Pseudotranslation as *Kippbild*: Multistable Authorship and Textuality in Franco Fortini's *Traduzioni Immaginarie*

Irene Fantappiè

Humboldt Universität Berlin

Baudelaire, Brecht, Éluard, Goethe, Kafka, Kraus, Enzensberger, and Milton are only some of the authors translated by Franco Fortini (1917-94). Since the publication of *Foglio di via* in 1946, Fortini has also been one of the most significant poets of twentieth-century Italian literature. Moreover, he played a key role in the Italian literary sphere as an editor and literary critic, contributing to the editorial politics of major publishing houses such as Einaudi or Feltrinelli, as well as writing a vast array of essays, which deal with both historical and theoretical-methodological issues concerning literature and translation.[1]

The mutual influence between poetry, translation, and criticism may be regarded as the core feature of Fortini's oeuvre. He strategically deploys it in two opposite ways. On the one hand, Fortini synergistically combines poetry, translation, and criticism in order to shape for himself a clearly defined identity: the authorial *posture*[2] of an ethically committed and politically engaged intellectual. On the other hand, through the interweaving of poetry, translation, and criticism, Fortini addresses the opposite urgency: the need for escaping the very same authorial *posture* with which he fashioned himself.

While the creation of his own *posture* mostly takes place in his translations,[3] his attempts to dismantle his constructed self can be found in his pseudotranslations, the "texte[s] ou ouvrage[s] faussement présenté[s] comme une traduction, l'auteur réel se présentant alors lui-même généralement comme traducteur" (Collombat 145). Fortini produced pseudotranslations throughout the fifty years of his literary activity and also discussed them as a literary genre, especially in his posthumously published book *Lezioni sulla traduzione* (175-82). These texts, thus far regarded merely as sense-

less *divertissements*, have not yet been investigated.[4]

My aim is to analyze Fortini's "translations with no original" (Apter, "Translation with No Original" 210) as far as authorship and textuality are concerned. As David Martens claims, pseudotranslations are often a "rite of institution which is proper to the literary field and through which certain authors, by means of institutionalized socio-anthropological determinants, configure their authorial *posture* at crucial moments in their careers" (*Du manuscrit à l'imprimé* 431). I seek to show that, in this particular case, pseudotranslations have the opposite intention: they are instrumental to the creation of a literary space allowing the author to escape his self-configured and socially determined *posture* in order to embody a different authorial identity, or rather, several different—even contradictory—authorial identities at the same time. In Fortini's pseudotranslations, authorship is enacted as a self-contradictory cultural performance.[5]

Secondly, I will focus on the level of textuality and show how Fortini's "reflections of texts which turn out not to exist at all" (Lefevere 153) discharge the concept of "author" *tout court*, or at least its established understanding. I will argue that these pseudotranslations foster an approach to literature along which the very same text can be equally, although alternatively, classified both as entirely "original" and entirely "non-original," a paradox that challenges the conventional bond between the subject and the objects of literary production.

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Finally, I will discuss the issue of reader reception of this form of text. Fortini's production encourages a perception of pseudotranslation as textual paradox: a text in which mutually exclusive features can be attributed to the same object. As a hermeneutic model for thinking through the issue of the reception of pseudotranslations, I propose to use multistable figures, the so-called *Kippbilder*.

TRANSLATION AND AUTHORSHIP: CREATING THE AUTHORIAL POSTURE

One of the most remarkable results of the connection between Fortini's activities as translator, poet, and critic is his work on Bertolt Brecht. The German poet had been a model for Fortini since the 1940s. Later, with the essential support of his wife Ruth Leiser, Fortini translated some of Brecht's theatrical works: *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe* and *Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder* appeared in 1951 as *Santa Giovanna dei macelli* and *Madre Courage e i suoi figli*. In 1959, he convinced the publishing house Einaudi[6] to publish an Italian anthology of Brecht's poems, *Poesie e canzoni*, which features Fortini as editor, as translator (with Ruth Leiser), and as the author of the introductory critical essay. *Poesie e canzoni* can be regarded as the acme of Fortini's wide-ranging cultural project on Brecht. Its purpose is not only to import Brecht's oeuvre into the Italian literary field, but also to reshape and showcase

Brecht's authorial figure as that of the ideal "moral poet of socialism" (Bonavita 279) that Fortini wished to represent in Italy. By acting as Brecht's editor and translator, Fortini aims to become his Italian counterpart as a poet.

On a more general level, re-embodying Brecht allows Fortini to promote in Italy a new understanding of the figure of the poet, that of an ethically committed and politically engaged intellectual. This authorial *posture* is intended as the opposite, or at least as an alternative, to that of the leading contemporary Italian literates. Fortini pursues replacing both the model represented by the Nobel Prize-winning poet Eugenio Montale, who, in Fortini's opinion, is entrenched in a kind of individualistic ethics, and the one embodied by the emerging "neoavanguardisti" such as Edoardo Sanguineti, whom Fortini accuses of merely portraying social alienation instead of actively fighting it.

Moreover, in his translations of Brecht, Fortini establishes a stylistic template that finds an echo in his own poems. The anthology *Poesie e canzoni* features a lapidary, **682** almost epigrammatic syntax, as well as rhythmically irregular metres, full of caesuras and enjambments, compelling the reader to constantly deal with a gap between content and form. These characteristics were the most evident marks of Fortini's own poetry, and became progressively more so until the end of his literary activity. It is not a coincidence that Fortini's poetry gained wide recognition immediately after the publication of *Poesie e canzoni*, which made Brecht immensely popular in Italy. The two poets become inextricably associated: Giovanni Raboni pointed to the presence of a "Brecht-Fortini line" in twentieth-century Italian literature (*Franco Fortini traduttore di Bertolt Brecht*).

As a further matter, Fortini tends to "Brechtianize" not only himself but also other authors, thereby short-circuiting the texts he translates and his own poems. This is especially evident in his self-compiled anthology of translations, *Il ladro di ciliegie* (1982), a book in which his purposes as translator, poet, and critic come together once again. Under each text and translation, the same date is printed: not the publication date of the poem, but the composition date of his translation. Fortini says that "[s]ono le stesse date che accompagnano altri libri miei. Vorrebbero ricordare al lettore, se il testo non lo dicesse abbastanza chiaro, che quelle parole sono state scritte nel tempo ossia mentre accadeva 'altro,' altro che le reggeva o le oppugnava e continua a reggerle, a combatterle o a abbandonarle. In questo senso le versioni di poesia che qui seguono si augurano di non differire dagli altri versi miei" (*Il ladro di ciliegie e altre versioni di poesia* VII).[7]

Karl Kraus's poem *Sonntag* [Sunday], translated as *Domenica dopo la guerra* [Sunday after the war], is a case in point. In *Sonntag*, Kraus actually referred to a war, namely the First World War. In Fortini's translation, however, the patent Brechtian metrics full of enjambments and caesuras abruptly breaking the plain syntax of Kraus's verses, as well as the modification of the title (Fortini adds "*dopo la guerra*," alluding to a poem by his coeval Vittorio Sereni) and the date (1960), trick the reader into associating both texts with the Second World War, a common theme in both

Brecht's and Fortini's oeuvre.

Despite being a text by Karl Kraus, *Domenica dopo la guerra* resembles both Brecht's and Fortini's poems stylistically and thematically. Possible specimens of analogous texts by Fortini—as a translator and as an author, respectively—are *Il ritorno*, the Italian version of Brecht's *Die Heimkehr*, published in *Poesie e canzoni*, and the incipit of the poem *1944-1947*, included in Fortini's collection *Una volta per sempre* (1963). All are characterized by a poet speaking in the first person (singular/plural) to both past and future generations, dealing with historical events and striving to convey both a moral and a political message. Furthermore, he employs an epigrammatic syntax as well as a broken and syncopated metre, in which the semantic units mostly coincide with hemistichs rather than with whole verses:

Sonntag

Die Welt ist neu, wir wollen Anteil nehmen.
Aus Blut erblüht. Und immer wieder Rosen.
Wir haßten, um zu kosen.
Wir wollen uns zum Glück bequemen.

Und euch gelingts; und wie es immer sei,
ein jeder trifft und jeder führt's am Arm.
Daß Gott erbarm!
            Der meinige ist frei.

Weiß, wie es kam, und daß der Tag vergeht
und daß er Platz macht andern Tagen.
Und eure Kinder werden einst erschlagen.
Wie viel ist's an der Zeit? Zu spät.

Domenica dopo la guerra

Il mondo è nuovo. Anche noi ne vogliamo
la nostra parte. Fiorito dal sangue. Sempre
rose. Abbiamo odiato, per queste carezze.
Vogliamo essere pronti alla gioia.

E a voi riesce. E comunque, ce n'è
un po' per tutti, tutti prende sottobraccio.
Sia ringraziato il cielo.
                Il mio è libero.

So come va. So come il giorno scompare
per fare luogo ad altri giorni.
E i vostri figli un giorno saranno ammazzati.
Che ora è, del tempo? E' troppo tardi.

1960
(*Il ladro di ciliegie e altre versioni di poesia* 68-69)

Il ritorno

La mia città, come la troverò?
Seguendo gli sciami dei bombardieri
io vengo verso casa.
E dove è? Dove le sterminate
montagne di fumo si levano. […]
La mia città, come mi accoglierà?
Innanzi a me vengono i bombardieri. Sciami mortali
vi annunciano il mio ritorno. Incendi
precedono il figlio.

(*Poesie e canzoni* 110)

1944-1947

Era la guerra, la notte tremavano
nelle credenze i cristalli al ronzio
dei Liberators da ovest a oriente
o a sud, verso l'Italia. Chi ero io
e tu chi eri? Cominiciò così.
[…]

(*Tutte le Poesie* 261)

Despite their supposed heterogeneity, these texts constitute one fairly homogeneous intertext. Fortini's poems and his translations of Kraus and Brecht are all customized to the same stylistic and thematic template, as well as to the same authorial voice. This voice, moreover, is the topic of several of Fortini's critical essays. In one of these essays, Fortini describes his ideal prototype of "author" as a self-crafted authorial identity, as an "author dressed up as Author" (*Saggi ed Epigrammi* 1350). According to Fortini, this author would have an "illuminating voice" and publicly speak out with "exhortations" pointing at "an exemplary scene, a morality."[8] It is impossible not to interpret this portrait as a stylized and a utopic self-portrait. In the Italian literary field of the mid-twentieth century, this voice, which exhorts others to morality through *exempla*, is Fortini's own; it stands strongly against both Montale and the "neoavanguardisti." Unsurprisingly, this description of the "author dressed up as Author" was first published as the introductory essay to Bertolt Brecht's *Poesie e canzoni*. All in all, Fortini orchestrates the different parts of his literary production, thus managing to construct a clearly recognizable and strictly defined authorial model that he adopts as his own *posture*.

Pseudotranslations and Multistable Authorship: Opening Up the Authorial *Posture*

However, Fortini's self-fashioning as an intellectual à la Brecht is a golden cage from

which he needs to escape. In one 1966 essay, he confesses to perceiving his own authorial identity as a "nuisance" and expresses the strong need to "disguise" himself, the same way actors do. He even reveals the desire to publish his own poems: "con altro nome: per godere ancora una volta i vantaggi d'una doppia identità senza rinunciare a quelli d'una sola. O anche col mio nome; ma allora essere largo, libero […] sciolto da quel tanto di contratto di stecchito e confitto che può torcerti il labbro davanti al corpo della vita" (*Saggi ed Epigrammi* 864).[9]

My claim is that Fortini's pseudotranslations are answers to this urge. In these texts, Fortini combines poetry, translation, and criticism, as he did with Brecht, but with a different purpose: the creation of a space in which his relationship with literature and with literary tradition is empowered to prescind from the normativity of the authorial *posture* he chose to adopt.[10] As I attempt to show in the following passages, these pseudotranslations are instrumental to placing his constructed self at a distance, with regard first to his literary production and second to his literary *milieu*.

First of all, pseudotranslations allow Fortini to practice poetics or aesthetics that **685** are opposite to his own or that he even claims to despise. One such example is *Illuso da quest'orbita*, an original text which Fortini presents as a translation from Rimbaud:

> *Illuso da quest'orbita*
>
> Illuso da quest'orbita di acqua torva, non so
> levarne—oh barca immobile e oh voi troppo brevi
> braccia!—quella né questa ninfea. Non la gialla che là
> insiste; non la celeste, cenere come l'acqua.
>
> Ah, il polline che un'ala agita ai salici!
> Di canneti remoti le rose divorate…
> Qui la mia barca, ferma; e la cima, tesa
> giù, a quest'orbita di acqua senza fine.—A che melma?
>
> (*Lezioni sulla traduzione* 93)

The title *Illuso da quest'orbita* accurately mimics a title of Rimbaud (*Jouet de cet oeil*), and there are manifest allusions to some of his famous poems such as *Le bateau ivre* (the motif of the boat, "barca") or *Voyelles* (the colours: "gialla," "celeste"), but the poem is an original text. However, no Italian reader would associate it with Fortini. The reprise of Montale's poetic *ductus* is patent, both as far as the form and the content are concerned; note the frequency of alliterations and assonances ("*orbit*a di acqua *torv*a"; "*ala agit*a *ai* sal*ici*"), the elevated language, the strong occurrence of botanical terms, and the allusion to the *topos* of water as an illusory mirror, which features in Montale's most celebrated poems, such as *Cigola la carrucola del pozzo*, first published in *Ossi di seppia* (1925).

Two further considerations can be made. Fortini's Rimbaud speaks with Montale's words, even though the former was long dead before the latter was born. In this respect, this pseudotranslation displays itself to the reader as an anachronism, because it brings to the present a past that never existed and gives a text that is

entirely conceived in the present a flavour of the past. Past and present are bounded in a paradoxical relationship: the past exists only as a projection of the present, the present exists only as representation of the past, or as a creation of a different past for the present itself. Pseudotranslations create a temporality in which past and present are inextricably linked and can paradoxically coexist.

Illuso da quest'orbita is also a paradoxical text from another point of view. Fortini allegedly translates a poet he has nothing in common with (Rimbaud) and produces an imitation of a poet he repeatedly puts at a distance (Montale). Thus, in this pseudotranslation, Fortini is expressing the "nuisance" for his authorial figure. He is "disguising," but not completely: he signs the poem with his name, even though it is featured as the translator. All in all, we perceive Fortini self-fashioning with both his standard characteristics and wholly different ones; we hear the author speaking with conflicting voices and see him adopting incoherent identities. In pseudotranslation, authorial identities that happen to be contradictory may turn out to be "authentic" to the same writer. With regard to authorship, Fortini's consistent *posture* is turned into a self-contradictory cultural performance.

Fortini also employs pseudotranslations as an even more explicit gesture of public ventriloquism, as a way of openly distancing himself from his own literary *milieu*. After the end of the Second World War, the Italian literary scene was dominated by the journal *Il Politecnico* (1945-47), founded by Elio Vittorini, an intellectual close to the Communist Party. Fortini was one of the four editors of the journal. *Il Politecnico* mostly published either texts and translations of ideologically aligned authors such as Pasternak or Gorky, or authorless poems, such as the ones on Lenin dictated by an unknown illiterate Armenian craftsman. The journal's graphic layout combined elements of Soviet futurism and American picture stories, in order to reach out to both the literary élites and to a larger, partially-uneducated public. Several issues contained reports on far-away cultures such as Egypt or Indonesia; literature was instrumental to bringing the readers closer to the cultural lives of foreign countries. In all, Vittorini manifestly made an instrumental and political use of literature: in his opinion, poems, novels, and books must be useful in order to search for "truth" (*Politica e cultura* 1).

In November 1945, Vittorini asked Fortini to find some Italian translations of Chinese poetry for an issue of *Politecnico* about China. Fortini sent him a short poem by Isiao Cien. Vittorini enthusiastically published it, along with the caption, also provided by Fortini: "Isiao Cien è uno dei 50 membri fondatori della Lega degli scrittori di sinistra, fondata a Sciangai nel 1930" (*Via dello Yenan* 6).[11] Isiao Cien, in fact, was none other than Franco Fortini, who tricked Vittorini into thinking that his own original text was a translation from the Chinese. By deceiving Vittorini, Fortini aimed to demonstrate that literature can fully serve ideology (or even "usefulness" and "truth") only at the price of becoming fake:[12]

Via dello Yenan

Quando le gualchiere di Ti Peu si sono fermate
perché il fango ha coperto la pianura,
e quando alle chiuse, canne, giberne, gatti
e corpi d'annegati si sono ripescati,
la luna degli avi guardava le mura della città
come al tempo dei miei colleghi imperiali.
Questa è la strada che essi, i poeti di mille anni fa,
se le Potenze li esiliavano, percorrevano in pianto;
oggi è la nostra strada, la via della capra, della ruota e del fango,
delle tue mani fredde e della mitraglia rossa
e del morire sulle vie d'acqua dello Yenan.
Ma essi non ritornavano e scrivevano dolci lamenti.
Noi torneremo, invece, quando il sole avrà vinto la pioggia.

(*Via dello Yenan* 6)

Fortini's text can be regarded as a multiple pseudotranslation. In the original edition of the *Politecnico* issue, an article signed by Franco Fortini, entitled *Poesia è libertà* (*Poetry is freedom*), appeared next to Isiao Chen's poem; this article provides a crucial key to interpreting the pseudotranslation from the Chinese. In *Poesia è libertà*, Fortini strongly asserts that literature has an intrinsic aesthetic and hermeneutic value, aside from its usefulness and from the (alleged) truths it conveys. Poetry, claims Fortini, is "un modo di presentar le parole, d'accostarsi e d'echeggiare, che non si richiede più se quel che dicono sia vero o falso, e a che cosa serva" (*Via dello Yenan* 8).[13] The poetry of Isiao Cien—Fortini's pseudotranslation—can therefore be considered both an interlingual translation of an original poem that does not exist, and as an intergeneric translation of Fortini's own essay, which *does* exist on the opposite page of the journal.

This understanding of pseudotranslations is also embedded in the name Fortini chooses for this category of texts: *traduzioni immaginarie*, "imaginary translation" (*Lezioni sulla traduzione* 175-82). *Immaginarie* is, of course, a synonym for *fictitious*: *Il malato immaginario* (*The imaginary invalid*) is one who claims to be what he is not. In this respect, the epithet *traduzioni immaginarie* fits in with those definitions of pseudotranslation that stress the spurious nature of these texts: Popovič's "fictitious translation" (20; see also Bassnett 28, Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* 3-18, Rambelli 208-12), Toury's "pseudo-translation" and "assumed translation" (*In Search of a Theory of Translation* 31, 46-58), Yahalom's classifications of these texts as "literary forgeries" (153) together with pseudofictional biographies or memoirs, and Apter's "fraudulent translation" (*The Translation Zone* 213), amongst others.

Nevertheless, the label *traduzioni immaginarie* places particular emphasis on the positive role of fictitiousness and forgery: if rendered in terms of "imagination," fictitiousness and forgery come to be associated with creativity and inventiveness. In other words, Fortini's *traduzioni immaginarie* are not only to be regarded as coun-

terfeits, that is, as objects that *are not* what they seem. They are also objects that *are* what they seem, albeit only in the imagination. In the space of imagination, *traduzioni immaginarie* do have a non-fictitious ontological status. From this point of view, Fortini's understanding matches Emily Apter's definition of pseudotranslation as "literature *hors de ce monde*" (*The Translation Zone* 211). The space of imagination is connoted, across cultures, as a space of freedom. That is what Fortini is longing for, in the first place, with his pseudotranslations: he is seeking a space for an authorial *posture* free enough to allow him the exposure of self-contradictions.

Fortini's *Via dello Yenan* also prompts some considerations as regards to authorship and its reception. From the point of view of the readers, who is the author of the poem? Fortini speaks in the first person, both singular and plural ("miei colleghi imperiali," "la nostra strada," "Noi torneremo"). The readers of *Politecnico* necessarily associated the personal pronouns and adjectives with Isiao Cien, not as a fictional narrator, but as a real person and as a testimony; the context of *Politecnico* associates literature and truth. However, to whom do the *I* and the *we* refer for later readers, who are aware that this is a pseudotranslation? In this case, who performs the "speech act" (Austin)? It is not merely Isiao Cien, who needed a Franco Fortini to get his texts published in *Il Politecnico*, nor merely Fortini, who acts and speaks as Isiao Cien, not as Franco Fortini.

Both Fortini and Isiao Cien are implied by the very same word "miei"; the "speech act" is performed by two inextricably linked entities. Nevertheless, it is impossible to perceive the two voices simultaneously. The presence of the one implicates the absence of the other, because each of them confers on the text a radically different meaning. If we read the poem as authored by Isiao Cien, this text is, from the first to the last line, exactly the one Vittorini was crying out for: a specimen of literary production that has the identity of, and hence the prestige associated with, Chinese literature of a particular kind; in short, a text perfectly consistent with its context.[14] If we read the poem as authored by Franco Fortini, the very same text is, in its entirety, to be read as a bitter satire on Vittorini's cultural program, and therefore as a poetic statement which manages to drastically question (and open up) the cultural niche in which it is embedded.

Both readings are equally possible, yet it is impossible to perform both simultaneously, because of their radically opposite outcomes. After the irreversible experience of recognizing the possibility of both interpretations, the reader's attention is compelled to permanently go back and forth between them. Similarly, after recognizing the presence of the author as both a fictitious and a real entity, the reader's attention permanently oscillates between taking into account the former or the latter. In this respect, I would argue that the reception of this text is informed by a multistable authorship.

Such a multistable authorship relies on the fact that the text is perceived as a "performative," and not a "constative," utterance (Austin), which is measured not in terms of truth but of "felicity," of success. Fortini's text is perceived as multistable

because, enacting performativity in a context which tends to use literature as a constative utterance, it manages to be equally successful in two mutually exclusive ways.

Pseudotranslation and Multistable Textuality: Escaping the Status of Author

With his *traduzioni immaginarie*, Fortini deliberately expands the common understanding of pseudotranslation. In his *Lezioni sulla traduzione* (175-82), Fortini gathers under the label *traduzioni immaginarie* a group of texts resulting from very diverse hypertextual processes: forgery, imitation, translation, rewriting, reprise, and allusion, as well as "original" writing. In the following section, I will attempt to make a taxonomy of the different textual typologies of *traduzioni immaginarie*: 1. implicit pseudotranslations (original texts presented as translations, that is, translations with no original); 2. explicit pseudotranslations, openly presented as such (translations which readers are aware have no original); 3. translations (derivative text whose source is an existing foreign original) that "counterfeit" the target language; 4. original texts alluding to other original texts.

1. *Implicit pseudotranslations* (*pseudotranslations stricto sensu*) are original texts presented as translations of existing or non-existing poets, in which Fortini models original poems on translational structures. In addition to *Illuso da quest'orbita* and *Via dello Yenan*, one further example is the poem *Varsavia 1944*. In Zurich, in 1944, Fortini wrote two pseudotranslations from the Polish without having ever read a single line of Polish literature, not even in translation, as he claims in *Lezioni sulla traduzione* (176). He had in mind only a peculiar rhythmic structure: a "sequence of unrhymed quatrains of pseudo-regular verses" (176),[15] which in his opinion signals translation from a Slavic language. Taking a cue from Gideon Toury, we may say that in his texts Fortini incorporates "features which have come to be associated, in the (target) culture in question, with translation [or] with the translation of texts of a specific type and from a particular source language and textual tradition" (*Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* 45). The two *traduzioni immaginarie* from the Polish, *Varsavia 1939* and *Varsavia 1944*, were published unsigned in 1944, in a weekly journal for Italian socialist emigrants in Switzerland. A few months after the publication, the Polish poet Stanislav Balinski, who believed they were original Italian texts, translated them into his language. The two poems were printed in several journals for Polish immigrants in London, Buenos Aires, and New York. A few years later, Balinski republished the Polish versions as his own original texts, whereas Fortini included the Italian poems in his anthology *Foglio di via* (1946). Thus, the pseudo-Polish form of these poems became a new metrical pattern of Italian poetry. Here we see the creation of fictitious items of a source culture within the boundaries of the target culture, aiming at bringing a foreign culture closer to the pseudotranslator's own. However, in 1944 Italy was still a Fascist country; Fortini escaped Italy

and took refuge in Switzerland, where, after a failed attempt to arm his fellow soldiers against the Germans, he joined the Resistance. Considering this historical and political context, we can also read the poem as the gesture of an author who has distanced himself from his own culture and self-fashions himself as a stranger to his own cultural landscape.

This text further shows the self-referential character of *traduzioni immaginarie*. The foreign culture is evoked, but in fact rethought within the boundaries of one's own culture; the latter is subjected to a process of estrangement in order to be critically analyzed or manipulated from within:

Varsavia 1944

E dopo verranno da te ancora una volta
A contarti a insegnarti a mentirti
E dopo verranno uomini senza cuore
A urlare forte libertà e giustizia.

Ma tu ricorda popolo ucciso mio
Libertà è quella che i santi scolpiscono sempre
Per i deserti nelle caverne in se stessi
Statua d'Adamo faticosamente.

Giustizia è quella che nel poeta sorride
Bianca vendetta di grazia sulla morte
Le mie parole che non ti danno pane
Le mie parole per le pupille dei figli.

(*Tutte le Poesie* 17)

2. *Explicit pseudotranslations, openly presented as such* align the pseudotranslation process to that of imitation, but these texts should not be regarded merely as "serious parodies" because the cultural nostalgia they imply is expressed through specifically translational patterns. One example is the *Traduzione immaginaria da Mallarmé*, featuring translational characteristics such as linguistic calques from the French and the rhythmic structure of *novenario*, a verse form that is rare in Italian poetry and is used merely as imitation of the French *octosyllabe*:

Traduzione immaginaria da Mallarmé

Se fra te e me bisettrice
una distanza provveda
a richiamare allettatrice
grazia che il tuo sorriso chieda

tornassi destinata preda
a delirare felice
freccia che non conceda
anfratto, tana o radice,

quello è celeste piacere né certo
più ricco la quercia ne matura

al pastore della natura

se su suolo sofferto
spirando esile concerto
il bosco suo se ne oscura.

(*Saggi ed Epigrammi* 1066)

3. *Translations that "counterfeit" the target language* include the sonnet *Al pensiero della morte e dell'inferno*, which is a translation of Góngoras's sonnet *A la memoria de la muerte y del infierno* (1612). Fortini's translation makes use of a reconstructed, and therefore fictitious, sixteenth-century Italian language, thus producing a linguistic forgery, a "fake Cinquecento" (*Il ladro di ciliegie e altre versioni di poesia* 6). The translation was produced in the 1930s, in the context of the revaluation of the so-called "metaphysical" poetry that included Góngora, John Donne, and Juan de la Cruz. It was not published until 1983, when Fortini decided to accept the "quantum of falsehood" (6) embedded in such an operation. The Italian text was published on the left side of the page and the Spanish on the right, probably in order to underscore that Góngora paradoxically translates and "follows" Fortini's "fake Cinquecento":

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A la memoria de la muerte y del infierno

Urnas plebeyas, túmulos reales
penetrad sin temor, memorias mías,
por donde ya el verdugo de los días
con igual pie dio pasos desiguales.

Revolved tantas señas de mortales,
desnudos huesos y cenizas frías,
a pesar de las vanas, si no pías,
caras preservaciones orientales.

Bajad luego al abismo, en cuyos senos
blasfeman almas, y en su prisión fuerte
hierros se escuchan siempre, y llanto eterno,

Si queréis, oh memorias, por lo menos
con la muerte libraros de la muerte,
y el infierno vencer con el infierno.

Al pensiero della morte e dell'inferno

Urne plebee, tumuli reali
senza paura, mio pensiero, penetra;
dove segnò il carnefice dei giorni
a passi eguali diseguali l'orme.

Scava tra i tanti resti di mortali
denudate ossa e fame incenerite
mal difese da vane, se non pie,
rare odorose resine orientali.

Scendi sino in abisso, agli antri dove
urlano infamie l'anime e le mura
catene odono sempre e pianto eterno

se mai vorrai, oh mio pensiero, almeno
con morte andare libero da morte
e l'inferno schernire con l'inferno.

<div align="center">Luis de Góngora 1612</div>

(*Il ladro di ciliegie e altre versioni di poesia* 5)

Fortini, however, was not aware that, funnily enough, his Italian "fake Cinquecento" already existed, as an original text. In fact, Góngora's sonnet is nothing but a translation of Angelo Grillo's sonnet *Tra le tombe de morti horrende e scure*, written around 1596 (see Poggi):

Tra le tombe de morti horrende e scure,
fra l'ossa ignude, i cadaveri, i vermi,
putridi parti e fetide pasture,
itene spesso, o pensier vaghi e infermi:

quivi deposte l'altre indegne cure
sol vostra intenta a contemplar si fermi
quali hebber forme già, quali hor figure,
quai già vari ripari, hor quali schermi:

indi passate, ove nel foco eterno
per morir sempre han gli empi immortal vita,
fra stridi, urli, bestemmie e stuol nocente:

poi l'imagini offrite all'egra mente
ch'avrà con morte contra morte aita,
e con l'inferno vincerà l'inferno.

4. *"Original" poetic compositions*, or *traduzioni immaginarie*, is the term Fortini uses for many of his original poems. He mentions particular texts with open intertextual allusions, such as *Traducendo Brecht* or *Traducendo Milton*. Despite the titles, these are among his most "original" compositions, which have been canonized as some of the most important poems of late twentieth-century Italian literature. Nonetheless, Fortini claims that they are *traduzioni immaginarie*, as if they may be regarded as translations of Milton's or Brecht's lost texts (*Lezioni sulla traduzione* 177). The gerund of the verb *translate* used in the title of an original poem emphasizes that poetry and translation are, for this text, equally valid categories:

Traducendo Brecht

Un grande temporale
per tutto il pomeriggio si è attorcigliato
sui tetti prima di rompere in lampi, acqua.
Fissavo versi di cemento e di vetro
dov'erano grida e piaghe murate e membra

anche di me, cui sopravvivo. Con cautela, guardando
ora i tegoli battagliati ora la pagina secca,
ascoltavo morire
la parola d'un poeta o mutarsi
in altra, non per noi più, voce. Gli oppressi
sono oppressi e tranquilli, gli oppressori tranquilli
parlano nei telefoni, l'odio è cortese, io stesso
credo di non sapere più di chi è la colpa.

Scrivi mi dico, odia
chi con dolcezza guida al niente
gli uomini e le donne che con te si accompagnano
e credono di non sapere. Fra quelli dei nemici
scrivi anche il tuo nome. Il temporale
è sparito con enfasi. La natura
per imitare le battaglie è troppo debole. La poesia
non muta nulla. Nulla è sicuro, ma scrivi.

(*Tutte le Poesie* 238)

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By expanding the category of *traduzione immaginaria* to the point of also including original texts,[16] Fortini breaks the distinctive correspondence between the subject and the object of literary production, thus distancing himself from the status of "author" *tout court*. Within the space of *traduzioni immaginarie*, texts are both original and non-original; they are both written and not written by their author. A text such as *Varsavia 1944* is fully entitled to count as derivative (both in Italian, as a pseudotranslation by Fortini printed in Silone's journal, and in Polish, as the translation Balinski published for Polish immigrants) as well as original (both in Italian and Polish, published respectively in one of Fortini's and Balinski's poetry collections). *Traduzione immaginaria* allows the categories of *original* and *non-original* to apply to the same text, even though they remain incompatible; a paradox fostering an understanding of textuality as potentially released from the concept of *author*.

Traduzioni immaginarie enable the coexistence of original and non-original textuality. On the other hand, originality and non-originality remain mutually exclusive categories that cannot be perceived at once because of their divergent outcomes. As a translation, *Al pensiero della morte e dell'inferno* is an attempt to remake the sonnet Góngora would have written if he had lived in his century as an Italian author; as an original text, it is Fortini's long-hidden attempt to write poetry conforming to the metaphysical trend of the 1930s. As far as the reception is concerned, readers oscillate between perceiving the original aura of a derivative text and the derivative character of an original text; both are alternately present and absent. In this respect, in the case of *traduzioni immaginarie* we may speak of a multistable textuality.

A Textual Paradox: Pseudotranslation as Multistable Figure (*Kippbild*)

With regard to their reception, Fortini's *traduzioni immaginarie* seem to foster an understanding of pseudotranslation as a textual paradox. Paradox has been already related to pseudotranslation (see, among others, Martens and Vanacker 479-95) and to intertextual practices (see Riffaterre); moreover, it has been interpreted as a "facteur de litterarité," which may offer some hints for the interpretation of pseudotranslation as an attempt to legitimate the practice of translation:

> La nature du paradoxe littéraire est de rende l'interprétation difficile, mais non impossible, à chaque lecture. C'est cette difficulté qui fait du paradoxe un facteur de littérarité pour deux raisons: d'abord parce que les paradigmes qu'elle engendre contribuent à cette unité de forme qui distingue le texte littéraire des textes qui ne le sont pas. Ensuite parce que cette difficulté, indissociable des présupposés, reste intacte à chaque relecture, et que le lecteur doit encore passer l'obstacle, même s'il connaît toutes les réponses. (Riffaterre 499)

My claim is that pseudotranslation may be regarded as a textual paradox in which opposite elements, despite remaining mutually exclusive, are allowed to coexist within the same space on the levels of purported authorship, textuality, and temporality.

On the level of authorship: by wearing someone else's mask or exposing the process of distancing himself from his constructed self, in his *traduzioni immaginarie* Fortini establishes a paradoxical relationship between different "speech acts" both relating to the same speaker. Readers' attention oscillates between the two alternative poles of the author as a real and as a fictitious entity, embodying a subject as constituted and a subject as constituting. This "Munchausen effect" triggered by the self-referential character of *traduzioni immaginarie* brings into question the traditional concept of *author*.

On the level of textuality: *traduzioni immaginarie* dissolve and simultaneously exalt the opposition between the concepts of *original* and *translation, original* and *non-original*. The self-referential character of *traduzioni immaginarie* enables them to ascribe mutually exclusive categories ("original" and "derivative") to the same text. Readers oscillate between perceiving a translation that has no original, and an original that is linked to an evoked but unattainable foreign text; both are alternately present and absent.

On the level of temporality: *traduzioni immaginarie* are texts conceived in the present while pretending to come from the past. However, here the past exists only as a representation of the present; on the other hand, the present exists only as an actualization of the past. In other words, the past exists only in terms of the present, and the present exists only in terms of the past. *Traduzioni immaginarie* are chiastic anachronisms: they create a temporality in which past and present, although mutually exclusive, can paradoxically coexist.[17]

A useful hermeneutic model for thinking through the issue of the reception of

pseudotranslations may be found in multistable figures, the so-called *Kippbilder*. In multistable figures, such as the famous duck-rabbit[18] cited by Wittgenstein (194-194a) and later by Thomas Kuhn, the same image allows for different, equally valid descriptions; similarly, in pseudotranslations, the same text allows for different, equally valid interpretations. The multistable image can be interpreted both as a duck and a rabbit; the text, both as original and non-original. Categories that appear to be mutually exclusive turn out to be attributed to the same object. On the other hand, the multistable figure can be interpreted either as a duck or as a rabbit, but not as both of them at the same time. Similarly, when readers are confronted with pseudotranslations, after recognizing the coexistence of opposite features, such as a real and fictitious author, an original and non-original text, they are compelled to continuously go back and forth between them, remaining trapped in a multi-stable perception of the object.

As Christoph Holzhey states, "multistable figures may offer a helpful model to think through the possibility of having incommensurable alternatives without promoting a radical constructivism, subjectivism, or relativism. They problematize fixed dichotomies between subject and object, reality and construction, epistemology and ontology, and natural and conventional categories; but rather than reducing, conflating or bridging them, they can also make their discontinuities and ruptures both palpable and intelligible" (9). Thinking pseudotranslation, as well as practices of rewriting in general, in terms of a multistable figure may provide precious hints to problematize fixed dichotomies such as the ones between *original* and *derivative* (or *translated*) on several levels: with regards to authorship, to textuality, and to temporality.

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NOTES

1. Franco Fortini's poetry has been republished in a single volume (*Tutte le Poesie*). His essays have been collected in *Saggi ed Epigrammi*. Regarding theory of translation, see *Traduzione e rifacimento* (1972) and *Cinque paragrafi sul tradurre* (1973) (*Saggi ed Epigrammi* 818-38, 839-44).

2. In using this term, I refer to Meizoz, *Postures littéraires* and *La fabrique des singularités*. Taking its cue both from Bourdieu's sociology of literature (1992) and from the *analyse du discours* (especially Aron, Saint-Jacques, Viala, and Charaudeau and Maingueneau), Meizoz defines *posture* as the "manière singulière d'occuper une 'position' dans le champ littéraire […] la posture constitue 'l'identité littéraire' construite par l'auteur lui-même, et souvent relayée par les medias qui la donnent à lire au public" (*Posture littéraires* 18). Through the concept of *posture*, Meizoz tries to take into account both the "singular" and the "collective" in literary discourse, overcoming the division between the former assigned to *poeticiens* and the latter assigned to sociologists of literature.

3. Regarding Fortini as a translator, see, among others, *Bertolt Brecht/Franco Fortini*; Thüne; Tirinato; *Cinque tesi sulla traduzione in Fortini*; Lenzini.

4. For some initial considerations on Fortini's pseudotranslations, see Fantappiè, *Franco Fortini als Lyrik-Übersetzer und Übersetzungstheoretiker* and *Il solve et coagula della storia*.

5. The idea of "authorship as cultural performance" has been developed by Berensmeyer, Buelens, and

Demoor. Reprising the concept of performativity (see Austin) and the studies of the so-called "performative turn" (see Wirth and Fischer-Lichte), as well as using previous conceptualizations of authorship and media studies, Berensmeyer, Buelens, and Demoor deal with the "gap between a 'strong' concept of authorship as autonomous agency, original creativity and intellectual ownership, and a 'weak' (but historically much more prevalent) concept of heteronomous authorship as a product of cultural networks and their acts of authorization" (8). The concept of authorship as "cultural performance" strives to relate individual cases and models to their wider context(s) or media settings. For general issues concerning *posture* and authorship, see also Burke and Detering. Of course, *posture* and "authorship as cultural performance" are not synonyms. The former stresses the social aspect more, while the latter emphasizes cultural issues; this is why I relate the former to Fortini's translations and the latter to his pseudotranslations.

6. It was not coincidental that Brecht's anthology was printed by Einaudi. Fortini was actually linked to another major Italian publishing house, Feltrinelli, which had published his essays *Dieci inverni* (1957) and his poems *Poesia ed errore* (1959). Yet, Feltrinelli was becoming the reference point for the Italian "neoavanguardisti," whom Fortini fiercely opposed in his poems. Moreover, Fortini discontinued his collaboration with Feltrinelli because of issues related to his activities as translator and editor. He had agreed to edit and translate an anthology of Enzensberger's poems for Feltrinelli, but the publishing house printed them without the previously planned introduction by Fortini, which was replaced by an essay by Enrico Filippini that aimed to align Enzensberger's poetics to the positions of "neoavanguardisti." Feltrinelli also chose an "avant-gardistic" cover image and blurb, and inserted Enzensberger's anthology into the same series that included the books of the most famous "neoavanguardista," Edoardo Sanguineti. As Michele Sisto claims, the volume *Poesie per chi non legge poesia* is thus a curious hybrid: it is "Brechtian" in its text but "avantgardistic" in its editing.

7. "These dates are the same that accompany other books of mine. They are meant to remind the reader [...] that those words were written while 'something else' was going on, something else that sustained them or assailed them and kept sustaining them, fighting them or abandoning them. In this sense, the following poetic versions wish to be no different from my other verses." (My translation.)

8. "Qui una voce che dimostra o scongiura. L'appello identifica o chiede dei destinatari: noi e voi, presenti o futuri. […] Spesso l'esortazione è indice teso a una scena esemplare, a una moralità, a un quadro vivente. In un angolo, col suo sigaro di traverse e il catiglio ben spiegato, c'è l'autore, vestito da Autore" (*Saggi ed Epigrammi* 1350).

9. "[U]nder another name: to enjoy once again the advantages of a double identity, without giving up those of having one only. Or also under my name; but then with the aim of being outsized, free, […] unleashed from that little amount of stiffness, stone-deadness and fixity that will purse your lips while facing the body of life." (My translation.)

10. In his pivotal treatise on translation and pseudotranslations, Gideon Toury affirms: "Sometimes the innovation [triggered by pseudo-translations] is not so much in terms of culture at large, but rather relative to the previous activities of a particular author who is now seeking to change course and who wouldn't like his/her new endeavours to be associated with what his/her name already stands for" (*Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* 42).

11. "Isiao Cien is one of the fifty founders of the League of Leftist Writers, established in Shanghai in 1930." (My translation.)

12. Fortini deceived Vittorini several times. Later in 1945, Vittorini expressed his intention to publish a translation of a contemporary English poem and entrusted the translator Thomas Giglio with this task. Fortini wrote forty verses reminiscent of both Stephen Spender and Archibald MacLeish, signed them with an English name, and sent them to Vittorini, who chose his text instead of Giglio's translation.

13. "A way of presenting words, of approaching and echoing them, so that it is no longer required to know if what they say is true." (My translation.)

14. As David Martens and Beatrijs Vanacker state, "Les pseudo-traductions se fondent sur une stratégie de publication particulière, qui accorde une place prépondérante à l'épitexte et à la façon dont il peut être mis à profit pour donner à lire un texte allochtone comme la traduction d'un texte dont l'original aurait été écrit dans une autre langue" (354).

15. "Non conoscevo neanche un verso, e neanche tradotto, di quella letteratura e lingua. Avevo nella mente bensì uno schema ritmico di quartine non rimate, con versi oscillanti fra le undici e le quattordici sillabe. Mi veniva, credo di poter dire, da letture di versioni di poesia russa, probabilmente di Renato Poggioli, compiuta su riviste dei miei anni fiorentini" (*Lezioni sulla traduzione* 176).

16. Fortini's category of *traduzioni immaginarie* is even broader than Douglas Robinson's. For him, pseudotranslation is "not only a text pretending, or purporting, or frequently taken to be a translation, but also […] a translation that is frequently taken to be an original work" any work "whose status as 'original' or 'derivative' is, for whatever social or textual reason, problematic" (Robinson 183).

17. By that means, pseudotranslation challenges our binary understanding of translation as opposed to an original text: "By pretending that we know what translation is, i.e. an operation that involves textual transfer across a binary divide, we tie ourselves up with problems of originality and authenticity, of power and ownership, of dominance and subservience. But can we always be certain that we know what a translation is? And is the object we call a translation always the same kind of text?" (Bassnett 27).

18. The earliest known version of the image is an unattributed illustration in *Fliegende Blätter*, 23 Oct. 1892, available at digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/fb97/0147&ui_lang=eng. On the philosophical and cultural implication of the figure of the duck-rabbit see also Holzhey; Fortuna, *Wittgensteins Philosophie des Kippbilds* and *A un secondo sguardo*; Fortuna, Gragnolati, and Trabant.

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