

I
2011



STUDI IRLANDESI
A JOURNAL OF IRISH STUDIES

STUDI IRLANDESI. A JOURNAL OF IRISH STUDIES

BIBLIOTECA DI STUDI DI FILOLOGIA MODERNA: COLLANA, RIVISTE E LABORATORIO

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via Santa Reparata 93-95, 50122 Firenze, Italy

<http://www.collana-filmod.unifi.it>

<http://www.fupress.com/bsfm-sijis>

sijis@comparate.unifi.it

Studi Irlandesi.
A Journal of Irish Studies

1

edited by
Fiorenzo Fantaccini

FIRENZE UNIVERSITY PRESS

2011

Studi Irlandesi. A Journal of Irish Studies /
Fiorenzo Fantaccini – Firenze : Firenze University
Press, 2011.
(Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna; 1)
ISSN 2239-3978

Registrazione al Tribunale di Firenze:
N. 5819 del 21/02/2011
(Studi Irlandesi. A Journal of Irish Studies)

I volumi della *Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna* (<<http://www.collana-filmod.unifi.it>>) vengono pubblicati con il contributo del Dipartimento di Lingue, Letterature e Culture Comparete dell'Università degli Studi di Firenze.

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Editing e composizione: Redazione elettronica della *Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna* con A. Antonielli (resp.), S. Corradin, G. Dobó, G. Froio, S. Grassi, A. Gremigni, H. Grenzen, E. Martini, G. Poli, P. Szabó, B. Venticonti.

Progetto ed elaborazione grafica / Cover idea and design: Marco Vanchetti

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2011 Firenze University Press
Università degli Studi di Firenze
Firenze University Press
Borgo Albizi, 28, 50122 Firenze, Italy
<http://www.fupress.com/>

Printed in Italy

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Joyce *l'italiano* and the Hans Jahnke Collection at the Zurich James Joyce Foundation

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Keywords: Joyce, letters, Italian language, poetry translation, manuscripts

Here I had found a man not made from dust;
one who had no narrow boasts of birthplace or country,
one who, if he bragged at all, would brag of his whole round globe against
the Martians and the inhabitants of the Moon.
O. Henry (William Sydney Porter)

Multilingualism characterizes both Joyce's works and his personal experience: not only did he spend most of his life outside the English-speaking world, but he also adopted a multicultural perspective and a polyglot style in his writings¹.

Interest in foreign languages, cultures and identities is intimately correlated to «voluntary exile»²: Joyce's curiosity for other European countries might have influenced the decision to leave Ireland, while his erratic life through several nations could have further stimulated his need for confrontation with different realities. Living in Pola, Trieste, Zurich and Paris undoubtedly helped Joyce master several languages and explore different cultures, but his cosmopolitan nature can be only partially explained by the fact that he was a migrant writer.

In his early youth, Joyce had already started learning Latin, Greek, French, Italian, Dano-Norwegian and Irish. During his expatriate experience he never limited his exploration of 'difference' to the countries where he resided and seemed to pursue at least an elementary knowledge of many European idioms: for example, he studied German, Yiddish, Spanish and Russian³. In every phase of his life, he continued to expand his linguistic (and cultural) boundaries in various directions. As Derek Attridge emphasizes,

[Joyce] crossed many national boundaries in his working career, in his outlook, and in his writing – extending his reach further and further until, in *Finnegans Wake*, he attempted to embrace the languages and cultures of the entire human community⁴.

Joyce's Babelic world was characterized by a deeper and more continuative connection with Italian than with any other language. Fascination with Italian had early origins and preceded his Triestine years: as early as 1894, Joyce chose it as his optional foreign language at Trinity College, Dublin. Encounters with

this new cultural-linguistic world must have been significant and revealing for Joyce. Figures of Italian teachers also people his first novels *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, where the characters Almidano Artifoni and Ghezzi, although satirically distorted, appear philosophically inspiring, and suggest an enriching negotiation of different cultural worlds⁵. Joyce's connection with the Italian language became crucial in 1904, when he found employment in Trieste⁶: he started writing regularly for a local newspaper, «Il Piccolo della Sera», and collaborated on the translations of Yeats' *The Countess Cathleen* and Synge's *Riders to the Sea*. Following his arrival in Trieste, Joyce wrote so continually in Italian that, Umberto Eco remarks, we can consider him «also an Italian author»⁷.

Joyce's commitment as translator, in particular, became increasingly more important and culminated in the well-known Italian version of two fragments from the *Anna Livia Plurabelle* episode of *Finnegans Wake* (1940), which Bolettieri Bosinelli defines «the last page of great prose that Joyce left us shortly before dying»⁸. Joyce adapted not only other writers' works to Italian, but also his own, showing a need for self-representation in the English-Italian literary mediation⁹. As a migrant writer, Joyce perfectly represents the translating subject, the foreigner who enters another language and therefore enters the *dimension* of translation.

Translation and self-translation represent one of the elements which testify to Joyce's cross-cultural position. Significantly, his relationship with the Italian language was not limited to his profession, but became a fundamental element of his personal life. The choice of the names for his children testifies to this special relationship: «Giorgio» and «Lucia» were the only two words «he never permitted to be translated»¹⁰. Communication between father and children was exclusively in Italian, even after leaving Trieste: according to Alessandro Francini Bruni, Joyce «used to say that the language for family affection could only be Italian»¹¹. Joyce's use of Italian in his 'public' and 'private' spheres has received ample notice and critical attention: much has already been said about his Italian essays, translations and correspondence¹². Recently, though, an extensive amount of new documentation has become available, allowing a new and a deeper insight into Joyce's special relationship with Italy. On 31 March 2006, the Zurich James Joyce Foundation acquired a collection of documents by and relating to James Joyce, material donated by Hans E. Jahnke, son of Giorgio Joyce's second wife Asta. The Hans Jahnke bequest to the James Joyce Foundation consists of a variety of documents, including *Finnegans Wake* material (concerning especially episodes I.8, II.2 and II.3), a 'Circe sheet' from *Ulysses*, manuscripts and typescripts of Joyce's poems, letters by and to James Joyce and legal, medical and business materials¹³.

What seems particularly interesting is that the Zurich collection sheds new light on two important aspects of Joyce *l'italiano*, namely poetry writing in Italian and the employment of this 'family language' in private correspond-

ence. I would like to focus primarily on these two aspects in the following discussion: first, I intend to propose a brief analysis of Joyce's 'Zurich letters', which are almost exclusively addressed to Giorgio. Most of the subsequent discussion will then be devoted to an exceptional and unpublished document, *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*, which is evidently connected to the text of *On the Beach at Fontana*. The latter poem is included in the collection *Pomes Penyeach*, published in 1927¹⁴.

Despite its unquestionable relevance, the material in the Hans Jahnke bequest has received inadequate critical notice. Reasons for the relative silence on the new collection can be traced in the strict copyright laws that regulate the possibility of direct quotes from unpublished documents. Although circulation of contents is necessarily limited, the possibilities of research are not hindered: in my discussion, I will not extensively quote from the texts but only refer to exemplary words and phrases, which are crucial in the analysis of the documentation¹⁵.

1

The language of affection: Italian Letters in the Hans Jahnke Collection

The Hans Jahnke bequest to the James Joyce Foundation is especially characterised by the 'personal nature' of the material¹⁶: it includes about 115 letters, postcards and notes by Joyce and more than 200 letters and cards to Joyce and his family, most from the editor Sylvia Beach. About 60 documents testify to the correspondence between James and Giorgio: I have based my analysis on this latter material¹⁷. Joyce's letters to Giorgio are in Italian, except for a few cases, when Giorgio is not the only recipient.

The Italian letters in the Jahnke collection can open the way to new perspectives on Joyce's uses of Italian. Certain expressions question the common idea that Joyce's Italian «non traduce un testo concepito in altra lingua» ("does not translate a text conceived in another language")¹⁸ and testify to the migrant's relationship with the foreign language: Joyce's Italian often appears influenced by or even intermingled with English. Significantly, some letters addressed to both Giorgio and his wife Helen are written partly in English and partly in Italian, with the two languages alternating within sentences, as in «vi ringrazio della lettera alquanto scortese in prompt reply to my telegram of a fortnight ago» ("thank you for your rather rude letter in prompt reply [...]"), 19/07/1932). Since Helen could not understand Italian, we might assume that some textual segments were addressed to Giorgio alone. Actually, in some cases Joyce writes «[Giorgio] puoi tradurlo» (e.g. 09/07/1931), which means "you can translate it", and might imply that Giorgio 'was allowed' to translate the text for Helen.

It might be also noticed, though, that the Italian sections seem to carry more emotive participation than the English ones; moreover, Italian is gener-

ally used to express subjective views, while English sentences appear to have mostly a descriptive function, as in «Mme Jolas passed here [...] and secondo lei Lucia sta meglio» (“[...] and according to her Lucia is better”, 19/07/1932). In juxtaposing different languages, the letters to Giorgio and Helen open a new space of negotiation among various idioms, namely English, Italian and Triestine dialect: the 1932 letter reveals a complex and creative use of code-switching which appears to underline Joyce’s split identity as an expatriate¹⁹.

‘Emotive’ use of language characterizes most of the ‘Zurich letters’. For instance, on 24 July 1935 Joyce complains that his letter will get on «un altro imbecille di battello che salpa per quel ridicolo paese» (“another stupid boat which sails to that ridiculous country”: since Giorgio was pursuing a career as a singer in New York at the time, the “ridiculous country” in Joyce’s view must have been the United States). Emotive participation is often conveyed through word alteration: as Del Greco Lobner already remarked about the Italian writings, Joyce seemed to be fascinated with the possibility of ‘playing’ with suffixes, especially diminutives and augmentatives, or even combinations of the two²⁰. In the Jahnke documentation, words like «stazioncina» (12/08/1937), «regaluccio» (letter not dated) and «stupidone» (07/08/1933) often recur. Alteration is especially used when addressing the family members: in most letters, Giorgio becomes «Giorgino», Stephen is called «Stefanuccio» (19/07/1932) and «nipotino» (even when the message is in English, 27/06/1932 and 05/09/1936); Giorgio and Helen together are defined «pargoletti» (“little children”, 19/07/1932).

The function of morphological alteration varies (attenuation, affection, irony etc.) and is used in a variety of contexts, but especially when Joyce writes about the «stupidina» Lucia (21/05/1935). The occurrence of diminutives seems to suggest Joyce wanted to minimize some aspects of Lucia’s mental condition. Together with alteration, superlatives and ‘evaluative’ adjectives²¹ suggest Joyce’s deep emotional response to his daughter’s illness. In this sense, three letters dated 1934, 1935 and 1937 appear particularly interesting: they include semi-medical accounts of Lucia’s condition. The contrast between objective, pseudo-scientific vocabulary and emotive language is evident. For instance, after giving a medical explanation of Lucia’s case, Joyce describes her as often «profondamente triste» (“deeply sad”) and contemporarily «molto affettuosa» (“very affectionate”), «una povera e cara figliola, fantastica [...] ed esaltata» (“a poor, dear child, fantastic [...] and exalted”, 01/10/1934).

In the 1935 and 1937 letters, hyperboles and similes are used frequently when writing about Lucia. For example, on 12/08/1937 Joyce says that, according to the doctors, Lucia is «un caso nettissimo» (“a very clear case”) of infantilism. He mentions himself as a typical case of inveterate infantilism and comments: «vi sono migliaia e milioni di persone adulte che restano un po’ infantili vita natural durante» (“there are thousands and millions of people who remain a little childish for their entire natural lives”). In 1935, apparently

replying to Giorgio's complaints about Lucia's behaviour, Joyce writes in his daughter's defence: «la sua intelligenza quando è intelligente ha la chiarezza del lampo» ("her intelligence when she is intelligent is as clear as lightning", 21/05/1935). In the 1935 and 1937 letters, the frequent use of hyperboles and similes seems to have the function of either diminishing the seriousness of Lucia's illness, or emphasizing her qualities.

The letters in the Jahnke collection reveal an insistence on expressions connected with religion and the Church, which are used to «lend emotional colour to utterances»²². The Italian language apparently offered Joyce wide opportunities for re-exploring his relationship with religion in an irreverent or humorous way. For instance, Joyce's cat is called «Monsignor Gatto», whose purring might mean «bestemmia o saluto, non so quale» ("blasphemy or greeting, I do not know which", 21/05/1935); an inclement weather can show signs of «penitenza» ("penitence", 1936, undated) and a long journey westward is compared to that of the Magi (12/08/1937). The documentation also shows that Saint Gervasius, Servasius and Bonifacius must have had a special meaning for Joyce. These names are included in one of the parodic interpolations in the «Cyclops» episode of *Ulysses*²³: on 21/05/1935, Joyce mentions them again in a letter and writes, «S. Gervasio, S. Servasio and S. Bonifazio sono i tre più grandi mascalzoni che il sommo pontefice abbia mai canonizzati» ("S. Gervasius, Servasius and Bonifacius are the three greatest rascals that the Supreme Pontiff has ever canonized").

The mock-religious references in the Zurich material range from the saints to the highest celestial hierarchies: God, or Jesus, are generally mentioned when Joyce expresses his frustration and annoyance. For example, on 08/09/1937 Joyce reassures Giorgio that he would not have been able to achieve his goal even if «la Santità di Nostro Signore fosse intervenuto in persona» ("the Lord our God himself had intervened"); in 1935, Joyce ironically underlines the success of the writer Gertrude Stein, lists her honours, and ends the list with an invocation: «Dio beffardo, portami aiuto» ("God the mocker, help me", 14/05/1935). To sum up, Joyce's Italian prose can be said to be «supersaturated with the religion in which [he says he] disbelieve[s]»²⁴ like Stephen's mind in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

The register of the letters often switches from informal to formal in the space of a few lines; spoken language alternates to learned, even archaic lexical choices. The informal use of Italian appears particularly inventive and original: Joyce frequently distorts or transforms set phrases and idioms. For example, he claims to write «un poco in fretta, ma mica in furia» ("in a hurry but without rushing", 31/08/1936), an expression which echoes and transforms the Italian idiom «in fretta e furia». Only in a few cases does Joyce use set phrases without adapting and modifying them. For instance, he observes that «sangue da una rapa non si cava» ("you cannot get blood out of a stone" 23/08/1934) and, in a letter dated 07/08/1933, he wonders how the «Frankfurter Zeitung» «può

pigliare un granchio simile» (“can make such a blunder”: the newspaper had published a short story by Michael Joyce under the name of James Joyce).

Colloquial terms are sometimes combined in new turns of phrase and creative expressions, generating a humorous effect. For instance, in Joyce’s opinion, «gli irlandesi americani sono una tribù pestilenziale» (“Irish-Americans are a pestilential tribe”, 08/09/1937) and at the station one might see a «trenata di farabutti, mascalzoni, malandrini e brutti ceffi» (“a trainload of rascals, scoundrels, rogues and ugly mugs”, 06/01/1938). Both the transformations of linguistic clichés and the creation of original expressions suggest that Joyce’s process of appropriation of Italian implied a re-invention and a revision of the language. The letters in the Jahnke collection reveal Joyce’s attention to the vernacular of everyday speech and his expressive inventiveness, achieved through new combinations of familiar words.

Although Joyce makes wide use of colloquial phrases, Triestine dialect is found in only three letters of the Zurich collection and with completely different functions. On 12/08/1937 he refers to Stephen as «pizdrul», “little one”, using the dialect term as a means to express affection. On 10/5/1931 and 02/02/1938 the dialect expressions «fiol d’un can» (“son of a dog”) and «in malorsiga» (“to hell”) convey quite opposite feelings.

Ordinary language, as already mentioned, often contrasts with a learned vocabulary and use of a high register. Joyce frequently addresses requests to his son in a very formal way (e.g. letter from Beaujolais Hotel, Vichy, dated 1940), he uses archaic or learned terms like «sullodati» (“already praised”, 12/08/1937), «posdomani» (“the day after tomorrow”, 02/02/1938) and «cionullameno» (“nonetheless”, 31/08/1936), all expressions which stand out against the general tone and register of the letters. Examples of lexical archaisms can be traced in most of the Jahnke documentation (significant cases are also in the letters dated 07/08/1933 and 30/08/1932). Joyce’s tendency to consciously or unconsciously recover linguistic tradition was already noticed by his first Italian interlocutors, who defined his Italian *trecentesco*²⁵, or «una bizzarra mescolanza di lingua viva, di locuzioni dantesche, di frasario da libretto d’opera» (“a strange mixture of ordinary language, dantesque phrases and operatic text”)²⁶. When Joyce arrived in Trieste, we might suppose that his knowledge of Italian was essentially based on his readings of Dante and Cavalcanti: it is not surprising that he seemed to speak an ‘old’ language. Nonetheless, the material in the Zurich collection is dated well after 1904: most letters were written between 1930 and 1940, when Joyce had acquired an excellent proficiency in Italian.

The fact that Joyce never abandoned part of his linguistically ‘archaic’ tendency can be a significant element to understand his relationship with Italian language and culture²⁷. Linguistic recovery might express a need to access a local reality, or to constitute an identifying linguistic and cultural microcosm composed, for example, by his family members. The dynamic

nature of Joyce's use of Italian makes it difficult to establish a single function of archaisms in the Zurich letters. In some cases they may actually represent a link with the past, but more often archaisms can in fact be innovations and represent a form of linguistic renewal.

In the Jahnke collection, Joyce's 'archaic tendency' in writing Italian does not emerge only in the private correspondence, but characterizes also the text of *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*, the Italian poem to which the next section of the present study is devoted.

2

Joyce's Italian poetry: the manuscript of *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*

In *Ulysses*, Bloom hears some men speaking Italian and defines it «a beautiful language», then he asks Stephen Dedalus «why do you not write your poetry in that language?»²⁸. This incident from *Ulysses* establishes a relationship between Bloom's fictional suggestion and James Joyce's personal experience: the Hans Jahnke collection testifies to the fact Joyce wrote – or probably re-wrote – poetry in Italian.

One of the most interesting documents of the Zurich collection is an unpublished (and partially un-publishable) Italian poem titled *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*. The manuscript, in Joyce's handwriting, is allegedly a fair copy, since writing is clear and ordered and the text presents only one modification in line 3. It should be noted, though, that it is not possible to establish with certainty if the text was composed by Joyce, or if he transcribed it from another source: we can only rely on the available material evidence, which contains no signs that Joyce might have 'borrowed' the text from elsewhere.

What seems certain is that the extant documentation of Joyce's poetical corpus includes two poems in different languages, *On the Beach at Fontana* and *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*, which are closely interconnected. The first and most obvious relationship is in the title, but the two texts are also similar in contents and form, suggesting that the poems could be one the translation of the other. It is difficult to establish a chronological succession, since *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* is not dated; *On the Beach at Fontana*, instead, is dated by Joyce around 1914²⁹

The compositional history of the English text can provide some useful points of reference regarding the dating of *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*. The available documentation testifies that the text of *On the Beach at Fontana* underwent modifications in the years 1918-19 (Buffalo IV.A.I, Huntington E.6.b). In particular, lines 7 and 8 were modified through procedures of dislocation: «[...] touch his fineboned boyish shoulder / And trembling arm» in Buffalo IV.A.1 becomes «[...] touch his trembling fineboned shoulder / And boyish arm» in Huntington E.6.b. In lines 7 and 8, the Italian poem presents the reading «[...] tocco la sua spalla tremante timida / Il braccio di giovinetto», which is connected to the post-1919 readings of *On the Beach at Fontana*. In light of

this connection, it might be assumed that the Italian text was composed at least after 1919: it must have been written when *On the Beach at Fontana* had already been conceived and might be based on a late reading of the English poem. *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* could then constitute a precious testimony of Joyce's self-translation in verse: before the Jahnke material was available, documentation of Joyce's poetry translations into Italian included only James Stephen's sonnet *St. Stephen's Green* (which was also produced in four other languages)³⁰.

The published English poem *On the Beach at Fontana* is composed of three alternately rhymed quatrains:

Wind whines and whines the shingle,
The crazy pierstakes groan;
A senile sea numbers each single
Slimesilvered stone.

From whining wind and colder
Grey sea I wrap him warm
And touch his trembling fineboned shoulder
And boyish arm.

Around us fear, descending
Darkness of fear above
And in my heart how deep unending
Ache of love!³¹

The poem opens with the perception of concrete images, namely the sea and piers, and closes with abstract ones, fear and ache. The second quatrain introduces both the poetic I and «him» (line 6): the referent of the third person pronoun is not identifiable within the contextual knowledge shared by the addresser and the addressee. The text does not provide information which would allow us to retrieve the referent of the pronoun: we can only assume the fictional existence of a male figure, evoked through mention of his fragile arm and shoulder.

On the Beach at Fontana is commonly interpreted with reference to extratextual information, in particular Joyce's biography: the figures by the sea are generally identified as James Joyce and his son Giorgio³². At the basis of such interpretation is a passage of the *Trieste notebook*:

Giorgino

You were a few minutes old. While the doctor was drying his hands I walked up and down with you, humming to you. You were quite happy, happier than I.

I held him in the sea at the baths of Fontana and felt with humble love the trembling of his frail shoulders: *Asperge me, Domine, hyssopo et mundabor: lavabis me et super nivem dealbalor*. Before he was born I had no fear of fortune³³.

The annotation, a reflection on Giorgio's birth, is echoed in the poem, which might be considered deriving from this passage. The images described in *On the Beach at Fontana* cannot be considered a mere portrayal of Joyce and his son: the verses are open to wider interpretations and the father/son relationship becomes instrumental to a second end, that of representing the passing of time and the various phases of human life.

The numbering of the stones (line 3) relates to the «unnumbered pebbles» in *Proteus*³⁴; both *Ulysses* and *Pomes Penyeach* present a connection to *King Lear*, where «[...] the murmuring surge / That on the unnumbered idle pebble chafes / Cannot be heard [...]» (Quarto 4.5, Sc.20:21-2). In Shakespeare's tragedy, father and son are on the beach: the youngster helps the elderly man saying «Give me your arm» (Sc.20:64). Similarly, in *On the Beach at Fontana*, the speaker touches the arm of the figure beside him in order to protect him. The connections with Shakespeare emphasise references to senility and introduce the theme of the father/son relationship in the poem, a relationship which is seen through multiple perspectives.

The idea of senility is substantiated in line 7: «his trembling fineboned shoulder» could refer to the fragility of old age. «Boyish arm», in the following line, apparently changes the whole picture: relevant information is deferred, causing an effect of surprise in the reader. We puzzle out the figure on the shore, which presents a fair amount of ambiguity: «boyish» could mean both belonging to a boy and boy-like, indicating the arm is as thin as that of a boy. Lines 7-8, therefore, open the way to a twofold interpretation of the poem: we cannot establish whether the speaker is wrapping a child, or an old man. The theme of the father/son relationship develops according to a double direction: the poetic I appears simultaneously father and son. Youth and old age reveal continuity, as time re-unites them in one single figure.

The Italian text, *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* can be seen as a fairly literal translation of *On the Beach at Fontana*. The enjambements in lines 3, 5 and 11 are maintained and so is the opening chiasm in line 1: «Il vento guaisce, guaiscono i ciottoli» can be actually translated as «Wind whines and whines the shingle». The repetitions of noun phrases in the first and second quatrain characterize both poems, although with some variations. On the whole, both the Italian and the English texts are characterised by pervasive indeterminacy and allusiveness and seem to present the same degree of literary allusions, metaphorical thickness and semantic density. Syntactically, instead, the Italian text appears less complex than *On the Beach at Fontana*. Three neologisms in the English text lose their peculiarity of compound words in *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*: «pierstakes» (line 2) and «slimesilvered» (line 4) are translated through prepositional phrases, while «fineboned» (line 7) is substituted with a completely different term. The introduction of prepositional phrases and other forms of textual 'expansions' is generally determined by the morphological-syntactic characteristics of Italian. This procedure of linguistic slackening³⁵

often implies de-nominalization: English can create «strings of adjectives and nouns, and particularly strings of just nouns, to form lexically-dense noun phrases»³⁶, which can be best translated into Italian through insertions of verbs, or prepositions. At the same time, however, Joyce tends to maintain syntactic compression even in Italian: for instance, he omits the verb in line 11, «Ma nel mio cuore angoscia profonda [...]» (“But in my heart deep anguish [...]”)³⁷.

The (alleged) Italian translation reconstitutes the overall verbal effect of the English text, but via lexically variant usages. While the formal and structural patterns are preserved, the two poems present a different choice of lexical items, which results in the creation of two different registers. *On the Beach at Fontana* is written in a language not far from common speech, while *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* strikes the reader as more archaic, and decidedly more high-flown than the English text. In this sense, we might also say that the feeling of ‘familiarity’ brought about by the lexicon in *On the Beach at Fontana* becomes a feeling of ‘foreignness’ in *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*. In the latter text, the high register is especially determined by three terms, each included in a different quatrain: «rovinosi» (line 2), «ammanto» (line 6) and «atra» (line 10).

In the second line of both poems, the English «crazy pierstakes» becomes «pali rovinosi» («ruinous piers») in Italian. The passage from the adjective «crazy» to «rovinosi» not only represents a change from an ordinary to a learned lexicon, but also implies a connotative shift. The Italian term «rovinoso» means «ruined», «liable to collapse», but is commonly used also with the sense of «damaging»³⁸. In the context of the poem, the choice of «rovinosi» (instead of an adjectival past participle such as «rovinati») is probably aimed at emphasizing that the piers are going to ruin in a process which is still *in fieri*.

The second term which contributes towards establishing a high register in *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* appears in line 6 of the poem, where the English «I wrap him warm» (line 6) is modified in «l’ammanto caldamente» (“I mantle him warmly”). In Italian the verb «ammantare» (“to mantle”) is mostly used in a metaphorical sense and is not commonly coupled with an adverbial. Compared to the verb “avvolgere”, which might be a more literal translation of “to wrap”, it has more learned and lyric overtones.

The modifier «atra» (line 10) is one of the most interesting lexical choices in the Italian poem: «la paura atra» corresponds to the English «darkness of fear» in line 10 of *On the Beach at Fontana*. The substantive «darkness» is therefore substituted with an adjective which carries multiple connotations. «Atra» is a poetic term in which meanings such as «dark», «terrible» and «funereal»³⁹ merge. It bears a strong connection with the theory of humours, since it is commonly applied to *bile*: «atra bile» was regarded as a morbid symptom and as the cause of melancholy.

The reference to the theory of humours is only one of the relationships which add to the meaning of the poem: the term «atra» establishes a thick

intertextual web, since it was used in Italian works such as Dante's *Divina Commedia*, Petrarca's *Rime* and Boccaccio's *Teseida*⁴⁰. *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* opens to a simultaneity of cultural and literary referents, which introduce the poem into an ancient and 'aureate' Italian tradition. Joyce seems interested in creating new associative intertextual chains for Italian readers, a procedure which was already noticed by Bollettieri Bosinelli in the translation of the *Anna Livia Plurabelle* episode of *Finnegans Wake*⁴¹.

By shifting to a higher register the Italian text may instantiate a different attitude toward the events narrated, as well as reframe the relationship between addresser and addressee in the poem. High 'poetic' language seems to partially stylize and depersonalize the images described in the text, with the effect of attenuating their concreteness. Compared to *On the Beach at Fontana*, *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* might be said to convey the feeling of a greater distance between the speaker and the subject matter.

The choice of different lexical items is not the only aspect which characterizes the rewriting of *On the Beach at Fontana*: the transformation of the text includes procedures of dislocation and elimination of terms⁴². The positioning of elements in the sentence is modified in lines 5 and 6: the English «From whining wind and colder / Grey sea [...]» becomes «Dal mar senile, dal più gelido / Vento [...]» in *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*. The substantives «wind» (line 5) and «sea» (line 6) are inverted, creating a sort of chiasmic re-arrangement of the elements introduced in the first quatrain. Rather than a strategy adopted to solve linguistic problems, dislocation could be meant to convey a different perception of things, or to change focus from one element to another. The adjectives «whining» (line 5) and «colder grey» (lines 5-6) in *On the Beach at Fontana* also undergo significant changes: in the Italian text, «gelido» (line 5) is displaced and modifies the wind, while «whining» is eliminated, weakening the connection between lines 1 and 5. «Grey» (line 6) is substituted with «senile» in *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*, a modification which reinforces the connection between lines 3 and 5.

Lines 7 and 8, which can be considered pivotal to the interpretation of the whole English text, are slightly modified in *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*. In line 7, the term «fineboned» is translated with «timida» («shy», «timid»). The shift is from a term which describes a characteristic of the human body, «fineboned», to one which expresses a personality trait. It might also be noticed, though, that «timida» can be understood primarily in its etymologic derivation from the Latin «timidus», «fearful». In this perspective, the substitution establishes a connection between a feature of the shoulder and a possible reason for its trembling. The ambiguity introduced by the term «boyish» in line 7 of *On the Beach at Fontana* is only partially rendered in Italian: in «braccio di giovinetto» (line 7), the preposition «di» introduces a genitive case and suggests the arm *belongs* to a boy.

The close of the English poem hints to a worsening state of things: fear descends on the poetic *personae*, supposedly provoking the speaker's «ache of love» (lines 9-11). In *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*, fear is a static entity which surrounds the human figures and impends over them like a threat. Lines 11-12 undergo further crucial modifications: «And in my heart how deep unending / Ache of love» becomes «Ma nel mio cuore angoscia profonda / d'amore che non ha fine» (“But in my heart deep anguish / of love which has no end”). In line 11 of the Italian text the type of coordination changes from copulative to adversative («And» / «Ma»): the latter establishes a contrast between ‘external menace’ and the speaker’s feelings. Such contrast shifts the centre of attention to the individual’s emotional state, which receives maximum emphasis in *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*. What seems even more relevant, the adjective «unending» (line 11 of *On the Beach at Fontana*) becomes a relative clause in the Italian text (line 12). The reasons for the change do not appear merely linguistic: on the one hand, the introduction of a relative clause could be principally aimed at exploring different rhythms. On the other, as Senn suggests, the relative clause allows placing the word «fine» (“end”) exactly at the end of *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*⁴³. The term «fine» marks the cessation of writing, conclusion which, at the same time, is denied by the whole sentence, «che non ha fine», “which has no end”. Such dichotomy might be a fitting representation of the ambiguity Joyce felt about textual closure and completion⁴⁴.

On the whole, we might say that the Joycean corpus includes two similar poems in different languages which show a few, but significant, modifications: the change of language also corresponds to a different perspective on the material. Micro-variations determine new paths of meaning and new levels of connotation: the alleged rewriting of *On the Beach at Fontana* into *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* can be perceived as both a ‘transferral’ and an ‘expansion’ of the text.

Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana opens new perspectives on Joyce’s whole poetic corpus: not only does it corroborates the idea that Joyce’s verse writing and re-writing characterized his whole literary life⁴⁵, but it also testifies to the fact that Joyce’s poetic experimentation took various directions, including composing in Italian. The fact that *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* might be seen as a translation of *On the Beach at Fontana* is particularly noteworthy, since it suggests a sense of instability of the text: the creative detours give the poem a «movement of fragmentation, a wandering of errance»⁴⁶. The key feature of Joyce’s alleged translation is revealed to be the same which characterizes his whole production: dynamism. It is precisely in light of a continuative interest in mutation and transfer that Joyce’s activity as self-translator acquires particular significance. «Translation within the same language is not essentially different from translation between two tongues»⁴⁷: in this sense, *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana* can be related to the many rewritings that characterize Joyce’s English macrotext, a Protean corpus subject to incessant expansion and variation.

Self-translations, drafts and published works could be considered as a 'whole': a multifaceted but unitary dossier is a possibility.

The Hans Jahnke collection not only substantiates previous hypotheses on Joyce's uses of Italian but also opens the way to further speculation. The plural dimension of Joyce's existence is echoed in both the letters and *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*. In particular, analysis of the 'new' documentation shows that Joyce perceived the language(s) and the text as dynamic, unstable elements, «evermoving wanderers» like the stars in *Ulysses*⁴⁸. The Zurich letters to Giorgio testify to how Joyce was interested in the different tones and registers of the language. He often alternated vernacular speech and formal expressions within only a few lines of writing and could easily move from a conventional to a creative use of Italian. *Sulla Spiaggia a Fontana*, a transformation of the poem *On the Beach at Fontana*, reveals a possible textual itinerary from English to Italian, an itinerary that generates new relationships and associations, so that multiple meanings can often co-exist and enrich each other. Joyce's «travellingself»⁴⁹ as an 'exile' is also reflected in his modalities of re-writing: each text, each new reading can be considered a new point of departure, but «a departure engenders a (new) departure, in these texts which are related to each other, recognize each other and cite each other by the complex motif, or concept, of departure»⁵⁰.

Endnotes

¹ I wish to thank Prof. Fritz Senn, director of the Zurich James Joyce Foundation, for giving me the possibility of carrying on this research and offering me hospitality at the Foundation. I am grateful to Prof. Donatella Pallotti for her invaluable indications and continuous guidance during the composition of this study; to Prof. Paola Pugliatti for her kind advice; to Drs. Ruth Frehner and Ursula Zeller, who provided me with essential help with the Jahnke material and to Dr. Fiorenzo Fantaccini for his unremitting support.

² Joyce himself defines «voluntary exile» his drive towards migration. J. Joyce, *Letters*, ed. by R. Ellmann, Viking, New York 1966, vol. 2, p. 82.

³ All information concerning Joyce's biography is based on: R. Ellmann, *James Joyce*, Oxford UP, New York-Oxford 1959 and J. McCourt, *The Years of Bloom: Joyce in Trieste 1904-1920*, Lilliput Press, Dublin 2000.

⁴ D. Attridge, *Preface*, in Id. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce*, 2nd edition, Cambridge UP, Cambridge 2004, p. xii.

⁵ Father Ghezzi is Stephen's Italian teacher in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (see J. Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1992, p. 271). It seems that Ghezzi was actually the surname of one of Joyce's teachers at University College. Almidano Artifoni is the Italian teacher in *Stephen Hero* (see J. Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, ed. by T. Spencer, J. Slocum, H. Cahoon, New Directions, New York 1963, pp. 169-170). This name recurs in Joyce's works: Artifoni is a music teacher in the *Wandering Rocks* episode of *Ulysses* (J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1992, pp. 292-293). An Almidano Artifoni actually existed, and was the director of the Berlitz School of Trieste in the first decade of 1900.

⁶ Austrian city with an Italian spirit (and language), Trieste was characterized by a cosmopolitan atmosphere which included German, Italian and Eastern European influences. Trieste's cultural melting-pot is thoroughly analysed in J. McCourt, *The Years of Bloom*, cit., *passim*.

⁷ U. Eco, *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos: The Middle Ages of James Joyce*, Harvard UP, Cambridge MA 1989, p. xi.

⁸ R.M. Bollettieri Bosinelli, *Anna Livia's Italian Sister*, in K. Lawrence (ed.), *Transcultural Joyce*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge 1998, p. 197.

⁹ Translation must have fascinated Joyce since his youth: one of his earliest extant writings is a translation from Horace (1896), which was followed five years later by the English versions of Hauptmann's *Vor Sonnenaufgang* and *Michael Kramer*.

¹⁰ The testimony of A. Francini Bruni is included in W. Potts (ed.), *Portraits of the Artist in Exile. Recollections of James Joyce by Europeans*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 1979, p. 45.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² See for example G. Melchiori, *James Joyce scrittore italiano*, in J. Joyce, *Scritti italiani*, Mondadori, Milano 1979, pp. 7-19; F. Senn, *Joyce's Dislocutions. Essays on Reading as Translation*, The John Hopkins UP, Baltimore, London 1984; F. Ruggieri, *Esercizi di stile: dalle poesie alle traduzioni*, in J. Joyce, *Poesie e Prose*, Mondadori, Milano 1992, pp. XI-XLII; C. Marengo Vaglio, *Trieste as a Linguistic Melting-pot. Joyce et l'Italie*, «La Revue des Lettres Modernes», special issue, 1994, pp. 55-74; S. Zanotti, *Joyce in Italy. L'italiano in Joyce*, Aracne, Roma 2004; O. De Zordo, *James Joyce e le riviste fiorentine tra le due guerre*, «Rivista di letterature moderne e comparate», XXXVI, 3, 1983, pp. 251-259.

¹³ For an exhaustive description of the whole material see R. Frehner and U. Zeller, *The Hans E. Jahnke Bequest at the Zurich James Joyce Foundation*, «James Joyce Quarterly», 42-43, 1-4, 2004-2006, pp. 17-20. See also the website of the Zurich James Joyce Foundation, <<http://www.joycefoundation.ch/>> (07/2009).

¹⁴ J. Joyce, *Poems and Exiles*, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1992, p. 47.

¹⁵ The International James Joyce Foundation website provides a useful guide to copyright, fair use and permission regarding Joyce's works and manuscripts, <<http://english.osu.edu/research/organizations/ijjf/copyrightfaqs.cfm>> (07/2009) which was recently published in: P.K. Saint-Amour et al., *James Joyce: Copyright, Fair Use, and Permissions: Frequently Asked Questions*, «James Joyce Quarterly», 44, 4, 2007, pp. 753-784.

¹⁶ See T. Kileen, *Joyce Collection Among The Most Personal Yet Found*, «The Irish Times», 16/05/2006, <<http://www.joycefoundation.ch/Jahnke%20in%20Times.htm>> (07/2009).

¹⁷ In particular, my analysis focuses on about 40 letters written by James Joyce to Giorgio from 1926 to 1940. In the Jahnke bequest, the letters are catalogued according to the year, month and day of their composition, as indicated by Joyce on the manuscripts.

¹⁸ S. Crise, *Epiphanies and Phadographs. Joyce and Trieste*, All'insegna del pesce d'oro, Milano 1967, p. 68; unless explicitly mentioned, all translations from the Italian are mine.

¹⁹ Incidentally, Joyce's condition of 'exile' is unconsciously expressed in a *lapsus*, or revealing mistake, which appears in a letter dated 30/08/1932: a 'foreign body' entering the eye of the migrant Joyce is defined in Italian a «corpo straniero», instead of «corpo estraneo».

²⁰ C. Del Greco Lobner, *James Joyce and the Italian Language*, «Italia», 60, 2, 1983, pp. 145-146.

²¹ With «evaluative adjectives» I am referring to Kerbrat-Orecchioni's scheme of subjective adjectives in C. Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *L'énonciation. De la subjectivité dans le langage*, Colin, Paris 1980, pp. 84-91. The scheme is discussed in P. Pugliatti, *Lo sguardo nel racconto. Teorie e prassi del punto di vista*, Zanichelli, Bologna 1985, p. 163.

²² F. Senn, *Ulysean Close-ups*, cit., p. 59. Senn is here discussing the effects of 'blessing and curses' in *Ulysses*.

²³ J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, cit., p. 441, lines 10-11.

²⁴ J. Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, cit., p. 261.

²⁵ C. Del Greco Lobner, *James Joyce and the Italian Language*, cit., p. 141.

²⁶ D. De Tuoni, *Ricordo di Joyce a Trieste*, All'insegna del pesce d'oro, Milano 1966, p. 59.

²⁷ Del Greco Lobner underlines that before leaving Ireland Joyce was already familiar with at least one modern Italian writer, Gabriele D'Annunzio. In light of this fact, the scholar hypothesizes that Joyce's employment of *italiano trecentesco* might have always been intentional. See C. Del Greco Lobner, *James Joyce's Italian Connection*, University of Iowa Press, Iowa City 1989, p. 21.

²⁸ J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, cit., p. 716, lines 31-32.

²⁹ Joyce indicates different dates in different drafts of the poem. In manuscript Buffalo IV.A.1 and Huntington E.6.b «On the Beach at Fontana» is dated 1915, while the published text presents the date 1914. I have analysed all manuscripts and typescripts of Joyce's poems on the facsimiles in: M. Groden *et alii* (eds.), *The James Joyce Archive. Chamber Music, Pomes Penyeach & Occasional Verse. A Facsimile of Manuscripts, Typescripts & Proofs*, vol. 1, Garland, New York-London 1978. I have discussed the composition of *Pomes Penyeach* in: I. Natali, «*That submerged doughdoughty doubleface*»: *Pomes Penyeach di James Joyce*, ETS, Pisa 2008.

³⁰ See M. Groden *et alii* (eds.), *The James Joyce Archive. Chamber Music, Pomes Penyeach & Occasional Verse. A Facsimile of Manuscripts, Typescripts & Proofs*, cit; some typescripts of the poem are also included in the Jahnke bequest.

³¹ J. Joyce, *Poems and Exiles*, cit., p. 47.

³² See for example: J.C.C. Mays, *Notes*, in J. Joyce, *Poems and Exiles*, cit., p. 291.

³³ The same annotation in the «Trieste notebook» was probably reworked in *Ulysses*, «Oxen of the Sun»: «Before born babe bliss had» (J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, cit., p. 502, line 7). I have analysed the «Trieste notebook» on the facsimiles in: M. Groden *et alii* (eds.), *The James Joyce Archive. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man: A Facsimile of Epiphanies, Notes, Manuscripts and Typescripts*, vol. 7, Garland, New York-London 1978.

³⁴ J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, cit., p. 50, line 23.

³⁵ The expression «linguistic slackening» is derived from the definition of the procedure of textual «diffusion» proposed in: C. Taylor, *Language to Language*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge 1998, p. 56.

³⁶ Ivi, p. 58.

³⁷ Donatella Pallotti reveals that nominalization is a characterising aspect of *Giacomo Joyce* and analyses its function in: D. Pallotti, «*Everintermutuomergent*»: *The 'Cobueb (Hand) Writing' of Giacomo Joyce*, in F. Ruggieri (ed.), *Classic Joyce*, Bulzoni, Roma 1999, pp. 342-343.

³⁸ See G. Devoto, G.C. Oli (eds.), *Dizionario della lingua italiana*, Le Monnier, Firenze 2008, «Rovinoso».

³⁹ Ivi, «Atro».

⁴⁰ D. Alighieri, *La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata*, ed. by G. Petrocchi, Mondadori, Milano 1966-1967, vol. 1, p. 96 (*Inferno* 6.16) and vol. 3, p. 93 (*Paradiso* 6.78). F. Petrarca, *Rime disperse e attribuite*, ed. by A. Solerti, Sansoni, Firenze 1909, p. 255 (207.46). G. Boccaccio, *Teseida delle nozze d'Emilia*, in G. Boccaccio, *Tutte le opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*, a cura di A. Limentani, Mondadori, Milano 1964, vol. 2, p. 305.

⁴¹ R.M. Bollettieri Bosinelli, *Anna Livià's Italian Sister*, cit., p. 195.

⁴² The basic procedures of textual modification, which include dislocation, elimination, substitution and increase, are illustrated in: P. Pugliatti, *Avantesto e spazio della scrittura*, «Il piccolo Hans», 64, 1989-90, pp. 117-153.

⁴³ I am grateful to Fritz Senn for this helpful advice, which he offered me during an informal conversation in February 2009.

⁴⁴ Joyce often seemed to consider their texts as 'always in progress', unstable, as the compositional process of his works emphasizes.

⁴⁵ I have tried to reveal Joyce's unremitting interest in poetry writing in I. Natali, «*That submerged doughdoughty doubleface*»: *Pomes Penyeach di James Joyce*, cit., 2008.

⁴⁶ P. de Man, *The Resistance to Theory*, Minnesota UP, Minneapolis 1986, p. 92.

⁴⁷ O. Paz, *Traduzione: letteratura e letteralità*, in S. Nergaard (a cura di), *Teorie contemporanee della traduzione*, Bompiani, Milano 1995, p. 283.

⁴⁸ In *Ulysses*, reference is to parallax (one of the *Leitmotifs* of the novel), the phenomenon according to which a celestial body appears to change its angular position if observed from different points of view. The phrase «evermoving wanderers» only appears in the Gabler edition: J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. by H.W. Gabler, Vintage, New York 1986, p. 573, line 1053.

⁴⁹ J. Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1992, p. 358, line 13.

⁵⁰ H. Cixous, «*Mamãe, disse ele*», or, *Joyce's Second Hand*, «Poetics Today», 17, 3, 1996, p. 343.

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