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Edited by
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ANDREA BINELLI

CIRCULATING LIKE A BALLAD IN THE DARK. JOYCE, THE *WAKE* AND THE ANARCHIST TRANSLATION

The starting point for this article is a question, or better, some related questions that curiously arose in me when I first read the call for papers of the XII James Joyce Italian Foundation Conference in Rome. The questions were all prompted by the topic of the conference, "Feast of Languages", which famously refers to an inspiring quotation, almost a refrain among Joycean scholars, from Giorgio Melchiori's suggestive argument that "[t]he whole of Joyce's works, from *Epiphanies* to *Finnegans Wake*, is a great feast of languages of which we are asked to partake" (1992: 1). Given my personal background, the immediate and rather obvious question which came to my mind concerned how possibly to translate "a great feast of languages" and may be phrased as: "What should happen to a feast of languages when it comes to translating it?" Other questions immediately followed, all revolving around the perhaps too practical assumption that much of what one may do in order to translate a feast seemingly depends on the catering provision. So I wondered: "Who caters a feast of languages?" And the range of answers I could come up with instantly turned into as many questions: "Is it the author? The readers? The community of scholars? The publishing industry? The tradition, i.e. the collective memory forged at the crowded intersection of all these agents and the social structures informing – and informed by – these very agents' semantic skills and interpreting practices?"

As this article will hopefully demonstrate, questions as to how feasts of languages are organized and offered, at the best of times shaping into ground-breaking texts which revolutionise codes and communicative patterns, aesthetic models, narrative forms and, ultimately, our conception of literature, are certainly not idle speculation. In fact, working on

these two, only apparently random, levels – the first one being the demandingly brilliant and utterly diverse quality of Joyce's feasting language, ranging from the sumptuously elaborate to the unapologetically vulgar; the second one being the relationship between such anarchy of style and translation – just went to show how the initial line of reasoning and its related image, a poor translator puzzled by a distant, motley and faceless caterer, was much less a provocation than I myself initially expected.

Even though the revolutionary achievements of James Joyce have been celebrated time and again, there in fact remains much to understand of the formal and linguistic mechanisms through which such revolution was waged and, in particular, of the extent to which Joyce's engagement with translation may have accounted for it. Indeed, Joyce was not simply an exile who, like many others before and after him, had formerly developed a passion for foreign languages;[1] who, once abroad, wanted his children to speak the local (Italian) language at home;[2] who taught English as L2 to foreigners (mainly Italian, French and German speakers); and who problematized linguistic and sociolinguistic issues on several occasions and in all of his works: starting from *The Portrait* and the long political shadow of the Irish language over Stephen Dedalus's musings on identity, all the way through the vengeful, rampant abuse of English itself in *Ulysses* (Eglinton 1935; Gibson 2002), to the thunderous explosion of dozens of idioms in *Finnegans Wake*. Beside all this, Joyce was also a translator and had to deal with translation from a range of standpoints. Accordingly, the aim of this paper is obviously not to downplay the incomparable significance and worth of language and linguistic awareness in Joyce's educational background, professional history and

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[1] In Belvedere College Joyce was given "excellent training in" Latin, French and Italian, "the Cinderella of Modern languages" (*JJII* 47, 57). As a student in UCD, University College of Dublin, he also approached Greek dramas, studied German so as to read the original version of Hauptmann's plays, especially *Hanneles Himmelfahrt* (*JJII* 78), and focused on Ibsen's bokmål – Dano-Norwegian to him – so as to better enjoy such plays of his as *Bygmester Solness* and *Brand* (*JJII* 78-79).

[2] The Joyces kept loyal to Italian as the family language when they left Italy (Ellmann 1977: 389, 485), also in their written correspondence. The varieties of Italian Joyce employed in different periods were investigated, among others, by Corinna del Greco Lobner 1989 and Zanotti 2013.

artistic biography. Rather, the hypothesis being tested here is that, within the scope of the linguistic issue, one should focus on Joyce's direct dealings with translation in order to better understand how his familiarity with – and, at some stage, even mastery of – such practice resulted in an unorthodox, libertarian conception of the relationship between writer and literary work; and this revelation, in turn, arguably affected how his subversive, radical notion of authorship came into shape, thus making such a rioting and feasting style as that of *Finnegans Wake* possible.

Joyce dealt with translation throughout his life, across a range of languages and with different roles. Ever since his teen years he realized that by granting access to distant works and authors, translation could not only open up a wider window on the outside world but also provide the single artist as well as an entire community with a fresh, profane and less normative standpoint on their own literature and culture, whose gaps could thus be identified and filled with novel, contaminated forms and motives. This attitude of openness and curiosity can already be appreciated in Joyce's first collection of poems, *Moods*, which was supposedly assembled in 1897 or 1898, and contained his own translation of Horace's ode, *O Fons Bandusiae*. Whereas this translation performance can still be read and enjoyed – though inevitably proving rather immature in several respects (Schork 1997: 144) – *Moods* has unfortunately not survived (Ellmann 1977a: 51-52). However, what is worth being emphasized is that at only fifteen, perhaps sixteen years of age, Joyce already was an ambitious mind wishing to develop his own writing manner by appropriating and re-forging foreign aesthetic sensibilities.[3] To him such juvenile translation training, spanning from classic authors to Verlaine, from Latin to French (Ellmann 1977a: 79-80), was in the first place a laboratory where he could learn to exceed the Irish stylistic tradition and find new poetic paths.

Also his 1901 translations of Hauptmann's plays, *Vor sonnenaufgang* and *Michael Kramer*, should be regarded as part of this stylistic research, though he eventually had to omit several portions of the original

[3] According to Scarlett Baron, this approach is thematized in several of Joyce's mature works, including critical writings and the *Portrait*, where translation to Stephen seems to be, among other things, an act of appropriation (Baron 2010).

texts on account of his poor knowledge of German and of the Silesian dialect in particular (Ellmann 1977a: 87-88). Moreover, these translations of Hauptmann can also – and more pragmatically – be interpreted in terms of a daring attempt to enter the mainstream literary circles and to accordingly gain critical recognition, as he had in mind to propose them to W.B. Yeats for the Irish Literary Theatre. The attempt was daring indeed. In fact, with this proposal Joyce allegedly aimed to persuade the leaders of the Irish Literary Theatre project to present plays by non-Irish dramatists, thus eschewing the manacles of parochial cultural politics. At all rates, his being "not a very good German scholar", as W.B. Yeats's euphemistically and ironically pointed out in his reply, accounted for the failure of the submission more and before than the nationalist outlook of the newly-established theatre (Ellmann 1977a: 88, 178; Joyce 2016: 933).

Anyhow, translation was not just a literary venture to Joyce. For the young man who soon opted for the exile, translation rapidly came to mean job opportunities in new, foreign environments. He certainly was a proficient polyglot and an extremely proud one (O'Neill 2005); hence, for instance, his bitter disappointment at the not so brilliant marks he got in a written Italian examination test he sat for at the University of Padua in April 1912 (Ellmann 1977a: 321). And translating, perhaps even more than English teaching, helped him make ends meet during his first stay in Paris, his family's long years in Trieste, the period in Rome – where, by the way, he worked as a correspondence clerk in the Nast-Kolb & Schumacher bank translating to and from English, French and Italian – as well as their subsequent stays in France and Switzerland. His letters from Trieste, Zurich and other cities often record names of businessmen and dignitaries such as Richard Greenham, Siegmund Feilbogen, George Wettstein (Ellmann 1977a: 222, 387-88, 440) and others who throughout the years hired him as either full-time or part-time translator. This prolonged work experience and his subsequently highly developed sense for the refinements of translation undoubtedly accounted for much of his capacity to penetrate the subtleties of language. By virtue of this translational introspection Joyce never took anything in language for granted: learning and comparing more – and not just two – grammatical and morphological systems brought him to question the very idea of a linguistic system and dealing with different dictionaries paved the way for him to

explore the wonders of semantics, thus acknowledging the funny arbitrariness of the relationships between signifiers and the concepts they express. The limits of any individual authority over language were soon as clear as day to him, who was still left with the dignifying capacity to play with such awareness. In fact, playing with language, as it will be most evident in *Finnegans Wake*, was often the consequence of, and sometimes even at one with, experiences involving a translation process. A practical example of this clear and direct link can be found in the anecdote he reported to his brother Stanislaus in a letter sent from Rome, where Joyce admittedly used to take great delight from making English calques out of the surnames of his local colleagues:

> A clerk here is named (he is round, bald, fat, voiceless) Bartoluzzi. You pronounce by inflating both cheeks and prolonging the u. Every time I pass him I repeat his name to myself and translate «Good day, little bits of Barto». Another is named Simonetti: they are all little bits of something or other, I think. (Ellmann 1967: 202)

Joyce's inclination to question language in a playful and witty way, his penchant for creating new words and making up new names for people and even objects show up in all of his literary output and prove especially important in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. Thousands of brilliant scholars have engaged in studies on this crucial topic: Joyce's multilingualism and linguistic proficiency in relation to his own writing. More relevantly – and following Fritz Senn's intuition that anything in Joyce is about translation (Senn 1967: 163-164; 1984: 39; 1995) – Jolanta Wawrzycka went so far as to describe this attitude as a "translatorial" one and to term its outcome "writing-as-translation" (Wawrzycka 2009: 131; 2010: 516). Accordingly, what the anecdote in the quotation above may suggest is that scholarly research should more sharply focus on how Joyce's inspired and gifted style and much of his inventive, seditious linguistic behaviour was directly boosted by the cognitive process of translation, one which accompanied him throughout his life.

Even though regularly working on professional, technical and business translations, whenever possible, Joyce undoubtedly preferred to deal with literary translation. As a young man, he grew familiar with reviewing it, which, again, meant to him an easy way to earn some money

and make acquaintances in the literary circles. By no chance, his review of the French translation of Ibsen's *Catilina* – published on the *Speaker* on 21 March 1903 – is one of the first editorial jobs for which he was paid (Joyce 2016: 56-57, 920). Through this apprenticeship as a reviewer, he became even more aware of the complexity of translational issues, of the difficulty of this craft and of the not always adequate capacities of translators. For instance, in a letter to his brother, Stanislaus, dated 18 October 1906, he harshly criticized Edmund Gosse's disgraceful translation of Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*. And the censorious attitude of the typically boisterous young man was not dismissed easily. In a letter sent to W.B. Yeats ten years later and dated 14 September 1916, he disapproved of Carlo Linati's Italian translation of his *Countess Cathleen*, part of which Joyce himself had translated years before with the help of Nicolò Vidacovich, though their collaborative work was never published because – as explained in a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver dated 14 January 1917 – Yeats did not like his own earlier version Joyce and Vidacovich had unfortunately worked on. In simple terms, Joyce was pointing out the bad quality of the available translation in order to complain for his own translation not being appreciated.

This is just one of many similar misfortunes. Interestingly, while collecting rejections for his own writings, Joyce also dedicated increasing and equally unproductive energies to proposing English as well as Italian translations of his beloved authors to publishing houses, friends and mentors. Beside Yeats's *Countess Cathleen*, he translated John Millington Synge's *Riders to the Sea* into Italian, still aided by Vidacovich (on who did what in these translations see Gorman 1924; Bigazzi 1992: 646-655; Joyce 2016: 317, 320, 970). Again, their translation was not published and after some strange turns the manuscript even disappeared. It was found and eventually published only in 1929 in *Solaria*. Another failed attempt at translating Irish authors into Italian regarded George Moore's *Mildred Lawson*, the first of the three short stories in *Celibates*. Joyce only translated its opening pages, this time together with a Tuscan friend, Alessandro Francini Bruni, who at the time worked as vice-director at the Berlitz School in Pola and whose company and Florentine accent Joyce admittedly loved (Ellmann 1977a: 215). Anyhow, this project ultimately fell short like the previous ones. In June 1909 he obtained from Robert

Ross permission to translate Oscar Wilde's *The Soul of Man under Socialism* but this plan too went astray on account of an escalation of events which drew his attention away from it later in the summer (Ellmann 1977a: 274). This series of attempts was doomed to consistent failure also when the target language was English, as it had previously occurred to his proposal to translate Maeterlinck's *La vie des abeilles* in 1903 (Ellmann 1977a: 141).

Joyce only stopped proposing translations once that he had established a reputation for himself as an author. This was a crucial passage, one which accordingly enabled him to enjoy a radically different perspective on translation: that of the author being translated. Unsurprisingly, he always demanded to have a say on the selection of the translators of his books as well as on the assessment of their efforts, starting with *Exiles*, *The Portrait* and "his serialized *Ulysses*" (Wawrzycka 2009: 132). On numerous occasions, including the German translation of *Ulysses* in 1927, he even prompted a new edition with his own revisions (Sullivan 2007: 78-82). And as his fame spread, things grew more difficult. With the French translation of *Ulysses* he happened to go through trying times as he had to mediate between Auguste Morel, who carried out the first draft of the translation, Stuart Gilbert, who supervised Morel's work, Valery Larbaud, who revised them both, and Adrienne Monnier, the publisher who in turn watched over the whole process (Costanzo 1972). This was a demandingly new situation whereby Joyce, the last of Morel's four supervisors, could really sense to what extent translated works cannot just be the work of their author. What their readers read is words, phrases, sentences, syntactical patterns and rhetorical arrangements devised by another person, the translator, and often carefully considered and negotiated by several more.

Awareness of the intrinsically plural source of translated literature became even more acute and downright frustrating when, at different times, he learned about the American and the Japanese pirated translations of *Ulysses*. Joyce initially lost his temper, only to realize later that, despite the economic losses suffered, these actually were rather funny accidents. He even wrote a humorous poem in this regard (Ellmann 1977a: 666-668). In a loose sense, it was as though being told that his – as much as everybody else's – works could take on a life of their own. Likewise,

when the idea of turning *Ulysses* into a movie was posited and detailed elements of this were discussed with Warner Brothers, Paul Léon, Eisenstein and others, he arguably had to envisage such a systemic transformation of his work again in the terms of a very special form of translation. Furthermore, though not in direct relation to any actual translation, similar feelings were likely stirred in him by the very many publishers, attorneys, lawyers, critics and printers who time and again urged him to expurgate his texts – i.e. to translate them into less scandalous versions – so as to bypass censorship and avoid trials for obscenity.

The personal experience and philological evidence reported so far in this essay necessarily and intimately connected Joyce to translation in all its aspects and in a way that gradually and inescapably brought him to discard any old-fashioned, naïve idea of the author as the sole owner of a literary work. To the best of his knowledge, books were clearly there on account of their authors' deliberate decision but what really happened to and came out of them very seldom depended on their authors' choice only. This piece of wisdom – the ineluctably social nature of meaning-making processes in human communication and in literary texts in particular – shaped up into a major driver of his stylistic evolution during the mature age of his artistic life and it can be most clearly seen in his last book, *Finnegans Wake*, as well as in his free-wheeling approach to self-translation. Self-translation can in fact be regarded as the last, utterly peculiar and most meaningful stage of his life-long relationship with the actuality of translation.

It is extensively researched on how, during the 1930s, Joyce self-translated the *Anna Livia Plurabelle* section from *Finnegans Wake* into Italian and French, with the collaboration of native speakers (Risset 1979; Bosinelli 1996; Eco 1996; Zanotti 2013). By this time Joyce was very keen on translations carried out by more people together, or, in the terminology proper of Translation Studies, on Collaborative Translation (Cordingley and Manning 2015), of his own as well as other people's works. For instance, in 1933 and afterwards he helped Stuart Gilbert to translate Édouard Dujardin's *Les Lauriers sont coupés* into English (Beja 1992: 66; Ellmann 1977a: 520, 665) and in 1936, for the Danish translation of *Ulysses*, he proposed that the writer Tom Kristensen and Kai Friis-Moller (poet, critic and translator of Eliot) should work together (Ellmann 1977a:

692). Moreover, with regards to his own works, he was actively involved in ‘authorized’ translations whenever he was familiar with the target language. These collaborations are consistent with his increasingly depersonalized view of the semiotic circulation started by both authors and translators, and, as a consequence, with an increasingly collective understanding of the worth and origin of textual sense. Moreover, what is powerfully suggestive – and confusingly contradictory – in this regard is that his French and Italian collaborators were recurrently struck by his caring more for sound, rhythm, musical aspects and wordplays than for any disambiguated, general sense of the target versions of the *Anna Livia* chapter. Actually, according to Paul Léon and Philippe Soupault in 1931 and to Nino Frank in 1937, he sometimes neglected loyalty to the original meaning altogether (Ellmann 1977a: 632-633, 702). In so doing, he seemed to share Attridge’s insight that the relevant responses of readers and, even more so, of translators to a text are all legitimate continuations of that text (Attridge 1990: 24). Under those circumstances, Joyce apparently felt his duty to continue *Anna Livia* rather than dogmatically bringing it back to some primigenial shape. This was taken by Patrick O’Neill as a confirmation of his theory whereby translations extend the original by opening many possibilities into it (O’Neill 2005; 2007), which turns “the entire corpus of translations of the *Wake* […] together with the original text” into “a single and coherent object of study, a single polyglot macrotext” (O’Neill 2013: 7). This is a crucial stage when Joyce finally framed the value of literary works in a social setting for which the author is only partially responsible: what influenced the making of the text and what will outlive it, especially the individual hermeneutic appropriations which eventually forge its sense, live in the public domain, as they feed and are fed by two commons: the always impersonal sphere of linguistic change and progress, and the collective imaginary recklessly shaped by a diverse array of forces and sensibilities, including those of readers, translators, publishers, friends, judges, musicians, relatives, etc.

Michaël Oustinoff illustrated an attitude similar to that of Joyce in self translations by Julien Green, Samuel Beckett and Vladimir Nabokov, and called it “auto-traduction recréatrice” (Oustinoff 2001: 29-34). This translational approach discloses and treasures novel possibilities not fully expressed in the original and emphasizes the creative freedom enjoyed in

this process of interpretation. In Joyce's self-translations, or continuations, freedom with respect to the original matches the very freedom of composition that was already manifest in *Finnegans Wake* in the first place. This latter freedom resulted from disrespect for language (linguistic freedom), in the sense that dozens of languages are simultaneously employed;[4] disrespect for grammar (morphological freedom); disrespect for the plot (narrative freedom); disrespect for its discursive structures (narratological freedom), as there is no available interpretive pattern to make sense of who is sending what kind of message to whom through the book, unless we really take it to be a popular, dark ballad, as its title suggests, whose transmission endlessly generates all sorts of free, anonymous variations and adaptations. Jacques Aubert brilliantly summarized this openness by hinting at the absence of a definite author when he claimed that the *Wake* is a "translation in Progress" (Aubert 1967: 219). Here 'translation' is arguably metaphorical of the *Wake*'s encyclopedic intent to recapitulate the Irish history by melting it with the history of the world and the universal myth, which in turn embrace and melt all religions and human discourses (Deane 2002: 703). In Seamus Deane's words, "Joyce's last great work is […] a transcription into a miniaturized form of the whole western literary tradition […] It is a book that opens itself to all of history, culture and experience" (Deane 1992: VII). The plurality of sources "miniaturized", or better, translated by Joyce into the *Wake*, as in a first step towards their collectivization, corresponds to the narratological openness of the text where individual interpretations and free associations are all equally legitimate and even solicited by its semiotic constituency (Schenoni 2017: LIX-LX).

This free rein creativity and collective appropriation of universal knowledge must have driven Joyce back to the ideals of his young age when he proclaimed himself a socialist and filled his library with anarchist theorists. Ellmann, who reported on and enquired about Joyce's interest in Nietzscheanism and radical politics (Ellmann 1977a: 142, 239-241; see also Emmanuel 2010), argued that "for him, the act of writing was also, and indissolubly, an act of liberating" (Ellmann 1977b: 90). In-

[4] At the end of Luigi Schenoni's Italian edition a glossary with terms from 45 languages is provided; according to Andrew Gibson, the *Wake* "harbours traces of more than sixty live and dead languages" (Gibson 2006: 157).

deed, in browsing through the list of books he “left behind him in Trieste when in June 1920 he moved to Paris” (Ellmann 1977b: 97), one can spot works by utopian writers such as Giordano Bruno (*De gli eroici furori*) and Campanella (*Città del sole* and *Apologia di Galileo*), diverse socialist writers including Carlo Pisacane, Bernard Shaw, Walt Whitman and Mark Twain, and, among the anarchists, *The Commune of Paris*; *La conquista del pane*; *Fields, Factories and Workers*; and *La granda rivoluzione* by Peter Kropotkin; *Instead of a Book. A Fragmentary Exposition of Philosophical Anarchism* by Benjamin Tucker, i.e., Joyce’s “principal political authority” (Manganiello 2016: 74); Bakunin’s *God and the State*, translated by Benjamin Tucker; and Proudhon’s *Qu’est-ce que la propriété*. According to Ellmann, a precise definition of Joyce’s politics can be found in *Stephen Hero*, which is by the way the closest to his non-fiction autobiography: “not unjustly an ally of the collectivist politicians” (Ellmann 1977b: 79). Rejecting the contention that Joyce was unmoved by politics, Ellmann and several other critics, including the already quoted Dominic Manganiello 1984 and 2016, Carlo Bigazzi 1984, Diarmuid Maguire 1984, David Weir 1997, Jean-Michel Rabaté 2001 and Patrick McGee 2001, formulated accurate and compelling political interpretations of his works shedding light on their oblique attacks on unjust social order and wealth distribution. The discursive organization of the *Wake*, in particular, recalls the anarchist and collectivist description of society where, beneath a surface of happy chaos, no element prevails over another, and the overall unity is by no chance preserved by “the pun, verbal emblem of coincidence, agent of democracy and collectivist ideas” (Ellmann 1977b: 95).

In concluding this part, the point I would like to make is that Joyce’s self-translations and general slant on translation mirrored, encouraged and was corroborated by the aesthetical and political attitude he finally articulated in the *Wake*: to him the author is neither the absolute explanatory criterion of literature, nor the unique holder of the properties of a text. Social and cultural processes for which authors are only partially accountable ultimately produce the ‘truthful’ sense and value of literary works. Such a glib dismissal of the dogmatic figure (and function, in

a Foucaultian sense)[5] of the author should be thought of as an epochal artistic dispossession and a political act of collectivization to whose necessity and beauty Joyce was awakened through a decennial, troublesome, and still enthusiastic relationship with the multifaceted reality of translation. He found the individual ownership of literary texts to be totally at odds with his own experience and to rather amount to an illusion. Joyce recognized such fallacy, realized that aristocrats and nostalgic bourgeois were resisting the wave of democratic progress and thus aimed to replace it with the anarchist, variegated choir of churchless men and women.

Joyce's artistic journey, and especially his translational and political pursuits, somehow mirror the trajectory of an age-old debate, regarding the interpretation of texts, which was revived by scholars within the field of Translation Studies in the late Twentieth century: the sense of a text to be translated was initially identified in the intention of its author and such identification lasted for long getting through Spinoza, Hermeneutic Philology, Positivism and Historicism until, at different times, Russian Formalism, American New Criticism and French Structuralism removed the authorial intention and variously replaced it with either the language, the literary system, the style, the text itself or the individual reader as novel criteria for the explanation of literature. It was only in the wake of the extremist epigones of these movements that the author was finally restored in its rank as one and certainly not the least important among many factors which account for what a translator should focus on and aim to recreate: the what and the how of a literary text (Mounin 1965; Bassnett 1980; Nergaard 1993; Compagnon 2004). Nevertheless, Joyce's achievement still looks so distant from today's average reader's understanding of 'authors and books' relationship, with the latter being often absorbed by the former. Even translators, who are well known to complain about their own invisibility (Venuti 1995), inadvertently partake in this erasure of what is in a text beyond who first wrote it whenever they fail to distinguish between author and work, and state, for instance, to be translating Orwell, instead of *Homage to Catalonia*. In so doing, they employ quite a typical metonymy and refer to a work via its

[5] The analysis of the "author function" as an ideological figure is developed in Foucalt's essay "What is an Author" (1977).

author, thus replacing the effect with the cause. According to Lausberg, this is obtained through a "connection of reciprocal dependency" based on "material or moral ownership"[6], so that the owner stands for the property (quoted in Mortara Garavelli 2003: 148). The equation of author and work thus rests on an act of ownership and is not so much a *totum-pro-parte* synecdoche, as it sometimes is wrongly argued.

To assume uncritically that authors retain material and moral ownership of their texts, seemingly including their sense, has serious consequences. A naïve though hard-to-die stereotype related to it wants that the translator's endeavour should be to reproduce the message the author intended to send. One may easily come across this false belief in students' papers and newspaper and magazine reviews. As a matter of fact, to scrutinize the communicative potential and will of the sender of a literary text is useful whenever such scrutiny is questioned and couched in rigorously philological terms, but the authors' intention, albeit relevant, never covers the overall signification of a text, which in turn is likely to transcend that original plan. In the first place, most human beings – and authors are so – tend not to fully and exactly express what they mean to each and all of their readers. Besides, there will always be much more in any writing than what the writer deliberately meant. According to Antoine Compagnon, "there are no grounds, in principle, for eliminating testimonies about intention, let them come from the author or his contemporaries, because these are sometimes useful clues to understanding the text" and still, "[w]e must avoid substituting intention for the text, for the meaning of a work is not necessarily identical to the author's intention, and most likely it is not" (Compagnon 2004: 56). The intention of the author cannot be a translational criterion and scholars have long since made this point (Eco 2003; Cavagnoli 2012). It is in fact a common experience for authors to agree with translators when meanings are detected and reproduced which they did not deliberately express (Eco 2003; Cavagnoli 2012). Indeed, a translator has the ethical duty to translate what the author wrote and is found in the text and certainly not what an author wanted to write and yet can hardly be found in the same text, unless the inter-

[6] In the quotation is my English translation of "legami di reciproca dipendenza" and "proprietà materiale o morale".

preter carries out an hermeneutic appropriation which, by the way, evokes the paradigm of ownership again.

With respect to this paradigm, one may easily observe that many of the keywords and frameworks within which the proto-history and the history of Translation Studies evolved are indicative of and sometimes even focused on ideas of textual identity which imply the author's ownership of the text. This is the obvious case of the fierce, even lethal[7] debate on the right versus prohibition to translate the Bible – including St. Jerome's and Luther's celebrated self-defense – and other sacred texts (Nida 1964). These, in fact, are alternatively regarded as the property of either all the people or some divine entity of which only appointed institutions could serve as human agent and spokesperson. Arguably, the enduring discussions on the 'literal' versus 'free', and 'faithful' versus 'beautiful' qualities of translations revolved around the same alternative. Again the author's ownership of the text contrasts the assumptions of those who dare question it in translation and the distance between these two standpoints can be found between translators who keep their target text as close as possible to the author's original and those who find some sort of reformulation unavoidable, legitimate and essential. In this regard, also the unsophisticated word-for-word versus sense-for-sense dichotomy differentiates the two strategies according to the relative departure from the author's patterns and choices. Whereas the former takes even the author's syntactical choice as an indisputable key to access the sense of the text, the latter indirectly pulls it away from the author's private possession by claiming for it a collective agency, as decodable sense is necessarily social and can only exist in the public domain. It is along very similar lines that Schleiermacher envisaged his renowned "valorisation of the foreign" (Munday 2001: 27-28) and accordingly proposed methods of translation which could mediate the distance between source text writer and target text reader. Likewise, Lawrence Venuti's antithesis between 'naturalizing' versus 'alienating' approaches, in order to develop 'foreignizing' versus 'domesticating' dialectics of translation, is based on a challenge to national cultures' ownership of literary works (Venuti 1995). All in all, the act of translation has always been seen as a negotiation with such ownership and with the more or less fair limits it entails on the transla-

[7] Lethal in the sense that it has had its martyrs.

tor's attempt to achieve an equivalence, whatever sense translation theorists have conferred to this crucial notion (Kenny 1998).

Even though the most relevant among the contemporary theories of translation can all be considered attacks on the individual property of the sense and value of literary texts, i.e. on the automatic identification of author and text, like all stereotypes, such identification will always resurface. Stereotypes survive because they are easy, they make our life simple and we are too lazy to stay clear of simplifications. Compagnon devoted a seminal book to the most troublesome clichés of literary studies, *Le démon de la théorie. Littérature et sens commun*, where he explored the equation of author and text as the outcome of precise sociological and ideological developments. After quoting Barthes's remark that the "author is a modern figure, a product of our society insofar as, emerging from the Middle Ages with English empiricism, French rationalism and the personal faith of the Reformation, it discovered the prestige of the individual, of, as it is more nobly put, the human person", Compagnon went so far as to argue that to modern criticism "the author is none other than the bourgeois, the quintessential incarnation of capitalist ideology" (Compagnon 2004: 31). And by no coincidence it was just when this "capitalist ideology" was most fiercely questioned, from the early 1960 to the 1980s, that the connection between authors and the meaning of their literary output came to be examined outside the usual frame of possession: "The modern (and moreover very new) received idea denounces the relevance of the author's intention in order to determine or describe the signification of the work […] recourse to the notion of intention seemed not only useless but even harmful to literary studies" (Compagnon 2004: 29). In Compagnon's recollection, only the political climate can explain this development:

> Intention, and still more the author himself, the usual standard of literary explanation since the nineteenth century, was the site par excellence of the conflict between the traditionalists (literary history) and the moderns (the new criticism) in the sixties. In 1969 Foucault gave a famous lecture entitled "What Is an Author?" and in 1968 Barthes published an article whose sensational tide, "The Death of the Author," became the antihumanist slogan of the science of the text. (Compagnon 2004: 31)

This symbolic murder, or better, this act of dispossession results from the subversive ideological drive of the time:

> We are in 1968: the overthrow of the author, which marks the passage from systematic structuralism to deconstructive post-structuralism, is on equal footing with the anti-authoritarian rebellion of that spring. Lastly, and before executing the author, however, critics had to identify him with the bourgeois individual, the psychological person, and thus reduce the question of the author to that of the *explication de texte* by life and biography. (Compagnon 2004: 32)

Joyce's own insubordinate drive and his departure from any traditional, individual ownership of writing adequately explain the success he at last began to encounter in the same period. As illustrated, despite being an authoritative, overwhelming figure, textual ownership with Joyce vanishes into thin air to be replaced, especially in the *Wake*, by a collective monument, an anarchist translation of the whole of human knowledge. The inspiration for this is drawn from an instinctive, perhaps parochial, certainly anarchist irritation against empires and churches, all power structures and their repressive conventions. Stylistically such a rebellious attitude follows Jonathan Swift's teaching on the farcical side of history and the grotesque appearance of utopia; hence, Joyce's urge to develop a code resonating with a utopian drive, a feast of languages with multiple, open models of interpretation. Already in *Ulysses*, as Declan Kiberd made it clear, he had treasured folklore and common people's daily life as well as highbrow literature, thus widening the repertoire of the novel to include, in a Bachtinian polyphonic fashion, stream of thoughts, songs, radio commercial, jingles, Irish melodies, nursery rhymes, printed ads, dirty jokes, limericks, riddles, puns, ditties, jest books, classic literature, mythologies (Kiberd 2009). Through his life-long dealings with translation Joyce took a step further down the road to the anarchist dispossession of the author, as it is finally exemplified in the *Wake*. According to *Groupe* μ, the average net of semantic relationships which articulates the sense of all texts, in the *Wake* "is abolished, giving way to the organization of multiple and coordinated isotopies" which foster ambiguity and polysemy (*Groupe* μ 1981: 33) and accordingly deprives the author of their traditional hold on the text.

This is a feature of much past literature – typical, for instance, of the middle ages – from which Joyce heavily drew in debunking the frame of authorship as possession. His challenge anticipated a then revolutionary (subsequently semiotic) understanding of intertextuality whereby the creation of a text does not begin so much with the speaker's or the artist's thoughts as with the other texts and works of art that circulate within the discourses where models are shaped, reproduced and transformed (Greimas 1983: 160-161). This 'collectivist' view on communication as a social process is also consistent with Juri Lotman's framework of cultural typologies (Lotman 1975) and Gérard Genette's research on architextuality (Genette 1997), and it proved to be the starting point of not few among those who made the majestic effort to translate the *Wake*.[8] Their approach was at the same time randomly associative and intertextually alert, apparently gypsy-like and philologically rigorous. Their task was to comply with the anarchist, osmotic priming between latent signifiers and the semantic investments made possible by the frames and isotopic patterns operated by Joyce in his multi-layered, paradoxically author-less and 'translation-like' encoding. It is definitely not by chance that the history of the interpretation of the *Wake* is, in the first place, the history of its translations.

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[8] A powerful comparative, "transtextual" account of how translations of the *Wake* – such as those by Erik Bindervoet and Robbert-Jan Henkes (Dutch), Philippe Lavergne (French), Mikka Mutanen (Finnish), Víctor Pozanco (Spanish), Luigi Schenoni (Italian), Donaldo Schüler (Portuguese), Macej Słomczyński (Polish), Dieter Stündel (German), Garcìa Tortosa (Spanish) and several others, to whom today one may add more recent ones as Pedone and Terrinoni's (Italian) – all "contribute cumulatively to the extension of that text into a multilingual macrotext" (p. 7) can be found in the already mentioned *Impossible Joyce. Finnegans Wakes* by Patrick O'Neill.

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