un viottolo che portava al fiume. Vi erano nell'interno differenze di livello che facevano incespicare. Una stretta anticamera separava la cucina dalla sala dove la signora Aubain se ne stava tutto il giorno, seduta vicino alla finestra su un seggiolone* ***impagliato (1)****. Contro la parete tinta di bianco erano allineate otto sedie di mogano. Sotto il barometro* ***c'era una piramide di scatole di legno e di cartone posata su un vecchio pianoforte (2)****. Ai lati del caminetto di marmo giallo stile Luigi XV* ***c'****erano due grandi poltrone ricamate.* ***L'orologio a pendolo aveva, nel mezzo, una raffigurazione di Vesta (3)****; e siccome l'impiantito era più basso del giardino, tutto l'appartamento aveva un leggero* ***odore (4)*** *di muffa.*

> **RSTS**: **(1)** Freer translation of 'de paille', previously literally rendered as 'di paglia', an now replaced with 'impagliato'. The STS change slightly compromises the ST: 'impagliato' in Italian is a term also used to indicate the stuffing of a dead animal with straw,[126] so the Italian 'stuffed armchair'

[125] This passage is almost identical to the previous version except for one small change: 'strada', translating the original 'passage', has become 'strada privata', which is arguably somewhat closer to the meaning of the ST.

[126] In Treccani online dictionary, 'impagliare': 2) Di animali morti, prepararne la pelle e imbottirla di paglia o d'altra materia per imbalsamarli, ossia conservarli nella forma che

introduces a strikingly inappropriate link with the stuffed bird who will emerge as a central character in this story. **(2)** Romano in the STS considerably changes the original text, in accordance, it seems, with her strategy of 'depersonification' of objects which was observed in R44. The piano like the chairs is no longer (as in the original) the main character of the picture bearing the weight of the pyramid of boxes, instead, it fades into the background as a mere object in the description of a room presented by a narrator whose controlling voice is audible in the phrase 'era posata'. **(3)** The same happens with the clock. **(4)** Romano changes the antiquated term 'sentore' to the more modern 'odore'.

The analysis of the opening of Flaubert's story in the first revision that Romano did for the 1980 edition of 'Centopagine' reveals just two minimal changes, tending towards a more precise literal interpretation of the original. In this version the writer-translator changes the out-of-date Italianization of proper names and converts them back into their original French. The transformation of 'Felicita' into 'Félicité' does not cause any loss of the original irony implied in the name of the protagonist,[127] as the French 'Félicité' is extremely similar to the Italian 'Felicita', and its meaning ('happiness') is still clearly recognizable by the Italian reader. The conversion of the name back into its original French makes it more coherent with the rest of the French names – of persons and places – present in the text, eliminating an incongruity which had existed when Félicité was the only foreign-sounding name in a cast of French characters. (The case of Loulou, the parrot, is different. Romano's first version had named the bird 'Lulù', and changing this back to 'Loulou' makes no phonetic difference.)

The analysis of the opening of the revision for the series STS reveals that: 1) some of the changes are a modernization of language in an effort to make the Italian

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avevano da vivi (v. tassidermia). ◆ Part. pass. **impagliato**, anche come agg.: *fiaschi impagliati*; *un pappagallo impagliato*.

[127] 'Félicité' means 'happiness' in French. The irony of the name can be perceived at different levels: 1) Felicité's life appears quite far from being a happy one; 2) despite her miserable life the protagonist seems quite 'happy' until the end; 3) in the story her name, 'Félicité', and her apparent 'happiness', are strictly related to her 'simplicity'.

text more fluent, even though at times these compromise aspects of the source text; 2) other changes are a freer interpretation of the original text and, in general, tend to move the target text farther from the source text: they appear as an amplification of those changes observed in R44.

It is the aim of the following section to investigate further the two versions of 'Un cuore semplice', confirming what was found in the examination of the openings.

*6.3.2 Relevant examples from the selective analysis of the whole texts of **R80** and **RSTS***

R80: A few relevant examples from the analysis of R80 will show that, generally speaking, the changes made by Romano in this revision tend towards a more faithful, precise rendering of the original. All the changes made in R80 are kept in RSTS.

Fl (p. 25, ll. 33-34): *Le taureau avait **acculé** Félicité **contre une claire-voie;*** ;

R44 (p. 12, ll. 15-16) *Felicita **rinculava** sempre davanti al toro,* ;

R80 (p. 14, ll. 13-14) *Il toro **aveva serrato** Félicité **contro una staccionata;***[128]

Fl (p. 27, ll. 13-14), *les murailles noires de fume, **les carreaux** gris de poussière* ;

R44 (p. 13, ll. 40-41), *i muri anneriti dal fumo, **i mattoni** grigi di polvere* ;

R80 (p. 15, ll. 33-34), *i muri anneriti dal fumo, **i vetri** grigi di polvere*[129]

Fl (p. 29, ll. 24-25) ***On les rencontrait** toujours aux abords de la cuisine*;

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[128] cf. Maccagnani: '*Il toro aveva stretto Felicita contro un staccato*' (p. 29, l. 3). Change kept in STS.

[129] cf. Maccagnani: '*i **vetri** grigi di polvere*' (p. 30, ll. 19-20). Change kept in STS.

R44 (p. 15, l. 41; p. 16, l. 1) ***Si potevano incontrare*** *sempre dalle parti della cucina* ;

R80 (p. 18, l. 11) ***Li si incontrava*** *sempre dalle parti della cucina*[130]

RSTS: We may now consider a few examples from the analysis of the whole text of RSTS. The revision made for the Einaudi series appears to have been more extensive and more careful than the previous one.[131] The changes for STS are a re-manipulation of the Italian text, rather a meticulous comparison with the ST, aiming at a more fluent prose and more modern lexis. RSTS and R80 seem to move in opposite directions with regard to the source text.[132] Some changes in the second revision aim at a modernization of language and at improving the fluency of the text; others, however, seem dictated by gratuitous personal linguistic choices bearing no relation to the original, and these changes, all too often, seriously compromise fundamental aspects of the source text.

I will just list a very few examples from the revision of the conclusion of 'Un cœur simple', showing how, at the close of the tale, the masterly pictorial description of the altar, immediately preceding the final metamorphosis of the parrot into the Holy Spirit, is considerably watered down by Romano's revisional changes:

Fl (p. 57, ll. 20-25): *Il y avait au milieu un petit* ***cadre*** *enfermant des reliques, deux* ***orangers*** *dans les angles, et,* ***tout le long****, des flambeaux d'argent et des vases en porcelain,* ***d'où s'élançaient*** *des tournesols, des lis (...).* ***Ce monceau*** *de couleurs...*

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[130] '*Le si vedevano sempre nei pressi della cucina*'. Change kept in STS.

[131] This impression is borne out by the fact that some mistakes present in the 1944 version had not been corrected, probably because undetected, in the first revision, but were caught in the STS version. For instance: Fl (p. 35, l. 5) *Un lundi, 14* ***juillet*** *1819* ; R 44 and R80 (p. 20, l. 37/ p. 23, l. 19) *Un lunedí, il 14* ***giugno*** *1819* ; RSTS (p. 22, l. 30) *Un lunedí, il 14* ***luglio*** *1819*; Fl (p. 51, ll. 21-23) *puis elle mangea une croûte de pain, mise dans son* ***panier*** *par précaution*; R44 and R80 (p. 35, ll. 6-7; p. 40, ll. 24-25): *poi mangiò una crosta di pane che per precauzione si era messa nel* ***fazzoletto***; RSTS (p. 39, ll. 24-25): *poi mangiò una crosta di pane che per precausione aveva messo nella* ***cesta***.

[132] This general tendency, does not prove true for all of the changes made by Romano.

R44 (p. 42, ll. 18-23): *Nel mezzo c'era una piccola* ***cornice***[133] *contenente le reliquie, negli angoli due* ***aranci (1)****, e* ***per tutta la lunghezza (2)*** *candelieri d'argento e vasi di porcellana* ***dai quali s'innalzavano (3)*** *girasoli, gigli (...) .* ***Questo mucchio (4)*** *di colori...*

RSTS (p. 47, ll. 17-21): *Nel mezzo c'era una piccola teca contenente le reliquie, negli angoli due* ***candelabri (1)****, e* ***tutt'intorno (2)****candelieri d'argento e vasi di porcellana* ***pieni (3)*** *di girasoli, gigli (...).* ***Quest'insieme (4)*** *di colori...*

> In the STS version, **(1)**, **(2)**, **(3)**, **(4)** are changes pulling her previous 1944 translation farther from the original text and they cannot be said to improve it. It seems that their only aim is the one of not being literal, of arbitrarily changing the original text even if this means losing part of the beautiful pictorial effect created by Flaubert. For instance, in relation to Flaubert's triumph of colours and odours, which seems to go alongside Félicité's loss of her senses, Romano's first revisional change **(1)** deletes the colour orange and the distinctive odour of the plant; change **(2)** arbitrarily modifies the original description, also rendering it slightly implausible; **(3)** subverts the original perspective: in the original the sunflowers are visualized from underneath (definitely not from above) and might suggest that the whole image is in the mind of Félicité, lying in bed, and re-enacting in her pictorial imagination what is happening outside (an apotheosis of her mode of perceiving reality, not free from a touch of benevolent authorial irony); **(4)** the literal R44 translation of 'ce monceau' with 'questo mucchio' rendered better the pictoriality of the description of the altar (lots of colours, all mixed together, one on top of the other as in a painting) seen through Félicité's eyes, rather than being recounted by a controlling narrator. This highly sensorial vision, its vibrant colours anticipating the vision of the parrot, is furtherly compromised in Romano's last

[133] R 80 (p. 48, ll. 22-27): the only change in this revision is the substitution of '**cornice**' with '**teca**' (*'Nel mezzo c'era una piccola* ***teca*** *contenente le reliquie')* which seems an attempt to translate more faithfully the ST. Relics are typically usually kept in small transparent glass cases and not in a frame. Maccagnani also translates 'teca': '*Al centro v'era una piccola* ***teca****'*, p. 59, l. 9.

revision at crucial moments, as in the last description of the parrot in physical form:

Fl (p. 57, ll. 31-33) : *Loulou, caché sous des roses, ne laissait voir que son* ***front*** *bleu, pareil à une plaque de lapis.*

R44 and R80 (p. 43, ll. 32-34; p. 48, l. 34/p. 49,ll. 1-2) : *Di Lulù, nascosto sotto le rose, non si vedeva altro che la* ***fronte*** *turchina, simile ad una piastra di lapislazzuli.*

RSTS (p. 47, ll. 27-28): *Di Lulù, nascosto sotto le rose, non si vedeva altro che la* ***testa*** *turchina, simile ad una piastra di lapislazzuli.*

This change compromises the final appearance of Loulou: in the ST only his forehead is visible, a small and relatively shapeless (his forehead emerging from behind the roses) spot of colour. The last we see of the parrot before seeing him again in all his coloured splendor in Félicité's afterlife, is a spot of colour mixed with the other bright colours on the altar.[134]

Romano's STS translation, by revising 'fronte' with 'testa' [head], changes the original picture and spoils the pictorial metamorphosis of the parrot. Her striking change brings the parrot back to physical life disrupting Flaubert's skilfully arranged gradual fadeout of the bird. We are left with the bulky physical presence of the parrot (the Italian reader imagines his eyes, beak, expression etc.) which in the original has almost disappeared, as he has almost accomplished his spiritual metamorphosis.

Again, two lines later, another original powerful visual image is weakened by Romano's propensity to non-literality in her last revision:

Fl (p. 47, ll. 30-31) : *Le prêtre gravit lentamente les marches, et posa sur la dentelle* ***son grand soleil d'or qui rayonnait.***

R44 and R80 (p. 42, ll. 36-38; p. 49, ll. 4-6): *Il prete salì lentamente i gradini, e posò sulla tovaglia di pizzo il* ***suo gran sole d'oro raggiante.***

[134] The parrot's earthly life (even if already an afterlife) has been gradually deteriorating (broken, stuffing coming out, worms eating it etc.) until this very last disintegration.

RSTS (p. 47, ll. 30-31): *Il prete salì lentamente i gradini, e posò sulla tovaglia di pizzo il* ***grande ostensorio dai raggi dorati.***

> The change from 'sole' to 'ostensorio', whose sun-shape might not come as immediately to the reader, the substitution of the very effective active verb 'rayonnait' with the passive description 'dai raggi dorati', waters down the pictorial effect of a beaming golden sun, making it duller and less miraculous. The reduction of the priest's gilded monstrance to a mere inactive product also breaks the story's sequence of things which seem able to take action as if by their own will.

Finally, in the very last paragraph where Félicité dies and has the vision of the parrot as the Paraclete:

Fl (p. 58, ll. 3-11): *Une vapeur d'azur monta dans la chambre de Félicité. Elle* ***avança (1)*** *les narines, en la humant avec une sensibilité mystique; puis ferma les paupières. Ses lèvres souriaient. Les* ***mouvements (2) de son cœur (3)*** *se ralentirent* ***un à un (4)****, plus vagues chaque fois, plus doux,* ***comme une fontaine s'épuise, comme un écho disparaît (5)****; et, quand elle exhale* ***son (3)*** *dernier souffle, elle crut voir,* ***dans les cieux entrouverts (6)****, un perroquet gigantesque,* ***planant (7)*** *au-dessus de sa tête.*

R44 and R80 (p. 42, ll. 42-43/p. 43, ll. 1-7; p. 49, ll. 8-15) *Un vapore azzurro salì nella camera di Felicita/Félicité. Essa* ***sporse (1)*** *le narici, aspirandolo con mistica ebbrezza; poi chiuse le palpebre. Con le labbra sorrideva.* ***I moti (2) del suo (3) cuore*** *rallentarono a poco a poco,* ***ogni volta (4)*** *più tenui, più dolci,* ***come una fontana si estingue, come un'eco si perde (5)****; e quando esalò il* ***suo (3)*** *ultimo respiro, credette di vedere,* ***nei cieli dischiusi (6)****, un pappagallo gigantesco,* ***che si librava (7)*** *sopra la sua testa.*

RSTS (p. 48, ll. 4-11): *Un vapore azzurro salì nella camera di Félicité. Lei* ***dilatò (1)*** *le narici, aspirandolo con mistica ebbrezza; poi chiuse le palpebre. Con le labbra sorrideva. I* ***battiti (2)*** *del* ***[< >] (3)*** *cuore rallentarono a poco a poco,* ***sempre più (4)*** *deboli, più tenui,* ***come si estingue una fontana, come si perde un'eco (5)****; e quando*

*esalò l' **[< >] (3)** ultimo respiro, credette di vedere, **nel cielo che si apriva (6)**, un pappagallo gigantesco **librarsi (7)** sopra la sua testa.*

The changes of the STS revision systematically aim at detaching the TT from the ST. Again, the strategical choice of reducing the literal quality of the first translation, at this extremely important moment of the story, produces a remarkable loss: **(1)** the more literal R44 translation of 'avança' with 'sporse', compared to the RSTS 'dilatò', is a a more faithful rendering of the imperceptible movement of Félicité's nostrils described by the French verb; 'dilatò' [dilated/widened] is too visible and exaggerated (exaggeration at this last delicate moment might cause a comical effect). **(2):** Again the more literal R44 translation of 'mouvements' with 'moti' is a better rendering than the RSTS 'battiti'. The term 'battiti' is less poetic and slightly reduces the wider meaning of the original word 'mouvements', including maybe also a reference to Félicité's good heartdness, and hence the *mouvements de son cœur* come to mean the end of all her life. **(3)** The STS deletion of the two possessive adjectives 'son' in front of 'cœur' and 'souffle' reduces the pathos and what might be interpreted as the sympathy of the author, surfacing at the end of Félicité's life, towards his main character[135]. **(4)** The STS replacement of the more literal R44 'ogni volta' to translate the original 'chaque fois' with 'sempre più', slightly compromises the figurative power of this last portrayal of life which is losing power, diminishing and extinguishing itself like a fountain within Félicité's body. The R44 translation 'ogni volta' depicts more effectively the feeble hiccupping of an old fountain whose water supply is dwindling away. **(5)** The two STS inversions of the literal R44 reproduction of the original order in 'comme une fontaine s'épuise' and 'comme un écho disparaît' 'come una fontana si estingue' and 'come un'eco si perde' with 'come si estingue una fontana' and 'come si perde un'eco' considerably reduces the lyricism and pathos of this last moment, lessening the potential

[135] The importance of retaining this feature in translation is clear when one considers the many debates on whether Flaubert's sympathy towards Félicité at this point can provide fundamental proof of 'Un cœur simple' being essentially ironic, or not.

sympathy of the author and reader towards Félicité. **(6)** The RSTS change of the faithful R44 translation of the original plural 'nei cieli dischiusi' with 'nel cielo che si apriva' unnecessarily weakens and reduces the religious reference, and important elements of subtext and cohesion are lost in this final representation of Félicité's religion, sacred and profane, following many others in the text (e.g. her bedroom). **(7)** The substitution of the R44 imperfect tense (successfully conveying the effect of the original present participle, as of a continuous present, almost an eternity) with the reflexive infinitive compromises the effect of solemnity, universality and timelessness of the close.

The analysis of Romano's two revisions of 'Un cœur simple' has revealed different attitudes towards the original. In R80 the minimal changes to her first version seem aimed at a modernization of language and a more precise rendering of the source text. On the other hand, the changes made for the STS edition seem determined by a will to widen the distance between original and translation. In this final revision the original text by Flaubert does not seem to play a significant role: the analysis of Romano's changes makes one wonder which text Romano was revising, her translation of Flaubert or Romano's original?

7. Conclusion

The analysis of Lalla Romano's 1944 translation of Gustave Flaubert's 'Un cœur simple" has revealed, as for the other two case-studies of authorial translations, a higher degree of freedom of the writer-translator as compared to her fellow non-writer translators. In particular, Romano tends to disrupt systematically the original meticuolous arrangement of syntax, thereby undermining one of the most distinctive aspects of Flaubert's masterpiece, which underpins two further interdependent features, of fundamental importance to the work: the impersonality of its prose and its pictorial quality.

Lalla Romano's sensibility as a painter, her innate affinity with Flaubert's style, the importance and influence of this translation on her writing career, do not

guarantee a successful rendering of those aspects of the original text that – one might reasonably assume – she should, at least in principle, have caught better than other translators. This brings the present study face to face with an important fact: a strong sense of affinity, and similarities of ideals and styles, between the writer translating and the work being translated, might hinder rather than facilitate the production of a good translation. This favourable circumstance can, perversely, provide the translator with an irresistible temptation to rewrite the work in her own way.

The analysis of the two revisions of the translation by Romano have informed us about some relevant aspects of this case-study, and of writerly translation in general. The first minor, unacknowledged revision for 'Centopagine' was inspired by what revisions are usually determined by: a wish to update the language and to correct errors with a view to producing a more faithful, precise rendering of the original text. On the other hand, the more extensive revision for the prestigious series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' reveals a tendency to increase the proportion of arbitrary translation choices, greatly expanding the strategy of rearrangement and capricious changes which we had found in R44.

The findings of the analysis in this last chapter might throw a little light on the general relationship between writers and translations.

The fact that in both revisions by Lalla Romano *not one* change is a correction, an attempt to amend the arbitrary nature of past translation choices and the considerable losses they had caused, strongly confirms that writers seem to worry less about literality and faithfulness to the original. As we saw, it seems likely that Romano did not compare the older translations to the original 'Un cœur simple' when undertaking her revision for 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'.

Romano's freedom is evident from the beginning of her writing career, and this might point to the innate nature of the writer's freer attitude in translation, revealing that such creative disposition is not determined only by fame.[136] Against that

[136] Such generalizations can always be challenged by a counter-example. Tim Parks, although a famous writer, remains a careful and thoughtful translator. He does recommend 'a syntax

inference, it might be argued that Romano at the time was already a well-established visual artist, had written a collection of poems, and had been invited by a writer of the stature of Pavese to translate Flaubert's work. Could this invitation, this commission, have been the real determining factor?

The fact that Romano increases the departures from the original in the STS version might point to the opposite conclusion: that independence and freedom grow along with growth of fame and authority. But one may also ask: if you are compelled to prove your writerly freedom by making changes everywhere, can such a compulsory 'freedom' really be called freedom?

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that is quite different from the original' when translating parts of *The Prince*, but this is to be done in order to get the tone of Machiavelli's 'more spoken, flexible, persuading, sometimes brusque voice'. See Parks, 'Concerning the way in which translators should keep faith', in Buffagni et al. (ed.), *The Translator as Author*, pp. 181-191 (p. 184).

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

'Soprattutto non troppo genio'

– Franco Fortini, 1989

The present study has reviewed some ideas and values concerned with writing and translation, and with the relationship between writers and translators. In addition, it has described and sampled a significant Italian cultural initiative that was built on certain assumptions about the interconnections between those two professions. But do these two dimensions of the study, the general and the specific, fit together well and yield some extra value by being combined as I have done? After examining three authorial translations by well-established writers who translate we can ask what is special about the 'Scrittori tradotti da Scrittori' series, and whether any universal insights can be generalized from the local findings that have been suggested in the course of the study.

Before going on to answer those questions, I admit that I have been quite hostile in my judgements of the translation strategies and solutions adopted by the three authors whose translations I have studied. My objections are not meant to diminish the status of Manganelli, Pavese and Romano as creative writers, and I accept that my concentration on the criterion of accurately reflecting the source text is only one among the possible approaches to translation criticism. I have certainly shown that their translations are 'inaccurate', and I leave it to others to decide whether all of the resulting Italian texts have a literary quality that compensates for their failure to meet the accuracy criterion. But even if all three translations are accepted as examples of really distinguished writing, would that make them good translations? And Einaudi published them as translations, not retellings, re-writings or adaptations.

I have also shown, in the course of my analysis, that several 'ordinary' working translators have made Italian versions of the same texts that are far more accurate than those offered by the three established authors. Personally, I think that these 'ordinary' translations are sometimes better written than the 'authorial' translations, so maybe

the search for accuracy can also have good effects on writing style. Another reason why the 'ordinary' translators are sometimes very good is that the distinction between 'author' and 'translator' is not absolute; it is a boundary that is often crossed. Apart from the translation work of celebrated authors such as Claudio Magris and Tim Parks, there is the fact that many translators also produce creative work. It may not always be as significant as the output of an established prose writer, but if it is relatively weaker, the deficit is likely to be more in the area of the plot, theme and imagination of the original author and less concerned with the skill of writing good prose, because in prose fiction, 'the unit is not [...] the word, but the event'.[1] Among the twenty-five working translators who contribute interviews to Ilide Carmignani's collection, the biographical notes show that at least nine of them are published authors, some of them very successful in that field.[2]

I would therefore like to start my conclusions by listening to what some well-established professional translators have to say on the assumption that underpins the whole 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' project: the idea that original writing and translating are similar practices fixed in a hierarchical relation; and the consequent misleading assumption that translations by writers are top quality because they are produced by the real professionals of literary language. The welcome opportunity to hear the view of the (real) professionals of translation is offered by some collections including interviews, essays and articles by professional translators. My main source, once again, will be the interviews with established Italian translators included by Ilide Carmignani in the volume *Gli autori invisibili, incontri sulla traduzione letteraria*, from which most of the translators' interventions quoted here are taken. Other valuable collections featuring the thoughts of professional translators are *The Translator as Author, Perspectives on Literary Translation* edited by Buffagni,

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[1] In *Language of Fiction* (p. 26) David Lodge quotes Marvin Mudrick: 'In prose fiction the unit is not, as in poetry, the word, but the event – a fact that helps to explain why prose fiction so remarkably survives the sea-change of language even in bad translations...Yet great fiction can survive, not only translation, but a measurable amount of bad or dull writing in the original...'.

[2] Carmignani, *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 173-179.

Garzelli and Zanotti, and Allen's and Bernofsky's recent collection *In Translation, Translators on Their Work and What it Means*.[3]

1.The translator is not an author

According to the translator, academic and writer Serena Vitale,[4] a translator is a different person from an author. To the question 'Che tipo di autorialità offre, a suo avviso, la traduzione? [...]' she answers:

> Non capisco molto bene, e comunque è estranea al mio modo di scrivere e pensare, la parola 'autorialità'. Il traduttore, è lampante, non può sostituirsi all'autore. È un'altra cosa, un'altra persona, con un diverso statuto nel mondo del creare. Ed è indispensabile che conosca bene i propri limiti nel ri-creare, mai cedendo all'arbitrio.[5]

Translators indeed have a different role in the creative world. A very obvious difference is that they do not invent a plot, as Moshe Kahn, a former academic, filmmaker, opera director and now a leading professional translator into German,[6] points out. To explain the essential difference between writing and translating, and to argue that being a literary translator does not make him an author, Kahn uses a metaphor of the composer and the performer that conveys the distinction with great clarity:

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[3] The publishing details of the two volumes have already appeared in chapters 1 and 2.

[4] Serena Vitale teaches Russian literature at the Università Cattolica in Milan. She translated into Italian works of Brodskij, Cvetaeva, Esenin, Mandel'stam, Nabokov and many others. She wrote the novel *Il Bottone di Puškin* (for which she was awarded the Premio Comisso in 1995) and the tales *La casa di ghiaccio* (for which she won the Premio Chiara and the Premio Bagutta). See *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 179.

[5] Serena Sanvitale, 'Tradurre: una gioiosa avventura dello spirito' in *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 92-94 (p. 93).

[6] 'Moshe Kahn is considered by publishers and critics in the German speaking area of Europe a specialist for "untranslatable" novels from Italian into German. He has translated a variety of linguistically difficult novels, including Luigi Malerba's *Il pataffio*, Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Ragazzi di vita* as well as a great number of novels in dialect by Andrea Camilleri', *The Translator as Author*, p.103. See also Klezmerconnection.at/moshe-english.htm [accessed 24 March 2014].

> Does that make me a co-author? In a word, no. I do not invent any plot, I do not put any words in their places, I do not develop any sentences. All I do is transform them into another language. To me that is what happens when great violinists or pianists interpret the music of a great composer. That is all. The richer and the more varied their sound is, the finer their capability is to make the structures of a composition perceivable, then the greater is their art. But their art is that of performers, and brilliant though it may be, their sound belongs to a given piece of music: under no circumstances can we say that they invent the piece.[7]

It is not just a question of different roles; we are also looking at two contrasting personalities. Renata Colorni, an established translator and editor (with long experience in the translation of psychological works),[8] gives a convincing analysis of two completely different psychological types, the writer and the translator:

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[7] Moshe Kahn, 'How to deal with dialects in translation?' in *The Translator as Author*, pp. 103-116 (p. 113). Anthony Pym too has problems with the idea of the translator being an author, explaining that the difference between original writing and translating does not concern only creativity and individuality, but also, and essentially, a different ethical responsibility towards the text. Original writing, unlike translation 'concerns not just creativity or individuality, but also ethical responsibility [...]. Translators might be sincere in their belief that they are representing a source text, but should that commitment be extended to belief in the validity of the source text itself?' (Anthony Pym, 'The translator as non-author, and I am sorry about that' in *The Translator as Author*, pp. 31-44 (pp. 31, 37). The writer Umberto Eco has a very different opinion and claims that sometimes translators can be more authors in interpreting the ST than the original author. From his experience as a translated author, Eco explains: 'E se talora avvertivo delle impossibilità – che pure andavano in qualche modo risolte – più spesso ancora avvertivo delle possibilità: vale a dire avvertivo come, al contatto con l'altra lingua, il testo esibisse potenzialità interpretative che erano rimaste ignote a me stesso, e come talora la traduzione potesse migliorarlo (dico "migliorarlo" rispetto all'*intenzione* che il testo stesso veniva improvvisamente manifestando, indipendentemente dalla mia intenzione originaria di autore empirico)'. Similarly, the Italian writer Claudio Magris stresses the importance of translation as the first form of literary criticism of a text: "La traduzione [inoltre], come diceva Friedrich Schlegel, è la prima forma di critica letteraria, perché una traduzione scopre subito i punti solidi di un testo e quelli deboli, mostra dove un testo tiene e dove esso vacilla, anche se l'autore è riuscito a dissimulare o a simulare. È difficile imbrogliare un traduttore." (Both quotations are taken from Barbara Ivančić's 'Dialogue between translators and authors. The example of Claudio Magris' in *The Translator as Author*, pp. 157-172 (p. 166).

[8] Renata Colorni translated Sigmund Freud, Bernhard, Canetti, Dürrenmatt, Roth, Schnitzler, Reventlow, Werfel. In 1987 she won the 'Premio Goethe' for her translations of Freud and Elias Canetti. In 1991 she won the 'Premio Monselice' for her translation of Franz Werfel and Thomas Bernhard. Colorni also won other important awards for her translations: the 'Premio Grinzane Cavour', the 'Premio Nazionale per la Traduzione' and the 'Premio Feltrinelli per la Traduzione Letteraria'. See *Gli autori invisibili,* p. 175.

> Il traduttore è una bestia un po' particolare. Così come io l'ho fatto e come lo intendo, è una persona molto disposta all'ascolto, a restare nell'ombra, dotata di grande umiltà e devozione, forse di masochismo, ma anche di un'enorme curiosità. Ora che il mio lavoro, del tutto diverso, mi porta a incontrare molti scrittori, a conoscerne a fondo la psicologia, credo di poter dire che in generale, ma esistono naturalmente vistose e luminose eccezioni, si tratta di persone pochissimo curiose. Lo scrittore è una persona molto concentrata sul proprio ego, sul proprio modo di esprimersi, sul proprio mondo. Grande o piccolo non importa, è sempre ferocemente attaccato a una sua espressività e spesso ha poco interesse per la voce degli altri. Anche il modo in cui legge è fagocitante, cannibalico, legge per trarne qualcosa. Il traduttore ha una disposizione psicologica molto diversa, è disposto a far tabula rasa di se stesso e anche di quelle che sono le sue eventuali doti espressive. È molto capace di ascoltare, quando ascolta, si mette al servizio del testo e dell'autore che affronta.[9]

The translator is a specialist in the text more than in the author, a specialist of language more than of plot, as Rosella Bernascone, translator from English,[10] points out in answer to the question 'che rapporto si stabilisce fra traduttore e scrittore? [...]':[11]

> Mi è più facile pensare a un rapporto col testo, invece che con l'autore, e in quel caso mi piace la definizione di alcuni teorici: il testo primo e il testo secondo, così si toglie

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[9] Renata Colorni, 'Sulle spalle di un gigante' in *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 19-30 (p. 22). The fact that writers might tend to superimpose their literary egos on the works they translate, an attitude often observed in the field of authorial translations, could also be interpreted in the light of Harold Bloom's theory of anxiety of influence (see Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (Oxford University Press US, 1997)), according to which poets are hindered in their creative process by the ambiguous relation they maintained with precursor poets. Because poets must create an original new poetic vision to survive into posterity, the influence of precursor poets creates a sense of anxiety, of necessity to produce something different from what has already been written. If we look at the writer-translator's failure to abandon his own ego when translating in the light of this theory, we could read his or her attitude towards the ST as a sort of anxiety, of fear of being 'swallowed up' by the writing of the great writer. Romano's deviations from Flaubert could be her anxiety not to be overwhelmed by a great writer whose 'affinity' to herself gives him all too much power over her. Romano might feel the urge to change the original text for fear of becoming a second-rate Flaubert. For another theory of 'negative influence' as a way of reacting to literary stimuli from outside, see ch 4 'Influence, Analogy and Tradition' of S.S. Prawer, *Comparative Literary Studies* (London: Duckworth, 1973), pp. 51-73.

[10] Rosella Bernascone is a teacher of literary translation. She is a translator from English. She translated Alcott, Conrad, London, Stoker, MacDonald, Corbett, Lawrence Norfolk; Nancy Huston and many others. See *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 173.

[11] *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 128.

> di mezzo la pretesa originalità, e la traduzione è seconda solo in quanto è scritta dopo [...]. E come traduttrice io mi sento una lettrice privilegiata. Una lettrice che legge il testo da sopra la spalla dell'autore. [...] stai leggendo la sua scrittura più ancora che il suo testo.[12]

If these statements are true, if the true specialism of the writer lies in personal expression and invention rather than in assuming a secondary role, the series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' could be seen, in principle, as a fraud on the general public. It would be a bit like a series featuring 'Romanzi scritti da traduttori', with the difference that Italian readers would probably immediately challenge the underlying assumption of such a series. Being a translator does not mean that you can write an original work. Susanna Basso, a well-established translator for Einaudi,[13] characterizes the essential difference between translating and original writing by claiming that she as a translator could not write something original:

> Non riuscirei mai a inventare un intreccio. Mc Ewan ha intrecci così perfetti, così forti narrativamente, che mi sembrano miracoli dell'intelligenza. Quando ho avuto la tentazione di scrivere è sempre stato scrivere del leggere, per esempio scrivere sul senso di prendere quella parola che avevo appena lasciato. Il mio lavoro è prendere la parola da altri, ma non prendere mai la parola. Credo che la traduzione sia un po'come pregare, per la devozione che richiede. Scrivere invece è un po' cantare. [14]

2. Must translators stay in the shadow?

I like Basso's metaphors of singing and praying because, like Kahn's image of composing and performing, they show effectively the diversity of attitudes and skills that writing and translating entail. A writer who, while translating, loses sight of the

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[12] Rosella Bernascone, 'Che cos'è la traduzione?' in *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 127-131 (pp. 128-129).

[13] Susanna Basso is a teacher and a translator for Einaudi. She translated: Ian McEwan, Paul Auster, Alice Munro, Julian Barnes, Martin Amis, John McGahern, Hilary Mantel, Wole Soyinka, Angela Carter, Steven Millhauser, Kazuo Ishiguro, Tobias Wolff, Michael Frayn and many others. She won the 'Premio Procida' and 'Nini Castellani Agosti'. *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 173.

[14] Susanna Basso, 'Sulla punta della mia lingua materna', *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 38-41 (p. 41). See also footnote 1.

original and imposes his ego on the text, sounds as out of place as an opera singer interrupting a prayer meeting. Anonymity, invisibility, humility, a silencing of one's own personality, are all part of the translator's job-description. 'Se uno ha voglia di scrivere romanzi, li scriva e non si metta a tradurre quelli altrui, perché finisce per prevaricare, per imporre malamente il suo gusto"[15] says Angelo Morino, a translator and novelist,[16] to his translation students when they impose their personal styles on the text. Eliot Weinberger, translator and literary critic,[17] stresses the confusion created by the pretended authoriality of translation. A translator is not an author. A fundamental attitude of anonymity and invisibility required in translation is at the opposite end from original writing:

> Some translators now claim that they are authors (or something like authors), which strikes me as a Pirandellesque (or Reaganesque) confusion of actor and role. [...] the advanced guard of translators and their explainers are now declaring that the translator is an author, that a translated and original text are essentially indistinguishable (because an original text is a translation and/or a translation is an original text) and, most radically, that the sole author of a translation is the translator [...] This strikes me as presumptuous, if not hubristic; and it may well be time to raise the banner of the translator's essential and endearing anonymity. [...] For me, the translator's anonymity [...] is the joy of translation. One is operating strictly on the level of language, attempting to invent similar effects, to capture the essential, without the interference of the otherwise all-consuming ego.[18]

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[15] Angelo Morino, 'Traduttore per caso', *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 102-111 (p. 110).

[16] Angelo Morino (1950-2007) was a teacher of Spanish, a novelist and a translator. He translated: Allende, Arguedas, Benet, Bolaño, Carpentier, denevi, Donoso, Garcìa Màrquez, Ibargüengoitia, Puig, Scorza, Soriano, Vargas Llosa and many others. *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 177-178.

[17] Eliot Weinberger is the author of a study of Chinese poetry translation, *19 Ways of Looking at Wang Wei*, he translates the poetry of Bei Dao and is editor of *The New Directions. Anthology of Classical Chinese Poetry* and a forthcoming series of classics from Chinese University Press of Hong Kong. Among his translations and editions of Latin American poetry and prose are *The Poems of Octavio Paz*, Jorge Luis Borges's *Selected Non-Fictions* (winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award in Criticism), Xavier Villaurrutia's *Nostalgia for Death*, and Vicente Huidobro's *Altazor*. His work has been translated into thirty languages. See *In Translation*, pp. 251-252.

[18] Eliot Weinberger, 'Anonymous Sources, (On Translators and Translation)' in *In Translation,* pp.17-43 (pp.26-27).

This great skill does not impose complete invisibility. Kahn's great violinist does not perform behind a screen. Translators are entitled to sign their work, while maintaining their professional humility towards the original text. Indeed some believe they have a duty to show themselves. Claudio Groff, one of the most prominent Italian translators from German, points out that he, as a translator of the German writer Günter Grass, must be able to transfer into Italian all the stylistic features of the original, but also to unveil a trace of the translator:

> Tutta (quasi tutta) la ricchezza, la densità, le tensioni della sua scrittura: [...]la lingua d'arrivo, qualunque essa sia, deve avere il sapore, l'odore e il suono inconfondibili della sua prosa: e insieme – aggiungo io – anche rivelare la traccia del mediatore, qualcosa di un' "aura" che rimane sullo sfondo, che non deve (dovrebbe) mai imporsi e sovrapporsi, restando però visibile in filigrana, anzi, nei risultati migliori, forse visibile e invisibile al tempo stesso.[19]

3. Translating is not an occasional job

The distinction also works the other way around. Being a writer does not entail being a translator. Translating is not an occasional job that any writer can do. In 1983, Vincenzo Mantovani, a translator, novelist and journalist,[20] was asked by the *Corriere della Sera* to give his impressions of a unique publishing project – the (then) forthcoming series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'. Mantovani commented:

> noi traduttori "professionali" abbiamo una certa antipatia (io almeno ce l'ho e non mi curo di nasconderla) per gli scrittori che si scoprono e s'improvvisano traduttori. O sono dei bravissimi ex-traduttori come Fruttero e Lucentini, e allora mi tolgo il

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[19] Claudio Groff, 'Tradurre Grass con Grass', *The Translator as Author,* pp. 151-156 (p. 155). Groff's idea of visibility-invisibility has nothing to do with Lawrence Venuti's ideas, according to which the translator must make himself visible and avoid adapting the language of translation to the standards of the TL, but making an effort to retain the foreign element. (See Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: a History of Translation* (London: Routledge, 1995).

[20] Vincenzo Mantovani translated: Bellow, Roth, V.S. Naipaul, Hemingway, Faulkner, Bukowski, Lowry, Kerouac, Miller, Asimov, Crichton, Twain, Updike, Lessing, Ghosh, O'Brien, Rushdie and others. *Gli autori invisibili,* p. 177.

> cappello perché so che avranno per l'originale lo stesso rispetto che ho io. O sono e si sentono soprattutto degli scrittori, e allora è inevitabile che tendano a sovrapporsi al testo, è facile che rischino di usarlo come un semplice supporto delle loro esercitazioni stilistiche a danno (più che a vantaggio) dell'autore tradotto.[21]

The idea that writer-translators might tend to superimpose their ego on the original text seems quite established in the field of literary translation. Our analysis has, in part, confirmed this view. In our three case-studies writers do not strive, as their fellow non-writer (or less established) translators would, to reproduce faithfully all the elements of the source text. The result of their 'freer' approach, especially in the case of Manganelli's Poe and Romano's Flaubert, is a failure to reproduce fundamental original effects. Poe's psychological thriller 'The Fall of the House of Usher', in Manganelli's version, has been uprooted from its psychological setting and lost its most essential features. Flaubert's masterpiece of impassibility and pictoriality 'Un cœur simple', in Romano's version, has considerably reduced its impassive and pictorial quality.

In the cases studied we have seen that writers tend not to have the same respect for their fellow-writers that ordinary translators display. We have seen that a certain degree of creativity is necessary to transfer a text into a new language. And we have also seen that 'creative intervention' does not necessarily mean 'different from the original'. Sometimes it takes much more creativity to reproduce every single element, to mirror the original, than it takes to produce a rough equivalent in one's own fluent prose. Changes, when they are needed, should be made carefully. In the page of the *Corriere della Sera* dedicated to the 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori', the famous Italian writer Claudio Magris was also asked to say something on the project. Magris points to the dangers of changing the original too much: 'Il problema più difficile per il traduttore, è la scelta di quel limite sottilissimo oltre il quale il mutamento – che il testo originario impone, per essere reso realmente nella sua vitalità e non già irrigidito

[21] Mantovani, 'L'autore in intimità', *Corriere della Sera*, 10 Agosto 1983.

in una morta trasposizione letterale – diventa una prevaricazione che falsa quel testo stesso.'[22]

4. Faithfulness as the most important criterion?

Manganelli's warning recorded in the Verbali Editoriali of the Einaudi publishing house – 'Manganelli insiste sulla necessità di mantenere per gli STS il carattere originario (di documento importante della storia di un autore). Occorre evitare che gli STS diventino una collana di sole buone traduzioni' – [23] might suggest that this free attitude towards the source text is what is actually imposed on writers participating in the 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' project. Are the writers who translate for the Einaudi series really free towards the original? Or are they acting under some sort of artificial freedom which they feel they have to display when translating for the series? Is this the reason why Romano changes for the worse many passages of her previous versions?[24] The attitude urged by Manganelli is not in line with the attitude that a professional translator would have towards the original, and implies that a translator can act like a real author and claim his or her authorial status, simply by translating unprofessionally. These types of translations might better have been called re-writings, 'Scrittori che riscrivono scrittori'. Professional translating traditionally involves respect for the original. And one might assume that writers ought to be naturally impelled to strive to reproduce all elements of the source text, because they

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[22] Claudio Magris, 'Una voce nell'altra', *Corriere della Sera*, 10 Agosto 1983.
[23] AE, Verbali Editoriali, 1987.
[24] Such attitude would be in accordance with the Skopos theory developed by Hans Vermeer. 'This "*Skopos* rule" appears to mean that the translator's decisions should be made, in the last instance, in accordance with the reasons why someone asked the translator to do the translation. Yet it could also mean that the dominant factor is what the end-user wants the translation for. Then again, the determining factor might be what the translator *thinks* the purpose should be.' [see Anthony Pym, *Exploring Translation Theories* (Banbury and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 44]. And, we may add, this kind of 'brief' to the translator would not necessarily have to be stated explicitly; it could just be assumed or 'understood' by both sides. Romano's unnecessary revisional changes might have been determined by the purpose of the series as stated by Manganelli (not to produce only good translations, but translations that would be documents of the history of the writer-translator), or by what she herself thought could be the purpose of the series.

should know, better than others, what producing an original text means. At least this is what Franca Cavagnoli, a professional translator, academic and novelist,[25] thinks:

> Scrivere aiuta ad essere più rispettosi della parola altrui. Sappiamo quanto ci è costato trovare quella certa parola per dire quella certa cosa. E sappiamo quante ne abbiamo scartate per far cadere la scelta proprio su quella.[26]

At the risk of being repetitious, let me accumulate some more statements of humility and service from non-writer translators. For Delfina Vezzoli, a professional translator,[27] translating is a profession that requires humility to accept the style and thought of the author you are translating:

> Più che un atto di mediazione è una forma di meditazione: richiede l'umiltà di accettare lo stile e il pensiero dell'autore che traduci (per questo sarebbe meglio scegliere autori che siano quanto meno "compatibili" con la propria sensibilità), sentire il "respiro" del testo (non solo la poesia ha un ritmo), cercare di riprodurlo nella propria lingua, diventare malleabili al punto di scrivere in italiano con lo stesso respiro dell'inglese. È un lavoro di ri-scrittura, non un trasloco di parole.[28]

Similarly, Anna Ravano, a professional translator,[29] points out that the absolute priority of the translator must be first to understand, and then to think of rewriting it in the new language:

> La domanda cruciale che ci si deve fare davanti al testo da tradurre è "che cosa intende dire l'autore scegliendo questa parola, esprimendosi con questa frase?" e solo

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[25] Author of two novels as well as academic books on translation.

[26] Franca Cavagnoli, 'Per ciascun pensiero c'è un'unica, mirabile parola' in *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 95-101 (p. 100)

[27] Delfina Vezzoli translated all the works of Anaïs Nin for Bompiani; Robert Pirsig for Adelphi; David Leavitt, Harold Brodkey for Mondadori; Don DeLillo for Einaudi and others. See *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 179.

[28] Delfina Vezzoli, 'Dopo Dio e l'idraulico c'è il traduttore' in *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 45-51 (p. 51).

[29] Anna Ravano translated all the poetry by Sylvia Plath for the Meridiani edition. She is co-author, together with Monica Harvey, of *Wow. The Word on Words* (Zanichelli), a dictionary of English slang and colloquialisms, *Gli autori invisibili*, p.178.

> dopo aver risposto a questa domanda si può passare a: "Come rendo in italiano questa parola? Come giro in italiano questa frase?"[30]

Martina Testa, a professional translator and editor,[31] feels that the translator is a craftsman at the service of the author, and sees faithfulness as the most important criterion for translating:

> La vedo anche come atto di trasmissione del pensiero altrui, un passaggio delicatissimo che richiede il massimo rigore...in un certo senso nel tradurre un romanzo non credo che ci si dovrebbero prendere più "libertà" che nel tradurre un documento legale. Insomma, non ho una visione molto romantica della traduzione! So benissimo che c'è invece chi pone l'accento sugli aspetti interpretativi, creativi, artistici, eccetera e dà al traduttore un ruolo molto vicino a quello dello scrittore; rispetto anche questa visione delle cose, solo che non è il modo in cui vivo io, personalmente, questo lavoro. Quando traduco non mi sento una coautrice, ma solo un'artigiana al servizio dell'autore.[32]

5. Translations are translations

Another important ethical aspect often stressed by professional translators is that a translation need not avoid at all costs showing itself as a translation. Sometimes the text of translation might reveal its 'non-original' status. Reading Romano's 'Un cœur simple' compared to Maccagnani's version of the same story, one might find Romano's more beautiful, natural and Italian than Maccagnani. But a translator has to consider the losses his or her rewriting might produce. Gallone's Poe sounds quite translational at times, but is that necessarily considered a failure? A translation is not the original. The reader knows this, or perhaps needs to be made aware of it, as Claudio Groff suggested. Natalia Ginzburg contributes a most interesting variant on Groff's 'visible and invisible' formula, in her article for the *Corriere della Sera* page

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[30] Anna Ravano, 'Tradurre: creatività e ascolto', in *Gli autori invisibili*, pp. 156-161 (p.159).
[31] Martina Testa is a professional translator from American-English. She translated: David Foster Wallace, Jonathan Lethem, J.T. Leroy, Kurt Vonnegut, Cormac Mc Carthy and others. *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 179.
[32] Martina Testa, 'La fedeltà come criterio supremo nel tradurre', pp. 162-171.

on 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'. She argues for a slight touch of roughness as a sign that a translation from one language has cost some effort, and cannot be completely fluid:

> Tradurre è trasferire un testo da una lingua in un'altra. Occorre stare attenti a non cadere in una non-lingua: in un testo tradotto, non bisognerebbe sentire lo sforzo della trasposizione. Però è anche vero che una certa eccessiva fluidità e scorrevolezza, possono essere il segno di una traduzione cattiva: cioè per sfuggire ai rischi della non-lingua, si finge disinvoltura e scioltezza; qui si nasconde, in genere, la superficialità e l'infedeltà. Le traduzioni buone non sono troppo fluide; hanno asperità e ruvidezza che distinguono dai diamanti falsi i diamanti veri.[33]

A translator, when reading the text he has translated, should feel 'foreign' to that way of expression, explains Glauco Felici, a professional translator:[34] 'se rileggendo una propria traduzione il traduttore stenta un po' a riconoscerla come uscita dalla sua penna, ma vi sente una voce altra, vuol dire che il processo di identificazione con l'autore ha funzionato.'[35] Would this test work with Manganelli, Romano, Pavese? And, does that matter?

6. 'La palestra': translation as training

Franco Fortini, a most authoritative Italian poet, writer, translator and literary critic, claimed that an authorial translation should be judged as any other original literary work in its own right. In the case of authorial translation, Fortini argues, the comparison with the original is superfluous, off the point:

> Ho detto di questa estensione, ormai consueta, della abitudine di porre il testo a fronte. Per le lingue che sono più accessibili alla nostra formazione scolastica esso è un sussidio utile. Lo è molto meno, fino a diventare superfluo, nel caso della traduzione

[33] Natalia Ginzburg, 'Con devozione e amore', *Corriere della Sera*, 10 Agosto 1983.
[34] Glauco Felici (1946-2012) was a translator from Spanish. He translated: Lorca, Paz, Bioy Casares, Borges, Lezama Lima, Cabrera Infante, Unamuno, Soriano, J. Marìas, Vargas Llosa, Trapiello, Pombo and many others. See *Gli autori invisibili*, p. 176.
[35] Glauco Felici, 'Una voce altra' in *Gli autori invisibili* pp. 149-155 (p. 149).

> d'autore e anche di tutti quei casi, frequentissimi soprattutto nelle edizioni di classici, nei quali la – chiamiamola così – distanza fra originale e versione rinvia silenziosamente a scelte di traduttori che meglio si gioverebbero dell'assenza dell'originale. È come se si volesse fruire della vicinanza per mettere in maggiore evidenza la distanza. In questo senso mi pare giustificata la decisione di Montale, di togliere i testi a fronte dal suo *Quaderno di traduzioni* per la edizione definitiva della propria opera in versi. [...] Voglio dire che non c'è quasi mai studio su di un singolo testo di traduzione che ometta il confronto con il cosiddetto originale. [...] Non di rado si trasforma il discorso critico nell'arbitraggio di una gara atletica. La sfida della difficoltà nel reperire un sistema di equivalenze fra testo *source* e testo *cible* viene assunta come meta della traduzione medesima.[36]

According to Fortini, then, translations by writers are a special case of translation. This is what Einaudi believed too, and concretized this belief in a series especially dedicated to these translations. And, in a broader cultural sense, he was right. Translations by famous writers, regardless of being more or less accurate translations of the same texts produced by professional translators, are (or become) and act differently within the culture where they are produced.

Einaudi firmly believed in translation as a gymnasium where writers should train: 'più che mai le nuove generazioni di narratori hanno bisogno di allenarsi nella palestra della traduzione, come quasi tutti i grandi narratori hanno fatto',[37] he had said in an interview. Translation has been a fundamental practice in the development of the artistic career of many great Italian writers. Translation by writers can be seen from a different perspective, as a bridge between the foreign culture and the Italian one, a channel through which foreign literary values are assimilated. Pavese's effort of rendering 'quel che s'era inteso, non colla letterale equivalenza linguistica, ma col piú italiano, col piú *nostro* sforzo di ri-creazione possibile'[38] is a good example of this function of 'bridging between cultures' to which authorial translation can contribute in its own distinctive way.

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[36] Franco Fortini, *Lezioni sulla traduzione* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2011), pp. 95-96. The volume includes a collection of lectures that were held at the University of Siena in 1989.
[37] Severino Cesari, *Colloquio con Giulio Einaudi*, Torino, Einaudi, 2007, pp. 139-140.
[38] Pavese a Enrico Bemporad, 4 Aprile 1931, in *Lettere 1924-1944*, p. 290.

Often translation is the place where a writer can try out his or her possible literary egos. And this would not be feasible if he kept literally faithful to the text he is translating. Claudio Magris admits that if it were not for a translation he did of Georg Büchner's *Woyzeck*, he might not have written some of his original works:

> Il mio vero tradurre è cominciato quando ho tradotto per il teatro. [...] In quell'occasione è cominciato per me qualcosa di nuovo; il tradurre è diventato propriamente un modo di scrivere. Era come se fossi veramente entrato in una dimensione che aveva da fare con la mia sintassi, con il mio modo di essere. Decisiva, determinante è stata soprattutto la traduzione del *Woyzeck* di Büchner, nata per una messinscena televisiva di Giorgio Pressburger [...]. Senza l'esperienza di questa traduzione, non solo non avrei più scritto testi teatrali, ma non avrei scritto neppure altre cose, come *Alla cieca*, non avrei avuto l'esperienza della scrittura come una lama che affila spietatamente l'esistenza.[39]

Lalla Romano found her own voice as a writer through translating Flaubert. After that translation she moved from painting to writing and from poetry to prose. Translating Flaubert helped her to find her distinctive style. *Maria*, a very fine novel, might not exist if it were not for her translation of 'Un cœur simple'. The analysis has shown that Romano in her translation does not stand humbly at the service of the original text. Her own style, her own 'Un cuore semplice' seems to preoccupy her as much as reproducing the original text. Would her future novel *Maria* have been the same, if she had regarded Flaubert's tale more as a text to respect and to reproduce faithfully than as a canvas or trampoline, or as Giulio Einaudi would say, a gymnasium in which to train her writing skills? It is in this taking possession of another author's work that the 'foreign' is assimilated in an 'original' way, as if it were home-grown. Translations by writers, and especially by famous writers, or ones who later became famous, have considerably contributed to shape the Italian literary scene and language. Fortini observes that this attitude of the writer when translating

> rende possibile annettere parti del linguaggio e luoghi del discorso che in proprio l'autore non tenta o non osa. Ma, a ben vedere, tutto questo conduce proprio ad

[39] Claudio Magris, in Barbara Ivančić, 'Dialogue between translators and authors', p. 159.

> effondere gli eventi linguistici delle versioni nell'intera vicenda letteraria di una società e di un'epoca. [40]

In the light of all this, 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' stands as a document in the history of individual writer-translators, while also documenting the workings of Italian culture and the wider practices of writers. However, the STS project also remains highly questionable. Its fragile foundations, its inherent uncertainties are laid bare in Fortini's final lecture on translation, where he abruptly retracts the the independent rights of authors to translate as they see fit:

> La traduzione privata o d'autore è il segno di una separatezza. Per quanto è soprattutto dei maggiori classici credo – contro me stesso, contro quel che pure ho fatto – che si debba perseguire il minimo di soggettività e di invenzione poetica a favore del massimo rigore filologico e storico. Al limite, fornire (con la storia critica delle versioni del testo considerato) la possibilità del *do-it-yourself*, del "fai da te", com'è delle edizioni interlineari e scolastiche. "Soprattutto non troppo genio" è la formula che mi sento di lasciarvi.[41]

The main contradiction of a series like 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' lies in its pretentious claim to enclose, under the same badge of 'writer-translators', different writers with very different personalities and practices. Leaving aside the difficulties in establishing who has the right to belong to the elected category, already explored in the course of the present study (how do we establish who is or is not a writer?), translations cannot be completely classified in categories, as they ultimately depend on the translator's individual taste and experience.

When I asked the Italian poet and translator Valerio Magrelli, 'Do writers translate better?', his first response was: 'Dipende.' He went on:

> Ma se prendiamo il più geniale traduttore folle del novecento, cioè Ezra Pound: sapeva il latino come uno studente italiano della prima media eppure ha fatto dei capolavori. Però io, lì, parlerei di riscrittura. Lui confondeva 'canere' ('cantare') con

[40] Fortini, *Lezioni,* cit., p.88.
[41] Ibid, p.184.

l'abbaiare dei cani. Davvero, non è possibile dare una risposta generica. In traduzione tutto è empirico. Non c'è altro.[42]

[42] Personal conversation, 17 March 2014.

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***The Writer as Translator:* the Einaudi series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'** **Simona Rossi**

ABSTRACT

This study investigates translation by creative writers as a separate instance from translation by 'ordinary' (professional) translators. The research takes its cue from the Einaudi series 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori'. The obvious questions raised by that most unusual publishing project – 'Do translators translate differently?', 'Do they translate better?', 'In what way?', 'Why?', etc. – are central to the study. In order to frame these general questions in a real-world context, the research is structured in such a way that the theoretical debate relates as far as possible to an analysis of translations by writers. The thesis therefore is divided into two parts.

The first part starts with questioning the theoretical assumptions underpinning the 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' project: the close relationship between the practice of writing and the practice of translating, and the overlap or fusion between the professions of writer and translator. Are translating and writing similar practices? Can translation be considered a form of original writing, and vice versa? What role does 'affinity' play in the commissioning and production of translation? This section provides a historical account of the STS series within the context of twentieth century translation in Italy.

The second part of the study roots the theoretical and historical discussion within the detailed analysis of actual translations by writers. Three translations are presented, by Giorgio Manganelli's translation of Edgar Allan Poe's tale 'The Fall of the House of Usher', Cesare Pavese's translation of Herman Melville's novella *Benito Cereno* and Lalla Romano's translation of Gustave Flaubert's short story 'Un cœur simple'. These authorial translations are analyzed in comparison with translations of the same texts by translators who are not 'writers', or at least not as well-known. Examining the lexical and syntactical choices that writer-translators make, the analysis verifies whether writers translate differently from their fellow professional translators, highlighting their distinctive translation practices, and assesses the results of their approach.

The study shows how the special status of writers can influence their translation work leading them to adopt a strategy that often appears to be aimed at imprinting the writer's signature on the Italian text rather than concentrating on what the source text says.

The originality of this study lies in approaching a much debated issue in the field of literary translation, the relationship between translation and creative writing, from an unusual point of view. Previously, the topic of authorial translation has been investigated mainly from two perspectives. One is represented by numerous studies which focus on the translations done by individual authors, often considering their translations as part of their original work. The other is represented by the relatively recent rise of studies concentrating on the creative presence of the translator within the text translated. This study explores the relationship between writing and translating from a different perspective: that of writer-translators as a separate category, with particular emphasis on the figure and role of the writer as translator.

Finally, this is also a study in the history of Italian translation practice, and shows 'Scrittori tradotti da scrittori' as a valuable document mapping the bridging role of the Italian writer-translator, between Italian and foreign cultures.