TRANSLATION AS DISSENT AND AS SELF-REPRESENTATION IN THE WORKS OF BEPPE FENOGLIO

by

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ABSTRACT

The study of translations, in the last decades, has moved away from a purely linguistic analysis of the process of translating, and has focused more on the cultural and ideological aspects which influence the activity of translators. However, the old concept of translations as linguistic transpositions – or mere copies – of an original text still seems to persist in much of scholarly works on translations. My project stems from the acknowledgement that Beppe Fenoglio's translations have not been examined in the political, cultural and ideological context in which they were produced, but have been dismissed as a purely linguistic exercise. Hence, I examine Fenoglio's translations as culturally and ideologically informed artistic expressions, in which Fenoglio was able to give voice to his dissent towards the mainstream ideology and poetics of his times, often choosing authors and characters with whom he identified. The interaction between the theories of Translation Studies, Literary theory and Adaptation Studies foregrounds the centrality of the role of the translator, showing how Fenoglio's ideology and poetics were clearly visible both in the selection of the texts he translated and in his translation strategies.

A mio padre

se anche fossi a me un estraneo,
fra tutti quanti gli uomini già tanto
pel tuo cuore fanciullo t'amerei

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

Throughout this thesis I use Harvard referencing for in-text references and for the bibliography.

Unless noted differently, all translations from Italian into English are mine.

Due to copyright issues Fenoglio's manuscripts could not be reproduced in full, but Fenoglio's heirs have given me their permission to reproduce sections of them in my commentary. Most of Fenoglio's manuscripts are either unnumbered or irregularly numbered. Where possible, I have numbered the pages in order to reference them correctly.

INTRODUCTION

1. Beppe Fenoglio: the translator and the writer

Beppe Fenoglio (1922-1963) is now considered one of the most important Italian authors of the twentieth century. His literary production ranges from short stories to novels and plays, and focus in particular on the theme of the Italian War of Resistance of 1944-45[1]. Fenoglio's novels *Il Partigiano Johnny* (*Johnny the Partisan*) and *Una questione privata* (*A Private Affair*) are now considered part of the contemporary literary canon and in particular provide a narration of the Partisan War of Resistance during Fascism. However, Fenoglio's work differs significantly from that of other writers who also explored similar themes, such as Italo Calvino, Primo Levi or Cesare Pavese. Fenoglio stands out in the canon on account of what has been referred to as Fenoglio's rather original and explicit "love affair" with England, which started when Fenoglio was an adolescent and lasted through his lifetime.

Fenoglio's predilection for English history, culture and literature is witnessed by the many translations from English into Italian that he carried out in the course of more than twenty years. Fenoglio was such a prolific translator, that the Italian literary critic Maria Corti called his translations from English "love letters to England" (1973, p. 51), thus highlighting the profound admiration that Fenoglio felt towards English literature. Other Italian authors such Elio Vittorini or Cesare Pavese had expressed admiration, even passion, for Anglo-American culture and literature. Fenoglio, however, went further. Not only did he translate into Italian

[1] Fenoglio himself took actively part to the war against Nazi-Fascism with the battle name of "Beppe/ Heathcliff".

the masterpieces to which he was so devoted, he also adopted this second language as his own expressive literary medium and wrote directly in English. Later, he would self-translate into Italian from his novels and short stories in English. While Pavese and Vittorini had brought the fantastic, mythical world of America to Italy through their translations of Faulkner and Melville, Fenoglio chose to narrate, in English, his own personal experience of the Italian Civil War. The names of his partisans are English: Johnny and Milton. His novels and short stories are filled with English expressions and words; a first draft of *Il Partigiano Johnny*, which was recovered only after Fenoglio's death, was written entirely in English. Therefore, not only did English culture play a key role in Fenoglio's formative adolescent years and become part of his inner soul, but it also led him to adopt the English language, preferring this second language to his mother tongue when writing.[2] The choice of appropriating English as his preferred language appears particularly original especially if we take into account the fact that Fenoglio never left the small native city of Alba, never visited England, and was educated in this village where the majority of people did not even speak standard Italian but only knew the Piedmontese dialect.

Beppe Fenoglio's translations are particularly varied, and the choice of texts also unconventional, because it is not limited to literary works. Most of his translations are found at the Fondo Fenoglio (Fenoglio Archive), in Alba, Piedmont. These include his translations of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Robert Browning, T. S. Eliot, John Donne, Thomas De Quincey, Geoffrey Chaucer, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Bunyan, Kenneth Grahame, John Milton, Christopher Marlowe, Edgar Lee Masters and William Shakespeare. Moreover, Fenoglio also

2 In this regard, see the autobiographical notes Fenoglio sent to the Publishing house Einaudi, in which he stated that his book *Primavera di Bellezza* "was conceived and written in English. The text which readers now see is thus only a mere translation" (Fenoglio 2002, p. 189)

translated some historical works, in particular Alfred Leslie Rowse's *The Spirit of English History*, G. M. Trevelyan's *England Under the Stuarts*, and Charles Firth's *Oliver Cromwell and the rule of Puritans in England*. None of these translations were commissioned, and only three of them were published when he was still alive. These works clearly show Fenoglio's dedication as a translator. They also show that the culture and politics of England interested Fenoglio as much as its literature.

Fenoglio's literary career was not particularly fortunate when he was alive, but took a different turn after he died in 1963, aged 41. In his lifetime, Fenoglio published just one novel and a collection of short stories. His published work received some controversial critical attention, especially for his unconventional depiction of the war of liberation in Italy (Pedullà, 2014, pp. 163-233). However, after Fenoglio's death, the manuscript of his novel *Il partigiano Johnny* was found among his papers. It was subsequently published by Einaudi in 1968. Thereafter, Fenoglio was recognized as an important author in Italian literature, and his previous works were re-read and reinterpreted in a more favourable light, so that Fenoglio is now part of the school curriculum in Italian literature courses both in high-schools and at universities. Fenoglio's translations, by contrast, have achieved little recognition to date. Only very rarely have critics examined and commented upon Fenoglio's translations. In most critical works, the translations remain in the background, subject only to brief comment and analysis. Indeed the fullest and most significant critical work to date on Fenoglio's translations remains Mark Pietralunga's *Beppe Fenoglio and English Literature: A Study of the Writer as Translator*, published in 1986. Pietralunga's study is an important and valued point of reference for this thesis.[3]

[3] Foti Belligambi's linguistic analysis of Fenoglio's rendition of the poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins (2008) is also of relevance for this thesis. However, the limited scope of this work, focusing only on the poems of Hopkins,

In summary, it is my view that previous studies have paid insufficient attention not only to the literary interest of Fenoglio's translations, but also to their cultural and ideological significance. The majority of critical works on Fenoglio, although recognizing Fenoglio's literary debt towards English literature and culture, do not dwell on the cultural and ideological reasons for Fenoglio's choice of England as his second homeland. Moreover, scholars of Fenoglio's life and works rarely if ever take into account the fascinating thematic and ideological interconnections between Fenoglio's translations and his original writings.

2. Aims, originality and significance of the thesis

This project has its roots in the idea that Fenoglio's translations, though critically neglected, are pivotal to understand both Fenoglio's original creative writings and his ideology. In particular, they appear to be a missing piece that contributes to a better contextualization of Fenoglio's dissenting approach to politics, religion and literature. Moreover, the profound connections between Fenoglio's translations and creative works may help to identify the core of Fenoglio's poetics, which is based on themes, images and characters which are recurrent in all his *oeuvre*, his translations included. Among the many rewritings carried out by Fenoglio, I have selected four translations and one adaptation: my analysis focuses on Fenoglio's translations of Christopher Marlowe's *Dr Faustus,* John Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part 1*, Charles Firth's *Oliver Cromwell and the rule of Puritans in England,* and Fenoglio's adaptation of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, called *La Voce nella Tempesta*. I have selected these specific texts because these are the most neglected of

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also limits its significance for present purposes.

Fenoglio's translations; whereas Fenoglio's translations of Coleridge, Lee Masters, Eliot and Hopkins have been posthumously published and analysed by scholars, most texts which appear in this thesis have not appeared publicly in print nor been addressed by critics. Moreover, these translations cover a broad span of Fenoglio's career as a translator, and thus show an ideal evolution in his Fenoglio's approach to translation, starting from the early years of his adolescence to the last years of his life. The earliest translation in this corpus is Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, which was done during Fenoglio's school years. His translation of Milton was carried out after the war, in the early fifties. The translations of Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part 1* and Firth's biography of Cromwell are later translations, dating to the late 1950s or early 1960s. As for Fenoglio's adaptation of Bronte's novel, Fenoglio donated the typescript of his work to his friends in the early 1960s, and probably translated Garrod's introduction in the previous months, in order to provide his readers with a critical interpretation of his adaptation. This corpus thus shows the evolution of Fenoglio's activity as a translator, and is particularly revealing if looked at along with his creative writings. The corpus of translations analysed in this thesis also offers an example of the various genres that Fenoglio translated: tragedy, comedy, historical essays and literary criticism. I have decided not to examine poetic translations, since Fenoglio's poetic renditions have been previously and extensively analysed by other scholars (Foti Belligambi 2008; Pavan 1998; Pietralunga in Fenoglio 2000).

The main aim of this thesis is to demonstrate two fundamental points: that (1) the activity of translation was for Fenoglio a way to express his dissent towards mainstream ideology; and that (2), since these translations were not commissioned by any publishing house but Fenoglio chose them himself, he was driven to texts and authors with which he identified, offering a very personal and creative interpretation of the source texts, which also emerges in his translation strategies.

In order to demonstrate both points, throughout this thesis I argue that translation is not simply an activity in which two languages are involved, but that it is also one in which two cultures come into contact. Translations in fact include "all cultural transactions, from the most benign to the most venal" (Brodzki, 2007, p. 3). The cultural and ideological context of the translations, such as the time in which they were undertaken and the social environment in which they are embedded, need to be taken into account in order to understand their significance and their relevance. Translation is a complex process which involves not only languages, but cultures and ideologies as well. The activity of translation, moreover, does not include only the source text and the target text; it also involves the active participation of the translator, who offers her/his personal reading and interpretation of the text s/he chooses to translate. Even if Fenoglio's translations were not published, and thus apparently excluded a specific audience, they carry the ideological imprint of Fenoglio as a translator. It is my view that the choice of texts which were culturally and ideologically distant from the values which were predominant in Italian society at the time of Fenoglio's translations can be considered an expression of dissent.

This cultural approach to Fenoglio's translations provides a fresh perspective on existing critical perspectives on Fenoglio's rewritings, which have mainly focused on the linguistic aspects of these translated works (Pietralunga, 1986; Frontori, 1991; Foti Belligambi, 2008) and their influence on Fenoglio's writing style. Literary critics Corti (1987; 1980), Meddemen (1982) and Beccaria (1984), to name but a few, have analysed the first drafts of his short-stories and novels, noting how English had influenced Fenoglio's style in terms of creativity and stylistic conciseness. If examined in a cultural perspective, Fenoglio's so-called Anglomania acquires a significance that goes beyond literary fascination and linguistic experimentation: in fact, it seems that Fenoglio, feeling oppressed by the impositions of the

Fascist regime, turned to and found solace in England or what Corti called the 'enchanted island' (Corti, 1978, p. 24) because it offered moral and cultural models which in his view were lacking in Italian society. The rich literary tradition of this country and the individualistic traits for which it was known provided him with a series of literary and historical characters who, in oppressive times, had plucked up their courage and rebelled against the religious and political authorities of their times. As I explain in Chapter 3 and 4 of this thesis, the model heroes that populated the texts which Fenoglio translated found their way into Fenoglio's original writings as well. As a result, it can be argued that the act of translation started as a subversive activity which helped Fenoglio give full but covert expression to his dissent against the Italian Fascist regime.

As I explain in Chapters 4 and 5, Fenoglio's translations are also a testimony of Fenoglio's challenging attitude towards mainstream ideology well beyond the years of Fascism. In the years following the Second World War and the establishment of the Republic, Italy was still a profoundly divided country (Pavone, 1991, p. 551). Fenoglio's political position at that time was once again non-conformist, because it did not embrace a one-sided reading of the war of Resistance as a war of liberation from the German foreigner; Fenoglio instead represented the war of Resistance as a civil war, a definition which was not accepted by most of the political exponents of the political left in Italy. Paying due attention to relevant scholarship on the literary and political history of the period, I focus my attention on the ideological and political reasons behind Fenoglio's decision to translate, in the late 1950s, Charles Firth's biography of Oliver Cromwell and his account of the English civil wars.

This thesis also considers Fenoglio's translations as a form of self-representation. In fact, Fenoglio always chose texts and authors that reflected his values and personal beliefs, or that shared a similar literary poetics. My analysis of Fenoglio's translations, in particular the

drama translations and his adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*, carried out in the late 1950s or early 1960s, adds to the existing critical perspectives on Fenoglio's writing and poetics, underlining the cultural and ideological similarities and analogies between Fenoglio's translations and his original writings. Fenoglio's concept of liberty, his religious attitude and his tragic view of life are manifestly evident in his translations, and significantly enrich existing critical debates around Fenoglio's literary output.

By examining Fenoglio's translations I shed fresh light on the cultural and ideological background to key features of Fenoglio's thoughts and literary art. For example, Fenoglio's concept of liberty has often been depicted as extreme and uncompromising: Fenoglio has often been described as a man who could not tolerate any sort of imposition nor standardization, with a deeply-felt but also tenacious sense of self (Mauro 1972, Sipione 2011). He appeared as an "individualist" (De Nicola, 1983, p. 3-19) because he was not interested in the literary disputes which were going on at the time of his writing. He also seemed to have been unbothered by literary critics who often negatively reviewed his writing. His religious attitude derived from seventeenth-century English Puritanism, and on many occasions he admitted that his view was closer to Protestantism than to Catholicism. Moreover, he chose to get married in a civil ceremony and not a religious one, which in 1960 caused a scandal in the small city of Alba (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 229). Fenoglio's fictional narratives have been defined as tragic by many commentators, because the main characters of his novels are complex and solitary individuals who face an irresolvable conflict, often succumbing to a destiny of death and self-sacrifice (Marchese 2014, Chiodi 1965). All these aspects are presented by literary critics and biographers as a part of the complex personality of Fenoglio, yet the cultural and ideological reasons for these attitudes have not been explored in depth. Close examination of Fenoglio's translations helps us to understand these reasons more fully.

Finally, this project focuses on the translation strategies through which Fenoglio was able to convey his own creativity and his personal reading of the source text. I argue that the translator himself does not merely transpose the words of others in another language, but in translating s/he offers her/his own interpretation of the text, thus reshaping and re-making the original into a new, creative text (Bassnett, 2014, p. 5). In order to achieve this aim, I compare Fenoglio's translations to other translators whenever possible, revealing the distinctive characteristic of Fenoglio's translation strategies. This analysis demonstrates not only that translation, adaptation and creative writing are deeply intertwined in Fenoglio's literary output, but also that his translations carry his specific literary and philosophical imprint as much as his own original creative works.

3. Methodology and research design of the thesis

The methodological foundation of my analysis is based on the most recent theories of Translation Studies. The theories that I found most helpful focus in particular on two general concepts. The first is that translation, like any other text, "is never innocent. There is always a context in which the translation takes place, always a history from which a text emerges and into which a text is transposed" (Bassett and Lefevere, 1990, p. 11). Thus, translations are texts that are both political as well as relatively autonomous with respect to the source text, since they are created in another culture, at a different time and for a different audience than the source text. Moreover, translations are linked to specific cultural and ideological environments, and they carry the imprint of these specific elements. In this regard, the works of Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere are key to my understanding and interpretation of Fenoglio's translations. This is because of their effort to understand the process of translation not only from a linguistic

standpoint but also as the result of a complex interpretative and communicative system, in which the target culture and ideology play a pivotal role. For example, Bassnett's argument that social and cultural factors influence the process of translation (Bassnett, 2014, pp. 30- 34) is particularly useful in my analysis of Fenoglio's education during the years of Fascism. As a matter of fact, the cultural background of Fascist education is of fundamental importance when we consider which texts Fenoglio chose to translate and the themes and values expressed in those texts. For example, Fenoglio's preference for translating dramatic texts whose protagonists are tragic heroes contrasts with the ideal of the hero that was promoted by Fascist propaganda in those years. As I explain in chapter 3, Fenoglio's choice of translating – during the years of Fascism - an author such as Marlowe demonstrates that he was looking for a model hero who was characterised by a strong individualism, a desire for self-affirmation and rejection of authority, whereas Fascism considered any form of individualism as subversion and rebellion.

The second theoretical concept which guides my analysis of Fenoglio's translations focuses on the centrality of translators in the translation process. In fact, in the past ten years a new field developed within the discipline of translation studies, dubbed "Translator Studies" (Chesterman, 2009, pp-13-22). The scholars within this field stress the importance of the subjectivity and originality of translators, arguing that translators make very specific choices which are indeed creative and personal. In particular I draw on the works of Lawrence Venuti (1995; 2000) and Andrew Chesterman (2009), who both tackled the issue of addressing the specificity of the translator's contribution to the translated text. Venuti, on the one hand, argues that translations are "an independent form of writing, distinct from the foreign texts and from texts written originally in the translating language" (Venuti, 2000, p. 230). This independent form of writing is indeed the result of the single translator' s interpretation and is the result of

the specific translation strategies employed by the translator. Moreover, as I show in Chapter 1, Venuti introduced the concepts of foreignization and domestication to define the translator's tendency to model his translation on the source text or the translator's tendency to deviate from the source text in order to make it more acceptable to the target culture (1995, pp. 15-22). These two definitions are applied to Fenoglio's translations throughout this thesis, in order to examine the specificity of Fenoglio's translation strategies, revealing how original and personal Fenoglio's interpretation of these texts was. Fenoglio's translations are also compared to the work of other translators, in order to identify the main differences in their approaches to translation.

Andrew Chesterman's research, on the other hand, focuses on the personal motives of translators with regard to their choice of texts. Chesterman refers to the translator's motives and aims as his/her "*telos*", a Greek word for "goal", in order to distinguish it from the aim of the text, which other translation theorists refer to as "skopos" (Chesterman, 2009, p. 17). I examine Fenoglio's *telos* in translating in order to identify the personal and ideological motives which prompted him to translate these specific texts. These theories are also relevant to the field of Adaptation Studies, which comes into play in the final chapter of this thesis with regard to Fenoglio's adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*.

Finally, I also examine and apply theories proposed by Italian scholars Mattioli (2004) and Buffoni (2007), whose research considers the poetics of translators. Both scholars believe that translations are the result of the fruitful encounter between the poetics of the author of the source text, in terms of style and themes, and the poetics of the translator. Thus translations not only reflect the author's world-view, but also the translator's. This concept is particularly apt with regard to Fenoglio, since, as I will show, Fenoglio only selected the authors and texts he felt represented his world-view or his values. From my analysis of the various parallels and

analogies that exist between Fenoglio's original creative writings and his translations I demonstrate how Fenoglio's poetics as a translator coincides with his poetics as a writer of fiction. In doing so, this thesis aims to present a more complete image of Fenoglio's literary poetics and world-view. It must also be noted that all the translations analysed in this thesis are fragmentary or incomplete. This is a characteristic which all of Fenoglio's translations have in common, even the ones which were published by Mark Pietralunga in *Quaderno di Traduzioni* (2000),with the single exception of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The tendency to incompleteness is a stylistic feature of Fenoglio: since the majority of his original writings were published after his death and without his final approval, he was often defined as a "posthumous author" (Boggione, 2011, p.165), and in the same way he was also a posthumous translator. If, on the one hand, the fragmentary and incomplete nature of these translations does not allow for an exhaustive understanding of Fenoglio's approach to the source texts as a whole, on the other hand it turns our attention to the reasons why Fenoglio selected some specific sections of these texts, and makes them particularly interesting in the perspective of Translator Studies. As I explain in chapter 1, the selections that a translator operates on a source text are revealing of his/her poetics, in that s/he focuses on specific aspects of a text and neglects others.

4. Thesis structure

This thesis is divided into 6 chapters, each of which tackles different works in Fenoglio's corpus of translated texts.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of previous scholarly research on Fenoglio's translations, identifying potentially fruitful and important research opportunities. In particular, it underlines how research on Fenoglio's translations has systematically excluded cultural and ideological discussions, focusing instead on considerations of linguistic choices. In response,

the chapter turns to relevant theories developed in Translation Studies which take into account key elements in the translation process that have previously been overlooked, such as ideology, culture and creative contribution on the part of Fenoglio as translator.

Chapter 2 explores the cultural and ideological scene in which Fenoglio was immersed when he became a translator. This chapter shows how Fenoglio turned to translation given the literary and ideological vacuum created by the Fascist regime's cultural and educational programs. Here my emphasis is placed on the subversive nature of Fenoglio's choice of the English language and culture against the impositions of Fascism. Fenoglio's translations must be considered as creative research into a set of cultural and ideological values upon which he could draw to reinforce his own, which opposed those of the political culture of the time. The exploration of these values led him to build his own identity as a man, and to actively transport those values and themes into real life, and thus to put into practice what he had learned.

Chapter 3 examines in detail Fenoglio's translations of Christopher Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and John Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. Drawing on the concept of poetics of translators, which I presented in Chapter 1, and by comparing these translations to Fenoglio's creative writings, this chapter underlines the profound similarities between Fenoglio's poetics and Marlowe's and Milton's poetics, with particular regard to the depiction of tragic heroes and the structure of the dramatic form. This chapter also shows how these translations shed light on Fenoglio's unconventional religious beliefs and his idea of armed resistance towards oppression. Fenoglio's translation strategies are also examined in order to highlight Fenoglio's creativity in the rendition of these two source texts.

Chapter 4 analyses Fenoglio's translation of a section of Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part 1*. This chapter investigates in particular Fenoglio's interest in the character of Falstaff. It emerges that this character acted as a model for Fenoglio's own representation of partisans in

his short-fiction and in his one-act play *Solitudine*. In these works, Fenoglio portrayed partisans as flawed individuals, instead of knights in shining armour. This unflinchingly realistic representation of partisans was criticized by many contemporary literary critics since it did not conform to the mainstream ideas about "literary commitment" and what that was supposed to be. The analysis of this translation, both in terms of strategies and cultural significance, brings to the foreground a rather thorny issue about Fenoglio's dissenting view of the men and women who fought in the war of resistance. It also demonstrates his uncompromising commitment to truth in translating and narrating.

Chapter 5 takes into account Fenoglio's translation of C.H. Firth's *Oliver Cromwell and the rule of Puritans in England*. Though discarded by critics, this translation proves to be pivotal in understanding Fenoglio's depiction of the Italian Resistance as a civil war, a view that was extremely controversial in Italy in the years which followed the war. This chapter points to the cultural and ideological connection which Fenoglio shares with Firth's account of the English Revolution, showing how Fenoglio self-identified with English Parliamentarians in terms of values and ideals. The classical roots of these ideals are also examined. Finally, Fenoglio's translation strategies are discussed in order to understand Fenoglio's own personal interpretation of the text.

Chapter 6 examines Fenoglio's theatrical adaptation of Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights* and Fenoglio's translation of W. H. Garrod's Introduction to the novel. Fenoglio used the latter as an introduction to his adaptation. This chapter identifies Brontë's novel and William Wyler's Hollywood movie as the two source texts on which Fenoglio modelled his adaptation. By comparing the three texts, this chapter demonstrates how Fenoglio built an entirely new creative text, which has much in common with the translations examined in the previous chapters. This final chapter thus seeks to establish the profound cultural and

thematic connections between Fenoglio's translations, his adaptation and his original writings.

Finally, the **Conclusion** summarizes the original contribution of this thesis, noting its specific findings, their implications, and ways in which this project opens up opportunities for future research both on Fenoglio's work and more generally in the field of translation studies.

CHAPTER 1

"A PRIVATE AFFAIR": THE CRITICAL RESPONSE TO FENOGLIO'S TRANSLATIONS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES FROM TRANSLATION STUDIES

"My attitude towards the critics' judgment of my work
is shared, I believe, by all artists: amazement for
what critics can see in your work,
and the same amazement for what they cannot see"
Beppe Fenoglio[1]

1.1 Introduction

A Private Affair (Una questione privata), the title of Fenoglio's most famous novel, is an apt title for this chapter which sets out to explore the critical response to Fenoglio's translations, the role that English culture and language play in his life, and his established reputation as a writer. A quick overview of critical literature about this writer suggests that most Italian scholars and critics have had what looks like an uneasy relationship with Fenoglio's translations, as though this activity was too private an affair to be dealt with. Fenoglio himself, rather diplomatically, expressed his own scepticism about critics declaring he was equally amazed at what "the critics can see" but also aware of "what they cannot see": in the quotation reported above, Fenoglio – answering to journalist Elio Accrocca – stressed the fact that oftentimes literary critics appear to be particularly selective in their examination of a writer's work, neglecting aspects which the author himself would probably have found of

[1] Fenoglio's words are reported in Accrocca (1960, p.180)

great relevance. Although they recognize the importance of English culture and literature in Fenoglio's literary output, critics seem to want to relegate Fenoglio's translation to a linguistic and literary exercise whose only aim was linguistic experimentation.

In this chapter I focus on that part of Fenoglio's production which has gone unseen. With this in mind, the first part of this chapter explores some scholarly works dedicated to Fenoglio and his output, with the aim of bringing to the foreground a much neglected but integral part of Fenoglio's work: his translations. The second part of this chapter outlines some existing translation theories in order to see how useful these are in shedding light on the cultural and ideological choices underpinning Fenoglio's translated works.

The first section of this chapter explores key critical responses to Fenoglio's *oeuvre* with the aim of highlighting the critical neglect of Fenoglio's translations. Some scholars, such as Segre and Raimondi, pass Fenoglio's translations by altogether, others regard them as stepping stones (Corti 1980, pp. 26-28) or stylistic exercises (Pietralunga, 1987, p.177) leading Italian readers to Fenoglio's brighter realm of short stories and novels. Moreover, these scholars deal almost exclusively with linguistic issues, leaving aside cultural and ideological factors which are instead of great importance. Fenoglio's use of the English language in his creative writings shares a similar fate, and is commonly approached by critics as a stylistic tool, a passing stage directed towards the renovation of the Italian language (Beccaria, 1984, p. 36). My aim is to prove that English more than Italian was in fact the language of creativity for Fenoglio, and that this aspect is what made him stand out in the contemporary Italian literary scene.

In order to address this neglect, in the second section of this chapter I present the existing translation theories which in my view help provide a better understanding of Fenoglio and the cultural and ideological context which defined him and informed his translation

strategies. These theories belong to the recent field of Translation Studies, which developed in the 1980s and 1990s, and focus on the impact which a translation produces in the target culture, taking into account the extra-textual factors which previous theories had overlooked. In this section I will attempt to demonstrate why this writer's translations should be given more visibility, arguing that far from being ancillary to his novels and short stories, translations are core to demonstrating who Fenoglio was as a man of his times, as a writer and above all as a translator.

The specific role of the translator and his personal stance is further explored in the final sections of this chapter. In fact, recent trends in Translation Studies have started to focus on translators as the "central concept of the research question" (Chesterman, 2009, p. 14), emphasizing their creativity and individuality. Section three, in particular, explores the theories which, challenging the supposed neutral position of the translator as a mediator between two cultures, may help understand Fenoglio's original approach to both English and Italian culture through his translations. Finally, I examine the contributions of two Italian scholars who view translation as a dynamic encounter between the poetics of the translator and the poetics of the translated author. These theories bring my argument full circle back to the title of this chapter, but from a rather different perspective: it is because of their private, personal nature, that Fenoglio's translations reveal themselves to be the truest expression of his poetics, and are worthy to be recognized as an important part of his literary contribution along with his creative writings.

1.2 The role and critical fortune of Fenoglio's translations

Fenoglio's activity as a translator lasted his entire lifetime, and was extremely varied. As noted earlier, not only did he translate numerous English authors into Italian, but also

produced a theatrical adaptation of Charlotte Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, which I examine in the final chapter of this thesis. Yet, the importance of translating in Fenoglio's work is generally overlooked by critics. As a matter of fact, Fenoglio's literary fame in Italy is primarily connected with anti-fascist Second World War fiction, mainly his novels *Il partigiano Johnny* and *Una questione privata*. Fenoglio is often associated with other two contemporary writers Cesare Pavese and Italo Calvino not only because of their common Piedmontese origins, but also because they all chose the *Resistenza* – or at least some aspects of it – as the subject of their novels. Fenoglio's *Il Partigiano Johnny*, Pavese's *La Casa in Collina* and Calvino's *Il Sentiero dei Nidi di Ragno* are regarded as the novels which have given the greatest contribution to the understanding of the Civil war in the history of Italian literature. The strong anti-fascist beliefs which these Piedmontese writers shared prompted both Fenoglio and Calvino to join the armed resistance movements, while Pavese – who had previously been sent to the *confino* (exile) for his political ideas – chose to hide and live in isolation until the end of the war.[2]

The studies completed by De Nicola (1975), Corti (1980), Grignani (1981), Beccaria (1984), Lagorio (1998), Bigazzi (2011), Gioanola (2017) Bufano (1999) clearly demonstrate that while Fenoglio has always been taken seriously as a writer, he has never been given sufficient credit for his translations. In fact, very few scholars have taken the latter into serious consideration both from a practical, theoretical and aesthetic point of view. The lack of appreciation of this aspect of the writer's production can be seen, in particular, through Italian literature anthologies and also through curricula and university courses which only mention Fenoglio's translations in passing, if at all. A case in point is Raimondi who describes

[2] For an in-depth analysis of the similarities and difference between the work of Pavese and Fenoglio, see Lajolo (1971) and the interesting comparative analysis offered by Balbis and Boggione (2014), who also examine the work of Italo Calvino.

Fenoglio's translations as a "preparatory exercise to his linguistic research" (Raimondi, 2010, p. 64), implying that they are simply a form of training preparing the writer for his original or more serious writings. Another example is offered by literary scholar and critic Segre, who goes so far as to say the great number of translations produced by Fenoglio is not in itself proof of the relevance of this activity in Fenoglio's literary work. In fact, while Segre acknowledges that Fenoglio's translations are numerous, he goes on to state that the author himself considered them of a small value, "which is proved by the fact that they are almost entirely unpublished" (Segre, 1992, p. 1086). The subordinate role assigned to Fenoglio's translations is further corroborated by the rich editorial fortune of Fenoglio's novels and short-stories. In fact, in contrast to the publishing success of his literary works, very few of the numerous and varied translations produced by Fenoglio have been published. In fact Fenoglio's novels and short stories were scrupulously edited and published, notwithstanding the fact that they are as fragmentary and incomplete as the translations.[3] In order to understand why this is the case, I wish to explore a number of key publications produced between the 1960s and the 1990s which deal with the issue of translation in Fenoglio's work. I will argue that by excluding Fenoglio's translations from their studies, scholars have missed out a fundamental aspect of Fenoglio's specificity. I hope to demonstrate that his translations are one of the key elements which offset Fenoglio's originality on the Italian literary scene.

The Italian literary critic and philologist Maria Corti was one of the first scholars to address the issue of Fenoglio's translations. As a matter of fact, it could be said that she was

[3] The majority of Fenoglio's work is unfinished or fragmentary, because it was edited and published posthumously: the only books that were published while Fenoglio was alive were a collection of short stories called *I Ventitré giorni della città di Alba*, a brief novel called *La malora*, and another novel called *Primavera di bellezza*. The typescripts of *Il partigiano Johnny* were discovered in Fenoglio's drawer only after his death, and were deciphered and assembled by editors in order to give them unity and cohesion. The same happened with most of the first drafts of his short stories, which were published in 1973 with the title *Un Fenoglio alla prima Guerra mondiale.*

the first critic to have explicitly excluded them from Fenoglio's *Complete Works*. In fact, when in 1969 Corti published, with the help of other scholars, the complete edition of Fenoglio's work - which was meant to collect all his writings, including the first drafts of his novels which were discovered after his death – she decided not to include in the volume Fenoglio's translations of English authors such as Eliot, Shakespeare, Milton and Marlowe. Fenoglio's theatrical transposition of *Wuthering Heights* and the *Ur-Partigiano Johnny* (a partial first draft of *Il Partigiano Johnny* written entirely in English), were published along with his creative writings. Corti provides a justification for this exclusion in the preface of the volume. Here she suggests that Fenoglio's translations of other authors were to be considered as non-creative, therefore not suitable for a collection of all his creative writings; in fact, she writes: "we present here Fenoglio's entire creative work; therefore, his numerous translations of prose and poetry are excluded from the volume" (Corti, 1969, p. ix). The task to tackle his translations, she argues, belonged to Anglicists and not to literary critics (Corti, 1980, p. 18).

The choice of excluding Fenoglio's translation from this important edition of his literary output seems to be in tune with Corti's formation as a linguist and philologist. In fact, the Italian scholar tended to express an attitude which was defined by Octavio Paz "imperialism of linguistics" (Paz, in Nergaard 1995, p. 348), and which focused predominantly on a scientific study of language. This approach originated in a school of thought which maintained a clear difference between creative work and translations, and has its roots in the idea, which was prevalent until the development of Translation Studies in 1970s and 1980s, that translation was mainly a skill which did not involve creativity, but whose only aim was reproducing the original text in a different language. The common theoretical position among critics when Corti embarked in the edition of Fenoglio's work, due to the influence of structuralism, regarded translation as a mainly linguistic activity focused on the source text, linked to the idea of the

search of equivalence (Pym, 2014, loc. 473), and to the concept of faithfulness to the source text. As a result, the literary merit of a translation was devaluated, because "the preeminence of the SL text – the "original" - is assumed de facto over any TL version (the copy)" (Bassnett, 2006, p. 173). This view of translation

> "exists and seems to have been in operation for some time now, which has led to translation being seen as the poor relation of writing, often referred to as "original" or "creative" writing, and widely perceived as superior" (p.173).

As a consequence of this approach, Corti focuses entirely on the creative original writings of Fenoglio and regards his translations simply as an homage he made to a literature he devotedly admired, reducing the attention Fenoglio gave to "all things English" to a matter of private, personal taste or infatuation (Corti, 1980, p. 18). Moreover, favouring a perspective of exclusion rather than inclusion, she seems to have failed to recognize the interdisciplinary approach which is necessary to tackle the entirety of Fenoglio's work in terms of creativity.

However, not all scholars agreed with the idea that Fenoglio's translations had to be considered non-creative or negligible. For instance, the critic John Meddemmen challenged Corti's interpretation of Fenoglio's translations. The scholar – who has produced several articles dedicated to the influence of the English language on Fenoglio's work, and has explored with great insight the role of English in the creation of Fenoglio's idiolect and in his peculiar use of language (Meddemmen, 1982, pp. 85-114) – lamented the exclusion of Fenoglio's translations from the edition of 1969. He argued that "in a very real sense the Corti edition is not "all Fenoglio" at all, by any manner of means" (Meddemmen, 1982, p. 88) and advocated for a more serious attempt to coming to terms with the many translations which were not included in the critical edition. Indeed, according to Meddemmen translations play a very important part in Fenoglio's literary production, and should not be considered a secondary

activity since “it is on this predominantly *private*, strangely non-commercial experience that Fenoglio's formation as a writer in Italian to a very considerable extent depends” (Meddemmen, 1982, p. 88, my italics). Meddemmen thus contests the approach which tends to regard writing and translating as separate and entirely unrelated activities, and brings to light the seminal relationship which exists between them. Moreover, he acknowledges that the creative writings which Fenoglio produced are linked to and even depend on Fenoglio’s activity as a translator.

The importance of the relationship between writing and translating in Fenoglio’s work was explored by literary scholar Mark Pietralunga. Pietralunga published a volume of Fenoglio’s translations, which includes G.M. Hopkins, T.S. Eliot, E. Lee Masters and S.T. Coleridge. The volume did not include the entire number of translations that Fenoglio produced in his lifetime. In fact, many of his translations are still unpublished today, and seem to not be able to find a collocation in the editorial world, because they appear to be of small interest to the public for the peculiarity of their content (an example can be found in his translation of the historical essays on Elizabethan and revolutionary England) or because they are too fragmentary in nature.

Pietralunga’s most interesting contribution to the study of Fenoglio’s translation is his essay *Beppe Fenoglio and English Literature* (1986). In the first pages of his study Pietralunga immediately puts forward his point of view on the significance of Fenoglio’s translations: in fact, he defines translation as a “prime feature in understanding Fenoglio” (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 8), and stresses the “intense union that existed between his adopted English culture and his human and poetic expression” (p. 9). Moreover, Pietralunga challenges the idea that Fenoglio’s translations were simply the symptom of an infatuation, and recognizes that they are extremely revelatory and deeply contribute to a better understanding of Fenoglio’s original writing:

"Fenoglio's decision to translate the texts examined in this study was not merely a consequence of a fascination with a tradition, but an attraction to works that enabled him to explore and expand his own artistic expression" (p. 41).

Pietralunga's analysis proceeds following two fundamental lines of thought, both of which deal with stylistic and linguistic issues. The first focuses on the function of translation in Fenoglio's work, which in Pietralunga's view is "primarily of propaedetic value, a kind of exercise" (p. 117). In fact, the scholar argues that Fenoglio translated with the aim of becoming an original writer and translating gave him the chance of confronting himself with different styles and linguistic experimentations. In this perspective, Fenoglio's translations acquire value or relevance because of the influence they exert on the style which he used in his novels and short stories. In fact, Fenoglio's activity as a translator is defined by Pietralunga as an "apprenticeship" (p. 118), which suggests that translating is a preparatory activity to the act of writing.

The second idea which shapes Pietralunga's analysis of Fenoglio as a translator, concerns the criterion which seems to have guided Fenoglio in his selection of English authors. In this regard, Pietralunga believes that Fenoglio was attracted to translating mainly for linguistic and stylistic reasons. He argues: "Fenoglio must have realized at an early age that his incurably bookish and rhetorical Italian had to undergo an operation", and therefore he "selected texts that allowed him to explore his own language's expressive capacity" (p. 106). As a consequence, Pietralunga suggests that Fenoglio might have chosen to translate Marlowe, Shakespeare or G. M. Hopkins because of their "stylistic and linguistic explorative tendencies" (p. 194), which would inspire him to be equally experimental in his own language. Pietralunga also identifies in the English authors translated by Fenoglio a specific "freshness and naturalness of expression" (p. 98), which seems to be one of the key stylistic elements of

Fenoglio's creative writings as well. Because of his interest in linguistics and style, the scholar carries out an in-depth analysis and comment on Fenoglio's linguistic choices in his translations, in search of parallels and similarities in the language Fenoglio used in his novels and short-stories. For example, in approaching Fenoglio's rendering of the poems by G.M. Hopkins, the scholar analyses Fenoglio's use of assonance, alliteration, rhyme patterns and iteration, and notes that "a strong attraction to these phonetic expediencies, which are characteristic of the English language, returns in his prose" (p. 54); thus, in Pietralunga's view, Fenoglio's translations of Hopkins were in fact an exercise through which Fenoglio was able to "elaborate and nourish his own linguistic expression" (p. 54).[4]

While I fully agree with what Pietralunga maintains on the depth of the relationship between translating and writing in Fenoglio's work, I am at variance with the scholar's interpretation both of the function and of the role of Fenoglio's translations within his literary work. The first thing I dispute is the above-mentioned idea of apprenticeship, used by the critic to define the function of Fenoglio's translations. In my view, if - as Pietraluga suggests - Fenoglio's translations had been simply a propaedeutic activity to the act of writing, he would have abandoned it once he had found his own voice or style in his original writing. But Fenoglio never abandoned his translating activity, even when he was in fact a recognized author and had published two books of short stories. This suggests that translating does not precede or prepare the act of writing, but it is rather a complementary activity. Moreover, the concept of apprenticeship implies a distinction between the act of writing and the act of translating, suggesting that they are two separate activities, which may have some elements in common, but ultimately are ontologically different. On the contrary, my own view is that in Fenoglio's

[4] For an accurate linguistic analysis of Fenoglio's choices in translating G.M. Hopkins see Foti Belligambi (2008)

work translating and writing are deeply intertwined, which is proved by the fact that Fenoglio's creative writings are in fact translations themselves, since he first drafted them in English and then proceeded to self-translate them into Italian.

The second aspect which I dispute in Pietralunga's interpretation of Fenoglio's translations is that it is limited to a strictly linguistic point of view. In fact, the central purpose of Pietralunga's examination is to demonstrate that Fenoglio translated because he felt "the necessity to find in the English language a step towards revivifying the semantic and phonological aspects of an anemic Italian language" (p. 15). Fenoglio's curiosity towards linguistic issues and experimentation is indeed undeniable, but it is not sufficient to explain Fenoglio's attraction to English literature and culture, especially with reference to the historical essays he translated, such as Charles Firth's *Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England* and A. L. Rowse's *The Spirit of English History*. Pietralunga prefers not to take them into account, arguing that they appear to be "fruitless for our stylistic interests and offer little insight for our thematic concerns" (p. 126). What I dispute here is that Pietralunga's approach, privileging the language and the style of these texts as Fenoglio's focus of interest, does not account for the cultural and ideological content of these works. If, moving beyond an analysis based exclusively on language, we approach them from a cultural and ideological point of view, we discover that these translations are extremely fruitful. Fenoglio's choice of translating a biography of Cromwell, for example, can be better understood in view of the political and cultural values Cromwell held and represented, also in the light of Fenoglio's own values and beliefs - such as his strong dislike of absolute authority and power, his interpretation of the concept of liberty, as well as his morality and sense of duty with regard to political engagement. In my view, when Fenoglio translated he was not only looking for a new creative style through the example of others, but also a way to express himself from an ideological and

aesthetic point of view.

I believe it pertinent to include here a brief mention of Fenoglio's use of English in his creative writings, and the critical interpretation it received. In fact, in my view, one key point for understanding the importance of Fenoglio's translations is to explore the deep and complex rapport he held with the English language, and investigate the reason for such a fruitful relationship. As already mentioned, Fenoglio used to write the first drafts of his novels and short stories in English. On more than one occasion Fenoglio himself revealed this aspect of his writing. According to Italo Calvino, Fenoglio confessed to him: "Now I'll tell you something you won't believe. I always write in English first and then I translate into Italian" (Bigazzi, 1983, p. 185). Another testimony is offered by the poet Giovanni Giudici, who recalled that in 1958 Fenoglio mentioned the novel he was writing at the time, adding that he was drafting it in English (Pedullà, 2012, p.3). Fenoglio's revelations seem to be proved by one piece of writing, the so-called *Ur-Partigiano Johnny*, an earlier draft of one section of the novel *Il Partigiano Johhny*, written entirely in English and found in Fenoglio's drawer after his death. Even though we do not possess other texts entirely drafted in English, we know that Fenoglio often resorted to English words and expressions in the earlier versions of his novels and even in his short stories set in the *Langhe*.

The response of scholars to this specific aspect of Fenoglio's writing is rather surprising. In fact, they generally tend to scale down the significance of Fenoglio's choice of English, preferring to concentrate on his final drafts in Italian. In so doing, they reduce the cultural and ideological significance of Fenoglio's first choice of English, often dismissing Fenoglio's own claims of writing in English as "provocations" (Fenoglio, 1981, p. 179). The reason for this lack of insight is probably due to the importance of asserting Fenoglio's reputation as an Italian writer. These scholars seem reluctant to admit that Fenoglio's creativity

as a writer depended so entirely on a different culture and on a different language, as though such an admission would damage his position in the Italian literary scene. It seems that the recognition of Fenoglio's debt to the English language and culture, far from being in itself an enrichment, is perceived by these scholars as a threat to his identity as an Italian writer. The main point, in these views, is not that Fenoglio turned to England, but that in the end he came back to Italy.

In fact, if one looks at the contributions of critics and scholars on Fenoglio's use of English, two general attitudes seem to emerge: one which investigates Fenoglio's reasons and another which explores Fenoglio's purpose in his use of English. With regard to Fenoglio's reasons, scholars tend to relegate Fenoglio's use of English to a matter of personal taste, which concerns the writer's private sphere. For example, Raimondi argues that "all critics agree that Fenoglio's choice of English was primarily due to his love for the English language and literature" (Raimondi, 2016, p. 86), but the cultural and ideological roots of this love are not further explored. Another example is the Italian critic Dante Isella, who relates Fenoglio's interest in English language and culture to his desire of isolating himself, "discovering a world of his own, more fascinating and dignified" (Isella, 2003, p. 485) than the one he was living in. The interest in English thus becomes an expression of a personality trait, more than a specific cultural choice.

On the other hand, the scholars who explore Fenoglio's purpose in his use of English in his creative writings, tend to argue that Fenoglio had a very pragmatic aim, which was to "turn Italian into a more concise linguistic code" (Raimondi 2016, p. 86). The English drafts are referred to as a phase of transition, or an "intermediary of the creative act" (Corti 1980, p. 22). Fenoglio's English is thus simply a stylistic device, and the focus of the argument remains, indeed, the Italian language. As a case in point, Maria Corti in her essay *Beppe Fenoglio, storia*

di un Continuum narrativo maintains that Fenoglio utilizes the English language as a "ladder to rise up to the expressive act"[5] (Corti, 1980, p. 24). She further explains:

> Having conquered a respectable degree of bilingualism, Fenoglio uses it for a stylistic-linguistic operation which has two ends: an English writing and a mixed writing, both conceived as a private phase, work in the factory with an eye towards the passage to a final writing almost entirely in Italian (Corti, 1980, in Escolar 2011, p. 79).

The term private is used to identify a stage of Fenoglio's creativity which gets little attention because of its provisional nature. Since Corti considers Fenoglio's writings in Italian the most relevant, the draft written in English is safely relegated to a phase which will soon be surpassed. The same meaning can be attributed to the expression "work in the factory" (Corti, 1980, p. 24)[6]: in Corti's view English was only a working tool whose final aim was the creation of a personal style in Italian. As a result, she chooses to define Fenoglio's self-translations in terms of a "general stylistic revision" (p. 63). Moreover, Corti suggests that Fenoglio's use of English is more instrumental than instinctive: "Fenoglio's relationship with English is not instinctive nor spontaneous, but one that exists only between an author and a literary medium" (Corti, 1969, p. 22).[7]

A similar point of view is offered by Pietralunga and Galaverni, who both focus on Fenoglio's use of English as functional to a renovation of the Italian language. Pietralunga seems to agree with Corti's opinion that English was destined to "disappear once in print" (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 11), therefore Fenoglio "sought to establish a style that meant turning toward another tradition before returning to his own" (p. 32). For his part, Galaverni (2006, p. 95) writes about Fenoglio and his use of English, focusing again on Fenoglio's final choice of

[5] In Italian Corti uses the expression: "scala per salire all'atto espressivo" .
[6] In Italian: "lavoro di cantiere" (translation in Escolar 2011, p.80).
[7] In Italian: "Non un rapporto istintivo e spontaneo, ma più un rapporto fra autore e mezzo letterario" .

Italian, and interpreting it as a journey whose final goal is coming back home: "along with Johnny, Fenoglio finds a *round* trip ticket to England (I repeat it: the *return ticket* is important)" (Galaverni, 2006; 95). Gianluigi Beccaria also believes that Fenoglio used English in order to creatively transform his mother tongue. In fact, he argues that Fenoglio was skeptical about the Italian language, which he learned at school but did not speak at home (Beccaria, 2013, p. 19). As a result, according to the scholar, Fenoglio adopted English in order to combine its morphological, lexical and syntactical structure with that of Italian, giving birth to a hybrid solution that Beccaria names "Il Grande stile" (the Grand style) (Beccaria, 1979, p. 35).

In my own opinion, these interpretations of Fenoglio's use of English have several shortcomings. In the first place, putting forward an interpretation of English as a working tool, they disregard the fact that Fenoglio considered English the language of creativity. It is undeniable that Fenoglio would translate into Italian his writings in English in order to publish them. Nonetheless, the fact that he first wrote those texts in English should not be dismissed only because they would not reach the publication stage. His choice of English as primary language is indeed very significant if we are to understand Fenoglio's creative process, and it is also fundamental with regard to Fenoglio's translations of other authors.

In my view, for Fenoglio English is always an instinctive, existential choice. It has much to do with what he was and what he believed in as a man and as a writer. To prove my point, I intend to quote some passages in which Fenoglio himself discussed his relationship with English, contradicting Corti's idea of English as a mere stylistic device. In a passage of the first draft of *Primavera di bellezza*, Johnny- the protagonist of the novel and Fenoglio's alter-ego - reflects on the importance that English has for him and he is himself surprised by the naturalness with which he handles it:

> For example, I don't know why words come to me more easily in English than in Italian; I don't know why they seem more precise and exact in English than in Italian, or why I always talk to myself in English, automatically (…) It's a mystery to me. (Fenoglio, 2015, p. 9).

This passage demonstrates that Fenoglio's relationship with English had more to do with instinct than with the tools of the trade. When he was offered a job as a marketing representative for a wine factory Fenoglio felt crushed at the idea of having to use English only to write commercial letters. Marisa Fenoglio, Beppe's sister, recalls:

> One day he shouted at me: "Do you understand what English is for me? Can you even imagine it? I read, write, think in English! I immerse myself in it as if it were my own language! I can mould it as I wish! And now, I can only write commercial letters with it!" (Fenoglio, 2015, p. XLVII).

This passage infers that English was not the intermediary of the creative act, but the sparkle of creativity, which is what makes Fenoglio different from any other writer in the Italian literary scene.

In the second place, I argue that Fenoglio's choice of writing in English should be investigated beyond stylistic and literary considerations. The critic Bruce Merry recognized this, arguing that: "English was a moral and political choice, rather than a literary specialization, for an anti-fascist intellectual" (Merry, 1972, p. 4). Merry's statement is of great interest for the present study, because he is the first to have mentioned, although not further developing the concept, the cultural aspect which underpins Fenoglio's choice of English language and literature. In the chapter which focuses on Fenoglio's beginnings as a translator I shall explain more in depth in what way the English language can be considered relevant to this author's poetics, as well as its cultural and ideological significance. In this regard, one

may argue that Fenoglio's use of English has received for the most part the same treatment of his translations: just as his translations were considered a preliminary activity, inferior to his original writing, his use of English in his creative writings is considered preparatory to his writing in Italian and its function is primarily to enrich his mother tongue.

The studies which I have briefly presented are in fact a useful starting point for my thesis: although they seem to be based on a traditional perception of translation, which has been challenged and set aside by recent theories, they are of interest because of the avenues they open for further research. In order to carry out a more comprehensive research on Fenoglio's translations, I intend to reject the idea of translations as being a task for specialists of translation or linguistics, but to view them in a broader perspective which includes an in-depth analysis of the cultural and ideological aspects which emerge in Fenoglio's work as a translator. To carry out this task, in the next section I wish to discuss the theoretical contributions of a number of studies developed in the field of Translation Studies, which tackles "the complex of problems clustered round the phenomenon of translating and translations" (Holmes, 1988b/2004, p.181), and which are at the core of my approach to Fenoglio's translations.

1.3 Culture and Ideology in Fenoglio's translations: the perspective of Translation Studies

The theories put forward by the discipline of Translation Studies, which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s and is still expanding, are of fundamental importance if we are to examine Fenoglio's work as a translator, because their contribution can lead to a deeper exploration of all aspects of Fenoglio's work, taking into account the intertextual, cultural and ideological elements neglected in previous studies. Two aspects in particular will be discussed in this section, as I attempt to advance a new interpretation of Fenoglio's translations: culture and

ideology.

1.3.1 The concept of Culture in Translation Studies

The absence of a cultural analysis in the majority of the studies concerned with Fenoglio's translations could be explained by the fact that this issue was included quite recently in the debate regarding translation, after the birth of descriptive translation studies as opposed to prescriptive translations studies in the late 1970s (Nergaard, 1995, p. 6).

In the prescriptive approach, the research conducted in the field of translation had the aim to define a "science" of translation, which focused primarily on the source text (Nida 1965; Mounin 1963) and whose objective was formulating norms which could be universally applied to the field of translation.[8] As a result, literary texts were usually excluded from the analysis, "because they are thought to be too complex, which they are, of course, from the point of view of perfectly justified linguistic approach to translation" (Lefevere, 1982b, p. 4). In response to this approach, in the 1970s and 1980s a number of scholars set out to establish a new framework for the development of the study of translation of literary texts, based on both theory and practice (Gentzler, 2004, p. 93). Considerable research attention was now directed toward the cultural context in which the translation was received, and a new emphasis was given to the deep interconnection between linguistic and extra-linguistic aspects. The attention of scholars thus shifted from language to the broader concept of text (Nergaard, 1995, p. 13).

One of the first scholars whose theory is particularly useful to our interpretation of Fenoglio's translations in the context of culture is Atamar Even-Zohar. Between 1970 and 1978

[8] See Munday (2001/2016) for an extensive examination of the descriptive branch of translation studies; see also Pym (2014) and Bertazzoli (2015, pp. 74-84), who focus in particular on the different approach which characterized the science of translation and the theory of translation as opposed to the more recent discipline of Translation Studies. Two other volumes are of fundamental importance, since they collect the most important essays and articles by translation scholars of the 20th century: Venuti's *The translation Studies Reader* (2000) and the *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (Baker and Saldanha, eds, 2009).

the scholar formulated a theory which sees translation and literature as part of a polysystem, giving way to a broader interpretation of what a translation is and how it functions in a given society: translation is now embedded in a wider context, which includes history, culture and social studies (Even-Zohar, 2000, pp. 392-396). Following Lotman's idea that "a text does not exist by itself at all, it will be inevitably included in some (historically real or conventional) context (…). The perception of text, detached from its extra-textual background is impossible" (Lotman, in Nergaard 1995, p. 112), Even-Zohar first focused his attention on the need of an approach which will take into account the text within the context (or the many contexts) of culture and society. His view that "a well-established literary system will translate less than one that is undergoing change and upheaval" (Bassnett, 2007, p. 13) is particularly insightful if applied to Fenoglio's first steps as a translator, because it also brings into the debate the historical moment in which Fenoglio chose to devote himself to translating. In fact, as I will show in the following chapter, when Fenoglio started translating as a school-boy, the literary system which was imposed to him was almost entirely controlled by Fascism. Since Fenoglio did not adhere to the values which that system promoted, his choice to turn to translation can be interpreted as an urge of exploring innovative, alternative values.

In addition, Even-Zohar's statement that "cultures translate according to need" (Bassnett, 2007, p. 17) also helps explain the reason of the translation boom which started in Italy mostly in anti-fascist publishing houses during the 1930s and 1940s, which I mention in the following chapter. It also acknowledges that translation can be defined as a "need", which is true with regard to the culture of a society at large but could also be applied to individuals. It could be argued that individuals translate according to need, and that this specific need might be cultural and even moral, as I will demonstrate in Fenoglio's case. In fact, translations can be interpreted as Fenoglio's need to search for a new "model of humanity" (Chiodi, 2002, p.

199).

Another aspect which is of great importance for this study with regard to culture is the concept of intertextuality, as proposed by Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes. Kristeva's fundamental insight is that texts are the result of a never-ending dialogue between many other texts (Kristeva, 1969, p. 146). The term intertextuality, as conceptualized by Barthes, is meant to replace the traditional idea of "influence", which was considered ambiguous because it tended to focus on personal and biographical aspects concerning the author more than on textual elements. According to Barthes:

> Every text is an inter-text; other texts are present within it, at different levels and under more or less recognizable fashions: the texts of a previous culture and those of contemporary culture. Intertextuality is a condition shared by all texts, of any kind, and cannot be reduced to a problem of sources or influence (Barthes, 1968, p. 1015).

This point is particularly relevant if applied to translation, because it may be used to undermine the idea of supremacy of the source text over the target text, leading to the approach of translation as an autonomous text. In fact, if we apply the concept of intertextuality to a source text, we see that it can no longer be perceived as the bearer of absolute meaning of which translation is mainly a copy, but as the result of a dialogue between other texts and extra-textual factors. At the same time, translations should be regarded as texts in their own right, in which extra-textual factors are also the result of the personal contribution of the translator. The concept of intertextuality is particularly fruitful in our analysis of Fenoglio's translations, but also of his theatrical adaptation of the novel *Wuthering Heights*: the analysis of possible inter-textual frames which emerge in the texts may shed light, for example, on Fenoglio's absorption and interpretations of literary narrative schemes borrowed from English literature. This approach can thus be useful to evaluate critically the elements

involved in the text discourse and their interrelation in Fenoglio's translations.

During the 1980s and the 1990s, the central significance of culture in the context of translation studies was fully established, due to the works of Susan Bassnett, André Lefevere and Theo Hermans. Their work aimed at dealing systematically with the issues of translation from both a descriptive and theoretical point of view. Moreover, the central aim of Bassnett's and Lefevere's research was to establish that translation was a discipline in its own right, and not a branch of linguistics or of comparative literature (Bassnett, 1980, p. 1). The focus of this new approach was in fact a redefinition of the essence and function of translation: far from being simply a linguistic transcoding, it was redefined as a cultural transfer (Snell-Hornby, 1988, p. 46) which produces specific effects on the target culture. As Bassnett and Lefevere point out: "the object of study has been redefined; what is studied is text embedded within its network of both source and target cultural signs" (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990, pp. 11-12). In addition, Translation Studies established itself as a field which drew upon interdisciplinarity:

> As a method, for instance, translation maintains *a priori* the dialogue between the inside and the outside, not only of disciplines, but of cultures, languages and histories. In other words, we practice translation each time we theorize connection (Kuhiwczak &Littau, 2007, p. 6).

In 1990 Lefevere and Bassnett further broadened the field of research in Translation Studies by calling for a "cultural turn". Susan Bassnett offers a clear sum up of the concepts which were developed out of this change of perspective:

> That translation played a major role in shaping literary systems, that translation does not take place on a horizontal axis, that the translator is involved in complex power negotiations, that translation is always a rewriting of an original (1990, p. 14).

In the context of Fenoglio's translations, the theories proposed after the cultural turn are of great relevance: for instance, the acknowledgment that translation is a form of rewriting suggests that the translator is an active participant in the creation of an original text. This concept is at the basis of my call for a deeper analysis of Fenoglio's translations as original works and in legitimating their position within the general context of Fenoglio's literary output. Moreover, these studies recognize the pivotal role played by intercultural relationships in translation, which in the case of Fenoglio may be identified, for example, in the fruitful and deep connection he established between the values of English Civil war and the ones underpinning the Italian *Resistenza*, and more in general with the English cultural model he identified with in terms of politics, engagement or view of the world.

1.3.2 Ideology in Translation Studies

One of the consequences of the exclusion of cultural elements in the majority of studies regarding Fenoglio's translations is that the ideological factors embedded in his translations were entirely left out of the debate. To tackle the complex problem of ideology in translation let us turn once more to the research conducted within the field of translation studies by Lefevere and Bassnett. Lefevere acknowledges that translations are the result of the intentional or unintentional manipulation of translators, who not only translate but also actively re-write the source texts, usually to make them acceptable in the new target culture. Out of the recognition of the fact that translating a text is always a form of rewriting, Lefevere developed the concept of refraction (Lefevere, 1982a, p. 4-5). The scholar argues that the ideology and values of a given source text are usually adapted to the ideology and values of the target culture, and the translated text acquires an entirely new meaning within the cultural and social framework of the target language. In Lefevere's words, refraction is "the adaptation of a work

of literature to a different audience, with the intention of influencing the way in which that audience reads the work" (Lefevere, 1982, p. 4). The concept of refraction "has been coined to replace the old terminology of influence" (Bassnett, 1991, p. xvii), and is useful in analysing Fenoglio's choices when he transfers a text from one context to another.

Following the idea that "all rewriting, *whatever their intention*, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature *to function* in a given society in a given way"(Lefevere, 1992b, p. vii), Bassnett and Lefevere further explore and deepen the concept of ideology applied to translation, extending their analysis to "the impact of a translation in a target system" (Bassnett, 1991, p. xiii). The fundamental insight of this current of thought, which was called Manipulation School and developed during the 1990s, is that "all translation implies a degree of manipulation of a source text for a certain purpose" (Hermans, 1985, p. 11) : translators manipulate in some degree the source text, generally in order to adapt it to the ideology and the poetics which dominate in the target culture (Lefevere, 1992b, p. 6). This approach takes into account the role of the public, publishers and editors in the creation of an established "canon", which influences the fortune of authors and translations in a given society. Texts that are translated are in fact rewritten for a different audience and in a different cultural, political and ideological context, and either conform or reject the mainstream poetics of the time in which they are produced. Translations are, for example, influenced by the ideology of the commissioners – who Lefevere calls patrons – such as the editors in publishing houses or reviewers and critics, and are also influenced by the individual ideology of the translator: translations and the way in which they are carried out thus shape the literary fame of specific authors, who in different times in history are rewritten following different agendas and according to different ideologies.

The idea that translation is an ideologically determined text can further be explored

following Bassnett's statement that: "the translator is first a reader and then a writer, and in the process of reading he or she must take a position" (Bassnett, 1991, p. 78). The concept of the translator as being a reader can be linked to the ideas expressed by Umberto Eco in his *The Role of the Reader* (1979). Eco argues that the text is a complex result of the cooperation between author and reader, who "as an active principal of interpretation is a part of the picture of the generative process of the text" (Eco, 1979, p. 4). In the same way, it could be argued that the translator, who in the first place is obviously a reader of the source text, cooperates to the building of the meaning target text. In my view, Fenoglio's translations should be explored not only in terms of what they say and how they say it, but also in terms of what they imply ideologically and culturally, in the light of his specific cultural values which are also expressed in his original writings.

From this perspective, the notion of transplant, proposed by Lorna Hardwick in her book *Translating words, Translating cultures* (2000) in connection with the translation of classics, may help contextualize the ideological implications of Fenoglio's translations of English classic authors. In Hardwick's interpretation, in fact, translation eventually brings about change (Hardwick, 2000, p. 10) because it enables readers to re-create lost civilities and cultures, putting them in relation with contemporary civility and culture: "translation is the portal through which the past can be accessed" (Bassnett, 2007, p. 15). In fact, it could be argued that Fenoglio turned to classic English literature in order to 'transplant' it into contemporary Italian literature and culture, looking for a model which could actually be followed to construct his identity. It must be remembered, with regard to the construction of a model based on the past, that Fascism had already taken over the cultural and moral ideas of ancient Rome and of classic Latin authors, promoting them as the foundation of Fascist ideology.

However, the idea of there being an ideological function of translation, although pivotal in the understanding of translation processes, needs to be adapted to the specific case of Fenoglio, which is rather different in terms of connection with the target culture. In fact, the theories which I have briefly presented tend to focus on what translations create or set in motion in a given culture once they are published and distributed. This is probably due to the fact that the majority of translations that are object of study have usually been published and were realized in order to be published; in all these cases the function of translation could easily be explored, for example by studying the ideology or political policy of the editors that commissioned that translation, or by analysing the tastes of the particular public the translations might have been directed to, or again by considering the particular interests of the translator and his poetics, especially when translators are also novelists or poets.[9]

In fact, if it can be accepted that the function of a translation is most significant in the broad understanding of the strategies adopted by translators, it cannot be argued that the ideological factors which manipulate or influence the translation process should be embedded exclusively in the receiving culture. This approach, in my opinion, tends to leave in the background all the translations which were not commissioned nor had the aim of being published, at least when the translator sat down at his desk and started to work on them, which is the specific case of Fenoglio.

The question to be asked thus is: when a translator translates "for her/himself", who is the receiver? Whose ideology is s/he influenced by and who does that translation affect? With regard to Fenoglio, one possible answer could be that the fact that these translations were

[9] In this regard, the previously cited cases of Pavese is particularly enlightening, since he himself stated that his translation from the American had the intent to bring new life into the stagnant literary culture in which he was living, and destabilize from within the suffocating and decaying atmosphere created by Fascism. His translations had a political and ideological aim, and had an immense impact on his creativity as an author.

private does not mean that they did not serve a purpose, but that they served a *private* purpose, which has to do with Fenoglio's search for an alternative cultural and ideological model. In my view, the aim of his translations was not to make them compatible with the dominating target culture, but to empower himself in order to challenge it, in the hope of transforming it. The values Fenoglio discovered in studying English Literature and translating English authors were the values he himself held and which he cultivated through a passionate activity of translation.

While Fenoglio's goal in translating has been often explored by critics, who have identified the final aim of his translations in a research of a new literary style (Pietralunga, 1986, p. 134), Fenoglio's reasons for translating have usually been ignored or neglected by critics. It is my view, however, that the motives of the translator should be taken into account, especially when such numerous translations were not commissioned by any editor or publishing house. We should then ask what caused Fenoglio to direct his attention towards the activity of translation, and why he chose those specific texts when he translated, thus directing our attention to Fenoglio's reasons in translating rather than to his goal.

In this regard, the concept of *telos* appears to be particularly interesting if applied to Fenoglio. *Telos* is a term used by translation scholar Andrew Chesterman (2009), to refer to the personal reasons that prompt translator to translate. Chesterman argues that not only texts have an aim, a so-called *skopos*, which usually is identified in the target culture and in the target reader, but also translators are influenced, in their activity, by their private and individual motivations, which must be taken into account when a translation is examined. The *telos* of a translator thus denotes "the personal motivation of translators and also the reasons why they translate a given text" (Chesterman, 2009, p. 17). According to Chesterman, investigating a translator's *telos* contributes to "a better understanding of their attitudes and personal goals and ethics, and how these are realized in what and how they translate" (p. 17).

An examination of Fenoglio's *telos* helps us answer the questions which scholars have neglected to answer: firstly, an analysis of the reasons why Fenoglio became a "private" translator can shed light on how the activity of translating - in a historical moment when cultural and literary models are insufficient to provide guidance and inspiration – was culturally and ideologically formative for our author. In this perspective, translation is not only a subversive activity but also an existential experience which helped Fenoglio to become Fenoglio. Secondly, an analysis of text choices is very revelatory in terms of translator's subjectivity, and helps understanding how Fenoglio rewrote Milton, Marlowe, Shakespeare and all his beloved authors transporting their values, ideas and also political and ideological belief into 20th Century Alba.

It is worth mentioning in this regard that the word private does not mean individualistic. In fact, my argument is that even the translations which were born, as in the case of Fenoglio, as private explorations of one's identity and one's self, can have a significant impact on society and culture at large, although not through traditional mediums such as publishing or dissemination of literary culture. They in fact were a key factor in the process of empowerment which guided Fenoglio in his real-life fight against oppression, when he joined the armed groups in the mountains of the Langhe, offering his personal contribution, in the pursuit of freedom, to the renovation of Italy (Chiodi, 2002, pp. 200-201).

The theories which I have presented are of substantial importance to our purposes, because they help us relate them to the historical and cultural context in which Fenoglio operated. If compared to the previous theories, they move beyond linguistic interests, focusing instead on the ideological and political significance of translation. Moreover, these theories challenge the classic opposition between translating and writing, giving translations the dignity

of creative autonomous texts. However, one could argue that these theories focus too closely on "the impact of translation in the target system" (Bassnett, 2000, p. xiii), concentrating more on the limits imposed to the translator by the target culture expectations rather than on his freedom. In fact, the limits of this approach is that it takes into account the translations which were produced following a commission and with the intent of being received in a target culture. As we have seen, Fenoglio's case is different. In the next section I will explore the contributions which have reflected more closely on the translator's agency and creativity as primary and specific focus, with the aim to pinpoint the originality of Fenoglio as a translator. These theories promote a shift of focus from the ideology of translations to the ideology of translators, putting the role of the translator centre stage in the process of translation.

1.4 From Fenoglio's translations to Fenoglio as a translator: the perspective of the translator's centeredness

An in-depth study on Fenoglio's translations must take into account the specific place which Fenoglio holds in the dialogue between source culture and target culture, focusing on his personal and individual stance as a translator. In the present study, Fenoglio's translations will be approached by commenting on the specific strategies that he adopted in translating and on the originality of their nature, so that a shift of focus can take place from the translations to the translator. Following the idea proposed by Maria Tymoczko (2003) on the subjectivity of the translator, I wish to present the role of the translator as a "co-constructor of meaning" (Maier, 2007, p. 56) more than a mediator between two poles.

Before discussing Tymoczko's theories, I wish to touch upon another contribution which has a direct bearing on this research, because it focused its attention on the specific role and position of the translator within the literary field. I am referring to Venuti's essay *The*

translator's visibility (1995). Venuti's arguments paved the way to a considerable amount of research which has yielded some important insights into the positionality of translators advocating for a better consideration of the role of translators in the literary field and in society. In fact, Venuti tackled the problem of the role of translators taking issue with the status in which translators are held both as professionals and as writers. He argues that in order to produce an acceptable translation, the translator has always been required to become invisible, therefore being forced to a sort of self-annihilation (Venuti, 1995, p. 8). The notion of "transparency" as a requirement for a good translation has put the translators in a condition of marginalization, which can be overcome only if the translator is at the centre of the debate regarding translations. The strategies adopted by the translator must be specifically discussed in order to assert the value of a translation in itself and not simply in comparison with the source text.

With particular regard to Fenoglio, Venuti's contribution is interesting because it introduces the terms foreignization and domestication (Venuti, 1995, pp. 19-20) in order to describe two different translation strategies adopted by translators when dealing with a source text. Domestication is a strategy that focuses on the expectations of the target cultural system, and usually includes the adoption of strategies "which minimize the foreignness of the source text" (Munday, 2001, p. 145). On the other hand, foreignization implies using translation strategies which include all the elements which are alien to the target culture or language in the target text. Venuti argues that foreignization is the technique which enhances the most the translator's visibility. This last strategy was adopted by Fenoglio both in his translations of English authors and in his-self translations: in fact, he tends to "foreignize" his Italian when he chooses to keep English terms and structures in his final drafts. What is more interesting, however, is that foreignization refers, in Venuti's argument, "both to the text selected as well

as the approach" (Blakesley, 2014, p. 42). Text choice is extremely relevant in our examination of Fenoglio's translations, because of the "private" nature of his stimulus to translate, which is linked to a personal need and not to an external influence or request.

The recognition of the translator as the focus of translation analysis brings into closer scrutiny the ideology of a translation, which is not only the result of the encounter between the source culture and the target culture, but is also influenced by the ideology of the translator himself. Maria Tymoczko (2003) and Hu Gengshen (2004) have both explored in detail the ideology and the position of the translator as the key element in the translational process. Their approach is particularly useful if we want to explore translation from the point of view of the translator's subjectivity, and are especially relevant for the analysis of Fenoglio's translations.

In particular Maria Tymoczko, in her article called "Ideology and the position of the translator: in what sense is a translator in between?" (2003) , argues that the ideology of a translation is in fact determined by the translator himself.

> The ideology of a translation resides not simply in the text translated, but in the voicing and stance of the translator …The place of the enunciation of the translator is an ideological positioning as well as a geographical or temporal one. These aspects of translation are motivated and determined by the translator's cultural and ideological affiliations (Tymoczko, 2003, p. 183).

But where does the translator stand? Where is his ideological position with regard to the source text and target text? Tymockzo argues that the idea of a binary system, the source text and the target text, has created the concept of the "in-betweennes" of the translator, a sort of limbo, where the translator seems to have to switch from one system to the other without occupying any space of his own within both. It seems that the translator is told that he cannot serve two masters: he either chooses to serve the source text or the target text. In response to this,

Tymoczko argues that "nobody can stand in a neutral or free space between cultures"(Tymoczko, 2003, p. 195). In her view, the translator does not operate in between two systems, but in a broader system which transcends both and encompasses both:

> In the act of translation, when a translator interrogates a source text – on the basis of a target text – the translator transcends the source language as a formal system without simply switching to the target language as a formal system. Conversely when the target text is interrogated using the source text as the basis of interrogation, the translator transcends the target language as formal system without simply reverting to the system of the source language (Tymoczko, 2003, p. 196).

In other words, a translator does not operate in one system at a time but in both systems at the same time and has in mind the cultural implications of both the source text and the target text. Undoubtedly the result of this process is a text in one language, the target language; but if we focus on the process of translation, it must be acknowledged that a translation requires operating within both elements: the moment when the two cultures and the two languages meet and communicate in the translator's mind. The translator is first and foremost what these two cultures and languages have in common. Therefore, if this dynamic relationship between cultures takes place, it is because of the translator who sets it in motion. The process of translation coincides with the moment where the two cultures and languages start to work together (pp. 200-201).

This idea of inclusiveness is particularly relevant for Fenoglio, because both as a writer and as a translator Fenoglio always seems to have operated in a wider system, which "encompasses or includes the systems transcended" (Tymoczko, 2003, p. 195), both linguistically and culturally. From a linguistic point of view, Fenoglio's creative writings in English are deeply influenced by Italian, both in structure and in lexicon. Similarly, the short

stories which are set in the Langhe and appear to have been written directly in Italian, are filled with English words. The reason why this happens, is that Fenoglio always felt the need to operate within both languages and both cultures at the same time, even when he was writing his own stories. Translating and writing meant operating in a system that includes both source culture and target culture. Using a metaphor, it could be argued that Fenoglio's tree of knowledge was deeply rooted in both Italian and British culture, and the fruit of this tree is the result of both cultures: linguistically, he produced an Italianized English and an Anglicized Italian, the so-called "fenglese" (Saccone, 1981, p. 570), a sort of hybrid idiolect.

From a cultural point of view, it is relevant to remember that though Fenoglio admired and identified with the ideals of the English Revolution, he remained a fervent supporter of the Monarchy and after the war voted against the Republic (Bigazzi, 2011, p. 67). Fenoglio was in favour of the king because of the history of the Monarchy in Italy and because of the role that the Savoia family had in the unification of Italy (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 145). He embraced the ideals of English Revolution because they promoted freedom and established the rights of the individual as opposed to the oppression of centralized power; he identified with Cromwell soldiers because of the rectitude of their ideals and the uncompromising nature of their choice to oppose a regime which was unjust and autocratic (Pedullà, 2001, p.115). He saw the connections between the values for which many individuals fought in the English Civil War and the values he held in his fight in the Italian Civil War. For Fenoglio, the act of translation deals with the exploration of others – in terms of culture and ideas - as much as it deals with the discovery and exploration of one's own self, which in the end leads to creativity and experimentation (Pavan, 1998, p.5). This view of the position of the translator helps to put into focus as well the reasons why Fenoglio translated for so long: translation becomes a form of continuous dialogue, in which neither the source text nor the target text prevails, but the

communication between the two is enhanced, with the result that the closeness of the two cultures emerges.

Thanks to the work of Gengshen Hu the role of the translator has moved more centre stage. In his article, he intends "to establish a basis for the central status of translators and their role in translation" (Hu, 2004, p. 106) in a more pragmatic way, which is only possible by putting emphasis on the individual strategies that translators use, with particular interest on the selection of the texts. If the translator is at the centre of the process, then all the factors which are also part of a translation (including for example publishers, financial support, evaluators and so on) form "an interlocked entirety dominated by the translator" (Hu, 2004, p. 110). Since "translators leave their imprint in the linguistic layer and in individual interpretations" (Dollerup, 1999, p. 236), Hu suggests that a comparative approach to translations may turn out to be particularly useful to emphasize the subjectivity of translators:

> The importance of the translator is best illustrated when different translators have produced different translations of the same original, because these "different" translated versions are the outcome of the work and personality of the translators and not due to the influence of e.g. publishers, readers, financial considerations (Hu, 2004, p. 113).

The theories that I have presented above are extremely relevant in enhancing the subjectivity of translators as a starting point in the analysis of translations. As I have explained, they tend to reconsider the supremacy of the target culture, in particular of the factors that influence or restrict the limits of the translator's work, which have been at the centre of the debate in Translation Studies since the cultural turn of the 1990s, and acknowledge that the contribution of the translator is the key element in the interpretation of a text. In the following section, I shall take into account the theories which examine the specific choices made by the translator, both in terms of text selection and translation strategies, and define this complex

system of choices as the expression of the subjectivity of translators.

1.5 Fenoglio and the poetics of the translator: the Italian contribution to Translation Studies

As we have seen, the translator is not simply a mediator between two languages and cultures, but participates in the creation of new meanings and new literary texts. The translator thus contributes to the recreation of a text, and his specific ideology becomes evident in his individual translation strategies and in the selection of the texts to be translated. This idea was put forward by scholar Anton Popovic, who defined the changes that a translator operates in a source text as a system of choices, which reveal the translator's individuality (Popovič, 2006, p. 90). This concept has been further developed in the last decade by the scholars and translators Emilio Mattioli and Franco Buffoni, whose contribution to the theory of translation has been much neglected in the field of Translation Studies. Mattioli and Buffoni's arguments are particularly insightful with regard to Fenoglio and offer a valid alternative to the traditional linguistic approach with which Fenoglio's translations have been studied, presenting an interpretation of translations which considers both the translator's individuality and the cultural and social environment surrounding him. They also provide a different point of view compared to the target-oriented theories of Anglo-American Translation Studies, which as we have seen focus on the receiving culture and on translation as a product as well as a process.

That each translation carries the individual imprint of a translator is demonstrated by the fact that many different translations of the same source texts may exist. Shakespeare, for example, is constantly retranslated in Italy, so that different versions of Shakespeare's plays carried out by different translators are available for readers to choose from. More in general, literary and non-literary texts are constantly re-translated: the language of these translations

can age, and the evolution of language may require a revision of texts whose translations have become archaic in terms of style and language. However, every time that a translator starts working on a texts s/he has to make individual, specific choices. For example, a translator may decide to put particular emphasis on the stylistic elements of the texts he is translating, thus identifying in the style of the source text the dominant element which needs to be reproduced in the target text. Other translators may instead want to focus on the semantics and in the content of the source text, sacrificing those aspects of style that seem to be impossible to convey in the target text and culture.[10] In making these choices, the translator asserts himself as a creative subject, and his/her subjective approach to the source text, based on his/her ideology and interpretation of the source text, becomes visible.

Italian translation scholars Mattioli and Buffoni focus on the choices made by the translator in terms of style and content, arguing that these elements - such as the text choice, linguistic strategies, ideology, etc. – can be defined as the translator's poetics. Both Mattioli and Buffoni build their theories of translation on the definition of poetics proposed by the Italian philosopher Luciano Anceschi, a definition which concerns artists in general:

> the poetics represents the reflection made by poets and artists on their work, when they indicate the technical means, the operative norms, the morality and value of what they do (Anceschi, 1989, p. 39).

Similarly, a translator – through the specific choices and strategies that he employs to render the source text – is implicitly indicating "his operative norms, his technical means , the

[10] An example of this may be seen in the different translation of the famous *Ballad of Reading Gaol* by Oscar Wilde, which was translated many times into Italian. Some translators preferred to maintain the style of the ballad, thus reproducing the rhythmic structure, the alliterations and the metrical structure of the ballad in their Italian version (Severi, 1998). Other translators opted for a more prosaic rendition, sacrificing for examples the rhymes, in order to preserve a faithful rendition of the content of the ballad (Boato, 1999; Vetri, 2006)

morality and value" of what he does. In addition, Anceschi argues that not only are artists always compelled to make choices, but that they make these choices consciously and deliberately. Emilio Mattioli draws on this concept and develops it by applying it to translators, arguing that "taking into account the poetics of the translator to fully understand a translated text is as important as taking into account the poetics of the author to understand the source text" (Mattioli, 2004, p. 174). In fact, Mattioli argues that a writer or a poet creates a work of art following his poetics, and so does a translator, who makes his decisions – in the process of translating, but also when he chooses a text to translate – according to his poetics. However, this does not mean that the translator is allowed total freedom with regard to the source text, but rather that translations are the result of a specific and deliberate project which has its roots in the translator's individual history as a human being. Translation thus becomes a literary and human experience, "an activity which refers directly to a specific subject and to the historicity of his work" (Cadeddu, 2016, p. 16).

Translation scholar Franco Buffoni further explores the concept of the translator's positionality with regard to translated texts, including in his argument the poetics of the author. Buffoni is a writer and a poet; therefore he develops a theory of translation based on his own experience as a writer as well. Following the idea already expressed by George Steiner in his *After Babel* (1975), Buffoni maintains that "translating, rather than being a formal exercise, is an existential experience" (Buffoni, 2009, p. 48) and that literary translation "results from the combination of two poetics: that of the author of being translated and that of the translator" (Buffoni, 2009, p. 48), in which the translator's task is "to make the most of the clash between the poetics of the translator and the one of the translated author". In this way s/he will produce a creative text "worthy of becoming part, in every respect, of his/her work, of his/her canon" (Buffoni, 1997, p. 4). In other words, the translator produces a text which belongs to his own

literary output, as much as the source text is part of the translated author's literary output. What Buffoni is saying, in a way, is that the translator is an author: not of the source text, but the author of the translation, which acquires "an intrinsic autonomous dignity as a text" (Buffoni, 2009, p. 53)

This approach has two fundamental consequences, both of which are significant and useful for our analysis of Fenoglio's work as a translator. First, the definition of translation as an existential experience overcomes the common theoretical position which regarded Fenoglio's translations simply as a formal exercise, an apprenticeship or a search for style. In fact, following Buffoni's idea, the significance of Fenoglio's translations does not rely solely on how or why Fenoglio translated, but also on what he translated, and on his personal reasons for translating those specific authors and texts. Secondly, if a translation is in fact the result of a relationship between equals and has its own dignity as an autonomous text belonging to the translator, the hierarchic difference between writing and translating, author and translator, source text and target text, can no longer exist. Therefore, this approach lends weight to the argument that Fenoglio's translations should not be considered a secondary or ancillary activity, but instead part of his "canon" as much as his creative work.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning here that Fenoglio was often translating even when he was creating his original texts: in fact, he first produced a draft of his original writings in English, which was not his mother tongue. This seems to suggest that translation was a vehicle to creativity, both when he was translating other texts and when he was writing his own novels or short stories. Fenoglio is in fact an author/translator, whose individuality, poetics and creativity are expressed equally in his translations and in his work as a writer.

This idea seems to find further support when we analyse what Fenoglio himself wrote about translating and writing. In fact, on many occasions Fenoglio – especially in his letters –

reflected on his literary activity, with regard to both writing and translating. The passages I am about to quote demonstrate that these two activities had much in common. One example may be found in Fenoglio's perception of writing and translating as activities which required much order and discipline (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 32) and which cost him an immense amount of labour. In one of his diaries, he recalls how difficult it was to translate the poems of G.M. Hopkins: "the stimulating labour translating that little bit of Hopkins cost me" (Fenoglio, 2007, p. 572) ; in another passage, recalling his translation of the *Ballad of the Ancient Mariner*, he wrote: "a most illustrious text and, at times, desperately difficult in the rendering of its fantastical dimension" (Fenoglio, 2004, p. 123). This allusion to labour is equally present in Fenoglio's reflections about writing: "I write for an infinite number of reasons. Certainly not for fun. It is extremely exhausting. The easiest of my pages comes out carefree after about ten painful rewritings" (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 33). Therefore it could be argued that the element of labour, which has been recognized as part of the poetics of Fenoglio the writer, is also part of the poetics of Fenoglio the translator.

Another example of the deep connection between writing and translating in Fenoglio's work is offered by some passages of *Primavera di Bellezza*, in which Fenoglio himself expresses his own views on the subject of literature and translation through Johnny, the protagonist of this novel. When Johnny is asked by his friend Ferrero – who knows Johnny wants to be a writer - whether he is writing something, he sighs and answers: "I have suspended. I mean, the creative writing. Now I translate" (Fenoglio, 2015, p. 26). It has been suggested that this passage proves that for Fenoglio translating does not measure up to original writing and, as a result, the protagonist of the novel turns to translating when he feels incapable of producing proper writing (Escolar, 2011, p. 81). In my view, Escolar's interpretation of Johnny's words is unfounded. In fact, a few lines afterwards, when Johnny talks about the piece

of creative writing he had been working on but had suspended, it turns out that Cristopher Marlowe, whom Johnny is often seen translating, has now become the protagonist of his creative writings:

> Well, I was working on a play in which these university comrades, among them Christopher Marlowe, spend the night in an inn located between Oxford and London (Fenoglio, 2015, p. 26).

What emerges from this passage is that Johnny's original writings is so dependent by his translations that it even borrows its subject matter. Fenoglio's poetics will be further explored in the analysis of Fenoglio's translations in the following chapters, which will examine Fenoglio's translations of 16th and 17th Century English Literature, and also in his theatrical adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*.

The theories on poetics which I have presented offer a valid contribution to the field of Translation Studies. Nonetheless, as the scholar Lavieri notes, they have not yet been accepted "in the canon of Translation Studies" (Lavieri, 2012, p. 222), probably due to the fact that they seem to resuscitate the notion of "author", which has become outdated especially after Post-structuralism and with the advent of deconstructionism. However, it is important to understand that focusing on the individuality of translators does not coincide with a narcissistic perspective or with mere subjectivism. On the contrary, the theories of poetics acknowledge that a translator is an integral part of his culture, his language and of his time, but also recognize that the translator's individuality is indispensable in order to fully understand a translation. As mentioned above, Fenoglio's translations have traditionally been neglected because of their private nature, but the new theories I have presented assert just the opposite: it is precisely because they are private that they are the truest expression of Fenoglio's creativity, and therefore are highly relevant in the context of his literary output.

1.6 Conclusions

This chapter has examined the most relevant existing critical approach to Fenoglio's translations. Here I have argued that the cultural, ideological and contextual elements which are a fundamental part of Fenoglio's translations have been systematically neglected. More in general, I have underlined how translations are still perceived, in the critical analysis of Fenoglio's work, as a secondary activity if compared to his original creative writings, and for this reason they have not been taken into account in a wider analysis of Fenoglio's literary output.

The most recent theories of the discipline of translation studies, in particular the ones put forward by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, see translation as a cultural and ideologically motivated activity. These theories provide a fruitful theoretical background for my analysis of Fenoglio's translations, because they recognize the contextual, historical and social elements which surround and influence translations and translators. Moreover, recent theories proposed by Italian scholars Emilio Mattioli and Franco Buffoni highlight the creativity of translations as the result of the personal and individual choices of translators. These choices constitute the personal poetics of the translator, who is regarded as a creative subject both in the selection of texts and in the translation strategies s/he employs.

In order to understand the profound influence of ideology and culture on Fenoglio's translations, in the next chapter I examine the cultural and political environment in which Fenoglio started translating, trying to establish the link between Fenoglio's early expression of dissent and his choice to become a translator of English literary and non-literary works.

CHAPTER 2

CHALLENGING EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN FASCIST ITALY: HOW FENOGLIO BECAME A TRANSLATOR

"These days are days of shaking,

and this shaking is universal"

Jeremiah Whitaker[1]

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to provide an overview of the years of Fenoglio's educational and cultural formation. Such an overview shows how Fenoglio's political conscience developed hand in hand with his first attempts at translating English authors, such as Christopher Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, which I analyse in Chapter 3 of this thesis. The days of Fenoglio's formation can be appropriately defined "days of shaking", as suggested in the quotation above by the English clergyman Jeremiah Whitaker: it is in those years that the Fascist regime implemented laws and political reforms directed at suppressing liberties and imposing cultural and linguistic choices, which aimed at eliminating differences and individuality all across the country. It is also in those years, however, especially with the Second World war looming on Italy, that many anti-fascists secretly organized themselves to resist these impositions. In the peripheral town of Alba, young Beppe Fenoglio chose an original way to rebel against Fascist oppression, which also limited the diffusion of translations in Italy, embracing English culture and literature, thus creating a different political and cultural model for himself.

[1] Jeremiah Whitaker was a Puritan clergyman, one of the most important members of the Wenstminster Assembly of Divines. This speech is quoted in Scott Dixon (2016, p. 207)

I have chosen to devote an entire chapter to this particular historical and cultural moment of Italy because it offers an explanation of the subversive nature of Fenoglio's approach to translation from the early years of his life. This subversive approach, which - as we will see in the following chapters - can be identified both in the text choices he made and in the strategies he employed in translating them - will remain a constant aspect of Fenoglio's translations, even when the mainstream ideologies in Italy had changed, thus after the fall of the Fascist Regime. However, it was born precisely in those years as a form of opposition and dissent.

The first sections of the chapter deal with the historical and cultural background of Fenoglio's education, with particular interest in the Fascist propaganda in schools and in the values that the Regime tried to inculcate into young pupils as Fenoglio. The idea of culture promoted by Fascism had its roots in the rejection of foreignness and in the idealization of Nationalism, with at its centre the figure of the Duce. Fenoglio's reaction to the cultural impositions of Fascism was embracing the literature, culture and language of England, especially because they were deeply rooted in a respect for individualism and personal rebellion which was not endorsed by the Regime.

The second part of the chapter deals with the role of translations in the years of Fascism and in the personal approach of Fenoglio to this activity. Whereas Fenoglio's contemporaries seem to regard translations as a way of renovating Italian literature and culture, Fenoglio seemed to regard translation as a personal exploration of themes, values and ideologies with which he personally identified. In order to prove this point, I provide a general overview of translations during the years of Regime, establishing Fenoglio's original position in this background.

2.2 Fenoglio's education and the Gentile reforms of school

In order to understand the peculiarity of Fenoglio's intellectual choices and contributions, it is important to analyse and consider the cultural scene in which he was immersed when he first came into contact with English literature and the English language. It is ironic that his cultural formation and his contact with English started during Fascism, when one of the major concerns of the regime was to establish intellectual autarchy and independence from any foreign influence. It might sound odd that during the *Ventennio Fascista*, when foreign words were Italianised and translations from English were if not prohibited strongly discouraged, a fifteen-year-old boy was nonetheless able to learn English literature and culture. However, the oddity of this particular case might be put into perspective if we tackle the problem of the definition of culture[2] during Fascism and the contradictions that arose at the time of Fenoglio's education.

Two elements must here be taken into account: the first is, generally speaking, the cultural environment in Italy in the 1920s and 1930s, especially the organization of schools after the reforms brought about by the philosopher Giovanni Gentile (1875-1944) in 1923 and the measures taken to protect Italy and the Italians from the influence of foreign cultures: ironically, it was thanks to these reforms (and to the ones that were to follow) that Fenoglio was allowed to attend a *Liceo Classico*, a high school that had not existed at all before Gentile created it. The second aspect that will help us clarify and better understand the environment in which Fenoglio grew up is the particular situation of Alba, the small town in which he was born and which he never left. It could be argued that thanks to Alba's peripheral position

2 For an analysis of the concept of Fascist culture see Tarquini (2016) and Ben-Ghiat (2001)

(geographically and culturally) and its historical background, this little village tucked away in the mountains of Piedmont was the perfect place for Fenoglio to develop his own set of distinctive beliefs and ideas, as well as realize his cultural ambitions.

Fenoglio started the *scuole elementari* in 1927, four years after the Gentile reform (1923) had started changing the educational system and creating new institutions.[3] The reform had proved necessary to address one of the major issues at the heart of the new Partito Fascista, at the beginning of the 1920s: alphabetization. At the time, most people were illiterate and did not speak "standard" Italian, a language that was accessible only to highly cultured individuals (intellectuals, writers, philosophers). The majority of the Italian population usually learned and spoke dialects, the specific regional variations of the Italian language.[4] Moreover, not only was higher education and hence standard Italian accessible to a small percentage of the population, but primary education was often abandoned due to an abundance of available child labour, especially in the south of Italy. The Gentile reforms acknowledged the need for an educational upheaval destined to wipe out illiteracy and make education available to a larger section of population. At the same time, the Fascist regime was aware that if the people were to be indoctrinated, this had to happen through schooling and education. Education therefore became a vehicle through which the regime could inculcate the values of Fascism[5]. It also became apparent to Fascist thinkers that the building of a strong national identity, a feat that had troubled politicians and statesmen since the unification, had to be based on a strong national language, to be spoken by everybody. As a matter of fact, the role of state schooling according to Mussolini was to train people so that they would be " able to guarantee Italy's economic and historical progress, to elevate people's moral and cultural level, and to select the best

[3] For an exaustive analysis of Fascist reforms see Gori (2016).
[4] An in-depth study of dialect in Fascist Italy may be found in Cortelazzo (1984, pp. 107-116).
[5] See Tarquini (2016, pp. 73-77).

individuals who can assure a continual renovation of the ruling class" (Mussolini, 1954, p. 334).

The aim of the reforms suggested by Giovanni Gentile was to promote the cult of Fascism and of the notion of a totalitarian self-sufficient State or *Stato-tutto*, in which the community would mirror itself.[6] The main values Fascism promoted included the exaltation of the Risorgimento, a radical critique of political ideas regarded as outdated (such as nationalism or liberalism), the idea of self-sacrifice and stoic dedication, and the myth of the Roman Empire. Gentile based his reformative work on the principles of order, hierarchy, discipline and obedience to authority. His idea of schooling was elitist, because education had to be functional to the future social destination of the individual. Therefore, a clear distinction was drawn between culture and profession; the education for the future members of the ruling class needed to be based on the primacy of philosophic-humanistic culture, while the lower classes would only be required to attend only primary school and then go straight into finding an occupation.[7]

Strangely enough, despite being the sons of a butcher both Fenoglio and his brother attended the *Liceo Classico* Govoni of Alba. Beppe's primary school teacher, Chiaffredo Cesana, who had noticed that Beppe was particularly gifted, managed to persuade the family to let Beppe continue with further education.[8] He passed the entry exam with flying colours and so started his first year of the *Ginnasio* in 1932. Most of his school mates, if not outright

[6] It could be said that Gentile was the ideologist of the values underpinning Fascism. For more information on the role of Gentile in the building of Italian scholastic system see Tomasi (1969, p. 70).
[7] Still the basis of today's *licei*, or corresponding high schools which, unlike the *Istituti Professionali,* prepare students for University education. However, the definition is nowadays less class biased. The educational system was thus organized: after the first five years of primary instruction, one had access to the *ginnasio (*middle school*)*, which would give further access to the *liceo* (high school) and other secondary instruction. The milestone of the reform, however, was the creation of the *liceo classico*, the only secondary school that gave access to university degrees and programmes.
[8] A detailed account of the early life of Beppe Fenoglio is provided by Negri Scaglione (2006, pp. 8-25) and De Nicola (1989, pp. 19-40).

rich, came from families with a higher social position than Fenoglio's. This feeling of being different, of not belonging and fitting in with the rest of the students might have triggered him to make his way in the world and to assert his originality by excelling in English, a subject which was not mandatory after the first two years of the Ginnasio, but which Fenoglio decided to continue studying for the rest of his high-school career (Marchiaro in Vaccaneo, 2001, p. 61).

According to the Fascist educational agenda, the *Liceo Classico* was supposed to create the new cultural *élite*: from this perspective philosophy, history, Greek and Latin were meant to play a key role in forming this privileged group. *Liceo* students, it was believed, had to excel in these subjects, because the knowledge of the classics and of philosophy was considered to be crucial for the moral reformation of the Italians, who in turn would contribute to the renovation of the entire State.

By the time that Fenoglio started high-school, however, the Gentile reform had started to be perceived by some "hard-liners" (and apparently by Mussolini himself) as too "abstract" and not "Fascist" enough. It seemed as if, while it was successful in creating a very competent and cultured upper class, the reform was incapable of modelling a real fascist youth as the regime intended it (Ercole, 1936, pp. 482-483). Values such as the cult of war, of the idea of the Duce and of Fascism as being the only political choice, were not sufficiently inculcated in schools. The situation worsened with the ministry of C.M. De Vecchi (1935-36) and later with G. Bottai (1936-43), who implemented their ideas of extreme *fascistization* in schooling, which coincided with the years when Fenoglio was at the *liceo* or high-school. These two policy makers believed that school needed to be part and parcel of a plan of integral education, in which the knowledge acquisition was not as important as promoting and educating people to the values of Fascism.

During the 1930s many changes were introduced, especially in primary schools, through what was known as the *"libro unico"*[9]. New emphasis was put on national history, physical education and pre-military training in secondary schools and universities. A heavy training in physical education was enforced, and teachers were made to take a Fascist oath, on pain of losing their job. Fenoglio witnessed during the last two years of high school the gradual estrangement of Fascism from cultural problems, which became apparent with Gentile's successors. The message of the regime is perfectly conveyed in this sentence, written in a book for children: "A child who, though not refusing to obey, asks "why?" is like a bayonet made of tin: you must obey because you must."[10]; it is precisely on this concept of obedience and subordination that Fascist propaganda was particularly insistent. As Umberto Eco acutely argued, Fascism naturally rejected analytical criticism, considering individual thinking and disagreement as a form of treason (Eco, 1995, p. 5). Therefore, obedience had to be unquestionable and absolute, a duty which was required as if it were a religious faith. In fact, much of the rhetoric of Fascism stressed the similarities between politics and religion: what schools needed to teach students was to accept the full authority of the Duce and of the Party, through the assimilation of the almost cultic practices that Fascism promoted, such as the veneration of the martyrs for the Patria and the ritualistic military parades. The aim of these practices, hence, was to transform individuals into Fascists: "for the regime, the individual's worth seemed to reside in his or her ability to sacrifice any remnant of autonomous judgement and behaviour to the altar of Fascism's superior will" (Falasca-Zamponi, 1997, p. 187). In high school, students were forced to write apologetic compositions on the Regime, such as the one

[9] The law of the 7th January 1929 introduced the *libro unico* (the State single text) starting from the school year 1930-1931. "The regime was able to impose – in the name of the superior requirements of the State Educator – its own conception of the textbook as a vehicle of ideological and political propaganda" (Sani 2008, pp. 322-323).
[10] From *Il libro della terza classe elementare: Letture*, 1936-37, La libreria dello Stato, anno fascista XV, pp. 56-58.

which was found in the archive of Fenoglio's school, entitled "My remembrances and future perspectives, while our troops leave for Africa" (Pesce, 2014 p. 4).

By the time Fenoglio graduated from high school, in the late 1930s, Fascism had become entirely pragmatic in his political views; as already mentioned, the government, especially following the adoption of its aggressive foreign policy and the consequent war economy, was under pressure from industry to train young people with specific technical skills. The school then adapted to the needs of the productive and social reality. And families, on the other hand, took the opportunity to send the boys to high-employment technical schools rather than to the now declining agricultural institutions. The school became a further means of propagation of the fascist ideology, based on the myths of the leader, of the corporate state as the supreme realization of social harmony and the ethical state, in which the state would coincide with civil society. The didactic contents were manipulated for propaganda purposes and new disciplines were created, at university level, in response to the new reality: for example Corporate law, Military culture, History and Doctrine of fascism were taught as new Univeristy subjects. The school, the media, the Academy, the Fascist Cultural Institute, the Istituto Luce, the new Ministry of Popular Culture formed the imposing propaganda apparatus that had to spread the key points of fascist ideology: religion, nationalism, family, subordination of women, hierarchy, militarism, virilism, heroic activism.

The regime also insisted on the importance of asserting Italian linguistic autonomy. It might be argued that while Fenoglio was growing up, he felt the double pressure of, through his schooling, firstly to embrace the Fascist idea of culture, which was essentially that Italy "must become Fascism, all one and seamless" (Gregor, 1979, p. 231) and secondly to give up the language he used at home, in his everyday life, substituting it with a standard Italian that had more to do with Fascist propaganda than with a living language. In other words he must

have felt he was being forced to give up his identity and obliged to embrace a new one he despised.

Fenoglio was living in a very specific linguistic environment, in which Piedmontese dialect was the chosen spoken language in everyday life, while the standard Italian the regime wished to impose remained confined to schools. To reach the goal of linguistic unification, as already mentioned, a national language was needed and dialects were to be eliminated, in order to create a *pure* language.[11] The suppression of dialects, however, was proving particularly difficult to achieve in those regions of Italy which had a specific bond to their spoken language, such as Piedmont, which had played a key role in the unification and had a very strong sense of identity. It was felt that the dialect enshrined the distinctive personal and collective traits of the community that spoke it. So when the regime tried to implement its programme by suppressing regional dialects and sought to create a mass society which spoke one standardized language it came up against a great deal of quiet and implicit resistance.

It is against this suppression of individual freedom of thought that Fenoglio started to rebel, since the first years of high-school. He was not able to adapt to the rhetoric of obedience and conformism, and rejected all that he perceived as oppressive, limiting and obligating (Gioanola, 2017, p. 106). One example of his rebellious attitude is narrated by Fenoglio's teacher Pietro Chiodi:

> I was 23 when I started teaching in the Liceo Classico. Fenoglio, at that time, was eighteen. To commemorate the 28th of October, students had to write an essay to praise the *Marcia su Roma*. (…) When I entered the room I immediately noticed a

[11] To facilitate the process of "italianization" people with foreign surnames were forced to correct them, and in bilingual or multilingual regions of Italy (such as Venezia – Giulia or Trentino Alto Adige) the minorities speaking a language other than Italian were disparaged and offended. In 1923 a decree introduced a taxation for any foreign word appearing on shop windows or signs and four years later were officially banned (Gori 2016, 1-9). On the "italianization" process consult Rodogno (2006).

> student in the first row who, with his arms crossed, looked boringly at the white piece of paper. It was Beppe Fenoglio. Since I was worried he may suffer consequences, I called his professor of Italian literature. (..) They talked for a while, but there was no way of convincing him. The page remained white (Chiodi in Fenoglio, 2002, p. 199).

That white page was in fact the first act of resistance of the young Fenoglio. It was his way of "saying no", as his alter-ego Johnny declares in a beautiful page of *Il Partigiano Johnny*. Moreover, even more defiantly, Fenoglio started to embrace English literature and language, turning to a different culture for a new model of manhood and freedom.

2.3 Fenoglio's choice of English as a rejection of the instances of the Regime: the political and ideological reasons behind Fenoglio's "anglomania"

In 1933 Fenoglio was given the chance, during his second year of *Ginnasio*, to learn English literature and language, under the guidance of professor Lucia Marchiaro. In an interview, Fenoglio's teacher remembers that Beppe was since the beginning particularly fascinated with the learning of this new language, and that his attention was focused on poetry and theatre. She also recalls that Fenoglio was vividly interested in English history, and in particular in "the puritan period, dominated by the figures of Cromwell, John Bunyan and John Milton. Maybe it was because the severity and austerity of those times were particularly in tune with his reflective and reserved personality" (Marchiaro in Vaccaneo, 2001, p. 40). Marchiaro's testimony, even if retrospective, is illuminating in the understanding of Fenoglio's early interest in English literature and culture: she notes that Fenoglio, after the years of the *lycee*, kept studying English literature "reading extensively and translating the works he enjoyed the most. In those years English was not a mere subject of study, but a joy for his spirit, and – maybe –

also a secret antidote to authoritarian political impositions" (p. 64). Marchiaro here underlines two important concepts: the first is that Fenoglio's translations were selected for a special affinity he felt towards particular authors, and the second is that his choice of English was ideological, originating from his desire to oppose the impositions he was experiencing in his cultural environment.

The ideological reasons for Fenoglio's interest in Britain, however, have not been examined in detail by Fenoglio's commentators. Some critics tend to link this choice to biographical details of Fenoglio's life; a particular shyness brought him to easily isolate himself from others, and his preference for English could make him stand out among his classmates, with whom he also felt a sense of discomfort due to the different social class he belonged to (Grignani, 1981, p. 3). English appears thus to be an elitist choice motivated by the necessity of defending himself from the difficulties of socialization which he often encountered. Other critics have associated Fenoglio's preference for English to his later career as a writer; as a result, they concentrate on Fenoglio's search for literary models, who thematically and stylistically inspired his later original works (Pietralunga 1987; De Nicola 1989; Lagorio 1998). The almost exclusive focus on literature, however, as the source of Fenoglio's interest for England, has unfortunately diminished the ideological significance of such a choice. In my view, in order to understand clearly how subversive – and even dangerous – Fenoglio' s behaviour was when he started reading English novels in their original language, translating and even using English expressions and words in his everyday life, Fenoglio's choice must be situated within the context of the political relations between Italy and Britain during the Fascist Regime, also taking into account the Fascist representation of Britain in the mainstream propaganda.

Interestingly, it was in the 1930s – when Fenoglio started reading and studying English

literature - that the Fascist Regime started to express explicit hostility towards Great Britain. In fact, before Mussolini expressed his interest in the creation of an Empire which aimed to control the Mediterranean Sea, the political relationship between Britain and Italy had been relatively serene. Britain considered Italy as a force of stability, which could maintain a political balance between France and Germany. However, things changed after Great Britain voted in favour of sanctions against Italy when Mussolini invaded Ethiopia, in 1935.[12]

Fascist aversion towards Britain was gradual but resolute. Firstly, the English Empire was associated with the Empire of Carthage, opposed to the Empire of Rome, and thus the enemy to overthrow. For example, Emanuele Ciaceri, a fascist historian and Mussolini's ghostwriter, wrote that the English "are pirates and greedy merchants", inclined to fraud and trickery (Ciaceri, 1935, p. 131); similarly, Ettore Pais – an ancient historian and politician – despised Britain for not being a "warrior race" and denounced English cowardice for its tendency to " shed other people's blood and not their own" (Pais, 1927, p. 64). More in general, in the 1930s Fascist attacks towards Britain were mostly related to Britain's colonial power and supremacy in the Mediterranean Sea. The expression "Perfidious Albion", which Mussolini himself used[13], is strictly connected to the stereotype of the British as being untrustworthy, devoted to "subtle and cunning subterfuges of diplomacy" (p. 68).

The English are also presented, in Fascist propaganda, as egoistical and only devoted to commercial interests. The focus here is the opposition between the Italian interest in collectivity and love for people which is seen as a virtue, and English avid desire for supremacy which is moved by mere materialism. The "Anglo-Saxon enemy" is thus ridiculed and

[12] An in-depth exploration of Fascist foreign policy towards Britain is found in the documentaries realized by the Istituto Luce: *Storia D'Italia dall'Unità al Duemila* (2003) (DVD).

[13] It was erroneously believed that Mussolini had coined that expression. In fact, this expression was already notorious in France due to the Marquise Agustine de Ximenes.

caricaturized. The English are presented as the "people of the five meals a day" (Eco, 2017, p. 35) : as it is explained in the Fascist journal *La difesa della Razza* (The defense of the race), the British are the exponents of the culture of the stomach, in opposition to the culture of the heart. Mussolini himself defined the English as barbarians, uncivilized and inferior in the journal *Il Legionario* :

> If you take the fancy clothes off the British as they drink their 5 o'clock tea, you'll find British barbarians, their skin painted various colours, previously ruled by the great legions of Cesare and Claudio (Mussolini, 1942, p. 6).

After Mussolini's decision to abandon the League of Nations in 1937, Italy became more and more isolated and averse to foreign countries, especially to England. It is from this moment until the beginning of the war that the British were officially identified as enemies, and the previous scorn became pure aggression and ideological hate. The Fascist journal *La difesa della razza* (The Defence of the Race),[14] in particular, attacked the English on a racial basis, affirming a substantial identity between the British and the Jews. Many articles are entitled "The racial inferiority of the Anglosaxons" (1943, 6: 9) or "The Anglo-saxon race against Europe" (1943, 5: 4-6).

What is more interesting, with regard to Fenoglio, is that Fascist propaganda concentrated on the analogies between English Protestantism and Judaism. In an article which appeared in the journal it is argued that "the protestant reform was promoted and prepared by

[14] La difesa della Razza was a Fascist journal printed between 1938 and 1943. It aimed at demonstrating that the concept of race was scientifically proved, arguing that Italians should defend themselves from the contamination of other races. The director of the journal was Telesio Interlandi, but many scientists, anthropologists and journalists usually wrote in it. For an in-depth analysis of the journal, see Cassata (2008) and Pisanty's anthology (2007). The complete collection of the journal was digitalized and is available at: http://digiteca.bsmc.it/?l=periodici&t=Difesa%20della%20razza

secret societies and humanists, under the occult guidance of Jews" (De Giglio 1943, p. 42). The major reasons for Fascist hostility towards Protestantism was based on the individual interpretation of the sacred texts that the Protestant Reform had promoted. Obviously, a regime which promoted suppression of freedom of thought the idea of a different approach to authority, whether it be religious or political, was unacceptable. Interestingly, as previously explained in the quotation of Fenoglio's English teacher, Fenoglio was particularly interested in Puritanism and more in general in Protestantism. As I will explain in the following chapter, Fenoglio had religious views which were closer to Protestantism, and explicitly rejected Catholicism when he was only sixteen. But it must be remembered that at that specific time sympathy towards Protestantism was a political statement, and a clearly anti-fascist position. The debate on the protestant reform, which Italy had not experienced, had been at the center of the debate of many antifascist intellectuals and thinkers, since the 1920s. Other Piedmontese anti-fascists, such as Piero Gobetti, had often argued that Protestantism was at the root of modern liberal democracies, and it was the lack of a protestant reform that had kept Italy in a position of moral, cultural and economic backwardness (Gobetti, 1925, pp. 182-183). Protestantism was regarded as the foundation of modernity, because a religion based on action and individuality had taught "Anglo-saxons the religion of autonomy and sacrifice, of initiative and parsimony" (p.183).

The major Italian media were involved in anti-British propaganda. The known journalist and radio conductor Mario Appelius, who was particularly popular among Fascists for his radio programs and who also was popular for his bulletins during the war, published a short essay in which he stated that Britain was " a monstruous empire of Phoenician essence camped in five continents" (Appelius, 1999, p. 153). He was also known for proclaiming "May God damn the English" every evening on the radio. Fenoglio himself mentions Appelius with disgust in his first draft of *Il partigiano Johnny,* noting how Fascists usually met in cafes to

listen religiously to Appelius' war bulletins, which were often counterfeited and entirely invented (Fenoglio, 2015, p. 22). Another example of the Fascist attack against British in the press is the response to a Christmas message sent in 1941 by Winston Churchill to the Italian people. The journalist Andrea Buttigieg published a sort of counter-message in the weekly magazine "il Popolo di Lombardia":

> The majority of us do not know you, Mr Churchill. But we all hate you with all the strength of our hearts, because all around the world you do not represent a human creature, but the supreme cause for our oppression. Your country has no right but the one that comes from plunder (Buttigieg in Siennicka 1995, p. 174).

From this overview of the political attitude of Fascism towards Britain, it becomes clear how Fenoglio's identification with Britain was profoundly political and ideological. Fenoglio was taught to hate "the sons of Albion" in school, but the world of Elizabethan and Revolutionary England must have emerged before him as an alternative ideal; the image of a country in particular periods of its history when it had fought for freedom and exalted individual thinking, as opposed to the oppression Beppe was witnessing in his own country and in his own school. Unsurprisingly, Fenoglio became particularly interested in Milton, Donne, Shakespeare and Carlyle, and in the specific elements of the English culture which were despised by Fascist propaganda, such as individualism, freedom of thought, rebellion towards authority, openness in religious interpretation. Britain became "the country in which he wished he was born, because he loved the institutions that governed it, its costumes and the conquests of a society which is so profoundly diverse from the Italian one" (Campanello in Vaccaneo, 2001, p. 82).

2.4 A polymorph concept of culture: classic values and the concept of " open doors" in the Fascist culture with regard to foreign languages

Given the ferocious hostility that the regime expressed towards foreignness and the influence of different cultures on the so called "Italianity", it might appear curious that Fenoglio was allowed to learn English and study British culture and literature in school. In fact, it could be argued that a regime intent upon promoting Italian supremacy and autarchy would have clamped down on the teaching of modern foreign languages. However, the presence of modern languages in school curricula might be understood within the polymorph and complex concept of culture that Fascism promoted, a concept which is characterised by many incongruities and contradictions. Fundamentally, these contradictions arose by the clash of two fundamental aims expressed in Fascist programs: on the one hand, humanistic and classical culture as the root of Italian supremacy in terms of culture had to be stressed; therefore, much emphasis was put on the learning of classical languages, art and culture, such as Greek and Latin. On the other hand, Italy – in the Fascist view – needed to become more relevant and influential on a European level. As a consequence, Italians needed to become less provincial so as to be able to compete with other modern Nations in the international context. Knowledge of foreign cultures and literatures was thus extremely important to fulfil this objective. Foreign culture, and especially foreign literature, was not banned, due to the fact that Fascist regime was more preoccupied with the formation of a political conscience (a Fascist political conscience, to be precise, than with a cultural identity).

In fact, it appears that the Fascist idea of culture was somewhat blurred in the Regime intentions, especially because it tended to coincide with politics and ideology. The *Manifesto*

degli intellettuali fascisti, written in 1925 by Giovanni Gentile and signed by the most prominent intellectuals and academics of the time was, in fact, the first effort at defining the cultural aspects and goals of Italian Fascism[15]. According to the *Manifesto*, politics and culture were not to be distinguished: art, literature and all intellectual manifestations needed to bow in obeisance to politics. Without Fascism, according to Gentile, there was no true culture (Gregor, 1979, pp. 231-234). From this perspective, fascism and culture colluded to limit personal and collective freedom[16]. The importance of the *Manifesto* consisted in the fact that Fascists had understood what Gramsci called "cultural hegemony",[17] so as to say the diffusion of new ideas throughout society in order to establish and consolidate the power of a new elite and a new regime. Moreover, as Gregor notes: "It is clear that the fascist concern with culture did not necessarily involve commitment to any specific content" (1979, p. 231): culture, in this sense, was nothing but the inculcation of political convictions.

The role of the artist was also perceived as strictly connected to civic duties. Intellectuals, writers, sculptors and painters were called to play an active role in the cultural renovation of Fascist Italy, responding to the " social function of art" and rejecting what was perceived as a "bourgeoise impasse of a self-referential art, detached from any social function" (Storchi, 2017, p. 6). The image of the artist who must not withdraw inside an ivory tower is recurrent in the cultural debate of the 1920s and 1930s with regard to literature and art (Ben Ghiat 2001, p. 67; Storchi 2017, p. 2), and epitomizes the Fascist idea that intellectuals needed to cooperate by creating a distinctively fascist model of modernity, which had to start from the

[15] See Tarquini (2011, pp. 51-99).
[16] The press was censored and personal expression and individual thought were placed under strict surveillance and control.
[17] For the concept of hegemony see Gramsci (1975).

renewal of the humanistic, classical tradition. The myth of classicism and in particular of "*latinità*" blended with the ideological and political myth of the Roman empire, which became central in the Fascist figurative arts and in architecture.

However, the Fascist aim of creating and inspiring an art which totally reflected Fascism proved to be unsuccessful, at least in the literary field. The *Manifesto degli intellettuali fascisti* was strongly criticized by the anti-fascist intellectual and critic Benedetto Croce (1866-1952), who responded with the *Manifesto degli intellettuali anti-fascisti.* In 1925 Croce wrote:

> Intellectuals—those who cultivate science and art—may exercise their right and perform their duty as citizens by joining a party and serving it faithfully. But, as intellectuals, their sole duty is to focus on raising all men and all parties equally to a higher spiritual sphere—through research, criticism, and the creation of art—enabling them to fight the necessary battles with even more beneficial results.[18]

Other intellectuals, even when they belonged to the Fascist party, thought it "unseemly to write works of art which were openly political" (Ben Ghiat, 2001, p. 68).

The Regime's attitude towards foreign languages and foreign literature was also a fundamental element in the failure of the plan of creating a truly fascist culture. In fact, as previously noted, the regime aimed at promoting a culture which could be welcomed favourably in Europe. Hence, at least in the first years of the 1930s, Fascism opted for a policy of "open doors", promoting a process of cultural exchange with Europe. For this reasons, Fascism was not interfering with the publication of journals and magazines which had a distinguished cosmopolite essence.[19] Many literary journals that flourished during Fascism: for

[18] Benedetto Croce's philosophy and idea of art's independence from politics was extremely influential in the following years, when he actively became an opponent to the regime.
[19] For example the journal "Occidente", published the works of important foreign writers such as Katherine Mansfield, Hans Fallada and Ernest Hemingway. (Ben Ghiat 2001, p. 74)

example the journal called "Il Baretti", funded in Turin by Piero Gobetti, published the works of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. Many of these journals were eventually forced to end their publications, but not because of the literary choices they made or because they promulgated foreign literature or culture, but mainly because many of the contributors were more or less openly anti-fascist from a political standpoint.[20]

Due to this necessity of forming cosmopolitan Italians, the teaching of foreign languages and literatures was never prohibited and kept on being taught in schools. As noted by Stefano Rapisarda, from an ideological point of view, studying a foreign language was not "an homage to a foreign country, but is only a useful tool which could be employed for a wide variety of utilitarian purposes" (Rapisarda, 2015, p. 709). Fascist propaganda also presented the knowledge of two or more modern languages as an advantage: in an article published in 1935, called "*Mussolini dà l'esempio*" (Mussolini sets the example), the Duce is praised for his supposed ability to speak three languages. The command of two or more languages appeared thus " a potent weapon for the victorious achievement of practical aims" (p. 711). Moreover, with regard to the teaching of foreign literature, it must be remembered that the school programs usually privileged classic English literature, and excluded the most contemporary authors. The classical authors did not represent, in the Fascist view, a dangerous influence: on the contrary, anything "classic" had to be preserved. Fascists could not imagine, then, that someone could become an anti-fascist by reading Shakespeare or Milton or Marlowe. And in the end, these contradictions in the Regime's attitude towards culture made possible for Fenoglio to attend a school in which Shakespeare and Milton and the Romantics were taught. And they happened to be more influential on many young students, including Fenoglio, than

[20] Piero Gobetti (1901-1926) was an editor and intellectual, who founded the journal to spread his conviction that the Italian people could be taught how to reject the fascist culture through education in European culture. He was eventually forced to move to Paris, after he was assaulted by fascists. He died a short time later, at the age of 25.

the Duce's speeches.

2.5 Culture and politics between 1920 and 1940 in Fenoglio's Alba

Alba, where Fenoglio was born in 1922, ironically bears a resemblance to Albion, the oldest known name of Great Britain. The two words in fact share a common root. Alba in general was anti-fascist. In fact, Beppe grew up in a family that despised fascism, for many different reasons. His mother was deeply catholic and especially after the racial laws were passed she publicly expressed her disgust towards Fascism (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 39). His father disliked Mussolini in particular, and considered him a braggart and a liar. He was one of the few who never became member of the Party, even though it was a general rule to become one.

In the 1920s, when Beppe was growing up, Alba was a relatively poor town. It still lacked industrial resources and relied on agriculture and trading activities carried out in the market square on Sundays. Distant from the centre of power, Alba had always maintained peace even during the troubled times known in Italy as the *biennio rosso,* which occurred in 1919 and 1920, when many industrial towns were in ferment. Mass strikes and factories occupations were happening in Turin, Milan and Rome. Peasant protests, food riots, workers' demonstrations occurred in many cities of Northern Italy (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p.15). Alba, being geographically distant and isolated, remained untouched by these events, and kept its usual social peace. This was also due to the lack of infrastructures. In fact Alba lacked rail connections with other big cities, and was practically isolated. The social fabric was constituted by traders, professionals and clerks. Small land owners and sharecroppers populated the rural area of *le Langhe,* where Fenoglio's father came from, whereas his mother came from a Catholic family of traders. Fenoglio was later to say that he felt there was a struggle in his

blood, between his mother's catholic and middle-class origins and his father's directness and anticlericalism, typical of the people of *le Langhe* (Fenoglio, 2007, p. 571).

Alba was city of strong catholic and popular tradition and Fascism was not able to conquer the old ruling class nor to create a new one. In fact, Alba was one of the only cities in which a *Casa del Fascio* was never built (De Nicola, 1989, pp. 19-23 and Bigazzi, 2011, pp. 15-34). The catholic world of Alba always remained estranged from fascism, and in some cases showed a clear hostility. However, in 1922 Alba was occupied by Fascists, who tried to force the mayor, the catholic Giovanni Vico, to resign. He resisted and was able to keep his position until November 1925, when the regime dismissed the Municipality and nominated its prefects and *podestà*. However, the regime could never really spread and take roots in Alba: in 1922 the diocesan newspaper "La Gazzetta D'Alba" published an article that stated: "The fascist dictatorship will mean ruin: therefore, let's resist not with words, but with an intense work and active organization. We are not facing ideas but armed soldiers".[21]

One of the most important figures of the time was Mons. Luigi Maria Grassi (1887-1948)[22] who often took a stance against the regime. For instance, when in 1939 the public wearing of the Catholic Association emblem was banned, he explicitly urged people to an act of disobedience. Between the 1930s and the 1940s, when Beppe was attending high-school, the economic situation of the city improved, thanks to the institution of the *Fiera del Tartufo* (1929) and to local harvest fairs which became very popular and attracted tourists. Alba became an administrative and trading centre, whereas in the rural areas of *le Langhe* people kept living in poverty, relying only on the harvest of hazelnuts and farming.

[21] From *La Gazzetta d'Alba*, September 1922, p.10.
[22] For a more accurate analysis of Luigi Maria Grassi, see Stella (1996), *Alba, Storia di una diocesi, Alba:* Edizioni Centro Beppe Fenoglio.

One of the sources of pride of Alba, though, was the Ginnasio-Liceo G. Govone, which Fenoglio attended from 1932 to 1940. Several anti-fascist teachers, such as Umberto Perazzo, Giovanni Battaglino, Pietro Chiodi, Leonardo Cocito, continued to educate drawing on their anti-fascist views. These figures were of fundamental importance to Fenoglio's formation and education. Umberto Perazzo is a case in point. He was Fenoglio's math teacher at the Ginnasio Liceo Govone but had previously taught at the University and had been demoted to teaching in secondary school because he was an anti-fascist; Pietro Chiodi taught Fenoglio philosophy for two years. He became an important anti-fascist figure during the war and went on to become one of the finest philosophers in Italy. He is mostly known for his translations of Heidegger; Leonardo Cocito taught Italian literature to Fenoglio during the last year of high-school. He was a Marxist and openly (and dangerously) anti-fascist. In 1943, after joining a partisan brigade, he became one of the most active organizers of the *Resistenza* in Piedmont. He was captured and executed by the SS in 1944 and was posthumously awarded with the Italian gold medal for gallantry at war.[23] Pietro Chiodi recalls an episode regarding Leonardo Cocito in his memoire book *Banditi*, which describes the openness of this teacher with regard to his anti-fascist beliefs.

> Yesterday a student went to the library, asking for a book with Mussolini's speeches. Cocito looked harshly at him and then said: "Didn't you read the statute? It states that it is forbidden to give obscene books to young kids." Everybody loves Cocito, that's why he is not in jail yet (Chiodi, 1975, p. 6).

Due to the isolation of Alba, Fascism could only express itself in its most superficial and ostentatious aspects, which is why to several Albians and to Fenoglio himself it will have

[23] In *Il partigiano Johnny* Fenoglio writes about both Chiodi and Cocito (in the book they are identifiable in the two professors Monti and Corradi).

looked like a ridiculous spectacle. The compulsory ceremonies, the parades and the semi-military exercises were looked at with disgust or annoyance by Fenoglio's schoolmates. Fenoglio recalls one of these exercises in one of his short stories, entitled *I Premilitari.* The main protagonist, Johnny, who is talking to a fellow student called Girardi, is taking part in one of these exercises which is seen as a kind of farce:

> Girardi said to Johnny: "This is not serious, you know?". "And you realize it now?" "No, Johnny, try to understand. I mean, the pre-military service could be a serious thing. It's Borgna, Goghi and the rest: they're not serious". "Does this look serious to you?", Johnny burst out, pointing at the black uniform, the yellow-orange neckerchief and the big gaiters (Fenoglio, 2006, pp. 239-254).

Fenoglio is here describing one of the new activities imposed by Fascism: the so called *Sabato Fascista,* which was introduced in 1935. Once a week, every Saturday, students had to participate in military exercises and sport activities. They were dressed in uniforms, were given fake weapons and made to march through the streets of the town of Alba. The majority found these activities stupid, devoid of meaning if not outright grotesque (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 38). In this atmosphere of contempt for the impositions of the regime two events occurred that could be identified as openly anti-fascist forms of rebellion, in which Fenoglio did not participate but he surely must have heard of. In 1940 the students of the *Istituto Magistrale Pertinace* refused, during a gym lesson, to perform the roman salute imposed by the Duce. Later that same year, students and teachers of the *Convitto Civico* defiantly removed all the portraits of Mussolini from the school and destroyed them. Many of the people found responsible were arrested and imprisoned.

Fenoglio wrote extensively about his high-school years, especially in the first draft of *Il partigiano Johnny.* In these pages it clearly emerges how the protagonist's love for English

culture was a distinctive aspect of his character; this love, however, could also be a danger. Federico Durando, a *squadrista,* [24] calls Johnny *l'inglesino* with disgust and sarcasm, and tells him that he will not report him to the police only because "he considered Johnny mentally ill, anglophilia being the same as meningitis" (Fenoglio, 2015, p. 22). However, Johnny - Fenoglio's alter ego – seems to take pride in his knowledge of English because it gives him an identity and because it states his difference from the others. Even though Johnny's attitude might somehow look snobbish, in his solitude and his refusal to adjust to his environment, it is clear that his love for England is ideological and has deeper roots than it appears. As Jonny confesses to his friend Ferrero:

> You should easily understand my position: my anglophilia, even anglomania if you wish, is an expression of my desire, of my need for a different, better Italy. And there is no hope for me, if you and the ones like you can't understand me in this aspect (Fenoglio 2015, p. 26).

In my view, the crucial telling word in this passage is "need". Fenoglio very strongly felt the need for renovation, self-assertion and self-preservation in an environment that sought to suppress these aspirations. In a sense, Alba, this small village distant from the centre of power, was the nest in which our author could explore distant cultures and engage with worlds in which he might find his own voice by conversing with others.

2.6 Fenoglio and the Italian translation scene between 1920 and 1940

As previously noted, Fenoglio's interest in translation started while he was at the

[24] The "squadristi" were members of Fascist Squads, and were devoted to violence and intimidation. They were also named "Camicie nere" because they usually wore black shirts.

Ginnasio liceo Govone and continued up until his death in 1962. In a small town like Alba it was not easy to search out books in their original language. However, Fenoglio was able to read books in the original language in the Biblioteca Civica di Alba, which was supplied with many English books in their original language (Pesce, 2014, p. 30) and often borrowed books from the school library, which was particularly well supplied with Tauchnitz editions of English books (Pesce, 2014, p. 31). Alba did not have a bookshop which sold English book in the original language, but Fenoglio himself mentions a bookshop in Turin which he often visited, which was full of "Tauchnitz and Albatross editions" (Fenoglio 1978, p. 1307). Fenoglio's English teacher also generously lent books to young Fenoglio.

The majority of English books, however, were available in translation. It is important to have a general look at the translation scene during Fenoglio's formative years, especially because at the time the debate on translation was particularly controversial. Even though Fenoglio's own translations were not published, and thus were not subjected to the restrictions that published translations had to face, it is nonetheless interesting to have a look at the translation scene during the Fascist years, in order to understand better how the books to which Fenoglio had access were translated. As previously explained, despite the xenophobic attitude of the regime, many texts of British literature in translation were in circulation and available to Fenoglio, and accessible to the general Italian public.[25]

Since the late 1920s, what has been called the "invasion of translations" (Rundle 2010, p.15) took place in Italy. Italian readers had, in fact, developed in those years a great interest in popular narrative, especially in the Anglo-American one. This is confirmed by the fact that Italy, during the 1930s, was the country in which the largest number of translations was

[25] For example, a scholastic edition of Giuseppe Orlandi's *I grandi scrittori inglesi e americani* was an anthology of British and American writers normally distributed to students of English in the 1930s.

published. Translations, especially those of a literary nature, thus became one of the cornerstones of the Italian publishing market (Rundle, 2010, pp. 55-57).

The measures that the Regime, and in particular the Ministry of Popular Culture, adopted in those years were not entirely restrictive but rather ambiguous, in an atmosphere that the critic Mark Pietralunga calls "a guarded liberty" (Petralunga, 1987, p. 29).[26] The action of the regime in those years was characterized by an absence of systematic control over the entire book production and each work was evaluated individually. It must be noted that Fascists were hostile to the translation of the foreign authors primarily because it would shift the attention and primacy from Italian culture which was to be considered superior. As Christopher Rundle notes, when the regime intervened against contemporary foreign literature it was because the act of translation represented in itself "a sign of failure of its cultural project" (Rundle, 2011, p. 295) of disseminating Italian culture abroad. Italian culture in their view had to be "conscious of its own eternal role as a disseminator rather than receiver" (Rundle, 2010, p. 183), and the act of translation was considered as merely receptive, therefore a sign of weakness. This idea will be further explained later, when I illustrate the case of Vittorini's *Americana*.

As a rule, publishers were forced to reduce or limit translation "when these are not of particular value, and restrict the importation of foreign books to a minimum" (Rundle, 2000, pp. 67-68). The restriction would usually regard works of entertainment such as novels or short-stories, but would not involve classics or scientific works. More specifically, the regime committed itself to inducing self-censorship: in other words, editors and translators would manipulate and cut the texts themselves before submitting them for control. By promoting self-censorship, the Regime could therefore avoid being accused of damaging the literary market

[26] In her study of the Mondadori Publishing House, Claudia Patuzzi (1978, p. 33) writes that "an eclecticism and implicit contradictions" existed in this sector of book publishing.

which in those years was particularly flourishing and contributed largely to the country's economic growth.

Regarding the contents of the books, an active censorship was applied to all the books that were translated when they expressed ideas considered inappropriate (Cembali, 2006, pp. 2-3); the case of Agatha Christie, for example, is very telling: any slight reference to something that could be disturbing - for instance one of the character's suicide or the allusion to abortion - were removed from the text, sometimes even changing the plot of the novels. The regime in fact was very concerned about increasing the population and operated policies intent upon increasing the birth rates and hence the number of citizens and in particular strong men able to fight for their country. Both abortion and suicide went against this particular item on the Fascist agenda and needed to be eliminated (Bonsaver, 2007, p. 62). Cesare Pavese and Elio Vittorini, who were very active in translating American authors, had to cut entire stretches of the books they were working on in order to publish them. In any case, and at least before 1938, the regime applied its censorship with some degree of flexibility, and it was left to the translator's initiative to decide where and what to cut.

The reason why in the 1920s and early 1930s the regime never openly obstructed the flow of foreign literature, which at the time was conspicuous, was not only that the translation market at the time was particularly lucrative and popular with the public, but also that the Regime wanted to give the impression that a degree of freedom of speech was maintained, and legislative measures against publishers might have revealed counterproductive. Moreover, it appears that Fascists never considered literature in itself a great danger, and thus directed the bulk of their energy to controlling the theatre, the press and cinema.

In the late 1930s, however, the situation started to change. The Authors and Writers

Union, led by the futurist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti – who had been criticizing the invasion of translations for some time – began a new and more aggressive campaign against translators and publishers. At public conferences and with the press the Union claimed the need to extend autarchy to the whole cultural sphere. Translations, according to Marinetti and the Union, therefore had to be subject to a quality control and, moreover, they had to follow a principle of reciprocity. It was no longer acceptable that a nation like Italy, which was supposed to expand its sphere of influence, imported more books than it exported. Subsequently, on January 15, 1938, publishers were asked to compile a list of all the translations that had been published so far, and those that they intended to publish in the future. Finally, the Ministry made another important decision. With the circular No. 1135 of March 26, 1938, the Ministry forced publishers to submit foreign works to be approved:

> Publishers can send the books they intend to translate into Italian directly or through the Prefecture, in the original language. This ministry will make its judgment known to the Publisher - through the competent Prefecture - in the shortest term. Purely scientific treatises (medicine-engineering-mathematics-astronomy-botany-zoology) and classics universally recognized as such are excluded from prior approval (Rundle, 2010, p. 147).

The publication of the book *Americana*, in 1940, clarifies the particularly strict attitude of the regime towards the translations of contemporary foreign authors, especially in the years that preceded the outbreak of the Second World War. For years Elio Vittorini, who worked as a translator and editor for the Bompiani publishing house – and was later to publish with Einaudi Fenoglio's short stories – had in mind the project of publishing an anthology of American authors, including some of the newest exponents of American literature such as Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck, Caldwell, Saroyan, Fante. Right before the publication of the book the editor Bompiani received a letter from the Minister of Popular Culture Pavolini

which stated:

> The United States are a potential enemy of ours: their President has shown himself to be hostile to the Italian people. This is no time to perform acts of courtesy towards America, not even literary ones. Furthermore, the anthology would simply rekindle that excessive enthusiasm which has been shown for recent American literature: a fashion which I am determined not to encourage (Pavolini in Rundle, 2000, p. 13)

It was only in 1942, after the Minister was convinced by the editor Bompiani and by Vittorini that the classics published in the anthology would put the moderns currently in fashion in a bad light, that the book was eventually published. This example shows how censorship revolved around the idea that translation, in the light of a market trade war, was seen as a sign of weakness but was tolerated when it regarded classics.

To sum up, the Regime's attitude towards translation changed dramatically during the years. The early tolerance towards foreign literature had allowed Fenoglio to have access to translations so that he could easily retrieve the books he wished to read. However, by the time he started translating – arguably during the last years of the *liceo* –even possessing English books had become quite dangerous. Fenoglio himself mentions this situation in the first draft of *Il partigiano Johnny*. In this passage, Johnny visits a library to buy an English book. After he has made his choice, the bookseller carefully wraps the books up in paper:

> Johnny prayed the man that he wouldn't waste time, but it was in vain. - Allow me, allow me. You know, at times you meet certain bad guys on the street ... *hawk-eyed, I'd say.*[27] Real fanatics, capable of making trouble for an English book (Fenoglio, 2015, p. 25).

Despite this danger, or maybe because of this danger, Fenoglio started to translate with

[27] In English in the original text.

passion and devotion, even though – as I will explain in the next section – his aims were radically different from the translators who worked in Publishing houses in the 1930s and 1940s, and proved to be an original and an outsider also in his approach to translation.

2.7 Fenoglio's approach to the art of translation: a search for a new identity

Fenoglio's translations and his *modus operandi* will be examined in depth in the following chapters, but at the moment it might be useful to attempt an explanation of Fenoglio's approach to the art of translation. In fact, the question of translation is key to understanding his literary and intellectual agenda.

Translation, for Fenoglio, was a complex process; it was a defiance; it was an escape and also an epistemological process. He translated from English into Italian in order to be able to absorb and recognize his own set of values and beliefs; he went on to write in English the first drafts of his novels and short stories, and finally he returned to his native tongue, finding "in the English language a step towards revivifying the semantic and phonological aspects" of the Italian language (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 15). But setting aside the problem of language for a moment, it can be argued that translation to the writer acted as an act of self-empowerment, in which his creativity could freely emerge. The texts he chose, as we will see in the next chapters, reflected who he was, and treated the themes that were also recurrent in his own original writings; moreover, in translating many of them, in particular in his translations of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and in his translations of Firth's biography of Cromwell, Fenoglio was also expressing his political views in a cultural context that did not allow individuality to emerge, or even quashed any form of dissent.

Fenoglio's attitude to publishing his translations was also different than the one showed

by his contemporaries. Interestingly enough, Fenoglio did not seek an editor with regard to his translations, with the exception of one single letter sent to the publishing house Einaudi.[28] Fenoglio's case appears particularly original if compared to other famous translators of that time, and in particular Elio Vittorini and Cesare Pavese,[29] whose aim in translating was to modernize Italian literature through the example of American literature.

Like Fenoglio, Pavese and Vittorini had – quoting a famous passage of Pavese's essay *Return to Mankind* (Pavese,, 1968, pp. 197-199) – "loved with true passion the literature of a distant people, of a distant society. We talked about that literature, we translated it, and that people became our ideal homeland". Pavese referred to the years 1930-1940 as the "decade of translations" (Pavese, 1968, p. 223), which marked a turning point in Italian culture. He regarded his work as a translator as "a desire of *conquering* new texts" (1968, p. 223), which indicates the desire to explore something new and discover new lands, in order to renovate the Italian cultural landscape. Thanks to the translations of American authors such as Faulkner, Hemingway, Caldwell and Steinbeck, Pavese and Vittorini introduced the myth of America in Italy (Pontuale, 2007, p. 119). For those authors translating was a way to open the doors, to let another culture in, to show that another kind of literature was indeed possible. The process of translation was therefore a revolutionary act, because it brought something new: a new model of literature, a new way of expressing oneself.[30] They looked for something outside of themselves, and tried to import those new values, concepts and images into Italian culture: "Italy was estranged, barbarized, calcified: we had to shake it, release it, expose her to the

[28] It is a letter dated 8 September 1951, now available in the collection of Fenoglio's letters (Fenoglio 2002, p. 31).
[29] Elio Vittorini (1908 – 1966) translated – to name only few – Faulkner, Poe and Lawrence. Cesare Pavese (1908-1950) is particularly known for his translation of Melville's Moby Dick as well as for his translations of Sinclair Lewis, Anderson, Steinbeck, Dos Passos, Gertrude Stein and Faulkner. Pavese also wrote essays on American Literature, available in the volume *Saggi Letterari* (1968).
[30] Ettore Catalano describes Pavese's approach to literary translation as an "active cultural opposition to Fascism" (1976, pp. 56-57).

spring breeze of Europe and of the world" (Pavese, 1968, p. 223). Both Pavese and Vittorini were deeply drawn to American literature, especially to contemporary authors. They were trying to escape ideally the confinement they felt, culturally and politically, in their own country.

Contemporary American authors had contaminated written English with slang expressions, with words of everyday life; they had narrated the stories of ordinary people, with their misery and with their common dreams: Pavese and Vittorini believed that Italian literature could be revived "through a new perspective, focused on the spoken language, the language of everyday truth" (Bertacco, 2014, p. 28). Even more than Pavese, Vittorini dedicated himself to disseminating American literature and culture through numerous articles and reviews, proposing new authors for translation and planning new series with publishing houses (Torriglia, 2002, p. 82). The translation act in itself for these authors was based on the idea of discovery. In this sense, the act of translation proceeded from the outside (America) to the inside (Italy). Of course, they were looking for similarities, they were showing empathy, as a prisoner would do with the world outside his cell. One example can be found in Pavese's poems, collected in the volume *Lavorare Stanca*, in which he opts for an "American" style that R. W. Flint described as a "knotty, emphatic, improvised syntax" (1968, p. 153).[31]

Even though these authors shared with Fenoglio a sense of confinement and the desire "to graft on the sclerotic structure of the common language" (Bertacco, 2014, p. 29), Fenoglio's approach to translation is radically different in terms of purpose. In fact, for Fenoglio translation was mostly a private exercise (Pietralunga, 2000, p. 8), which means that translation

[31] Flint shows how Pavese was indebted to Whitman and American poetry in his thematic choices as well: "*Lavorare stanca*, saw him beginning to use his newly stretched "American" senses to celebrate the misfits, the workers without hope —farmhands, sand diggers, beggars, seamstresses, whores, etc.— whom he had begun to see and meet during his constant walking and bar-sitting on the city's outskirts" (1968, p. IX).

was an internal necessity, a personal need rather than a desire for disseminating culture. Moreover, it appears that the process of translation in the case of Fenoglio moves from the inside to the outside: the act of translating was a vehicle to understanding English culture and to make it his own, but also to say something about himself that had no other way to emerge; it was a learning tool, but it always had to do more with for a search for models on which to build his own identity as a writer and as a person.[32]

A particular passage of the first draft of *Il Partigiano Johnny*, written by Fenoglio in English, seems to confirm this idea:

> Johnny yearned *to be* one of them (Englishmen on their mission in the Langhe), to be them and the khaki the very colour he was born in and for, and to have had all their experience, and their borning and growing environment, and their homesickness for the witch-island and that present solitude, and their appeal from their own history, and their own chiefs, and their own waiting women (Fenoglio, 1978, pp. 7-8).

What emerges from this passage is Fenoglio's desire "to be" them, and not to imitate them or import them into his own culture. It seems that the English language and culture were closer to his inner thoughts than his mother tongue: this process appears to be mysterious to Fenoglio himself. Through the choice of English Fenoglio seems to be able to build a different identity: the "standard Italian" simply appeared to him to encapsulate the essence of that very culture which by now he had come to despise and recognize purely as the language of propaganda. The Italian language was thus artificial, inadequate to express the depth of his thoughts and the true sense of his life experience. English therefore became his chosen conceptual language, the one that could convey and express his own ideas of freedom

[32] For an in-depth analysis of the language used by Fenoglio in his work see Beccaria (2013).

(Grignani, 1981, pp. 2-6). It is in this precise context that the words of Fenoglio's English teacher, which I quoted earlier in this chapter, become truly suggestive: Fenoglio chose to identify with the enemies of Fascism, thus starting to build an alternative identity, based on opposite principles and values.

2.8 Conclusions

A cultural and historical examination of the context in which Fenoglio was educated reveals that Fenoglio's appropriation of English language and culture was a specific expression of political dissent towards the autarchic impositions of Fascism. The open aversion which the regime expressed towards Britain during the 1930s and 1940s, which consisted in a fierce political demonization and in the use of censorship of English literary works, demonstrates that Fenoglio's decision to translate English authors was at the time profoundly subversive and dangerous. Fenoglio's activity of translation cannot thus be simply considered an homage to a beloved literary tradition, but the first true manifestation of dissent towards the authority of the Fascist regime. As I have argued in Chapter 1, translations are profoundly connected with the political and ideological environment in which they are produced, and can either be used as a way to reinforce the mainstream values and poetics of the times or to challenge them. In translating, Fenoglio was not only challenging the very education he had received in school, but was also actively searching for an alternative political and intellectual model with which he could identify.

Translations were, for Fenoglio, a way to search for himself in the words of others. From this perspective, it was an existential choice, which helped him become a different human being from the one he was expected to be. In the following chapter, I look at Fenoglio's

translations of two plays, whose protagonists use rebellion as a way to affirm their freedom and individuality: Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.

CHAPTER 3

A PREDILECTION FOR DISSENTING HEROES: FENOGLIO'S TRANSLATIONS OF CRISTOPHER MARLOWE'S *DR FAUSTUS* AND JOHN MILTON'S *SAMSON AGONISTES*

Do you know why I so patiently translated Poe?

Because he resembled me.

C. Baudelaire[1]

3.1 Introduction

The first two translations by Fenoglio which I intend to examine in this thesis are Christopher Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and John Milton's *Samson Agonistes.* Drawing on the concept of poietic affinity put forward by Italian translation scholars Emilio Mattioli and Franco Buffoni, which I examined in Chapter 1, in this chapter I aim to bring to light the affinities between Fenoglio, Marlowe and Milton in terms of themes and style. My argument here is that these affinities appear to have motivated Fenoglio in his selection of these specific texts and also influenced the strategies he decided to employ in his translation.

As earlier explained, for Italian translation scholars Franco Buffoni and Emilio Mattioli a translation is the result of an intense poietic dialogue between the original author and text, where translation is not a mere "formal experiment but an existential experience intended to relive the creative act that inspired the original" (Buffoni in Blakesley, 2014, p. 222). The author of the original text and the translator thus dialogue in a translation, often showing

[1] This Baudelaire's sentence can be found in Rose (1981, p. 120)

affinities in terms of poetics: that is, in style, thematic issues or view of the world. This concept of translation is particularly insightful for translators who, like Fenoglio, were also creative writers, so that their creative writings as well can be more deeply understood in the light of their translated works.

An appropriate definition of poietic affinity between author and translator is provided by Charles Baudelaire in his 1864 letter to Théophile Thoré. Baudelaire explains the reasons behind his choice of translating Edgar Allan Poe, arguing that there was a special affinity between himself and the American writer. Two terms appear particularly interesting in Baudelaire's statement: the verb "resembled" and the adverb "patiently": the first one regards his motives in translation, his *telos.*[2] Resemblance is the reason why he decided to translate the works of Poe: the two authors share a common view of the world, common interests in thematic issues and a similar style in writing. Patience, the second term, concerns the way in which Baudelaire undertook that task, suggesting that the activity of translating this beloved author required endurance, deep participation and preciseness. Both terms employed by Baudelaire seem apt to define Fenoglio's rendition of Christopher Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and John Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. In this chapter I argue that, similarly to Baudelaire, Fenoglio's selection of texts to translate seems to be motivated by his affinity with these authors in terms of themes, characters and images. Moreover, the same patience which characterizes Baudelaire's rendition of Poe also defines Fenoglio's translations of these two plays, and becomes apparent when his original translation strategies are investigated, which reveal Fenoglio's complex and profound hermeneutic skills and his original understanding of these two characters.

[2] For the definition of the term *telos*, see Chapter 1 of this thesis

In this chapter I examine the key stylistic and thematic aspects of Marlowe's and Milton's plays and compare them with Fenoglio's original writings. Fenoglio's preference for translating dramatic texts helps us understand the dialogic, dry and succinct style which has become a recognizable characteristic of Fenoglio's prose. Moreover, looking in particular for similarities in the portrayal of characters, I argue that the thematic key factor that unites Fenoglio, Marlowe and Milton is a focus on individual dissent and rebellion. As I have argued in Chapter 1, translations are not neutral activities, but carry the imprint the translator's ideology. From this perspective, it is interesting to note that Fenoglio's selection of Marlowe and Milton shows his interest in characters who all choose in one way or another to challenge political and religious authority and power. Fenoglio, who since his adolescence was looking for "a human model, of a moral formation" (Chiodi, 2002, p. 199) which highly differed from the ones Fascism forced on him, discovered his own models in the protagonists of Milton's and Marlowe's tragedies. The study of these translations contributes to seeing the deepest roots of Fenoglio's attitude towards religion and political dissent, and see how culturally motivated they were, being inspired by classical tragedy and Elizabethan and Jacobean drama.

My critical emphasis is in particular directed to Fenoglio's attraction to tragic heroes as his model heroes, both in his translations and in his original writings. As I will later explain in detail, the choice of such characters is in tune with Fenoglio's view of life as fundamentally tragic, dominated by characters who embrace their fate, accepting the impending presence of death (Gramaglia, in Sipione, 2009, p. 79). Moreover, Fenoglio's identification with tragic heroes who rebelled against authority to preserve their freedom of choice expresses his moral reprobation towards the model heroes who were promoted by Fascist standards. His translations of plays which portray tragic, unconventional heroes, empowered Fenoglio to write about dissenting and tragic characters in his original writings as well: it thus appears that

Fenoglio was able to explore, through his translations of English drama, a series of rebels with whom he identified, and who also gave him the chance to express his own dissenting voice. In order to shed light on Fenoglio's personal reading of both plays, I also examine in detail Fenoglio's translation strategies and compare them to two other translators. Following Hu's idea that every translation is the result of a personal, subjective reading of a translator,[3] I argue that Fenoglio's translation strategies reveal Fenoglio's personal interpretation of the characters of Faustus and Samson.

These translations are an important testimony of the continuing interest Fenoglio professed towards English culture and literature. However, they both have received very little critical attention. Fenoglio's manuscript translation of *Samson Agonistes* is preserved in the Fondo Fenoglio, which is private and still belongs to Fenoglio's heirs, in Alba. It has never been published, and an in-depth analysis of the translation is offered in this thesis for the first time. Fenoglio's rendition of *Dr Faustus*, instead, was published by Fenoglio's scholar Mark Pietralunga in 2005. My analysis will add to Pietralunga's examination of this specific translation, exploring its cultural and ideological background, and establishing connections between this translation and Fenoglio's original writings.

3.2 Stylistic affinities between Milton Marlowe and Fenoglio: a predilection for translating drama

Going through Fenoglio's manuscripts, preserved in four red folders in his daughter's house in Alba, one thing immediately stands out: the majority of them are translations of plays,

[3] See Chapter 2 of this thesis, pp. 46-47

or parts of plays. Fenoglio himself expressed his preference for drama in a famous letter, dated 8 September 1951, to writer and editor Italo Calvino, in which he stated: "I translate everything indifferently, but I have a marked preference for drama and poetry" (Fenoglio, 2002, p. 31).

But what are the reasons for Fenoglio's specific choice of genre? One answer to this question may be found in the formal structure of drama. In fact, drama in general, and English drama in particular, might have appealed to Fenoglio for the direct language which is typical of this literary genre. In drama there is no room for the narrator to "comment or explain or moralise or interpret the action" (Daiches, 1986, p. 77), but the actions and words of the characters must carry the entire meaning of the play. Fenoglio's fascination with drama can be explained with the fact that in plays the narrator "disappears behind his characters, whose speech and action constitute the play" (p.77). This sort of prominence of the characters' actions and speech was particularly appreciated by Fenoglio: in his short-stories and novels, Fenoglio shows events, happenings, plain facts as they are, never indulging in abstract or ideological considerations. He was convinced that facts speak for themselves, and that the writer should be "eyes, eyes only" (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 192): a witness of the events taking place in front of him.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning here that Fenoglio experimented with drama as a genre: he wrote four short theatrical texts and one screenplay, which were all found in his drawers after his death. One of these one -act plays, *Solitudine*, will be examined in Chapter 4 of this thesis. Fenoglio's attraction towards translating dramatic texts corroborates his attraction towards a language which is based on direct speech, dryness and poetic language, thus reflecting his own approach to style in creative writings. This "performative" quality of Fenoglio's writing was identified by several commentators. The poet and literary critic Eugenio Montale, for example, in a review of Fenoglio's novel *Il Partigiano Johnny* noted: "Fenoglio

is one of those writers who let the facts speak but never allow themselves to intervene directly" (Montale, 1978, p. 72). Literary critic Gina Lagorio also mentions this characteristic of Fenoglio's writing, arguing that "it is evident that Fenoglio was tempted by drama, a language for which he had a natural inclination. This is demonstrated by his own style in narration, which prefers direct speech" (Lagorio, 1970, p. 14). In his own original writings, Fenoglio showed an attentive research for directness in words , a word which seems to have a "physical" body, and which gives the reader the visual image of the specific object he is describing. The unending research which Fenoglio carried out to find the perfect word was motivated specifically by the fact that he wanted to present events and actions taking place in front of the reader with no ornaments or comments by the author. The reader too becomes a spectator, a witness to what s/he reads on the page.[4]

The language of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and Milton's *Samson Agonistes* relies heavily on poetry. This aspect is interesting, because Fenoglio's own language in his novels is highly symbolic and poetic, especially in *Il Partigiano Johnny*, where he makes large use of metaphors, of poetic images and lyrical language. One example of this use of language can be found in a passage of *Il partigiano Johnny*, in which Fenoglio describes the night falling on the city of Alba, whose inhabitants are so terrified by the violence of Fascists that they have barred doors and windows, while the Partisans, hidden in the hills of the Langhe, are forced to

[4] The necessity of finding a word which conveys a physical and visual image often brings Fenoglio to create neologisms in his original writings: one example can be found in the following lines of *Il Partigiano Johnny*, in which Fenoglio writes: "Appena al limite della città, un'ombra più nera si stagliò nell'ombra uniforme, gigantesca; e Johnny *stascò* le mani (Fenoglio 1994, p. 18). Fenoglio, instead of saying "took his hands out of his pockets", coins the word "stascò", which does not exist in Italian, using the word *tasca*, which means "pocket", adding a negative prefix and conjugating it as a verb. This neologism allows Fenoglio to use only one word instead of three or four, and at the same time to show the action more directly to the reader. Thus, the words of the theater, which need to be immediate and evocative, seem to be perfectly in tune with Fenoglio's own way of narrating.

face a long cold winter night with no comfort or commodity, often with an empty stomach, not knowing what the following day will bring:

> The civilian houses were sealed like tombs (…) And outside, a black wind whistled eternally, as if it sprang from the very roots of humanity's mad heart (Fenoglio 1994, p. 75).

Echoes of the visionary and metaphysical language of Marlowe can also be found in other poetic passages of *Il Partigiano Johnny*. One example is offered by Fenoglio's description of a night of anguish experienced by Johnny, who is unable to sleep despite his exhaustion:

> He hoped that exhaustion, so legitimate and slothful, would overcome him until late in the morning. But the fatigue, announced by so many heralds, did not come marching into the field of battle in serried ranks, and Johnny rose (…) (p. 56).

Here the poetic and evocative personification of tiredness as an army, announced by heralds, recalls the creativity of the Elizabethans – not only Marlowe but also Shakespeare – in their use of metaphors and rhetoric devices (Isella, 1992, p. 511).

3.3 Thematic affinities between *Dr Faustus*, *Samson Agonistes* and Fenoglio's creative writings: a focus on tragic heroes

Having analysed some stylistic similarities between the two English authors and Fenoglio, I shall now examine the thematic issues which Fenoglio shares with Marlowe and Milton. The thematic connections between Fenoglio's translations and his own original writings have been recognized by scholar Mark Pietralunga, who argued that "in most cases the texts translated by Fenoglio reflect a theme, a subject or an image which are particularly dear to him, which often return in his creative writings" (Pietralunga, 2000, p. xiii). Pietralunga,

however, did not offer examples of which specific themes or images he refers or to what extent these analogies might be relevant in the understanding of Fenoglio's poetics. In order to fill this gap, this section focuses on the most relevant thematic affinities between Fenoglio's translations of Marlowe and Milton and Fenoglio's own writings, with particular interest on the characters portrayed in these plays and in Fenoglio's novels, in particular in *Il Partigiano Johnny* and in *Una Questione Privata*.

The first thing that can be noted is that both Marlowe's and Milton's plays deal with a central, strong character whose personal transformation is the focus of the play. The importance of characters in these plays has been underlined by scholar Cleanth Brooks, who argues that Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* are so focused on the personal development of the protagonist that they lack a "middle part" (Brooks, 1986, p. 97) in terms of events taking place in the plot. In fact, he explains that "the middle of the play has to be sought in the area of personal self-examination and inner conflict" (p. 98) within the characters themselves. The fact that the psychological and human development of one single character constitutes a pivotal element in the structure of these plays appears to be a plausible reason for Fenoglio's interest in them. Fenoglio's own novels and short stories are usually built around the development of one character, who experiences self-discovery, inner conflict and personal growth (Gioanola, 2017, p. 125). For instance, *Il partigiano Johnny* narrates the journey of a young man who decides to join the partisans to fight the Fascists, and in doing so he is forced to put his own beliefs and values to the test. Similarly, the protagonist of *Una Questione Privata* whose name is – interestingly enough – Milton, finds himself torn between the pursue of his love interest and the participation in the war of Resistance, and has to deal with the contradictory feelings which coexist within him.

But in my view the central characteristic that Faustus, Samson and many of Fenoglio's

characters share is that they are all tragic heroes, and they seem to reflect Fenoglio's view of the world, which in essence can be defined tragic (Barberi Squarotti, 2012, pp. 608-609). It is worth here spending a few words on the characteristics of tragedy to better contextualize Fenoglio's interest in it and its relation with Milton and Marlowe.

Many commentators and philosophers have tried to define specifically what the tragic is. The most insightful of the reflection of the nature of tragic is in my view the essay *Uber das Tragische*, written by the German philosopher Karl Jaspers in 1952. His interpretation of the tragic view of the world and in particular of the essence of the tragic hero is particularly revealing for our discussion of the protagonists of Marlowe's and Milton's plays and also Fenoglio's own characters. Jaspers argues that tragedy shows the human being in the moment of his fall, which the philosopher calls the "shipwreck"; this is the moment in which the tragic hero must face his destiny and ruin, which is usually caused by irreconcilable conflicts. The tragic hero is "elevated by his experience of extreme situations" (Jaspers, 1952, p. 210): this means that the pain caused by the tragic situation forces he hero to express the full potential of the human experience. Moreover, the conflicts that the tragic hero must face are often inner conflicts, and deal with the clash between destiny and personal responsibility. Where fate ends and free will begins is not clear, not even to the tragic hero. But in this situation of grave and profound conflict what matters is how the tragic hero *acts*, or maybe it would be better to say how he *chooses* to act. The moment of his choice, the choice which defines the hero's character, is the definitive one, because it coincides with the knowledge of one's own ruin. Jaspers summarizes very effectively this aspect when he argues:

> the tragic hero does not simply suffer and bear ruin and pain, but he is also aware of it; and not only is he aware of it, but his soul suffers extreme laceration. Tragedy represents the transformation a human being undergoes when he experiences extreme circumstances and situations (Jaspers, 1952, p. 211).

From this perspective, Faustus and Samson are traditional tragic heroes: Faustus is aware that his rebellion against God will lead him to damnation, but he accepts the full responsibility for his fall, and does not repent even if he is given the chance (Steiner, 1961/2005, p. 103); Samson is a tragic figure because his destiny becomes fulfilled only when he decides to act, but his action coincides with his own ruin. Both characters express fully the paradox of tragic freedom, in which a solitary individual confronts a fate which seems inescapable but that at the same time is the result of his own actions.[5]

What has been said for Faustus and Samson could also be said with regard to Fenoglio's characters. Many commentators have identified a tragic imprint in Fenoglio's writing and in his portrayal of characters. For example, the literary critic Corsini argues that in Fenoglio's work

> the individual is alone, often lost, and follows an impossible and absolute ideal, which does not belong to this world. The research that Fenoglio's characters undertake is felt as a duty which needs to be fulfilled, and the heroism of these characters lies in their constant trying, even though the task seems impossible and leads with all probability to defeat (Corsini in Vaccaneo, 1990, p. 54).

Moreover, Fenoglio's poetics revolves around the themes of solitude as "existential condition, in which one man needs to confront himself and the world, facing life's challenges and trials, which lead to a destiny of death and loss" (p. 55). Fenoglio's biographer, Negri Scaglione, also underlines this aspect of Fenoglio's poetics: "the tragedy of men who are alone in facing their

[5] For an exploration of the role of the tragic hero see Leech (1969/2018). George Steiner also wrote a pivotal essay on tragedy (1992) and a more recent article on the same subject (2004). In his examination of tragedy, however, Steiner focuses in particular on the tragic "events", more than on the specific responsibility of the tragic hero. His focus is on the destruction of the individual in front of major forces which cannot be understood, but which the tragic character heroically accepts. For an in-depth analysis of the peculiarities of Elizabethan tragedies see Bradley (1962); Lehmann (2016); Evans (2017).

destiny interests Fenoglio: the solitude in which each of us must go through life and meet death" (Negri Scaglione, 2006, pp. 180-181). The protagonist of Fenoglio's novel *Una Questione Privata* is a tragic hero, whose obsessive desire of knowledge transforms him in a modern Oedipus, and whose internal lacerations – which he tries unsuccessfully to conciliate – lead him to death (Marchese 2014, p. 111).

Fenoglio's inclination towards translating and portraying such tragic figures appears to be an implicit rejection of the model heroes that were promoted and disseminated by Fascist culture. Fascism promoted an ideal of hero which was based on two fundamental aspects: the first one was obedience, and the second was aggressiveness. These two elements constituted the myth of the 'new man' which was to substitute the "old and corrupt bourgeois mentality" (Tarquini, 2011, p.134), which allegedly belonged to liberals and antifascists. The concept of virility supported by Fascism was grounded on the idea that men had to use violence to impose their own opinions and that life was fundamentally an "object of conquest" (p. 136): as it was explained by Umberto Eco in his essay *Ur-Fascism*, for Fascists "life is lived for struggle [...] because life is a permanent warfare" (Eco, 1995, p.7); moreover, the true Fascist hero had to serve the regime, and thus had to sacrifice and forsake his own individuality, because "for the Fascists everything is State, and nothing outside the State has any spiritual or human value" (p. 134). The utmost success is given by the defeat of the enemy, thus the Fascist hero is always a winner.[6]

It is not surprising that these fascist masculine ideals of slavery and unquestioned heroism for the sake of the state should clash with ideas of freedom and self-expression embraced by the more liberal-minded intellectuals and dissenting writers like Fenoglio.

[6] It is worth remembering here the words that Mussolini used as a "parola d'ordine" after the declaration of war: "Vincere, e vinceremo!" (We must win! And we will win!).

Fenoglio translated and wrote about characters who are fundamentally defined by a strong individualism: they do not conform to a common way of thinking and reject, in a way or another, any form of authority. Moreover, they embrace death as an act of self-affirmation. In fact, as Jaspers acutely argued, the true measure of tragic heroes can be found in the fact that they "realize their self-hood even unto death, where they find redemption and deliverance (..) through their sheer strength to bear the unknown without question, and to endure it with unshakable defiance" (Jaspers, 1952, p. 42-43). Faustus and Samson thus fascinated Fenoglio, because their choice of a life at the margins reflected his own spirit of revolt, which critic Gioanola acutely defined "anarchic and savage at the same time" (Gioanola, 2017, p. 113). The boldest and most daring of these heroes is undoubtedly Marlowe's Faustus who chooses to defy, by sixteenth-century standards, the highest authority: God.

3.4 Fenoglio's translation of Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*: context and selection of scenes

Having explored Fenoglio's stylistic and thematic affinities with Marlow and Milton, I now wish to concentrate on the specific translation of *Dr Faustus*. When Fenoglio started reading Marlowe's plays, he was a schoolboy dreaming of becoming a Robin Hood (Gioanola, 2017, p. 24) and looking for a role model who could inspire him to oppose a tyranny which he found unbearable. It is then no surprise that his first love was an author who, in his life and in his work, made of the concept of rebellion a fundamental aspect.[7] The Elizabethan playwright is in fact known for his extremism and subversive style both in his writing and in his personal life (Bevington, 1996, p. 524). Himself a translator, Marlowe wrote plays which revolved

[7] Scholar David Bevington highlights this aspect of Marlowe's poetics in analyzing, *Tamburlaine the Great*: "it narrates the story of a Revolution enthusiastically carried out against any form of constituted authority" (Bevington 1996: 543)

around the exploration of power and its decadence, the consequence of ambition and more in general the theme of rebellion.

Fenoglio's translation of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* dates back to the years of high school, in the early 1940s, therefore it can be argued that Fenoglio's fascination with this author was born very early and it grew in time becoming very solid, turning into a proper giant in Fenoglio's poetics as a writer. In fact, as it has been noted, in Fenoglio's partisan novels the protagonists are often seen reading or translating Marlowe, so that his theatre appears as the "translation for excellence, and the reading which marks the moments of greatest crisis" (Brozzi, 2008, p. vi). For example, in the beginning of *Il Partigiano Johnny*, the protagonist is translating *The Jew of Malta* right before he makes the decision to join the partisans; in the short story called *L'incontro*, the protagonist Milton refers to Marlowe when he meets for the first time his love interest, Fulvia: again, the central character of the novel is a translator, and is translating Marlowe: "I knew that I would never take up again the translation of Marlowe, which I had confidently left an hour before, and together with Marlowe, everything else that I had done before" (Fenoglio, 2007, p. 575). In another novel, called *L'imboscata*, the central character – his name is once again Milton – is also translating Marlowe before he joins the partisans. Marlowe's translations are inserted in the life of Fenoglio's characters as an identity factor, a characteristic which defines them specifically.

In a letter to Italo Calvino, Fenoglio defines Marlowe as "the black diamond of English literature" (Fenoglio, 2002, p. 31), thus suggesting that Marlowe's plays are dark and mysterious, yet bright and beautiful. The dark, gloomy aspect of Marlowe's poetics must have attracted Fenoglio from the beginning of his encounter with the playwright. *Doctor Faustus* in particular, with its demons and angels, and the pact with the devil, is full of images which will later return in Fenoglio's own creative works. In fact, the fascination for the so called

"letteratura degli inferi" – thus for those works which deal with damnation and the conflict between Bad and Evil – has been noted as a central aspect of Fenoglio's poetics (Foti Belligambi, 2013, p. 151), especially in his partisan novels. In this regard Dante Isella, reflecting on the theme of the battle between Bad and Evil in *Il Partigiano Johnny* argues:

> In this battle against Evil, the enemy is naturally cruel, ferocious, odious, but never unworthy of respect. It is the fallen angel, that Lucifer of the infernal ranks, who oftentimes has the better of the good forces (Isella, 1978, p. xiii).

Isella's argument is rather interesting, because it is the testimony of Fenoglio's deep fascination for the metaphysical element: the fight which takes place in the hills of Piedmont is elevated to the rank of a fight between the forces of Evil and the forces of Good. It is not a coincidence that the partisans are twice called "the archangels" (Fenoglio, 1994, p. 128), whereas the Fascists and the Germans have usually demoniac connotations, either in their behaviour or in their physical appearance. It is through this metaphysical element, which Fenoglio had explored through his translations and his study of English Reformation and the King James Bible, that Fenoglio's partisan novels acquire their epic breadth, because it transforms a specific historical event and experience in the metaphor of human struggle, which concerns us all as human beings, in opposing the forces of evil and pursuing the triumph of good.

The original manuscript of this translation is preserved in a small notebook now in possession of Giancarlo Molino, to whom it was donated by Fenoglio's heirs after his death. The text of this translation was published in 2005 by scholar Mark Pietralunga, in the Italian literary journal *Sincronie*. The scholar traces Fenoglio's motive in translating this play in linguistic experimentation, noting that this translation is the result of Fenoglio's attraction "to

the concrete language of the original and to the clarity of its expression and images" (Pietralunga, 2005, p. 15). In my view, Fenoglio's motive in translating should be investigated examining the specific selection that he made of the play, and looking at the content of these scenes. As a matter of fact, since Fenoglio decided to translate only the scenes where Faustus is centre stage, and left aside the sections of the play which focus on other characters, it can be argued that the character of Faustus and his religious rebellion are the elements which interest Fenoglio the most, rather than the style with which the play was written.

Fenoglio's translation begins with Faust's monologue in the first scene of Act 1, skipping the verses of the chorus in the Prologue. Fenoglio also does not tackle scene two of Act one, in which Faustus is absent, and resumes his translation when scene three begins: in this scene Faustus is having a conversation with Mephistopheles, and the focus of Fenoglio's interest is the moment of the play when Faustus makes the decision to sell his soul to the Devil but later has second thoughts; Faustus' inner conflict is exacerbated by the presence of two angels, the Good Angel and the Evil Angel, who compete to win Faustus's will; one asks Faust to repent, the other reminds him his promise to Mephistopheles and tells him that forgiveness is only an illusion. Faustus seems to waver between his desire of fulfilling his ambition and repenting, but despite his doubts and questions he finally gives up to the Devil. This is the moment of crisis which precedes Faustus' final decision and which precipitates Faustus' story. At this point, Fenoglio's translation moves to scene 6. In this scene Faustus converses with Mephistopheles but is still tortured by the idea of repenting. Fenoglio, however, does not translate the entire scene and neglects the last part, in which Mephistopheles shows Faust the personification of the Seven deadly sins. The translation resumes again at the beginning of scene 8, and abruptly ends in the middle of it, with Faustus and Mephistopheles arriving in Rome and preparing to enter the Pope's private chambers.

From this analysis it appears not only that Fenoglio focused his translation on Faustus' lines, but also that he selected the parts of the play in which Faustus is debating – often with himself – whether to embark or not on the decision of selling his soul to the devil. The scenes chosen by Fenoglio are also the most important for the tragic evolution of the story, and show how Faustus' reasoning leads him to make the decision to reject God. Faustus's deal with Lucifer is a suffered one. His story is one of despair, of a man who gets tangled up in his own logic and reasoning, alternating between the desire to cross the limits and repentance (Brooks, 1986, p.100). Fenoglio is particularly interested in translating these scenes, because they show Faustus' inner conflict and suffering: these scenes are in fact the ones that explore the most the theme of self-exploration and transformation, which, as it has been noted, is at the core of the play; as the literary scholar Giamatti notes, the tragedy of Faustus deals with "man's innate power of formation, the capacity of the self to shape the self" (Giamatti 1972, p. 110), and with the consequences of this power of transformation.

Faustus' language also reflects the deep conflict within himself. Faustus is a character of great strength, whose ambition is the result of a distorted perception of what power is, but is also a fallen creature, whose transgressive energy is expressed in his highly poetic and hyperbolic language, which will reach the point of highest lyrical expression in his final monologue. As it has been noted, Faustus' poetry

> arises from the depth of the character of Faustus himself; it expresses his aspirations, his dreams, his fears, his agonies, and his intense awareness of the conflicting feeling within himself (Brooks, 1986, p. 98).

Such a choice of scenes is rather unsurprising, if one looks at Fenoglio's own original writings. Self-doubt and self-exploration are characteristics that Faustus shares with Fenoglio's character Johnny, protagonist of the novel *Il partigiano Johnny*. To highlight the connection

between Fenoglio's translation of Faustus and his own poetics with regard to these aspects, I would like to compare a scene which Fenoglio translated from Marlowe's play and a section of *Il Partigiano Johnny*, in which Faustus and Johnny share the same interior state and the same dilemmas.

In scene seven of Marlowe's play Faustus seems tortured by doubts. At the beginning of the scene Faustus has already consummated his pact with the devil, but seems now to have changed his mind and thus curses Mephistopheles for depriving him of the joys of heaven:

> Faustus: When I behold the heavens, then I repent
> And curse thee, wicked Mephistopheles
> Because thou hast deprived me of those joys (7: 1-3)

Faustus decision to repent, however, is rejected a few verses afterwards, when he states: "my heart's so hard'ned I cannot repent" (7, 18) and later "I am resolv'd: Faustus shall never repent"(7: 32). But Faustus changes his mind again, when he remembers that God created the world and created it as a gift to humanity; in this highly emotional scene, Faustus seems to surrender to his desire of being forgiven, and even cries to Jesus Christ: "Ah, Christ, my Saviour, Seek to save distressed Faustus' soul" (7: 82-83). After Lucifer, Mephistopheles and Belzebub tell Faustus that he is breaking his promise, Faustus resolves once again "never to look to Heaven, Never to name God or to pray him, to burn his Scriptures, slay his ministers, And make my spirits pull his churches down" (7: 96-98). This scene shows that Faustus finds himself in a painful quandary: in this sense, the Bad Angel and the Good Angel are interpreted as the "mirrors of the inner state of the person to whom they appear" (Giamatti, 1986, p. 105). In the end, Faustus remains faithful to his promise and to his own decision: it is his own strictness which leads his to damnation, but it is this same quality which permits him to retain his dignity. Fenoglio, who was longing for a "morality which lacked carelessness and easy

compromises" (Scipioni, 2009, 23) was naturally drawn to characters who, despite showing hesitation and distrust, kept their word until the end.

Similarly, the protagonist of Fenoglio's novel *Il partigiano Johnny* experiences doubts and alternating states of mind. Johnny is a young student, who has decided to enter the partisan armed forces to fight the Fascists and the Germans, but his decision is far from being simple. Johnny is forced to experience painful circumstances, and is often disillusioned by the lack of organization of the forces he joined; moreover, he often feels overwhelmed by the apparently impossible task to defeat organized and powerful armies, and is shocked by the seemingly absurd deaths of his friends. The horror of the civil war reveals itself in all its ferocity, and Johnny seems to give up his decision to fight. After two of his friends are attacked by the Fascists and seem to have died in an ambush, Johnny despairs and even thinks about giving himself up to the Fascists. He then tells himself:

> Enough, enough, today I have had enough. Maybe they two were still alive, but they are dead, they both. Enough, enough, I don't want to be shot at any longer, I don't want to have to fly for my life once more. Enough, enough, the proclamation. No! I don't want to consign, to give me up, but I'll hide in any house, in a cellar, I'll have myself maintained, I'll dress in civvy, I'll bury my sten. Enough, I'll surely be patient until the end. I'm alone. Enough (Fenoglio, 1995, p. 346).

A few lines later, however, Johnny abruptly changes his mind: after considering the courage of his friends who are dead, Johnny declares: "I'll go on to the end, I'll never give up" (p. 348). Thus, Johnny shares with Faust "the alternating states of bliss and despair" (Abrams and Greenblatt, 2000, p. 990) which characterize a life-changing decision, and the loneliness which this responsibility brings as its inevitable consequence. It is obvious that Faustus' choice and Johnny's choice are radically different, but they share the same determination to challenge

a superior authority and the same final rigor in accepting the consequences of their choice: Faustus accepts damnation, Johnny accepts death[8].

As it has been suggested, Faustus is looking for "an act of self-affirmation" (Giamatti, 1986, p.110) and this act of self-affirmation- though in the end leading to his downfall – is based on an act of rebellion: indeed, he is struggling to achieve some sort of intellectual freedom. For this reason, in my view, the exploration of an alternative point of view on religion, a view which also contemplated individual freedom an rebellion to authority, is Fenoglio's main interest in this play.

3.5 Fenoglio's "Protestantism" and the theology of Faustus: the translation of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* as an expression of religious dissent

Fenoglio's translation of Marlowe's *Faustus* is a testimony of his attraction to works of literature which treated the questioning of religion. Fenoglio showed a profound interest towards theology and religion for his entire life, but his interests – as I argued earlier– were rather original, since they were more in tune with the representation of a distant, indifferent God: in his original writings, such as the short novel *La Malora*, Fenoglio looks at "the damnation, the fall of man without remedy, the God who abandons man and leaves him, as a legacy, a destiny of fatigue and pain" (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 175).

What emerges from Fenoglio's translation of *Dr Faustus* is his interest in a play whose protagonist challenges religious authority, an interest which is also corroborated by his translation strategies which aim at highlighting the specifically religious context in which the

[8] Faustus' contradictory lines "I do repent, and yet I do despair" find echo in Fenoglio's own definition of his way of writing: "I write with deep distrust and a deeper faith" (Fenoglio 1960, pp.180-181).

play is situated. Faustus deals with religion in a subversive, challenging way, which might have been particularly fascinating with Fenoglio. As a matter of fact he, at that time, was himself starting to question religious authority and was looking for a personal way of approaching God and religion as a whole (Sipione, 2009, p. 45).

It is relevant to touch upon Fenoglio's relationship with religion, because it explains Fenoglio's interest in a play such *Faustus* and in an author such Christopher Marlowe, "whose plays of power and helplessness are filled with the energy of the sacred and its desecration" (Romany and Lindsay, 2003, p. xi). It is interesting to see that Fenoglio undertook the task of translating a play which dealt with this kind of subversion, especially if we consider that Fenoglio himself at that age had explicitly rejected Catholicism, which was the established religion at his time. It is common knowledge that Fenoglio, at the age of sixteen, wrote a note to his philosophy professor, Don Natale Bussi, a religious figure who remained as a friend in Beppe's life, in which he announced that he would abandon all religious practices. Don Bussi recalled that Beppe "affirmed that, more than God, it was the Church he had stopped believing in" (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 135). Fenoglio's sister, Marisa, also remembers that he had said to her: "each one of us imagines our Lord the way he can. The Lord I imagine does not resemble the one of the priests" (p.167).

It was first and foremost the suffocating Catholic ritualism that Fenoglio could not stand: in this regard, it has been noted that Fenoglio in his adolescence, had interpreted the fact that the mass was included in the compulsory military service as a sort of blaspheme conjunction of Fascism and religious devotion (Gioanola, 2007, p. 33). Fenoglio was intolerant to everything that was regulated and subjected to impositions from the outside, especially in the religious field, in which spontaneous adhesion is the first requirement for a sincere act of faith. Moreover, as I have argued in Chapter 2, in Fascist Italy Protestantism was deeply

connected with anti-fascism. In the journals of Fascist propaganda the Reformation was described as an event secretly promoted by Jews and aimed at destroying Christianity from within. After the Lateran Treaty of 1929, Catholicism had become officially a religion of the State, and it appeared evident that religion had been contaminated by politics. Fenoglio's dismissal of Catholicism was also linked to this contamination, which left no room for personal interpretation or for tolerance in religious issues.

Despite his courageous rejection of Catholicism, Fenoglio did not despise religion as a whole. On the contrary, it was often reported that he was able to quote entire passages of the Bible by heart, and that his curiosity for religion accompanied him throughout his whole life (Negri Scaglione, 2006, pp. 178-180). Fenoglio's attitude towards religion could be defined as a mixture of moral rigor and spiritual austerity which does not tolerate any sort of compromise. Much has been written about Fenoglio's relationship with religion[9], especially about his preference for Protestantism, which promoted a more individual and direct relationship with God. As a matter of fact, the puritan ideal, which contemplated also civic and moral irreproachability, was closer to Fenoglio's sensibility, and in Protestantism Fenoglio could find values which conformed to his idea of religious devotion (Gioanola, 2007, p. 35): Fenoglio was not interested in the concept of redemption as intended by Catholicism, because it seemed to him an easy compromise (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 175), when men can simply change their mind at the last minute and be forgiven. Fenoglio valued instead the supreme importance of choice, a choice which must be consistent with the actions that men carry out throughout

[9] In this regard, see Maria Luisa Sipione's *Beppe Fenoglio e la Bibbia* (2011), which establishes the importance of the Bible both in Fenoglio's writing career and in his life. See also Pergliasco (2005) for an interesting discussion of the connection between language and the sacred texts in *Il Partigiano Johnny*. For a general background of Fenoglio's interest for religion see also Lajolo (1978); Negri Scaglione (2007) and Bigazzi (2011)

their entire life, and which must be kept with rigor and until the end. In a way, it is the God of the Old Testament that Fenoglio is interested in: a God who punishes, and asks men to choose, once and for all, whom they want to serve (Joshua 24:17).

The theology which Faustus expresses in Marlowe's play is in tune with Fenoglio's own ideas, in that it is neither consolatory nor reassuring to the Christian audience. God is distant, does not interfere, "seems not to act at all" (Romany and Lindsey 2003, p. xxvi), thus abandons men to the destiny they have willingly chosen. The choice to translate *Faustus* thus suggests Fenoglio's early interest for a vision of life which has been defined, with regard to religion, as "austere and manfully welcomed" (Sipione, 2009, p. 60); the dark and mysterious world of Faustus is in fact in tune with the Puritanical beliefs of Fenoglio: "the error cannot be corrected, we are destined either to eternal suffering or eternal glory" (Sipione, 2009, p. 206), while the value of life must be assessed by the coherence with which he accepts his martyrdom, choosing one side or the other.

Fenoglio was particularly sensitive to the idea that there is an association between choice and martyrdom. In his diary there is an entry, titled "Choice", which says:

> I have been speaking with Corsini and Cerrato[10] about East and West. Corsini does not want to choose, and says he is ready to die freely, not belonging to the ones nor to the others. I told him that choosing is already a form of martyrdom (Fenoglio, 2007, p. 569)

What thus emerges from this quote is that Fenoglio believed that embracing one side is in itself a definitive choice. It must be done with the awareness that there is no way back from one's decision, and that the consequences must be unconditionally accepted. It thus

[10] Corsini and Cerrato were two friends of Fenoglio.

appears more clear why Fenoglio was so fascinated by a character who does not choose the way of repentance but remains faithful to his principles, however sacrilegious and nefarious they may be, even accepting death and despair not to submit and obey someone whose authority he does not recognize.

3.6 Fenoglio's translation strategies in his rendition of Marlowe's Dr Faustus: a poetics of "patience" in the rendition of religious terms

In the introduction to this chapter I have noted how the term "patience" seems to sum up the general attitude of Baudelaire with regard to the works of Poe. Similarly, it might be argued that the same patience characterizes Fenoglio's rendition of *Dr Faustus*, with specific regard to religious and metaphysical terms. Despite his young age, Fenoglio appears to be particularly accurate in his rendition of such terms, and shows particular attention to the words which convey the theological and religious significance of the source text. Fenoglio's level of proficiency in English at this particular time of his life is not officially attested, but it can be argued, looking at Marlowe's translation, that he was able to face the linguistic challenges of a very complex text without making interpretation or comprehension mistakes.

As for the translation tools he used during his school years, there is no indication that he already possessed his own dictionary, but Fenoglio's school library still owns the dictionaries which students could borrow during the 1920s and 1930s, and which Fenoglio himself consulted in different occasions (Pesce, 2014, p. 33). For his later translations, he used the 1936 edition of the *Dizionario delle Lingue Italiana e Inglese* by A. dr R. Lysle, which is now in the home of Fenoglio's daughter.

As I have explained earlier in this thesis, the specific translation strategies made by translators are revealing of their subjectivity, in that they reflect their personal interpretation of the text. As noted by translator scholar Popovič, the individual choices which translators make in this process are the expression of particular tendencies, through which the translator emerges as a creative subject (2006, pp. 90-91) : these tendencies, all together, constitute the so-called poetics of the translator. Moreover, translators usually add more emphasis to some aspects of the text and neglect others, due to their personal interpretation of the source text: in this regard, Luciano Anceschi noted :

> Translations give us the tone, the measure, the true meaning of the way of reading of a Century, of a literary movement or of a specific individual. That individual reading (…) can become clear in the way the translator – dealing with the source text – produces a translation which underlines some aspects of the source text and neglects, forgets or ignores others (Anceschi, 1957, p. 50).

This quote highlights that the translator's reading, thus his personal interpretation of the text, which is revealed both in his text choices and in his translation strategies, is the true mark of creativity which emerges in the translated text. As I have argued in Chapter 1, a proper way to make the subjectivity of the translator visible is to compare its rendition of a text with other translations, highlighting the difference in their translation approach and in translation strategies. In order to identify the specificity of Fenoglio's translation, I wish to compare his translation to the one realized by Rodolfo Wilcock and published by Adelphi in 1966. By comparing Fenoglio's translation choices and the ones employed by Wilcock, it is possible to identify the specific features of Fenoglio's translation and his creative approach to the text. I have preferred Wilcock's translation of *Dr Faustus* to other renditions mainly because Wilcock was himself a writer and a dramatist; other translations, such as Nemi D'Agostino's

(1980), were published at a much later date, when the standard Italian language was already very different and when editorial policies might have had more influence on the work of translators.

It must be also noted here that, whereas Fenoglio's translations were not published, the ones I compare with Fenoglio's were indeed published. This means that they were intended for an audience, and might have had been subjected to policies and restrictions imposed by editors or by the general requirements of the publishing house. However, when two or more translations are compared within the perspective of Translator Studies, the focus of interest is not the publishing editorial context – which has relevance but cannot be determined specifically – but the subjectivity of the translator. As a consequence, if we are to compare two different translations within the framework of Translator Studies we have to identify the translator as the author of the translation: when s/he puts his name on the translation, s/he takes responsibility for the authorship of that translation.

The first instance of Fenoglio's attention towards a precise rendition of religious terms can be found in the translation of the adjective "evil" (I, 72), which Marlowe uses to identify precisely the angel who wants to damn Faustus. To translate this term, Wilcock chooses the neutral adjective "cattivo" (1966, p. 434), which is the direct opposite to "buono". But while it is true that the term *cattivo* in Italian is the correct term to indicate the opposite of good, the adjective is generally used to indicate an unspecified reprehensible behavior, and carries a more common and general meaning. Fenoglio instead chooses to translate the term bad with the archaic adjective "malo". In my view, two reasons can be identified in Fenoglio's specific choice of this term: the first is that using a word which derives from Latin Fenoglio is more in tune with the style of the tragedy, in which expressions in Latin are recurrent, especially in the specific scene Fenoglio is dealing with; the second reason is that "malo" is not a neutral or

general term, but it is used to refer to moral and spiritual malice and dishonesty, rather than to a specific behaviour (*Treccani Encyclopedia*, malo entry), and immediately recalls a supernatural, spiritual evil. Interestingly, this term is employed with great frequency in Dante's *Commedia*, to describe those who are damned.[11] In this way, Fenoglio chooses the term that best represents the spiritually negative characteristics of the angel who is a slave of the devil, and at the same time makes use of an adjective which will quite naturally recall the most important Italian literary work on heaven and hell, which is of course Dante's *Commedia*.

Another example of the attention that Fenoglio lends to terms with a deeply religious connotation is given by his translation of the term *stipendium*, which is in Latin in the original text. This term appears at the beginning of the first scene, where Faustus is reviewing all the knowledge he has acquired. At one point, reflecting on religion, Faustus says: "*mors stipendium peccati est*, death is the reward of sin" (1, 39-40). While Wilcock translates the term "stipendium/reward" with the word "paga", which in Italian means economical retribution and thus carries a more practical meaning, Fenoglio adopts a term which better conveys the moral and spiritual connotation of the word and chooses "mercede". Mercede derives directly from the Latin word *merx*, which literally translated means "goods"; but if we look at the meaning and usage of this word in Italian, we discover that it was often used by Dante with the meaning of "spiritual reward" (Consoli, in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, 1970). Once more, Fenoglio chose a term which stresses the spiritual and metaphysical aspects of the original text, and thus is particularly appropriate in this specific context. Moreover, this term is highly literary and thus particularly in tune with Marlowe's own style, which is often baroque and elaborate.

Fenoglio then translates the scene in which Faustus seals his pact with the devil, and

[11] The adjective *malo* appears more than 20 times in Dante's Commedia, especially in the *Purgatorio* and *Inferno*.

pronounces the famous phrase: "*consummatum est*. The bill is ended" (5: 74). This is a central moment in Marlowe's play, which marks Faustus' damnation and leads him to his tragic end. *Consummatum est*, the last words of Jesus on the cross (John XIX: 30), are subversively parodied by Faustus when he realizes that he can't escape his fate. Fenoglio was well aware of the meaning of this expression: he also quoted it with the same irony in one of his letters to a friend, (Fenoglio, 2002, p. 3), referring to his friend's decision to study pharmacology at the University. In their translation, both Fenoglio and Wilcock maintain the Latin expression as it is, but they translate the following expression , "the bill is ended", very differently: Fenoglio translates it with "l'atto è terminato" (the act is finished) (2005, p. 23); Wilcock, on the other hand, chooses the strategy of amplification and translates the sentence in the following way: "Ecco il contratto" (here is the contract) (1966, p. 446) . Fenoglio chooses the verb "terminare", which means to finish, thus stressing the link between the significance of the expression *consummatum est* and the signing of Faustus's pact with the devil. This solution is more faithful to the original text. In fact, if one looks at the Italian official version of the Bible, which is a translation from the Latin *Vulgata*, Christ's final words on the cross are translated with "*tutto è compiuto*" (all is accomplished). The term "accomplished" alludes to the fulfillment of the divine plan that has its peak in the death and resurrection of Christ. A literal translation from the Greek original verb, however, would be: "all is finished". The Greek verb , *tetélestai*, means "to be finished". Fenoglio in this case demonstrates great interpretative intelligence, choosing an equivalent which recalls the original meaning of *consummatum*, and which - by placing the accent on the finishing aspect - perfectly evokes the irreversibility of that specific action, which in itself already implies not only the fulfilment of a gesture, but also the spiritual ending of the protagonist.

One last instance might be useful to further explore Fenoglio's depth with regard to the

translation of the terms which carry theological meaning. In scene three, Faustus questions Mephistopheles as to where hell is located. Mephistopheles answers that hell is "under the heavens" (5: 119). "Heaven" and its synonym "heavens" are usually translated by Wilcock with the term "cielo", which is its formal equivalent; Fenoglio, however, usually employs the plural term "cieli", except for one case in which he prefers the word "paradiso" (paradise)(2005, p. 24). As a matter of fact, Fenoglio chooses the term *paradiso* when Mephistopheles is discussing the Armageddon, thus the end of the world, and says: "when all the world dissolves/ and every creature shall be purified/ all places shall be hell that is not *heaven*"(5, 128). Fenoglio notices here that "heaven" is posited as the opposite of "hell", and thus opts for the term "paradiso". However obvious this choice might look, Wilcock does not recognise the opposition between "heaven" and "hell", and employs the usual term "cielo".

Fenoglio's translation choices are also revealing in his personal reading and interpretation of the character of Faustus. In Fenoglio's translation Faustus becomes more tragic, due to the specific terms he chooses to employ. I wish to offer now two examples of his subjectivity in translating, which highlight how Fenoglio's personal reading of Faustus' character infiltrates the text and shapes it. The first example is taken from scene five, which I have illustrated in the previous paragraph and which presents the conversation between Faustus and Mephistopheles on the nature of Hell. As we have seen, Faustus asks Mephistopheles the exact location of hell, and Mephistopheles answers that it is situated "within the bowels of these elements/Where we are tortured and remain forever" (5: 122). Now, in the source text the use of the passive voice –"we are tortured" – suggests that the sufferings in hell are the result of a punishment entirely imposed on those who are damned. Wilcock, translating this passage, keeps the passive voice, opting for "dove siamo sempre torturati" (where we are forever

tortured) (1966, p. 448) and thus maintains the idea that those who are punished endure their suffering without contributing to it. Moreover, Wilcock moves the adverb forever close to the verb tortured, thus indicating that the punishment lasts forever. Fenoglio, on the other hand, opts for a more original rendition of this passage, in which the passive voice (we are tortured) becomes a reflexive verb: "*noi ci si* tortura" (we torture ourselves) (2005, p. 24). Apparently, this could be interpreted as an error on Fenoglio's part, but in fact this choice derives from Fenoglio's understanding of the kind of suffering those who are damned endure, and his idea that they are co-responsible for their own punishment. In fact, with this linguistic choice Fenoglio explains what kind of punishment the damned souls must undergo, specifying that in fact they torture themselves with the thought of being excluded from God's love. Moreover, Fenoglio's reading of this passage is in tune with what Mephistopheles had confessed in scene 3, when he had asked Faustus not to remind him of the joys of Heaven:

> Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God
> And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
> *Am not tormented with ten thousand hells*
> *In being deprived of everlasting bliss?*
> O Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,
> Which strike a terror to my fainting soul! (3: 79-84)

In this passage Mephistopheles admits that the pain he suffers derives from the knowledge of being eternally cut off from God, and the simple thought of it is similar to "ten thousand hells". His punishment is the eternal awareness of the fact that he will never be admitted to the presence of God, and is thus a state of the soul, more than an external punishment that he has to endure. Fenoglio's choice of a reflexive verb puts emphasis on the painful self-torture which Mephistopheles experiences, and from which Faustus himself is not excluded. In fact, right

after he has signed his pact with Lucifer, Faustus regrets his decision with verses that echo Mephistopheles' description of the pain which he suffers for being damned: "When I behold the heavens, then I repent And curse thee, wicked Mephistopheles, because thou hast deprived me of those joys" (7: 1-3). Faustus is here behaving as though he were already damned, tormented by the fact that he will never see the magnificence of God's heaven. Fenoglio's choice thus appears accurate, because it stresses the internal, personal nature of the eternal penance, in that the reflexive verb mirrors the torment of a soul lacerated by the awareness of being damned. Since the punishment consists in knowing one's banishment from God's love and thus in being tormented by this knowledge, joy and love are forever denied.

With regard to the character of Faustus, Fenoglio's translation also stresses the great pain Faustus is enduring. Whether it be because of his dissatisfaction with knowledge or of his restlessness, Faustus appears in Fenoglio's translation as a man who is terribly unhappy even before the devils carry away his soul. One example of this can be found in Faustus's interest in what hell is and how it is structured. In scene 5, when Mephistopheles explains that hell is a reality and not a myth, Faustus dismisses Mephistopheles's remarks and asks: "think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine that after this life there is *any* pain?" (scene 5, 136-137). Wilcock translates this sentence in the following way: "Credi che sono così sciocco da credere che dopo questa vita si può soffrire?" (Do you think that I am so silly to believe that it is possible to suffer after this life?) (1966, p. 448). Wilcock conveys the exact same meaning of the source text. Fenoglio, instead, operates a substitution, translating the words "any pain" with "*altro* dolore" (any *more* pain): "Pensi che Faust sia tutto stolto da immaginare che, dopo questa vita, vi sia *altro dolore*?" (2005, p. 24). In Fenoglio's translation, Faustus suggests that he does not think that it is possible to suffer more than in this life. Fenoglio thus sees Faustus as a man

who already considers his life painful, and refuses to believe that in the afterlife men may suffer even more. The addition of the word "more" is an expression of Fenoglio's specific poetics and interpretation of the character of Faustus, and a shift of focus from the final damnation of Faustus to his condition before he is eternally condemned. It seems that Fenoglio is interested in showing the process of Faustus decision-making, and the state he is in when he makes his choice, which is related to the idea that he can sell his soul to the devil because he is already damned even in this life. Fenoglio seems to suggest that Faustus believes that life is already too painful for him, and that God does not love him anyway, as Faustus himself affirms when he argues that the fundaments of religion are "we must sin and so consequently die. Ay, we must die an everlasting death" (I, 48 - 49). In Fenoglio's translation, Faustus is a man who is tragically already damned, but in his own head and by his own hands.

As has been demonstrated, Fenoglio's poetics and subjectivity are evident in this translation, in the choice of a source text which reveals Fenoglio's interest in a character whose rebellion is perceived as desperate and maybe absurd - because inscribed in a life which already is full of pain and in which redemption is not conceivable – but not meaningless. However, Faustus retains his dignity because in the end he endures the consequences of his actions, thus becoming a true tragic hero. In this aspect, Faustus is very similar to Fenoglio's own characters who also "rebel under the sign of death, and are able to resist any temptation: thus they are able to live up to the expectation of the audience" (Saccone, 1988, p. 112). The desperate conclusion of a rebellion is also shared by the protagonist of another translation carried out by Fenoglio: Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.

3.7 Fenoglio's translation of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*: a tragedy of individual revolt,

Fenoglio's interest for rebels in further corroborated by his translation of two scenes of John Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. The reasons for Fenoglio's attraction to Milton are numerous, and must be sought both in Milton's religious views and in his involvement in the English Civil Wars, which, as I will explain in Chapter 6, were of great interest to Fenoglio and whose parallels with the Italian Civil war Fenoglio explored in his novels and in his short-fiction. Fenoglio's admiration for John Milton was so fervent that, as noted earlier, both the protagonists of the novels *Una Questione Privata* and *L'imboscata* are named Milton, and the Johnny of *Il Partigiano Johnny* also owes his name to this famous English writer.

Milton's tragedy is a rewriting of the biblical history of Samson, contained in *The Book of Judges.* However, Milton modified the plot in order to build a tragedy faithful in form and structure to Greek classical tragedies; he thus condensed Samson's story in one single day and operated some modification to the plot, for example adding a long conversation between Dalila and Samson, which is not present in *Judges* (Dobranski, 2012, p. 188). Milton's play, written between 1667 and 1670, narrates how Samson comes to the decision to use violence to revolt against the Philistines, who hold him prisoner. His strength has returned, so when he is requested to perform a show of it in an assembly in a feast day, Samson pulls down the pillars of the theater causing everyone's death, including his own. If compared to Marlowe's Faustus, Samson's rebellion is thus rather different. Whereas Faustus rebels to God and religion in search for his intellectual freedom, Samson's rebellion is more political than intellectual. The Philistines are the political and religious oppressors of the people of Israel, and thus function in Milton's play as a metaphor for tyranny. Since the play was written in Post-restoration England, Milton seems to have used the figure of Samson as the personification of the defeated

Revolutionary Army and more in general of the supporters of the English Revolution, who in those years were persecuted by the new political establishment (Dobranski, 2012, pp. 187-188).

Samson's rebellion is strictly connected to the theme of revenge. Samson in fact kills his enemies in a final act of extreme violence, which seems to have puzzled literary critics because of the political significance of such an act. As we will see, due to the political implications of representing violence and rebellion, Milton's play has been at the center of scholarly debates which investigate the legitimacy of recourse to violence against political oppressors. Samson's final act of violence seems to raise the ethical and moral question as to what the limits of rebellion to political oppression are, and – even more interestingly with regards to Fenoglio – "what are the limits and consequences of resistance?" (Cherneaik, 2017, p. 174).

Fenoglio's choice of translating Milton's play appears rather unsurprising if one considers Fenoglio's original writings, and in particular some of his short-stories. The theme of violence in relation to political resistance, which seems to be central in Milton's play, is in fact also one of the key interests of Fenoglio's own writings. Both Fenoglio and Milton seem to be especially tormented by the implications of violence, and also share the perspective that heroism oftentimes requires violence through a defining individual choice.

3.8 A shared poetics of violent resistance : the affinity between Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Fenoglio's *Un giorno di fuoco*

In this section I wish to draw a comparison between *Samson Agonistes* and Fenoglio's

own short story *Un giorno di fuoco* (*A day of fire*), which was defined by critic Gina Lagorio "a symphony which starts and ends with the theme of rebellion" (1998, p. 105). This short story, in my view, shows that a common concept of political resistance unites Milton and Fenoglio. As we will see, the many correspondences between Fenoglio's work and *Samson Agonistes* suggest that Fenoglio chose this text because he recognized a similar poetics with regard to political resistance. Fenoglio's translation is thus a testimony of what Renato Poggioli argues when he notes that "a translator is looking for an author in whom he can recognize, or at least transpose, a part of himself" (Poggioli, 2015, p. 221).

Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Fenoglio's *Un giorno di fuoco* (A day of fire) (1963) both focus on the revenge of the principal characters, who react to the misery they find themselves in with one final act of extreme violence against others, and subsequently take their own life. The short story *Un giorno di fuoco* opens narrating of the "great act" performed by Pietro Gallesio, who one day, all of a sudden, kills his brother, his nephew and the priest of the village:

> At the end of June, Pietro Gallesio gave the floor to the shotgun. He killed his brother in the kitchen, he shot his nephew in the barnyard, his sister-in-law was on his list but she appeared behind a grate with her youngest child in her arms, so he did not shoot her but flung himself down to Gorzegno's rectory. The parish priest was just returning from a visit to a dying man beyond the Bormida, and Gallesio stroke him down on the street with a ball to the temple. It was the greatest fact before the war in Abyssinia (Fenoglio 2007, p. 209).

The motives which induced Gallesio to this act are explained a few pages later, when we discover that Gallesio's brother had loaned him money, and when Gallesio was not able to return the money his brother, following his wife's suggestion, had taken away his land. Gallesio had then decided to marry a girl, but the priest of the village dissuaded her from marrying him.

Gallesio had thus been ruined by the people he killed. But his "great act" is not circumscribed to revenge: Gallesio in fact barricades himself in a barn and waits for the *Carabinieri*, thus engaging a battle with them and killing one of them. It is now that his great resistance begins, and his all-against-one fight continues for two days. The solitary struggle of the protagonist ends with Gallesio killing himself with his last bullet.

The similarities with Samson's vicissitudes are numerous, not only regarding the theme of vengeance but also in terms of narration: in fact, Gallesio's act of violence and subsequent death are not shown to the reader but are reported by young Beppe's uncle. In the same way, Samson's killings and his own death are reported by a messenger to Samson's father. This is a technical requirement of tragedies, usually employed in Greek tragedy, since it was forbidden to show violent acts on stage. In the case of Fenoglio, however, Gallesio's absence from the scene helps creating an atmosphere of mystery and suspense surrounding Gallesio's character.

Samson shares with Fenoglio's Gallesio two other important features. The first one is the utmost solitude they endure: Gallesio faces his enemies completely alone, and defends himself strenuously; Samson is also aware of his solitude in facing his destiny, and alone he challenges his enemies. But more importantly, both Samson's and Gallesio's gestures are received with admiration by bystanders. When Samson's story becomes known, his father declares that his son "heroicly hath finish'd/ a life heroic, on his enemies Fully reveng'd" (1709-12). A few lines later he argues that his son's death was nothing less than noble:

> nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail/ Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt, dispraise, or blame, nothing but well and fair/ And what may quiet us in a death so noble (1721-1724).

Samson himself is convinced of the justness of his enterprise, saying: "This day will be remarkable in my life/by some great act, or of my days the last" (1388-89); this great act

coincides with the affirmation of his dignity and results in the recovering of his freedom. The same thing happens with Fenoglio's Gallesio: when it is discovered that Gallesio has died, the narrator's uncle explicitly approves of his gesture saying: "Well done Gallesio!" (Fenoglio 2007, p. 224). As we will see, the uncle's approval of Gallesio's actions derives from the idea that the price one must pay for such an action must be death, and death itself dignifies the action.

At this point of my discussion, it is interesting to have a look at how critics have explained Fenoglio's and Milton's ideology in these two literary works. In both cases, critics have tried to figure out whether the two authors endorsed or approved of the behavior of their characters. With regard to Milton, critics have asked themselves: does Milton justify ideologically and theologically Samson's act of rebellion? Similarly, Fenoglio's commentators have tried to establish whether Fenoglio morally condemned or praised the actions of Gallesio. With regard to Milton, the figure of Samson has raised a heated debate among scholars and critics, who have continuously tried to explain and contextualize both the character of Samson and Milton's ideologic position in representing his story.[12] What does not seem to be clear, for example, is whether God endorses his act of revenge. The text does not provide an explicit answer to this problem: unlike Faustus, who is certainly damned for what he has done, Samson's act does not receive a clear punishment nor praise – at least from God – for his violent act (Gregory 2010, p. 177). Milton himself does not clarify whether Samson acted alone or with guidance from God (Dobranski, 2012, p. 193), and whether he is thus theologically

[12] See Serjeantson (2011) for a political exploration of the meaning of Samson's action; see also the illuminating book by Woods (2010) for an examination of freedom in Milton's poetics. Mohamad (2005) also wrote an interesting study on the connection between religion and violence in *Samson Agonistes*.

justified in acting in this way. Milton's ambiguity with regard to the violent ending of the play has appeared quite disturbing to contemporary critics, who have recently reflected on the acceptability of violence against others in the affirmation of one's own self; some have even assimilated Samson's behaviour to contemporary suicide bombers, who use their religion to justify acts of mass-slaughtering, defining it martyrdom (Carey, 2002, pp. 15-16). Other commentators have instead argued that Milton's intent was to have his readers dislike Samson's behaviour: from this perspective, the play would serve as a warning to Milton's fellow Revolutionaries with regard to the tragic consequences of choosing violence for political aims (Gregory, 2010, p. 176).[13] It must be noted, however, that in earlier writings Milton had ethically and politically sustained the necessity of resistance towards unjust rulers, suggesting that fear of "strenuous Liberty" is the reason why tyrants thrive: men are afraid of taking to extreme measures their defence of liberty (Chernaik, 2017, p. 19).

In Fenoglio's story, Gallesio's violent revenge is equally ambiguous from the moral point of view. As previously stated, his crude act is seen favourably by Beppe's uncle, but is condemned by Beppe's aunt, who attributes the roots this tragedy to the poverty and ignorance of the people of the Langhe, and in the final lines of the story hopes that God will have mercy on them all (Fenoglio, 2007, p. 224). Commentators have read in these last lines of the story Fenoglio's own ideological statement with regard to Gallesio. For example, for literary critic Antonietta Grignani, Fenoglio narrates Gallesio's story to denounce the ignorance of peasants, who are hostile to the State because it seems not to understand the difficult realities of the rural society (Grignani, 1981, p. 104). Other commentators have focused on the tragic ending of the

[13] See E.M. W. Tillyard (1966), who argues that Milton's beliefs ran opposite to Samson's behaviour. See also Herman (2005) and Wood (2001) for a reading of Milton's play which stresses the ambiguity of the author with regard to violence.

protagonist of Fenoglio's story, interpreting it as a reflection on the impossibility of rebelling against a destiny of poverty and injustice: death seems to be the final destination for those who do not accept their fate and choose not to endure the unfortunate circumstances they live in (De Nicola, 1989, p. 83). In this interpretation, Fenoglio is represented as a pessimistic writer, who shares the poetics of Giovanni Verga's *I malavoglia,*[14] in which every attempt to assert oneself ends in defeat and in death.

These readings of Fenoglio's story, however, seem to miss the point with regard to the understanding of Fenoglio's poetics, because they do not take into account Fenoglio's idea of individual heroic resistance and its political implications, which Milton's *Samson Agonistes* in my view helps illuminate. Milton's own reflection on Samson's choice of resistance, offered in a passage of the *First Defense*,[15] helps clarifying the guiding idea which is at the centre of Milton's ideology, and which can also be applied to Fenoglio's portrayal of Gallesio:

> None but a country's foes think that a tyrant is her king. (…) Even the heroic Samson, though his countrymen reproached him saying, Judges 15, "Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us?" still made war single-handed on his masters, and, whether prompted by God or by his own valor, slew at one stroke not one but a host of his country's tyrants (Milton, 1953, p. 302)

From this passage it appears evident that Milton qualifies Samson's act as heroic

[14] Giovanni Verga (1840-1922) is considered the most important exponent of the literary current of Realism (verismo). His novels and short-stories are usually set in small villages of Sicily, and depict the miserable lives of the peasants, who can't escape their destiny of pain and suffering. Fenoglio has been compared to Verga especially for his novel *La malora*, in which Fenoglio narrates the sad adventures of a poor young boy, Agostino. Fenoglio's poetics and Verga's, however, appear to be very different in terms of the representation of men's destiny. Whereas Verga thinks that man has no chance to evolve or to escape his own destiny, Fenoglio believes in the self-affirmation of the individual, whose death or despair is tragic but never meaningless.

[15] John Milton, *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* (1651), in *Complete prose works of John Milton*, Yale University Press.

because it is a choice of individual resistance against power. In other words, the emphasis is on the reaction of the individual against oppression: it does not matter whether Samson was justified or not by the law of God, it matters only that he acted against the oppression of unjust power. Milton was writing this essay to justify the execution of Charles I, and was evoking "heroic precedents for the regicide" (Gregory, 2010, p. 187). It is the choice of not obeying which is seen as heroic, even though it brings tragic consequences: Samson asserts himself with this act, and becomes a true tragic figure, whose failure nonetheless acquires "transcending symbolic significance for the thoughts or conducts of others" (Jaspers 1969, p. 19). Similarly to Samson, Fenoglio's Gallesio "made war single-handed on his masters": it does not matter, in Fenoglio's view, that his actions be judged morally justifiable: Gallesio's heroism consists in making the choice of rebelling, and keeping his resolution up to his own defeat. Samson and Gallesio are in this reading two peculiar heroes: their actions are a statement of uncompromising individuality and liberty, a tragic mystery which evokes pity and fear.[16]

This conception of individual heroic resistance must be understood in Milton's and Fenoglio's similar historical and political context. Both authors had to make a choice in a difficult historical and political moment of their country. As earlier noted, Milton had perorated the Republican cause against the tyranny of Charles I, and had supported Cromwell's ascension to power. Fenoglio had embraced an armed resistance against the Fascist regime, and hat to make the decision to risk his own life and to kill others in order to rebel to a political tyranny.

[16] In Aristotle's *Poetics*, the Greek philosopher argues that: "tragedy is, then, a representation of an action that is serious and complete and of a certain magnitude-by means of language made pleasing for each of the forms separately in the different parts [of the play]: it represents men in action and does not use narrative, and through pity and fear it effects a catharsis of such emotions" (1987, p. 37) .

Both authors had asked themselves the moral and ethical question of the consequence of resistance, and both have reflected on this theme in their writings. It is thus possible to argue that Fenoglio and Milton shared a similar poetics of dissent and resistance, based on the idea that individual choices, though difficult and extreme, are often the result of a true commitment to the protection of liberty, at any cost. Their attitude towards acts of violence is controversial, but the political motivations seem to outdo the moral scepticism which these characters seem to generate. In the end, as Fenoglio always said, the real value of a man's life is offered by the decision he makes, and from his capacity to "*stare al gioco*" (to play the game, that is to accept the consequences of one's actions) (Saccone, 1988, p. 123).[17]

Fenoglio's translation of *Samson Agonistes* establishes a clear link between two different cultures and two different historical moments: Milton's poetics of dissent and rebellion dialogues with Fenoglio's poetics of resistance, and thus the values and the ideology expressed by Milton are rewritten and appropriated by Fenoglio, and also influenced Fenoglio's own original writings. Translation is in this case an example of cross-cultural encounter, thanks to which ideals and also literary models are constantly reinterpreted and disseminated in different cultures and at different times. As we will see in the following sections, the translation strategies adopted by Fenoglio in his rendering of Milton's play also show his personal interpretation of the character of Samson as a heroic figure.

3.9 Translation as "openness": Fenoglio's foreignizing translation strategies in his rendition of *Samson Agonistes*

[17] Interestingly enough, literary critic Eduardo Saccone notes that Fenoglio's characters know that "their rebellion is absurd, but not insignificant" (1988, p. 123) : the significance of their resistance is the fact that they have asserted themselves, they have found a way to say no to injustice and oppression.

The translation of *Samson Agonistes* was completed at a later time, if compared to *Faustus'*. Unfortunately, the manuscripts do not give any information as to when it was composed, but the handwriting and the type of paper on which it was written suggest that Fenoglio was already in his maturity when he undertook this task. Fenoglio's translation of *Samson Agonistes* is handwritten and archived in folder 21 in the Fondo Fenoglio in Alba. As usually happens with Fenoglio, this translation is also partial and focuses on the latter part of the play.[18] The first part of the translation starts at verse 1061 and ends at verse 1115, when Samson is insulted and provoked by Harapha, who makes fun of Samson's slave condition which contrasts with his fame as a force of nature. Fenoglio then moves to the final part of the play, which suggests that his interest is focused on the description of Samson's revenge, both in terms of how it unfolded but also of its symbolic significance and importance.

In order to highlight the specificity of Fenoglio's translation of this play, I wish to compare it to the version by Marco Lombardi, published by Bompiani in 1943. Marco Lombardi, pseudonym of Aldo Camerino, was one of the most important translators of English literature into Italian between the 1940s and the 1960s. His translations are as varied as Fenoglio's: he translated Shakespeare, Milton, Stevenson and Joyce. Just like Wilcock and Fenoglio, Lombardi was also a writer, and published two novels. I have chosen this specific translation because Lombardi's translations are considered creative but also very respectful of the source texts, and distant from the usual approach to translation in those years, which privileged re-writing to adherence to the source texts (Collani, 2012, p.265).

The first thing to be noted is that Fenoglio approached the source text with the desire to let the English language emerge in his own translation, showing what Renato Poggioli called

[18] The pages of the manuscript were not numbered by Fenoglio. Hence, I numbered the folios from 1 to 4 in order to reference them correctly.

the most important quality in translators: their openness (*disponibilità*) (Poggioli 2015, p. 221). The concept of openness is very close to the one developed by Lawrence Venuti, who opts for the term foreignization (Venuti, 1995, p. 24): both views refer to an approach to translation which welcomes the foreign element of the text and gives it prominence in the translation. On the other hand, Lombardi's translation tends to domestication, focusing on fluency in Italian and thus often modifying the structure of the source text to adapt it to Italian. Lombardi makes large use of amplification and reordering, whereas Fenoglio rarely adds any words to make the text clearer to the reader. Lombardi also alters punctuation in order to make the text clearer, while Fenoglio usually does not intervene to modify punctuation.

Evidently, Fenoglio aims to preserve the rhythm and the tone of the source text, often forcing the structure of Italian in order to adapt it to the English original. For instance, he alters the position of adjectives, which in Italian are usually put after the nouns they refer to, and collocates them before nouns, as it normally happens in English; some examples are: "mielate parole" for "honied words", "più cruda lingua" for "rougher tongue", "eccheggiata descrizione" for "loud report" , "mortale duello" for "mortal duel" (Fenoglio, p.1), "i tuoi schiacciati nemici" for "thy slaughter'd foes", "una eroica vita" for " a heroic life" (p.3). Moreover, Fenoglio generally prefers to use terms which also reproduce the sound of the original ones, instead of recurring to synonyms, such as "frenesia" for "phrenzie", "importunarono" for "importun'd" (p.3), "invitare" for "invite", "incontrollabile" for "uncontroulable", "condolermi" for "condole" (p.4).

Fenoglio's preference for foreignization also emerges in the use of calques, literal word-for-word or root-for-root translations and direct translations of English structures into Italian ones. One example of calque can be found at line 1730, when Manoa says: "I'll send for all my kindred, all my friends". In English, the phrasal verb "To send for" means "to summon",

but there is no exact equivalent in Italian so that usually a periphrasis is needed. In his translation, Lombardi amplifies the meaning of the verb, and translates it with "m'affretto a chiamare tutti i parenti e gli amici" (I will haste to summon all my kindred and my friends) (Milton, 1943, p. 172); in doing so, Lombardi amplifies the meaning of the verb, implying that Manoa is in a hurry, a nuance that is not present the source text. Fenoglio, on the contrary, opts for a calque in translating the verb "to summon", and translates it with "manderò per" (p. 3): this construction does not normally exist in Italian, nonetheless it is still understandable, though it sounds unusual. Another interesting example of direct translation is offered by lines 1719-1720, when Manoa is expressing his belief that Samson's action was endorsed by God. Here Manoa says that Samson acted "with God not parted from him, as was feard/But favouring and assisting to the end". Lombardi, as usual, opts for domestication and fluency, and thus translates: "Senza che Dio l'abbandonasse, ma col suo favore e col suo aiuto" (1943, p.172). Lombardi here transforms the past participle "not parted" into a subjunctive, in order to respect the Italian construction of the adverb "senza" (without); moreover, in order to make the sentence sound natural in Italian, he translates the two present participles "favouring" and "assisting" with two nouns *favore* and *aiuto*. Fenoglio, on the contrary, sacrifices fluency and reproduces the structure of the source text faithfully. Here is his rendition of the sentence: "con Dio non da lui separato, ma propizio e ausiliante" (p. 3). Fenoglio builds a very unusual sentence: the English past participle is rendered in Italian with a past participle as well (parted/separato); the present participle "assisting" is also rendered with a present participle (ausiliante). Whereas Lombardi's rendition is more respective of the Italian usual sentence structure, Fenoglio chooses to remain faithful to the structure of English, producing a translation which is less fluent but more suggestive and original. This is an apt example of what French scholar Antoine Berman called "literal translation"(Berman, 1999, p. 118), which

means closer to the letter of the source text; Berman argues that this strategy lets the foreign element of the source text emerge in the translation, and is thus preferable to amplification or reordering. These foreignizing techniques are extensively used by Fenoglio in his later translations more than in his translation of *Dr Faustus*, which he carried out when he was younger. As Mark Pietralunga noted in his introduction to his essay on Fenoglio's translation of Marlowe, this is probably due to the fact that this translation was still influenced by "some ingenuities and mannerism probably caused by the linguistic style Fenoglio had learned in school" (Pietralunga in Fenoglio, 2005, p.14).

The second scene translated by Fenoglio centres on the reflection made by the chorus and by Samson's father on the significance and relevance of Samson's gesture. In fact, the chorus first and Manoa later praise Samson's violent revenge, presenting it as an act of heroic justice. This is a very important scene, in which Samson is defined as "a holy martyr and a heroic template for future warriors" (Bryson, 2008, p. 33). Fenoglio's translation of this scene is particularly poetic, if compared to the previous scene. The terms he chooses are archaic and the tone is highly literary, which suggests that Fenoglio ascribed great poetic relevance to the scene. I wish to concentrate on a specific example which in my view reflects Fenoglio's subjectivity in translating this scene: the translation of the chorus' comments after what happened to Samson has been revealed: "O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!" (1066). The focus of my interest is the term "dearly-bought", which was translated by Fenoglio and Lombardi in two very different ways. In fact, Lombardi opts for the translation strategy of diffusion, which consists in using more words than the source text to convey the same meaning, and translates: "Oh vendetta *pagata a caro prezzo*, ma gloriosa!" (paid at a high price) (1943, p. 170), thus using four words and creating a longer sentence than the original. Fenoglio, on the other hand, aims at keeping the rhythm and the conciseness of the original, translates: "O

carestiosa vendetta, ma gloriosa!", choosing the archaic term "carestiosa", which means exactly "too expensive". This choice reflects Fenoglio's tendency to look for a correspondence between English and Italian, which also emerges in his creative writings. One of the characteristic elements of his writing style is in fact his search for concise, meaningful words, which can convey the exact meaning without the support of other terms. Fenoglio particularly loved the capacity of the English language to be precise and direct, and tried to transport this characteristic – which is very distant from Italian – into his own language. The term "carestiosa" also creates a rhyme with the term "gloriosa" (glorious), whose immediacy creates poetic suggestions. This choice of a term is very recognizable as a subjective intervention made by Fenoglio, because it reflects his poetics in terms of style.

A comparative analysis of Fenoglio's and Lombardi's translation also reveals that the two translators offered two different pictures of Samson. In Fenoglio's translation, Samson emerges as a stronger individual and as a hero, whereas Lombardi does not put the same emphasis on this characterization of Samson, usually choosing more neutral words in particular when translating Samson's lines. I wish to offer a few examples of this aspect, since it shows how translations are truly shaped by the subjective understanding and interpretation of the source text given by the translator, and proves what I have argued in Chapter 1 with regard to the recent theories of Translator Studies: translation is a creative activity in which the translator's ideology and poetics plays a fundamental role.

The first scene translated by Fenoglio presents the dialogue between a blind Samson and one of his enemies, Harapha, who has come to humiliate and provoke him. Samson's reaction is not violent but rather firm: Samson wants to show Harapha that, despite his blindness, he is not afraid to address vigorously his antagonist. Even though some critics have considered Samson's reaction to Harapha's provocations as "impotent taunting" (Bryson 2008,

p. 30), thus suggesting that Samson's reaction is rather pathetic due to his situation of defeat, in Fenoglio's translation Samson emerges as a valorous figure and not as a beaten individual. For instance, when the chorus announces to Samson that Harapha is approaching and questions whether he is coming in peace, Samson response is "or peace or not, alike to me he comes" (1074). This answer is translated by Lombardi with "sia pace o no, poco m'importa" (whether in peace or not, I do not care) (1943, p. 136), which suggests that Samson is rather indifferent, or even resigned to his own fate, and Harapha's arrival is of little importance to him. Fenoglio's Samson, instead, appears assertive and courageous. Fenoglio, in fact, translates Samson's answer with: "in pace o no, l'arrivo non mi turba" (whether in peace or not, his arrival does not trouble me) (p. 1), thus putting emphasis on the fact that Samson is not troubled – thus does not fear – Harapha.

In Milton's play, Samson's reactions to Harapha's verbal aggressions appear to be concise and sharp, especially at the beginning of their conversation. In fact, when Harapha tells Samson that he has come to see if Samson's fame as a force of nature corresponds to reality, Samson confrontationally responds: "the way to know were not to see but taste" (line 1091). Lombardi choses to translate this passage with: " il modo per saperlo non sarebbe vedere, ma provare" (the way to know is not seeing but trying) (1943, p.138) : he translates the verb "to taste" with its more general synonym "provare"; Fenoglio, however, translates the same lines in the following way: "il modo di controllarlo non era già vedere ma assaggiare" (the way to check this was not seeing but tasting)(p. 1), choosing as an equivalent to the verb "taste" the Italian "assaggiare": in Italian, the verb "assaggiare" is the direct equivalent of the English verb to taste, which means to physically ascertain the flavour of something, but it also carries a figurative meaning, which is rather colloquial and sarcastic: when the verb *assaggiare* is used with nouns such as "botte" (thrashing) or "bastone" (stick), "frusta" (whip), it means "to be

beaten up". As a result of this translating choice, Samson's response appears at the same time more allusive, sarcastic and threatening: he is not only inviting his opponent to try his strength, but is also suggesting that the result would be his rival's beating. In his translation, Fenoglio thus underlines Samson's self-confidence and the insolence of his answer, therefore also justifying Harapha response: "Dost thou already single me" (1092).

The last example of Fenoglio's subjectivity in translating is offered by his rendition of Manoa's speech on the dignity of his son's ending. In this moving passage, Manoa says: "Come, come, no time for lamentation now/Nor much more cause/Samson hath quit himself Like Samson, and heroicly hath finis'd/ a Life heroic" (1708- 1712). Manoa appears to be proud of Samson's violent act, which – in his view – is perfectly in tune with the honourable life he had led. Lombardi's translation seems to focus on the inevitability of Samson's act, especially with regard to the phrase "Samson hath quit himself/Like Samson" (1709). In fact, Lombardi translates it with an amplification and a substitution: he substitutes the words "Samson hath quit himself" – a specific reference to his suicide - with a more general: "Sansone ha fatto quello che doveva fare Sansone" (Samson did what Samson *had to do*) (1943, p. 171). Here Lombardi emphasises the idea that Samson had a mission, and that his violent act was what God expected from him. This translation thus focuses on the idea that Samson was destined to do what he did, and so that Samson was actually "tangl'd in the fold of dire necessity" (Milton, 1665). Lombardi's translation, as a consequence, highlights the idea of predestination, according to which Samson's responsibility becomes blurred. Moreover, in his version Lombardi eliminates any explicit reference to suicide, probably because – as I have noted in Chapter 2 – subjects such as suicide were censored by the regime and thus they had to be eliminated or toned down.

Even though Lombardi's translation is not incorrect, because it reflects Manoa's actual

thoughts on God's assistance in Samson's revenge,[19] Fenoglio's version of this scene appears to be more complex and profound. Fenoglio in fact seems to focus not simply on the inevitability of Samson's violent rebellion, but specifically on the character of Samson. The words of Maona are rendered by Fenoglio in the following way: "ora non è più tempo di compianto, e nemmeno più causa; Sansone se l'è tolta da Sansone, ed ha finito eroicamente una eroica vita" (Samson took his own life as Samson) (p. 3). In Fenoglio's translation, Samson's action appears to be in perfect tune with his character, that is to say, he made a deliberate choice which reflected who he was. Whereas Lombardi's attention is focused on the act of revenge towards others, Fenoglio's concern focuses on Samson's responsibility and with the significance of his decision. Once again, as with *Faustus*, Fenoglio seems to be interested in portraying characters who make a choice which defines them entirely, and their heroism lies in the responsibility of choosing their fate, and heroically accepting it.

The analysis which I have provided of these excerpts of Milton's *Samson Agonistes* offers another example of Fenoglio's poetics as a translator, which relies on two aspects: the first is the importance of the themes which the plays treated, which often revolve around a character who reflects Fenoglio's idea of a hero; the second element which emerges is Fenoglio's openness in translating: it seems that Fenoglio's translations were welcoming not only a specific imagery but also the structure of the foreign language, which led him to modify the structure of the Italian language, sacrificing fluency but offering at the same time very interesting results in terms of rhythm and poetic efficacy.

[19] A few lines later, in fact, Manoa explains: "And which is best and happiest yet/all this with God not parted from him, as was feard, but favouring and assisting to the end" (lines 1718-1720).

3.10 Conclusions

Fenoglio's translations of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and Milton's *Samson Agonistes* help us understand Fenoglio's idea of heroism and its connection with resistance to power. Both Faustus and Samson are tragic heroes who refuse to accept an authority they do not recognize: Faustus rejects God, while Samson rebels against the political power of the Philistines who hold him prisoner. In choosing to translate these two tragedies, Fenoglio is showing his identification with tragic heroes, an identification which is an expression of dissent towards the idea of the hero that Fascism tried to promote: the tragic hero, differently from the Fascist hero, is a solitary individual who fights for his own freedom and rejects conformism and obedience. These translations are also helpful to understand the protagonists of Fenoglio's original writings, in particular Johnny of the novel *Il Partigiano Johnny,* and Gallesio, the protagonist of Fenoglio's short-story *Un giorno di fuoco.* Johnny and Gallesio, similarly to Faustus and Samson, are individuals who decide courageously to rebel and take action against their oppressors, even though they know that their decision will cause their own destruction. Fenoglio's translations of Marlowe and Milton are thus part of Fenoglio's exploration of the theme of individual commitment to freedom and its consequences, a theme which is recurrent in his own original writings.

In his translation of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, Fenoglio shows a deep interest in religious dissent. Fenoglio is particularly precise in the correct translation of religious terms, offering his own understanding of the Calvinist theology of Faustus. Through his translation strategies Fenoglio highlights Faustus' tragic decision of challenging God as an expression of intellectual self-affirmation and rebellion. The translation of *Samson Agonistes*, on the other hand, Fenoglio is particularly concerned with the translation of terms which stress Samson's heroism

and his rebellion as an act of free will.

Fenoglio, however, did not deal solely with heroes, but also with anti-heroes: as I will show in the next chapter, Fenoglio's translations are also helpful in understanding the most controversial of his characters, the flawed partisans that populate his short-fiction and some of his theatrical experiments, whose ideal model can be found in the protagonist of another one of his translations: Falstaff of Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part 1*.

CHAPTER 4

"FALSTAFFIAN" PARTISANS: FENOGLIO'S TRANSLATION OF SHAKESPEARE'S *HENRY IV PART 1* AND FENOGLIO'S ORIGINAL WRITINGS

Fenoglio was born under the sign of controversy

G. Beccaria (1984, p. 167)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to explore the connections between Fenoglio's translation of "the tavern scene" of Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part 1*, which he carried out in the 1950s, and Fenoglio's own portrayal of partisans in two of his literary works, in particular in the collection of short-stories *The* 23 *Days of the city of Alba,* published in 1952, and in his one-act play *Solitudine,* which was published a few months after Fenoglio's death in 1963. Such an analysis helps discover the reasons behind Fenoglio's original and subversive portrayal of partisans, thus deepening the understanding of his choices in his original works.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of Translation Studies, as I noted in Chapter 1, in this chapter I shall take into account both literary criticism and translation theory, in order to establish the profound connections between Fenoglio's translation of the tavern scene of *Henry IV Part 1* and his original writings. From this perspective, translation and original writing appear to be collaborating with each other, each adding important critical information for a full understanding the other: on the one hand, Fenoglio's translation of *Henry IV Part 1* and the character of Falstaff offer new insight to Fenoglio's original writings in terms of influence and

inspiration; on the other hand, Fenoglio's original writings – and in particular Fenoglio's his realism – help understand Fenoglio's choice of realism in the translation strategies he employs.

The boisterous and defiant character of Falstaff seems to have inspired Fenoglio in his own portrayal of partisans. For this reason, in the first part of the chapter I focus my argument on Falstaff as a figure of dissent and resistance, identifying the analogies with some of Fenoglio's partisans. From this analysis, it appears that Fenoglio – borrowing the subversive and irreverent traits of Falstaff in the creation of his own characters – was expressing his own dissent towards the ideological connotation of the Italian literary movement of Neorealism and social realism, which advocated a politically and ideological depiction of the Resistance. As we will see, in *The 23 Days of the city of Alba* and in the play *Solitudine* Fenoglio's partisans are very far from the idealization which characterised the novels and short-stories focused on the Italian Resistance written in the 1940s and 1950s: in his search for realism in writing, Fenoglio did not narrate of partisans only in terms of martyrs or heroes, but he chose, at a time when the Italian Resistance was being canonized, to offer an anti-rhetorical reading of this experience, which did not exclude the less edifying aspect of the civil war.

Both Fenoglio's translation and his creative writings are then examined within the cultural and historical context in which they were carried out. Here, I note that Fenoglio's partisans were not received with favour. Interestingly, Fenoglio's writing was guided by a commitment to truth and realism which was not understood at the time of the publication of his short fiction, so that his short-stories were not appreciated by the most radically left-winged critics and writers, who criticized his low register, the use of vernacular and swear words, also suggesting that Fenoglio was irrespective towards the Resistance values.[1] Some literary critics

[1] A similar treatment was reserved to other artists: for example, the Italian director Luigi Turolla received negative reviews for his movie *The hand on the rifle* (1962), because the film focused on the human tragedy of the war without idealization nor rhetoric. For reference, see the review of the movie written by C. Bertiero in the Journal

and writers openly attacked him, accusing him of "qualunquismo", which in Italian means a cynical and apathic attitude towards politics. To these reactions, and to the many which followed Fenoglio's death, is also referring Gianluigi Beccaria in the quotation mentioned at the beginning of this chapter: Fenoglio's work was always – in a way or another- challenging the mainstream ideology of the time; as he had opposed Fascism in the years of the Regime, after the war he was opposing an ideology which promoted an unrealistic portrayal of the Civil War and of the partisans who had participated in it.

In the second part of the chapter I turn my attention to the original translation strategies that Fenoglio employs in this particular text. Fenoglio's translation consists only in a fragment of the play. The six unnumbered manuscript pages in fact focus on one scene, the so called tavern scene of the second scene of the second act. It is not possible to offer a precise date for this translation, as it happens with the majority of his manuscripts, because Fenoglio did not have the habit to write the dates on them. However, his handwriting, which with time became more unintelligible, suggests that this translation was carried out at quite a late time in Fenoglio's life, surely after the war, in the 1950s (Pietralunga 1987, p. 106).

Here Fenoglio deals with strong language and vernacular expressions, and more in general with a style which is very different from the one of the plays analysed in the previous chapter of this thesis. If compared to the rendition of these scene of another translator, Cesare Vico Lodovici, Fenoglio's translation strategies suggest a radically different approach in the treatment of a complex author such as Shakespeare. In order to prove Fenoglio's creativity and originality in translating I also look at the most common tendencies of contemporary translators of Shakespeare, noting how Fenoglio appears to be a modern and acute translator, well ahead

"Bianco e Nero" (November 1962).

of his times.

4.2 An examination of the analogies between Elizabethan outlaws and Italian partisans as Fenoglio's motive for translating *Henry IV Part 1*

As previously explained, Fenoglio had a special fondness for Elizabethan literature and drama and Shakespeare, in particular, was one of his favourite authors. Johnny, Beppe's alter ego, protagonist of the great novel about the resistance, is also a fan of Shakespeare, and the real Beppe, once made the decision to enter the ranks of Italian resistance, left for the hills with some sonnets of Shakespeare copied into the jacket lining (Vaccaneo, 2001, p. 60). Many friends and family members recall Fenoglio's love for Shakespeare; for example, Fenoglio's mother, revealed that "Beppe never parted from a small red volume containing all Shakespeare's plays" (Lagorio, 1975, p. 4). The small volume is still kept in Fenoglio's library in Alba. In Folder 25, in the Fondo Fenoglio, which contains the majority of Fenoglio's manuscript translations, the only presence of Shakespeare is offered by the translation of a short scene of *Henry IV Part 1*. In particular, Fenoglio's translation focuses on the so-called tavern scene, the fifth scene of the second act of the play.

The choice of translating *Henry IV Part 1* might appear rather surprising, if compared to the plays considered in the previous chapters. The brevity of the present translation does not allow us to make generalizations about Fenoglio's interpretation of the whole play; however, it is possible to search for analogies between the style and theme of this specific scene and Fenoglio's original writings, so as to be able to make an hypothesis for his interest in this play. As I later discuss in detail, scholars and commentators have not explored the reasons for Fenoglio's choice of this specific text, attributing Fenoglio's interest in the scene only to its

linguistic features: my own discussion in this section, instead, focuses on the settings and the characters of the play, with particular interest in the figure of the outlaw and in the tavern as the context in which the action takes place.

At the moment, it is useful to introduce briefly the general theme of Shakespeare's play, in order to provide a broad context for the analysis of the specific scene Fenoglio chose to translate. Interestingly, *Henry IV Part 1* is an exploration - albeit in a different key to the texts we have previously presented - of the theme of rebellion. As a matter of fact, *Henry IV Part 1* describes both threatened rebellions, which are about to occur, such as the one in Wales and the one by the Earl of Northumberland and actual rebellions, like the one of Prince Hal against the authority of his father, the King Henry IV. Hal in particular, the future Henry V, leads a dissolute life, beyond the limits of legality, and spends his time between drunkards, thieves and prostitutes. The specific form of rebellion presented in *Henry IV Part 1*, therefore, is associated with a life at the margins of society, a sort of parallel world which substitutes the official one, epitomized by the Court of the King (Bacigalupo, 2016, loc. 713). The central character of the play is Falstaff, a disreputable knight, who often boasts of enterprises which he has never accomplished and who is dedicated, above all, to stealing and drinking.

Comparing this play to the ones that I treated in the previous chapter, which focused on the tragic heroes Faustus and Samson, one might wonder why Fenoglio decided to translate a play which narrates the exploits of bandits, outlaws and criminals. A possible answer might be: as a partisan, he himself had been considered a bandit, and in that condition he had experienced the utmost liberty and self-affirmation against a law which he considered tyrannical and unjust. In fact, the Italian partisans who fought against the Nazi-fascists were considered by their adversaries bandits, outlaws in all respects. In 1943, after the armistice between Italy and the Allied armed forces, in the North of Italy the National Republican Army

was formed, which included former Royal Army units still supporting Mussolini and Italian pro-Nazi units, created by the Germans. The condition of partisans as outlaws is well explored by the philosopher and writer Pietro Chiodi, who also was a professor of Fenoglio in high school, in his own memoire entitled *Banditi* (1975). Chiodi explains that those who refused to join the National Republican Army had two options: they could either live in hiding or join the partisans. Thus, the partisans were not a recognized army, and for this reason if they were captured they could be shot on the spot, like common criminals (Chiodi, 1975, p. 23). Chiodi, who was arrested by the Nazis and sent to a concentration camp in Germany, recalls in his book that he looked at the list of those arrested with him and noticed the term *Aktivbandite* (a bandit active in a group), used to identify the partisans (Ibidem, p. 59). The Fascist approach to partisans is also corroborated by many Fascist leaflets in which partisans are presented as criminals, looters and bandits. In one of them, Fascists aim to convince the Italian people that the real enemies are the partisans, who burn houses, kill and steal, and are thus called bandits and rebels. The leaflet also addresses the partisans themselves and those who somehow support them, communicating a well-defined threat: "you will be crushed like worms".[2]

Partisans were organized into bands of volunteers, often managed in an improvised manner; very often, to ensure their survival, they were forced to requisition food, vehicles and basic necessities to farmers and peasants, which was often perceived by ordinary people as an abuse, if not proper stealing. As explained by historian Claudio Pavone, the expression "outlaw" was reflecting the conflict between two different ideas of law: the one expressed by Fascist groups who felt they were "regular" and the one expressed by rebels, which were

[2] This leaflet is preserved in the Archivio Istituto Storico di Modena. A reproduction of it is available at : https://keynes.scuole.bo.it/ipertesti/il_ventennio/Propaganda%20fascista%20della%20RSI.htm

centred on liberty (Pavone, 1991, p. 449). However, the lack of specific regulations within the partisan organization often allowed for the existence of partisans who only joined for their personal gains, for example to exercise violence or revenge to personal enemies. Others were simply disguising themselves as partisans to steal or pillage the countryside. For this reason, many of the leaders of Partisan groups insisted in educating ideologically the partisans who were in their ranks, and to promote very harsh punishments towards those who, by stealing or rejecting discipline, were compromising the image of partisans as being honest and devoted to the right cause (p. 454). These harsh measures, which often included execution by shooting for the partisans who were caught stealing or deserting, were aimed at showing the other side – thus the fascists – that Partisans were acting as a real army, and thus to confute the Fascist propaganda which portrayed partisans as criminals.

In Fenoglio's Resistance novels and short stories it is often made clear that the partisans were considered outlaws. For his part, Fenoglio is fascinated by this condition, as he narrates in *Il partigiano Johnny*:

> (Johnny) had the chilling dream of finding himself alone in that position, a solitary outlaw, who sacrificed himself for reasons not clear even to himself (Fenoglio, 1994, p. 155).

Fenoglio's fascination with this condition is linked with the idea that the outlaw makes a choice of total freedom, against authority, whether it be the Army or the government or the State. The Fascist soldiers do not admire nor have any respect for partisans, who are in their view simply traitors and common criminals: in the short story *L'erba brilla al sole,* for instance, the fascists call the partisans : "Traitors! Bandits! English!" (Fenoglio, 2007, p. 196). In the same story, a fascist soldier reminds the partisan Matè: "You are bandits! You are delinquents!" (p. 204). Another example is offered by the short story *L'ora della messa grande* (*The hour of*

the Big Mass), in which a village priest explains, during the mass, that the partisans should not be supported by the local population because: "The real government was always that other one, that of Mussolini. In fact, were not the partisans called rebels? And rebels to what, if not to the constituted and legal government? So they are subversives and rebels, bandits" (Fenoglio, 2007, p. 159).

In addition to the interest in describing a world that lives on the margins of legality, a world which in this space of freedom finds its deepest identity, Fenoglio must have been attracted also by the place where *Henry IV Part 1*'s scene is set, which is the Old Barn tavern. In Shakespeare's play, the tavern functions as a specular place and opposite to the Court Palace, which must have reminded Fenoglio of the country inns in the Piedmontese countryside, called "osterie" in italian. The *osteria* is for the Langhe what the tavern is for Elizabethan England: the place of freedom, of play, of drinking and often of fights and quarrels. As it happens in *1 Herny IV,* In Fenoglio's short stories the tavern is the epicentre of action, where the private, often scurrilous, dimension of his characters emerges; it is also populated by boastful and tragi-comic patrons, as in the story *Ma il mio amore è Paco* (1962) , in which Paco, the protagonist, spends all his time in the *osteria*, drinking, playing cards and trying to steal money from the peasants. Similarly, Elizabethan taverns were places of freedom and licentiousness, and were located in the so-called Liberties, in which not only gaming houses, taverns, bear-baiting pits, brothels could be found, but also theatres: places populated by

> a great number of dissolute, loose and insolent people harbored and maintained in such and like noisome and disorderly houses, as namely poor cottages and habitations of beggars and people without trade, stables, inns, alehouses, taverns, garden houses converted to dwellings, ordinaries [places serving food], dicing houses, bowling allies and brothel houses (Berlin, 1968, p. 17).

The Old Barn tavern must have felt quite familiar to Fenoglio, because it embodied the place of freedom where the true human nature was free to emerge and to find natural expression, as also happened in the *osterie* of the Langhe.

4.3 Realism and subversion: Falstaff as Fenoglio's model for his own partisans

This section focuses then on the specificity of the character of Falstaff, which appears to be the focus of interest in Fenoglio's translation. In fact, Fenoglio starts translating the scene at the moment where Falstaff is about to enter the scene and abruptly ends with Falstaff's verses. Given the centrality of this character as the main interest of Fenoglio, it is useful at this point to have a quick look at the character of Falstaff, highlighting the aspects which Fenoglio might have found appealing and inspiring. It is not possible to offer here a complete overview of the criticism around the character of Falstaff, but some of the critical readings on this character prove to be insightful in our discussion of the analogies between Falstaff and Fenoglio's partisans and are thus worth examining. In particular, I concentrate my attention on the critical readings which understand Falstaff as a character whose contradictions made him more real, and – on the other hand – at those commentators who have focused on Falstaff as a subversive character, who challenges the hypocrisy intrinsic in the representation of the Monarchy.

Having a quick look at the interpretations of the character of Falstaff in the first half of the 20th century, it seems that Falstaff has been appreciated because of all the contradictions of human nature that he embodies. Falstaff is cynical, irreverent, boastful and often vile, but is also funny and full of life. In this regard, critics – though with due differences – seem to have all underlined that Falstaff offered a broader image of humanity if compared to Prince Hal, who appeared to be a more idealized figure, and probably a less complex character. Falstaff, in

his being at the same time honest and dishonest, cynical and sentimental, has impacted the imaginations of the critics far more that the future King Henry V, who remains as if in the background and has solicited much less debate than Falstaff himself[3]. Falstaff's ambiguity seems to be rather appealing to some critics: literary scholar Maurice Morgann famously argued that Falstaff was "a man at once young and old, enterprising and fat, a dupe and a wit, harmless and wicked, weak in principle and resolute by constitution, cowardly in appearances and brave in reality, a knave without malice, a liar without deceit" (Morgann in Hyers, 1996, p. 54). Many other commentators seem to share a similar view: recently, the playwright and writer Michael Morpurgo stated in an interview about Falstaff that the most interesting characters "have frailty" (2014), and Falstaff's frailties have undoubtedly made him interesting.[4]

The frailties that Falstaff showed seemed to many commentators thus to make the character more "real" : that is, he appears to be a more believable image of a man. For example, writer G.K. Chesterton argues that, among all Shakespeare's characters, Falstaff was the one whose realism went beyond his words and actions: it was his mixture of vice and virtue which made him "real", and goes as to far as to say "Falstaff existed and was real" (Chesterton, 2012, p. 151). Rosalie Colie argues that Shakespeare was indeed able to create the "illusion that this character is a real individual" (Colie in Bloom, 1992, p. 51); other commentators have focused on Shakespeare's intentions in creating Falstaff, and intend realism as close to nature: one example is Harold Bloom, who stresses the fact that Falstaff is more believable than other characters, so that it arises some sort of identification in the scholar: "Harold Bloom sees

[3] For a collection of essays on the figure of Falstaff see Bloom (2012; 2107), Spiekerman (2001) and Bevington (2015).
[4] See the review of *Henry IV part 1 and 2* by Lucia Cox, in "Northern Soul", October 25, 2014. Available at northernsoul.me.uk/review-henry-IV/

Falstaff as a teacher… one who instructs us in freedom; particularly freedom from society; he is a satirist who turns against all powers" (Nabil & Ibrahim, 2016, p. 8). This discussion on realism will be useful later, when I examine Fenoglio's aim in creating his own characters.

More recent critical approaches to Falstaff, however, focus on what this character represented within the context of Shakespeare's play, highlighting in particular its subversive role in challenging political and ideological assumptions (Caldwell 2007; Grady 2002). From this perspective, Falstaff represents a sort of "no doctrine" (Andreutti, 2016, p. 13), when he derides for example the common concept of honour, [5]ambition, family and morality. He rejects everything that represents the foundation of political order and stability. Falstaff's cynicism becomes thus the precise expression of subversion, in particular towards accepted beliefs and traditions.

Ellen Caldwell (2007) offers a particularly interesting political reading of Falstaff, which proves to be fruitful in the examination of Fenoglio's partisans as well. Examining Falstaff's role in Shakespeare's play, Caldwell focuses on its iconoclastic nature, noting how Falstaff's scorn for hypocrisy and ornamentation is a political attack on an idealized image of the Monarchy. In fact, when Falstaff mocks the concepts of honour and accuses Prince Hal of hypocrisy, reminding him that his right to the throne is more than questionable, he is challenging the concept of divine right of the king, and denouncing the royal pomp and its ceremonies as hypocritical and untrue. In Caldwell's view, Falstaff represents a criticism of the artifice of kingship and "challenges princely power as representational, iconic, and false" (p. 219). Hence, it is the iconography of Monarchy that Falstaff is opposing to with his irreverence, often denouncing the ideology of Monarchy which portrays the king as an infallible divine

[5] Falstaff argues: "What is honor? A word" (5, 1:134-5).

being, and affirming that the king is nothing but a man in disguise, vulnerable and culpable as anybody else (p. 225). In a way, Falstaff appears to be challenging not so much the Monarchy in itself as an institution, but rather the fabrication of an ideology on Monarchy: an iconography which has inevitably put distance between the king and his subjects, and has transformed the king into a cold and arid ruler. The interpretation of Falstaff as an iconoclastic threat to ideology is also shared by Grady, who expresses his preference for Falstaff because "Falstaff […] understands that ideology need not be the be-all and end-all of human social reality" (Gray, 2002, p. 144). Falstaff thus appears to be honest and to be "himself" when scorns the King and the court, whereas Prince Hal is an able politician and disguises himself as a rebel, but in reality he completely conforms to the hypocrisies and the subterfuges his father built his image on. The realism of Falstaff is being here interpreted as a form of political and ideological scepticism, which opposes much counterfeit. Prince Hal, for his part, is the perfect perpetuator of the iconography of Monarchy. which is confirmed by the sudden rejection of Falstaff at the end of *Henry IV Part 2*. Falstaff's sudden banishment is a direct consequence of his ideological threat to kingship, which cannot be accepted by the newly appointed king Henry V.

The critical readings of Falstaff that I have examined above are illuminating if we turn to Fenoglio's own depiction of partisans, both with regard to realism and with regard to dissent. Before embarking on the discussion of dissent, however, it is necessary to see how the figure of Falstaff influenced Fenoglio's depiction of partisans. In the next section I examine the most "Falstaffian" of Fenoglio's partisans, looking at the many analogies between Fenoglio's translation of *Henry IV Part 1* and his original work.

4.4 Fenoglio's "imperfect" partisans and the influence of Falstaff on Fenoglio's *I Ventitre giorni della città di Alba, Il Vecchio Blister* and *Solitudine*

As previously noted, Fenoglio's partisans have much in common with Falstaff, especially in their less edifying characteristics. In fact, as Fenoglio's scholar Ian Seed argues, Fenoglio often paints a picture of partisans "who are frequently amoral, (…) and who seem to have little awareness of the value of what they are supposedly fighting for" (Seed, 2017, p. 246). For example, in the short-story *I Ventitre giorni della città di Alba,* partisans enter the small town of Alba after defeating a Fascist regiment, and immediately look for prostitutes and engage in motor races in the city centre instead of organizing the defence of the city:

> A group (of partisans) ran to the two brothels of the city, with a bunch of boys behind them who luckily stopped at the door (..). In those houses there were eight professionals who, on that day and in the following days, did things that are worthy of a medal. The *maitresses* were also exceptional, they managed to collect a large part of the tariffs, which is a miracle when you deal with partisans, who are used to being given everything for free (Fenoglio, 1990, p. 162).

When the Fascists, who in Fenoglio's story appear to be more organized and competent than the partisans, are able to enter the city again – also due to the sloppiness of the partisans' behaviour – some partisans ignore the battle that ensues between the Fascist troops and the partisans, and continue to enjoy their fun activities:

> On that same day, in Dogliani - which is a large town twenty kilometres from Alba - there was the autumn fair. In the square of the town there were a thousand partisans who fired at the dartboards, courted girls, drank and managed very easily not to hear the roar of the battle of Alba (p. 175).

As a consequence, Alba – which was taken by more than two thousand partisans- is now

defended by only two hundred of them: only a few of them go back on the hills to continue the fight against Fascists, while many others are simply dispersed. Moreover, when the order to retire is imparted by the partisan chiefs, some get their faces dirty with mud to exaggerate the signs of the battle, hoping that they will be seen by peasants and pitied (Ibidem, p. 18). This scene recalls Falstaff's many tricks to make him appear more valiant than he is, both in the scene translated by Fenoglio, when he damages his sword to make it look like he had a fight with those who robbed him, and at the end of the play, when he stabs the already dead Hotspur and thus carries him on his back to pretend that he killed Hotspur himself (Shakespeare, 1997, 5,4: 124-125).

The protagonist of another short story, called *Il Vecchio Blister* (*The old Blister*)[6], is an almost splitting image of Falstaff. Blister is an old man, who appears to be – like Falstaff – an alcoholic and thus often steals from peasants in order to obtain alcohol. His comrades seem to tolerate his behaviour and are affectionate towards him for his good spirits and his jovial nature. However, when he finally threatens two people while being drunk and steals gold from them, the partisans of his group are forced to sentence him to death. Blister at this point believes that it is all a joke, and that his comrades will never have the courage to kill him. He then starts to defend himself with a verbosity which recalls Falstaff, and that wins the reader's affection and pity: Blister admits to being a coward, but also adds that his comrades should spare his life because "I am the one who always makes you laugh! I boosted the morale to all of you!" (Fenoglio, 2007, p. 58). Being older than the other partisans, Blister also presents himself as a sort of a teacher on the facts of life, and patronizes his younger comrades with intentional paradoxes which recall Falstaff's tendency to "jest and dally" (Shakespeare 5, 5: 55). Blister

[6] *The Old Blister* is the fifth short story of the collection entitled *I ventitre giorni della città di Alba*.

notes: “I am forty years old and I have learned that life is such a serious thing that it must be trifled with” (p.58). In his insightful comment to this short-story, Ian Seed hypothesizes a similarity between Falstaff and Blister (Seed, 2017, p. 252), but he seems to be unaware of the fact that indeed Fenoglio translated a scene of *Henry IV Part 1*. Seed’s intuition of the analogies between Falstaff and Blister is thus fully corroborated by Fenoglio’s translation of Shakespeare’s play. As I have argued earlier, Fenoglio’s translations appear to be fundamental not only in identifying some of his possible sources for his creative writings, but also to understand more deeply his own characters. Blister’s tragic ending, when he is finally shot by his comrades, echoes the tragic end of Falstaff himself, and the pity he evokes in his astonishment when he realises that he will indeed be killed is the same sense of pity which Falstaff evokes when he – the jester – is himself tricked in his hopes of keeping the Prince’s favour (Bacigalupo, 2016, loc. 856).

Fenoglio’s translation of the tavern scene is particularly interesting if compared to Fenoglio’s one-act play, called *Solitudine* (*Solitude*), because of the major analogies between Falstaff and Sceriffo, the protagonist of the play. Fenoglio wrote this play in the late 1950s, approximatively in the same years in which he translated *Henry IV Part 1*. In order to explore the similarities between Fenoglio’s play and Shakespeare’s scene I wish now to compare in detail the events taking place in Fenoglio’s *piece* and the tavern scene, noting how Fenoglio’s translation profoundly influenced his writing of *Solitudine*.

Fenoglio begins his translation of *Henry IV Part 1* with scene four of the second act, when Falstaff enters the Boar's Head tavern. Falstaff has robbed some travellers, but has been robbed himself shortly afterwards by two individuals. The two robbers are in fact Prince Hal and his friend Poins in disguise, who have planned to play a practical joke on Falstaff: since

they know that he usually fabricates stories, they expect him to give them a fake account of what happened to him. Falstaff's account of his misfortunes is the comic focus of the scene: firstly he exaggerates the number of men who attacked him, and then shows his sword, which he has himself damaged to make it look like he fought with many people. Falstaff's speech is full of insults and cursing, which adds to the comic quality of the scene. Fenoglio ends his translation with Prince Hal exposing Falstaff's lies and returning his money. This scene thus presents Falstaff as a vainglorious individual: he is a coward, though he wishes to appear otherwise. In fact, as Price Hal reveals, Falstaff did not fight anyone but "you carried your guts away as nimbly, with as quick dexterity, and roared for mercy and still run and roared" (2, 5: 239-240). Prince Hal also exposes Falstaff's trick with the sword: "what slave art thou, to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight!" (241-242).

These two characteristics, boastfulness and cowardice, also belong to the protagonist of Fenoglio's play *Solitudine.*[7] In this play, Fenoglio's partisan ceases to be an epic hero and his condition becomes problematic (Brozzi, 2008, p. xv). The events are set after the "sbandamento" (disbandment) of 1944, imposed by General Alexander, when partisans were ordered by the British army to disband during the winter and wait for instruction the following spring. Sceriffo, the protagonist, is a partisan who feels alone and is probably an alcoholic. He explains that he has spent the previous day completely drunk, but in fact he is even unsure about what day it is : "But was it yesterday or another day? I completely lost my sense of time. To be sure, I am not even aware if today is really today" (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 270).

In order to find some company, he decides to pay a visit to a young woman who lives nearby and who works as a seamstress, named Rita. To go visit this woman is a very dangerous

[7] This play is probably one of the last things Fenoglio ever wrote, together with two other plays: *Atto Unico* and *Prologhi* (Fenoglio, 2008).

decision, because Fascists could discover and kill him, but Sceriffo decides to take a chance. Since the woman is not expecting him and hardly knows who he is, Sceriffo needs to fabricate a story to start a conversation with her. At this point, the analogies with Falstaff's story begin. Sceriffo cuts his jacket with a knife, so as to ask her to mend it, then he departs and looks for the girl. Just as Falstaff had done with his sword, Sceriffo fabricates an entire story around the cut on his jacket, in order to appear courageous in the eyes of the girl. His style, however, is different from the one used by Falstaff in his own accounts. The reason is made clear by Sceriffo himself:

> Sceriffo: Oh, this cut has a history!
> Rita: Will you tell me?
> Sceriffo: Well, it is a story that should not be told to a girl.
> Rita: Well… if you say so…
> Sceriffo: It is not an indecent story. But it is a bit… a bit strong, you see. But I'll tell you anyway, very briefly so as not to offend you.
> Rita: yes.
> Sceriffo: If I had to tell it, for example, to a friend of mine, I would use a totally different style! (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 277).

Unlike Falstaff, in fact, Sceriffo is not talking to his fellow comrades but to a young woman, thus he needs to moderate his words. Like Falstaff, however, Sceriffo tells Rita that he was suddenly attacked by soldiers.

> Sceriffo: I was careful, but all of a sudden they appeared.
> Rita: Who?
> Sceriffo: The soldiers!
> Rita: Oh yes, of course. And how many of them?
> Sceriffo: Five or six, maybe ten (…) It was me against six of them… and I only had a pistol..if only had I had the sten… (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 278).

Here Sceriffo seems to use the same words of Falstaff, who continuously increases the number of men that allegedly attacked him: he says four, then seven and finally nine. Then he goes on to say that he was the sole target of these men's fury:

> Falstaff: These four came all a-front and mainly thrust on me. I made me no ado but took all their seven points in my target, thus (2, 5: 184-185).

In *Henry IV Part 1*, as I previously noted, the Prince is aware of the fact that Falstaff is lying and is making fun of him. The girl in Fenoglio's play is not openly doubtful, but seems to be surprised to not have heard the sound of gunfire since the ambush had happened so close to where she lives:

> Rita: It happened yesterday morning? It is strange that we heard nothing here, with so much shooting going on.
> Sceriffo: You did not hear it? Well, it happened on the other side of the river. And it happened in the woods, you know, the woods cover noises perfectly (p. 280).

Sceriffo then adds that, fearing that he would finally be overwhelmed by the Fascists' bullets, he had started to run, and while he was running a branch caused the cut in his jacket.

> Sceriffo: At a certain point I distinctly heard a series of gunshots which had my name on it. These are things that you can feel, you know, when you have been a partisan for so long. So I ran away, and while I was running a thorn bush cut my jacket: it had thorns long as a finger and as sharp as knives (p. 281).

Here Sceriffo is proudly admitting that he is a partisan, and that he has been for some time. He also adds that the memory of this misadventure is not troubling him anymore, because as soon as he escaped the ambush he stopped thinking about it. This is again part of his strategy in trying to impress Rita, who keeps working on the jacket of the partisan. But just as Falstaff

was exposed in his lying and fabrication, so is Sceriffo, who all of a sudden is attacked (this time for real) by two Fascist soldiers who saw him enter Rita's house. This is the moment when Sceriffo's cowardice becomes apparent:

> Seargent: you are fucked, partisan!
> Sceriffo: I am not a partisan!
> Tenent: If you are not a partisan, what the hell are you?
> Sceriffo: I am….nothing! (p. 283)

Sceriffo thus denies being a partisan, and when confronted with the enemy he reveals his true nature: he is a coward, in the end. Poor Rita has no time to notice, since she faints the minute the Fascists enter her house.

The fundamental difference between Falstaff's and Sceriffo's story is that the first is a comic one, the second ends in tragedy when Sceriffo is shot by the soldiers. But the analysis I have provided suggests that Fenoglio was able to see even in his heroes, in his own characters, a bit of Falstaff. As the literary critic Leone Piccioni notices:

> everywhere in life, good people and bad people live one next to the other, and there is no good man who lacks aspects that can sometimes leave us perplexed, and there is no bad man without flashes of goodness (...) and the task of the narrator is precisely that of showing his character's intimate torment and thought and vital contradictions (Piccioni, 2014, pp. 179-180).

Fenoglio's decision of representing partisans as imperfect human beings, however, was profoundly subversive at the time of the publication of *I ventitre giorni della città di Alba*. Fenoglio's Falstaffian partisans represent, – as Falstaff does with the ideological view of Monarchy – a response to the ideological view of the Resistance which was being built in the

Italian literary and cultural environment in the 1940s and 1950s. In order to prove my point, in the next section I explore the political and ideological implications of Fenoglio's dissent in the context of the mainstream perception of the Resistance in post-war Italy.

4.5 Fenoglio's Falstaffian partisans as an expression of Fenoglio's dissent towards the ideology of Neorealism and social realism

Fenoglio wrote his collection of short-stories on partisans at a time in which Resistance writings flourished in the form of memorials, autobiographic reports and also works of fiction. After the end of the war many ex-combaters felt the need to report in detail their experience as partisans, in order to preserve the memory and the values underpinning such a traumatic event. Italian writer Italo Calvino recalls that these works were prompted by a "vocation towards truth" (Calvino, 1964, p.1), which aimed at reproducing faithfully the essence of the Italian Resistance. The desire to preserve the ideals of the Resistance thus prompted many writers to publish their own account of the war of liberation, such as Elio Vittorini, Cesare Pavese, Carlo Cassola and Italo Calvino, who gave birth to the literary current called Neo-realism[8], which included all those literary works which were devoted to a true representation of reality. It must be remembered here that after two decades of Fascist oppression, intellectuals, writers and artists felt the urgent necessity, through their work, to offer their testimony of the sacrifices of the many Italians who had fought the Regime, and to take part in the renovation of Italian culture and literature on the basis of the values of freedom which had inspired the Italian Resistance (Solaiman, 2018, p. 121).

In this fervent atmosphere of renovation, culture and politics were inevitably

[8] On the cultural origins of Neorealism see Corti (1978), Vitzizzai (1977), Casadei and Santagata (2007). A dated but pivotal introduction to the phenomenon of Neorealism can be found in Ferretti (1974). An in-depth analysis of neorealism is also found in Turconi (1977) and Vetri (1992).

intertwined. The relationship between culture and politics became the focus of the debate among intellectuals and writers, who believed these works of art had the duty to form a new conscience and disseminate the anti-fascist ideals which informed the Resistance. After the General Elections of 1948, which was marked the defeat of Italian Communist Party and the success of the Christian Democracy party, many feared that the so-desired renovation of Italy would not happen at all, and that there would be no continuity in the political and social renewal wished by the leftist parties. The fear that the values of the Resistance and the sacrifices made by the partisans to liberate Italy would be forgotten once a new political order was established, had already emerged a few years before the General Elections, after the so-called Togliatti amnesty was promulgated. This amnesty, promoted by the Communist politician Palmiro Togliatti in 1946, condoned the crimes committed between September 1943 and June 1946, including homicides and collaborationism with Nazis. The aim of the amnesty was the pacification of Italy after the Civil War, so that episodes of violence and of retaliation would cease, but many partisans and intellectuals reacted to this decision of the government by manifesting openly against it.[9]

The autobiographic accounts of the Resistance which Fenoglio read in journals and that were usually published by the end of the 1940s were based on a cultural model influenced by socialist realism, which had become prominent among the writers who were active supporters of the Communist party, and more in general on the leftist writers and intellectuals. The direction of the party promoted a concept of culture which glorified the depiction of communist values, defining the role of the artist as "one of service to the people, to the Party and to the cause of socialism" (Hewitt and Wasserman, 1989, p. 22). As a result, many writers devoted

[9] For an in-depth analysis of the political significance of the Togliatti amnesty, see Franzinelli (2016).

themselves to writing autobiographic accounts of the Resistance with the specific aim to make very clear who was on the right side and who was on the wrong side. These works, however, offered a reading of the experience of the Resistance which was essentially in black and white and hagiographic. The partisans were portrayed as good characters and Fascists as evil characters, with no "in-between". According to writer Marcello Venturi, the writers who emerged from the Resistance "offered an interpretation of the Resistance which was rather partial (which focused on) the cliché of the fascist who was always bad and always wrong" (Venturi in Fenoglio, 2015, p. LVII). As noted by Giovanni Falaschi, these memoires were often celebratory and rhetorical, dwelling on sentimentalism in order to move the reader and to facilitate pity and identification (Falaschi, 1976, p. 67). Moreover, partisans are depicted as almost gigantic both in their physical strength and in their commitment to ideals, as is the case in Silvio Micheli's *Giorni col fronte a due passi* (1947) the protagonist Miguel faces alone and kills two thousand men (p. 62). More in general, the partisan appears to be a mythicized hero, whose death is never controversial or absurd, but responds to the necessity of a sacrifice made for the highest ideals. A good example can be found in the last lines of the autobiography of the partisan Enrico Martini:

> We died not by calculation, nor by interest, but by the homeland that we have collected in the mud and redeemed with our sacrifice. For it to live we have given life; for it to continue its mission in the world we entrust it to you, so that Italy of all centuries, our Italy, may live immortal (Martini, 1947, p. 250).

Fenoglio was reportedly hostile to such a rhetorical approach to literature, and deliberately avoided offering such a view of the war. In the immediate years after the Resistance, he was particularly careful in escaping the rhetoric which surrounded it, refusing to adhere "to a concept of literature which served an ideological battle and that may distort

reality" (Solaiman, p. 114). His choice of irony and irreverence in *I ventitre giorni della città di Alba* aimed at rejecting the idealized image of the participants to a war which in his view epitomized the fullness of human experience, including the flaws that other writers were denying or covering.[10]

Fenoglio's flawed partisans were dismantling from within the iconography of resistance: whereas the partisans of Viganò's novel *L'Agnese va a morire* (1948) appear to be deeply aware of the ideological motivation which made them choose to become rebels, Fenoglio's are often shown as having no profound or ideological belief; the tragic experiences of the shooting of Fascist enemies or of spies are presented by the most popular Resistance novels as just and inevitable punishment; in Fenoglio's works, these events are instead presented in all their controversial aspects, as traumatic experiences who reveal the brutality of war. Whereas writers such Michelini or Venturi portray the death of partisans as a moral victory (Falaschi, p. 67) , Fenoglio often notes the absurdity of death of thousands of young men, who knew that they were on the "right side", but shared the doubts and contradictions common to all human beings.

From this perspective, Fenoglio's Falstaffian partisans represent an attack not so much to the values of the Resistance, but rather to the fabrication of the ideology of a sacred, immaculate Resistance – the mainstream "image" of the Italian resistance - which was being disseminated in those years. Their almost anti-heroic qualities were, in this light, an expression of Fenoglio's commitment to a truthful, realistic image of those who fought against Fascists and Germans, which literary scholar Ian Seed defined as Fenoglio's "moral commitment to

[10] For treatment of the theme of the Resistance in literature see Falaschi (1977). Literary critic Asor Rosa also edited an illuminating anthology of anti-fascist and Resistance literature (1974); on the issues of rhetoric and representation of the war in Italian literature also Milanini (1980) and Gabriele Pedullà's introduction to *Una Questione Privata* (Fenoglio 2006).

truth" (Seed, 2015, p. 682). The truth Fenoglio was searching was implied a reflection on contradictions, and the courage to explore the complexities of the war of Resistance, "being prepared to examine its worst sides" (Seed, 2017, p. 252). In a way, it is the same reality that Falstaff portrays: as Falstaff has become an epitome of realism due to his dis-qualities and contradictions, so Fenoglio's partisans became real when he portrayed them in their idiosyncrasies.

The correspondences between Falstaff and Fenoglio's partisans, however, do not end here. In fact, Fenoglio's "flawed" partisans received the same treatment of poor Falstaff: they were substantially banned and rejected by the critics and intellectuals of the Resistance, who did not appreciate such candour in narrating the war and accused Fenoglio of undermining the values which underpinned the war of Liberation. Even though the communist party did not officially impose any specific doctrine, nor enforced any specific form of expression as preferred, communist intellectuals and critics and many leftist commentators often attacked, from the page of newspapers and journals, the authors who did not conform to their idea of political engagement. The newspaper *L'Unità*, for example, published a review which defined Fenoglio's characters "strange partisans, who appear to be mere caricatures or picaresque adventurers, who seem to fight for the mere love of adventure or even for nothing and no one at all" (Pedullà, 2014, p. 175).

Fenoglio's friends and acquaintances also reacted with astonishment to his short-stories. Pietro Chiodi, Fenoglio's former teacher, who had maintained with him a close friendship, dissociated himself from Fenoglio's depiction of partisans, accusing Beppe of portraying partisans as nothing more than opportunistic criminals and vile individualists. He went as far as to say "if there were today another trial against a Fascist, the man could bring to court – in his defence – a copy of *I Ventitre giorni*" (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 162). Moreover,

the ex-partisans of Alba and Cuneo did not appreciate Fenoglio's book either, and started blaming Fenoglio's friends for still associating with him. Thus, in order to preserve the iconographic image of the Resistance, Fenoglio's partisans had to be excluded and rejected. This rejection continued well beyond the 1950s: the journal "Patria Indipendente", published by the association of Italian ex-partisans – never mentioned the name of Fenoglio until the 1970s (Pedullà, 2007). Surprisingly enough, such short-sighted misunderstanding about Fenoglio still persists in recent controversies raised by critics. Writer and intellectual Giorgio Bocca, for example, though moved by a sincere and legitimate opposition to some bitter historiographic revisionism[11], wrongfully attacked Fenoglio's novel *Il Partigiano Johnny*. Refusing to taking a step back from Fenoglio's detractors who had condemned *I Ventitrè giorni* in 1952, Bocca stated in an interview :

> Fenoglio understood nothing of the Resistance. I have a political and historical idea of those twenty months. I know what the values of the Resistance were, I know why the dream that gave birth to it was finally shattered. Fenoglio is like Pansa, and narrates a false Resistance, reduced to a theater of murderers, scoundrels, poor devils (Bocca, 2007).

Fenoglio's realism was thus interpreted as a provocation, and it still is, at least for some commentators, an unforgivable lese-majesty. But the echoes of Falstaff's boisterous claims in Fenoglio's original writings show that Fenoglio was able to see men, even rebels, as all-round characters, in their heroism but also in their mediocrity. It can be argued that Fenoglio's partisans were "real", and that the intent of the author was indeed to portray them as they were,

[11] In recent years, some journalists and intellectuals started to look at the Resistance in a perspective which has been defined as revisionist. In particular, journalist Gianpaolo Pansa published a number of works in which he reported the alleged violence acts perpetrated by the partisans, with the aim to obscure the idea that those who fought in the Resistance were truly committed to justice. For a critical insight of Pansa's works see Serkowska (2014, pp. 91-99).

without any intention of detracting anything from them, but of offering a compassionate reading of those who had chosen to participate to the war of resistance, who had different reasons to join the irregular army and different motives to prompt them to that moment. Fenoglio is not afraid to show even moments of fear, of cowardice, of doubts, because these facets also were part of the experience. In this regard, one is reminded of Falstaff's famous words, at the end of the tavern scene, when he tells Prince Hal: "Banish plump Jack, and banish the world!" (2: 460). As acutely argued by Ellen Caldwell, banishing Falstaff means to banish "the accidental, the human, from the Lancastrian myth of kingship" (Caldwell 2007, p. 219): in short, the human world. Similarly, rejecting Fenoglio's flawed, human and imperfect partisans meant to banish the accidental, the human –the tragic and the comical elements – from the ideological myth of the Resistance.

In 1964, only a year after Fenoglio's death, Italo Calvino, looking back at the literary works that had been produced on the Resistance in the previous years, became one of the first writers and intellectuals to note courageously that "it seemed to me that everybody was talking about the Resistance in the wrong way: a rhetoric was being born and was hiding the true essence of that experience" (Calvino, 1993, p. 1197). Calvino did not despise those works, but recognized that they lacked authenticity in that they chose to be didactic instead of true. He then mentions Fenoglio's novel *Una Questione Privata*, with words that are worth quoting:

> It was the most solitary of writers who was able to write the novel that we all had dreamt of writing, when none of us was expecting it anymore: Beppe Fenoglio. (…) The book that our generation wished to create now exists, and our work has now a realization and a meaning; only now, and thanks to Fenoglio, can we say that a season is finished; only now do we have the certainty that it really existed. (In the novel) There is the Resistance, exactly as it was, inside and out, true as it had never been written, preserved for years clearly in his faithful memory. With all the moral values, the more profound the more implicit - and the emotion, and the fury (Calvino, 1993, p. 1202).

In this long passage, Calvino recognizes with admiration Fenoglio's choice of realism, which made him write the book with which a generation could finally identify[12]. From this analysis it appears that Fenoglio's translation of Falstaff is of great importance to fully understand Fenoglio's dissent and adherence to reality in his own creative writings. However, Fenoglio's commitment to truth and realism is not only discernible in his depiction of Falstaffian partisans: as I shall explain in the next section, Realism is also the main guidance in his translating approach and strategies for his rendition of Shakespeare's tavern scene of *Henry IV Part 1*.

4.6 Fenoglio's translating approach to *Henry the IV Part 1*: realism and adherence to the source text

As explained earlier, Fenoglio chose adherence to truth and reality in his creative writings. The same thing can be said with regard to Fenoglio's translation of the tavern scene of *Henry IV Part 1*, in particular with regard to register and semantics: in fact, Fenoglio seems to be guided by a clear intention to be faithful and adherent to the source text in all its aspects.

It must be noted here that the scene that Fenoglio chooses to deal with is particularly complex from the linguistic point of view, in particular for the colloquialisms and the slang expressions that it contains. For this reason, Mark Pietralunga identifies the style of the play as

[12] See Weiss (1993) for an in-depth examination of Italo Calvino's understanding of the works of Fenoglio. See also the letters written by Calvino to Fenoglio in the collection edited by Luca Bufano (2002). It was only after the publication of *Una Questione Privata* and of the novel *Il Partigiano Johnny* that Fenoglio was finally understood. But the cultural and political situation had changed: it was a new generation of rebels, the ones fighting for a different renovation of culture and politics, that was able to recognize in Fenoglio's work the inspiration for a new fight for liberty: the students of the revolution of 1968 welcomed and modeled themselves on the young rebel Johnny (Pedullà 2012, p. 906).

Fenoglio's original interest for this scene, and in particular his desire to "manipulate language both metaphorically and morphologically" (p. 113); Pietralunga also notes that, despite the text's complexity, Fenoglio is able to render very effectively both the colloquialisms and the rhythm of the scene. Moreover, – referring to Falstaff in particular – Pietralunga maintains that Fenoglio easily grasps the nuances of the source text and makes particularly apt lexical choices, thus appearing "to have understood the character of the speaker" (p. 112). Arguably, the colourful and idiomatic language that Shakespeare uses in this comedy must have been a challenge for Fenoglio and at the same time a source of attraction. In my view, however, Fenoglio's translation appears original and creative especially because it reproduces closely the structure and the register of the source text, reducing alterations and explanations to the minimum and avoiding substitutions and amplifications.

To understand better the peculiarity and originality of Fenoglio's approach to this text, it is useful to compare it with another translation which dates up to the same years: the rendition of Cesare Vico Lodovici, who translated Shakespeare for the Publishing House Einaudi in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Lodovici was a translator and a scriptwriter. I chose this specific rendition of *Henry IV Part 1* because Fenoglio was very well acquainted with Lodovici's work as a translator. On one occasion Fenoglio also asked Italo Calvino to compare his own translation of Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* with Ludovici's version (Fenoglio 2002, p. 31). Lodovici was a highly-regarded translator of Shakespeare, and for a long time his renditions of Shakespeare's plays remained the canonical ones in Italian culture (Abbarelli, 2013, pp. 464-465).

In comparing Lodovici's work with Fenoglio's, in my analysis I shall concentrate on two fundamental aspects: the first one is Fenoglio's general approach to the source text, which is – as in the translations examined in the previous chapter - guided by a foreignizing tendency;

the second aspect I wish to examine is Fenoglio's accurate rendition of the complex register and style of the source text.

4.6.1 Fenoglio's translation and Lodovici's translation: foreignization versus domestication

The general approach to this translation adopted by Fenoglio and Lodovici is extremely different. In fact, Fenoglio's translation is usually more closely modelled to the source text, whereas Lodovici frequently amplifies and modifies it. Lodovici thus opts for a domesticating translation approach, while Fenoglio chooses a more foreignizing translation approach, and rarely reduces or omits any elements of the text; he neither adds explanation nor amplifies it.

Since Lodovici's translation was published and thus was conceived for an audience, his domesticating approach was probably influenced by a desire to enhance readability and fluency. Fenoglio's translation was unpublished, and this means that – had he intended to publish his translation – he might have wanted to reduce or mitigate the use of some foreignizing techniques to improve readability. However, if we look at the few translations that Fenoglio published when he was alive, we realise that foreignization remained his prevalent choice even in his published works: for example, in her study of Fenoglio's translation of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (2015), literary scholar Laura Organte points out that Fenoglio's approach to Coleridge is "foreignizing, a calque of the original" (p. 188) both in language and rhythm. Foreignization - and in particular calques, borrowings and a mimetic register - was a stylistic feature of Fenoglio's as a translations and writings, both in his published and unpublished works.

In his translation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part 1*, Lodovici usually employs the strategies of amplification and reordering. Amplification is a strategy which implies adding

information to the target text which is not present in the source text, in order to clarify ambiguities and provide explanations (Malone 1988, p. 45). As a result, amplification usually produces translations that are longer than the original text. Reordering, on the other hand, is a strategy which aims at modifying the source text's structure, for example changing the order of the words, so that the target text may conform to the rules of the target language (Malone 1988, p. 65). Translation scholars Antoine Berman and Lawrence Venuti consider these strategies as examples of domestication. These tendencies are usually employed when fluency is the main aim of the translator, so that the reader will not sense that what they are reading is a translation; Berman also notes that through these strategies both the source text and the translator become invisible: in these translations the reader cannot identify the "foreignness" of the text nor the personal contribution of the translator, which is suppressed in order to produce a translation which is accepted in the target culture and language (Berman, in Venuti 2000, pp. 286-287).

Fenoglio's translation is more literal, because it usually avoids substitutions and amplifications, giving preference to calques and to borrowings. Moreover, as we have seen in his translations of Marlowe and Milton, Fenoglio usually prefers to maintain the English order of words, modifying it only when it is strictly necessary for the understanding of the text. For example, Lodovici opts for domestication in his rendition of the names of the characters of the play, in particular with the name of the Prince, translating the name "Hal" with "Enrico" or "Righetto" ; moreover, Lodovici often avoids repeating the names in dialogues: "Jack", which is the diminutive form for John, is translated with "my friend", or substituted with "John" (1960, p. 104).[13] Here Lodovici probably does not want to confuse the Italian average reader,

[13] The text of Shakespeare that I use as a reference in this chapter is *The Norton Shakespeare*, edited by S. Greenblatt (1997, pp 1157- 1224).

who might not be aware that “Jack” is a diminutive form of the name “John”. Generally, in the 1950s and 1960s it was common to translate into Italian the names of the protagonists of the play, to make the reader more comfortable with names they could recognize and pronounce more easily. Fenoglio, instead, maintains all the names as they are: the name “Hal” remains “Hal” throughout the entire translation, and so does “Jack”.

Moving forward in the comparison of the two translations, it becomes more evident that Lodovici’s rendition of this scene is prolix and lengthy, while Fenoglio opts for a dry, simpler translation. One example occurs right at the beginning of the scene. When Falstaff enters the scene, he asks for a glass of wine: “Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant?” (1997, 2. 5: 107-108). Here is Lodovici’s version: “Dammi un gotto di vin di Spagna, furfante! Non c’è dunque più coraggio nel mondo?” (1960, p.104) (Give me a cup of Spanish wine, rogue! Isn’t there any courage left in the world then?). Fenoglio translated the same lines in the following way: “Mi dai questa coppa di secco, furfante? O non c’è più virtù?” (p.1) (Give me a cup of wine, rogue! is there no virtue anymore?). Fenoglio’s version is evidently shorter and more direct; whereas Lodovici opts for amplification, translating “sack” with “wine from Spain”, Fenoglio opts for a single, more effective word, which is “secco”, which in Italian refers to dry wine. Moreover, Lodovici amplifies the final lines, adding the words “in the world” , which are not present in the source text. Lodovici also translates the word virtue with “coraggio” (courage), while Fenoglio remains closer to the original, preferring the word “virtue”, which has the same etymology of the original and is also closer in sound. Lodovici’s additions appear unnecessary, and motivated by his desire to embellish the source text or to make it more readable to the audience; Fenoglio, instead, prefers to replicate the rapidity and dryness of the dialogues, without interfering or manipulating the text.

Fenoglio’s choice for equivalent words in the translation also shows his desire to remain

as close as possible to the source text: for example, a few lines later, the Prince makes a reference to the sun calling it "Titan" (2.5: 109). Lodovici as usual chooses amplification, and translates "Titan" with "the sun" (1960, p. 140), whereas Fenoglio opts for a calque, and translates it "titano" (p.1); similarly, when Falstaff argues with the Prince and threatens him to "beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath" (2.5: 123-124), Lodovici translates the word dagger with "spatola" (spatula) (1960, p. 107), whereas Fenoglio chooses "daga" (sword) (Fenoglio, p.1) , which is more similar to dagger, and derives from Old German[14] as well.

Another interesting example of Fenoglio's and Lodovici's different approach to translation which is worth analysing is offered by the Prince's speech, when he reveals to Falstaff that those who attacked him were in fact his friends and the Prince himself, thus exposing Falstaff's lies:

> PRINCE HARRY: We two saw you four set on four, and bound them, and were masters of their wealth. – Mark now how a plain tale shall put you down. – Then did we two set on you four, and, with a word, outfaced you from your prize, and have it; yeah, and can show it you here in the house (2.5: 234-238).

Lodovici translates this passage employing amplification and reordering, also heavily intervening on punctuation:

> *Principe*: Noi due vi abbiamo visto, voi quattro, dare addosso a quattro di loro, legarli e impadronirvi del loro danaro. Sta' attento adesso come in quattro parole ti metto a terra. A questo punto noi due siamo piombati addosso a voi quattro e vi abbiamo fatto subito prendere un fugone, morti di paura, abbandonando lì il denaro, che abbiamo preso e portato qui – sicuro! – e che vi mostreremo (p. 108).

[14] *Merriam-Webster.comDictionary*, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dagger. Accessed 15 May. 2020.

In the lines underlined above, it can be seen how Lodovici uses amplification adding to the passage words that did not exist in the original, such as "morti di paura" (scared to death); Lodovici also completely changes the order of words in the last lines: "with a word, outfaced you from you prize" becomes "we immediately made you run away, scared to death, leaving behind the money, which we took and brought here – safe! – and which we will show you".

Fenoglio's translation, instead, closely reproduces the structure of the source text and does not manipulate the order of words. Here is Fenoglio's rendition of this passage:

> PRIN: Noi due vi vedemmo, vedemmo voi quattro piombare addosso ad altri quattro e legarli e impadronirvi delle loro ricchezze. Attento ora, come una relazione semplice semplice ti smonta. Allora voi due piombammo sui voialtri quattro, e con un grido, vi staccammo dalla vostra preda, che ci beccammo. Già, e possiamo mostrarvela, qui in questa casa (Fenoglio, p. 4).

Fenoglio's translation appears to be shorter and more in tune with the original dialogue's rapidity; Fenoglio also uses a more colloquial style, translating – for example – "outfaced you from your prize, and have it" with "vi staccammo dalla vostra preda, che ci beccammo" (we separated you form your prize, which we took): "beccarsi" is a colloquial verb in Italian, which means to take something with a trick or with great ability.

These examples show how Fenoglio's foreignizing approach produces a text which is able to reflect the style and structure of the source text. If compared to Lodovici's, Fenoglio's translation is more readable because it avoids redundancy and additions, but it also aims at maintaining the language structure and style of the original, thus reproducing its more important characteristics. An analysis of Fenoglio's use of register also suggests a similar interpretation, as I explain in the following section.

4.6.2 Register in translation: ennoblement vs colloquialism

Not only do Fenoglio's and Lodovici's translations diverge in terms of structural and linguistic elements, but they also appear very different with regard to the rendition of register. While Lodovici does not reproduce the style and register of the original, choosing to embellish the prose of Shakespeare, Fenoglio remains faithful to the original tone, register and style. This element in particular makes Fenoglio's translation original and uncommon, not only if compared with Lodovici's version but more in general with common Italian renditions of Shakespeare's plays of other translators.

Henry IV Part 1 is a play characterised by a mixture of high and low register. As Pietralunga notes, this contrast is deliberate and creates a very distinctive clash between "the high style, founded on a diction that has epic overtones and is heavily rhetorical, and the low common mode" (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 107). The tavern scene in particular is characterised by vernacular, idiomatic expressions, swearing words and insults. This element characterises Falstaff and the other bandits, and marks their difference with the language spoken by the Prince and more in general with the people who surround the court of the King. Since the language that the characters speak defines them specifically, the translation should try to reproduce it as closely as possible.

Lodovici's translation with regard to register is characterised by the strategy of ennoblement. Ennoblement occurs when the translator produces a text whose style and register is higher than the original: the aim is "poeticizing" the original, trying to make it appear more elegant and adherent to an idea of "good speaking" (Berman in Venuti, 2000, pp. 290-291). In his rendition of the tavern scene, Lodovici suppresses the colloquial register, and chooses uncommon and elevated words, thus eliminating the orality which characterises this specific

scene. One example of ennoblement is the usage of the second person plural in Italian (*voi*) to translate the word "you": in Italian, the term *voi* used to address another person is very formal, and shows respect towards the interlocutor. Lodovici uses this specific form throughout the entire play, especially when Falstaff is talking to the Prince. When Falstaff tells the Prince: "Are not you a coward? Answer me to that!" (2.5: 129), Lodovici translates: "E non siete un vigliacco anche voi? Rispondetemi su questo punto" (1960, p. 105). Given the very informal relationship between the Prince and Falstaff, it is highly unlikely that Falstaff may address Hal with such courtesy, only a few line before insulting him overtly. More in general, Lodovici seems to want to elevate the general style of the play, usually choosing archaic or high words, even in imprecations. When Falstaff shouts: "A bad world, I say" (2.5: 119), Lodovici translates this line with "Reo mondo, dico io" (Shakespeare, 1960, p.104). "Reo" is an adjective which means "wicked" and "vicious", but is very literary and usually employed in written language, not in oral speaking.

Fenoglio's approach to register is entirely the opposite to Lodovici's. Fenoglio preserves the orality of this scene choosing common, simple words, and trying to reproduce oral speech whenever possible. For example, for the same line mentioned above, Fenoglio opts for "brutto" as an equivalent for "bad"; in other instances, the difference in register between the two translations is even more evident: Fenoglio employs terms such as "fregare" (to steal); "beccarsi" (to take); "una coppa" (a cup) which are very common and colloquial, whereas Lodovici uses higher terms such as "procacciare" (to steal); "estorte" (to be taken away with violence); "un gotto" (a cup), which are all very literary.

In some occasions, Lodovici also tones down some insults; when Falstaff recounts that he has been assaulted by some men, he states: "But, as the devil would have it, three misbegotten knaves in Kendal green came at my back and let drive at me" (2.5: 205-206).

Lodovici translates the lines this way: “Ma volle il diavolo che tre giovinastri vestiti di panno verde di Kendal mi si buttarono addosso di sorpresa, alle spalle” (1960, p. 107). Lodovici omits the expression “misbegotten knaves”, and translates it with “giovinastri” (young boys). Fenoglio’s rendition of same lines is the following: “ Ma, vedi come la mise il diavolo – tre malnati in tela verde mi presero alle spalle e giù stoccate” (p. 3). In his rendition, Fenoglio keeps the word “misbegotten”, and translates it with “malnati” (baseborn), which is a perfect equivalent, since it shares with the original both meaning and construction (the negative prefix -mis is the equivalent of italian “-mal”, and begotten –which refers to the act of being born– is the equivalent of the Italian “nati”). Both terms are used with the meaning of contemptible and wicked.

It is important to mention here that Fenoglio’s choice of maintaining a simple, colloquial register is particularly original and surprising, if looked in the background of Shakespeare’s translations into Italian. In fact, it has been often noted that the translations from Shakespeare are usually rendered with a higher tone and register, due to Shakespeare’s being considered a classic. As a consequence, translators want to

> highlight its nature as a classic. Traditionally belonging to the framework of high literature, the classic must be translated in such a way that the target text never falls short of its prestige(Venturi 2009, p. 336).

Ennoblement was a common strategy at the times of Fenoglio, but, as Eleonora Fois notes in her insightful essay on Shakespeare’s translations, it is still very much used:

> [Shakespeare’s translations] usually present a higher register, usually unmotivated, which is related to formal situations, and moves away from the linguistic structures which are typical of orality (Fois, 2018, p. 60).

Fenoglio's translation choices seem thus very innovative, and seem aimed at maintaining the realism with which Shakespeare depicted Falstaff, which is also the central source of comic effect in the play. Lodovici's translation appears to sacrifice this pivotal aspect of the play, in order to privilege the audience's expectation in reading a classic.

It is interesting to note here that the colloquial style which Fenoglio identifies and adequately renders in his translation of *Henry IV Part 1* was also used by him in his own original writings, in the same texts which I have previously mentioned in this chapter. In *I ventitre giorni* we find colloquial and often vulgar expressions; in *Il Vecchio Blister*, the young partisans offend Blister with words that recall both Falstaff and Hal in their colourful interactions: "ci hai smerdati tutti, sei un porco!" (p. 59).[15] More in general, as Gianluigi Beccaria notes, the stylistic mixture of comic and tragic elements is very common in Fenoglio's style. In fact, Fenoglio often dwells in the description of the humorous and tragicomic moments of the war of resistance (Beccaria, 2015, p. X), such as in the story about the partisan Catone, narrated in Fenoglio's *Appunti Partigiani*: this partisan escapes from an ambush by fascists who are shooting at him, and proudly shows his trousers full of bullet holes: "through the holes you could see his knickers, which were incredibly purple" (Fenoglio 1994, pp. 68-69).

As Fenoglio chose to employ common, colloquial expressions in his own original writings to offer a wider and more complex image of his own characters, he also chose to maintain them in his translation of Shakespeare, and not to adulterate the source text to make it look more elegant. In Fenoglio's view, his writing needed to reflect the heart of human experience, and thus had to contemplate also low register, swear words, and idiomatic expressions. From this analysis it can be argued that Fenoglio refused to employ ennoblement

[15] You fucked us up! You pig!

in his entire literary output, always preferring realism and adherence to truth both in his original writings and in his translations.

4.7 Conclusions

Fenoglio's translation of *Henry IV Part 1* has proved to be revealing in identifying a possible model for some of his own characters. Fenoglio's depiction of partisans as flawed individuals works as an implicit dissent to the mainstream depiction of the Italian *Resistenza* in literature. Falstaff, despite being mostly a comic figure, has revealed himself to be as dangerous and as dissenting as Faustus and Samson, in his irreverent challenge to the stereotypical and rhetorical image of authority, and thus is an apt vehicle to incarnate Fenoglio's own dissent towards hagiography and standardization in literature. Fenoglio's translation strategies reveal an original approach to Shakespeare's text, which highlights the oral and colloquial style of the play.

Fenoglio's dissent was not limited to literary issues, as far as the Italian Resistance is concerned. In the following chapter, I examine Fenoglio's subversive definition of the Italian Resistance as a Civil War, a definition which has created in the scholarly and political debate as much controversy as his Falstaffian partisans did in the literary field. Once more, in the exploration of Fenoglio's ideological approach to this political and historical issue, a translation of his is an illuminating guide: Fenoglio's rendition of Charles Firth's *Oliver Cromwell and the rule of Puritans in England.*

CHAPTER 5

TWO CIVIL WARS COMPARED:

FENOGLIO'S TRANSLATION OF CHARLES FIRTH'S *OLIVER CROMWELL AND THE RULE OF PURITANS IN ENGLAND*

We have quarrelled for and we contested for the liberty of England

Oliver Cromwell, Speech in first Parliament, 12 September 1654[1]

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on Fenoglio's translation of *Oliver Cromwell and the rule of Puritans in England*, written by Charles Firth in 1900. The quotation above, taken from a speech given by Cromwell in 1654, is directly relevant to the main arguments I put forward in this chapter. These are firstly that Fenoglio's view of freedom and liberty is conveyed in his translations; and secondly, that the values of liberty promoted by Cromwell during the early years of the English civil wars also informed Fenoglio's personal interpretation of the Italian Resistance. In fact, this translation of Firth's book – although generally neglected by the critics– is relevant in illuminating the original and "irregular" position of Fenoglio in the activity of translation and also politically and ideologically.

My analysis concerns both the linguistic issues and the cultural context of this translation. In the first sections, I offer a brief analysis of the source text, from the perspective

[1] This is a particularly famous speech by Cromwell, and it is reported in *The Parliamentary or Constitutional History of England* (2017, vol 20, p. 367).

of translator's sociology put forward by Andrew Chesterman, which I have discussed in Chapter 1. Chesterman focuses his studies on the importance of the translator's subjectivity and his motives in translating. As I have explained earlier, the translation scholar argues that the key element of a translation is the individual contribution of the translator, that is his personal aim when he undertakes a translation, rather than the aim of the text. Chesterman refers to the complex connection of motivation and ideology of the translator as her/his *telos*. Fenoglio's linguistic approach to Firth's book is also explored, noting that his translation strategies do not particularly differ from his translation of literary texts. Once more Fenoglio privileges foreignization, and shows an inclusive attitude towards the source language, choosing to render the foreignness of the text particularly visible, both in the structure of the sentences and in his vocabulary choices. In making these very original choices, Fenoglio was distinguishing himself from the current and usual approach to translation of the time, when adaptation, amplification and domestication were the approaches which professional translators preferred. Once again Fenoglio stands out as a non-conformist writer and rewriter, who does not fit in with the poetics of his time.

In this chapter, I argue that Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book needs to be studied in the specific cultural and political context in which it was produced. To that end I shall draw on a theorist of Translation Studies whose arguments are particularly useful to accurately understand this specific translation: André Lefevere. In fact, Lefevere's theory of translation as a rewriting (1992) helps contextualize Fenoglio's translation and illuminates the connections between Fenoglio's translation, the culture in which he operated, and his personal ideology. More specifically, when I use the term ideology I refer to Van Dijk's definition, which takes into account not only strictly political issues, but also the "basis of the social representations shared by a group" (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 8): in other words, as Jeremy Munday argues: "ideology

encompasses the knowledge, beliefs and value systems of the individual in the society in which he or she operates" (Munday, 2007, p. 196). The culture in which a translator operates is fundamental to understand how the translator approached a specific text. Along with many others, I argue that no translation stands entirely alone, and a translation, as any form of rewriting, is always in dialogue with his own age and culture.

The interesting fact is that, from this perspective, Fenoglio's translation of Firth's text seems to be in evident contrast with the predominant ideology in Italy in the 1950s and 1960s, with regard to the experience of the war. As I shall later explain, Fenoglio's interest in the English civil war appears to be his response to the cultural and political *milieu* which had strongly criticized his writings on the Italian resistance, in which Fenoglio had expressed clearly his idea that Italy had experienced a real civil war. As a matter of fact, the idea that the Italian war of resistance could be defined as a civil war was at the time particularly opposed by the Communist Party and more in general by the Italian political left (Pavone, 1985, p. 24). It can then be stated that Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book is inspired by ideological motivations, because Fenoglio did not find himself in agreement with the dominant ideology of his time (Lefevere, 1992, p. 5).

In conclusion, it can be argued that this translation is relevant because it is part of a "continuum" of Fenoglio's life[2]. It is part of Fenoglio's continuum as a translator, because it confirms the approach to translation which he had adopted in his other translations, and it is also part – thematically at least - of the continuum of his work as a writer: in 1959, in fact, while translating Firth's book on the English Civil war, Fenoglio was also intent in writing his

[2] I am here referring to Susan Bassnett, when she argues: "Frequently writers translate other's people work because these are the works they would have written themselves(…). Translation is not an exercise in such cases, but it is part of the continuum of a writer's life" (Bassnett 1985, p. 175).

novel *Una Questione Privata* and many short stories, all of which were concerned with the traumatic experience of the Italian civil war of 1944-45. The translation of Firth's book is excluded explicitly by Mark Pietralunga in his essay on Fenoglio's translations, because it does not confirm his idea that Fenoglio translated to consolidate and experiment with literary style. Thus, Fenoglio's translation of Firth and its relevance with regard to his writing and political ideas is presented for the first time in this project.

5.2 Fenoglio's *telos* in translating Firth's biography of Cromwell: preliminary notes on the source text

In order to understand the relevance of this translation, I shall approach the text from the perspective of the sociology of translators as illustrated in the theories put forward by Andrew Chesterman (2009, p. 3). Chesterman's approach to translation focuses on the idea that in Translation Studies much attention has been paid to translations as texts or to the translation process, but translators as primary agents have been neglected. In fact, he argues that "not all translation research takes these people [the translators] as the primary and explicit focus, the starting point, the central concept of the research question" (Chesterman, 2009, p.14). He then goes on to suggest a new inter-discipline – named Translator Studies - in which translators themselves are primary, and which research investigates "translators' attitude to their work (…) translators' ideologies and translators' ethics" (p.15).

In a way, this approach is very similar to the one I have presented in Chapter 3 when analyzing Fenoglio's theatrical translations of Marlowe and Milton, and which was based on Buffoni's theory of poetic affinity between the author of the source text and the translator (see Chapter 1). While Buffoni, however, focuses on translations as the result of the relation

between similar poetics, Chesterman takes into account the sociological factors, such as the social and cultural environment in which the translator operates, and his own view of the world. When applied to Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book, Chesterman's approach to translations is particularly fruitful in two ways: in the first place, such an analysis covers not only linguistics but also sociology, culture and ideology. In other words, the significance of this translation acquires a specific relevance when it is set in the historic moment and in the socio-cultural environment in which it was produced. In the second place, this approach to Fenoglio's translations also opens new perspectives in literary criticism, offering a better understanding of his original writings as well. In fact, as I shall later explain, this translation was undertaken by Fenoglio at almost exactly the same time as he was writing his novel *Una Questione Privata* and some of his short-stories about the Italian Resistance. A cultural analysis of Fenoglio's translation of Firth's *Cromwell* translation helps contextualize and clarify Fenoglio's political view with regards to the Resistance, a view which also emerges in the novels and stories he was writing at the time.

In order to carry out an in-depth analysis of Fenoglio's translation it is necessary to offer a short introduction to the source text, so as to identify the most important characteristics which might have prompted Fenoglio to choose this book, and therefore his *telos*. Charles Firth's *Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England* was published in 1900 and follows the steps of historian Samuel Gardiner, who had introduced the figure of Cromwell as a man "whose ideal was constitutional monarchy; who wished for bit-by-bit reform, and opposed the exaggeration of Puritanism" (Hill, 1970, p. 259). In this regard it must be noted that historians have approached the figure of Cromwell in contrasting ways: since the post-restoration period, biographies of Cromwell have either presented him as an hypocrite, a tyrant

and regicide, or as "one of the greatest man of his age" (p. 258). In other words, as Firth himself notes in the preface of his biography, the historical figure of Cromwell was for many years victim of the prejudices of the historians who had narrated his role in the seventeenth-century English revolution. Firth's biography can be regarded as a balanced one, and aims at giving a more objective account of Cromwell's life, praising his moral strength and his ideals but also showing a critical attitude towards his choices in the years of the Protectorate. Firth presents Cromwell's figure as similar to Napoleon or Julius Caesar, due to his military and political skills. He also explores his profound motivations in entering politics, and is never tempted to turn to hagiography. Firth also devotes his narration to the military campaigns of Cromwell in great detail, and tries to offer a complex view of the general circumstances which generated the English revolution.

Given these premises, it does not seem strange that Fenoglio chose to translate this biography. In fact, if we should investigate the genesis of this translation and Fenoglio's *telos* in approaching it, we would have to make two important considerations: first, Fenoglio had always showed a predilection for the figure of Cromwell, who of course stands as a giant in the history of seventeenth-century's England; second, the theme of the civil war, which this book investigates in depth along with the description of Cromwell private life, was the central interest of Fenoglio's life and also the principal subject of his original writings.

Critics and scholars who have explored the role of the figure of Cromwell in Fenoglio's work and life, have highlighted many aspects which might have attracted Beppe to the Lord Protector of England; for instance, the literary critic Davide Lajolo has argued that Fenoglio's interest in Cromwell and English history was "religious more than political", and was connected to Fenoglio's antagonism with institutionalized religion (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 127). The nonconformist attitude which Fenoglio developed towards religion has already been

explored in the third chapter of this thesis, and was in fact related to his preference for Protestantism, due to its tendency to individualism and spiritual introspection.

However, other scholars have found ideological reasons for Fenoglio's interest in Cromwell. For instance, Elvio Guagnini notes that Fenoglio admired Cromwell as a political leader and as a soldier, especially because – at least in the beginning of his political career – he had presented himself as the defender of civil rights against the abuse of power committed by the monarch (Guagnini, 1975, p. 67). Moreover, Guagnini acutely argues that Fenoglio's "anglophilia" had deep ideological roots, and was a form of critique of the condition of Italy at the time. The moral rigor and the defence of liberty which were at the basis of Cromwell's rise into politics and which underpinned the English Civil Wars were in Fenoglio's view in direct opposition to the Italian decay of morals and also to its underdevelopment, in terms of culture, economy and institutions (Guagnini, 1975, p. 68). Fenoglio explicitly mentions Cromwell in his novel *Il Partigiano Johnny,* referring to his rigor in the organization of his Army. He admired this rigor and this commitment so much, that Fenoglio's professor Chiodi reported that Fenoglio used to say that he dreamt of being "as a Cromwell soldier, with the rifle on his shoulder and the Bible in his sack" (Chiodi, 2002, p. 200).

Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book is a fundamental testimony of Fenoglio's fascination with British culture, which extended far beyond its literature. In this sense, this specific translation tells us much more about Fenoglio than his literary translations, because it is the proof of Fenoglio's complex and deep involvement with British culture, history and institutions, which Fenoglio perceived to be a model to admire. From these considerations, it seems evident that Fenoglio regarded translation as a cultural activity which encompasses but also goes beyond literary experimentation and literature in a strict sense.

5.3 Cultural and sociological context of Fenoglio's translation of *Oliver Cromwell*

This section focuses on Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book in a cultural perspective, to give a more complete picture of the importance of Fenoglio's translations as an expression of his personal convictions and political beliefs, connected with the key issues of liberty and dissidence. It is my view that this specific translation, in fact, can help clarify some misinterpretations of Fenoglio's political positions, and also decipher Fenoglio's so-called "anglomania" in a broader context.

The importance of the ideology of the translator has been recognized as a key issue in Translation Studies by many scholars (see Chapter 1). In this section I draw on the studies of André Lefevere, who identifies in the translator's ideology and in the dominant poetics of the target culture the key factors which define a translated text:

> Two factors basically determine the image of a work of literature as projected by translation. These two factors are, *in order of importance*, the translator's ideology and the poetics dominant in the receiving literature at the time the translation is made (Lefevere, 1992, p. 31).

Following Lefevere's idea, it is thus necessary to take into account the social values and ideologies which were predominant at the time of the translation, and then see whether the translator conforms to them or instead challenges them. The position of the translator in relation to these social values and ideologies reveals his ideology which contributes to the cultural and political reading of this text.

Throughout this thesis I have made it a point to underline the cultural and political connotation of Fenoglio's translations. For example, in Chapter 3 I interpreted Fenoglio's translations of Marlowe and Milton as an expression of his challenging attitude towards the

political, cultural and religious environment promoted by Fascism. Firth's book, however, was not translated during the Fascist Regime, but in the last years of the 1950s, when Italy had already emerged from the war, had defeated absolutism and had become a democratic Republic.

Why then did Fenoglio choose to translate a book about Cromwell and the English Civil War in that specific historical and cultural moment? It is my view that Fenoglio chose to translate this text to make a political statement which challenged the predominant view of the Italian Resistance. I also think that he chose to translate Firth's *Cromwell* when he did to defend his own political positions, which at that time had been heavily criticized by literary critics who belonged to the political left. In order to clarify this concept, I shall briefly present the political and cultural environment at the time of Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book, and the role that Fenoglio played in that specific context.

5.3.1 War of Liberation or Civil War? Fenoglio and the Italian political debates in the 50s

When Fenoglio started translating Firth's book on Cromwell, the Italian political environment was characterized by a bitter dispute concerning the definition of the *Resistenza*. This political debate aimed at describing what had happened in Italy between September 1943 and April 1945, when armed groups started a *guerriglia* war against Fascists and German Nazis. The victorious forces, in other words those antifascists who had become politicians after the war, defined this period as the "National Liberation War", whereas those who had lost the war – that is to say those who kept fighting with Mussolini in the army of the Repubblica Sociale - called it a "civil war" (Bobbio, 1992, p. 85). Generally speaking, antifascists refused the definition of the *Resistenza* as a civil war, because according to them it belittled the nobility

of the conflict, which they believed to be in the first place "a war conducted for the liberation of Italy against Germans and their allies, thus a patriotic war: a second *Risorgimento*"(Ibidem). According to antifascist parties, calling the *Resistenza* a civil war would downgrade its ideal value of a people's struggle for its own freedom, reducing it to a fratricidal war. Moreover, after the war, the Communist party had appropriated the concept of Resistance, linking it to the communist Revolution and giving it an emphatically ideological reference, thus making it also a class struggle. Transforming this fight into a civil war would have given "the other side", thus the Fascists, the dignity of representatives of an opposite but equal set of values.

I have mentioned these preliminary considerations because they are very relevant to Fenoglio's position both as a writer and as a translator. It is in fact important to note that Fenoglio, despite being an anti-fascist and despite having played an active part in the armed fights against Fascists in the Piedmontese hills, always used the term civil war to refer to the war of liberation. This approach to the *Resistenza* has encountered, since the publication of his first novels and short-stories, much hostility and misunderstanding. In fact, Fenoglio had published, in 1951, a book of short stories which he intended to name "Stories of the Civil war". This title was not accepted by the Publishing house Einaudi, and the book was then published with the title *I ventitre giorni della città di Alba* (Bufano, 2006, p. 46). As I have noted in the previous chapter, this book was not received with sympathy by the critics. After the publication of the book, Fenoglio was ferociously attacked by critics in the journal *L'Unità*, who reproached him for his representation of the *Resistenza*, in which the flaws and the frailties of partisans were represented without infringement.[3] Among the many reviews which slated Fenoglio's work, I wish here to mention two articles written by journalists Carlo Salinari and

[3] See Chapter 4 of the present work, sections 4.3 and 4.4

Davide Lajolo, because they wholly represent the resentment with which Fenoglio's books were received and interpreted. Salinari, in an article dated 3 September 1952, wrote:

> A few days ago I met a friend who was disgusted and indignant. He had tried (and he is a factory worker) and bought a book, the one written by Fenoglio and published by Vittorini. My friend had been so disgusted by that reading, that probably he won't buy a book for many months to come. Not only did Fenoglio write a bad book, he also did a bad deed (Salinari in Pedullà, 2014, p. 173).

Journalist and literary critic Davide Lajolo is equally aggressive when he comments that: "(the book's) style is deliberately literary and false as its contents" (p. 174), and goes as far as to say that "publishing and disseminating this kind of books means not only falsifying reality, but it also means subverting human values and destroying that sense of moral rightness and honesty of which our literary tradition has always been proud" (p. 175).

Lajolo also suggests that Fenoglio is, indeed, not only a dishonest writer but a dishonest man:

> Beppe Fenoglio works in an important wine firm. We do not know whether he does his job honestly or whether he sells his clients altered wine. However, when it comes to writing, we cannot talk about honesty, and this book is a clear demonstration of that (p. 174).

These quotes show how heated the debate around the definition of the war of resistance was, and how Fenoglio's dissident position had been taken as an attack on anti-fascist values or worse as a mystification of the experience of the war. Amidst these polemics, Fenoglio responded with his translation of Firth's book on Oliver Cromwell. This is illuminating because it helps clarify the reasons that underlay Fenoglio' appropriation of the term "Civil War" and of the values which animated his own fight among the Piedmontese partisans. In this sense,

Fenoglio's translation of Firth is a political act, which claims the recognition of the value of his political and ideological choices in opposition to the current mainstream ideology. In the next section I shall explain in what ways Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book can be considered a statement of his ideology and political beliefs.

5.4 Fenoglio's ideology as a translator: two civil wars compared

The neglect of an in-depth cultural and ideological analysis of Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book has left a void in the understanding of Fenoglio's ideology with regard to his definition of civil war and how these terms apply to the Italian liberation war. More in general, the marginalization of ideological and political elements in Fenoglio's admiration for Britain has resulted in a distorted, or at least incomplete, vision of the influence of the English culture in Fenoglio's original writings and in his poetics.[4]

Fenoglio's admiration for Cromwell, for example, has frequently been reduced to a naïve and peculiar infatuation for a figure who resembled the literary character of Robin Hood or it has been justified with the idea that Fenoglio was fundamentally ignorant about the real historical figure of Cromwell, which "was vitiated by the biases of his historical sources" (O'Healy 1990, p. 50). But if we carefully read Firth's book in Fenoglio's translation, especially those sections in which Firth describes Cromwell's preparation for Civil War and his participation in it, we immediately realize that it is the values of the times, which Cromwell

[4] One instance of this purely literary interest is offered by Pietralunga's mention of Firth's book as translated by Fenoglio. Pietralunga acknowledges its importance as a document "representing a subject particularly dear to him" (Pietralunga 1987, p. 126) and stresses its link to Bunyan's *Pilgrim Progress*, which Fenoglio also translated. However, he makes no mention of the historical moment in which Fenoglio carried out this translation nor explores any ideological link to Fenoglio's poetics.

embodied - even if for a short period of time - which Fenoglio shares with Revolutionary England. In translating a text which narrates the origins of the civil war and is also discussing the moral, religious and political connotations of that war, Fenoglio is implicitly defending his own appropriation of the term civil war with regard to the Italian *Resistenza*.

But where did Fenoglio see a correspondence between the English Revolutionary period and the Italian *Resistenza* of 1944-45? The points of contact, in my view, are two: the first one is the glorification of individual liberty, whether it touches religious or political issues; the second one is the legitimacy of an act of rebellion when the authority reveals itself to be tyrannical, because "governmental authority is distinguished from the powers of particular rulers or magistrates" (Dauber, 2016, p. 5). In fact, in both cases, the Cromwell partisans and the Italian partisans rebelled and fought against an authority perceived as tyrannical and in order to re-establish freedom. War thus becomes an act of free choice, and expression of liberty of conscience, where the army is not formed by mercenaries nor "official" representatives of a Nation – thus not entirely responsible for their actions during the war - but by people who willingly decide to fight in order to protect a cause or an ideal. Fenoglio's own deep tragic sensibility also made him recognize in the National liberation war the tragic nature of the conflict, in which brothers started to fight each other on opposite sides, and parents had to witness the destruction of their own homes and families due to reciprocal hate.

All these aspects that I have introduced are clearly present in Fenoglio's translation of Firth and in Fenoglio's original writings. By comparing some sections of Firth book and Fenoglio's novels and short stories I hope to demonstrate that Fenoglio appropriated the values that motivated Cromwell's actions in the English civil war and for this reason justifies his own use of the terms when referring to the Italian situation of 1944-45.

5.4.1 A shared idea of liberty: a Cromwell soldier in the Piedmontese hills

As I have noted above, the importance of Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book lies in the fact that it sheds light on some aspects of Fenoglio's political beliefs which have been misinterpreted or poorly understood. For example, Fenoglio's statement that in joining the *Resistenza* he was feeling like a "Cromwell soldier" – an expression which is mostly quoted to underline the singularity of Fenoglio's becomes more well-defined if interpreted in the light of Firth's biography of Cromwell and his explanation of the origins of the English Civil war. In fact, Fenoglio's attitude towards politics had its roots in a concept of liberty which, as we will see, was shared by the Parliamentarians of 1645 and especially put forward by Cromwell, at least at the beginning of his political career. This concept of liberty was the result of the influence of Latin and Greek authors which Fenoglio himself had studied in his youth.

Firth puts great emphasis in explaining, throughout his book, that one of the pivotal causes of the Civil War was the attempt on the part of the Stuarts to suppress the freedom of Parliament, thus attributing the outburst of the civil war to a political issue more than a religious one. Firth argues, with regard to James I's political policy, that "it proceeded from the formed design to destroy English freedom" (Firth, 2018, p. 14): in fact, James I had strongly limited Parliament's right to freedom of speech, which in his view was a privilege "derived from the grace and favour of his ancestors" (p. 14). Charles I was no different from his father on this specific matter, and Firth reports that his Privy Counsellors went as far as to laugh "when the word liberty of the subject was named" (p. 20). As a contrasting figure to these monarchs, Cromwell is presented by Firth as a man who has at heart first and foremost the liberty of the subjects. In fact, his political career begins with his defence of the rights of peasants and small freeholders whose land had been enclosed and sold without the consent of the commoners (p. 27), thus defending one of the most important rights of free citizens, which is property. Later,

Firth quotes one of Cromwell's letters, written at the time when he had decided to take up arms, in which he clearly justifies his decision : "I could never satisfy myself of the justness of this war, but from the authority of the Parliament to maintain itself in its rights" (p. 52). Liberty is indeed the most central element of his fight against the King, who in his eyes is no more than a tyrant, since "Parliaments without parliamentary liberties were but plausible ways to servitude" (p. 21). In chapter four, Firth quotes Cromwell's definition of the meaning of the war, which was "the maintenance of our civil liberties as men" (p. 52).

But what kind of liberty is Cromwell defending, and how is it similar to Fenoglio's? In order to answer this question I shall now briefly explore the neo-classical ideal of liberty, which shaped the political discourse of 16th and 17th Century Britain, and helped "legitimize (and hence to bring about) the outbreak of the English civil war in 1642" (Skinner, 2010, p. 308). This brief digression is necessary because this specific idea of liberty was also at the heart of Fenoglio's education and constitutes the key ideological motivation for his decision to join the Italian Resistance. This also helps to better understand why the identification with Parliamentarians on the part of Fenoglio was based on shared values which originated in classical culture and literature.

By the end of the 16th Century, Greek and Latin authors had reached Britain, and their influence originated a strong debate on the legitimacy of royal prerogative. More in particular, as it has been noted, the cultural environment which preceded and accompanied the development of the English civil war was strongly influenced by the "classical and especially Roman law distinction between free citizens and slaves" (Skinner, 2001, p. 312), and "the most radical arguments in favour of the liberty of subjects were largely taken from the legal and

political writers of Ancient Rome" (Ibid, p. 313)[5]. The Latin conception of liberty of the Republican tradition, which was founded on the Roman interpretation of Aristotle's *Politics*, was founded on two aspects: first, the free citizen cannot live *in potestate domini*- that is to say under the control of another person- and second, when Kings become tyrants the free citizens have the right to take arms against him to reinstate freedom (Pettit, 2000, pp. 334-336). Many Latin authors such as Cicero, Sallust, Livy and Tacitus had explicitly discussed this issue, and it is not a coincidence that it was exactly near the end of the 16th Century that these authors were available in English for the first time[6]. In particular, reading a passage of Cicero's *Philippics* one is immediately reminded of the passage of Cromwell's letter which I cited above:

> Do you call servitude peace? (…) You think that our arms should now be thrown away in order that we should become slaves. But what cause of waging war can be more just than that of repudiating slavery? (Cicero, 1926, p. 374).[7]

Historians have argued that the choice of the two Houses, in 1642, to raise an army against the King was contractual in character, in the sense that it was a reaction to the King's breach of contract with his people. However, other historians observe that "Parliament and many of its supported preferred to justify their decision to go to war in neo-classical rather in contractarian terms" (Skinner, 2002, p. 342), referring to the two opposing concepts of liberty *versus* slavery . This is evident in the final Declarations issued by Parliament in August 1642:

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[5] The Roman legal system had in fact distinguished two categories of men in *De Statu Hominis*, at the beginning of Justinian's *Digest*: a civis, a free citizen, "must be someone who is not under the dominion of anyone else, but *sui iuris*, capable of acting in their own rights" (ivi, 313), whereas someone who is subject to the power of someone else is *sub potestate*, thus a slave.

[6] Cicero's *De Officiis* was translated and became a best seller in 1558, and became extremely popular by the end of 16th Century.

[7] It is interesting to note that this passage by Cicero was also quoted by Milton in his *Defensio pro populo anglicano* (1651) (Skinner 2002, p. 314).

> The intention being still the same (…) to destroy the Parliament, and be masters of our religion and liberties, *to make us slaves*, and alter the Government of this Kingdom, and reduce to the condition of some other countries, *which are not governed by Parliaments, and so by Laws, but by the will of the Prince*, or rather of those who are about him (p. 343).

But even more interesting and illuminating are the words used in a Declaration of Parliament dated 8 August 1642, in which the factions supporting the King and his counsellors are said to have forced the Parliament to "Declare and Ordaine, that it is, and shall be lawfull for all His Majesties loving Subjects, by force of Armes to *resist* the said severall parties, and their Accomplices" (Skinner, 2010, p. 342). The decision to raise an army is thus seen as an act of resistance, to defend "the Liberties and Peace of the Kingdom against the imposition of arbitrary government" (p. 343). In my view, the connection between the English Civil War and the so-called Italian Civil war lies exactly in the verb "to resist", thus in the perspective that an oppressive Regime which denies freedom to its citizens must be fought with arms. In fact, as many historians have recently come to realize – in particular Claudio Pavone, who dedicated a controversial essay to the Italian *Resistenza* – those who joined the armed resistance in 1944 were essentially rebelling against Fascism and the tyranny of Mussolini, thus their own government, and their enemy number one were in fact Fascists, not Germans (Pavone, 1991, p. 58).[8]

If we keep in mind that the same idea of liberty, which repudiated any form of

[8] Fenoglio was the first writer who admitted and proclaimed that the real enemy in this war were the Fascists, and that the Germans were not as hated as the Italian Fascists were. In his essay *A civil War. Historical essay on the morality of the Resistenza* (1991) , the historian Claudio Pavone quotes a passage of Fenoglio's short story *Golia* to demonstrate how Fascists were considered "the reason of it all" (Fenoglio 2007, p.127)

submission and promoted an active reaction against oppression, was also at the root of Fenoglio's cultural formation, his identification with English Parliamentarians becomes more understandable. In fact, Fenoglio formed his political conscience during the years of high school, studying Latin and Greek writers and thinkers. As I have noted in Chapter 2, Fenoglio's professor Pietro Chiodi noted, it was not unusual during Fascism that young boys learnt how to revolt by reading Plato, Cicero or Tucidides (Chiodi in Fenoglio, 2012, p. XII). Young Beppe himself was particularly fascinated by Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*, in which liberty goes hand in hand with rebellion against a tyrant who denies his citizens their rights. When Fascists appropriated the myth of Rome to justify the construction of an Empire, Fenoglio turned to those who had instead interiorized Roman and Greek values to defend individual liberties, and had used them to fight against a power they believed to be unjust. The British figures Fenoglio admired were not only writers and poets, but the natural heirs of the classical values of liberty and freedom which he himself endorsed. In this respect, Fenoglio chose 17th Century Britain as the ideal model of the people who, standing on the shoulders of classical thinkers, were able to resist tyranny making the difficult choice to embark on a bloody civil war.

Fenoglio's novels and short stories illustrate rather clearly that liberty is the key concept which prompted Fenoglio to join the Resistenza. In the second chapter of his novel *Il Partigiano Johnny*, the author's alter-ego Johnny confronts some Communists who believe that "one will not be a partisan if one is not a Communist" (Fenoglio, 1995, p. 20). Johnny disagrees, and shares the opinion of one of his professors, who has intervened in the discussion, arguing that "a partisan is and will be anyone that fights the Fascists" (Fenoglio, 1995, p.19). This passage reflects the contradictions which characterized the Italian *Resistenza*: some partisans joined the fight because they were motivated by a precise political ideology, others – like Fenoglio – believed that freedom in itself was a sufficient ideological structure (Fenoglio,

1995, p. 20).

In fact, Fenoglio's decision to join the partisans was not motivated by a specific ideological belief espoused by any political party, but by his conviction that the specific political connotations of the partisans had no importance as long as liberty was the common goal[9]. Fenoglio's rejection of Communism during the *Resistenza* and his subsequent refusal to adhere to a specific political party after the war have been judged as examples of an apolitical attitude (Falaschi, 1976, p. 159), or "political immaturity" (Bigazzi, 2011, p. 23), but are instead an example of Fenoglio's commitment to a concept of liberty which transcended individual ideologies. In a beautiful passage of his novel, Fenoglio describes Johnny's thoughts as he climbs the Piedmontese hills, after his decision to join the partisans:

> He left for the highest hills, the ancestral lands which he would help in its unmoving potential, in the vortex of the black wind, feeling how great a man is when he is in his normal human dimension. And at the moment he left he felt himself invested – *nor death itself would have been divestiture*[10] – in the name of the authentic people of Italy to oppose Fascism in every possible way, to judge and to act, to decide militarily and as a citizen. Such supreme power was intoxicating but infinitely more intoxicating was the consciousness of the legitimate use he would make of it. And even physically he had never been so much a man, herculean he bent the wind and the earth (Fenoglio, 1995, pp. 45-46).

This passage shows how Fenoglio perceived his commitment to the resistance as an existential and civic choice, which had its roots in the classical idea that tyrants must be fought – "militarily and as citizens" - in order to preserve the freedom of the country. These are the

[9] In this regard, see *Il Partigiano Johnny*, when Johnny strongly refuses to attend a course in Marxism: "I did not come here for any courses, except a course for training in possible now weapons (…). I am here because of the Fascists – and only that. All the rest is for what comes later" (Fenoglio 1995, 64).

[10] In English in the source text.

same values expressed by Firth when he quotes a letter from Cromwell, in which he gives a definition of a Parliamentarian soldier: "he who ventures his life for the liberty of his country" (Firth, 2018, p. 102). Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book is then deeply illuminating, because it helps to clarify the connections which Fenoglio saw between the English Civil war and the Italian *Resistenza.* Both were founded on the classic concept of freedom. Fenoglio's translation also reveals the cultural and ideological connotations and also the cultural and ideological connotations of his love for Britain.

5.4.2 Firth and Fenoglio: the description of fratricidal wars

Having analysed the similarities between the English Civil War and the Italian *Resistenza* in terms of a shared idea of liberty, I now proceed to consider other aspects of Firth's biography of Cromwell which may help us to understand Fenoglio's identification with the English Parliamentarians. In fact, Fenoglio used the term Civil War not only because it reminded him of the English one in terms of the values it promoted, but also because – just like the English Civil war - it was indeed a violent, fratricidal war.

As I explained earlier, there were political reasons which motivated the rejection of the terms Civil War in Italy, both during and after the end of the *Resistenza*. However, Fenoglio was impervious to ideological matters, being in this aspect very similar to Cromwell "the great Independent", who "called himself by the name of no sect and joined himself to no party" (Firth, 2018, p. 100). In my view, Firth's book on Cromwell and Fenoglio's own writings present some evident points of contact when they narrate the struggle between the two sides fighting each other, and also when they present the individual and tragic implications of a war which caused the disintegration of families and friendships. This last section sets out to confirm how "Fenoglio's creative work was related to and influenced by the patrimony of images and

values inherited from his intense studies of post-Reformation England's literature and history" (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 129).

If one looks at Fenoglio's original writings, one can argue that Fenoglio's description of the war of Resistance as a civil war is based on two fundamental aspects: the first one is the fact that it started after the armistice of the 8th of September 1944, when it became necessary to choose one side or another, that is to say, whether to support or actively fight Fascism. The 8th of September was in fact the moment where "all citizens were forced to take a position in the civil war" (Pavone, 1991, p. 28), and is a fundamental date in Fenoglio's novels *Primavera di bellezza* and *Il Partigiano Johnny*, because it marks the moment when the protagonists make their choice to join the partisans. The second one is that this decision often divided families and pitted brothers against each other, and more in general forced Italians to kill other Italians.

In this regard, it is interesting to note how both aspects are also present in Firth's narration of the characteristics of the English Civil war. In chapter four of his book, Firth notes that

> From the day when King Charles raised his standard at Nottingham, and even before that date, England was divided into two camps, according as men elected to obey the King or the Parliament. The country was about to learn by experience what civil war meant, and to suffer as it had not suffered since the fifteenth century (Firth 2018, p. 50).

In reading this passage one is immediately reminded of the Italian situation after the armistice of the 8th of September. In fact, Italy was divided into two camps as well and Italians were forced to decide whether to opt for "the mountains of the partisans or the cities of the Fascists" (Pavone, 1991, p. 32) . This choice, once made, was irrevocable. Fenoglio narrates the irreversibility of such a decision in one of his most beautiful short stories, called *L'Erba*

brilla al sole (Fenoglio, 2007, pp. 193-206), [11] in which a partisan, named Matè, is captured by a group of Fascists. They try to convince him to become one of them, which would spare him the execution:

> (..) Do you understand that we must shoot you?
> – Order what you must – answered Maté.
> – Listen to me, – said the major – the idea of killing a soldier like you repulses me. There aren't many real soldiers left, in Italy. There is a way out. I have already talked to my officers. Listen very carefully. Come to our side, wear our uniform and your life will be spared.
> – I can't do it, – immediately answered Matè.
> – What are you saying?
> –I am saying I can't change sides.
> –Oh! – the major snapped. – Please think about it. You know what the alternative is. Come with us.
> – No. I don't even want to talk about it. (…)
> – But you want to get shot then! (..)I promise you, if you wear our uniform we will never use you against your old comrades, I give you my word, we'll keep you here in the barracks. Until the end.
> Maté shook his head gently. – I can't change sides.
> – I'll have to give orders to execute you, then.
> – You give your orders.
> – Immediately.
> – It's fine - said Maté. – it's better up here than in the city (Fenoglio, 2007, pp. 203-204).

The reasons behind the choice of one side or the other both in the English civil war and on the Italian resistance were varied and complex, so that they cannot be generalized. Firth

[11] *L'Erba brilla al sole* (*The grass shines in the sun)* is one of the short stories included in the volume *I Ventitrè giorni della città di Alba*, whose original title was *Stories of the Civil War*.

argues that both among the gentry and among the peers "very various were the motives which led men to choose one side or the other" and that most of all the war remained a "struggle of opinions and ideas" (Firth, 2018, pp. 50-51). Fenoglio describes the same mixture of motives both in Il *Partigiano Johnny* and in *L'imboscata*. For example, in *Il Partigiano Johhny,* we see that the protagonist joins the partisans mostly because he feels the duty to actively fight the Fascists but has no personal acrimony towards anyone in particular, whereas the protagonist of *L'imboscata* is motivated by revenge, after his father was killed by Fascists. In addition, Fenoglio describes other partisans, the so called "Badogliani" – who were monarchists and followed General Badoglio. He explains that they "were vaguely liberal, but their political confession of faith was, one had to recognize, null, and in some of them took the form of simple *esprit de bataille*": their antifascism was "above all an armed, potent reassertion of taste and restraint as opposed to Fascism's tragic carnival" (Fenoglio, 1995, p. 138).

As for the consequences of these choices, both Firth and Fenoglio clearly highlight the tragic implication of a war which is conducted not against a foreign enemy, but often within families and among fellow countrymen. I find it very illuminating in this regard to quote a passage from Firth's book and to compare it with an episode of Fenoglio's novel *Il partigiano Johnny*.

In the first pages of chapter four, Firth notes:

> In every civil war, political and religious convictions must often conflict with family ties. Few families were like the Fairfaxes and Sheffields, of whom it was said that there was not one of those names but was on the side of Parliament. (..) in very many cases the nearest relations took opposite sides. At Edgehill, the Earl of Denbigh and the Earl of Dover charged in the King's guard, while their sons, Lord Feilding and Lord Rochford, fought under Essex. In Cromwell's own family, his uncle, Sir Oliver, and his

> cousin, Henry Cromwell, were both ardent Royalists, and owed the preservation of their estates, after the defeat of their party, to the intercession of their kinsman (pp. 51-52).

Firth's passage seems the natural introduction to Fenoglio's story of two brothers who find themselves on opposite sides, one among the Communist Partisans, the other in a Fascist militia. Kyra is a partisan in the Communist group which Johnny also joined. Fenoglio describes him as "the best man under Pierre's order" and as "a simple partisan, the favourite of the population of Mango, who greeted him, called out to him and invited him home with very much more warmth than any other partisan" (Fenoglio, 1995, p. 145). However, Johnny notices that the boy is very quiet and sad, and later discovers the reason for his sadness:

> Kyra had an elder brother and he was an officer in the Fascist garrison in Asti. And, said Kyra, he was as lucky for the Fascists as Kyra was for them. (…) While the war lasted the two brothers had no occasion to come into collision but first of all on 25 July and more so on 8 September they wounded each other deeply. The other had not been particularly enthusiastic during the whole of the war and Kyra was too young. But after 8 September the elder one changed, he was ablaze, he erupted, he was among the first and most determined and most bloodthirsty Fascists (Fenoglio, 1995, pp. 145-146).

The two brothers are equally committed to their own choices though silently suffering, and would never ask for a special treatment should one of them be captured. Johnny's friend, Pierre, reflects on the situation of the two brothers and argues:

> "We are lucky", said Pierre, "and are undeserving, it seems to me. It seemed a great step to come up into the hills in our way – but think of those like Kyra how they climbed up and how they stay here. And think of his father and mother. The victory of one son is the perdition of the other. One has almost to hope for their sake that neither of them reaches the end, the moment of judgement. And for the old people as well" (pp.146-147).

When Kyra dies in an accident, the commander of Kyra's division offers a safe conduct to his brother so that he can attend the funeral, "but Lieutenant X did not come. The other five partisans had their families who had been summoned around them but Kyra went into the earth without anyone from his kith and kin" (p. 189).

Reading these last sentences in Fenoglio's account of Kyra's life, one is reminded of a letter written by Sir William Waller to his old friend Ralph Hopton, who were both engaged in the English Civil war but on opposite sides. This phrase is reported by Firth in order to explain the seriousness with which these life decisions were taken, and how the participants to this war were aware of the suffering they had to endure: "I must be true to the cause wherein I serve. […] We are both upon the stage, and we must act the parts that are assigned us in this tragedy" (Firth, 2018, p. 58). The description of such tragic events must not have escaped Fenoglio, who in his own original writings was particularly sensitive to the suffering of a lacerated generation, and to the consequence of a war who made family members mortal enemies.

5.5 Fenoglio's translation strategies and approach to the source text

Having discussed the cultural context of Fenoglio's translation of Firth, in this sections I examine Fenoglio's translation strategies and choices, in order to discover the signs of his personal and individual reading of Firth's text. Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book is located in the Fondo Fenoglio, in Folder 18, and unlike the previous translations which I have analysed, which were all fragmentary, it is almost complete. It consists of 228 typewritten pages, irregularly numbered and often corrected in ink, and was almost certainly carried out by

Fenoglio in the late 1950s (Sipione, 2009, p. 66).[12] This translation has never been treated in detail by scholars, but a few chapters of it have been transcribed by Marialuigia Sipione in her book on Fenoglio's relationship with the Bible (Scipione, 2009). Sipione selects those parts of the text which regard more specifically the theme of Puritanism, in order to testimony Fenoglio's interest for Cromwell and the puritan belief. Mark Pietralunga only briefly mentions Fenoglio's rendering of Firth's book in his essay on Fenoglio's translation, but does not comment on it further. For my analysis I have selected some sections of the book, and more specifically five chapters (Chapter 1, 2, 9, 11 and 35), because they seem to show Fenoglio's intervention as a translator more clearly, especially with regard to style and word choices.

The first thing that needs to be noted is that Fenoglio draws no distinction between historical essays or poetry when it comes to choosing style and register in translation; in fact, Fenoglio adopts the same mimetic style which he had previously employed with poetry and theatre, preferring foreignization to domestication, and – as I will later explain – making considerable use of neologisms, archaisms and alliteration. This approach appears particularly original, especially because normally – as André Lefevere noted in his article on literary translation – a "sharp dividing line between so-called literary and so-called non-literary texts" has always existed, and was generally based on the idea that literature employed a higher tone and language, whereas non-literary text preferred "common or colloquial language" (Lefevere, 1982, p. 5). Fenoglio explicitly disregards the idea that an historical essay should be translated differently from any other literary text, making himself more visible to the reader as a translator by choosing foreignization where usually domestication is preferred.

[12] In the references I refer, when possible, to the pages of the manuscript as they were numbered by Fenoglio. No other translation of Firth's text is available in Italy.

His foreignizing tendencies are also evident in the translation strategies he employs, both in sentence structure and in his choice of equivalent words. As I will later show in many examples, Fenoglio always rejects the strategies which would make the target text more fluent, preferring syntactical fragmentation, polysemy, and employing sudden shifts in discursive registers. This approach leads to a translation which is marked by linguistic freedom and experimentation, and which reminds the reader that the text he is reading is in fact a translation.

In this regard, it is relevant here to indicate that Fenoglio's approach to translation was definitely in contrast with the way translations were carried out at the time. In fact, in Italy during the 1950s and 1960s adaptation and domestication were the strategies preferred by editors and translators when dealing with foreign texts. Since the target text needed to be welcomed by the readers as an "original", translators normally felt free to modify, manipulate and even cut entire pages of what they were translating. The fundamental idea which guided translation at the time was that the source text could be enriched and even improved by the intervention of the translator. An example is Natalia Ginzburg, who translated many novels from French into Italian for the editor Einaudi, and who also left out of her translations many pages of Proust's *Recherche* (Correnti, 2016, p. 45). In the same way, Elio Vittorini often intervened extensively in the texts he translated, so that the critic Claudio Gorlier defined his translations "imitations in every sense of the word" (Gorlier, 1966, p. 160). These considerations deserved our attention because they stress the originality of Fenoglio's approach to translation in the cultural context in which he was operating. As I mentioned above, this specific translation is almost complete, and typewritten. It is thus possible that Fenoglio may have wanted to publish this work. However, as I will show, even with a possible audience in mind, and with a probable concern for publication, Fenoglio chose foreignization in his approach to this text.

I shall now proceed to analyse in detail the specific translation strategies that Fenoglio employed, with particular reference to the idea of foreignizing that I have presented earlier in this thesis.

5.5.1 Sentence structure

Earlier in my analysis of Fenoglio's translations of Marlowe and Milton I explained that Fenoglio usually disregards the sentence structure typical of the Italian language and tends to reproduce the English syntax, thus making the target text unusual and distancing for Italian-language readers. This aspect is also found in Fenoglio's own writings, as noted by Beccaria, who argued that Fenoglio's Italian is "distant from anything which may sound familiar or linguistically relaxed" (Beccaria, 2013, p. 17), due to the fact that Fenoglio is using English as an ideal model for the creation of his own language.

Many examples of this foreignizing tendency are found in Fenoglio's translation of Firth's text, especially with regard to the pre-position of epithets, as when Fenoglio puts adjectives before nouns. This construction is standard in English but is marked in Italian, and it is used particularly in poetry to stress the importance of the adjective. Fenoglio seems to prefer it in most cases throughout the entire text. Here are some examples : *sincera* religione (p. 2), *redditizi* castelli (p. 3), *recalcitranti* ecclesiastici (p.3), *demoniaca* superstizione (p. 4), *più semplice* cerimoniale, *contraria e arcigna* predisposizione (p.3), il *quadriennale* conflitto (p. 4). This use of the adjectives contributes to the high literary style of this text, which is generally uncommon for history essays, and at the same time makes the mark of the translator particularly visible and recognizable.

Another foreignizing aspect with regard to sentence structure is Fenoglio's rendering of the construction "to have to". Italian has a specific equivalent to translate this construction

in order to express obligation, which is the verb "dovere". Fenoglio, however, does not use it, and prefers a construction which is mimics the English one: "avere a". For example, in chapter 2 Firth writes: "When Charles I succeeded his father, he found the nation he *had to govern* not only discontented but also full of suspicion" (Firth, 2018, p. 14). Fenoglio translates this sentence: "Quando Carlo I successe al padre, trovò la nazione che *aveva a governare* non solo scontenta ma anche piena di sospetto" (p. 7). This specific sentence also contains a very uncommon use of the past tense of the verb "succedere" (which translates the English verb to succeed). Standard Italian forms the past tense of this verb in two ways: "succeduto", meaning " to take over, to replace", and "successo", more generally meaning "to happen", but also very rarely employed to mean "to replace". Fenoglio chooses the second option, once again deviating from the more natural and familiar use of the verb.

In the same way, Fenoglio alters the structure of the Italian sentence when he translates "*Stories are told* of his marvelous deliverances from danger, and of strange prognostications of his future greatness" (Firth, p. 9) with "*Storie si narrano* di sue meravigliose liberazioni da pericoli, di strane pronosticazioni della sua grandezza futura" (p. 2). Standard Italian would not allow the sentence to begin with the subject "storie", but rather with the impersonal verb "si narrano"; Fenoglio chooses to keep the structure of the English sentence, thus creating an effect of estrangement.

5.5.2 Calques, loans and neologisms

In this translation, as in his original writings and his literary translations[13], Fenoglio makes large use of calques and loans. Obviously, calques and loans are heavily employed in

[13] With regard to Fenoglio's use of calques, see Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of the present thesis

translations which tend to make the foreign visible, thus are part of what Lawrence Venuti calls "the resistance strategies" (Venuti, 1995, p. 299), because they resist to fluent – thus domesticating – approaches to translation. However, they are extremely uncommon in non-literary translations. Calques are a vital part of the mimetic style of Fenoglio's translations, which corresponds to his desire to be extremely faithful to the original text. This results in an evident hybridity both in style and register of the translation. I would like here to give a few examples of the calques which Fenoglio employs in his translation, some of which sound particularly original for an Italian-language speaker.

In the first paragraph of the first chapter Firth writes that "Cromwell's family was one of the many English families which *rose to wealth* and *importance* at the time of the Reformation" (Firth, 2018, p. 7), which Fenoglio translates: "Quella di Cromwell era una delle tante famiglie inglesi *salite a ricchezza ed importanza* all'epoca della Riforma" (p. 1). The expression "salire in ricchezza" is entirely modelled on "rose to wealth", and sounds particularly strange to an Italian speaker, because the verb "salire" (to rise) does not collocate with the noun "wealth". A more domesticating approach would have preferred the verb "acquisire", and instead of a past participle (salite) would probably have opted for a relative clause. In this section the peculiarity of Fenoglio's style emerges clearly, because one of his stylistic peculiarities, both in writing and in translating, is the constant avoidance of circumlocutions and relative clauses, whereas he prefers participles – present and past – in order to create a concise, terse language (Beccaria, 2013, p. 27).

Similar examples of calques can be found throughout the entire work, some of which result in minor errors in Fenoglio's translation of the text. For example, Fenoglio translates the sentence " Samuel Ward was a learned and *morbidly conscientious* divine" (Firth, 2008, p. 9) with "Samuel Ward era un teologo dotto e *morbidamente coscienzioso*" (p. 2), thus not

recognizing that "morbido" is a so-called false friend and does not mean morbid, but tender. Fenoglio chooses calque in many other occasions, thus creating expressions which are unusual or even nonexistent in Italian: "Came in turn of" becomes "venne in turno di" (p. 9); "taking more delight in" becomes "prendendo più piacere nel" (p. 3); "Attitude to" becomes "attitudine a"(p. 2); "took refuge" becomes "prese rifugio" (p.18).

Fenoglio's foreignizing tendencies are also found in his use of loans and neologisms. In fact, in some cases Fenoglio did not translate into Italian the terms which he believed had no specific equivalent. On example can be found when Firth discusses the Parliament's opposition to some specific taxes, called "tonnage" and "poundage" (Firth, 2008, p.16). Fenoglio does not translate these terms and does not provide explanation of any kind for them, leaving to the reader alone the task of figuring out the meaning of these words. This choice is in tune with Fenoglio's will to keep the Englishness of the text visible, avoiding any possible domesticating strategy which would suppress the otherness of the source text. We are reminded here of Schleiermacher's idea of "alienating translation", in which the translator should "leave the writer in peace as much as possible and move the reader toward him" (Schleiermacher, 2012, p. 49).[14] Such an approach aims at the valorisation of the foreign, which also produces a vitalizing result on the target language.

The enrichment of the target language which derives from foreignization is evident when Fenoglio creates neologisms. Two examples of neologisms can be found in Fenoglio's translation of Firth. The first one is Fenoglio's rendering of the word "disciplinarian" (Firth,

[14] It is not strange that Fenoglio seems have shared Schleiermacher's idea of translating, especially if we consider that Schleiermacher was "a founder of modern Protestant theology and modern hermeneutics (…)", who "expounded a Romantic approach to interpretation based not on absolute truth but on the individual's inner feeling and understanding" (Munday 2016, p.47)

2008, p. 9). Fenoglio translates it "disciplinariano" (p. 2) , which is indeed a neologism created by means of calque. A more common translation of this term would have implied a circumlocution or a periphrasis, something like "sostenitore della disciplina". The second one regards the word "misgovernment", which Fenoglio translates with "sgoverno" (p. 77). The verb "sgovernare", meaning "to govern inefficiently", exists but is very rare and literary. However, Fenoglio employs derivation in order to create a noun that does not exist in the Italian language. This choice appears to be rather atypical, especially because the noun "malgoverno" is the common Italian equivalent to the English "misgovernment". Why then does Fenoglio choose these specific neologisms? In answering this question it should be emphasised that the use of neologisms is typical of both Fenoglio's writing and translating.

With reference to translation, Pietralunga discusses this issue in Fenoglio's rendering of the poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, arguing that Fenoglio employed neologisms to create a text which reflected the style of its author. Through neologisms, Fenoglio was reproducing "the same unbridled and intense assault of traditional lexical forms that Fenoglio considered a major attribute of Hopkins" (Pietralunga, 1987, p. 202). In this specific case, however, Firth's style does not justify Fenoglio's recourse to neologisms and does not mimic any specific linguistic experimentation of the author. With regard to this specific translation, it can be assumed that Fenoglio employs neologisms in order to achieve conciseness and directness, and also to avoid the use of circumlocutions which would in his view make the text sound redundant. This attitude is consistent with a general stylistic tendency which belongs to Fenoglio, who also in his original writings often resorts to neologisms, usually derived from English, when Italian cannot express with one single word the concept he has in mind.

In conclusion it can be argued that Fenoglio's use of neologisms is not, in this case, motivated by the necessity of adhering to the source text, but is rather the result of a personal preference of the translator, and is thus an expression of his subjectivity.

5.5.3 Archaisms

Fenoglio's personal preference for brevity and concision is confirmed in his considerable use of archaisms and rare words. In fact, the archaisms which Fenoglio employs are usually shorter than their more common synonyms; but another interesting element is that Fenoglio usually chooses archaisms to render the English words which share a Latin etymology with Italian. The effect of this choice is that the Italian he employs sounds archaic to the Italian reader, but is at the same time more similar to the English of the source text. The same desire of reproducing the English sound motivates Fenoglio's choice of using words which are uncommon or very rarely used in Italian.

Fenoglio employs archaisms several times in this translation, but I have chosen to concentrate on three examples which seem particularly illuminating and revealing of Fenoglio's imprint on the text. Two of them clearly show Fenoglio's preference for the terms in which English and Italian share a common Latin root. The first one can be found at page 34, when Firth is discussing King Charles' attempt to subdue the Scots: "Charles was resolved to force the Scots to submission" (Firth, 2008, p. 34). The English word submission comes from the Latin noun "submissio", which means "to yield to authority". The common Italian word for "submissio" is "sottomissione", although an archaic form of this noun exists: "sommissione". Fenoglio chooses this second option, rejecting the more common word "sottomissione", probably because "sommissione" is almost identical to the English "submission" (p. 24).

The second example of archaism worth discussing is found at page 90 , when Firth is describing Cromwell's army attacking Basing House, which belonged to catholic Marquise of Winchester. In particular, here Firth is quoting Cromwell's letter to William Lenthal, in which he argues that: " [the Marquise of Winchester's] soldiers fell on with great resolution and cheerfulness". The interesting word is "resolution", which Fenoglio translated with the archaic term "risoluzione" instead of the more common "risolutezza"(p.65). Once again, the term risoluzione is not only more similar to the English term resolution, but is also closer to the common etymology of both English and Italian forms: the Latin word "resolutio".

Finally, an interesting example of archaism that I wish to address in Fenoglio's translation is the term "self-denying", which Firth employs when quoting a letter by John Lilburn on Cromwell: "O for self-denying Cromwell home again…for he is sound at the heart and not rotten-cored"(Firth, 2008, p. 100). To translate the term "self-denying" Fenoglio turns again to a term which has deep roots in the Latin language: "Tornasse *l'abnegante* Cromwell" (Fenoglio, p. 80). "Abnegante" is the present participle of the verb "abnegare", which derives from the Latin verb "abnego", which means not only to renounce willingly to one's own personal need, but to do it in favour of a religious belief or a moral cause (Treccani Dictionary, abnegare entry). Choosing this term, Fenoglio not only perfectly conveys the idea of unselfishness which the English term "self-denying" contains, but through the Latin etymology of the term stresses in his translation the moral and religious causes of Cromwell's selflessness.

From this analysis it can be argued that English is the vehicle through which Fenoglio rediscovers the linguistic possibilities of an archaic Italian, which is full of expressive force and vitality, and which he also employs in his original writings. It is also due to these strategies that Fenoglio makes himself visible as a translator: in fact, they show the cultural and linguistic attention with which Fenoglio approached the texts he translated, in which he focused on the

profound connections that exist between English and Italian. In his translation the two languages dialogue through Fenoglio's personal intervention and interpretation, and the result is a deeply original and fascinating rendition of the source text.

5.6 Conclusions

My examination of Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book has brought to light the deep interconnections between the cultural values and ideas expressed by the English Parlamentarians and Fenoglio's own view of the Italian Resistance. Fenoglio's interpretation of the Resistance as a civil war, which was rejected by the mainstream cultural and political *milieu* of his time, appears to have its roots in the ideals of liberty which informed the English revolutionaries, who were inspired by the political theorizations of Greek and Latin thinkers. Moreover, Fenoglio's translation of the biography of Oliver Cromwell testimonies the identification himself expressed towards the English revolutionaries was culturally and ideologically informed, and must be taken into account for a complete understanding of Fenoglio's political views.

As I have also noted in the analysis of other translations by Fenoglio, the translation strategies employed by our author reveal a very original approach to the act of translation. Fenoglio in fact chooses foreignization not only in literary texts but also in the rendition of Firth's historical essay: Fenoglio's translation keeps the foreign visible, through calques, borrowings and neologisms, and helps the reader rediscover the potentiality of the Italian language through the influence of English. The linguistic analysis of this translation

demonstrates that Fenoglio was not a neutral mediator between two languages and cultures, but was devoted to finding a profound cultural and linguistic connection between the two cultures and the two languages with which he worked.

Firth's narration of the English civil war as a tragic experience also resonates in Fenoglio's original writings, especially in his novel *Il Partigiano Johnny*. Fenoglio's predilection for the tragic genre, however, is not only present in his translations – as we have seen in Chapter 3 – and in his original writings, but also in a theatrical adaptation of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. In the following chapter I examine Fenoglio's adaptation, noting how through his modifications of the source text, Fenoglio was able to transform Brontë's novel into a tragedy, and offered a very personal reading of Brontë's novel.

CHAPTER 6

THE FINE LINE BETWEEN TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION: FENOGLIO'S *LA VOCE NELLA TEMPESTA* AND THE TRANSLATION OF H. W. GARROD'S INTRODUCTION TO *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

If the partisan war spares me,
I'll have a battle name: Heathcliff
*(*Fenoglio, *Appunti Partigiani*)[1]

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on Fenoglio's interest in adaptation, and takes into account Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta*, a theatrical rendition of Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights*. The most original aspect of this adaptation is that Fenoglio based his work on two different sources: one is Brontë's novel and the other is William Wyler's 1939 film, which title was translated as *La Voce nella Tempesta* for the Italian market. After he watched the movie, Fenoglio borrowed the Italian title of the movie for his own adaptation. Being based on both a novel and a movie, Fenoglio's adaptation stands out as being particularly inventive, becoming an "example of mixture of translation, original writing and film influence" (Brozzi, 2008, p. vii).

Fenoglio's adaptation of Brontë's novel has been received by critics with much more interest than Fenoglio's translations, especially in recent times. Recent commentators have focused in particular on the relationship between this play and Fenoglio's novel *Una Questione*

[1] Fenoglio 1994, p. 22

Privata, due to the similarities between these two works in the portrayal of an unfortunate love story. This curiosity towards Fenoglio's adaptation appears to be due to the fact that adaptations are considered original writings, even though they involve the transformation of previous material, whereas translations are still not approached as creative writings. As a result, these scholars ignore the possible rapport between *La Voce nella Tempesta* and Fenoglio's translations; moreover, they usually disregard the importance of Wyler's movie in influencing Fenoglio's reading of Brontë's novel. In order to address this gap, this chapter aims at acknowledging the importance of both sources that Fenoglio used in order to produce his adaptation. By analyzing the ways in which Fenoglio chose on the one hand to depart and on the other to remain faithful to his two sources, his personal reading and interpretation of *Wuthering Heights* becomes clearer.

Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta* focuses on the figure of Heathcliff, with whom – as the quotation above shows – Fenoglio identified so much that he borrowed his name when he chose his own partisan nickname.[2] As I showed in the previous chapters, Fenoglio tended to identify with solitary heroes and outcasts, such as Milton's Samson or Marlowe's Faustus. Heathcliff is no exception, given his rebellious and almost antisocial nature. Moreover, that Fenoglio chose to adapt Brontë's novel into the form of a play also reflects his longstanding interest in drama, witnessed by his translations of sixteenth and seventeenth-century English dramas such as *Dr Faustus*, *Henry IV Part 1*, and *Samson Agonistes*. However, the analogies between *La Voce nella Tempesta* and Fenoglio's translations do not limit themselves to structure: as we will see, Fenoglio's adaptation appears to be cohesive not only with the themes and formal structure of his original writings, for example with his novel *Una Questione*

[2] This results from a copy of Beppe's service record book, in which he indicates Heathcliff as his battle name. A reproduction of the record can be found in Vaccaneo (1996, p. 55)

Qrivata, but also with the translations which I have analysed in the previous chapters. In this chapter, I focus in particular on the thematic similarities which link Fenoglio's adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* to his translations.

In the previous chapters of this thesis I argued that Fenoglio's approach to translation shows how his subjectivity as a translator emerges both in his text choices and his translation strategies. With the same aim in mind, my analysis of *La Voce nella Tempesta* combines theories of Adaptation Studies and Translation Studies, in order to highlight how Fenoglio's original interpretation of the novel becomes visible in his rewriting. In this regard, I draw on those scholars who have highlighted the relationship between translation and adaptation, in particular Julie Sanders (2006) and Lawrence Venuti (2007), who both examine the many ways in which adapters and translators transform previous material into a new work with very specific and individual choices. Another contribution which helps us understand Fenoglio's text is offered by André Lefevere and his concept of refraction (1982a, p. 232-248), which I have also mentioned in Chapter 1 of this thesis.

The typescript version of the play was introduced by a critical essay. This essay was considered for a long time Fenoglio's original writing and was therefore included in the Collected Works of Fenoglio, edited by Maria Corti in 1969. However, it was later discovered that that introduction was not Fenoglio's, but a translation of H. W. Garrod's introduction to *Wuthering Heights*, included in the 1944 edition of the novel which Fenoglio possessed. Once it was discovered that this essay was a translation, it was removed from the subsequent editions of the play, even though Fenoglio had specifically wanted it as an introduction to his own play. The editors' choice to remove this translation from the published edition of Fenoglio's rewriting shows once more that translations are still considered non-creative, whereas adaptations are allowed more freedom in terms of subjectivity and originality. For this reason,

the last sections of the chapter examine Fenoglio's translation of Garrod's introduction, noting how Garrod influenced Fenoglio' critical reading of the novel, providing a theoretical underpinning for many of Fenoglio's choices in the process of adaptation. It is thus once again one of Fenoglio's translations which helps us better contextualize and understand one of his creative writings.

6.2 Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta* : the play, the influence of *Wuthering Heights,* and its critical fortune

Scholars have not as yet been able to establish the year in which *La Voce nella Tempesta* was written. Nonetheless, literary critic Francesco De Nicola, who first published the play in 1974, suggested that the piece could have been written in 1941. Fenoglio's English teacher, Maria Lucia Marchiaro, reported that this play was part of a wider idea, which included the translation of the entire novel. According to Fenoglio's teacher, he allegedly decided to adapt the novel after seeing Wyler's movie adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*, which was distributed in Italy in 1941 with the title *La Voce nella Tempesta* (De Nicola, 1973, p. 21), the same title that Fenoglio gave to his own theatrical adaptation of the novel. This dating hypothesis, however, remains problematic because it was questioned by Fenoglio's brother, Walter, who said that Beppe had seen the movie in 1945, after the war, during a film festival in Alba. In any case, we could safely assume that Fenoglio wrote this theatrical adaptation during the 1940s, and that the film influence on Fenoglio's rendition is undeniable.

From a formal point of view, Fenoglio's play is divided into three acts, the third of which is further composed of two scenes. The first act covers the events narrated in the first nine chapters of Brontë's novel. It begins with Longwood's (Brontë's Lockwood) arrival at

Wuthering Heights and continues until the marriage of Cathy Earnshaw and Edgar Linton and Heathcliff's disappearance from Wuthering Heights. The second part starts with Heathcliff's return to his home as a wealthy man and ends with Heathcliff and Isabella's elopement, while the third and final act starts with de description of Heathcliff and Isabella's unhappy marriage and closes with Cathy dying in Heathcliff's arms. The two scenes in which the last part of the play is divided into show the final crisis and the turn to despair of the protagonists: in the first scene Isabella is the main protagonist, while the second concentrates on Cathy and Heathcliff himself.

The typescript of *La Voce nella Tempesta* is known to have been donated by Fenoglio to his friends, Ugo and Luciana Cerrato, in 1958 (Boggione , 2011, p. 208). As noted earlier, it contains a short introduction, which was at first believed to be his original writing, but turned out to be Fenoglio's translation of Garrod's introduction to Brontë's novel. Fenoglio's interest in Brontë's novel is corroborated by the records of his high school's library, where it is reported that Fenoglio borrowed Brontë's book, in Italian, both in 1941 and in 1947 (Pesce, 2014, p. 32). A 1944 edition of Brontë's novel in English can also be found in Fenoglio's private library.

Fenoglio's fascination with *Wuthering Heights* has been acknowledged and investigated by several critics. Some scholars have dealt with, more specifically, the young writer's fascination with Heathcliff's character, focusing on possible autobiographical motives for his identification with Heathcliff: for example, Fenoglio's biographer Negri Scaglione argues that Fenoglio was drawn the unfortunate love story between the two protagonists of *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff and Cathy, because it resembled Fenoglio's complex and unrequited love for a young girl called Baba, whose relationship with Fenoglio was thwarted by her family (Negri Scaglione, 2007, p. 119). Moreover, the figure of Heathcliff fascinated young Fenoglio both for his solitary nature and for his inability to adapt to society's

conventions, a characteristic which commentators have often attributed to Fenoglio himself. Negri Scaglione notes that Heathcliff is a rebel, is treated as an inferior by the Earnshaw family and thus proudly looks for revenge: on this character Fenoglio "models himself and many of the characters of his novels" (p. 121).

Another element which critics find particularly important is the role of nature and of weather, which is pivotal in Brontë's novel and in Fenoglio's theatrical adaptation, but also in Fenoglio's creative writings. Brontë's stormy weather appears to be a metaphor through which the British writer establishes a link with the passionate love affair of the two protagonists. In this regard, literary critic Gioanola noted that in Brontë's novel the natural environment, with its windstorms, rain and snow, plays a central role because it reflects how extreme the love of the two characters is (2017, p. 21). This focus on nature in Brontë's novel is not surprising, given the influence of Romantic literary movement on the early Victorian novels; however, Brontë also uses the image of a disruptive nature to allude to a clash between an old way of life – the Romantic world, based on passion and feelings – and a new one, based on moderation and discipline (Pack and Coyle, 2002, p. 178). Fenoglio was himself attracted by the beauty and mystery of the natural environment of the *Langhe*, and to him "there were no big differences between his native Langhe and the Yorkshire moors and hills" (Raimondi, 2019, p. 156). Fenoglio stresses the importance of nature in his adaptation, but focuses in particular on the element of wind as central to his narration. The wind, in Fenoglio's adaptation, is the central emblem of solitude, freedom and violence of passion.

The violence and cruelty of this unhappy love are the elements that make it an impossible love, but also make it very close to Fenoglio's taste and poetics, especially if we keep in mind the difficult and tormented love story which Fenoglio narrates in *Una Questione Privata* (Gioanola , 2017, p. 19). In Fenoglio's novel, the protagonist Milton is obsessed by the

love for a young woman, Fulvia, who resembles Cathy in her ambiguity and indecisiveness. The love story between Heathcliff and Cathy was, in Fenoglio's eyes, tragic in its impossibility of fulfilment, and Heathcliff is – like the Milton's of *Una Questione Privata* - the tragic hero who is a victim of "the unconscious cruelty of women" (Negri Scaglione, 2006, p. 119).

Other critics recognize an important role *Wuthering Heights* in terms on influence on Fenoglio's original writing, and analyze it as a means to better understand his poetics as a writer (that is to say, the themes which are dear to him and which he also explores in his novels and short stories).[3] These critical approaches look at *Wuthering Heights* from an intertextual perspective, which has been particularly influential in the field of comparative literature. As I have explained in Chapter 1, intertextuality sees each text as a dialogue between other texts: each text is in fact the result of conscious or unconscious influence of other texts. From this perspective, these scholars look at Brontë's novel in relation to some of the themes which Fenoglio explored in his own writings, especially in relation to his last novel *Una Questione Privata*. In a very interesting study, Orsetta Innocenti (2001) approached Brontë's novel as an archetype for Fenoglio's last novel *Una Questione Privata*, exploring the echoes of other literary works which play an important part in the novel. Wuthering Heights appears to be, in Innocenti's view, Fenoglio's inspiration to narrate "a complicated, literary love story" between the three characters of Fenoglio's novel: Milton, Giorgio and Fulvia. She finally categorises Fenoglio's novel in the wide genre of the "romance" (p. 86), focusing on its transposition of Romantic elements , and identifying the implicit influence on the novel of other authors, such as Proust, Schnitzler and Thomas Hardy (p. 110). Innocenti's focus, however, is the novel *Una Questione Privata*, and Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* remains in the background, as a literary

[3] A very interesting reading of Fenoglio's *A voice in the storm* is offered by Elio Gianola (2017), in which he provides psychological reasons for Fenoglio' identification with Heathcliff.

influence and an a source of implicit inspiration.

Fenoglio's adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* has been recently examined by scholars Boggione (2014), Conti (2016) and Raimondi (2019), who also approach the text from an intertextual perspective, and identify in *Wuthering Heights* some of the themes which became recurrent in other writings of Fenoglio, such as the relationship between man and nature and the exploration of social disparities between the characters. In particular, they look at a short play Fenoglio wrote, called *Serenate a Bretton Oaks* (*Serenades at Bretton Oaks)*. This play, written approximately in the same years of Fenoglio's adaptation of Brontë's novel, revolves around an unfortunate love story between two characters called Joel and Cathy. The female protagonist does not only share the name of Bronte's novel, but she is also torn between her true love for Joel and her desire for a more quiet, conventional and secure life with the wealthy and superficial Don Hallam. Similarly to Bronte's Cathy, Fenoglio's Cathy will finally choose to conform to the dominant cultural and behavioural models, sacrificing her happiness and Joel's. It appears thus evident that the theme of the "love triangle" was a *topos* in Fenoglio's poetics, given the recurrence of this aspect in most of his writings. Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* was indeed a novel to which Fenoglio owes much, and brings out Fenoglio's sensibility towards a theme such as love as a tragic experience, in which social constraints often play a key role in obstructing the happy development of the relationship between two protagonists. Once more, it appears that those who do not conform to an imposed way of life have no choice but to succumb and to be rejected for their different approach to existence and love.

As I have argued earlier*„ La Voce nella Tempesta* has received much attention from critics if compared to his translations. Despite the fact that it is modelled on a source text, as much as translations do, Fenoglio's adaptation is treated by critics as a creative work in its own right, and is accepted as a vital part of Fenoglio's *oeuvre*. His voice is recognized beneath and

beyond Brontë's, and the play is seen as a work of literature in its own right. *La Voce nella Tempesta* is approached by literary scholars, who apply a methodology which has its roots in literary theory and comparative literature, and which examines for example recurrent themes or images which Fenoglio used in his other novels or short stories. None of the critics who have studied Fenoglio's play, with the exception of Valter Boggione (2010), have mentioned Fenoglio's translations as an important point of reference to better understand this specific text. In my view, this *piece* has much in common with Fenoglio's translations, so that they can be an illuminating guide in understanding Fenoglio's choices in adapting *Wuthering Heights*. For this reason, in the next section I examine Fenoglio's translations and their important connections with Fenoglio's play.

6.3 *La Voce nella Tempesta* and Fenoglio's translations: formal and thematic affinities

The analogies between Fenoglio's translations and his adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* are numerous, both in style and content. Firstly, the choice of the dramatic form for the adaptation of this novel becomes more understandable if we keep in mind that the majority of Fenoglio's translations consist of plays. Moreover, as I have noted in Chapter 3, Fenoglio's original works, both novels and short-stories, have a "dramatic quality" in terms of style, due to his preference for direct speech and his modality of narration which derived by his habit of translating theatre. Secondly, *La Voce nella Tempesta* seems to be characterised by the same thematic interests which guided Fenoglio in the selection of the texts he translated. In Chapter 3 of the present thesis I have explained that, by looking at the whole of his translations, Fenoglio directed his attention specifically towards tragedies. Having this in mind, it is thus no

surprise that Fenoglio not only adapted *Wuthering Heights* for the theatre, but also transformed it into a tragedy.

Several critics have acknowledged that Fenoglio's interpretation of the novel is to be understood in a tragic perspective, and have identified it in the irreconcilable conflict between nature and civilization the basis for this approach (Boggione 2010, p. 216; Broccio 2011, p. 108). For these critics, the love story of Heathcliff and Cathy seems to embody the unresolvable clash between a world controlled by the forces of nature, and a civilized, cultured world. The passion of which the two characters are victim clashes with the constraints and norms of civilization. The impossibility of conciliation between the two worlds leads all the characters to despair and disaster. In Fenoglio's play, it is Nelly who gives voice to this concept, telling Cathy: "Heathcliff is the storm, Edgar is the calm" (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 35). To understand better this aspect, it is fruitful to include a few considerations on Fenoglio's translations, because they contribute to bringing into sharper focus the nature of Fenoglio's adaptation. In fact, some of the choices which Fenoglio deployed in his adaptation have clear correspondences with the tragedies which he translated and that I have presented in the previous chapters of this work. In constructing *La Voce nella Tempesta* , Fenoglio seems to have borrowed some features from the playwrights he translated, such as the representation of Heathcliff as a tragic hero, the theme of revenge and also the ending of his play.

Fenoglio's Heathcliff, as I have noted above, is the focus of Fenoglio's play, the real protagonist of the story. This is in tune with the structure of classic and Elizabethan tragedy, which usually "revolves around a tragic hero, and is mainly concerned with a single character" (Guerra De Gloss, 1992, p. 158). As we have seen in the previous chapter, Marlowe's *Faustus* and Milton's *Samson Agonistes* also revolve around a central male character, whose fall causes pain and destruction to himself and others around him. Moreover, Fenoglio's Heathcliff shares

with Samson and Faustus a perennial condition of solitude and loneliness. We have seen how Fenoglio showed particular interest for rebels, outcasts and solitary heroes, who are not accepted by society and usually rebel against a constituted power; on these characters he built his poetics of rebellion and dissent, which he also displayed in his original writings. The same happens with Fenoglio's solitary Heathcliff, who in terms of personality is more similar to Faustus or to Samson than he is to Brontë's original Heathcliff. Heathcliff becomes cruel and revengeful through no fault of his own, but because of the harsh treatment he receives in his childhood. Fenoglio insists much on the cruelties Heathcliff has to endure from Martin Earnshaw, who treats him like a servant and forces him to take care of the horses and work in the stable: in Fenoglio's play, Heathcliff is called a "bastard" at least 10 times, both by his brother Martin and by the servant Giuseppe.

As we have seen, Samson as well has to endure servitude and is constantly humiliated: his decision to revenge gives him back the dignity he had previously lost (Chapter 3). Just like Samson, Fenoglio's Heathcliff is devoted to his plan of revenge, even though he knows that the fulfillment of his plan will cause devastation both to Cathy and himself. The revenge theme is also present in Brontë's novel, but it has a rather different function: Brontë's Heathcliff acts revengefully because he cannot control his capacity of hating as much as he cannot control his love for Catherine. Fenoglio's Heathcliff faces coldly the consequences of his plan of revenge even though he knows that it will cause the annihilation of both. However, he is coldly determined in his plan, appearing always in control of the situation. Brontë, on the contrary, stresses the violent, uncontrollable nature of Heathcliff's temperament. He is constantly agitated, either by anger or by passion. When Catherine dies, he is in such a state that Nelly is

worried that he may go mad (Brontë 2011, p. 161).[4] Fenoglio's Heathcliff is always calm and cold. The terms "*calmo*" (calm) or "*con voce calma*" (in a calm voice) appear at least seven times when Fenoglio is referring to Heathcliff. Fenoglio's Heathcliff reacts with calm and dignity, though of course with immense pain, to Catherine's death. He accepts it as the inevitable conclusion of his revenge plan against Edgar: holding Cathy's body in his hands, he addresses Edgar and tells him: "Do not cry. Now she is what she should always have been: only mine" (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 94). It is in this ending in particular that we recognize the tragic nature of Fenoglio's play: Fenoglio's Heathcliff brings to the extreme consequences his plan of revenge, and accepts the destiny of despair that awaits him. His revenge is accomplished, and the play ends with the knowledge that Heathcliff will never find peace, not even in death. Brontë, on the contrary, decides to reunite the two lovers in death, and conclude her novel with a happier love story, the one between Catherine's daughter and her cousin Hareton.

From this analysis it can be argued that Milton's and Marlowe's tragic heroes were a valid model on which Fenoglio might have built his own Heathcliff. Having presented the thematic and structural analogies between Fenoglio's translations and his theatrical adaptation of *Wuthering Heights,* in the next section I intend to integrate the theories of Translation Studies with the ones of Adaptation Studies, in order to offer a more original reading of Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta* .

6.4 The analogies between translation and adaptation: how Translation Studies can be incorporated in Adaptation Studies

[4] For example, when he starts hitting his head against a tree, "not like a man , but like a savage beast getting goaded to death with knives and spears" (Brontë 2011, p. 162).

This section examines the theories of Translation Studies and Adaptation studies which can help us determine the originality of Fenoglio's theatrical rendition of Brontë's novel. The theoretical framework offered by these two disciplines is important because it approaches both translation and adaptation as activities which imply a creative relationship between the previous material and the new material. Both the adapter and the translator very visibly assert themselves through the comparison with their sources and in their translation or adaptation choices.

Scholars in the field of translation always acknowledged the affinity between translation and adaptation. Roman Jacobson (1975/2012), for example, identified adaptation as a form of translation, and defined it "intersemiotic translation": when texts are translated from one genre or modality into another, as in the adaptation of a novel into a movie or from a novel into a play, this operation involves a transmutation of signs, usually between verbal signs to non-verbal / semi-verbal signs. (1957/2012, p. 139). In the case of Fenoglio's adaptation of a novel into a play, we can identify a transference between verbal signs to verbal and semi-verbal signs. Jacobson's definition of adaptation proved seminal in the development of Film Studies and Adaptation Studies, since it was employed to understand the process of transmutation which takes place in movie adaptations and in other forms of art. This concept applies thus applying the notion of translation to other artistic expressions beyond the written word and broadens the traditional idea of text.

Scholars in the field of literary criticism deeply influenced the development of Translation and Adaptation studies. In particular, French critic and historian Gerard Genette's definition of "hypertextuality" helped acknowledge that all texts are deeply interrelated with other different texts. Genette defined hypertextuality as "any relationship uniting a text B (which I should call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall of course call it the hypotext),

upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not a commentary" (Genette ,1997, p. 5). Thus, the hypotext is the basis, the primary text, and the hypertext is the transformed secondary text. This concept, as it has been noted, can fit any form of translation and adaptation, in which a primary source is pivotal for the existence of the target text (Drößiger, 2018, p. 263). This concept is very useful for our analysis of Fenoglio's adaptation, which can be defined an hypotext whose hypertexts are both Brontë's novel and Wyler's movie.

In recent years, several Adaptation Studies scholars have commented on the process of transmutation which occurs in adaptation, and also started to focus on the personal contribution of the adapter. The same thing happened in Translation Studies, as we have seen in Chapter 1, when more and more scholars started focusing on the role of the translator and on his personal, creative contribution to the translated text. In particular, the studies of Julie Sanders (2006) and Lawrence Venuti (2007) discuss both the nature of adaptation and the creativity of adapters. Sanders argues that adaptation deals with transformation, and focuses indeed on how "art creates art, how literature is made by literature" (Sanders 2006, p. i). This concept draws on the idea of intertextuality which I explored in the second chapter of this thesis, and is based on the notion that all texts feed off other texts in order to create new material. Sanders then proceeds to distinguish between adaptation and appropriation, noting that an adaptation usually keeps its source visible, either in the title or in the plot; appropriation, on the other hand, moves more radically away from its informing text, transforming it into "a wholly new cultural product and domain" (p. 34) . In this regard, Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta* can be defined an adaptation, because *Wuthering Heights* is the visible, explicit reference on which Fenoglio works. However, Fenoglio recontextualizes and modifies the text in order to offer his own interpretation of the story and thus modifies some aspects of it.

Venuti's study on adaptation (2007) devotes his attention precisely to the new context

in which the adaptation is received, and on the personal intervention of the adapter: in fact, just as translations do, adaptations also deal with the cultural re-contextualization of previous material for a new culture and a new audience. In this process, the role of the adapter is very similar to the one of the translator. As Venuti argues, adaptations and translations are cultural and hermeneutic activities, in which the vision of the adapter/translator has a specific role which must be accounted for. In his analysis, he stresses the need to value an adaptation not much in terms of fidelity to the source text, but in terms of shifts – thus transformations- operated by the adapter in the process of rewriting a text. Venuti here shares Sander's belief that "it is usually at the very point of infidelity that the most creative acts of adaptation take place" (Sanders, 2006, p. 17).

The shifts which take place in adaptation as the result of the adapters' choice are called by Venuti *interpretants* (2007, pp. 31-32). The interpretants are the principles that guide the adapter in the process of transforming the previous material in a new material. There are two typologies of interpretants, formal interpretants and thematic interpretants. These interpretants can be recognized every time an adapter chooses to depart from or to stay close to the source text, either in terms of structure or in terms of thematic content. Formal interpretants refer to the shifts operated by the adapter in terms of structure; for example "structural correspondence maintained between the adapted material and the film, a particular style, or a concept of genre that necessitates a manipulation or revision of the adapted materials" (p. 33). When an adapter retains or modifies certain characteristics of the structure of the source material – for example some specific plot details, the chronology of narration, addition or elision of characters – s/he is making shifts that are revealing of her/his interpretation of the text (Venuti, 2007, p. 31). This approach highlights the role of the adapter as interpreting agent, and emphasises the importance of the adapter's subjective interpretation of the prior material.

Thematic interpretants, on the other hand, deal with changes in values, ideologies and poetics of the source text. For example, an adapter may need to adjust the thematic issues or modify the portrayal of characters in order to please the new audience the adaptation is directed to; s/he may also operate shifts according to his own political ideas, or to the new cultural and social context which is supposed to welcome the adaptation. Venuti argues that translations and adaptations both imply "re-contextualization and re-negotiation of social meaning" (p. 198), because they interact both with their source text and with the surrounding socio-cultural environment. The filter of subjectivity here emerges clearly, since the adapter makes this choices for his own agenda or to fulfil the expectation of the target audience to which the adaptation is directed. In fact, interpretants are the vehicle through which the creativity and the subjectivity of the adapter become evident, since these principles "always constitute interpretive moves" (Venuti, 2007, p. 31).

Venuti's approach to adaptation and translation draws on André Lefevere (1984) and on his concept of refracted texts, which I have discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis. Lefevere calls refractions all those texts which are the result of a re-reading and a re-working in other times, languages and cultures: indeed, "refractions occur when a text is produced to replace an original text for a given audience" (Lefevere, 1984, p. 219). Both translations and adaptations are indeed refracted texts, since they are the result of a new reading of previous material intended for different readers.

In the following sections, I wish to examine the novel, the film and Fenoglio's adaptation, focusing on the formal and thematic interpretants which convey more clearly Fenoglio's creativity as an adapter. Moreover, I wish to add the concept of *telos* to Venuti's concept of interpretants. As I have explained in Chapter 1 of this thesis, *telos* identifies the personal motive of the translator, but it can also be fruitfully applied to the adapter, since often

both the translator and the adaptor modify and transform the source text according to their own ideology and poetics. Through the analysis of the interpretants adopted by Fenoglio it will be clear how Fenoglio transformed Brontë's novel into a tragic play.

6.5 Two *hypotexts* for one *hypertext*: Brontë's novel and Wyler's movie. The creativity of Fenoglio's adaptation

In reading Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta* it appears evident that the starting point in the construction of Fenoglio's play are both Brontë's novel and Wyler's film. In Genette's words, as I noted above - these two sources constitute the hypotexts on which Fenoglio builds his hypertext (Genette, 1997, p. 5). As argued above, scholars who have commented on this play usually do not look at both the film and the novel, but rather focus on *Wuthering Heights* (Vatteroni 2014, Raimondi 2019, Conti 2016). The film is generally referred to as a movie which Fenoglio did not particularly appreciate (Negri Scaglione 2006, p. 120) and for this reason is not further investigated.

In my view, the importance of Wyler's film as one of Fenoglio's sources should not be neglected. In fact, the references to the movie both in structural and thematic choices are many, and need to be properly addressed in order to better understand the intertextual elements of the play, which seems to reinterpret and transform both the novel and the movie. Fenoglio dialogues intensely with both works, modifying both to make them suit to his own creative idea. The shifts he employs, or *interpretants*, work at the level of structure of the text and at the level of themes or ideology represented in the new text. In other words, they are indications of the changes that Fenoglio undertook in order to transform – or appropriate – the source or

hypotext, and are the signs of the new "thetic position" (Kristeva, 1984, p. 60)[5] assumed by the new speaking subject. I now intend to focus on the most significant formal and thematic interpretants which Fenoglio employed in his rewriting, in order to draw out his personal reading and interpretation of the novel and film. As we will see, Fenoglio structurally remained closer to the movie, but introduced new elements in terms of themes and poetics in order to create his own *Wuthering Heights*, and in particular to build his own character of Heathcliff.

6.5.1 Formal interpretants in Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta* changes in plot and structure in comparison with Wyler's movie and with *Wuthering Heights*

As previously explained, formal interpretants show how the adapter deals with a set of formal features of the previous material (Milton, 2009, p. 56), such as structure or plot. Despite the dislike which Fenoglio apparently expressed towards Wyler's movie, *La Voce nella Tempesta* has structurally much more in common with Wyler's film than with Brontë's novel.

The first element the movie and Fenoglio's play have in common is that they both choose to concentrate on the first seventeen chapters of the book and cut out the second part of the novel, thus also reducing the number of characters of the story. Fenoglio's aim to adapt a novel into a play obviously forced him to make significant changes to the formal structure of Brontë's novel, especially through compression. This choice is motivated by the necessity of condensing the very complex plot of a novel into a screenplay and a play, which have specific time and place constraints. Both the play and the film end with the death of Catherine, but Wyler's movie also shows the death of Heathcliff, while Fenoglio does not.

[5] Kristeva argues that in a transposition the thetic position – that is to say the speaking subject – gets transformed as well. The result is "the destruction of the old thetic position and a formation of a new one" (Kristeva 1984, p. 59)

The second generation of characters, whose story occupies the remaining seventeen chapters of the novel, is eliminated both in the play and in the movie. The love story between Chatherine's daughter and Hareton, her cousin, is thus not narrated, even if it is the only happy love story of the novel. This second love story is important in the narrative of the novel, because it concludes the story with a happy ending and with the peace that the two major characters could not have. The consequence of this reduction is that the love triangle between Heathcliff, Cathy and Edgar Linton becomes the centre of the story, and the subplots are sacrificed. Also to give pre-eminence to the characters of Cathy and Heathcliff, secondary characters such Lockwood and Nelly - who, as the two main narrators of the events of Wuthering Heights, have great relevance in the novel - are relegated to a much inferior position. Especially Lockwood, who is a pivotal character in the novel because he represents Heathcliff's alter-ego (Berlinger, 2010, p. 185) , is reduced – both in the movie and in the play – to a bystander, and lacks psychological depth and insight (Boggione, 2010, p. 212)[6].

Wyler's movie and Fenoglio's play depict the main narrators in a similar way. In the novel, the story of Cathy and Heathcliff is mostly narrated by Ellen Dean (Nelly) to Lockwood. In Brontë's novel, however, Nelly appears to be an unreliable narrator, for example when she defines Edgar – Catherine's husband and Heathcliff's rival – as "kind and truthful and honourable" (Brontë, 2011, p. 104) but then refers to him as a cruel and cold man in his treatment of Isabella (ibidem, p. 141). In the film, Nelly becomes "a more authoritative narrator than the novel's" (Wright, 2010, p. 173), and the same can be said for Fenoglio's play. In the movie and in the play she also seems to have compassion and understanding for the two protagonists' love, whereas in the novel she often distances herself from the behavior of the

[6] With regard to Lockwood, Valter Boggione argues that he is represented as the epitome of the normal individual, who strongly contrasts with the excesses of passion and more in general of character shown by Heathcliff. His normality is what makes Heathcliff's (and Cathy's) behaviour almost pathological (Boggione 2010, p. 212)

two lovers, often giving voice to her perplexity, as when she argues that "I did not feel as I were in the company of a creature of my own species" (Brontë, 2011, p. 155).

Both the movie and Fenoglio's play retain the frequent and intricate use of flashbacks which is central in Bronte's narration. It is usually the character of Nelly who remembers the past, and reports Heathcliff and Cathy's story to Lockwood: the movie usually opts for dissolves and fade-outs, whereas Fenoglio uses Ellen and Lockwood as narrative links between one scene and another, giving them the function of a voice-over (Boggione, 2010, p. 213). For example, when the characters of Catherine and Heathcliff are first introduced on stage, Fenoglio has Ellen say to Longwood:

> ELLEN: At that time I was much younger, but I had been at the service of the Earnshaw family for a long time. (takes Longwood by the hand). But look now, how life was then at Thruscross Grange.
> ELENA and LONGWOOD exit using the forestage stair.
> From the left, enter MARTIN EARNSHAW and GIUSEPPE (Fenoglio 2008, p. 14).

In this example, Fenoglio uses Nelly to introduce the following scene, which is a flashback to earlier times in the story.

Cuts and reductions also characterize Fenoglio's play and Wyler's movie with regard to the gothic aspects of the novel. However, while Both Wyler and Fenoglio tend to tone down the gothic and violent elements of the novel, they deal very differently with the supernatural, which is central in Brontë's novel. Fenoglio mentions the ghost of Catherine only once at the beginning of the *piece*, but cuts the scene where the ghost of Catherine appears to Lockwood, in the third chapter of the novel (Brontë, 2011, p. 25). Wyler, instead, retains the scene of the

ghost of Catherine and also shows the spirits of Heathcliff and Catherine hand in hand, in the last scene of the film.[7] Fenoglio never shows spirits nor ghosts on stage, and limits his reference to Catherine's ghost to allusion, when Elena/Nelly tells Lockwood that Heathcliff faces the storm that rages outside his house, looking for " a dead woman. His dead woman." (Fenoglio 2008, p. 13).

Wyler and Fenoglio do not only cut elements of the novel, but also add some which are both structurally and thematically important. One example is the imaginary castle which Heathcliff and Catherine see in the highest point of the rocks of Wuthering Heights. The idea of an imaginary castle is an invention of the screenwriters of Wyler's movie (Mills, 1996, p. 417), and Fenoglio retains it because it is narratively suggestive. This castle symbolizes the uniqueness of the relationship between the two characters, and their tendency to seclude themselves in their one-dimensional love: as Mills argues, the castle becomes "their place, inhabited only by the two of them" (p. 417). In Wyler's movie the castle is first shown when Catherine and Heathcliff are children and are playing together in the hills. Fenoglio, instead, has it mentioned first by Ellen to Lockwood, and later by Catherine and Heathcliff. In particular, the castle is mentioned in the last scene, when Catherine is dying in Heathcliff's arms:

> CATHY: Our castle…
> HEATHCLIFF: one day we will climb up there and never come back…
> (Fenoglio 2008, p. 93).

[7] Other film adaptations of *Wuthering Heights* deal with the supernatural in the way chosen by Wyler. For example, Kosminsky's film retains and amplifies the scene of the appearance of Catherine's ghost. For an in-depth analysis of the various adaptations of *Wuthering Heights* and their concern with the supernatural see Wright (2010).

However, the function of the castle seems to be different in the movie and in the play. Wyler, in fact, uses it also as the setting of his happy ending: at the end of the film, the ghosts of the two characters are shown walking hand in hand towards the rocks where they had imagined their childhood castle; Fenoglio, who does not opt for an happy ending, uses the castle in order to represent the natural element, which is central in the description of the tumultuous relationship between the two characters. In a theatrical piece, in fact, the representation of the exterior setting is always particularly difficult; all the more so in the case of *Wuthering Heights*, which devotes so much of its attention to the description of the hills tormented by storms, which reflect the violence of the protagonists' passion.[8] Fenoglio, who recognized and put emphasis on the relevance of the natural element, kept the idea of the castle, which he had seen in the movie, to make a clear reference to the connection between the natural environment and the characters' relationship.

If from the point of view of structure Fenoglio shows adherence to Wyler's movie, he departs from it more substantially in terms of characterization of the protagonists, in particular Heathcliff, Catherine and Isabella. In the following section I intend to focus on the most important shifts that come to light which are revealing of Fenoglio's poetics, in connection with the translations which I have analyzed in the previous chapters.

6.5.2 Thematic interpretants in Fenoglio's La Voce nella Tempesta : changes in themes, characters in comparison with film and novel

If formal interpretants show how the adapter deals with the formal characteristics of its source material, thematic interpretants show how the adapter works with the ideologies, themes

[8] It is also interesting to note that Fenoglio frequently explored, in his own novels and short-stories, the relationship between man and natural element. Especially in the novel *Il Partigiano Johnny*, the natural element acquires such a relevance that is often considered a character in itself. In this regard, see Corsini (1991) and Conti (2006)

and poetics embedded in the source text, and how he transforms them according to a new audience and/or to his own vision (Perdikaki, 2016, p. 33). As it has been noted, Fenoglio's adaptation "reflects his own view of the world, his conception of love and existence, through some specific corrections he introduced to the thematic framework of the novel" (Broccio, 2011, p. 116)[9].

The first and most important of these corrections concerns the position of Heathcliff in the story. In Fenoglio's piece he appears to play a major role, so much that it has been argued that he is the "absolute protagonist of the story" (Broccio, 2011, p. 112). In fact, Fenoglio manages to give prominence to Heathcliff's character by reducing the complexity of the character of Catherine in order to put more emphasis on Heathcliff; as a result, Fenoglio's Catherine is a fragile but also rather plain figure.

Despite being a superficial, spoiled girl, Fenoglio's Cathy has none of the harshness or the cruelty of Brontë's character nor the impulsiveness of Wyler's. The motives of her rejection of Heathcliff are also less complex than in the novel or in the movie. In Fenoglio's play, Catherine makes clear that she can't marry Heathcliff because he can't offer her the life she dreams of. She reproaches Heathcliff telling him: "What are you offering Cathy Earnshaw? Edgar Linton, among other things, is offering me his house, so different from ours…" (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 39). It seems that the social difference between the two protagonists is the only, and rather shallow, reason for her to rejection of Heathcliff's love. In the novel, the reasons for her incapacity to accept Heathcliff's love are not only based on social differences, but also have to do with her fear of the uncontrollability of their feelings, which makes her opt for a quieter, more predictable life. However, she is always capricious, and punishes rather

[9] *La voce nella Tempesta* shares with Fenoglio's translations the fact that it was not commissioned by a producer or a director, but was a private exercise. This means that, though he may have had some specific audience in mind, he embarked on this project untroubled by other people's agenda.

cruelly both Heathcliff and her husband for her unhappiness. Moreover, she treats very badly Edgar's sister, Isabella, when she falls in love with Heathcliff, and humiliates her in many occasions (Brontë, 2011, pp. 102-103).

In the movie, Catherine seems truly torn between the feelings she has for Heathcliff and the more predictable Edgar. However, she shows less cruelty or vindictiveness than Brontë's character. In this regard, it must be noted that Wyler's movie tends to soften the harshness of both protagonists. As Terry Wright observes in her essay on Wyler's adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* , the screenwriters had the aim to transform Heathcliff into a romantic hero, more sinned against than sinning, whose harshness is partially motivated by the lack of love and respect he suffered in his childhood (Wright, 2010, p. 176). The screenwriters believed that the audience would not appreciate the excesses of the two lovers, and opted for a less complicated relationship, with which it was easier to identify.

Fenoglio, on the contrary, weakens Catherine's personality, but retains and even insists on a portrayal of Heathcliff as a savage and vengeful character, whose only aim is to exert his revenge on his rival Edgar and on Cathy herself. He is also deliberately abusive towards Isabella, making her "live like a servant, and forcing her to sleep in the attic" (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 75). Revenge seems to be his only reason to live, and though he often asserts his love for Cathy, yet he cannot resist the temptation to punish her harshly. This is a very important thematic shift, because the theme of revenge, which is of course strongly present in the novel and in the movie, becomes even more important in Fenoglio's rewrite; moreover, whereas Brontë's and Wyler's Heathcliff deny having any desire of vengeance against Cathy herself, Fenoglio's Heathcliff explicitly affirms that it is Cathy he wants to punish.

This becomes clear if one looks at the scene of Heathcliff's return, after he has been absent from Wuthering Heights for three years. This is an important scene, because Heathcliff

is now returning to his childhood home after becoming a wealthy man, and sees Catherine for the first time after her marriage to Edgar. This scene is described in the novel, in the movie and in Fenoglio's play, but with some interesting differences. In Brontë's novel, Heathcliff is ecstatically welcomed by Catherine: her happiness and joy in seeing him seem inappropriate to her husband, who reproaches her: "Catherine, try to be glad, without being absurd! The whole household need not witness the sight of your welcoming a runaway servant as a brother" (Brontë, 2011, p. 92). Heathcliff too, on his part, seems agitated and pleased by Catherine's warm welcome. In Wyler's movie, the focus of the scene is Catherine's reaction to Heathcliff's return: she seems more scared than happy, not only because she knows that Heathcliff must have a plan in mind, but also because he is the living proof that her life with Edgar is only a fallback. This is in tune with the desire of the screenwriters to present Cathy as "torn between the two lives, (..) between the polite respectability which Edgar offers and the genuine passion" (Wright, 2010, p. 177) which Heathcliff embodies.

Fenoglio's version of this scene is very different both from the novel and the movie. From the moment Heathcliff enters the room, he appears calm, cold and determined, blaming Catherine for his harshness: "I find myself hating everybody, because I have loved only you" (Ibidem, p. 54); he then confesses that he intends to "do justice with Martin and Giuseppe. And punish my other enemies" (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 55). Cathy asks if he intends to punish her too, and Heathcliff's cold answer is : "I'll punish you more than anybody else" (p.55). Moreover, Heathcliff lacks, in Fenoglio's portrayal, the excesses of temper which characterize him in the novel and in the movie. He is depicted as a solitary man, an outcast who coldly sets out his plan to take revenge on the people who have either offended or rejected him. This shift reveals a thematic interpretant: far from being a complex and gothic love story or a romantic idealization of two lovers, Fenoglio's play is about a solitary man who seeks revenge after he's

been rejected by his lover and humiliated by his acquired family.

Heathcliff's centrality within Fenoglio's play is also evident if one takes into account the voice that is heard in the moors, which is one of the most notorious element of the novel and that is echoed in the title of Fenoglio's play. In the novel and in the movie, the ghost of Catherine is seen haunting the whereabouts of the house, also terrorizing poor Lockwood. It is the voice of Catherine which is heard in the hills, calling Heathcliff and asking to be let in her old house (Brontë, 2008, p. 25). In the movie, Nelly tells Longwood that the voice he has heard is "Cathy's love, calling to him (Heathcliff)" (Mills, 1996, p. 416). In Fenoglio's adaptation instead it is Heathcliff's voice, and not Catherine's, which can be heard in the hills. It is him, still desperate many years after her death, who looks for her in the hills during the terrible snowstorms which torment Wuthering Heights (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 12).

Not only does Fenoglio eliminate the ghost of Catherine from the play, he also gives no indication whatsoever that Heathcliff ever "found" the dead woman he is always looking for. In fact, whereas in the novel and in the movie all characters, starting with Nelly, are convinced that Catherine's spirit really haunts the place - Lockwood sees her, and also talks to her, even if he then affirms that he believed it was a nightmare – in Fenoglio's play we are only told that Heathcliff walks in the storms, searching for her. Heathcliff's behaviour becomes, in Fenoglio's adaptation, the result of his obsession with Catherine, which is close to madness.

In this regard, Fenoglio also did not include in his adaptation the famous speech in which Heathcliff implores Catherine's spirit to haunt him. This scene is also reproduced literally in Wyler's movie:

> Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living! You said I killed you – haunt me then!(..) Be with me always, take any form, drive me mad! only do not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! (Brontë, 2011, pp.161-162)

It seems that Fenoglio's Catherine does leave Heathcliff in this abyss, where he is forced to eternally look for her without ever finding her. This shift is very revealing, because it shows not only that Fenoglio intended to make Heathcliff the protagonist of his play, but also that he intended to exclude the possibility of any form of peaceful resolution of this story. In fact, as it has been noted, both the novel and the movie opt for some sort of happy ending, or at least a quiet conclusion: in the novel, after Heathcliff's death, the ghosts of the two lovers are often spotted by the farmers near the hills, and a young boy tells Nelly that he has seen "Heathcliff, and a woman, yonder, under the Nab" (p. 321), thus implying that the two, who were separated in life, at least are united in death; the same solution is chosen by Wyler, who shows the ghosts of Heathcliff and Catherine walking towards their castle in the moors. Fenoglio totally discards this option, concluding the play when Catherine dies.

Moreover, in Fenoglio's play Heathcliff does not die: this changes completely the sense of completeness which both the novel and the movie offer their audience. On the contrary, Fenoglio keeps the tensions of the protagonist unresolved, presenting him as a creature forever condemned to "shout in the moors, calling forever Catherine's name" (Broccio, 2011, p. 108). The play's ending is profoundly tragic, because it leaves no space for reconciliation. This conclusion, however, is not the only element which transforms *La Voce nella Tempesta* into a tragic play, but the depiction of another character contributes to this effect: Edgar's sister, Isabella.

Isabella Linton is Edgar Linton's younger sister. She has the misfortune to be fascinated by Heathcliff once he returns to Wuthering Heights, and he convinces her to elope, with the evident scheme to revenge himself on Edgar (and, in part , on Catherine). In Brontë's novel, Heathcliff treats Isabella with cruelty and contempt from the first moment she enters his house, immediately confessing not only that he does not love her but also that he married her to

infuriate her brother and to use her for his plans (Brontë, 2008, p. 147). As a result of Heathcliff's cruelty, Isabella starts hating him, until she decides to leave him and escapes to London and there she remains until her death. Isabella's escape takes place in the second part of the novel, so neither Wyler nor Fenoglio include it in their adaptations. However, they both portray Isabella's love for Heathcliff, though rather differently.

As I have previously explained, Wyler's movie softens Heathcliff's abusive behaviour towards Isabella, in order to make him appear cold but not cruel. Wyler shows Isabella's unhappiness by stressing her shabby clothes and her premature ageing after her marriage to Heathcliff, but does not give her any particular connotation in terms of personality, treating her as a secondary character. Fenoglio, instead, chooses to give importance to the character of Isabella, and it is in the depiction of this specific character that he operates the major changes with respect both to the novel and the movie. Fenoglio's Isabella, in fact, remains stubbornly in love with Heathcliff, even after she experimented his harsh treatment. When Elena visits her and tries to convince her to escape from Heathcliff, she confesses that she loves him desperately: "I am impotent with him. He could crush me with his fingers. I wish he did" (Fenoglio, 2008, p. 77). Elena then tells Longwood that "Isabella, if ever her brother had forgiven her, would have never come back home" (p. 76).

Isabella's desperate love for Heathcliff and her awareness of the impossibility of being reciprocated transforms her in a creature full of hate: when she is told that Cathy is dying, she answer, with shining eyes: "She's dying. Then let her die". Elena is troubled by Isabella's remark:

> ELENA: Isabella, you are mad!
> ISABELLA (*staring, softly*): Cathy… who holds Heathcliff's heart. Let her die (p. 84)

In Fenoglio's play, Isabella seems unable to resist her passion for Heathcliff, even though he is destroying her. Isabella, in Fenoglio's play, suffers the same tragic destiny that awaits the two protagonists, who seem to be unable to oppose the forces which lead them to destruction and self-destruction. This tragic atmosphere, in which characters are forced to suffer, though through no fault of their own, as if they were destined to do so, has been noted by literary critic Boggione, who argued that in Fenoglio's play "all characters, including Isabella, seem victim of an obscure and tragic destiny, which carry them away in spite of their own will" (2010, p. 214). This transformation of Isabella's character, but more in general the tragic reading of Brontë's novel, is a very recognizable characteristic of Fenoglio's style. In fact, it is in tune with Fenoglio's poetics, which – as I have explained in chapter three of this thesis - was based on a tragic concept of life, evident both in his translations and in his original works.

Formal and thematic interpretants reveal that Fenoglio was thus creating a tragic play. The structure of the play, the centrality of the main character, the cut of the final happy ending and the theme of revenge are all characteristics which define the tragedies that Fenoglio translated, and reflect also Fenoglio's tragic reading of Brontë's novel.

6.6 Fenoglio's translation of W. H. Garrod's "Introduction" to *Wuthering Heights*: the influence of Garrod on Fenoglio's reading of *Wuthering Heights* and Fenoglio's translation strategies

An important text, which Fenoglio translated and that is rarely mentioned by scholars, seems to have influenced Fenoglio's interpretation of *Wuthering Height* as a tragedy. I am here referring to Fenoglio's translation of W.H. Garrod's introduction to the Oxford 1944 edition

of *Wuthering Heights*, which Fenoglio attached to the typescript of his play when he donated it to his friends. Fenoglio's translation of Garrod's introduction was published in the *Complete Works* edited by Maria Corti in 1978 as an introduction to Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta*. Unfortunately, this edition is no longer in print, and the subsequent editions of Fenoglio's theatrical works do not contain Fenoglio's translation of Garrod. In my view, the exclusion of this translation from the subsequent editions of *La Voce nella Tempesta* is a great loss. Since the *Complete Works* of Fenoglio have been out of print for many years now, and are only available in libraries but not distributed in bookshops anymore, contemporary readers miss the chance to examine a critical interpretation of the text which Fenoglio himself thought would be useful to understand his adaptation. For this reason I wish to look at the interpretation offered by Garrod to Brontë's novel in order to decipher the way Fenoglio understood *Wuthering Heights* and, as a consequence, how he adapted it. Hopefully, this translation will be included in the next editions of Fenoglio's theatrical writings, as it was the author's wish when he attached it to his typescript.

W.H. Garrod wrote the introduction for the Oxford edition of *Wuthering Heights* in 1930; Fenoglio's library contains an edition of the novel which includes this introduction, but since he acquired this English edition quite late in time (and not before 1948), it is very probable that he translated Garrod's introduction and attached it to the play many years after writing the adaptation, possibly shortly before donating it to the Cerrato family.[10] As regards Fenoglio's *telos* in deciding to translate and attach this translation to his own work, it is my view that it should be found in the hermeneutic approach which Fenoglio and Garrod seem to share with regard to *Wuthering Heights*. In fact, there are many points of contact between

[10] For an in-depth analysis of datation problems of Fenoglio's play see Vatteroni (2014)

Garrod's critical interpretation of the novel and the one which Fenoglio revealed through his adaptation strategies and choices. Fenoglio's decision to include this preface to his own adaptation demonstrates how important he believed it to be in order to critically explain his own work. In his essay, Garrod distances himself from previous critical analysis of *Wuthering Heights*, which had disapproved the complex structure of the novel and also the supposed morally harmful nature of the protagonists. Garrod argues that Brontë's novel is "the more purely inspired" (Garrod 1930, p. 6) work of literature written in the English language.

The first point of contact between Garrod and Fenoglio regards the definition of the structure of the novel. In fact, the literary critic states clearly that Brontë's novel "is conceived and executed, as a Greek tragedy is, or as *Lear* is" (Garrod, 1930, p. 9), and that the most admirable quality of the book is "its strong instinct for a living scene: nowhere else [...] are the scene and the actors to the same degree a single tragic effect" (p. 11). Here Garrod refers to the novel as a tragedy, and to the characters as actors; Fenoglio had probably felt the same when he decided to adapt *Wuthering Heights* for the theatre, realizing its dramatic and tragic qualities.

Another point of contact between Garrod's reading and Fenoglio's rewriting of *Wuthering Heights* is the importance of the natural settings. This aspect has also been noted by Boggione (2010, p. 223), who argued that Fenoglio understood perfectly the importance of the contrast between nature and civilization which lies at the roots of Brontë's novel. Fenoglio intends the relationship between man and nature as symbiotic, and for this reason puts great emphasis on the natural elements, such as ever recurrent images of the wind and the rain. In this regard, Conti noted that the natural settings often reflects the characters' disposition (2016, p. 9). The symbiotic relationship between characters and natural setting is also underlined by Garrod:

> The book envisages human passion and human suffering as part of an everlasting process of nature, a process in which the distinction between human beings and the being of the world is negligible or without meaning. Heathcliff and the lives with which his life is bound up have no true separation from their setting of nature (p. 9).

Garrod's introduction seems to touch on all the thematic issues that are part of Fenoglio's adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*. However, as I point out in the following section, Fenoglio's translation of Garrod does not follow entirely the original text, and seems to be radically different in terms of strategies if compared to the translations previously analysed in this thesis.

Despite the persistence of foreignizing tendencies, which as we have seen are a common pattern in Fenoglio's approach to translation, in this specific text Fenoglio seems to be more concerned with fluency than in his previous translated works. Moreover, Fenoglio's translation of this short introduction is not unabridged: in fact, Fenoglio operates major cuts to the original text. As a result, this specific translation is characterized by a mixture of foreignizing and domesticating strategies. Before exploring the reasons for his different approach to this specific translation, I wish to examine some examples of Fenoglio's foreignization that appear rather interesting in our exploration of Fenoglio's creativity in translation.

In terms of linguistic strategies, Fenoglio's translation of Garrod introduction does not differ from the pattern that I have identified in previous translations, with regard to the use of calques, archaisms and in the choice of terms which resemble the original in sound and etymology. Fenoglio's foreignizing tendency in translation appears in his dealing with word order, in particular with regard to adjectives and adverbs: " a superior work" is translated with "un superiore lavoro" (p. ; "strangely wills and works for itself" becomes "stranamente decide

e opera". Moreover, Fenoglio usually chooses equivalents who closely resemble the English originals: for example, when Garrod argues that Lockwood's role in Brontë's novel is being taught of what love is in its "primeval quality" (1930, p. 8), Fenoglio translates the adjective "primeval" with "*primeva*" (Fenoglio, 1978, p.653) which is a literary and archaic term, instead of using a more common adjective like "primigenia". Similarly, Fenoglio translated the term "rusticity", which Garrod employs to define an aspect of Brontë's novel, with "*rusticità*" (p. 651), instead of *rustichezza,* which would be a more natural equivalent.

Two examples in particular show how refined and acute a translator Fenoglio was, and the depth of his capacity to convey the exact meaning of the source text with subtle and intelligent solutions. The first one is Fenoglio's rendition of a very complex passage of Garrod to define the nature of Catherine's love for Heathcliff. Noting how Catherine is usually misunderstood by less passionate characters, who have no patience with her, Garrod argues that "it is the way of common sense and common feeling to be put out of patience when any subject is looked at from the point of view of life everlasting" (1930, p. 8). Garrod here is referring to the reaction those people who, rejecting the disrupting force of passion or not recognizing it, dismiss it as folly. Garrod uses the expression "from the point of view of the everlasting" to imply that Catherine depicts her love for Heathcliff as a supernatural force, from a perspective that goes beyond time and space and disregards human circumstances, but has to do with eternity. Fenoglio chooses to translate this passage with a Latin expression, so that "from the point of view of the everlasting" becomes "*sub specie aeternitatis*" (p. 654). Fenoglio, to render precisely Garrod's concept, uses this Latin expression which in Italian is an adverb, and has its origin in philosophy and theology. In particular, *sub specie aeternitatis* was used by philosopher Spinoza in his *Ethics II* to stress the difference between God's vision and human vision: men see things live and die because they see them in relation with time and

space; God, on the other hand, sees them in their eternal essence, thus from his perspective things are eternal, and nothing can be born or die (Spinoza 2016, p. 44). From this perspective, Catherine's love for Heathcliff cannot die, because she sees it and feels it from the perspective of the eternal, and not as a human thing, which is subject to change and death. Fenoglio demonstrated here not only to have comprehended perfectly Garrod's expression, but also showed a profound knowledge of philosophy and theology, a knowledge he had already demonstrated in his translation of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*.

The second example which shows Fenoglio's ability in translating is offered by a passage of Garrod's introduction in which he quotes the concluding lines of Brontë's novel. These are Brontë's words: "I watched the moths fluttering among the heath and hare-bells; listened to the soft wind breathing through the grass" (p.12). Fenoglio translates this beautiful passage in the following way: "guardai le falene aliare fra l'erica e le campanule, ascoltai il vento spirare dolce fra l'erba" (p. 656). I wish to concentrate here on the verb "aliare", with which Fenoglio rendered the present participle "fluttering". Aliare is a very rare and literary verb,[11] usually found in poetry, which means "to move the wings while flying." It derives directly from the noun "ala" (wing) and conveys both the image of the wings moving and, at the same time, also evokes the sound the air which is touched by the moving of the wings. Fenoglio was particularly fond of this verb, and he also used it twice in his novel il Partigiano Jonny : "un libero aliare di venti" (Fenoglio, 1994, p. 221) and "come un aliare nella densa e ferma atmosfera della casa" (p. 37). In Fenoglio's dictionary, the word "aliare" is the fifth choice after "volteggiare", "svolazzare", "battere le ali" and "aleggiare" (1936, p.847). Fenoglio's choice of the verb "aliare", instead of a more common "svolazzare", is in my view

[11] This verb was particularly used by poets Pascoli, D'Annunzio, Carducci and Foscolo.

particularly moving and poetic, and fits perfectly to the poetic serenity of the last lines of Brontë's novel. Fenoglio appears once more particularly precise in finding a word which conveys appropriately the style and content of his source text.

As noted earlier, despite the foreignizing tendencies explained above, Fenoglio also makes quite surprising domesticating choices. For example, he employs amplification – a strategy that he rarely uses in other translations – thus adding more words to the target text in order to facilitate the reader in his understanding of the source text. One instance occurs when Garrod is discussing Charlotte Brontë's preface to her sister's novel, arguing that Charlotte believed *Wuthering Heights* to be "a book to be apologized for" (p. 6); Fenoglio translates this phrase with "il libro viene addirittura considerato come bisognoso di non poche scuse" (p. 651) (the book is even considered to be needing more than a few apologies), adding to the source text the words "even", thus stressing the absurdity of the statement, and "more than a few", thus implying that in Charlotte's view the book needed not only justification, but much justification. Another example of domestication is Fenoglio's rendition of Garrod's passage: "the region of edifying fiction" (p. 8) with "la *bassa* regione della narrativa edificante" (the low region of edifying fiction"(p. 653), in which Fenoglio adds the word "low" in order to stress his negative judgement of this particular genre of narration. Garrod implies that the didactic and moralysing narration is of a lower quality than Brontë's truly inspired novel, but does not express it explicitly. Fenoglio does, and makes it very clear to the reader.

The most striking example of domestication, however, is Fenoglio's use of reduction. Reduction is a strategy that consists in omitting elements from the source text in the target text (Malone 1988, p. . In particular, Fenoglio omits in his translation any reference that Garrod makes to the parts of the novel which Fenoglio did not include in his adaptation: he cuts two

entire paragraphs from the Garrod's essay (pp. 10-11), where the author refers to the second generation of characters and gives a short summary of the novel's major events; he also eliminates the reference to Heathcliff's dogs, which in fact are not mentioned in Fenoglio's play. Finally, he skips two entire lines (p.1) which are concerned with an analysis of Brontë's ability to create evocative names: these two lines relate in particular to a secondary character, called Zillah, who does not appear in *La Voce nella Tempesta* .

To better understand this surprising tendency towards domestication, it must be noted here that the translation of Garrod's essay– as opposed to the ones I have presented in the previous chapters – was carried out with a different purpose. Fenoglio is not only translating Garrod's work, but he is also appropriating it and manipulating it in order to make it suitable as an introduction to his own adaptation, and not simply to Brontë's novel. He is thus selective with the source text, and decides to translate only the sections that can be used as a critical introduction to his own work. The text is thus rewritten, more than simply translated, because of the different purpose that it is meant to serve. Fenoglio seems to use Garrod's essay as raw material on which to build his own critical introduction: in doing so he feels free to add or subtract, depending on the relevance of the essay with respect *La Voce nella Tempesta*.

A few considerations appear to be necessary here, which in my view highlight very clearly the difference of status that exists between translation and adaptation, and also explain why critics have devoted much more attention to Fenoglio's adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* than to his translations. As mentioned earlier, Fenoglio does not mention the name of Garrod nor does he clarify that the essay is indeed a translation; as we have seen, he cuts and manipulates the text to adjust it to his own vision and to his own purpose: in some aspects, this could be considered a form of plagiarism, even though Fenoglio did not intend to publish the essay but only included it as an introduction of his own play for his friends to read.

However, if we regarded Fenoglio's re-writing of Garrod as an adaptation, the implication of plagiarism would cease to exist. As we have seen, adaptation implies the rewriting of previous material and its transformation into new work, in which the adapter is free to make his interpretation visible as well as his creativity. For this reason, *La Voce nella Tempesta* is considered a creative, original work, and no mention of plagiarism is ever made, not even when dialogues are repeated almost word for word. Translations, instead, are still considered as the mere copies of an original, in which the creative contribution of the translator is supposed to be null. For this reason, in my view, scholars have demonstrated an entirely opposite approach to Fenoglio's translation and to his adaptations: they are eager to recognise the subjectivity and creativity in his adaptation, but not in his translations. I hope, with this thesis, to have demonstrated the contrary.

6.7 Conclusions

Fenoglio's *La Voce nella Tempesta* and his translation of Garrod's introduction show how fine the line was, in our author's view, between adaptation and translation. The key element that these two activities have in common is the subjectivity of the translator/adapter and the creative contribution that they provide to the new text. In his theatrical adaptation, Fenoglio deals with two sources – or hypotexts – Brontë's novel and Wyler's movie, but is able to create an entirely new work, a tragic play which stands on its own and carries the imprint of Fenoglio's poetics. Heathcliff, in particular, becomes in Fenoglio's adaptation the central tragic figure with whom Fenoglio seems to identify, and who shares numerous analogies with the protagonists of the plays Fenoglio translated and with the protagonist of his novel *Una*

questione privata.

In translating Garrod's introduction to *Wuthering Heights* Fenoglio shows a radically different approach to the source text: while in the translations I examined in the previous chapters Fenoglio always preferred foreignization and adherence to the source text, in this specific translation he operated numerous cuts, modifications and amplifications. The reason for this unusual choice must be identified in his desire to appropriate Garrod's text in order to make it suitable to function as an introduction to his own play. For this reason Fenoglio's translation of Garrod becomes not only a reading of Brontë's novel, but also a critical reading of Fenoglio's play. The final text is in the end the result of a collaboration of two authors: Garrod and Fenoglio.

One last aspect seems to offer an ideal connection between Fenoglio's translations, his adaptation and his creative writings, and it can be found in the final lines of Garrod's essay. Garrod concludes his introduction quoting an author who has a great relevance in Fenoglio's literary formation. Discussing how Brontë chose to end her novel, Garrod argues that she chooses an image of peace and of reconciliation. In fact, Lockwood is seen walking near the graves of Catherine and Heathcliff, struck by the quietness and peace which that place evokes. Garrod thus writes that Brontë dismisses "the persons of her drama: *And calm of mind, all passion spent*" (Garrod, 1930, p. 12). This quote is taken from the final verses of Milton's *Samson Agonistes* (Milton, 1925, p. 58), whose translation by Fenoglio I have analyzed in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Whether it might be only a coincidence that Garrod quotes not only the author but the very play which Fenoglio had translated, it is my view that it is still very relevant information, because it shows how Fenoglio's translations, adaptation and creative writings are all connected by a unique *fil rouge*: in fact, Fenoglio's translation of an essay on *Wuthering*

Heights, which he intended to use as a preface to his own adaptation, happens to contain a reference to another translation carried out by Fenoglio. This image is apt to conclude this chapter and this thesis, because it shows how intertwined original writing, translation and adaptation are in Fenoglio's literary output, and how each one contributes to a better and deeper understanding of the other.

CONCLUSION

The initial idea that inspired this thesis is that Fenoglio's translations offer an important contribution to the understanding of both Fenoglio's ideology and of his literary poetics. The research aims of this project were fuelled by the existence of a large corpus of translations carried out by Fenoglio which, despite its considerable scope, had not previously been explored by researchers. Even when critics had taken Fenoglio's translations into consideration, they had rarely if ever conceived of them as culturally and ideologically informed pieces of writing. My project, therefore, set out to examine Fenoglio's translations as: (1) written works shaped ideologically, at least in part, by the historical and cultural environment in which they were produced; and as (2) the expression of Fenoglio's personal and original interpretation of his source texts, made visible in the translation strategies employed by Fenoglio in comparison with other translators.

These research aims have been fulfilled by applying to Fenoglio's translations the most recent theories in translation studies. These theories, which argue that translation is an inter-cultural process influenced by extratextual factors such as culture, ideology and the translator's personal interpretation of the source text – also defined as the translator's subjectivity. The thesis applies this theoretical framework to four translations and one adaptation, which were undertaken by Fenoglio over the full span of his literary career, from his teenage years until his death. Using translation theory in this way helped to identify the specificity of Fenoglio's translations within the context in which they were carried out, while also highlighting his own imprint in his translations.

One of the principal findings of this thesis concerns Fenoglio's use of translation as an expression of ideological and political dissent. In Chapter 2, for example, I argue that

Fenoglio's decision to turn to translation during the years of the Fascist regime – years in which Britain was considered a political enemy – was a profoundly subversive one. By establishing dangerous and prohibited connections with foreign cultures, Fenoglio was by Fascist standards already making a rebellious statement against the strictures of the regime. Fenoglio's choice of translating British authors and appropriating the English language as his own has been explained as a reaction to the historical and sociological context created by the Fascist regime, which was explicitly averse to any foreign influence and in particular towards the "*perfida Albione*". Since literary translation was discouraged by the Fascist regime, Fenoglio's work in this vein became a precise statement of ideological dissent, an early form of rebellion and not simply a naïve infatuation of a provincial writer for a fantastic world, a form of vanity, which made this reclusive Piedmontese writer look as an original if compared to his own contemporaries (Chiodi, 2002, p. 198). In the causes that made Fenoglio turn to translation we thus discover his poetics: a poetics that is essentially based on rebellion and freedom as central concepts.

Dissent and rebellion are the main thematic issues which connect all the translations examined in this project. Again and again Fenoglio chose to translate texts whose characters are usually rebels, outcasts or outlaws: characters with which he seemed to identify. Marlowe's *Faustus*, which I examined in Chapter 3, is a solitary rebel who challenges religion in order to achieve intellectual freedom. Fenoglio's translation, with its particular attention to the precise rendition of religious terms, showed how from an early age Fenoglio was attracted to religious dissent. He had himself rejected the teaching of the Catholic Church at this time because of what Fenoglio saw and the Church's political and moral connivance with the Fascist regime. Fenoglio's translations of Marlowe's *Faustus* and Milton's *Samson Agonistes* (Chapter 3) demonstrate Fenoglio's liking for the figure of the tragic hero, which was ideologically the

opposite to the heroes Fenoglio had been taught to admire in school. Fenoglio's predilection for solitary heroes – and Samson in particular - who are destined to succumb, usually by opposing a fate of which they are perfectly aware in order to achieve some form of self-assertion, contrasts with Fascism's view of a hero. In Fascist thinking a hero is always obedient and who is never expected to exercise his own free will nor to express personal critical reflection.

Fenoglio's dissent from mainstream ideology also emerges in translations which belong to a later time in Fenoglio's life, after the fall of the Fascist regime. As shown in Chapter 4, Shakespeare's Falstaff, one of the central characters of *Henry IV Part 1*, is a model character for many of Fenoglio's partisans. Fenoglio seems to have borrowed the irreverence and the frailties of a character such as Falstaff to narrate the difficult reality of the Italian Resistance, dismantling the ideological representation of the Resistance with his controversial depiction of partisans as frail human beings. Fenoglio's translation of *Henry IV Part 1* demonstrated Fenoglio's interest for complex and diverse characters, and a preference for realism which he also expressed in his translation strategies. In Chapter 5, I showed how Fenoglio's definition of the Italian Resistance as a civil war went against the common depiction of Resistance as a war of liberation from the German invader. At a time characterized by vicious controversies in which intellectuals and politicians debated the propriety of the definition of the Resistance, Fenoglio privately embarked on the translation of Firth's biography of Cromwell and the English civil wars. My examination of this specific translation shows how Fenoglio's conception of the Italian Resistance as a civil war had its roots in Fenoglio's profound identification with seventeenth-century English Parliamentarians, who espoused a version of the classical philosophical concept of liberty as opposition to unjust rulers.

This project has also shown that Fenoglio's translations are deeply connected with

Fenoglio's original writings. The analogies between Fenoglio's translations and Fenoglio's creative writings showed that Fenoglio picked authors to translate who shared a similar poetics in terms of style, themes and ideology. In Chapter 3, I examined the many interesting correlations between Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Fenoglio's short-story *Un giorno di fuoco*, which both focus on the issue of violence as a last resort against oppression. In this chapter I argued that Fenoglio and Milton shared a similar conception of political resistance, in which such resistance is often a tragic choice that involves following one's decision even when it leads to extreme consequences. In Chapter 4 I argued that the thematic analogies between the character of Falstaff and the protagonist of Fenoglio's play *Solitudine* as well as of his short-fiction showed that Fenoglio's interest in *Henry IV Part 1*'s tavern scene went beyond linguistic interests, but were motivated by a similar approach to realism. Fenoglio's translation of Firth's biography of Cromwell, which I analysed in Chapter 5, is closely connected to Fenoglio's novel *Il Partigiano Johnny*, with specific regard to the depiction of the civil war as a tragic experience, which finds its justification in the strenuous defence of political and intellectual freedom. Finally, my examination of Fenoglio's *La voce nella Tempesta* (*A voice in the storm*), a theatrical adaptation of Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (Chapter 6), has proved interesting for two reasons. Not only is there a fascinating connection between the character of Heathcliff and the protagonist of Fenoglio's *Una Questione Privata*, but Fenoglio's play also clearly shares the tragic vision found in his translations. Comparing *La Voce nella Tempesta* to its two sources, Brontë's novel and Wyler's movie, I show how Fenoglio built his own work in a way that it made it resonant with the themes of revenge, tragedy and rebellion which also lie at the heart of his translations and his novels. Fenoglio's translation and appropriation of W. H. Garrod's Introduction to *Wuthering Heights* showed that this tragic reading was also part of Garrod's hermeneutic approach to the novel, which seems

to have guided Fenoglio himself in his original rendition of Brontë's novel.

Other key findings of this project concern Fenoglio's approach to translation and the translation strategies he deployed. Throughout this project it emerged that foreignization is Fenoglio's favoured approach to translation. In his translations, with the exception of Garrod's Introduction to *Wuthering Heights*, Fenoglio chose to adhere closely to the structure, the rhythm and the style of the source text, thus producing a translation in which the echo of the original language can clearly be discerned. Foreignization in Fenoglio's translations often takes the form of archaisms and neologisms, as in Fenoglio's translation of Firth's book on Oliver Cromwell (Chapter 5). In other cases, foreignization is discernible in Fenoglio's search for Italian words that are equivalent to or similar in sound to the English ones, as in his translation of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. In other instances, Fenoglio searches for corresponding terms that have the same etymology both in Italian and in English, as in his translation of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*. Finally, Fenoglio's translation of *Henry IV Part 1* shows a foreignizing tendency in Fenoglio's choice to maintain a colloquial, low register in rendering Falstaff's lines. Fenoglio's foreignizing tendency appears to be particularly original if compared to the style of translation habitually used by his contemporaries, all of whom chose domestication rather than foreignization. This fits with mainstream translational practice at the time, as Venuti and Berman note, wherein translators were usually expected to create "transparent" translations. This meant that translators would usually adapt the source text to the requirement of the target language and culture. In so doing they would suppress the foreignness of the text in order to make it more acceptable to the target audience. Fenoglio's different approach shows that he was not interested in a fluent rendition of the texts, but more committed to a precise transposition of the characteristics of the source texts, both from the point of view of content and of style. Fenoglio's translations thus appear creative and innovative, and are indeed a series

of love letters to England, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis. This love was corroborated by the precision and care evident in Fenoglio's thoughtful interpretation and rendition of these texts.

To summarise, this projects has fulfilled its research aims both in demonstrating the ideological significance of Fenoglio's translations and in showing how and what Fenoglio's translations can bring to our understanding of Fenoglio's literary poetics and personal beliefs. The thesis has also established the distinctive individual creativity contained within Fenoglio's translations. This has been shown through a comparative analysis of Fenoglio's translations with other translators' renditions of the same source texts.

However, certain limitations of this study need to be acknowledged as well. Firstly, this project is a relatively small scale one, since it takes into account only four translations and one adaptation within a corpus of many more translations. Further research might investigate the cultural and ideological content of other translations by Fenoglio, thus opening new perspectives on his interests and literary models. Moreover, Fenoglio's translations examined in this thesis - and especially the translations of Marlowe, Milton and Shakespeare - are very fragmentary, selective and ultimately unpublished. However, it must be remembered that Fenoglio's original work was unpublished as well, and this aspect has not diminished or affected the significance of his work and its impact on Italian culture and literature. Publication is obviously the seal that the writer puts on his or her work, but it might not be a definitive one. Many translators and writers modify or rethink their work years after they publish it: this means that writing – and translating – is always a work in progress. As Walter Benjamin argued, "all translation is only a somewhat provisional way of coming to terms with the foreignness of languages" (Benjamin in Venuti, 2000, p. 19). Fenoglio's translations are drafts and works in progress, but they still carry the mark of his own original way of coming to terms with the

foreignness of languages.

More generally speaking, however, the kind of cultural, thematic and ideological reading of translations that I have undertaken in this thesis might fruitfully be applied to other writers who also translated the works of others. The powerful appeal of this approach is that it has the potential to establish a deep mutually dynamic connection between a writer's translations and his or her original writings. In this model, translations hold a primary status as an integral part of the "continuum" of a writer's career instead merely of being regarded as a secondary or subsidiary activity.

Secondly, this study may also shed light on the affinity between translator and source text, even when this is not immediately obvious. In some cases, for example, where translators may be commissioned to work on particular source texts or authors, there may well be no direct or personal connection between translator and the author of the source text. However, as translation scholar Buffoni acutely notes:

> it often happens that an author which the translator did not choose and did not know previously becomes then a great revelation, and as such, the occasion for a beautiful translation (Buffoni 2007, p. 78).

In other words, even in those cases where the *telos* of the translator is not his *a priori* affinity with the author of source text, the encounter of the author and the translator's poetics may well nonetheless be worth investigating. In this regard, translators themselves should be included in the debate as to what translation represents for them, and what *telos* moves them to translate, so that their subjectivity and creative agency might be more fully recognized.

Some additional observations may also serve as a foundation for future reflection on translation. As noted in Chapter 1, most of the interest of recent translation studies is devoted to the role that translations play in changing and influencing literary systems, target culture and

target ideology. The impact of translation has in fact, as witnessed through the years, promoted new interpretation and reading of texts which has influenced the receiving culture, disseminating new literary models and new ideas. It is precisely the power of translation to promote literary and cultural renewal that makes this activity so complex and important. It is thus undeniably true that translations are "the creation of a new original for a different readership" (Bassnett , 2014, p. 177). However, as this project has shown, translations not only promote renewal in possible target readers, they also promote renewal in the translator's ideology and in his view of life. As a matter of fact, when translating is not considered only a linguistic exercise but becomes part of one's identity, it becomes transforming force for translators. Fenoglio was inspired to act politically, and to participate actively in the *Resistenza* after he had translated English writers, who inspired him to make a life-changing decision. His private translations were thus at the basis of his political decisions. Fenoglio's translations are not only the result of Fenoglio's interest in literature, but are also the testimony of how this activity reshapes and influences those who translate, as it often happens when one recognizes oneself in the voice of others who spoke before.

As I noted earlier, Fenoglio wrote: "my anglophilia, even anglomania if you wish, is an expression of my desire, of my need for a different, better Italy" (2015, p.16). During Fascism, reading and translating English literature meant opposing the values that were promoted by the Fascist propaganda; after the war, when the *Resistenza* was portrayed in black and white, writing and translating texts which described the atrocities of a civil war meant choosing truthfulness and realism over rhetoric, running the risk of being unpopular. Fenoglio's translations, both in the Fascist era and later in the post-war years, were his personal way of looking for a way to build a different, better Italy. But they were also his way of trying to become a better person himself.

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