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JOHN FLORIO AND THE *DECAMERON*:
NOTES ON STYLE AND VOICE

1. *Introduction.*

Renaissance England celebrated the accomplishment of a slew of translations of printed books from the continent, revealing an avid interest in a humanistic culture whose models were represented by both medieval and modern Italian authors, like Petrarch, Castiglione or Guazzo. At that time, vernaculars all over Europe were seeking to establish a primary role for themselves in the emerging process of constructing national identities, and translation practises strove to contribute to the linguistic and cultural enrichment of the language, drawing on the prestigious models of Latin, Italian and French culture, both through imitation and opposition[1].

In this context, Boccaccio in English has a surprise in store. He was widely known as the serious author of *De casibus virorum illustrium* and *De claris mulieribus* but the *Decameron* had a history of dismemberment and distortion: single *novellas* had been translated and adapted in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, but it was only at the beginning of the seventeenth century, long after it had become familiar in western Europe, that the complete *Decameron* was translated in English and published anonymously[2].

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[1] See F. O. Matthiessen, *Translation. An Elizabethan Art*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 1931; C. Nocera, *Studi sulla traduzione nell'Inghilterra del Seicento e del Settecento*, Caltanissetta, Salvatore Sciascia Editore, 1990; T. Hermans, *The Task of the Translator in the European Renaissance. Explorations in a Discursuve Field*, in *Translating Literature*, edited by S. Bassnett, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 1997, pp. 14-40; M. Morini, *Tudor Translation in Theory and Practice*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006; P. Burke, *The Renaissance Translator as Go-Between*, in *Renaissance Go-Betweens. Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, edited by A. Höfele – W. von Koppenfels, Berlin-New York, Walter de Gruyter, 2005, pp. 17-31; *Cultural Translation in Early-Modern Europe*, edited by P. Burke – R. Po-chia Hsia, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

[2] A translation of the hundred tales into Catalan had been completed in 1429; in Castilian it was printed in 1496; in German in 1473 and then in 1490; in Dutch, between 1564 and 1615. The first complete edition in France, a key area of influence on the English events, was

In 1953, Herbert G. Wright, author of the pioneering *Boccaccio in England*, formulated the hypothesis attributing the translation to the renowned John Florio, unanimously recognized as an outstanding interpreter of the Italian humanistic culture in Elizabethan England[3]. The small community of Italian Protestant refugees in London during the sixteenth century had a strong influence on Elizabethan translations: «Speakers or readers of Italian, indeed any appropriator of an element of Italian culture, entered into an imagined relationship with a 'nation' that, apart from its language and the culture that gave it a transmissible form, did not, in fact, exist»[4]. In this perspective, a rising nation seemed to be negotiating its nascent image with a precarious group of intermediators who transmitted their cultural patrimony essentially through textual means, a literal and a metaphorical translation of culture, manners, books and words: in a nutshell, translation as *translatio studii*.

John Florio (ca. 1553-1625) embodied the most typical features of the Renaissance go-betweens who «took advantage of their liminal position and made a career of mediating between two countries»[5]. 'An Englishman in Italiane', Florio was a teacher of Italian at Elizabeth's court, and author of conversation textbooks (*Firste Fruites*, 1578; *Second Frutes*, 1591); he was a lexicographer compiling two richly detailed dictionaries (in 1598 *A Worlde of Wordes* and in 1611 *Queen Anna's New World of Words*, dedicated to the queen); more importantly, he was the prestigious translator of Montaigne (*Essays*, 1603). «Bilingual Florio», as he was called by his own pupils,

published in 1414 by Laurent de Premierfait; and then another edition by Antoine Le Macon, was completed by 1545.

[3] H. G. Wright, *The First English Translation of the Decameron (1620)*, Uppsala/Cambridge Mass, Harvard University Press, 1953; H. G. Wright, *Boccaccio in England from Chaucer to Tennyson*, London, The Athlone Press, 1957 (recently reprinted for Bloomsbury Academic, 2013). On Boccaccio in English see also *Il Boccaccio nella cultura inglese e anglo-americana*, a cura di G. Galigani, Firenze, Olschki, 1974; A. Petrina, *Boccaccio oltremanica: il primo approdo del Decameron nelle Isole Britanniche*, in *Premio "Città di Monselice" per la traduzione letteraria e scientifica,* a cura di G. Peron, Monselice, Il Poligrafo, 2008, pp. 249-270.

[4] M. Wyatt, *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England. A Cultural Politics of Translation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 138.

[5] Burke, *The Renaissance Translator*, p. 23. On Florio see also F. A. Yates, *John Florio. The Life of an Italian in Shakespeare's England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1934; M. Pfister, *John/Giovanni Florio: The Translator as Go-Between,* in *Translation Practices: Through Language to Culture*, edited by A. Chantler – C. Dente, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2009, pp. 184-202; M. Pfister, *Inglese Italianato – Italiano Anglizzato: John Florio*, in *Renaissance Go-Betweens*, edited by A. Höfele – W. von Koppenfels, 2005, pp. 32-54; D. Montini, *John/Giovanni: Florio mezzano e intercessore della lingua italiana*, «Memoria di Shakespeare», 6 (2008), pp. 47-59.

«Praelector Linguae Italicae», as he defines himself, he was certainly well acquainted with Boccaccio's original *Decameron*: in the twelfth chapter of his *Second Frutes* on love and women, he provides a nonchalant quotation which shows his familiarity with the Italian author:

'ben dice il Boccaccio, che
Come ogni cauallo buon' o rio, vuol lo sperone,
Così ogni donna buona o ria, vuole il bastone.

'and therfore Bocace saith wel:
To make thy horse to runne, and thy wife to stop,
Giue him the spurre, give her the holly crop[6].

Some scholars, like Michael Wyatt, agree with Wright and attribute the translation of *The Decameron* to Florio; others are sceptical about this attribution, claiming that there is insufficient evidence[7]. One objection to Florio as a translator, nothing more than a conjecture, in fact, is that 'resolute John Florio', celebrated translator of the *Essays*, would not have consented to hide his identity, which was also unusual for the time; on the other hand, it may also be suggested that in 1620 an elderly Florio, in disgrace after Queen Anne's death, and aware that he was engaging in the translation of a work considered controversial and containing offending material, might have been cautious about claiming its paternity. A more realistic explanation for the lack of attribution may depend on the history of the manuscript which may have been given anonymously to the printer, or may be connected to the disappeared *Decameron* which the printer John Wolfe entered on the Stationers' Register in his name in 1587 and which was never published.

Recent scholarship has reconsidered and investigated the *Decameron* in English, especially the history of the book, but in the end «no one has offered any substantial evidence to challenge this identification», so far[8]. Launching

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[6] J. Florio, *Second Frutes* (1591), edited by R. C. Simonini Jr., Delmar, New York, 1977, pp. 182-183.

[7] See Wyatt, *The Italian Encounter*, p. 22; and G. H. McWilliam's Introduction to G. Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, edited by G. H. McWilliam, London, Penguin Books, pp. 26-27.

[8] G. Armstrong, *Paratexts and their Functions in Seventeenth-Century English Decamerons*, «Modern Language Review», 2007, pp. 40-57, p. 42 nota 8. On Boccaccio in English see also of the same author *Translations as Cultural 'Facts: The History of Boccaccio in English*, in *Translation: Transfer, Text and Topic*, edited by P. Barrotta – A. L. Lepschy, Perugia, Guerra, 2010, pp. 53-68; and especially the full-length monograph *The English Boccaccio: A History in Books*, Toronto, The University of Toronto Press, 2013. Armstrong's book presents all the editions of the *Decameron* in English from the Middle Ages to the present days; she is also editing the Early Modern English translations of Boccaccio for publication in the MHRA Tudor and Stuart Translations series.

an accurate investigation based on stylometry would certainly be worth the effort, since we could take advantage of the advanced contemporary tools used to ascertain authorship, but in expectation of conclusive evidence electronically obtained, I will proceed by joining the ranks of Florio's supporters and, with the aim of furthering the investigation on his translating hand, I will focus on some stylistic features which may highlight the translation techniques adopted. Unlike approaches which concentrate on the material aspects of the book and on the so called margins of the texts, my article situates itself within the framework of textual and stylistic studies: this may help especially to show how stylistic structures affect the presentation of authorship and responsibility of the translator, and how translating faithfulness and the translator's personal stylistic and ideological perspective may conflate.

2. *The* Translatio Princeps.

The 1620 translation of the *Decameron,* the first printed edition in England, is «unarguably the defining event in Boccaccio's premodern reception history»[9]. Such a late translation is traditionally explained as a consequence of the circulation of the text in the original Italian: the proclaimed Italophilia of Elizabeth I and her court would seem to support the existence of a declared and determined effort on the part of English readers to familiarize with the Italian canon. Other scholars, however, encourage the so called French-language transmission route suggested by both visual and textual aspects: this may imply that *The Decameron* was also being read alongside a French translation or perhaps the French version was read instead of the Italian text. In other words, Boccaccio may have been transmitted into Anglophone culture through French rather than Italian[10].

As mentioned above, the right to publish an edition of the *Decameron* was licensed to John Wolfe in 1587, but only on March 22nd 1620, was an entry made in the Stationers' Register authorising the publication of «A booke called The Decameron of Master John Boccace, Florentine»[11]. It appeared immediately as an important literary undertaking, a very beautiful edition in a handsome folio, printed in two volumes, adorned with woodcut

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[9] Armstrong *The English Boccaccio*, p. 216. On a detailed description of the 1620 edition see pp. 213-223.

[10] Interestingly, Douglas A. Kibbee has even suggested that «Elizabethan Italophilia was itself a cultural transmission from France», D. A. Kibbee, *For to Speke Frenche Trewely: the French Language in England 1000-1600. Its Status, Description and Instruction*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1991, p. 106.

[11] Four following editions will be based on this translation: 1625, 1634, 1657, 1684.

illustrations of French origin. The printer, Isaac Jaggard, and the dedicatee, Sir Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery will be the same protagonists of the publication, in three years time, of Shakespeare's celebrated in Folio.

The 1620 *Translatio Princeps* is the first complete translation and it is also the only edition which uses the Italian title. However, neither the author's name (which will make its appearance in 1625, as the 'Renowned Iohn Boccaccio', though presented «as a kind of literary archivist»[12], a collector of contemporary fables), nor the translator's appears in the text. There is more. The only reference to the fact that the book is a translation occurs in the second dedication at the beginning of Volume II: unusual for the time as it is, the translator declined to be identified.

The 1620 text is mainly a combination of Le Macon's French translation and Leonardo Salviati's censored edition[13]. It comprises Boccaccio's Proem (the Author's Prologue), the Introduction to the First Day (the 'Induction'), the frame story, one hundred novellas, and ten songs[14]. A rich editorial paratext precedes the text: an 'Epistle Dedicatory' to the Earl of Montgomery, supposedly by the translator's hand which introduces the text as a whole and the translated text at the beginning of Volume I; a second dedication by the translator, which forms part of the front-matter of the second Volume; finally, the printer's address «To the Reader», presumably written by Isaac Jaggard: only the author and the printer are mentioned, but here 'Author' can refer only to the translator, the individual who may deliver «a ragged written Copy» to the printer.

The first dedication is especially valuable for having preserved the translator's individual voice. «In imitation of witty Aesope», writes the translator, «who reciteth not a Fable, but graceth it with a iudicious morall application; as many other worthy Writers have done the like»[15]. The licentious novellas

[12] Armstrong, *Paratexts*, p. 49.

[13] In Italy, after being placed on the Index of prohibited books issued by Pope Paul IV in 1559, *The Decameron* was edited and censored by Leonardo Salviati (*Il Decameron di Messer Giovanni Boccacci Cittadin Fiorentino*, Firenze 1582). The new *Decameron* was published in Venice in August 1582 and many other editions followed. In his censorship and expurgation not only did Salviati cut long excerpts of the novellas, he also changed them and used marginal glosses in order to guide the reader and suggest the right interpretation. Only 48 novellas were saved in the original version. See Giuseppe Chicchi – Luciano Troisio, *Il Decameron sequestrato. Le tre edizioni censurate nel Cinquecento*, Milano, Unicopli, 1984.

[14] In the following editions, however, some parts will be further omitted and offending material will be expunged or rewritten. Two tales were entirely removed and substituted: the novella of Alibech and Rustico (III. 10) and the novella about the Baronci family (IV. 6). On a detailed history of the translations see Armstrong, *The English Boccaccio.*

[15] In Armstrong, *Paratexts*, p. 54.

of the *Decameron* are then introduced and explained as a means to impart moral instruction, to present and display the eternal conflict between virtue and vice[16].

Herbert G. Wright's *The First English Translation of the Decameron (1620)* remains the only extensive attempt to attribute the translation to Florio, so far; his approach (accurate, but outdated if compared to our contemporary standards) proceeds by analogy between Florio and the anonymous translator, and is based on the analysis of parallel aspects which Wright exploits minutely: on the one hand an investigation of the translator's and Florio's personalities as they emerge from the translation and from Florio's writings; on the other hand a comparative study of their respective style and techniques. Wright compares the translator's and Florio's interests in the most assorted matters: he debates their familiarity with Italy or their dramatic bent, their attitude towards Protestantism and philosophy, gambling and sexual excess, horses and music. He goes on to compare their stylistic choices: the real and the presumed translator are evaluated especially according to their use of alliterations, repetition and rhyme. In his conclusions Wright appears fully persuaded of Florio's hand, and praises the transformation Montaigne and Boccaccio's language underwent; Florio is defined as a «a musical lexicographer» and his translation «a process of re-creation»: «His amazing linguistic resourcefulness and his sensitive ear combine in a style that is as racy and vigorous as it is balanced and rhythmical. Its sustained alliterative unity lends point to colloquial speech and enhances the dulcet gravity of the loftier moments. (…) So perhaps after all Boccaccio had no cause to complain of the treatment that he received from John Florio»[17]. Wright's position has never been refuted, or even seriously challenged. For these reasons, rather than focusing on aspects related to the attribution of 'translatorship', the following pages will concern aspects of style useful to highlight the translator's strategies and use of voice.

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[16] According to Armstrong «the presence of moralizing rubrics can be traced back to one specific source text for this edition: 1578 edition of Le Maçon's French translation (…) The translator is responding to his reading public's horizon of expectations: since Boccaccio's fame in England at that point was due in great part to his works of historical reference, this *Decameron* newly translated for the English language audience is presented as a reassuringly similar work, and most scholars agree in claiming that the English *Decameron* possesses a degree of moralistic direction which is absent in Boccaccio's original, and this shows how translators attempted to manage and control the text». Armstrong, *Paratexts*, pp. 50, 54.

[17] Wright, *The First English Translation*, p. 263.

3. *Florio's Translation Laboratory.*

Florio's exuberant translation of the *Essais* has certainly been one of the most influential works of Elizabethan culture. It was widely read in the seventeenth century and it has long been maintained that Florio's Montaigne is one of the masterpieces of English prose[18]. As customary at the time, Florio's theory of translation is not to be looked for in any particular treatise: it emerges, if any, from the paratextual apparatus, as in the Preface to the *Essays* or in the address to the reader where he discusses precise ideas on translation and presents the target text as a 'secondary creation' and the translator as a 'foster-father'. In his work, Florio follows the taste of his age and serves the habits of the audience by adapting and transforming the *elocutio*: «The sense may keepe forme; the sentence is disfigured; the finenesse, fitnesse, featnesse diminished»[19], and the translator can only substitute his style for the author's and give the text a new sound and a new rhythm which is both similar to and different from the original[20].

Unlike the paratext to the *Essays*, however, in the *Decameron*, the introductory pages tend to focus on the content of the work, and especially on its moralizing target[21]. As has been mentioned above, the *Decameron* Florio translates is already an adaptation and rewriting of Boccaccio's original work and the very idea of fidelity to Boccaccio's *dispositio* is radically undermined, but even in this case Florio's most significant intervention is particularly evident in the transformation and adaptation of the *elocutio*. In point of fact, the most consistent effect of a developing modern concept of translation was probably the rhetorical reformation inaugurated by the Renaissance translators, a new *elocutio* which produced a new text from a stylistic and rhetorical perspective, in other words a domesticated text to the expectations of the

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[18] On Florio and Montaigne see among others Morini, *Tudor Translation*, the recent W. M. Hamlin, *Montaigne's English Journey: Reading the Essays in Shakespeare's Day*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013; and *Shakespeare's Montaigne. The Florio Translation of the Essays. A Selection*, edited by S. Greenblatt – P. P. Platt, New York, NYRB Classics, 2014.

[19] M. de Montaigne, *The Essayes*, translation by John Florio, London, Blount, 1603 (reprint Menston, The Scolar Press, 1969, p. 12).

[20] «The English discovered that rhetorical translation also meant domestication, for the transformation of rhetorical elements of the original could be effected with an eye on the rights of the target language rather than of the original author. Of course, the paths of the new and the old freedom crossed in the Tudor era», Morini, *Tudor Translation*, p. 28.

[21] For a detailed illustration of the editorial paratext of 1620 edition, see Armstrong, *Paratexts*, pp. 46-48.

target audience: it is the style which undergoes a massive transformation since every language has its own «genius and inseparable form»[22].

In this perspective, how does Florio work on Boccaccio's language? Or, how does Boccaccio sound when he speaks Florian English? The structured principle which shapes the whole work is that of *copia*, of increase, of crescendo, and what Puttenham would call «the "climbing" figure of *climax*, a scheme that presents a mounting over a series of words, clauses or sentences»[23]. In various forms and at different levels, Florio develops a homogeneous, pervasive strategy of addition and expansion, which is very similar to what he had done in his Montaigne [24]. As has been ironically put it: «Florio seems to share with many of his contemporaries the idea that elegance is directly proportional to the number of words used: good style is equated with abundance, rhetorical *copia*, amplification. Words, phrases, clauses are multiplied in synonymic chains; a simple concept is made to occupy a whole paragraph»[25].

The role played by the concept of *copia* in English Renaissance rhetoric was of paramount importance in the wake of Erasmus' *De Copia*: following the Latin etymology, *copia* was intended both as cultural imitation and as verbal and intellectual richness and Erasmus and his contemporaries did not see it as an expression of artificiality and falsehood, but as a necessary ornament. Thomas Wilson in his *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553) follows Erasmus closely when he dedicates some pages to amplification, in which *copia* coincides with *elocutio* and is intended and proposed in moral and political terms. *Amplificatio* is also presented in its pragmatic, perlocutionary force: «We encrease our cause by heapyng of wordes and sentences together», its purpose being «of movying affections»[26].

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[22] Morini, *Tudor Translation*, p. 85.

[23] K. Elam, *Shakespeare's Universe of Discourse. Language-Games in the Comedies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 252.

[24] On the use of amplification in Florio's translation of the *Essays*, see G. Iamartino, *Florio's and Cotton's Montaigne*, in *Early Modern English: Trends, Forms and Texts*, edited by C. Nocera – N. Pantaleo – D. Pezzini, Fasano, Schena, 1992, pp. 275-294.

[25] Morini, *Tudor Translation*, pp. 85-86.

[26] T. Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553), edited by T. J. Derrick, New York and London, Garland Publishing, 1982, p. 263. «Amplificacion is of twoo sortes (…) the one resteth in wordes, the other in matter (…) Yea, wordes that fill the mouthe, and have a sound with them, set further a matter very well. And sometimes wordes twise spoken make the matter appear greter», p. 238. On Erasmus' *De Copia* and the function of amplification in rhetoric, see A. Locatelli, *The Land of Plenty: Erasmus' De Copia and English Renaissance Rhetoric*, in *Silenos: Erasmus in Elizabethan Literature*, edited by C. Corti, Pisa, Pacini, 1998, pp. 41-57;

Florio's first and most recurring strategy of manipulation of Boccaccio's language is exactly his tendency to expand, to re-write the text under the sign of amplification, resulting in a translation which radically denies any *pro verbo verbum* golden rule. This procedure may be appreciated at various levels, the phonetic, for example, but especially at the lexical one. Indeed, no area of linguistic development aroused more intense passion in Elizabethan England than the enrichment of vocabulary, «the lexical brand of eloquence that derived from word-hunting, word-borrowing, word-coining, word-joining, word-reviving or simple word-spinning»[27].

The translator's style presents the usual arsenal of devices typical of Euphuism and translation-as-domestication could hardly find a better rendering. Florio's re-fashioning of Boccaccio is accomplished by precise, repeated devices: by heaping synonymic nouns, adjectives and verbs; by recurrently using compound epithets; by his love for alliteration; by explaining what was not explicit; by adding clauses, aiming at adding meaning by amplifying the source text.

Instead of selecting random examples of the whole text of *The Decameron*, I have decided to scrutinize one single *novella*, and I have chosen the well known story of Guiscardo and Ghismonda especially because no major omissions or changes have been made either in the source text or in Florio's translation as far as plot features are concerned, and this will allow my analysis to concentrate on aspects of style.

3.1. *Guiscardo and Ghismonda.*

Guiscardo and Ghismonda is the first tale of the fourth day, «la Quarta, nella quale, sotto il reggimento di Filostrato, si ragiona di coloro li cui amori ebbero infelice fine»[28].

The story of Guiscardo and Ghismonda was one of those novellas which had already had a very wide circulation before the XVI century. Since it was translated into Latin between 1470 and 1500, no less than twenty-four edi-

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P. Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric. Theory and Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002; *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, edited by S. Adamson – G. Alexander – K. Ettenhuber, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

[27] K. Elam, *Shakespeare's Universe of Discourse*, p. 264.

[28] G. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, a cura di V. Branca, Milano, Mondadori, 1985, pp. 327, 337-348; see also the most recent Italian edition, G. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, a cura di A. Quondam – M. Fiorilla – G. Alfano, Milano, Rizzoli, 2013. Digital facsimiles used for this article include printed editions in the Early English Books Online (EEBO), Google Books, and online texts of the *Decameron* hosted on the *Decameron Web* (http://www.brown.edu/decameron).

tions were published, some in Italy and Spain and others in Germany and the Netherlands. It was evidently regarded as a fascinating tale of tragic love, and in 1532 it was translated from Latin into English by William Walter[29].

In this novella amplification starts from the very number of words, a literal *copia verborum*, if 3,752 words in Boccaccio become 5,114 in Florio (ca. 36% increase). A close reading of the bi-text of the very first paragraph of the tale in Salviati's edition and Florio's translation (see Appendix, p. 102) presents numerous examples of doublets which were often used «to gain the rhetorical ornament of successive phrases or clauses of approximately equal length»[30]. Nouns, adjectives, verbs are doubled and piled up in order to heighten the emotional pitch of the situation or event described: they are added as an ornamental device, but also to clarify the subject, provide details and make the content more vivid and effective (ex. 1, 2, 3). Or doublets of adjectives and verbs are used as a variation for a single verb in the attempt to avoid repetitions (ex. 4 and 5).

Ex. 1
B. fiera materia.
F. *a subject, very rough and stearne.*

Ex. 2
B. E dimorando col tenero padre, sì come gran donna, in molte delicatezze…
F. *Continuing thus in Court with the King her father, who loved her beyond all his future hopes; like a Lady of great and glorious magnificence, she lived in all delights and pleasure.*

Ex. 3
B. E il giovane, il quale non era poco avveduto…
F. *The young Gentleman, though poore, being neither block nor dullard.*

Ex. 4
B. …dove per rallegrare venuti siamo.
F. *we are come hither to be merry and pleasant.*

Ex. 5
B. di mutare il suo piacere.
F. *to alter or contradict his appointments.*

Florio's love for alliterations as another device to couple two terms different in meaning and similar in form seems to be confirmed almost every

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[29] On Walter's translation see *Early English Versions of the Tales of Guiscardo and Ghismonda and Titus and Gisippus from the Decameron*, edited by Herbert G. Wright, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1937.

[30] Matthiessen, *Translation*, p. 126.

other sentence: «rough and stearne», «neere and deere» (with an internal rhyme, in this case), «great and glorious», «desperate and dangerous», and many other examples are freely distributed along the text.

The strategy of amplification is also deployed in adding proper clauses or even sentences to the source text (ex. 6 and 7). This particular form of addition is often used to render explicit what is left implicit, and this also allows the translator to propose his ideological point of view both on characters and on events.

Ex. 6
B. si pensò di volere avere, se esser potesse, occultamente un valoroso amante.
F. concluded in her mindes private consultations, to make choise of some one especiall friend or favourite (if Fortune would prove so furtherous to her) whom she might acquaint secretly, with her sober, honest, and familiar purposes.

Ex. 7
B.(…) piú che altro le piacque, e di lui tacitamente, spesso vedendolo, fieramente s'accese, ognora piú lodando i modi suoi.
F. (…) so that by often noting his parts and perfections, her affections being but a glowing sparke at first, grew like a Bavin to take fl[R]ame, *yet kept so closely as possibly she could; as Ladies are warie enough in their love.*

The whole text, in fact, is interspersed with expansions, definitions, explanations of Boccaccio's more concise concepts, or even of words (ex. 8, 9, 10):

Ex. 8
B. se egli nell'amoroso sangue nella sua vecchiezza non s'avesse le mani bruttate;
F. if, in his elder yeeres, he had not soiled his hands in the blood of Lovers, *especially one of them, being both neere and deere unto him.*

Ex. 9
B. e per questo tenero amore, (…) non sappiendola da sé partire, (non la maritava):
F. and so farre extended his over-curious respect of her, as he would seldome admit her to be forth of his sight.

Ex. 10
B. Era costei bellissima del corpo e del viso quanto alcuna altra femina fosse mai, e giovane e gagliarda e savia piú che a donna per avventura non si richiedea.
F. This Lady, had all the most absolute perfections, both of favour and feature, as could be wished in any woman, young, queintly disposed, and of admirable understanding, more (perhappes) then was requisite in so weake a body.

Florio has also a special penchant for proverbs and adages and an extensive knowledge of them; they are one of his capital sources for teaching

Italian, and in his translation he does not hesitate about adding them even without the Italian source[31]:

Ex. 11
F. *It hath bin observed as an ancient Adage, that when disasters are ordained to any one, commonly they prove to be inevitable, as poore Ghismonda could witnesse too well.*

Or, when translating Boccaccio, he chooses to modify and expand the text (ex. 12):

Ex. 12
B. ma la povertà non toglie gentilezza a alcuno ma sí avere.
F. *Neverthelesse poverty impayreth not any part of noble Nature, but wealth hurries into horrible confusions.*

Another lexical feature typical of Florio's style is the addition and use of compound words: examples are scattered throughout the *novella*, like *vent-light, vent-loope, over-grown*, which belong to a technical semantic area, and in this case instead of being merely ornamental, Florio's experience as a lexicographer provides the reader with brand new and accurate words[32].

Finally, scanning Florio's additions, some small words or clauses occur which may well go unnoticed while reading and which, however, are very important and explicit traces of the translator's hand and, ultimately, of his authorial presence (ex. 13):

Ex. 13
So it fortuned…
It was his Highness pleasure
(perhappes)
the saide *loop-hole*
the saide *ladder*
This long desired…
It hath been observed…
The poor discovered *lovers*

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[31] In his manuals for teaching Italian, *Firste Fruites* (1578) and *Second Frutes* (1591), Florio included long lists of proverbs and in 1591 he also compiled *Giardino di ricreazione*, a specific repository in which he displays hundreds of Italian proverbs, in alphabetical order. On Florio and his use of proverbs see also D. Montini, *Teaching Italian as a Foreign Language: Notes on Linguistic and Pragmatic Strategies in Florio's Fruits*, «Textus», XXIV (2011), 3, pp. 517-536; and *Proverbs in John Florio's Fruits: Some Pragmatic Aspects*, in *Historical perspectives on forms of English dialogue*, edited by G. Mazzon – L. Fodde, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2012, pp. 248-264.

[32] On Florio's love of compounds see Matthiessen who suggests the great influence of the Huguenot poet Du Bartas. Matthiessen, *Translation*, pp. 123-126.

All additions can be identified as a textual space and discourse construction of voice and perspective, in other words they are the place in which the stylistic taste and the ideological point of view are displayed. They are cohesion markers, signs of textual deixis, either adverbs, or adjectives or verbs, mitigators or boosters, uttered by the narrator's voice, in this case the translator's voice. Firstly, they tend to stress the presence of a translator who is extremely eager to exercise both the directing and the phatic function by maintaining contact with his reader whose attention is carefully monitored (*the* saide *loop-hole, the* saide *ladder*). Moreover, the recurrent instances of these unnoticed fragments affect the presentation of authorship and responsibility, as they provide an ideological space where the translator takes on the voice and the point of view of the narrator, an extra-diegetic voice which addresses the reader and provides him/her with his own personal interpretation of the story (*So it fortuned, This* long desired, *The* poor discovered *lovers*)[33].

For that matter, the introduction to the tale, which in the Italian source conventionally sums up the story, had already presented the translator as the 'new' narrator, by significantly altering the use of tenses (ex. 14):

Ex. 14

Tancredi, prenze di Salerno, uccide l'amante della figliuola e mandale il cuore in una coppa d'oro; la quale, messa sopr'esso acqua avvelenata, quella si bee, e cosí muore.

Tancrede, Prince of Salerne, caused the amorous friend of his daughter to bee slaine, and sent her his heart in a cup of Gold: which afterwards she steeped in an impoysoned water, and then drinking it, so dyed.

Unlike the Italian narrator, who chooses a commentative tense, a Simple Present, to describe events, framing the story against a historical background and thus making it exemplary, the English narrator presents actions and characters in a Narrative tense, a Simple Past, which precisely focuses on the material agent of the murder, giving the events back to history[34].

The translator is thus appropriating a power usually attributed to the narrator, or, in the complex construction of medieval authorship, to the author: amplifying techniques, which produce a radical reshaping of the *elocutio* of

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[33] On the voice of the translator/author in Boccaccio's English translations see A. Strowe, *The Auctour, the Translatoure and the Impressoure: Translating Boccaccio's Authorship in Early Modern England*, «Textus», XXIV (2011), 3, pp. 477-490.

[34] On the linguistic and stylistic effects of *commentative* and *narrative* tenses, see H. Weinrich, *Tempus. Le funzioni dei tempi nel testo*, trad. it. di M. P. La Valva, Bologna, il Mulino, 1984.

the target text, are in fact part and parcel of a precise strategy of intervention; far from being mere ornamental devices traditionally belonging to the rhetorical tool kit of the euphuistic style, they become a privileged textual space of responsibility and credit. In doing so, by refashioning Boccaccio's language, the translator re-fashions Boccaccio's culture and provides a story entirely dedicated to his own readers, both in form and content.

APPENDIX

Fourth Day

Wherein All The Severall Descourses, Are Under The Government Of Honourable Philstratus: And Concerning Such Persons, Whose Loves Have Had Successelesse Ending.
Quarta Giornata

Nella quale, sotto il reggimento di Filostrato, si ragiona di coloro li cui amori ebbero infelice fine.

FLORIO	BOCCACCIO
Fourth Day – First Novell	Quarta Giornata – Novella Prima
Tancrede, Prince of Salerne, caused the amorous friend of his daughter to bee slaine, and sent her his heart in a cup of Gold: which afterwards she steeped in an impoysoned water, and then drinking it, so dyed.	Tancredi, prenze di Salerno, uccide l'amante della figliuola e mandale il cuore in una coppa d'oro; la quale, messa sopr'esso acqua avvelenata, quella si bee, e cosí muore.
Our King (most Noble and vertuous Ladies) hath this day given us a subject, very rough and stearne to discourse on, and so much the rather, if we consider, that we are come hither to be merry and pleasant, where sad Tragicall reports are no way suteable, especially, by reviving the teares of others, to bedew our owne cheekes withall. Nor can any such argument be spoken of, without moving compassion both in the reporters, and hearers. But (perhaps) it was his Highnesse pleasure, to moderate the delights which we have already had. Or whatsoever else hath provoked him thereto, seeing it is not lawfull for me, to alter or contradict	Fiera materia di ragionare n'ha oggi il nostro re data, pensando che, dove per rallegrarci venuti siamo, ci convenga raccontar l'altrui lagrime, le quali dir non si possono, che chi le dice e chi l'ode non abbia compassione. Forse per temperare alquanto la letizia avuta li giorni passati l'ha fatto: ma che che se l'abbia mosso, poi che a me non si conviene di mutare il suo piacere, un pietoso accidente, anzi sventurato e degno delle nostre lagrime, racconterò. Tancredi, prencipe di Salerno, [il quale, avanti a i consoli della città di Roma, in quella parte dell'Italia signoreggiò, e quindi forse il moderno titolo fu ripreso

his appointment; I will recount an accident very pittifull, or rather most unfortinate, and well worthy to be graced with bur teares. Tancrede, Prince of Salerne (which City, before the Consulles of Rome held dominion in that part of Italy, stoode free, and thence (perchance) tooke the moderne title of a Principality was a very humane Lord, and of ingenious nature; if, in his elder yeeres, he had not soiled his hands in the blood of Lovers, especially one of them, being both neere and deere unto him. So it fortuned, that during the whole life time of this Prince, he had but one onely daughter (albeit it had beene much better, if he had had at all) whom he so choisely loved and esteemed, as never was any childe more deerely affected of a Father: and so farre extended his over-curious respect of her, as he would seldome admit her to be forth of his sight; neither would he suffer her to marry, although she had outstept (by divers yeeres) the age meete for marriage. Neverthelesse, at length, he matched her with the Sonne to the Duke of Capua, who lived no long while with her; but left her in a widdowed estate, and then she returned home to her father againe. This Lady, had all the most absolute perfections, both of favour and feature, as could be wished in any woman, young, queintly disposed, and of admirable understanding, more (perhappes) then was requisite in so weake a body. Continuing thus in Court with the King her Father, who loved her beyond all his future hopes; like a Lady of great and glorious magnificence, she lived in all delights and pleasure. She well perceiving, that her Father thus exceeding in his affection to her, had no minde at all of re-marrying her, and holding it most

del principato], fu signore assai umano e di benigno ingegno, se egli nell'amoroso sangue nella sua vecchiezza non s'avesse le mani bruttate; il quale in tutto lo spazio della sua vita non ebbe che una figliuola, e piú felice sarebbe stato se quella avuta non avesse. Costei fu dal padre tanto teneramente amata, quanto alcuna altra figliuola dal padre fosse giammai: e per questo tenero amore, avendo ella di molti anni avanzata l'età del dovere avere avuto marito, non sappiendola da sé partire, non la maritava: poi alla fine a un figliuolo del duca di Capova datala, poco tempo dimorata con lui, rimase vedova e al padre tornossi. Era costei bellissima del corpo e del viso quanto alcuna altra femina fosse mai, e giovane e gagliarda e savia piú che a donna per avventura non si richiedea. E dimorando col tenero padre, sí come gran donna, in molte dilicatezze, e veggendo che il padre, per l'amor che egli le portava, poca cura si dava di piú maritarla, né a lei onesta cosa pareva il richiedernelo, si pensò di volere avere, se esser potesse, occultamente un valoroso amante. E veggendo molti uomini nella corte del padre usare, gentili e altri, sí come noi veggiamo nelle corti, e considerate le maniere e' costumi di molti, tra gli altri un giovane valletto del padre, il cui nome era Guiscardo, uom di nazione assai umile ma per vertú e per costumi nobile, piú che altro le piacque, e di lui tacitamente, spesso vedendolo, fieramente s'accese, ognora piú lodando i modi suoi. E il giovane, il quale ancora non era poco avveduto, essendosi di lei accorto, l'aveva per sí fatta maniera nel cuore ricevuta, che da ogni altra cosa quasi che da amar lei aveva la mente rimossa.

immodest in her, to solicite him with any such suite: concluded in her mindes private consultations, to make choise of some one especiall friend or favourite (if Fortune would prove so furtherous to her) whom she might acquaint secretly, with her sober, honest, and familiar purposes. Her Fathers Court being much frequented, with plentifull accesse of brave Gentlemen, and others of inferiour quality, as commonly the Courts of Kings and Princes are, whose carriage and demeanor she very heedfully observed. There was a young Gentleman among all the rest, a servant to her Father, and named Cuiscardo, a man not derived from any great descent by blood, yet much more Noble by vertue and commandable behaviour, then appeared in any of the other, none pleased her opinion, like as he did; so that by often noting his parts and perfections, her affections being but a glowing sparke at first, grew like a Bavin to take Rame, yet kept so closely as possibly she could; as Ladies are warie enough in their love. The young Gentleman, though poore, being neither blocke nor dullard, perceived what he made no outward shew of, and understood himselfe so sufficiently, that holding it no meane happinesse to be affected by her, he thought it very base and cowardly in him, if he should not expresse the like to her againe.