

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

**TRANSLATING WOMEN: FEMALE FIGURES IN ELIZABETHAN
VERSIONS OF THREE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE EPIC POEMS**

being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the University of Hull

by

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September 2007

Vagliami 'l lungo studio e 'l grande amore
[*Inferno*, I, 83]

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Acknowledgments

I should like to thank the Faculty of Arts of the University of Hull, for a generous bursary that supported the first three years of this thesis; the Department of English for allowing me to take part in the Renaissance Society of America Conference in Cambridge, where I presented an early draft of Chapter One; and the Carl Baron Memorial Fund, for supporting the first of several research trips to Oxford.

I am extremely grateful to Prof. Daniel Javitch, whose unprompted appreciation of a draft of Chapter One has been extremely motivating, and to Brian Rigby and Jane Kingsley-Smith, for their insights on a section of this thesis and precious bibliographical suggestions.

I also wish to thank Claudia Capancioni, for her help, support and advice well beyond academic matters, Carolin Esser, for providing a home and for looking after me during my visits to Oxford, and Phil Mark, for embodying, briefly but perfectly, Montaigne's ideal of friendship. The staff at many libraries, including the Brynmor Jones Library in Hull, the Brotherton Library in Leeds, the Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, the Biblioteca della Facoltà di Lettere in Genoa, the Biblioteca Civica in Ovada, the University of York Library and, of course, the British Library and the Bodleian Library have all been extremely helpful. I should, however, like to single out three individuals, whose help during and after my visits has saved me much time and hassle and has often been beyond the call of duty: Irene Friedl, in the Manuscript and Rare Books Section of the Universitätsbibliothek München, first for locating, then for her bibliographical help with, issues of *Anglia* and Greg Colley, in Duke Humfrey's Library at the Bodleian, for his enthusiastic and useful help with the pseudo-Turberville manuscripts. I should also like to thank Georgianna Ziegler of the Folger Shakespeare Library for kindly transcribing and promptly sending me the 'Printer's Preface' to Robert Tofte's *Two Tales*. These librarians' kindness and helpfulness has been, time and time again, humbling, and I feel that, without them, my work would have been much weaker and slower.

This thesis would not have existed without the support of my parents, Bruna and Enrico, and of my husband and friend, Ben, who endlessly relieved me of commitments, worries and domestic incumbencies many more times than it would have been reasonable, who translated several articles from German, and who believed in this project more than anybody else.

Finally, it is a joy to have the opportunity to acknowledge my debt to Dr Veronica O'Mara and Dr Jason Lawrence. In different ways, they have guided, supported and motivated me throughout the writing of this thesis, and they have distributed liberally and generously their knowledge and expertise, which has been an honour and an immense privilege to share. Unable as I am to express adequately my gratitude, I will borrow Dante's words to Virgil:

tu mi contenti sí quando tu solvi,
che, non men che saver, dubbiar m'aggrata.

(*Inferno*, XI, 92-93)

NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

In presenting quotations from foreign languages the following scheme has been adopted. Primary texts are always quoted in the original with following parenthetical translation. Secondary texts are translated into English with the original reproduced in a footnote, if the quotation is within the body of the text; if the quotation is indented, the scheme is the same as that for primary sources. All translations from Italian and Latin are the present writer's own, with this exception:

Ariosto, Ludovico, 1991 (1532). *Orlando Furioso* (translated by Guido Waldman), Oxford: Oxford University Press

When, in rare cases, a more literal rendition is required, emendations are inserted between parentheses.

In order to avoid repetitions, a translation into English has not been deemed necessary for quotations from the first five cantos of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* and for those passage from Ariosto translated by Robert Tofte, in all those instances in which Richard Carew's and Tofte's translations have been considered sufficiently literal.

Introduction

Outline and scope of the thesis

The first section of this thesis explores the only complete Elizabethan translation of Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1532), Englished for the first time in its entirety in 1591 by Sir John Harington with the title *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*. This chapter intends to examine specifically an aspect of the 1591 translation which has been hitherto neglected in criticism: Harington's (mis)translation of the female figures of the *Furioso*. The English text, which has been otherwise the subject of much critical attention, some very recent, and has often been celebrated as an excellent and faithful rendition, is inaccurate for a number of reasons: most importantly, for its deliberate, methodical silencing and denigration of Ariosto's positive heroines, thus showing an intrinsic, instinctive misogyny which distinctly characterises the English poem and whose traditional non-acknowledgment in Harington criticism must be assessed and rectified. The chapter focuses first on the treatment of the female knights of the *Furioso*, then proceeds to explore the other female characters of the poem and, finally, concludes with the rendition of Ariosto's addresses to women and general comments on them. The importance of a side-by-side comparison, which constantly places the English text alongside the Italian poem, is stressed in all three sections, mainly because some instances of Harington's misogyny are self-evident but others, on the contrary, are only visible through a close comparison with the original. This is the case, for instance, with Harington's additions, impossible to detect without reference to Ariosto's text, or with his subtler modifications, the misogyny of which is heightened by a contrastive analysis with the Italian.

The second chapter concentrates on the Elizabethan translations of Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581): in 1594, Richard Carew's partial rendition of the first five cantos appeared in print, but it was never followed by that of the remaining fifteen; the first complete translation was published in 1600, authored by

Edward Fairfax¹. Both translations are faithful to the number of stanzas of the original and are, in general, reliable; in neither poet is there a visible agenda comparable to Harington's addition of the misogyny. However, a comparison of the two renditions is extremely interesting, as the poets adopt two very different translating methods: Carew's translation is an excellent specimen of what Dryden will call, a few decades later, 'metaphrase' (Dryden 1992: 17), a rendition which wishes to be so literal – semantically, syntactically, at times even terminologically, with some peculiar neologisms moulded around Italian terms – as to become almost a transliteration. The occasional inadequacy of Carew's rendition is highlighted in this chapter, in particular when his extreme literalness produces a text which is not fully intelligible; at the same time, his closeness to Tasso's original means that he is less likely than Fairfax to misinterpret the tone or the meaning of the Italian original. Conversely, Fairfax's version, a 'paraphrase' in Dryden's terminology (*ibid.*), is characterised by faithful looseness, being a freer rendition which, while remaining faithful to Tasso's meaning, is also flowing, despite some recurring traits such as added repetitions and proverbs. As well as analysing the differences in translating methods of the two Englished poems, this section of the thesis also chooses to study those passages of the *Liberata*, centred on the female characters and their adventures, which have deeply influenced other Elizabethan poets, such as Samuel Daniel and Edmund Spenser, both of whom, without actively translating from Tasso's masterpiece, creatively imitated the Italian poem in their own original works, at times, paradoxically, arriving closer to the original than the 'official' translators. Part of this discussion will be centred on Spenser's mediating influence on Fairfax, an extremely important element of the 1600 rendition which has been too often overlooked in criticism.

The third and final section of this thesis intends to study partial translations of the poems, then moving on to adaptations and imitations. The chapter opens with a study of Robert Tofte's 1598 rendition of Matteo Maria Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* (1495), limited to the first three cantos of the first book. Despite Tofte's prominent additions, most of which enhance the eroticism of the poem and which are, at times,

¹ There is another English version of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, authored by 'G.T.' and extant in two manuscript copies, slightly different but compiled by the same hand, both in the possession of the Bodleian Library. For a long time, these were attributed to the Elizabethan George Turberville (or Turbervile, 1543?-1597?), already translator of Ovid, Mantuan and Mancinus; however, both Emil Köppel (1889) and John Erskine Hankins (1940) consider the translation(s) to be much later and probably composed towards the end of the Seventeenth Century.

quite notable in length, the tone and, more importantly, the *spirit* of the original are always preserved, with an extraordinary care that renders the only Elizabethan version of the *Orlando Innamorato* one of the best translations analysed. Tofte also translated from Ariosto, and the chapter goes on to analyse the *Two Tales translated out of Ariosto* (1597), referring first to the compositional circumstances of the work (written during Tofte's Italian sojourn, presumably as a response to Harington's *Furioso*), and then evaluating both tales through a comparison not only with the original text, but also with Harington's version.

The ensuing sub-section of the chapter engages with Spenser's imitations from Ariosto, concentrating specifically on Book III of *The Faerie Queene* (1590) and on its female figures, in particular Britomart. The study also analyses the difference between Spenser's and Harington's omission of Ariosto's irony: while Spenser's entirely different purpose justifies this change, the self-proclaimed essence of Harington's poem as a translation renders this omission a serious mistake. The subsection goes on to analyse concisely George Gascoigne's mediating influence on Spenser, who, in Malbecco, betrays his knowledge of Gascoigne's episodic translation from Ariosto's *Cinque Canti* (1545) in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (ca. 1574). Spenser's imitations from Ariosto are not limited to Book III; in fact, he is the last in a line of a few English authors to be inspired by the tale of Ariodante and Ginevra, which he re-writes, simplifying it (again, in response to a precise purpose), in his own episode of Phaon and Claribell (Book II).

If the borders between translation and creative imitation/adaptation are already blurred with Spenser, with the other Elizabethan versions of the same story they shift further and further away from translation proper. Beverley's *Historie of Ariodanto and Jenevra* (ca. 1566), the first partial translation of the *Orlando Furioso* in England, is a re-writing twice as long as the original, which sees the basic Ariostean plot enriched with innumerable love-related topoi; one decade later, George Whetstone writes in very similar terms (albeit in prose) in the 'Discourse of Rinaldo and Giletta', part of *The Rocke of Regard* (1576). The study, analysing Whetstone's highly ironical glosses and use of Petrarchist conventions brought to the extreme and set within a frame which is heavily influenced, structurally, by George Gascoigne's 'The Adventures of Master F.J.', concludes positing a parodic purpose in Whetstone's prosimetrical narrative.

Although a full study of Renaissance translation theory is beyond the scope of this introduction, primarily because it has been exhaustively treated in very recent criticism (Morini 2006), it is opportune to offer a brief historical survey, and to enter in greater detail on those aspects of Renaissance translation that have either been neglected in current criticism (such as the employment of translation as a valuable tool for language-learning) or are particularly relevant for the works analysed. The inclusion, in this study, of texts that are not strictly ‘translations’, but rather re-writings, finds support in the notion, widely accepted in contemporary translation theory, that *all* translations are re-writings and, thus, manipulations, as explained by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere:

Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All re-writings, 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. Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one literature upon another.

(Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: preface)

Although Bassnett and Lefevere’s statement comments, specifically, on modern translation theory, it can be applied extra-temporally and is, consequently, still valid: in particular, their comment on ideology reflects an attitude visible in Harington. Ideological translations are guided by whoever holds the power (be it a patron or the public) and in the case of Harington, more than in other renditions from the Italian, an ideological attempt to moralise the original (studied, in this thesis, through his portrayal of women) plays a significant role. The blurring of borders between creative imitation and translation is typical of the Renaissance, and offers further support for the inclusion of adaptations and imitations in this discussion. In a way, all adaptations, translations and imitations betray the same, or at least a very similar, degree of engagement with the relevant source text, and, in an age when the sense of authorship was developing and when imitators could be, at times, closer translators of the originals than the ‘official’ translators, it seems necessary to include, in the discussion, both those renditions that present themselves as such and those that do not, but occasionally come closer to their source texts than the former.

Comments on translation have always appeared in prefaces or introductions to translations, normally reflecting that particular translator's opinion or interpretation of what a 'good' translation should be, yet the term 'Translation Studies' is relatively new, having been first coined by James Holmes in 1972 (France 2000: 4). The most influential translation theorists are by no means in agreement with one another. Walter Benjamin, for instance, reads translation as the necessary continuation of the original: 'A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. This may be achieved, above all, by a literal rendering of the syntax' (Benjamin 1989: 21). On the contrary, Vladimir Nabokov takes the opposite stance, advocating the wide use of footnotes in order to 'reproduce with absolute exactitude the whole text, and nothing but the text' (quoted in France 2000: 5), and 'urg[ing] the translator to sacrifice *everything* to the exact contextual meaning of the original' (France 2000: 8). Benjamin distinguishes between freedom and fidelity:

Fidelity and freedom in translation have traditionally been regarded as conflicting tendencies (...). For what is meant by freedom but that the rendering of the sense is no longer to be regarded as all-important?

(Benjamin 1989: 22)

concluding that 'the translation must be one with the original in the form of the interlinear version, in which literalness and freedom are united. For to some degree all great texts contain their potential translation between the lines' (Benjamin 1989: 24). The French theorist Henri Meschonnic takes a similar stance, believing that a translation should *not* be domesticated and treated as a work born in the target language, and maintaining that the distance between source and target languages should be made evident – what he calls 'décentrement' (quoted in France 2000: 4). Despite the diversity of opinions, a clear positive aspect has emerged from the newly born field of translation studies. France maintains that

The development of Translation Studies has at least taught us to ask, not simply: 'Is this a good/bad translation?', but rather: 'What is the purpose of this translation? Who is it aimed at? How well does it achieve its purpose?' It is within such a framework that translation critics should continue to assess translations in terms of both adequacy and acceptability.

(France 2000: 10)

This thesis, indeed, will try and refrain from the expression of judgments and will evaluate the Elizabethan translations from the Italian exactly 'in terms of adequacy and acceptability', trying to consider, at all times, the context.

This thesis rests firmly within the sub-field of descriptive translation studies, which is the most analytical and least prescriptive branch of the discipline. According to James Holmes' division of the discipline, Translation Studies can be divided into two large categories, Pure and Applied; the former can be sub-divided into Theoretical and Descriptive, with Descriptive Translation Studies splitting again in Function-, Process-, and Product-oriented (Toury 1995: 9). France comments that

while 'applied' translation studies (...) quite properly concern themselves with what should be, the empirical student will confine him or herself to describing and analysing what is. Translation Studies are not primarily concerned with teaching us how to translate, any more than linguistics is primarily concerned with teaching us how to speak.

(France 2000: 6)

The most influential theorist of Descriptive Translation Studies, Gideon Toury, believes that it is particularly important to consider adequately the receiving, or target, culture:

The [prospective] position (or function) of a translation within a recipient culture (or a particular section thereof) should be regarded as a strong governing factor of the very make-up of the product (...). After all, translations always come into being within a certain cultural environment and are designed to meet certain needs of, and/or occupy certain 'slots' in it. Consequently, translators may be said to operate first and foremost in the interest of the culture into which they are translating.

(Toury 1995: 12)

Indeed, the consequences that a certain cultural environment has on any translation are very visible in all the works analysed. Toury stresses the importance of proper contextualisation, considering the significance of the recipient culture, even more important than that of the source culture:

[T]ranslations are facts of target cultures; on occasion facts of a special status, sometimes even constituting identifiable (sub)systems of their own, but of the target culture in any event.

(Toury 1995: 29)

This thesis will try and contextualise all of the translated works: for instance, the shifted perspective on women in Harington's poem will be read as a moralising attempt on the part of the translator, while the popularity of the employment of

literary translation as a language-learning aid will be an argument used in the analysis of Tofte's and Carew's works.

Methodologically, this thesis follows a very strict comparative approach, as suggested by Toury:

The easiest comparative study to perform involves various parallel translations in one language, which came into being at one point in time. This kind of comparison is also the easiest to justify, because it involves the smallest number of variables. If each translation is properly contextualised, such a study is therefore bound to shed light on the correlations between surface realisation and position (or 'valence') in the target culture.

(Toury 1995: 72)

Toury's preference for an analysis of works translated at 'one point in time' is fundamental, because, as he explains, in the case of translations spanning across different centuries 'the notion of (one) target language would have to be modified, in view of the fact that languages undergo constant changes' (Toury 1995: 73). The choice, for this thesis, of Elizabethan translations is not coincidental, because the Elizabethan age truly was a 'golden age' as far as translations from the Italian are concerned, both qualitatively and quantitatively².

The most important criterion for a translation, according to Toury, is the concept of 'adequacy and acceptability'; as France puts it, 'there is, arguably, an implicit pact between translator and reader that the basic elements of signification in a text will be rendered with a reasonable degree of accuracy' (France 2000: 8). Similarly, the essential qualities of modern 'good translations' (as studied by another leading theorist, Lawrence Venuti), are their invisibility – somewhat paradoxically: the more

² It is striking to consider even only the sheer number and the variety of the translations from the Italian during the Elizabethan period. To give some examples, which are by no means exhaustive, in the decades between *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557, containing translated sonnets from Petrarch by Wyatt and Surrey) and Fairfax's 1600 *Godfrey of Bulloigne* there appeared translations from the Italian in the following genres: prose fiction, mainly from Boccaccio and Bandello (Geoffrey Fenton's *Tragicall Discourses*, 1567; William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, 1566/7; George Pettie's *Petite Pallace of Pettie his Pleasure*, 1576; Turberville's *Tragicall Tales*, 1574); historical-political tracts (anonymous renditions of Machiavelli's *Principe* circulated in manuscript, while Geoffrey Fenton Englished Guicciardini's *Storia d'Italia* in 1579); courtesy literature (Sir Thomas Hoby's 1561 version of Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, Robert Paterson's 1576 translation of della Casa's *Galateo*, and George Pettie and Bartholomew Young's 1581-6 rendition of Stefano Guazzo's *Civile Conversazione*); drama and pastoral drama (Abraham Fraunce's 1587 *Aminta*, by Tasso, via Thomas Watson's 1585 Latin intermediary, Gascoigne's 1566 *Supposes*, a translation of Ariosto's *Suppositi*). Some of these translations were so popular and so praised that they have obtained canonical status (for instance, Hoby's or even Harington's); in general, the splendour of this age left a gap in the following century (the next translation of the *Furioso* would appear only in 1755, by William Huggins, followed by John Hoole's 1783 rendition; the next version of the *Liberata* would appear only in 1761, by Philip Doyne, followed by John Hoole's in 1763).

invisible a translation is, the more positive its judgement will be – and their fluency (Venuti 1992: 4). These aspects are cross-temporal and universal, and can certainly be found in some Elizabethan translations: Fairfax, for instance, strives to be as invisible as possible in his translation of Tasso, and his additions, such as the occasional hints of his Protestantism, are so whispered and so rapid as to be hardly perceptible; similarly, Tofte – despite some significant additions – enters the spirit of his originals so perfectly as to embody, perhaps better than any other translator, the ‘invisibility’ demanded by Venuti. France’s comment on the accuracy of the translations can be exemplified by Carew, whose devout mimic of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* guarantees an unique level of accuracy.

However, not all Elizabethan translations can be related to modern criteria, and, vice versa, not all modern norms are applicable to Renaissance renditions. This is perhaps best exemplified in Harington, whose presence is strongly felt in his translation from Ariosto (from the very beginning, with his portrait printed on the title-page in the company of his spaniel), and who is very far from the ideal of the ‘invisible’ translator. In cases such as this, Warren Boutcher maintains,

It was, then, the point the translator wished to make, or the meditation he or she wished to offer regarding a particular issue on a given occasion, from a particular place, by *means* of a translation, which prevailed over any desire to offer a textually accurate version of a noted author’s work (...). English Renaissance translation is fundamentally, to be sure, a receptive process, but the reception is active and explicit. The translator ostentatiously receives, socializes, and re-employs a highly resourceful but potentially suspect representative of classical or continental culture in new English circumstances. There is a sense that special arrangements have to be made at every point to relocate the book in England, and to guarantee that its contents are worthwhile, harmless and, above all, useful and vivid for English readers. The whole book is thoroughly ‘Englished’ by a kind of multimedia transformation, a transformation which often includes the addition of aids such as maps, engraved illustrations and commentaries.

(Boutcher 2000: 51)

Indeed, the ‘Englishing’ of an Italian text is most clearly visible in Harington’s effort to moralise the *Furioso* – a process of which the female figures are the most visible victims –, in order to normalise, soften, and render innocuous a book coming from a genre that was viewed as potentially corrupting, immoral, and destabilising.

Generally speaking, it is particularly difficult to theorise on English Renaissance translation, because, before Dryden, there was no real English translation theorist. Consequently, any theorisation must be extrapolated from prefaces, dedicatory letters or references to translation within the texts; there is no treatise comparable, for

instance, to the works on translation produced in Renaissance Italy, such as Leonardo Bruni's fifteenth-century *De Interpretatione Recta* (1420-1426), the first Humanistic treatise on translation which, advocating a 'flexible' rendition – ideally *ad verbum*, but, whenever that is not possible without distorting the syntax of the target language, then *ad sententiam*³ –, had an immense influence throughout Europe⁴. The absence of a coherent translation theory in Elizabethan England has also been noted by Morini:

One difficulty posed by Tudor translation is the lack of a single, authoritative theory which would allow the critic to define all translations according to its principles [...]. The impression, in the theoretical statements as well as in the translations themselves, is indeed one of anarchy, of everybody doing what they please though conforming to a certain formal decorum in the prefatory writings.

(Morini 2006: vii)

This 'difficulty' is reflected in the relative paucity of the field of Renaissance translation criticism; Morini's very recent study was born exactly with the intention of bridging the gap between Medieval and seventeenth-century translation theories, both more widely studied than those of the Tudor period:

While a good deal of attention has been dedicated to the late Medieval period, and valuable studies have been written on the seventeenth century – two periods when the aims and habits of translators are comparatively clear – the best surveys of the Tudor period are either old and slightly outdated or only of partial interest [...]. Those few pronouncements that go some way towards attempting a definition have been formulated in mainly negative terms, by suggesting that the only rule that can be extracted from sixteenth-century translation is the lack of any fixed rules [...]. It has been generally conceded, in particular, that whereas the theoretical statements contained in the prefaces to sixteenth-century translations are imbued with literalism, in practice the translators behaved in a radically different manner, altering, cutting, and adding to what they found in the text they chose to 'English'.

(Morini 2006: 3)

Morini's primarily theoretical approach is also, in a way, his limitation: the 'practical' section of the study, an analysis of a selection of poetry and prose translations, is neither exhaustive nor in-depth. In addition, his final statement is a

³ Bruni's purpose is simple: 'Dico igitur omnem interpretationis vim in eo consistere, ut, quod in altera lingua scriptum sit, id in alteram recte traducatur' ('I say, therefore, that the entire strength of the correct translation consists of this, that what is written in one language, is correctly transported into the other', 76). Despite the apparent immediacy of the statement, however, Bruni admits that 'Magna res igitur et difficilis est interpretatio recta' ('correct translation is a great and difficult thing', 78), and then goes on to list exacting requirements for the would-be translator, ranging from complete knowledge of the author's works, to perfect bilingualism, to the ability of grasping each author's own style and reproducing it accordingly in the other language. He admits that, upon reading contemporary bad translations of Aristotle, he 'partim ingemisc[et], partim ride[t]' ('partly cries, partly laughs', 118), a reaction he would have had could he have read certain Elizabethan versions of the Italian epics.

⁴ Both in itself, and through Etienne Dolet's 1540 French re-writing, *La maniere de bien traduire d'une langue en aultre* (Morini 2006: 15).

slight generalisation, which, clearly not taking into consideration the literal translations such as Carew's, Hoby's or even Tofte's, almost reproduces F.O. Matthiessen's own conclusion about Elizabethan translations of 75 years earlier:

The translator must either suppress his personality and produce a scholarly work, faultless, but without life; or, if he enters creatively into his work, he runs the almost certain risk of adding elements which the next generation will consider a clouding of the spirit of the original. The Elizabethan translators all sinned in this second way, and yet their work has endured as a part of English literature as no other group of translations has.

(Matthiessen 1931: 231)

Matthiessen's final, almost surprised comment explains another difficulty of writing about English Renaissance translation theory: a certain attitude, on the part of contemporary criticism, to treat texts as original, and not as translations/adaptations. This is most evidently the case with Sir John Harington's work, whose faults have been largely ignored by Anglists precisely because the work has long been treated as an original work and not as a translation of another poet's words. It is particularly difficult, then, to talk of translation studies when referring to an age where, first of all, there was not an accepted method of translation, as demonstrated by the virtually contemporary, yet profoundly different methods of Carew and Fairfax for the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, or of Harington and Tofte for the *Orlando Furioso*; secondly, where translation had many different purposes, from the divulcation of foreign texts into England, as exemplified by Harington's or Fairfax's texts, to Italian language learning, as exemplified by Carew's bilingual version or Tofte's 'translation exercises'; finally, where the borders between translation, imitation and plagiarism were extremely, profoundly blurred.

The second major flaw in Morini's argument is his convinced categorisation of sixteenth-century translations into 'medieval' and 'modern':

On the one hand there is medieval translation, which often involves, as far as secular literature is concerned, a radical departure from the original; on the other hand there is 'modern', humanistic translation, which requires of the translator a subtler manipulation of the rhetorical organization of the source text.

(Morini 2006: x)

This dichotomy does not seem to be justified in any way, and an analysis of some of the texts that Morini himself studies, such as Harington's Ariosto, demonstrates that the division into 'medieval' and 'modern' texts is too simplistic. For instance, Harington's departures from the text, rather than signifying 'medieval' influences,

show the direct intermediacy of the several moralising explanations of the *Furioso*, which are, primarily, the products of a very evident Counter-Reformation approach to Ariosto's poem.

Interestingly, in no translation of the epic poems is there a formal apology for the inadequacy of English, suggesting that, by the 1590s, the vernacular was held almost on the same level as the prestigious Italian. On the one hand, a sense of the relative poverty of the English language is perhaps felt (but never expressed explicitly) in Carew, whose neologisms – or, rather, calques – moulded on Italian words seem to suggest a struggle to find a richness of vocabulary comparable to that encountered in the *Gerusalemme Liberata*. The same problem was faced by another extremely literal translator⁵, Thomas Hoby, in his version of the *Cortegiano*, as noted by Morini:

In order to be placed on a par with these languages [Italian and French], English had to be enriched and 'augmented' by its writers, and, above all, by its translators: for translation was considered a major means of enlarging one's tongue through contact with other languages.
(Morini 2006: 80)

On the other hand, in fact, rather than expressing a sense of inferiority, the neologisms could be considered as active attempts aimed at enriching the English language, an attitude that Carew himself suggested in his elegant panegyric 'The Excellency of the English Tongue' (composed 1595-1596), in which he professes that influences of and borrowings from European languages, as well as, specifically, polysyllables of foreign inspiration, can be extremely useful to enrich the English language:

Now wee in borrowing from them geue the strength of Consonantes to the Italian, the full sounde of wordes to the French, the variety of termi[n]acions to the Spanish, and the mollifieinge of more vowells to the Dutch; and soe (like bees) gather the honye of their good properties and leaue the dreggs to themselves [...]. Againe, the longe wordes that wee borrowe, being intermingled with the shorte of our owne store, make vp a perfitt harmonye.
(293)

Himself a polyglot who could speak at least five foreign languages, all self-taught (Italian, French, German, Spanish and Greek), Carew was 'greatly interested in

⁵ Morini's justification for Hoby's literalness, however, is not entirely convincing: 'Italian was widely studied in the sixteenth century [...]. Since the original was already in circulation, and since it was circumfused by an aura of prestige, Hoby knew that he had to be very careful in his rendering of the Italian text' (Morini 2006: 78). Of course, many other Italian works, besides *Il Cortegiano*, were surrounded by equal prestige: it is sufficient to mention only one example of this esteem, Queen Elizabeth's admiration of Tasso, emerging from a 1584 letter written by the Italian teacher Iacopo Castelvetro and requesting news on the poet's health and production on behalf of the Queen herself – who even learnt by heart many stanzas from the *Gerusalemme Liberata* in the Italian original –, well before the appearance of any English translation (Lawrence 2005: 14); but this unquestionable 'aura of prestige' did not prevent, for instance, Fairfax from producing a rather free translation.

language, and particularly in etymology' (Mendyk 2004: 60): in this context, his penchant for Italianate neologisms becomes more and more plausible as an attempt to enrich English vocabulary, rather than as a sign of his inability to find vernacular terms fit to match their Italian correspondents.

The quantity of intentional⁶ partial translations – the numerous versions of the Ariodante and Ginevra tale, as well as Tofte's Ariosto – should not be surprising, as should not be the choice, for all these writers, of Ariosto, whose *poema dalle mille fila* lends itself splendidly to abridgments and selections, and whose multiple self-contained tales are truly independent from the context and often have a frame of their own. It would be much more difficult to do the same, for example, with Tasso, who firmly believed in the Aristotelian *dictum* of the unity of theme and whose hypothetically selectable passages, such as Erminia's idyllic episode, cannot be fully understood without their context. The *Orlando Innamorato* is more similar, in this, to the *Furioso*, but less widely available and, probably, more difficult to read for Boiardo's strong dialectical inflections. The very notion of the self-contained tale, albeit framed within an epic poem, recalls the collections of *novelle* which were highly popular in Elizabethan England and formed a significant group of translations from the Italian⁷; the fact that one such author of tales, Bandello, was inspired himself by Ariosto's Ariodante and Ginevra, using the tale in that of Timbreo and Fenecia, confirms the popularity of this particular story.

In the case of Beverley and Whetstone, the discourse changes slightly from imitation to adaptation and enrichment. Especially in the former, the Ariostean tale is rendered ornate and florid: re-writing it in thrice as many lines as the original, at the same time Beverley maintains a relative closeness of plot, adding details, but never omitting any. There is, in other words, a unilateral modification – a lengthening – but nothing else; and in this respect, Beverley's is more of a translation than Whetstone's or Spenser's clear imitations/adaptations.

Writing about Beverley's treatment of the tale, Prouty notes that

⁶ 'Intentional' refers to those renditions of the epic poems that were born as translations of short passages, as opposed to translations begun and left incomplete (such as Tofte's Boiardo and particularly Carew's Tasso).

⁷ It is only sufficient to remember William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure* (mainly from Boccaccio and Bandello, 1566/7), Geoffrey Fenton's *Certaine Tragicall Discourses* (mainly from Bandello, 1567), George Pettie's *Pettie his Pleasure* (1576), and George Turberville's *Tragical Tales* (from Boccaccio, Bandello and Mambrino da Fabriana, 1574?/1587).

[The Elizabethans] were not the product of a rather highly developed society; they were aping the work of such a civilization and were trying to improve according to their ideas. Such improvement was nothing new; it may be found in a comparison of Seneca with Euripides. The Roman thought he was doing a much better job, and his readers most probably agreed with him. Similarly in a later time Nahum Tate thought that he was improving *King Lear*. Easy as it is for us to laugh at such "improvements," we can, if we are interested, learn a great deal about the tastes and standards of the improvers and their ages by noting the nature of the alterations.

(Prouty 1950: 30)

Beverley's alterations are, indeed, revealing: they confirm the taste for elaborateness and for Petrarchan inventions of the early Elizabethan period; they reveal a concern for love, and for the literary representations of love, that was not marked in the Ariostean version. In the light of the discourse on translation, however, they become even more significant, because they exemplify a type of translation done for extra-linguistic purposes. In other words, while the literal renditions could be the fruit, as in the case of Tofte, of disciplined self-tuition in the study of a foreign language; and while the self-proclaimed translations implied a desire to divulge the knowledge of their source texts in England, as in the case of Fairfax or Harington, the adaptations use the source text as a 'well of ideas' to be exploited, with no reference to and, more importantly, no apparent interest for the Italian authorship of the work. This attitude is also shown by the fact that in neither Beverley nor Whetstone is there an acknowledgment of Ariosto's original: Beverley calls his efforts the 'unripe fruits of [*his*] barren orchard' ('To The Reader', 2), whereas Whetstone declares that his tale 'was first written in Italian by an unknowne authour' (42).

Perhaps the aspect that has been most neglected in critical studies of Renaissance translations is the potential employment of these texts as a means to improve the knowledge of a foreign language⁸. This is exemplified, in particular, by Carew's Tasso, and by the bilingualism of its first edition. This feature of the text is acknowledged and justified by the printer himself, in his preface 'To the Reader', as beneficial for the readers:

I haue caused the Italian to be Printed together with the English, for the delight and benefit of those Gentlemen, that loue that most liuely language. And thereby the learned Reader shall see how strict a course the translator hath tyed himselfe in the whole work, usurping as little liberty as any whatsoeuer, that euer wrote with any commendations.

(Carew, 'To the Reader')

⁸ Naturally, as far as classical languages were concerned, this was the most approved method. See the beginning of the Second Book of Roger Ascham's *The Scholemaster* (1570), and his advice on the 'duble translation out of one tong into an other' (33) and on the analysis of imitations (47-48), suggesting to compare two authors and note where the later one imitates, adds to, omits from, or makes changes to his predecessor.

This editorial decision is essential to understand the purpose of the work: a side-by-side comparison of an original and its translation into the reader's native language was one of the most acclaimed ways to learn, with or without specific tuition, a foreign tongue⁹, as Jason Lawrence, analysing John Florio's *First Fruites* (1578) in his recent study of Italian language learning, explains:

The printing of the original and English versions in parallel columns would allow the reader to engage in a series of advanced translation exercises from a literary source. The student can either translate from Italian verse into English by covering up Florio's translations, or from English into Italian using Florio's literal version as a source text.

(Lawrence 2005: 29)

Such a comparative analysis is probably the method with which Shakespeare learnt Italian, and which 'seems to develop directly out of the insistent parallel-text focus of the bilingual dialogues in *all* the contemporary language manuals' (Lawrence 2005: 11). Indeed, bilingual editions of texts (besides purpose-written manuals, as were Florio's *Fruites*, which naturally contained bilingual dialogues or passages designed specifically for learning purposes) were not unusual, as shown, among others, by George Whetstone's *Honourable Reputation of a Soldier*, published in Leiden in 1586 with parallel texts in English and Dutch, accompanied by a short dictionary and notes on English pronunciation (Smith 2004: 461), or by the trilingual version of *Il Cortegiano* (1528), where the Italian original was accompanied by Hoby's English and by Chappuys' French translations, published in 1588 by John Wolfe (Lawrence 2005: 43), and there was a wide market for them¹⁰; more importantly, as Lawrence notes,

The emphasis in the manuals and private lessons on the use of literary translation, both as a language-improving exercise and as a means of understanding a text in its original form rather than as a replacement for it, encourages a close engagement with specific Italian sources, which often becomes the starting point for an act of creative imitation.

(Lawrence 2005: 12)

The manuals' predicaments were, indeed, put into practice, as famously exemplified by William Drummond of Hawthornden, whose first edition of Fairfax's

⁹ See Lawrence 2005, and Worth-Stylianou 1995. The latter's article refers, specifically, to bilingual editions in Renaissance France, but the validity of her points is, of course, pan-European.

¹⁰ Tiziana Menegatti, analysing the translations of the Seicento author Giovan Francesco Loredano, points out that '*the majority of the translations present a side-by-side Italian version, an effort to which a printer would not have gone without the public's demand*' ('*gran parte delle traduzioni presentano la versione italiana a lato, fatica che uno stampatore non avrebbe certo compiuto senza riscontro nelle richieste del pubblico*', emphases added, Menegatti 2000: 24).

Tasso is heavily annotated, proving a detailed, side-by-side reading of the Italian and English versions: Drummond records additions, omissions and differences between the two texts, as well as Spenserian imitations in Fairfax. The same practice is reflected also in Sir John Harington's suggestion of a side-by-side comparison to increase fluency in Italian, in his own 'Preface' to the *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*:

For my omitting and abbreviating some things either in matter impertinent to us or in some to tedious flatteries of persons that we have never heard of, if I have done ill, I craue pardon, for sure I did it for the best. But if anie being studious of the Italian would for his better understanding compare them, the first sixe bookes, save a litle of the third, will stand him in steed.

(‘A Preface’)

In the case of Carew's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, more clearly than in any other translation from the Italian, the importance given to the translation not as a replacement for the original but as an aid in the learning of a foreign language is most visible, and this possible interpretation for the purpose of the translation cannot be underestimated. It is only unfortunate that Hunt printed the wrong Italian text: while the English poet used, with very little doubt, the Bonná edition of 1581, the printer used the Osanna edition, which would be later used by Fairfax for his own translation¹¹. The mistake is, obviously, consequential, because it renders the side-by-side comparison of the texts much more difficult and confusing than it would have otherwise been; and it is, perhaps, indicative of a certain hurry on the publisher's part, or even of a degree of confusion regarding Tasso's text – probably born out of similar uncertainty towards the poem in Italy itself, where it was published in a number of pirated (or semi-pirated) editions without the author's consent.

The same emphasis seen in Carew, of employing translation as a means to improve the knowledge of a foreign language, is also visible in Tofte, although, whereas in the

¹¹ Indication of the different versions of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* used by the translators can first be found in their translation of Tasso's line '[v]agliami tua ragion, sì ch'io ridica' (I, XXXVI, 3) in the 1581 Bonná version, used by Carew who translates '[a]fford thy reasons helpe that I may shoue'. The 1584 Osanna edition of the poem, conversely, has '[v]agliami tua virtù, sì ch'io ridica' and this latter version seems the one used by Fairfax, who writes 'O let thy vertuous might auaille me soe'. The same situation is found at the end of the following stanza (I, XXXVII, 8), when Carew, following the Bonná edition, writes that Clotareo 'nought might want, possess a royall name', for the Italian 'se nulla manca, è il nome regio'. Fairfax, conversely, has 'hardie knight, isprong of princes blood', according to the Osanna version which substitutes 'nome' with 'sanguie': 'se nulla manca, è il sangue regio'. Both translators, in this instance, also make a translation mistake: in Tasso Clotareo *lacks* a royal name or royal blood, whereas in both English versions he is endowed with them. Also see Dodge 1929 and Bullock 1930.

former's case this emphasis is public-oriented (aiming at improving knowledge of Italian among its readers), in the latter it seems directed at self-improvement, and thus takes the form of translation exercises. This finds confirmation in a number of facts: first of all, both tales *resemble* translation exercises – Tofte chose two short, self-contained stories, one of which he could even have found in the Table of '[t]he Principal Tales in Orlando Furioso that may be read by themselves' appended to Harington's rich edition –; secondly, Tofte clearly presented the context, taking care of reproducing not only canto and stanza numbers but even the first line in the Italian, for an easy location of the original within the larger poem (and in stark contrast to other partial translations, such as Beverley's or Whetstone's); thirdly, Tofte privileges accuracy of translation over clarity, as shown by a few examples in the 'First Tale'¹². Finally, further support to this hypothesis is given by an extra-literary, but nevertheless extremely significant, element, the printer's note prefacing the *Two Tales*, which qualifies the translation as one made 'for his owne priuate exercise':

Gentlemen, these two Tales translated out of ARIOSTO, and the other Stanzies following, were not done by this Translator, to compare (as it were) with master HARRINGTONS verses (for he acknowledgeth himselfe euery way his inferiour) but for his owne priuate exercise, and at the earnest intreatie of some gentlemen his friends, all which he did in the yeere 1592. he [*sic*] being then in Italie.

(Printer's Note)

Beside the confirmation that the version was done as a translation exercise, the note is interesting also for its immediate positing of a contrast, effected through a close comparison, between the two English *Furiosi*¹³ – the explicit denial of the printer only serves to attract further attention to the inevitable comparison –, as well as for that mention of an 'earnest intreatie of some gentlemen his friends'. Although it is only possible to speculate, it is difficult not to fantasise on a conversation, with Harington's newly published *Furioso* as its main subject, between the two Italianists, Tofte and Daniel, during their meeting in Italy in 1591; and that the former's work was inspired and spurred by the latter, as an attempt aimed at emulating or ameliorating – but certainly vying with – the first rendition of the poem.

¹² See Chapter Three, p. 176.

¹³ Glyn Pursglove, analysing the phrasing of the titlepage of Tofte's Boiardo ('done into English Heroicall Verse'), finds, in it, an echo of Harington's title, *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse*, thus confirming the possibility of Tofte's knowledge of Harington (Pursglove 1984: 117). This knowledge is certain by the time of his publication of *Ariosto's Satyres* (in which he quotes from Harington's translation).

Chapter One

The Misrepresentation of Women in Sir John Harington's *Orlando Furioso* in *English Heroical Verse*

Baptised in 1560, Sir John Harington¹⁴ had the privilege of having Queen Elizabeth herself as his godmother, an honour bestowed upon the family as a recognition of the loyalty of the Haringtons during Elizabeth's imprisonment in the Tower of London under Queen Mary's reign. A career at court was the objective of Sir John's life, and the times of forced absence from it, such as, for instance, the years of 'banishment' following the appearance of his translation of the Giocondo tale from Ariosto, were bitterly resented. His attempts to advance at court often 'involv[ed] sophisticated exploitation of the media of manuscript and print' (Scott-Warren 2004: 288), and the rich 1591 edition of the *Orlando Furioso* is testament to this. His search for patronage under both Elizabeth and James was, overall, unsuccessful, largely because of his reputation as a 'wit' and not as a serious writer, a reputation clearly intensified by the publication of works such as his punningly-entitled treatise on the flushing toilet, *A New Discourse of a Stale Subject, called the Metamorphosis of Ajax* (1596). He seems to have resigned to a life away from court only in the final years of his life, when he retired to his estate in Kelston, where he died in 1612.

The compositional circumstances of Sir John Harington's translation are as dubious as they are fascinating. The tradition maintains that, in the 1580s, he translated a portion of Ariosto's masterpiece, the tale of Giocondo included in canto XXVIII, and circulated it at Court: when it came to the hands of Elizabeth, the Queen proclaimed her disgust at the bawdiness of the story, considered as potentially corrupting for her ladies-in-waiting, and punished the author by confining him to his country estate in Kelston until the translation of the complete poem was produced (Rich 1940: 11). As Townsend Rich points out in his study of Harington, there is no reason not to believe the legend, both because Harington himself wrote that his

¹⁴ Although Harington had not been knighted yet by the time he published his *Orlando Furioso* (the rank was bestowed upon him only in 1599), he is referred to with his title – throughout this thesis and in current criticism – to avoid confusion between him and his father, John Harington of Stepney.

Orlando Furioso was the result of a punishment by the Queen¹⁵, and because canto XXVIII seems the least complex book of the poem as far as certain poetic devices, in particular alliteration, are concerned, and this would demonstrate a development – a sort of gradual refinement – in the composition of the poem.

The translation, despite being notably shorter than the original in the body of the text (Morini's statistical count has shown that Harington maintains only, approximately, 85% of the original octaves; Morini 2006: 103), is, however, accompanied by a wealth of extra-textual material: beautiful engravings that render Harington's work one of the richest books of the time, as well as an elaborate critical apparatus, containing, among other sections, an allegory of the poem and a 'Preface, or rather a Briefe Apologie of Poetrie, and of the Author and Translator', heavily inspired by the commentaries on the *Furioso* circulating in Italy in the decades after the poem was published, and in particular by the 1549 *Spositione Sopra l'Orlando Furioso* by Simone Fornari¹⁶.

The question of Haringtonian criticism is particularly complex: perhaps because of the popularity of his translation, the work has been studied and discussed by critics without necessarily knowing Ariosto's original; in other words, the translation has been read, more often than not, as an original poem and not as the rendition of a foreign work¹⁷. This attitude has led to serious misunderstandings as to the true value of the poem, and Ben Jonson's famous *monitum* recorded by William Drummond, that 'John Haringtones Ariosto, under all translations was the worst' (Jonson 1925: 133), corroborated by F.O. Matthiessen's softer remark that 'Harington's Ariosto neither suggest[s] the qualities of the original, nor possess[es] exceptional poetic merit in compensation' (Matthiessen 1931: 5), has been forgotten in favour of enthusiastic celebrations of the work, ranging from McNulty's comment that '[e]ven in an age famous for translation Sir John Harington's *Orlando Furioso* in English Heroical

¹⁵ 'The whole work being enjoined me as a penance by that Saint, nay, rather goddess, whose service I am only devoted unto', 'An Apology', *The Metamorphosis of Ajax*, 52 (quoted in Rich 1940: 23).

¹⁶ Townsend Rich has convincingly demonstrated that Harington used Simone Fornari's *La Spositione sopra L'Orlando Furioso*, concluding that '[o]ne can be as definite as to say that practically all of Sir John's notes came from Fornari's *Spositione*, with the exception of his own chatty comments and illustratory tales.' (Rich 1940: 148).

¹⁷ Even Morini admits that 'under several aspects, it was more Harington's work than Ariosto's – the literary feat of a *cavaliere* who sought preferment at Elizabeth's court and infused a lot of himself in his translation, notes, and commentaries. Fairfax and Carew, on the contrary, are translators in the 'modern', humanistic sense of the word: and their invisibility as translators may be the very reason why, though Fairfax's Tasso went into many editions after 1600, both translators of the *Liberata* enjoyed less modern popularity, and continue to receive less critical attention, than their illustrious predecessor.' (Morini 2006: 119).

Verse stands out from its honoured fellows' (McNulty 1972: IX) to Peter France's 'Harington's translation is not merely dashing but precise, shadowing the inflections of the original with an attentiveness and intelligence few later translators have matched' (France 2000: 481).

Most critics talk of a supposed fidelity of spirit that even the most superficial look reveals to be unfounded. Glaringly misreading the text, most ignore Harington's agenda towards women; this, unfortunately, happens even in the most recent criticism. For instance, Massimiliano Morini devotes a chapter to Harington, mentioning his treatment of women only once, in less than a paragraph, and in an over-simplistic way:

[S]ometimes Harington strikes a misogynist chord which is typical of his age: when Orlando sees Angelica's love for Medoro carved on the bark of trees, Harington writes that 'she, to bost of that was her shame, / Vsd oft to write hers and *Medoros* name' (Harington, 1591, XXIII. 78), where 'bost' and 'her shame' are wholly his own. But on the whole, neither the notes nor the interpolations are as many as could be expected.

(Morini 2006: 112-113)

The example chosen by Morini, replicating Rich's comment that Harington's misogyny 'reflect[s] a literary trend of his time' (Rich 1940: 108) is certainly not the most representative of Harington's misogyny, of which several more informative instances will be considered and analysed at length in the course of this chapter; in addition, his conclusive statement is extraordinarily imprecise, and needs to be redressed¹⁸.

Even more strikingly, Jane Everson's 2005 article on Harington's modifications and omissions first states, analysing the translation in general, that 'his rendering of Ariosto's stanzas [is] often both wonderfully precise and *sensitive to tone* [emphasis added]' (Everson 2005: 645), and then, studying, specifically, the omissions, admits the need to investigate the quality and reasons of these. As will be exhaustively studied in this chapter, the tone of the original (especially the irony) is, conversely, more often than not missed in Harington, as proven by other critics, such as Daniel Javitch, whose study of the translation concentrates on the omission of Ariosto's irony (Javitch 1991: 142-144) and his consequent 'normalization' of the epic (*ibid.*: 156).

¹⁸ Conversely, Morini finds Fairfax misogynist: '[n]or is [Fairfax] free of that other Elizabethan (male) habit – the misogynistic comment. He interpolates one whenever the circumstances allow him to do so, but particularly in connection with Armida: in V. 65, for instance, he gratuitously calls her a witch' (Morini 2006: 133). Although it is true that the *Godfrey* is pervaded by a (very thin) veil of misogyny, so is Tasso's original: the misogyny is, thus, replicated, not invented (as it is in Harington). In addition, again, the example chosen is not very convincing, beside being imprecise (Armida *is*, of course, a witch, and Fairfax's definition of her as what she is can hardly be called 'gratuitous').

Everson expands on an exhaustive analysis of Harington's omissions concerning geography, and relegates his excision of important female figures to the final pages of her article, citing the single specific example of Isabella d'Este and providing a striking justification for Harington's choice:

He avoids mentioning Isabella d'Este by name, concentrating instead on her husband's victory at Fornovo, and praising her not for her virtues and achievements but for being a good wife [...]. The reasons for this omission [are connected] with a desire to avoid provoking the jealous wrath of the Queen, the only legitimate object of such lavish praise in the environment in which Harington is operating.

(Everson 2005: 656)

This reason seems hardly plausible, both because the *exemplum* of a foreign noblewoman would have been easily transformed into a praise of a corresponding English female patron or of the Queen herself, and because the exclusion of the praise of literary kings on the grounds of jealousy on the part of the author's own living king would automatically exclude from literature all positive mentions of any – fictitious or real – nobleman apart from the current rulers, an hypothesis against which literature itself revolts.

Everson's comment is also blotted by a serious mistake which is inexplicable if her profession of a careful line-by-line analysis of the translation against its original is to be believed: her statement that Ariosto's praise of the poetess Vittoria Colonna remains 'unchanged'¹⁹ (Everson 2005: 657). Everson concludes that

As Harington's version of the *Furioso* demonstrates, translation is an activity fraught with value judgements, cultural as well as linguistic, but surely dependent above all on empathy between author and translator, and translator and audience. It is a measure of Harington's genius that he was able to produce a version that satisfied an exacting patron and a sophisticated audience of courtiers four hundred years ago, and which continues today to offer such a lively and fluent approach to Ariosto's text.

(Everson 2005: 658)

It is exactly this notion of a supposed 'empathy between author and translator', as well as the long-held myth of the fidelity of Harington's translation, that this chapter wishes to challenge; and, in order to do so, the study will concentrate on the treatment of the female figures, the topic of the poem that the translator most visibly – and most deliberately – alters and silences.

¹⁹ As will be shown in the third section of this chapter, particularly on pp. 82-83, Harington's treatment of Vittoria Colonna can hardly be defined as remaining 'unchanged', and is, on the contrary, one of the most glaring examples of the translator's misogynistic attitude.

The categorisation of Ariosto's poem as proto-feminist is corroborated by the most authoritative Italian criticism of the past five decades. For instance, Mario Santoro – perhaps the critic who has written most exhaustively about this issue, devoting large sections of two of his major works specifically to the 'woman's question' –, writes about the centrality of this theme in Ariosto's mind, and, referring in particular to Rinaldo's attitude in the Ginevra episode²⁰, comments:

Nel discorso di Rinaldo il poeta traduceva e sperimentava un motivo fondamentale della sua cognizione del reale: il riconoscimento dei diritti della donna e della sua parità con l'uomo nella vita sociale. Egli così si faceva interprete e coscienza di un processo di affrancamento e di emancipazione della donna che, sotto la spinta della cultura umanistica, si sviluppò e maturò nel corso della civiltà rinascimentale.

[With Rinaldo's speech, the poet made explicit, and experimented with, a fundamental theme of his vision of the world: the recognition of women's rights and their equality with men in social life. He, thus, became an interpreter and embodied a consciousness of the process of liberation and emancipation of women which, spurred by Humanist culture, developed and matured in Renaissance society]

(Santoro 1973: 98)

[Il] problema dell'emancipazione della donna e del riconoscimento dei suoi diritti, della sua condizione e del suo destino, costituisce un motivo ricorrente nell'arco di tutto il poema.

[The issue of women's emancipation and of the recognition of women's rights, of their situation and their destiny, is a recurring theme throughout the poem].

(Santoro 1973: 113)

Indeed, the centrality of the 'woman's question' is evident in another work of Renaissance Italy, Baldassarre Castiglione's *Il libro del Cortegiano*, which appeared roughly in the same period as Ariosto's masterpiece (1528). Although the presence of women, as in Ariosto, is felt throughout Castiglione's work, of the four books composing the *Cortegiano* one (the third) is entirely centred on the figure of the court lady: it exposes arguments in favour and against women's worth, with the impression that 'misogynistic views do not carry the same weight as progressive ones' (Finucci 1992: 30). Valeria Finucci, in her book about the constructions of femininity in Castiglione and Ariosto, first admits the presence of misogynist traits in both authors, then writes that

Both authors layered their works with praise of contemporary women and gave sympathetic renderings of fictional female characters. As a result, *Il libro del Cortegiano* is often taken as an early feminist treatise and read as a quasi-historical representation of the position of women in Renaissance Italy. Similarly, Ariosto's lady knights are firmly placed within the pantheon of liberated, assertive females. The *Furioso* even opens with a modified Virgilian incipit in which women are added to the traditional pairing of men and arms (...). Finally, both

²⁰ See the discussion of the episode, pp. 62 ff.

Castiglione and Ariosto openly complain about the treatment of women in literature (...). I examine the construction of femininity in the *Cortegiano* and the *Furioso* precisely because Castiglione and Ariosto are open-minded toward women, because they give women positive roles, and because they have written some of the most celebrated passages in praise of this gender to appear before, during, or after the sixteenth century. It is precisely because they are perceived as protofeminists (although they are sometimes explicitly antifeminist) – as well as because they enjoy a canonical status – that they provide a rewarding forum for studying the role of cultural compromises in the formation of subjectivity.

(Finucci 1992: 13-14)

C. Salinari and C. Ricci take an even clearer stance:

Significativi e numerosi sono gli interventi sulla donna, che riflettono la particolare attenzione di Ariosto alla problematica femminile. Sono riflessioni caratterizzate da una posizione chiaramente filogina a favore della parità dei sessi, in polemica contro la violenza verso le donne e contro il maschilismo, e dal riconoscimento della sensibilità e dell'eccellenza artistica femminile; e del resto non si dimentichi che le donne costituiscono il pubblico e l'interlocutore privilegiato del poeta [...]. La simpatia per le donne non esclude, peraltro, anche le molte considerazioni sulle debolezze, la fragilità, gli errori, la volubilità del gentil sesso. Ma non si tratta, a nostro avviso, di residui di maschilismo o di misoginia, quanto della consapevolezza (che è in tutto il poema) di quale labirintica avventura sia la selva della vita, con i suoi vani sentieri e i suoi 'errori', che coinvolgono le donne come gli uomini, avvinti dalle loro passioni, cui è sempre fragile schermo lo scudo della ragione.

[The comments on women are significant and numerous, and they reflect Ariosto's special attention for the 'woman's question'. These are reflections characterised by a clearly philogynist position, in favour of equality between the sexes, against violence towards women and against misogyny, and by the recognition of women's artistic sensitivity and excellence. After all, let us not forget that women represent the audience and the interlocutors favoured by the poet (...). This high consideration for women does not exclude, though, the several comments on the sex's weakness, frailty, mistakes, inconstancy. But, in our opinion, these comments are not glimmers of male chauvinism or misogyny; rather, they represent the awareness (visible throughout the poem) that life is a maze-like adventure, with wrong paths leading to nowhere and 'mistakes', which involve men as well as women, preys to passion, against which reason is a most fragile shield].

(Salinari and Ricci 1990: 274)

This thesis agrees with Salinari and Ricci's arguments, and with the perception of Ariosto as proto-feminist; moreover, it strongly believes that it is *essential* to put the text firmly within its historical and cultural context. Katherine Henderson and Barbara McManus, writing on the proto-feminist pamphlet *Hic Mulier* (1620), point out that, although by the end of the pamphlet the female protagonist *retreats* from the strong feminist position presented at its beginning, 'the fact that such radical concepts were articulated at all in the Renaissance is in itself remarkable' (Henderson and McManus 1985: 31). Their comment can be borrowed, and the same point can be applied to the *Furioso*: the very presence of proto-feminist elements is, *per se*, a strong indication of the author's feminist inclination. However, this is only superficially acknowledged by

Finucci, who, concentrating on the eventual 'normalization' of some of the heroines²¹, only briefly admits (and never goes beyond this single statement) that 'although stable, normative subject positions are enforced at the end, it is the resistance detectable in the gaps that provides pleasure' (Finucci 1992: 24).

Ariosto's work is, overall, proto-feminist, but, of course, it also displays moments of ironic, light-hearted misogyny which are consonant with the general, 'smiling' tone of the work, while also reflecting the characteristic polyphony of the poem, with its plurality of voices and of perspectives. The fact that, throughout the poem, the philogyny prevails (and it does so by far) over the light-hearted misogyny confirms and leaves no doubt as to the proto-feminist interpretation of the poem.

Harington's treatment of women is altogether different: his intrinsic, deep-rooted misogyny is evident throughout the poem and can take several different forms, from simple displays of lesser respect towards Ariosto's heroines to more explicit antipathy. However, as Harington's work is a translation, the misogyny displayed in the English poem is almost exclusively noticeable when the translation is compared with the original version. Such a comparison reveals, for instance, that Harington does not abstain from misappropriating lines from Ariosto and attributing them meanings which were absent in the original version; this attitude, visible throughout the poem, is most often employed by Harington when Ariosto writes about women (be it his female knights, his other heroines or the women he addresses in his numerous apostrophes to readers), by easily shifting the perspective to reflect a male view, by adding gratuitous sarcasm, or by highlighting negative behaviour on the part of the heroines and concealing the positive. Since the simple realisation that Harington often introduces a misogynistic vein where the Italian text was completely void of any attack towards women is, alone, sufficient to suggest his inherent misogyny, it becomes obvious that it is only when the English text is read alongside its Italian original that these misogynistic traits become apparent and can be isolated and analysed; this kind of comparative research is even more needed because it has never been completed. Indeed, what is hitherto the most exhaustive study on Harington's

²¹ 'Ariosto portrays iconoclastic female characters and experiments with gender reversals, transvestism, and cross-dressing. Nonetheless, he too recontains disorder by reaffirming the need for alignment through normalization (marriage) or elimination (death or displacement to mythical lands) of the different female characters. To be sure, Castiglione and Ariosto are not ideologues bent on fostering women's status quo. Still, because of the genres they use, they need to end their narratives by reaffirming the values of their society.' (Finucci 1992: 16).

translation, Townsend Rich's 1940 analysis of Sir John's work, does recognise the English poet's negative treatment of women, stating that 'Sir John took every opportunity to attack the opposite sex' (Rich 1940: 108), but attributes this habit to 'a literary trend of his time' (*ibid.*), finally concluding that

Harington's attacks on women in his translation of the *Orlando Furioso* do not indicate any misogynistic tendencies in him; they reflect satirically one of the literary tastes of the period. They also show that Harington *maintained his sense of humor* while translating Ariosto [emphasis added].

(Rich 1940: 124)

However, Rich only devotes a few pages to the subject, with a limited selection of examples in which the comparative element is missing entirely; in addition, there is no sense in Rich that the misogyny on the part of Harington, added independently of Ariosto, renders the translation less correct, less acceptable. Whilst it might be true that certain attacks on women could be found entertaining by his courtly readership (especially those done through sarcasm), this is no justification for the *addition* of the misogyny – and the same touch of humour could have been more easily obtained by simply maintaining the great irony of the Italian text, which, conversely, often disappears in the translation, contrary to what Rich states and as will be demonstrated below. Other critics, such as Barbara Reynolds in a short article and B. Burton in an unpublished thesis, both state, very succinctly, that Harington increases the moralisations and the misogyny, but do not elaborate on the issue beyond the single statements²². Finally, a recent critic, Pamela Benson, states the opposite, maintaining that Harington's misogyny is, in fact, what she calls 'pro-feminism' (defined as the 'benign appreciation of women's abilities', especially with reference to the domestic sphere; Benson 1997: 44), inserting it within a tradition of works which 'offered sentimental images of women displaying traditional feminine virtues rather than offering a reasoned philosophical defense' (*ibid.*: 47) and thus attributing it to a desire for a defence of women, and not *vice versa*. However, the critic develops her ideas in a concise article, where examples are necessarily selective; in addition, these are rarely supported by quotations from the text (which are never bilingual), are not

²² Burton compiles a list of Harington's compressions and additions, concluding that these are influenced by 'personal predilections and prejudices' (Burton 1954: 27), while Reynolds notes that Harington 'non solo omette, anche aggiunge, aumentando e caricando specialmente i commenti moraleggianti ed i biasimi delle donne' ('he does not simply omit, but he also adds, increasing especially the moralising comments and the misogyny', Reynolds 1977: 78).

sufficiently detailed, and, in general, do not seem to offer any definitive proof, as will be discovered below.

For all these reasons, a more complete investigation is needed, which is not limited to selective quotation but which attempts to be exhaustive, and is expanded to include all typologies of women – from characters to readers – whose presence is felt in the epic poem.

The Warrior Heroines

Considering that Harington is less likely to accept pro-active, ‘proto-feminist’ models of women, whose independency endangers the traditional gender hierarchy, the character of the poem who bears the heaviest consequences of his misogynistic attitude is, naturally, Bradamante, the poem’s foremost female knight and the originator of the Estense family, to whom the poem is dedicated. Harington’s negative treatment of the warrior is immediately noticeable from her first appearance, where Ariosto writes that the yet unknown champion of the Pagan Sacripante

[S]timando avere assai di quel conflitto,
non si curò di rinovar la guerra;
ma dove per la selva è il camin dritto,
correndo a tutta briglia si disserra.

[Decided (s)he had had enough of this skirmish and felt no need to carry it further. So (s)he pulled away and rode off at a fast gallop along the path which ran straight through the forest]
(I, LXIV, 3-6)

hinting with the use of the verb ‘(non) curarsi’ a certain, confident sense of superiority on Bradamante’s part, almost as if she did not want to waste her extraordinary valour, of which she is fully conscious, in a now meaningless duel. Harington, on the contrary, writes that the knight

Expecting in this fight no more renowne,
Determin’d not the battell to renew.
But by the way that leadeth from the towne,
The first appointed journey doth pursew.

(I, LXIV, 3-6)

The mere change of the governing verb (the translation of the surrounding lines is rather faithful) has subtle, but firm, consequences, suggesting, as it does, that the heroine, perhaps for fear or cowardice, was relieved to abandon the duel and did not intend to start it again. Although it is true that Harington simply states that Bradamante decided not to renew the duel, and does not explicitly mention fear, cowardice or even relief, upon comparing the verb with its Italian counterpart it becomes clear that ‘determin’d’ is far more neutral than ‘non si curò’: the latter verb is so specific that readers are not allowed to intend the sentence as having any other meaning than that of the heroine being *too good* to waste time with the defeated opponent; the English version, by merely opening up the range of possible meanings that its governing verb produces, presents an alternative – and renders Bradamante susceptible to being viewed both as the invincible warrior who defeats and proceeds onwards, and as the warrior who is relieved to abandon with impunity a duel which she was, perhaps, fortunate to win.

It becomes clear that it is essential to analyse both texts side by side, as what may seem an innocuous passage in Harington when read independently reveals itself to hide a misogynistic vein within when it is compared to its original version. For instance, when Bradamante is, shortly after, named for the first time (by Angelica explaining to the defeated knight, Sacripante, who his victor was), Harington writes:

Of passing strength, but of more passing hew,
And *Bradamant*, this damsell faire is named,
She was the wight, whose meeting you may rew,
And all your life hereafter be ashamed.

(I, LXX, 1-4)

whereas Ariosto’s passage is more complimentary:

Ella è gagliarda, et è più bella molto;
né il suo famoso nome anco t’ascondo:
fu Bradamante quella che t’ha tolto
quanto onor mai tu guadagnasti al mondo.

[She is brave, but, more than that, she is beautiful. Her name is famous and I shall keep it from you no longer: it is Bradamante who has stripped you of all the honours you have won hitherto]

(I, LXX, 1-4)

In the Italian, the adjective ‘gagliardo’, normally employed in reference to male characters, is so powerful as to sound almost awkward in its feminine ending;

however, it is commanding, and at the same time its manliness is toned down by the addition of 'beautiful' in the superlative. The result of the Ariostean line is to present Bradamante as having the best of both worlds, being as valiant as the most courageous knight, and as beautiful as the fairest lady. She is also presented as if her reputation precedes her: the use of the adjective/noun pair 'famoso nome', omitted by Harington, precedes by one line the revelation of her actual name; equally powerful is the concluding line, describing as it does her capacity to annihilate a lifetime of victories with just one, magnificent defeat. The translator's presentation is far simpler, simply stating the knight's strength and beauty, which readers must believe out of trust, since no mention of her reputation or of her fame is reproduced. In addition, the adjective chosen by Harington, 'passing', is rather ambiguous: although in this context it should have the meaning of 'surpassing, pre-eminent' (*OED*'s third meaning), its other sense of 'fleeting, ephemeral' (*OED*, 2a) is looming in the background, with its obvious negative connotations. It cannot even be excluded that Harington chose the complex adjective exactly with this purpose, as a clever pun in his translation. In the new light shed by the analysis of Harington's translation compared to the original text, then, it becomes clear that Harington's description, which, if read on its own, seems nothing but complimentary towards the heroine, is now revealed as an understatement.

A possible reason for Harington's dislike of Bradamante can be found in and linked to what seems to be his set of values, which are diametrically different from Ariosto's, as visible in the first complete presentation of the heroine. Ariosto's introduction is concentrated in just one stanza, characterised, however, by a very precise scheme:

Io parlo di quella inclita donzella,
 per cui re Sacripante in terra giacque,
 che di questo signor degna sorella,
 del duca Amone e di Beatrice nacque.
 La gran possanza e il molto ardir di quella
 non meno a Carlo e tutta Francia piacque
 (che più d'un paragon ne vide saldo),
 che 'l lodato valor del buon Rinaldo.

[I mean that remarkable maiden who swept King Sacripant to the ground; she was a worthy sister to the paladin, born of the same parents – duke Aymon, that is, and Beatrice his wife. Her great strength and courage made her as popular with Charles and all the French as did the much-applauded valour of Rinaldo (and many, indeed, had been the occasions for comparison)]

(II, xxxi)

The pattern consists of an initial presentation (the reprise of the incident of Sacripante's defeat, which acts as a connection – welcome in a poem distinctive exactly because of its endless subplots and knotted episodes – of this passage with the earlier episode), Bradamante's familiar *milieu* (which presents her in relation to her parents and her brother and fellow knight Rinaldo), and finally a lengthy praise of her most valuable virtues, her great strength and courage. These are both very masculine qualities, which prompt Ariosto to suggest a (successful) comparison with Rinaldo and to expand on this, writing that the knights of France and Spain have contrasted the two knights and favoured the woman, having had certain proof ('paragon saldo') of her qualities. On the contrary, Harington's version is extremely different:

I meane the noble damsell *Bradamant*,
 Of *Ammon* daughter, and dame *Beatrice*,
 In whose rare mind no noble part did want,
 So full of value, and so void of vice,
 King *Charles* and *France* of her might rightly vaunt,
 So chaste, so faire, so faithfull and so wise,
 And in the feates of armes of so great fame,
 A man might guesse by that of whence she came.

(II, xxxi)

The beginning of Harington's presentation lacks the most comical details regarding Sacripante's unhorsing: in Ariosto, the use of the sentence 'inclita donzella / per cui Re Sacripante in terra giacque' is source of great humour, because readers would normally expect a king to be defeated – and so prosaically – for love or in defence of a lady, certainly not because he *has been* defeated by the lady herself. Interestingly, the first praise reserved for the heroine is only that of her 'rare mind'. Ariosto's celebration of her physical prowess and courage is omitted; even more significantly, Harington does not ignore the pride of Spain and France for the knight, but attributes this pride to the fact that she is 'so chaste, so faire, so faithfull and so wise'. This restriction is essential, because Harington relegates the martial qualities of the heroine to a minor position (a passing mention in line 7); his praises of her appearance and of her character (which, incidentally, would be customary for any girl of her social status), reveal a serious misreading of the Italian text and distort the translation. There is no question that, throughout the poem, Ariosto's Bradamante displays those same qualities of chastity, faithfulness, wisdom and beauty that Harington anticipates here; however, Ariosto presents her first and foremost as a warrior, and her crucial, initial

presentation to the reader rotates exclusively around her martial virtues. Perhaps it is this focus on the military side of the heroine that causes Harington's antipathy: the way in which he prioritises Bradamante's qualities, altogether differently to Ariosto, is revealing of his uneasiness with the warrior and preference for the woman.

Harington's sensitivity towards discussing the heroine's virtues appears again later in the same canto. When translating her reaction whilst hearing the latest news about her betrothed Ruggiero, Harington writes that Bradamante 'for feare [...] looketh pale' (II, LIX, 4), which is an addition created entirely by the English poet, as Ariosto presents his heroine as bravely listening without showing any emotions, in accordance with the depiction, throughout the rest of the poem, of Bradamante as a very strong character. Harington seems, in this instance, to be intent on endowing Bradamante with what he would consider as typically feminine behaviour, ignoring the fact that the Italian Bradamante does not display any signs of weakness. In the following stanza there is a similar attitude: a sentence in which Ariosto presents Bradamante ceasing to listen to her source of information once she is satisfied with the story and certain that Ruggiero is well ('e poi ch'al fin le parve esserne chiara', 'when at last the story seemed all clear', II, LX, 1) is transformed by Harington into a slightly unflattering 'when at the last the whole she understood' (II, LX, 1): in the Italian version the idea of being satisfied with the interlocutor's explanations presents the heroine as active, in control of the situation, of her emotions and of the speaker; in the English version, thanks to the change of the main verb, she is decidedly more passive, if not, worryingly, intellectually unreceptive.

A parallel episode can be found in the sorceress Melissa's third-canto elucidation of Bradamante's progeny in Merlin's cave. In the Italian original, the woman coolly witnesses the ghosts of her descendants parade past her eyes, listening carefully to Melissa's exposition and waiting until the sorceress has finished before exposing her doubts. In stanza XXIV, Harington depicts her, unsurprisingly, according to the more feminine conduct that he expects of her:

When *Bradamant* to feare did straight begin,
Her heart was cold, her colour waxed pall.

(III, XXIV, 5-6)

White with fear, terrified by the spirits, there is little valour or courage left in what should be one of the most important elements of the Christian camp; there is no

equivalent of these lines in the Italian original, as Ariosto chooses not to show Bradamante's feelings and presents her, at the end of the exposition, as perfectly composed and confident.

Even the similes that Harington uses in reference to the heroine are often derogatory. One such example is his insertion of a comparison, not present in Ariosto's text, saying that Bradamante 'such amorous passions feeles / she followeth like a spannell at his heeles' (II, LXVIII, 7-8). Despite Harington's well-known passion for this breed of dog, comparing Ariosto's most courageous heroine with the submissive animal *par excellence*, and hinting at the same time at the slavish quality of her passion for Ruggiero (which leads her to follow blindly a betrayer, who will shortly try to kill her, only because he carries news of her betrothed), does not seem a great sign of respect; Ariosto's version is, conversely, exceptionally neutral: 'e la figlia del duca di Dordona / gli è sempre dietro, e mai non l'abbandona' ('Duke Aymon's daughter kept steadily behind him and never abandoned him', LXVIII, 7-8); if anything, the idea given by the sentence 'gli è sempre dietro' is that of an implacable chaser, not satisfied until the prey is caught.

It is essential to realise the gratuitousness of some of Harington's modifications, an excellent example of which is provided in the passage describing Bradamante and Melissa's ride. Ariosto describes Melissa instructing the heroine on the stratagems that the latter would need to employ to save Ruggiero, adding, beautifully, how serenely and harmoniously the two women proceed, despite the great difficulties of their path:

E riuscìro in un burrone ascoso
tra monti inaccessibili alle genti;
e tutto 'l dì senza pigliar riposo
saliron balze e traversâr torrenti.
E perché men l'andar fosse noioso,
di piacevoli e bei ragionamenti
di quel che fu più conferir soave,
l'aspro camin facean parer men grave.

[They emerged in a ravine hidden amid mountains impossible of access; and all day they climbed hillsides and crossed torrents, never stopping for rest. And, to relieve the monotony of their journey and attenuate the difficulties of their path, they engaged in pleasant conversation, broaching whatever subjects were most agreeable to them]

(III, LXV)

The initial description of the inaccessibility of the road renders the two women's successful navigation of the route even more remarkable; Ariosto's line 'monti

inaccessibili alle genti' almost indicates the superhuman quality of the characters, who accomplish feats normally impossible for common people ('genti'). The peacefulness of the image is further softened by the adjectives Ariosto uses – 'piacevoli', 'bei', 'soave' within just two lines in the Italian version –; these, however, do not serve the purpose of dismissing the women's achievement, but rather of displaying the stoic nature of Bradamante and Melissa, oblivious to the difficulties of the mission exactly because they are so deeply concentrated on its success. Conversely, Harington's version presents the completely unwarranted image of the two ladies in great difficulty and struggling to complete their ride:

The way they went was darke and unaccessible,
 By secret vaults and hollowes of the hill,
 To find it out had bene a thing impossible,
 But with a guide of knowledge great and skill:
 At last they came unto a path more passible,
 By which they cease not to ascend
 [...]

And while that up this hill they slowly stalke,
 With pausing panting oft, and taking wind,
 To make less wearie seeme their wearie walke,
Melyssa still doth store of matter find,
 And now of this, and then of that doth talke.

(III, LIII, 1-6; LIV, 1-5)

The crossing is equally difficult, the way equally inaccessible; but, unlike in Ariosto, in Harington the women only manage to complete the journey when they find an easier, alternative option (LIII, 5). The weakness of their attempt is stressed by the use of the adverb 'slowly' (LIV, 1; contrasted by the third line in Ariosto, which conversely suggests that the women rapidly completed the effort), by the repetition of the adjective 'wearie' (LIV, 3) and is epitomised by the line '[w]ith pausing panting oft, and taking wind'. This contrasts heavily with the original text, which explicitly states that the women never stopped to rest, because of the relative ease with which these exceptional characters completed the crossing, united with the urgency of the mission, which did not allow for pauses. There seems to be no reason for Harington's changes, with the exception that the translator found his version more plausible for a couple of women; once again, however, he misreads the Ariostean text, which never shows gender inferiority, and, by doing this, distorts his translation.

Another exemplification of the gratuitousness of Harington's additions, apparently more trivial because it is limited only to an inconsequential parenthetical sentence, but

nevertheless significant for its revelation of the translator's habitual use of misogynistic *sententiae*, can be found much later, in canto XXIII. Immediately after Bradamante's commendation of her servant Ippalca as 'secret, wise, and trew', the translator inserts, between parentheses, a sentence which reads 'a praise of which we women seld can bost' (XX, 4). This comment, absent in the original, seems even more inappropriate and completely out of character when uttered by Bradamante, who is the embodiment of those qualities; more importantly, it is entirely gratuitous.

The episode of Brunello, for whom Bradamante has been searching in order to obtain from him the magic ring that renders its wearer invisible, presents a few interesting points. When describing Bradamante's first self-presentation to the man Ariosto writes an excellent

[E] simula ugualmente
e patria e stirpe e setta e nome e sesso

[(she) dissimulate(s) just as well in her account of her nation, family, religion, name, and sex]
(III, LXXVI, 6-7),

giving particular emphasis to her feigning a different sex thanks to the prominent end of line position of the noun 'sesso'. Harington's is a faithful translation, but reduces greatly Ariosto's polysyndeton and, failing to give importance to the term 'sex' by placing it at the end of the line, misses the humour of the Italian version:

[She] doth denie
Her countrey, stocke and name, and sex and kinne

(III, LXII, 5-6)

Slight nuances of tone are inevitably lost in any translation; however, Harington only rarely manages to compensate for them. Another instance is to be found in the fourth canto; when Bradamante is about to kill Brunello, the English poet merely states that she

[T]hought her fittest time drew very neare,
To take the ring, and make Brunello die.

(IV, IX, 5-6)

In Ariosto, the same concept is expressed with the lines

[Q]uivi la donna esser conosce l'ora

di tor l'anello e far che Brunel mora.

[Now was the time, the damsel (knew), to take the ring and to dispatch Brunello]
(IV, XIII, 7-8)

Despite the literal translation of the concluding line by Harington, the change of the governing verb (from 'conosce' to 'thought') is consequential. In Ariosto, in fact, the sentence 'conosce esser l'ora' gives far more clearly the idea of inevitability, as if Bradamante were *destined* to complete the killing of Brunello, and were simply awaiting divine orders to that effect; Harington, by preferring 'thought' to 'knew', entirely misses this implication.

Another example of the differing qualities with which the two poets endow their Bradamantes can be seen in the passage showing the character about to kill the magician Atlante. Harington tells his readers that

To strike his head from shoulders she prepared,
Till she was mov'd to mercy with his teares,
And with the sight of white and hoary haires.
(IV, XIX, 6-8)

These emotions obviously imply a relative weakness on her part, a weakness which is excusable, even to be expected, in a woman, but not in a knight: it is sufficient to imagine the incredulous reaction that readers would inevitably have upon reading that a male/'true' knight chose to spare an evil character only because he had been moved by the victim's (false) tears. In Ariosto, as usual, the pattern is completely different. He says that Bradamante, upon noticing Atlante's old age,

Disegnando levargli ella la testa,
alza la man vittoriosa in fretta,
ma poi che 'l viso mira, il colpo arresta,
quasi sdegnando sì bassa vendetta
[Quickly she raised her victorious arm, for she proposed to sever his head; but one look at his face and she held back, as though disdaining so cheap a vengeance]
(IV, XXVII, 1-4)

In the original lines, Ariosto points out the endless magnanimity of a heroine well aware of her total and absolute power over her victim, whom she chooses to grace, like a true king or queen: a reading of Bradamante that, as Jane Everson has noted, the

author borrows from Cieco da Ferrara's 1509 *Mambriano*²³, and which makes Ariosto's Bradamante 'the prominent member of the dynastic duo' (consisting of her and Ruggiero; Everson 2001: 342). Obviously, this majestic deed would be highly praised in a male hero as well; the resulting image, in the Italian *Furioso*, is that of an even more complete Bradamante; in the English one, that of a lady who dreams of being a knight but is too easily 'mov'd to mercy', unable to escape her typically feminine weaknesses.

A third example of Harington's resolute stress on the feminine virtues of the knight as opposed to her more specific, but truer, martial qualities is given later on, in the description of a meeting between Bradamante and her king, Charlemagne. When Ariosto talks generally of 'rispetto' when the heroine approaches Charlemagne in court (XLIV, LXVIII, 4), Harington limits it heavily saying that she, 'reiecting womanly respect, / Came vnto *Charles*' (XLIV, LXV, 4-5). Whereas Ariosto's 'respect' is to be intended as the normal respect due to the king by any of his knights, the addition of 'womanly' on the part of Harington limits and qualifies it, and is once again proof of Harington's prioritisation of the woman before the warrior. In the same way, a few stanzas earlier Harington chose not to record Bradamante's very human, irreverent burst of anger towards her parents, who had decided to marry her to Leon: comparing them with her brother Rinaldo, who wants her to be spouse of her beloved Ruggiero, Ariosto's character comments comically 'né gli ha la troppa età tolto il cervello' [to Rinaldo] ('whose brain has not been addled by surplus years', XLVI, 4), thus hinting that her parents *have* been addled by senility. The line, apart from providing a source of laughter for its extremely unpoetic, colloquial tone, also demonstrates Bradamante's secure, independent character, which, albeit slightly disobedient, is welcomed by the readers as a display of great humanity; even this disobedience is, however, comprehensible and reasonable, because, in the economy of the story, the heroine *cannot* marry Leon, if the Estense dynasty is to be born out of her union with Ruggiero. Harington, by omitting the passage entirely, seems to disregard deliberately Bradamante's independent side, and, in doing so, diminishes the complexity of her character greatly.

²³ In the *Mambriano*, another work produced within the Este court, Bradamante is 'a warrior and leader of armies, but also displays gifts of statesmanship and the generosity of a ruler, in her treatment of prisoners and concern for the besieged people of Montalbano' (Everson 2001: 342). The definition of 'generous ruler' as a quality visible in her treatment of prisoners is an attribution which applies perfectly, in this circumstance, also to the development of the character-Bradamante in Ariosto.

As seen above, Bradamante magnanimously spares the wizard Atlante, is able to free the prisoners of his castle (which included Ruggiero), and is consequently reunited with him. However, in the English poem, the reunion is characterised by the assertion that, upon embracing her lover again, the heroine bursts out crying (IV, XXXII). In the Italian version, Bradamante is never prone to such human weaknesses, and the meeting with her lover is obviously a source of great joy on her part, but is also free of tears. Similarly, after the reunion of the two lovers, Ariosto proceeds with the narration of how the Hippogriff escapes – more than once – first Bradamante, and then all of the other honoured knights who vainly attempt to catch him (stanzas XLIII-XLIV). Harington, starting one of his increasingly synthesising processes, only leaves in his translation that the winged horse teases the heroine (stanza XXXIII), and presents her as unable to control him – ultimately allowing him to escape with Ruggiero on his back –, whilst not expanding this fault to the other (male) knights.

The marriage proposal of Ruggiero and Bradamante is, originally, made by the latter in the Italian text, rather than by the male knight. Ariosto's Bradamante is extraordinarily brave in taking the initiative for the proposal, traditionally reserved to the male party, and reveals herself to be even stronger when she dares to include some conditions *sine qua non* she will marry Ruggiero:

[D]ice a Ruggier, se a dar gli ultimi frutti
lei non vuol sempre aver dura e selvaggia,
la faccia domandar per buoni mezzi
al padre Amon: ma prima si battezzi.

[Now she suggested to Ruggiero that if he was not to find her forever restive and stubborn about giving him the ultimate fruits, he should ask her father Aymon, in due form, for her hand – (but first, he must get baptised)]

(XXII, XXXIV, 5-8)

The conclusion of the heroine's 'request of being married' with a categorical 'ma prima si battezzi', rendered even stronger by the powerful caesura as well as by the sudden shift of syntax – what was a simple, descriptive line suddenly becomes an imperative in the third person – is in every sense similar to the modern stream of consciousness. Harington misses this nuance completely, translating the passage in its entirety but never varying its style and thus failing to avoid a flat, descriptive tone throughout:

[S]he his loves heate will asswage

And unto him her selfe in wedlocke bind,
 And spend with him all her ensuing age,
 If to be christened first he were content,
 And afterwards to aske her friends consent.

(XXII, xxvi, 4-8)

Harington's Bradamante still is, within the couple, the one who proposes, but in her words there are no imperatives, no commands: she seems to beg Ruggiero to convert ('If to be christened first he were *content*'; emphases added), rather than demand the conversion as a prerequisite before marrying. The weaker quality of the English line is also shown by the fact that neither the line itself nor the crucial verb 'christened' are located in a prominent position, whereas Ariosto had placed his 'battezzi' not only at the end of the line, but also at the end of the whole stanza, and consequently at the centre of his readers' attention. In the same way that the English version of the line is weaker, so is that of the heroine: the English Bradamante is less in control and much more submissive than her original model.

Harington also weakens Ariosto's characterisation of Bradamante by virtually erasing her role in the Ricciardetto and Fiordispina episode. When Bradamante and Ruggiero encounter in the forest a girl who reveals, in tears, the unfortunate fate of Ricciardetto, condemned to death for love of Fiordispina, the original text shows a great focus on the heroine, consistently at the centre of the action and presented as the decision-maker; so much so that Ariosto's Ruggiero does not initiate the action, but follows, rather passively, Bradamante's vibrant desire to help the innocent boy:

Bradamante ode, e par ch'assai le preme
 questa novella, e molto il cor l'annoï;
 né par che men per quel dannato tema,
 che se fosse uno dei fratello suoi.
 [...]

Ruggiero, avendo il cor benigno scorto
 De la sua donna e la pietosa cura,
 senti tutto infiammarsi di desire
 di non lasciare il giovine morire.

[As Bradamant listened, she appeared to be much disturbed by this story, and greatly upset; she seemed as concerned over the condemned man's fate as if he were a brother of hers (...). Ruggiero, noticing his lady's kindly disposition, her pity and concern, was fired with eagerness to prevent the youth from dying]

(XXII, XLII, 1-4; XLIII, 5-8)

Ruggiero is spurred into action only by the heroine's 'benign heart', which in turn enflames his own; the lines are extremely flattering towards Bradamante, presented

here as a charismatic ambassador of human sympathy. Harington, instead, relegates Bradamante to a secondary role and focuses on Ruggiero, who, upon sensing Bradamante's pity, 'much commends her noble mind' (XXXVI, 1). The use of the verb 'commends' seems to indicate an almost patronising attitude on the part of Ruggiero, as if Bradamante had done her part in feeling moved by the story and could now be put aside, leaving the action to the better hands of the male knight – who, indeed, in Harington is the only character to speak and console the mourning girl:

Tush (quoth *Rogero*) cease to be afraid.
[...]

These comfortable words *Rogero* spake,
With that his warlike looke and manly show
Did cause her heart of grace forthwith to take.

(XXII, XXXVI, 6; XXXVII, 1-3)

In Ariosto, Ruggiero never 'commends' his lover, and is consigned, at least initially, to a very passive role, which becomes active only through Bradamante's charisma. In addition, the distraught girl is relieved by the support she receives from the heroine, certainly not by the 'warlike looke and manly show' of Ruggiero, the latter definition automatically excluding from the passage Bradamante. Significantly, Harington's final three lines are supposed to translate Ariosto's

L'alto parlare e la fiera sembianza
di quella coppia a maraviglia ardita,
ebbon di tornar forza la speranza
colà dond'era già tutta fuggita.

[The bold words and proud bearing of this pair, remarkable for their spirit, succeeded in reviving hope whence it had ebbed]

(XXII, XLV, 1-4)

'[L]a coppia a maraviglia ardita' of the Italian version is sadly halved in Harington, with only its (dominant) male part surviving.

At this point, it becomes extremely interesting to analyse the partial translation made by Francis Harington, Sir John's brother. Francis translated the first fifty stanzas of canto XXXII, and given his brother's evident dislike and disapproval for Bradamante, the possibility of analysing Francis' own treatment of the lines relating to her is useful in ascertaining whether Sir John's misogyny is culturally induced or, in fact, caused by a personal *modus pensandi*. Canto XXXII, in addition, is

particularly remarkable in this respect, not only because a large number of stanzas are dedicated to Ariosto's foremost female knight, but especially since the section of the canto translated by Francis includes the most dramatic moment of the plot relating to Bradamante. It can be conjectured that it was exactly this exclusive concentration on the heroine, accompanied by the realisation that, in this case, an omission was not viable (because of the importance of this passage in the economy of the story) that led Sir John Harington to allow his brother to translate these octaves, as no other explanation is given for the change of translator apart from Francis' desire to prove his capabilities in translating from the Italian²⁴.

Ariosto begins by presenting a jealous and distraught Bradamante at the conclusion of the period of twenty days, at the end of which Ruggiero had claimed he would go back to his lover and to that Christian faith which he had promised to embrace and which formed the only remaining obstacle to the couple's wedding²⁵. Francis translates Bradamante's waiting and consequent anxieties very faithfully, without the addition of those typically Haringtonian 'feminine' details or moralisations, and renders the Italian text almost word for word, as best exemplified by the beautiful passage denoting Bradamante's very human insecurity and constant changing of mind:

Credendolo incontrar, talora armossi,
scese dal monte e giù calò nel piano;
né lo trovando, si sperò che fossi
per altra strada giunto a Montalbano:
e col disir con ch'avea i piedi mossi
fuor del castel, ritornò dentro invano.

[Sometimes she would arm and ride down from the hill-top, confident of going out to meet him; but, not finding him, she expected that he would have arrived at Montauban by some other road, and the very desire which had allured her out of the castle sent her back inside on a fool's errand; she found him neither here nor there]

(XXXII, XVI, 1-6)

Sometime all arm'd she mounteth on her steed,

²⁴ A note inserted by Sir John between the last stanza and the 'Morall' explains that 'The first fiftie staves of this booke I may call mine [...]. [I may] as truly sweare these are mine, for they were given me by my brother (*Francis Harington*) who made them for a proofoe of his vaine in this kinde, and if his slouth had not bene as blame worthie as his skill is praise worthie, he had eased me of much of the paine that I tooke with the rest; and methinkes when I reade his and mine owne together the phrase agrees so well as it were two brothers'.

²⁵ The description of Bradamante's jealousy also caught other authors' attention: not only did George Gascoigne paraphrase five of these stanzas (see Chapter Three, p. 216), but John Florio, in his manual *First Fruits*, used three of these stanzas, with their corresponding word-by-word translation, as a bilingual dialogue for language-learning purposes.

And so rides forth in hope to meet her deare,
 But soone some fancie her conceit doth feed,
 That he is past some other way more neare:
 Then homeward hasteth she with as much speed,
 Yet she at home no newes of him can heare.

(XXXII, xvi, 1-6)

Francis Harington also translates in a semantically perfect way Ariosto's eight-stanza proto-feminist monologue in which the heroine, now utterly hopeless, first proclaims her anger towards her betrothed, who is guilty of playing with her feelings in the cruellest fashion – as he is perfectly aware of her love for him but dismisses it, as if of no importance – then cynically exclaims that nothing short of a goddess could make any indentation on his heart:

Why then (quoth she) beseemes it me in vaine,
 To seeke him still, who thus from me doth slide?
 Shall I esteeme of him that doth disdain
 My sute, and scorne the torments I abide?
 Him, in whose heart a hate of me doth raine,
 Him, that accounts his vertues so well tride
 As though some goddesse should from heav'n descēd
 Before that he his heart to love would bend?

(XXXII, xviii)

The translation is remarkably faithful to the original:

Dunque fia ver (dicea) che mi convegna
 cercare un che mi fugge e mi s'asconde?
 Dunque debbo prezzare un che mi sdegna?
 Debbo pregar chi mai non mi risponde?
 Patirò che chi m'odia, il cor mi tegna?
 Un che sì stima sue virtù sì profonde,
 che bisogno sarà che dal ciel scenda
 immortal dea che 'l cor d'amor gli accenda?

['It is true then', she cried, 'that I must seek for one who avoids and hides from me? Am I to prize one who disdains me, to entreat one who never answers me? Shall I suffer one who hates me to possess my heart, one who so esteems his lofty virtues that it would take an immortal goddess descending from heaven to kindle his heart to love?']

(XXXII, xviii)

Francis maintains the numerous interrogative sentences of the original, as well as the parentheses in the first line, and, more importantly, never mistranslates Ariosto.

Bradamante's outburst of anger is followed by a lucid auto-apology, in which she justifies her love saying that her only mistake was to love Ruggiero, but that such a decision can hardly be considered an error, because, as she rhetorically wonders, 'What blind unhappie wretch were she would shun / The pleasing prospect of the

precious Sun?’ (XXIII, 7-8). The only divergence in the translation is to be found in stanza XXXVII, where Francis translates ‘Never wench that loved so sincerely / Was in requitall punisht so severely’ (7-8), for Ariosto’s more classical comparison that elevated Bradamante to the same level as the heroines seen on the stage of classical tragedies, such as Medea, betrayed by Jason, or Arianna, forsaken by Theseus. This is, however, a divergence that does not detract from Francis’s complimentary representation of Bradamante.

Bradamante, still swinging from sudden occurrences of jealousy to moments of hopeful patience, receives confirmation of her fears upon meeting a Guascon knight who, returning from the African camp and thus able to provide news of her beloved, reveals to the woman that Ruggiero, almost fatally wounded after a duel, is now slowly recovering, amorously looked after by Marfisa. The heroine, convinced of having been replaced by Marfisa in the knight’s heart (and naturally unaware that the latter is actually Ruggiero’s sister), decides to commit suicide in another lengthy monologue uttered in tears and with the only regret of not dying whilst still in Ruggiero’s favour, because such a death would have been counted ‘no death, but ease’ (XLIII, 8). In the solitude of her room, she points the sword to her chest:

When with these words she was resolv’d to dy,
 She tooke her sword in hand for that intent,
 And forst her selfe upon the point to ly,
 Her armour then her purpose did prevent,
 A better spirit checkt her by and by:
 And in her heart this secret reason went,
 O noble Ladie borne to so great fame,
 Wilt thou thus end thy dayes with so great shame?

(XXXII, XLIV)

Così dicendo, di morir disposta,
 salta del letto, e di rabbia infiammata
 si pon la spada alla sinistra costa;
 ma si ravvede poi che tutta è armata.
 Il miglior spirto in questo le s’accosta,
 e nel cor le ragiona: - O donna nata
 di tant’alto lignaggio, adunque vuoi
 finir con sì gran biasmo i giorni tuoi?

[So saying, she jumped off the bed, disposed to die, and in a passion set her sword-point against her left side – until she noticed that she was in full armour. Now at this juncture her better spirit approached her and reasoned with her thus: ‘O woman born of so exalted a stock, do you want to end your days so guiltily?’]

(XXXII, XLIV)

Francis Harington's version is semantically exact and literal and records the most important moment of Bradamante's history and one of the most humorous of the entire poem, when her resolute decision to die clashes noisily with her knightly armour. Although Ariosto's stanza enjoys some stylistic devices that render it spectacular, such as, for example, the use of two caesurae in the first two lines, which brilliantly reproduce in poetry what we can assume to be her rapid, jerky gestures when preparing to kill herself, Francis' translation is still praiseworthy, although he does not seem able to reproduce the sudden tonal transition to the humour of Ariosto's fourth line and thus misses the comicality of the passage entirely, in favour of heightened pathos. His translation continues to be so faithful that the modifications are almost inconsequential, as exemplified by the graphical change that Francis makes by eliminating the lengthy parenthesis which enclose Ariosto's stanzas XXXII to XXXIV, transformed into normal text in the English version. Francis fails to reproduce Ariosto's beautiful style on one other occasion, when, in stanza XLVIII, the Italian author writes that Bradamante, having now decided to avenge the supposed betrayal by killing Marfisa, or else be killed by Ruggiero, picks up Astolfo's spear, which grants invulnerability to its users,

[N]on però sapendo
che fosse del valor ch'era, stupendo

[(Not knowing, though, the true value it had, stupendous)]

(XXXII, XLVIII, 7-8)

The insertion of the comma before the last word literally isolates the adjective 'stupendo', which was already self-standing thanks to its appositive position, rendering the line at least as extraordinary as the valour of the weapon; Francis translates it prosaically, writing that

She tooke it [the spear], notwithstanding her election,
Not knowing of that magicall confection.

(XXXII, XLVIII, 7-8)

With Sir John's reprisal of the translation, the omissions and compressions recommence immediately and noticeably: whereas Francis had carefully maintained the same number of octaves as the original, Sir John omits seven stanzas in just the second half of this canto's translation. The end of the canto presents another proto-

feminist passage: in an episode that heavily inspired Spenser's *Castle Joyous*²⁶, Bradamante finds herself at the door of a castle into which, according to an ancient tradition, only the most beautiful woman and the strongest knight are allowed as guests for the night. Defeating three Scandinavian kings that had accompanied an Icelandic lady there, she is allowed into the castle, only to discover, when she reveals, raising her helmet, her beautiful blond hair, that the Icelandic gentlewoman is now forced to go, Bradamante being the more beautiful of the two. The heroine fiercely opposes the decision, proclaiming

Io ch'a difender questa causa toglío,
 dico: o più bella o men ch'io sia di lei,
 non venni come donna qui, né voglio
 che sian di donna ora i progressi miei.
 Ma chi dirà, se tutta non mi spoglio,
 s'io sono o non sono quel ch'è costei?
 [...]

Se come cavallier la stanza, o come
 donna acquistata m'abbia, è manifesto:
 perché dunque volete dar mi nome
 di donna, se maschio è ogni mio gesto?
 La legge vostra vuol che ne sian spinte
 donne da donne, e non da guerrier vinte.

[I, who am embracing her cause, affirm that, whether or not I am fairer than she, I did not gain admittance as a woman and I will not have my prospects determined as though I were one – who shall say, unless I take off all my clothes, whether or not I am of the same sex as she? (...) Whether I gained admittance as a knight or as a woman is evident enough: so why do you want to attribute the female sex to me when all my actions have been a man's? Your law requires that women should be ousted by women, not by warriors]

(XXXII, CII, 1-6; CIII, 3-8)

I, that on me do take her to defend,
 Say thus, that I be faire, or lesse or more,
 I came not as a woman, nor intend
 As woman now to be adjudg'd therefore;
 Who knowes my sex, except I condescend
 To shew the same?
 [...]

You do know that as a man I came,
 And all my gestures to a man belong;
 Wherefore in giving me a womans name,
 To both of us perhaps you may do wrong;
 Your law points women (if their right be donne)
 By women, not by warriors to be wonne.

(XXXII, XCV, 1-6; XCVI, 3-8)

This is the first and only instance in the poem in which Sir John Harington seems to accept Bradamante first and foremost as a warrior, and only in second place as a

²⁶ Spenser's translations from Ariosto will be analysed in detail in Chapter Three.

woman. In fact, this passage is the one example cited by Pamela Benson to 'prove' that

Harington's translation of the parts of the poem devoted to the deeds of lady knights and to praise of them (*sic*) is usually fairly faithful and gives a positive impression of women's military capacities just as the Italian poem does.

(Benson 1997: 51)

However, not only does the rest of the poem contradict Benson's statement; it must also be said that, in this particular passage, Ariosto's very construction of the story presented the condition of 'warrior' and the condition of 'woman' as two dichotomically opposed entities. Consequently, if Bradamante had any hope of allowing the Icelandic lady to remain in the castle, she was forced to present herself not as a woman warrior, but as a warrior, *and not* a woman. Hence, her choice to keep her real sex ambiguous until the end: clearly, Harington could have no other choice but reproduce the passage faithfully, save totally distorting the story.

Omissions and single terminological additions are another, subtler way in which Harington shows his dislike for Ariosto's warrior heroines. This is exemplified by his exclusion of some particulars relating to Bradamante in canto XXXVI: there, for instance, he fails to mention first Ruggiero's preoccupation for the fighting Bradamante, being aware of Marfisa's valour, and then his successive surprise at his betrothed's physical strength (stanza XXV). These omissions are followed by his independent addition of a very strong term a few octaves later, when he calls the two fighting knights 'viragoes' (XLVII, 7). Ariosto constantly shows great respect for Bradamante and Marfisa, always considered as valiant knights and as worthy as Orlando, Rinaldo or any other male warrior; the use of the ambiguous term by the translator, which can both indicate, positively, a 'female warrior' – the Latin meaning of the term –, but also, more pejoratively, a 'bold, impudent woman' (*OED*'s third meaning), is indicative of the English poet's lesser respect for the two women.

In an episode parallel to that translated by Francis Harington, Bradamante breaks into a second outburst of anger and despair in canto XLII, upon hearing that Ruggiero failed to honour his oath of forsaking the Pagan camp, should the duel in which he was engaged be interrupted by his king; the heroine, then, knowing that, despite the interruption, her betrothed failed to change sides, wonders miserably whether she can trust Ruggiero with any other promise he made, if he can ignore an oath solemnly

made in front of the two camps. Ariosto, describing Bradamante's incessant despair, mentions briefly that the character

[S]ciogliendo al gran dolor le vele,
il ciel, che consentia tanto pergiuro,
né fatto n'avea ancor segno evidente,
ingiusto chiama, debole e impotente

[Unfurling her sails to the blasts of woe, she called heaven unjust, impotent, and feeble, for
had it not condoned such falsehood and given no evident sign of disapproval?]

(XLII, xxv, 4-8)

The lines are unquestionably strong, but, at the same time, the use of the verb 'consentia' seems to refer to a particularly benign divine disposition towards Bradamante, exceptionally allowed to be angered with the Heavens; her angry address is, thus, somehow softened. Harington, however, expands this into a group of lines in which the heroine is presented

[B]laming God himself, and all his Saints,
For not redressing this her wofull state,
She scarce abstaines high blasphemie to speak,
That God unjust, and that Saints powers are weak.

(XLII, xxv, 5-8)

Once again, the translation seems literal at first; but the simple omission of the verb 'consentia', which in the original text indicated that Bradamante was *allowed* to show her anger towards God, thus hinting that she was not committing a sin, is extremely consequential: without it, the stanza presents Bradamante as a blasphemous, sacrilegious woman, and contributes to the hypothesis of antipathy for the heroine on the part of Harington.

The mentions of Bradamante continue to be significant towards the end of the poem: the heroine plays again a central role in canto XLV, where she persuades Charlemagne to let her test in duel her suitors and marry only that knight who will succeed in defeating her. When Ruggiero, clearly not complying with her secret wishes, fails to appear to test her, the female knight is shaken and disappointed. Harington translates the passage faithfully, as exemplified by this stanza highlighting Bradamante's internal struggle of a woman who cannot help doubting her betrothed's love but, at the same time, feels guilty about her very doubts:

E lei, che dato orecchie abbia, riprende,

a tanta iniqua suspizione e stolta.
 E così l'un pensier Ruggier difende,
 l'altro accusa: et ella amenduo ascolta,
 e quando a questo e quando a quel s'apprende,
 né risoluta a questo o a quel si volta.
 Pur all'opinion più tosto corre,
 che più le giova, e la contraria aborre.

[And she would reproach herself for heeding so unkind, so foolish a suspicion. One thought, then, would defend Ruggiero, the next accuse him, and she would listen to both, inclining now to the one, now to the other, never resolving upon either. But she would generally incline towards the more cheering thought and recoil from the other]

(XLV, xxx)

And thereupon her selfe she reprehends,
 That she her lover should so much abuse,
 Thus in her mind one fancy him defends,
 And then another doth him sore accuse,
 And she her thought to either fancy lends,
 And in great doubt she is which part to chuse;
 But when a while she had her self bethought,
 She leaneth most unto best pleasing thought.

(XLV, xxvii)

The translation, albeit quite literal, is however less effective than the original, which presented some excellent choices of vocabulary, as exemplified by the fourth line, where the verb 'ascolta' gives perfectly the idea of the heroine listening, shifting from one extreme to the other, to the opposing suggestions of two imaginary 'advisers' engaged in a *débat*, almost personifying the voice of reason and the evil spirit. Notwithstanding the stylistic differences, Harington's version is semantically faithful to the original, a rare feature of the passages relating to Bradamante: rather than proving a change of perspective on the part of the translator, however, it is more likely to indicate that the English poet appreciated greatly this unusual depiction of an emotionally fragile Bradamante, for once away from the battlefields and enclosed within the privacy of her chamber, engaged in the typically feminine activity of worrying and crying because of her lover. Upon reading this canto, in fact, there is no mention of Bradamante as a warrior or as a knight, but only of Bradamante as a woman, something that has also been highlighted by Jane Everson:

In the last quarter of the poem Bradamante is increasingly confined to the domestic sphere, first when she retires to Montalbano after parting from Ruggiero [...], and then after the end of the war, when she becomes a virtual prisoner in her parents' home [...]. Her dynastic role must now conform to that expressed virtually contemporaneously by Castiglione, a question of chastity, family, and status. Bradamante is permitted to protest against this, and does achieve a degree of independence in her demand for the duel against her would-be suitors, but her reacquisition of the warrior role is overshadowed by the apparent helplessness which preceded it.

(Everson 2001: 343-344)

Harington cannot have ignored this detail, and it is not surprising that he decided to translate faithfully what he probably viewed as the redemption of the heroine.

However, Bradamante is not the only female knight to appear in the *Furioso*: she is accompanied by Marfisa, another beautiful warrior characterised by independent spirit and strong presence of mind. Once again, an analysis of the English treatment of her original depiction is significant, as it can reveal whether Harington's misogyny is directed exclusively towards Bradamante, and is thus a manifestation of personal antipathy, or is intrinsic, and thus faced by both heroines of the poem. Ariosto begins presenting Marfisa as first and foremost an excellent warrior, able to make Orlando and Rinaldo 'sweat' on many occasions:

La vergine Marfisa si nomava,
di tal valor, che con la spada in mano
fece più volte al gran signor di Brava
sudar la fronte e a quel di Montalbano;
e 'l dì e la notte armata sempre andava
di qua di là cercando in monte e in piano
con cavallieri erranti riscontrarsi,
et immortale e gloriosa farsi.

[She was the virgin Marfisa, a swordsman of such prowess that on several occasions she had brought the perspiration to the brow of Orlando, lord of Brava, and to that of Rinaldo of Montauban. Day and night she was always armed, always on the prowl, up hill and down dale, alert to measure herself against knights errant and foster her immortal fame]

(XVIII, XCIX)

The extremely amusing detail of the warrior wearing her armour continually, 'just in case' she meets by chance a wandering knight willing to test her in a duel, characterises Marfisa immediately and brilliantly, and also adds to the poem's irony, mixing as it does plausible and not so plausible details. Two stanzas later, Ariosto gives another hint of Marfisa's rather peculiar character: describing the knight encountering and recognising Astolfo, the poet has her remembering 'la piacevolezza [...] del cavallier' ('the knight's agreeableness' CI, 1-2, a reference to a previous adventure shared by the two knights in Boiardo's poem *Orlando Innamorato*) and, raising the visor of her helmet, starts hugging him and simpering in a rather coquettish way.

Harington omits almost the entire introduction, compressing heavily Ariosto's presentation into one single stanza, in which Marfisa is reduced to little more than 'a gallant and a stately dame':

They met a gallant and a stately dame,
[...]
Marfisa was this noble Ladies name:
She travel'd like a Knight, her heart was bold,
Her body passing strong unto the same,
And when she knew both why and where they went,
To go with them she quickly did consent.

(XVIII, XLIV, 2, 4-8)

Marfisa's description shares some striking terminological similarities with Bradamante's, in particular that 'passing strong' which recalls the 'of passing strength' referred to the other heroine (I, LXX, 1) and which maintains the same ambiguity of meaning, both 'pre-eminent' and 'transient'. Just as with the introduction of Bradamante, Harington's presentation seems favourable at first; however, upon comparing it with the Italian version, it becomes clear that Marfisa does not enjoy an equally positive description in the translation as she does in the original text.

Ariosto, exactly as he does when writing about Bradamante, is quite complimentary towards this second female character. For instance, when describing Marfisa and Griffino's fight caused by the fact that both claimed the armour worn by the former as their own, the author states that, even if those arms did not belong to the heroine, she should be granted them only by virtue of her outstanding courage and ability in battles (CXXIX). Harington omits the lines altogether, even creating confusion in his subsequent stanza (LIX), where Ariosto's explanation of the traditional chivalric exchange of courtesies is badly translated: in the Italian version, Marfisa politely offers her armour back to Griffino, before eventually accepting it after a few more courteous acceptances and refusals; in Harington, conversely, the courtesy stops at Marfisa offering them, and, because it is not clear who is finally awarded them, the lines could be considered as a translation error.

Ariosto's favourable view of the heroine is confirmed when he calls her the best knight among the ones present in the episode:

Poi la giostra si fe',
[...]

Ch' Astolfo e i duo fratelli e la migliore
di lor, Marfisa, non volson provarsi

[The tournament took place (...). Astolfo and the twin brothers, and Marfisa, who could outclass them all, refrained from entering]

(XVIII, CXXXII, 3, 5-6)

Ariosto's attribute is, indeed, a great compliment, because the group referred to included a number of valiant knights, in particular Astolfo, the great English Duke; the comment is however omitted by Harington who, simplifying and compressing the passage in stanza LX, generally states that the four knights abstained from the tournament, failing to reproduce Ariosto's praise of the heroine.

Marfisa is also one of the protagonists of the lengthy episode of the Amazons, which is covered in cantos XIX and XX and which becomes significant in the light of Harington's treatment of the original version's presentation of women. When introducing the knights' arrival on the Amazons' island, Ariosto pens an interesting passage describing Marfisa's desire to prove herself in battles, which is again compressed and simplified by the translator. After explaining how the Amazons required that every knight, upon arrival on the island, defeat in duel ten of their male warriors in one day and then satisfy in bed ten Amazons in one night, or otherwise be condemned to death, Ariosto comments that

[A] Marfisa non mancava il core,
ben che mal atta alla seconda danza;
ma dove non l'aitasse la natura,
con la spada supplir stava sicura

[Nor did Marfisa lose heart: she may have been ill equipped for the second performance, but where Nature left her unaided she was confident of making good with her sword]

(XIX, LXVII, 5-8)

In the last line, the Italian author seems to refer to – well ahead of the times – something very similar to the Freudian psychoanalytical theory of penis envy, according to which his Marfisa is aware of the biological differences between herself and the other (male) knights and compensates for them with her sword, which is, perhaps not coincidentally, the phallic symbol *par excellence*. This concept is lost in Harington, in what is otherwise a very faithful translation:

*Marfisa eke (though for the second daunce
She was not fit) so manly mind she bare,
As she would needs her force and fortune trie,*

The change from the Ariostean 'Nature' to the English 'all weapons' cancels the strong reference to biological differences that made Ariosto's line so surprisingly modern.

Ariosto also presents, in this episode, a very interesting cultural parenthesis in his detailed description of the Amazons' living habits. Explaining that these women are used to riding along the streets half naked and that the men, who are outnumbered by ten to one, are not allowed to carry any weapons – and are not even allowed to ride with spurs –, the author says that they are, on the contrary, forced to perform typically feminine tasks, such as sewing and knitting, whilst wearing feminine clothes. Harington omits the parenthesis completely, and this is curious because the passage might have been of relevance to the contemporary debate on effeminate courtiers; at the same time, however, this omission might be consistent with Harington's desire to moralise the poem. Works like the *Furioso* were attracting attention in Elizabethan England exactly because of their dangerously 'Italianate' traits, the same traits which were considered too corrupting by moralists such as Roger Ascham. Jennifer Richards notes that

[F]ears of effeminization were levelled at theatrical cross-dressing, at the translation of bawdy Italian romances, and at the foibles of Italian (and French) manners and fashions.

(Richards 2000: 185)

Richards' deployment in the same sentence of cross-dressing and translations from the Italian is not coincidental. It suggests that the reason behind Harington's omission of the 'effeminisation' passage might have been his desire to conceal the most evidently dangerous trait of a text already viewed as highly suspicious. Episodes such as the 'cultural parenthesis' of the Amazons' island present a world in which the normal gender roles are inverted so explicitly and blatantly that not only women rule the country, but men *sew and knit dressed as women*: little could be scarier, for an Elizabethan moralist, than this image – even more shocking because it is presented as a real, viable and perfectly functioning mode of living. In this respect, Harington's ensuing transformation of Ariosto's genuine proto-feminism into a jocular, sarcastic passage might reveal again his desire to add *decorum* to the Italian poem. Indeed, perhaps the most significant passage of the episode is to be found at the beginning of canto XX, when Ariosto writes that the five knights ask whether the Amazons' island

presents, in the ruling of the families and as a mode of living, matriarchy or patriarchy:

I cavallier domandano a Guidone,
com'ha sì pochi maschi il tenitoro;
e s'alle moglie hanno suggezïone,
come esse l'han negli altri lochi a loro.

[The knights asked him how it was that there were so few males in this land, and whether they were subject to their wives the way women are to their husbands elsewhere]

(XX, IX, 1-4)

By wondering whether men are subjected to women like women are subjected to men in the western world, Ariosto effectively acknowledges the intrinsic inequality of the patriarchal system. Harington's version is completely indifferent to Ariosto's proto-feminism and attacks women according to the most stereotyped clichés; in this case, he has the five knights wonder jocularly how on this island a man can satisfy ten women, since in the western world one woman could never be satisfied with just one man:

[M]uch they wondred at this government,
They marvell that so great a territorie
For want of men was not consum'd and spent:
They thought no lesse the women would be sorie,
For want of men to live so continent:
'Twas strange one man sufficed ten of these,
Sith one with us can scant one woman please.

(XX, IX, 2-8)

The joke is not to be found anywhere in Ariosto, but is entirely in line with Harington's general attitude to the episode. Misogynistic comments made in jest are, after all, listed by Henderson and McManus as a rather frequent method of argumentation in the 'pamphlet wars' of the *querelle des femmes*, as traditional as the invectives, the appeals to authority, or the anecdotal narratives (Henderson and McManus 1985: 32-35); the very notion of the supposed sexual insatiability of women is another widespread weapon used in the anti-feminist pamphlets, along with the stereotype of female lustfulness (*ibid.*: 30).

The ensuing stanza is a rare addition on Harington's part: the translator adds some details to the curiosity of the group, presenting them as asking when the Amazons' 'foolish order' (X, 2) was installed. The use of that particular adjective is rather significant, because it charges the island with obvious negative values which are not

present in the original version. In fact, abstaining altogether from giving his opinion, Ariosto simply presents the matriarchal world as an alternative to patriarchy in a well-documented and logical manner: the Italian poet never comments, throughout the episode, on the ethical aspect of the gynocratic government of the island.

In the light of what has been written above, it becomes easier to understand why Harington omits certain very graphic passages, such as the one describing Marfisa, perhaps a little carried away by the excitement of the battle, as defeating one of the Amazons' knights and separating his haunches from his flanks so exquisitely as to leave the remainder of the corpse looking like a wax figurine (XIX, LXXXVI, 1-2). The passage, which appears almost amusing in its exaggerated precision and crudity, contrasted by the stillness and serenity of the ensuing simile, is entirely omitted by Harington, who perhaps did not consider such a cruel act becoming of a woman. In Ariosto, the lines served exactly to prove the opposite point, that is to highlight Marfisa's endless courage and relative mercilessness, fierce but appropriate for a knight, whether male or female.

At the conclusion of the Amazons episode, Harington's slightly derogatory treatment of the female warrior is apparent again in his transformation of Ariosto's description of the fear of the Christian knights upon hearing the horrifying noise of Astolfo's magical horn into an octave dedicated exclusively to Marfisa:

Yea even *Marfisas* courage, late so fierce,
(So great a vertue this inchantment had)
That strange and sudden feare the same did pearce,
And she by flight to save her selfe was glad.

(XX, LXIII, 1-4)

Although Marfisa's exceptional courage is registered here, it is immediately undermined by the description of her cowardly escape; Harington, thus, stresses the fragility of the heroine in a passage in which Ariosto had been careful not to single out any of the warriors:

Marfisa e 'l bon Guidone e i duo fratelli
e Sansonetto, pallidi e tremanti,
fuggiano inverso il mare, e dietro a quelli
fuggiano i marinari e i mercatanti

[Marfisa, Guidone, the two brothers, and Samsonet all fled, pale and quaking, down to the sea,
closely followed by the sailors and merchants]

(XX, xcv, 1-4)

Because the fear is shared by *all* the knights present (with the obvious exception of Astolfo, being the only one aware of the virtues of the horn), the behaviour of the warriors does not extend to cowardice; on the contrary, when the text singles out one individual, as Marfisa is in Harington's version, then a negative portrayal of that character logically ensues.

Although the passage does not show strictly misogynistic traits, it is interesting to note how Harington simplifies one of the most entertaining episodes relating to Marfisa, the duel between the heroine and Zerbino for the awfully ugly old woman Gabrina. Harington's compressions and simplifications reduce greatly the impact of the passage and, consequently, the portrait of the two knights involved in it. Ariosto is humorous from the beginning, when his Marfisa, with her customary dose of self-confidence, proclaims that the apparent (and justified, as readers would note) dislike of Zerbino for Gabrina is actually caused by his fear of fighting in her honour against the valiant heroine; Harington's Marfisa, on the contrary, lacks this delightful 'insight' into the king's intentions and merely declares that she will defend the old woman 'by speare or else by sword' (XX, LXXXII, 8). The comical climax, however, arrives in Ariosto when Marfisa declares that the ugly woman is actually so beautiful that nobody could resist the temptation of *raping* her if she were to wander alone in the wood:

E chi saria quel cavallier, che questa
sì giovane e sì bella ritrovasse
senza più compagnia ne la foresta,
e che di farla sua non si provasse?

[(And praise), what other knight, finding this maiden in the forest, so young and beautiful, and so poorly attended, would not try to make her his own?]

(XX, CXXII, 1-4)

The very use of the verb 'farla sua', instead of verbs from the semantic field of enamourment which would be more appropriate for the romantic imagery of Marfisa's first words, is indicative of the absurd, Gargantuan comicality of the passage. Zerbino's reply to the heroine is that he would not even fight a demonstrative duel for the ugly Gabrina; Harington's reaction to these lines is to omit them entirely. The humour in the original version lies in the incredulity of both characters, the man because he cannot understand why anybody would want to fight for such a hag, and

Marfisa because apparently she finds it 'intolerable' (she cannot 'patir', CXXIV, 3) that her opponent is not willing to battle for a 'sì leggiadro aspetto' ('so pretty a woman', *ibid.*) – whereas, in reality, readers can only wonder how she can refrain from laughing. As Zerbino is adamant that he does not want to fight for the honour of 'winning' the unpleasant woman, Marfisa has then an even more humorous idea, suggesting that the victor of the duel could have the privilege of *not winning* the old lady: at this point, readers have the feeling that, had Zerbino accepted the duel, she would have let herself fall from her horse deliberately, such is her desire to be freed of a travel companion whose presence must clearly be very annoying. This is the acme of the passage, which the translator maintains carefully; however, the whole episode loses much of its humour in the English version because of the omission of the previous lines, which climactically prepared the culmination of the comicality; in addition, Ariosto's portrayal of the articulate and witty Marfisa is entirely lost in the English version.

Conversely, Harington translates appropriately a line in which Ariosto stresses Marfisa's independent character. The author writes:

Marfisa, alzando con un viso altiero
la faccia, disse: – Il tuo parer molto erra.
Io ti concedo che diresti il vero,
ch'io sarei tua per la ragion di guerra,
quando mio signor fosse o cavalliero
alcun di questi ch'hai gittato in terra.
Io sua non son, né d'altri son che mia:
dunque me tolga a me chi mi desia.

[Marfisa looked at him haughtily and observed: 'You are badly mistaken. I allow that you would be correct about my being yours by custom of war if one of these men you have overthrown were my lord or my champion. But I am none of theirs; I belong to nobody, only to myself: who wants me must first reckon with me']

(XXVI, LXXIX)

The English version is faithful, although Harington ignores Ariosto's precious detail of Marfisa's proud facial expression, so typical of her character:

Indeed (*Marfisa* said) it were no wrong,
And I were yours I grant by law of warre,
If I were theirs, or did to them belong,
That you have foiled in this present jarre,
But I shall make you know I hope ere long,
You misse your marke, your aime did greatly erre,
I am mine owne, mine owner is within me,
He that will have me, from my selfe must win me.

A possible explanation of this rare record of the Ariostean proto-feminism on the part of Harington is given by the context: Marfisa's independent speech is directed at the pagan Mandricardo, who assumed that the woman (in this unique instance, dressed in feminine clothes) was the merited prize for his defeat of the Christian Ricciardetto. Thus, Marfisa's arrogant and independent speech is softened by the fact that it is addressed to an extremely negative character, sinning of great presumption and, more importantly, guilty of being an infidel.

Marfisa and Bradamante are united in one of the concluding episodes of the poem, when, after Bradamante's defeat by Ruggiero disguised as Leon, the heroine decides not to honour her promise and refuses to marry the knight who dismounted her. She professes her love and her faith for Ruggiero and recognises that she will be considered 'fickle' – 'let me be deemd as wau'ring as the wether' (XLV, XCVIII, 8, for Ariosto's 'volubil più che foglia anco sia detta', 'let them call me wayward as a leaf', CI, 8) – one of the defects most commonly imputed to women. A possible comprehension mistake on the part of Harington is visible two stanzas later, when Ariosto describes Marfisa's appearance in court and reveals that Bradamante asked her to tell Charlemagne that Ruggiero and the *figlia d'Amone* were in fact betrothed:

Fé la mattina la donzella altiera
Marfisa inanzi a Carlo comparire

[(The haughty damsel had Marfisa go to Charlemagne the following morning)]

(XLV, CIII, 1-2)

The subject of the sentence is Bradamante, but the line is rich in double senses because it could as well be 'ciel' (the last subject of stanza CII), or, more specifically, the Providence (in both cases, considering 'la donzella altiera' as attribute – with *enjambement* – of Marfisa); in Harington all these shadows are missing and Marfisa seems to go to Charlemagne on her own initiative:

Marfisa, that braue minded dame,
The next day came and sowed new seeds of strife.

(XLV, C, 1-2)

The second line is notable also for its employment of terms from the semantic field of discord which were absent in the original: a terminological choice, on the part of

Harington, which is almost incomprehensible, as it gives the passage negative connotations not present in Ariosto, where the timely appearance of Marfisa rather resembled a miracle sent by Heaven to solve the issue of Bradamante and Ruggiero's impeded marriage – something that almost functions as the concluding *agnizione* of classical comedies. The previous, secret agreement between Marfisa and Bradamante is also completely lost in Harington, so that his translation of 'che di volontade [Marfisa] lo facesse / di Bradamante' ('I have no doubt [that Marfisa] acted with the consent of Bradamant', CV, 5-6) as 'some thought perhaps that *Bradamante* it knew, and that was done in part by her consent' (CII, 5-6) actually remains nothing more than a hypothesis; conversely, in the original version it is a plan devised by the clever Bradamante, a fact given as certain by the omniscient author and on which there could be very little doubt.

The numerous examples given hitherto from Harington's translation have demonstrated that there is a distinctive trait of misogyny in the English poet. That Harington shows, persistently and constantly throughout his translation, an antipathy towards the female knights and warriors (Bradamante, Marfisa and the Amazons) is irrefutable. However, whether this antipathy is directed exclusively towards this group of women who live in masculine clothes and often show a virile behaviour, or whether it is a more general, entrenched misogyny towards all women, whether or not they engage in masculine activities, can only be revealed by an analysis of Harington's treatment of the other, more traditionally feminine characters of the poem.

Other female characters

The most important non-fighting female character of the poem is Angelica, the enchanting Asian princess after whom all of the male characters of the poem inevitably lust and because of whom Orlando eventually loses his sanity. Angelica enjoys a unique treatment in Ariosto: the author is clearly as sensitive to her beauty as any one of his characters, as shown by the evident, voyeuristic enjoyment he feels in describing it; at the same time, as the omniscient author, he is also aware, unlike them, of her coquettish nature. However, his intelligent realisation of her opportunism and occasional falsity is never a source of moralisations on the part of Ariosto, who

even presents this opportunism as caused, rather than by moral evil, by a more justifiable, natural instinct for self-preservation as a beautiful woman wandering alone in the same forests in which hundreds of knights are desperately searching for her. While Ariosto's depiction of Angelica is multifaceted and complex, Harington simplifies it greatly, reducing it to a mostly negative portrayal: the translator seems to condemn her unambiguously, and, by adding moralising comments to her actions, presents her as the embodiment of lust.

Differences in the two poets' portrayals of Angelica are visible from her first appearance, in canto I. In Ariosto's text, after Sacripante is unseated by Bradamante and left bruised on the ground, his shame is caused by the fact that not only does he fall from his steed, thus losing his duel, being dismounted; not only does this unfortunate accident happen in front of his lady; but it is exactly she, Angelica, who removes (with, admittedly, superhuman strength) the dead horse from Sacripante's body:

[S]i levò il pagano a piè rimasto,
Angelica presente al duro caso.

Sospira e geme, non perché l'annoï
che piede o braccia s'abbia rotto o mosso,
ma per vergogna sola
[...]

più, ch'oltre al cader, sua donna poi
fu che gli tolse il gran peso d'adosso.

[The pagan (...) regained his feet. Angelica had been witness of this dire event. He sighed and groaned, not because his arm or foot may have been broken or sprained, but simply for shame (...). This was not only because of his fall, but all the more so in that his lady it was who had pulled the heavy weight off him]

(I, LXV, 7-8; LXVI, 1-3, 5-6)

Harington ignores this last detail, preferring to depict a shy Angelica standing in the background, far from the site of the duel, as perhaps he found fitting for a lady of her stature; however, in doing so, the translator also misses most of the irony of the Italian text.

Angelica is also the protagonist of an episode which is interesting both for a few proto-feminist lines penned by Ariosto at the beginning of the story, and for the sensuality which overflows the rest of the episode. Whilst introducing for the first time the island of Ebuda, where Angelica, kidnapped by a group of pirates, is destined

to be devoured by an orc, Harington omits entirely a very powerful statement made by Ariosto, who claims that

Ben ch'essere donna sia in tutte le bande
danno e sciagura, quivi era pur grande.

[To be a woman is a (tragedy and a misfortune everywhere) – but here particularly so]
(VIII, LVIII, 7-8)

These few lines are proof of Ariosto's modern, intelligent realisation of the condition of women in the patriarchal world, a realisation that clearly Harington, as shown by his omission, does not share.

With the reprisal of the narration, both poets enjoy a brief voyeuristic moment whilst describing the woman's nakedness, when Ruggiero spots Angelica helplessly tied to the rocks:

La bellissima donna, così ignuda
come Natura prima la compose

[The exquisitely beautiful damsel (...), as naked as when Nature first fashioned her]
(X, XCV, 3-4)

As naked as of Nature she was borne
(X, LXXXI, 3)

In the ensuing octaves, however, Ariosto's version becomes gradually more sensuous, as best exemplified by the beautiful, cinematographic stanza XCVI, in which

Creduto avria che fosse statua finta
o d'alabastro o d'altri marmi illustri
Ruggiero, e su lo scoglio così avinta
per artificio di scultori industri;
se non vedea la lacrima distinta
tra fresche rose e candidi ligustri
far rugiadosa le crudette pome,
e l'aura sventolar l'aurate chiome.

[Ruggiero would have taken her for a statue fashioned in alabaster or some lambent marble, and tethered thus to the rock by some diligent sculptor's artifice, were it not that he saw a distinct tear coursing down her rose-fresh, lily-white cheeks and bedewing her unripe apple-breasts, and her golden tresses flowing in the wind]
(X, XCVI)

Harington reproduces the hypothetical sentence faithfully, but, of the three details that betray Angelica's human condition (hair flowing in the wind, tear on cheeks, tear on breasts), he avoids, significantly, the latter, ignoring entirely Ariosto's sensuous

seventh line and producing a stanza which is so distant, in beauty, from the original that Barbara Reynolds even posits a deliberate parody of Ariosto's poetry on the part of Harington (Reynolds 1977: 81):

Rogero at the first had surely thought,
She was some image made of alabaster,
Or of white marble curiously wrought,
To shew the skilfull hand of some great master.
But vewing neerer he was quickly taught,
She had some parts that were not made of plaster:
Both that her eies did shed such wofull teares,
And that the wind did wave her golden heares.

(X, LXXXII)

Harington's reluctance in the use of stronger expressions is a natural consequence of his attempt to moralise the Italian poem; at the same time, his clear reduction of Ariosto's sensuality shows that the way in which many critics have read Harington's translation was hindered by their lack of knowledge of Ariosto's original. For instance, Miranda Johnson-Haddad asserts that

Harington often elaborated on Ariosto's text at just those passages where the action becomes sexually explicit, and he spiced up several mildly racy episodes by adding details that are nowhere to be found in the original. Perhaps the most blatant example of Harington's calling attention to the lewd content of the poem was the inclusion, at his instructions, of three obscene drawings in the plate that illustrates canto 28 [...]. Once again, Harington seemed unable to resist emphasising the obscene elements of canto 28 that are said to have brought the queen's displeasure down upon his head.

(Johnson-Haddad 1994: 328)

Johnson-Haddad develops her comments from Townsend Rich's earlier study, in which the critic declared that

[J]ust as Harington increased the number of attacks on women, so he intensified and added to the wanton character of the *Furioso*. According to modern standards there is much material of a questionable nature in Ariosto's poem, but these passages were not enough for Sir John. Many of the Italian stanzas of passion or frankness he translated faithfully; many he heightened by making descriptions more graphic; some he intensified by adding one or two very telling lines.

(Rich 1940: 124-125)

However, the critics' opinion is not based on exhaustive research into the text compared to its original – the one example cited by Johnson-Haddad is not even relative to the text itself, but only to the drawings *external* to the poem –; Ariosto's version is, in general, much more explicit than its English counterpart, as will be shown below and as confirmed by those critics, such as Barbara Reynolds, who

analyse Harington's translation as a translation, and are constantly aware of the original lines.

Instances of Harington's discomfort with Ariosto's sexually explicit passages appear again in the tale of the unfortunate Olimpia, a second victim of Ebuda twice rescued by Orlando. The translator ignores completely the extraordinary *double-entendre* in Ariosto's line '[b]rama Orlando ch'in porto il suo legno entre' ('Orlando was anxious for his ship to come into port', XI, LXIX, 3). The image of the ship docking in the port, drawn from Petrarch²⁷, can obviously be intended on a literal level, but also as a rather explicit sexual metaphor, original with Ariosto. Harington omits it, and also modifies the climax of Ariostean sensuality, reached with Ariosto's subsequent portrayal of Olimpia's body, which has, significantly, been chosen by Barbara Reynolds to demonstrate that Harington 'seems to be hardly sensitive to the descriptions of female beauty' (Reynolds 1977: 78) and that he minimises them:

Vinceano di candor le nievi intatte,
et eran più ch'avorio a toccar molli:
le poppe ritondette parean latte,
che fuor dei giunchi allora allora tolli.
Spazio fra lor tal discendea, qual fatte
esser veggian fra piccolini colli
l'ombrese valli, in sua stagione amene,
che'l verno abbia di nieve allora piene.

[They were whiter than virgin snow and to the touch smoother than ivory. The small rounded breasts were like beads of milk newly pressed from a reed. They were so set apart, they resembled two little hillocks and between them a pleasant shady dell in the season when winter snow still lies in the hollows]

(XI, LXVIII)

Harington, indeed, minimises Ariosto's powerful eroticism:

Her haire, her eyes, her cheeks most amorous are,
Her nose, her mouth, her shoulders and her throte,
As for her other parts that then were bare,
Which she was wont to cover with her cote,
Were made in such a mould as might have moved
The chast *Hipolytus* her to have loved.
[...]

I cease to praise those other secret parts,
Nothing so fit to talke of as to tuch
In generall all was as white as milke

²⁷ Petrarch employed the image of the port or of the ship with striking frequency in his *Canzoniere*: see CLI, CLXXVII, CLXXX, and especially CLXXXIX ('Passa la nave mia colma d'oblio') and CCXXXIV ('O cameretta, che già fosti un porto').

Ariosto's stanza is preceded by an introductory octave presenting a very cinematographic praise of Olimpia's facial features and of her breasts; it is then followed by a brave praise of her flat belly, of her sculptured flanks and beautiful haunches, and finally of her Phidian thighs. Harington's readers need a much greater degree of imagination when picturing their Olimpia: his passage certainly hints, with the use of the verb 'tuch', the pleasures that the enjoyment of Olimpia's body can cause, but lacks the voyeuristic details that render Ariosto's version almost shocking in its explicitness. In addition, his final two lines act as a very abrupt, almost censoring conclusion.

The Olimpia episode is extremely interesting also for another reason, that of the possible influence of the *Orlando Furioso* on William Shakespeare. It is normally assumed that Shakespeare read the poem in its English translation²⁸, but a close comparison of the Olimpia passage with a few stanzas from *Venus and Adonis* (ca. 1593) reveals some striking resemblances to the Italian original:

I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer.
Feed where thou wilt, on mountain or in dale;
Graze on my lips, and if those hills be dry,
Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.
Within this limits is relief enough,
Sweet bottom grass and high delightful plain,
Round rising hillocks,
Brakes obscure and rough,
To shelter thee from tempest and from rain.
Then be my deer, since I am such a park.

(*Venus and Adonis*, 230-239)

Although Shakespeare creates independently the park metaphor, which beautifully encloses the erotic lines, there are a few conspicuous – and hitherto undetected – terminological similarities with Ariosto's version: first, the mention of mountains and dales in the English erotic epyllion (which correspond to the Italian 'colli' and 'valli'), and then the 'round rising hillocks', paired by the Ariostean 'poppe ritondette'. Two stanzas earlier, Ariosto had also added the elements of summer rain (LXV, 3) and the metaphor of Olimpia's tears as a river (LXVI, 2), perhaps comparable to the Shakespearian 'tempest' and 'rain', and 'fountains'. Perhaps more significant than

²⁸ See the overview opening Andrew Cairncross' article (Cairncross 1976: 178).

these details, however, is the general representation of the bodies of the two women as a mixture of geographical variety and richness of Nature, which the two poets share; and this similarity is extremely interesting especially as far as the dramatist's knowledge of the Italian language is concerned, which is normally held to have been established much later than 1593²⁹.

In one instance, Harington surprisingly appears to enhance Ariosto's depiction of two active women. When describing Ruggiero's attempt to reach Alcina's kingdom, the hero is presented as able to overcome the attack of a group of wild beasts only thanks to the timely appearance of two beautiful ladies, who fight in Ruggiero's defence. In this spectacular role reversal in which both poets present the ladies as brave *dece ex machina* whose sudden, welcome manifestation is the only way of saving the endangered hero, Harington is the poet who actually presents them as the more active and consequentially unfeminine, so much as to make the knight 'blush [...] with modest shame' (VI, LXX, 5) with their compliments (for Ariosto's delightfully euphemistic 'tinto in viso di color rosato' ['his face tinted with a rosy colour'], LXX, 5). This apparent inconsistency with the rest of the translation is, however, easily explained with the realisation that the two ladies, coming from Alcina's reign, share with the witch extremely negative qualities and are not, thus, models to be followed. This reveals that Harington writes with an extremely precise scheme: if the sensuality, or forwardness, are not consequential to his chosen representation of women (as happens in the Olimpia episode, which does not allow him to display any misogynistic traits, the girl being exceptionally faithful and chaste), then these are minimised remarkably, sometimes almost disappearing entirely from the text. If, on the contrary, Harington glimpses a possibility to pejorate the portrayal of women, making the unchaste more unchaste, or the forward more forward, then he does not restrain himself from increasing the explicitness of the passages. Clearly, Harington's attitude towards women follows a complex scheme, and differs greatly from the uniform 'bawdier than Ariosto' label that he receives from Johnson-Haddad and Rich.

Misogynistic comments are present even in the description of the discovery of the carving on the tree on the part of Orlando, an episode which, in the original version, is exclusively centred on the poem's eponymous hero. Whereas Ariosto poetically

²⁹ See, for instance, Lawrence 2005.

writes that every letter carved on the tree is a nail carved in Orlando's heart (XXIII, CIII), and elaborates on the hero's pathetic self-deceptions, which sometimes become comical in their absurdity (Orlando even goes as far as saying that the name 'Medoro' must be the pseudonym chosen by Angelica to denote *him*, CIV, 3-4), Harington does not miss the opportunity to moralise, commenting, autonomously, that Angelica '[h]er inward thoughts by outward words discloses, / In her much love to shew her litle wit' (LXXIX, 4).

Angelica's treatment on the part of Harington is, however, partly justifiable on the notion that Ariosto himself, in his multifaceted view of the character, never made an effort to hide her more negative qualities. It becomes, thus, interesting to analyse how the translator adapted a lengthy episode of the *Furioso*, the tale of Ariodante and Ginevra which spans over three cantos and in which the female protagonist is portrayed in a very favourable way by the Italian author. Ginevra, daughter to the King of Scotland, is condemned to be burnt alive after being accused of having welcomed a man in her rooms; the cruel law must be enforced unless a knight champions the princess, defending her honour. Bradamante's brother Rinaldo, riding through the Scottish woods in search of the runaway Angelica, obviously decides to protect the princess – irrespective of her guilt or innocence – as soon as he hears of the law, in accordance with the chivalric code. On the way, he encounters Ginevra's maid, Dalinda, who reveals to Rinaldo how the former is innocent and how it was actually her, disguised as her princess, who let her own lover into Ginevra's chamber. Ariosto's Rinaldo raises extremely modern, proto-feminist arguments throughout the episode; first of all, he claims that, even if Ginevra was guilty, the crime, licentiousness, is undeserving of the punishment, death:

Dirò ben che non de' per simil atto
punizion cadere alcuna in lei;
e dirò che fu ingiusto o che fu matto
chi fece prima li statuti rei.

[What I will say is that she should incur no punishment for such an act, and that whoever devised these pernicious laws was unjust or downright mad]

(IV, LXV, 3-4)

Ariosto's version is truly powerful, thanks to the use of the intensifier 'ben' and, in particular, of the verb 'dovere' in its apocopated form, which graphically and tonally almost resembles an imperative. Harington's translation, on the contrary, does not

enjoy similar stylistic devices; the translator even uses, on two occasions, the conditional form of the verb 'must', softening its strength greatly:

[I]t ought to be remitted
Much rather than she should distresse endure

(IV, LII, 3-4)

Ariosto proceeds with Rinaldo's increasingly passionate defence of the queen, of which the four concluding lines are a masterpiece: an explicit manifesto of proto-feminist politics. The author declares that men and women receive an opposite treatment, wondering

S'un medesimo ardor, s'un disir pare
inchina e sforza l'uno e l'altro sesso
a quel suave fin d'amor, che pare
all'ignorante vulgo un grave eccesso;
perché si dè punir donna o biasmare,
che con uno o più d'uno abbia commesso
quel che l'uomo fa con quante n'ha appetito,
e lodato ne va, non che impunito?

[If the same ardour, the same urge drives both sexes to love's gentle fulfilment, which to the mindless commoner seems so grave an excess, why is the woman to be punished or blamed for doing with one or several men the very thing a man does with as many women as he will, and receives no punishment but praise for it?]

(IV, LXVI)

In one single stanza, Ariosto manages to summarise and convey the age-old double standard towards men and women, the former being more and more praised the greater the number of 'conquests', the latter being condemned for the same reason. This logical articulation of the differing treatment that men and women receive is, alone, sufficient to question the rule's fairness, and has, among its precedents in literature, the speech made by madonna Filippa in Boccaccio's *Decameron*³⁰. What renders Ariosto's version of it even more remarkable is that it is uttered not only by a male character, but by Rinaldo, who is currently despised by Angelica (who, in the whirlwind of feelings – and their reversals – of the *Furioso*, has just come out of an infatuation for him), and is thus far more likely to turn bitterly misogynist in revenge, as often happens with the knights in the poem (such as Orlando after his discovery of

³⁰ On the sixth day of the *Decameron*, madonna Filippa justifies her adultery, and advocates female sexual freedom, asking the judge: 'se egli ha sempre preso di me preso quello che gli é bisognato e piaciuto, io che doveva fare o debbo di quel che gli avanza? debbolo io gittare a' cani? non é egli molto meglio servirne uno gentile uomo che più che sé m'ama?' ('If my husband has always taken of me what he needed and liked, what am I supposed to do with the rest? Should I feed it to the dogs? Isn't it much better to bestow it to a gentleman who loves me more than he loves himself?'), VI, 7].

Angelica's 'infidelity', or Rodomonte after Doralice's leaving)³¹. When inserted in this context, Rinaldo's words acquire strength, as if the unequal treatment of the sexes were so plain, and its unfairness so despicable, that it could sweep away anecdotal squabbles between two individuals of opposite sexes. Harington translates Rinaldo's speech without omitting or compressing lines, but his version is weak:

Sith like desire the fancies doth possesse,
Both of the male and of the female gender,
To do that thing that fooles count great excesse,
And quench the flame that *Cupid* doth engender,
To grant the men more scope, the women lesse,
Is law for which no reason we can render.
Men using many never are ashamed,
But women using one or two are blamed.

(IV, LIII)

The translator does reproduce the Ariostean comment that sexual love is considered a 'great excesse' by 'fooles', but gives the line a different nuance, as is easily visible by the comparison of Harington's cold 'to do that thing' – where the anonymity of the act helps to confer negative qualities to it – and of Ariosto's 'suave fin d'amor', which recalls the poetry of the *dolce stil novo* and which, accompanied by the 'ignorante vulgo' (guilty of not understanding the finesse of such love) of the ensuing line, almost presents the ability to love physically as a privileged and exalted condition. Harington, moreover, disassociates himself from the text overtly by adding a marginal note, placed at the side of the third line, which reads 'wise men should count it a greater [excess] notwithstanding good Renaldo's opinion'; this comment is probably the greatest limitation to the English Rinaldo's feminist argument, and its quasi-patronising tone seems to confirm a moralistic intention on the part of the translator. Finally, Harington's line 'men using many never are ashamed', which appears to be sufficiently contrastive in relation to the ensuing line regarding women, has a rather different effect when it is compared with its original version: Ariosto states that 'l'uomo lodato ne va', adding a very real, powerful element of praise of the philanderer, whose representation as a man endowed with extraordinary seductive charm is normally charged with positive qualities. Conversely, Harington's line – stating simply that men do not feel shame and ignoring the donjuanesque aspect of celebration for the conquests – restricts the effect of these conquests to a 'private'

³¹ For a very brief account of Orlando as a 'textbook case of the lover who turns misogynist' after his beloved's 'betrayal', see Benson 1992: 94.

psychological level and excludes the 'public' levels of praise and positive reputation; his version is, consequently, weaker than Ariosto's.

Nevertheless, Rinaldo's proto-feminism is not universally accepted. Miranda Johnson-Haddad suggests that the character's speech, rather than feminist, is opportunist:

[I]t is possible that Harington was being an astute reader in suggesting the [*sic*] Rinaldo's motives are not, in fact, as righteous as they ostensibly appear. At least one modern critic has recently argued that close examination of Ariosto's text shows that Rinaldo may well be acting out of self-interested cynicism rather than a dispassionate sense of justice.

(Johnson-Haddad 1994: 340)

The critic mentioned is Peter DeSa Wiggins, later quoted as saying:

At first glance Rinaldo's opinions appear to represent a refreshing antidote to the indiscriminate cruelty of Scotland's law, and also a recognition of feminine rights, but upon consideration, they reveal themselves to be an expression of a laissez-faire cynicism of which Scotland's law is little more than the opposite extreme.

(quoted in Johnson-Haddad 1994: 350)

Pamela Benson expresses even stronger doubts about Rinaldo's motives, perhaps even excessively: defining Rinaldo as 'antifeminist because he is motivated by male sexual interests' (Benson 1992: 96), she explains that

Rinaldo's antifeminism is made clear by his failure to make a substantial argument against the double standard. He attacks the law because it denies sexual pleasure to the male lover, not because it withholds equal rights from women. He thinks of women as objects that can satisfy men's sexual desires.

(Benson 1992: 97)

However, Benson's observation is flawed for a number of reasons. First, Rinaldo's words are so powerful that it is difficult not to consider his speech successfully proto-feminist exactly because it *acknowledges* the existence of a double standard, which is, *per se*, a significant, consequential, and not at all granted realisation: Rinaldo's very articulation of the gender inequality is, in itself, a 'substantial argument', considering period and context. Second, it is not clear how the Scottish law could deny 'sexual pleasure to the male lover', punishing, as it does, women only; third, Benson's final remark seems as inappropriate as her later definition of Rinaldo as 'pleasure-seeking, amoral, and antifeminist' (Benson 1992: 112), not to mention that it seems rather difficult, and arrogant, to delineate what Ariosto's character 'thinks of women' (or what any character thinks, for that matter). In general, the idea that a noble knight-errant, spurred by a monk's sad tale, would really set off in defence of a princess – whose face he has never even seen – just for self-interest (of what kind it is not clear:

readers would have a hard guess at what Rinaldo could obtain by saving a woman whose heart and life, Ariosto makes clear, are entirely devoted to another man), seems, quite simply, too forced³². Finally, to question the sincerity of Rinaldo's demand for legal fairness is to fail to situate the Ginevra episode in the correct, wider context of the poem, and ultimately to misread Ariosto's text. In fact, Rinaldo's proto-feminist plea for equality – rather than hierarchy – among the sexes is not unique in the poem: as seen in the previous section, the acknowledgment of the opposing patriarchal and matriarchal systems was an argument raised by the Christian knights visiting the Amazons' island. There, Ariosto had equated the gender-specific differences in the law with intrinsic unfairness within the law, in a very similar pattern to here; and Harington had managed, on that occasion, to twist the text completely and to add some humorous misogynistic comments, ignoring at the same time the implicit but very evident proto-feminism of the Italian text. It is by studying both passages together that Rinaldo's egalitarianism can be better understood: it is precisely the realisation that his defence of Ginevra is not a unique passage in the poem, but is reprised and strengthened by its companion, the Amazons' tale, that proves its sincerity.

Indeed, in current Italian criticism the episode is often selected exactly to prove the proto-feminism of the Ariostean text. Mario Santoro, for instance, admits that Rinaldo's condemnation of the Scottish law 'may seem a manifestation of easy hedonism, perhaps suggested by the very reputation of the character'³³ (Santoro 1973: 95), but goes on to say that

[Q]uelle parole acquistano il loro esatto valore e la loro precisa dimensione lette alla luce di quanto poco dopo lo stesso Rinaldo dirà per spiegare le ragioni della sua condanna della legge iniqua. Il problema si allarga per investire quello dei diritti della donna nei confronti dell'altro sesso: e il discorso di Rinaldo mira non tanto a giustificare i diritti della natura quanto a rivendicare alla donna la parità con lo uomo [...]. Il discorso di Rinaldo va dunque al di là della dura legge di Scozia per coinvolgere nella condanna assai più largamente tutta la morale tradizionale: la legge non è che un'occasione per un'esplicita e perentoria presa di coscienza di un problema generale etico e di costume.

[Those words acquire their true worth and their precise dimension in the light of what Rinaldo himself, soon after, will say to explain the reasons of his condemnation of the unfair law. The issue becomes larger, so as to include the question of women's rights in relation to men's: and

³² This very idea will be, in fact, contradicted at the conclusion of the tale, in the sixth canto: Rinaldo will save Ginevra, he will not *obtain* anything in exchange, and will happily depart Scotland after witnessing the wedding of the reunited couple – probably leaving those critics convinced of his 'self-interest' rather puzzled.

³³ 'Potrebbe sembrare questa affermazione una manifestazione di facile edonismo suggerito anche dall'immagine tradizionale del personaggio'.

Rinaldo's speech is not aimed at justifying nature's rights, but, rather, at vindicating woman's equality with man (...). Rinaldo's speech, therefore, goes beyond Scotland's harsh law to include, in its condemnation, the whole traditional moral at large: the law is nothing but an excuse for an explicit and irrefutable stand on a general ethical and moral issue].

(Santoro 1973: 96-97)

Another aspect that emerges from the Ariodante and Ginevra episode is stylistic, but nevertheless significant. In the Italian poem, Ariosto consistently narrates the tale writing from the point of view of Ginevra, and thus utilising a female perspective: the most manifest example of this is the fact that even Ariodante's passion is represented in these terms, that is not describing his feelings, but rather portraying Ginevra's perception of *his* love: 'ella sapea che l'era amante', '(she knew) how he loved her' (V, XVIII, 4). Harington never picks up on this detail (for instance, the Ariostean line above becomes in the English version '*Ariodantes* heart was set on fire, / *Genevras* beautie kindling his desire', XVIII, 7-8). This apparently inconsequential modification is cause of obscurity in two instances; first, when Ariosto has Dalinda explain that the duke Polinesso, another of Ginevra's suitors, could have no hope of winning the princess, because she was in love with Ariodante:

[E]ra sì d'Ariodante accesa,
che quanta acqua è nel mar, piccola dramma
non spegneria de la sua immensa fiamma.

[She was so inflamed with love of Ariodante that all the water in the sea could not extinguish
a small part of the fire which raged within her]

(V, XX, 6-8)

Harington maintains the same metaphor, but virtually erases the role of Ginevra, saying instead that Polinesso's hopes were vain because '*Ariodant* so lov'd the princely maid, / that by no meanes his flames could be alaid' (XX, 7-8). The translation here is flawed because Ariodante's love for Ginevra would not have presented *per se* a problem, as the princess would still have been able to marry the duke or, for that matter, anybody else, had she not reciprocated Ariodante's feelings. Similarly, in stanza XXIX, during a verbal fight between Polinesso and Ariodante, Ariosto has the latter exclaiming 'e so che certo sai che t'ella non t'ama' ('I know that you know she loves you not', XXIX, 8; a very flowing line whose rhythm recalls the Dantean '[c]red'io ch'ei credette ch'io credesse', *Inferno*, XIII, 25), focusing on Ginevra's feelings and stressing that it is she, and only she, who has the right to decide on her

spouse; Harington, on the contrary, ignores the role of Ginevra once again and simply writes 'still finding from all hope you are excluded' (XXIX, 8).

That Ariosto's choice of using the princess' point of view is deliberate is proved not only by the fact that the reiterated use of Ginevra's perspective cannot be coincidental, with it being extended to the whole episode, but is also confirmed by the syntax of the opening stanza of the canto: describing how it is a peculiarity of the human species that women can be subject to mistreatment from men, he writes that

[L]'orsa con l'orso al bosco sicura erra,
la leonessa appresso il leon giace;
col lupo vive la lupa sicura,
né la iuvenca ha del torel paura.

[The mother-bear goes safely through the forest with her mate. The lioness lays herself down beside the lion; the she-wolf lives secure in her consort's company, and the heifer has no fear of the young bull]

(V, I, 4-8)

The syntax of the passage is remarkable: all of the four lines are written from the point of view of the relative female animal, thus rendering the opening stanza, as far as style is concerned, an anticipation of the way in which the whole episode will be narrated. Harington, albeit producing a semantically faithful translation, ignores this stylistic device and groups the male and female of the four species into one single line. The obstinacy of never presenting the woman's point of view, favouring instead that of a number of rigorously male suitors/viewers/lovers, does not purport a positive representation of Ginevra, who seems, in the English version, not only condemned to an unjust death on the literal level, but also to a metaphorical death in that her opinions, her perspective and, by extension, her *side* of the story are silenced and condemned to die with her. For Harington, she seems already dead, her words erased, and her memory only revived by male characters uttering their *male* view of the story. The translator's attitude becomes even more interesting in the light of England's political situation, and of Queen Elizabeth's position of having to choose whether to marry or not and, if so, whom (certainly, in her case, not for love but for politics: still, it was to be her decision). Jason Scott-Warren has commented that

Harington dropped less than subtle hints that an unmarried, and hence ungoverned, female was an entirely unsuitable ruler [...]. In the *Metamorphosis of Ajax* of 1596, he [dropped] a strong hint that the queen should subordinate herself to her (married) favourite Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex. Praising the Roman Emperor Trajan in terms which

irresistibly aligned him with Essex, Harington then referred to Elizabeth as 'our most gracious Empress, who is indeed worthy, and only worthy to be Trajan's mistress' [...]. It appears that Elizabeth was angered by the *Metamorphosis*, and it is easy to see why.

(Scott-Warren 2003: 230)

It might become clear why Harington could never have agreed with the freedom of choice that Ariosto desperately wished to grant to his princess, whose right to decide whether and whom to marry he championed, through Rinaldo, throughout the episode. In Harington's eyes, Elizabeth could not afford such freedom and *had* to marry, but the translator, in 1591, was clearly not yet ready to state his opinion on the subject explicitly – he needed a few more years, and another work, to be able to do so.

A final detail in the Ginevra story allows Harington to pen a gratuitous generalisation on women. Ariosto begins one of the octaves of the fifth canto with a very powerful '[f]inge ella teco, né t'ama né prezza' ('You are deceived by her; she neither esteems nor loves you', XXXVII, 1), in which the unusual, prominent position given to the verb 'finge' and the postponement of the subject almost leads readers to gender it as male, because duke Polinesso is the character that readers have learnt to know as a deceiver. Harington's version has, on the contrary, a completely autonomous remark on female falseness, which does not even refer specifically to Ginevra. His

Alas (quoth he), I see you do not know
How cunningly these women can dissemble,
They least do love where they make greatest show,
And not to be the thing they most resemble.

(V, XXXVII, 1-4),

with the word 'sentence' added as a marginal note, is inexplicable: the translator, twisting the meaning of the original text, attributes the opinion to Ariosto, by highlighting the universality of the message through his para-textual comment.

Intertwined with the Ginevra episode is the related tale of Dalinda, the girl who revealed to Rinaldo the injustice of the princess' condemnation. Harington does not miss the opportunity to attack talkative women, one of his most common criticisms of women in the poem and elsewhere³⁴; in order to do so, however, he transforms

³⁴ On the subject of 'shrewishly talkative' women, Jason Scott-Warren notes that, in the *Letters*, Harington 'wrote that, in a wife, "one language may be tongue too much"' (Scott-Warren 2003: 229). Conversely, Ariosto's ideal wife is characterised by, primarily, intelligence, as emerges from his third satire: 'Sia di buona aria, sia gentil, non dorma / con gli occhi aperti; che più l'esser sciocca / d'ogni altra ria deformità deforma' ['Let her be happy, kind, and let her not sleep with open eyes: because lack

completely Ariosto's text, even rendering his translation implausible at points. When the Italian author says that the girl, whose life Rinaldo had just saved by fighting the bandits who were trying to kill her, was so frightened by the experience that, understandably, she could not even open her mouth to explain what had happened, Harington writes, as implausibly as it is gratuitously, that the girl 'unto *Renaldo* straight would have recited' (LVIII, 4) the full story. This pattern continues in the following stanza, where Ariosto's girl, so far depicted as extremely beautiful and equally silent, finally manages to utter a few words, with a feeble and trembling voice. Harington's lady, on the contrary, recovers so quickly from her scare that she even manages to entertain Rinaldo with her 'pleasing speech' (LIX, 3): as if the chance to chat about her problems is too tempting for a woman, who, in order to do so, even forgets a life-threatening experience. Clearly, the chance to satirise women's talkativeness was equally tempting for the translator.

Canto XXVIII is deserving of particular attention, both because, as the tradition goes, it provided the cause and the starting point of Harington's entire work³⁵, and because the Host's tale included in it is characterised by strong misogyny in both versions. Although the anti-feminism in the Ariostean version renders this canto a remarkable exception to his normal, evident sympathy for women visible in the rest of the poem³⁶, the self-containment of the anecdote, its external inspiration (from a tale in the *Arabian Nights*) and the fact that the 'theory' professed in it is contradicted by the 'practice' of the ensuing story of Isabella act as partial explanations for this change. In turn, both the tale's misogyny and the fact that it might have been the first to be translated are possible reasons for this being one of the cantos in which Harington makes the fewest omissions and compressions, leaving virtually untouched

of intelligence in a wife is worse than any other ugly deformity', quoted in Santoro 1989: 333]. According to Santoro, 'la donna viene con insistenza qualificata come 'compagna' e 'amica', in un rapporto segnato decisamente dalla reciprocità dell'amore' ['the woman is consistently qualified as a 'partner' and as a 'friend', and the relationship is decidedly characterised by the reciprocity of love', *ibid.*], thus concentrating on equality rather than hierarchy within the family.

³⁵ See pp. 17-18.

³⁶ Ariosto does not only apologise for his report of the Host's tale at its beginning, when he asks female readers (and male gynophile readers) to skip it, but even in an address to women included in the much later fragment *Cinque Canti* (composed 1518-19, published 1545; see Chapter Three, page 207), as though still regretting, after so many years, its inclusion in the poem: 'sopra tutti gli altri v'ho lodate, / come quel che son vostro e sempre fui: / io v'ho offeso, ignorante, in un sol loco; / vi lodo in tanti a studio' ('above everybody else I have praised you, as I am and always have been yours; I have offended you, unintentionally, only in one place; but I celebrate you in many other places, deliberately', *Cinque Canti*, IV, 1, 5-8).

(even in the number of octaves) the Host's tale itself and making minor changes only once the narration of the canto reprises.

The impression, purported by some critics, that Harington in this canto enjoys adding details to the already bawdy stanzas by Ariosto, rendering the episode more explicit by the opportune insertion of certain metaphors, is, in fact, only apparent. Townsend Rich quotes the stanza

Th'Adulterer, through sleeping verie sound,
Yet by his face was easily detected:
A beggars brat, bred by him from his cradell,
he was ryding on his masters sadell.

(XXVIII, XXI, 5-8)

Rich comments that this is 'the only noticeable change or addition which Harington made in the tale of Giocondo [...]. The last line is original with Sir John' (Rich 1940: 126). However, Ariosto uses the same semantic field of 'riding' later on in the episode, when he has a similar, but longer metaphor:

[G]li dimostrò il bruttissimo omiciuolo
che la giumenta altrui sotto si tiene,
tocca di sproni e fa giuocar di schiene.

[He revealed the grotesque little dwarf: he was mounted on another's filly, spurring her as his back jerked up and down]

(XXVIII, XLIII, 6-8)

Of this metaphor, Harington only keeps one line (that the dwarf can 'keep his styryp still', XLIII, 8); Ariosto's most explicit terms – and his mare metaphor to indicate the queen – remain ignored, and Harington's previous line cannot be defined 'original' because it is Ariostean, and simply anticipated.

As said above, the rare fidelity characteristic of this canto includes also a striking identity in the number of octaves. It is perhaps significant that the first stanza to be omitted is part of a series of three that Ariosto dedicates to a defence of women:

Conoscete alcun voi, che non lasciasse
la moglie sola, ancor che fosse bella,
per seguire altra donna, se sperasse
in breve e facilmente ottener quella?
Che farebbe egli, quando lo pregasse
o desse premio a lui donna o donzella?
Credo, per compiacer or queste or quelle,
che tutti lasciaremmovi la pelle.

[Do you know any man who would not leave his wife, however beautiful she was, to follow another woman, if he had hopes of a quick and easy conquest? And what would he do if a woman or young girl paid court to him or offered him presents? To please some woman or other I believe that every one of us would forfeit our own skins]

(XXVIII, LXXVIII)

One of the translator's modifications of the original text is to be found when, describing Giocondo's shocking discovery of the queen copulating with the dwarf, Ariosto mentions that the room where the unaware couple is lying is the queen's own, most private room, where nobody but the closest to her are admitted; Harington omits this, simply stating that the queen is lying in a richly furnished room. As Jason Scott-Warren notes,

The queen's relationship to the room is much more tangential in the translation than it is in the original, where the geography of the court, in its secrecy and intimacy and beauty, is charged with sexual implications. Harington hangs back here because he risks making all too apparent what was implicit in his circulation of the canto among his own queen's ladies-in-waiting [...]. The resemblance between the geography of intimacy at the courts of Astolfo and Elizabeth Tudor was too close for comfort.

(Scott-Warren 1996: 31-32)

The other notable differences between the two versions are those, ever-present, in style. For example, the conclusion of the Giocondo story presents Fiammetta humbly apologising to her two lovers after having managed to have sexual intercourse with a third man throughout one night, her other two lovers lying by her very side. Harington's version is rather flat, with the exception of the antanaclasis in lines 2 and 3 ('pitie' used as a verb and a noun):

She humbly pardon craves for her offence,
And that they pitie would her wofull case,
That she with pitie mov'd to recompence
His love, that lasted had no little space,
And who it was, she told them, and of whence,
Had this ill luck in this unluckie place,
How she had hop'd that though they hapt to wake,
Yet for his partner either would it take.

(XXVIII, LXX)

Ariosto, on the contrary, manages to give his stanza a unique tone:

Domandò lor perdono, che d'amore
Ch'a un giovinetto avea portato, spinta,
e da pietà d'un tormentato core
che molto avea per lei patito, vinta,
caduta era la notte in quello errore;
e seguitò, senza dir cosa finta,
come tra lor con speme si condusse,

ch'ambi credesson che'l compagno fusse.

[She asked their pardon. Moved by the love she had long nurtured for a young man, she explained, and conquered by pity for a tormented heart which had suffered so much for her, she had that night committed her error. She went on, without inventing anything, to explain how she had behaved between them in the hope that each would think it was his companion]

(XXVIII, LXX)

The two splendid caesurae in the second (where it is accompanied by the sophisticated figure of speech of hyperbaton) and in the fourth line give the whole passage a logical, inexorable tone – almost resembling a defensive speech in a trial –, which the English translation evidently lacks.

Addresses to Women and General Comments

Despite the obvious importance of the treatment of the female characters of the poem, it is especially in Harington's translation of Ariosto's addresses to women or comments on them that the former's misogyny is most apparent, because the writers' opinions are not shielded by the *hic et nunc* representation of an individual character in a precise moment in time, but are, on the contrary, general and, even more consequentially, generalisable, as many of these comments have the nature of *sententiae*. A simple glance at a selection of these comments is sufficient to become aware of the extent to which Harington's misogyny can reach.

A first example can be found in the second canto, when the translator adds that all people, as humans, share a desire for gossip, but that this is especially true in the case of women: 'deepe desire / That all (but chiefly women) have to know' (XXXVI, 1-2). In the original version, Ariosto presents prying as a characteristically human (as opposed to specifically female) trait, he does not ironise on women's supposed nosiness, and never genders curiosity as a typically female characteristic. In fact, his line 'questo disir, ch'a *tutti* sta nel cuore / de' fatti altrui sempre cercar novella' ('the desire people commonly feel to enquire into other people's affairs', XXXVI, 1-2; emphasis added) rather shows it as the common trait that connects humanity.

In the eighth canto, Harington translates significantly a passage – the prominent *incipit* of the book –, which Ariosto is very careful in maintaining ungendered. In fact, the Italian author strives to gender the nouns as *both* male *and* female, specifying

Oh quante sono incantatrici, oh quanti

incantator tra noi, che non si sanno!
Che con le lor arti uomini e donne amanti
di sè, cangiando i visi lor, fatto hanno.

[Charming men and women, we may not know it but you thrive among us! Artfully you
disguise your faces and ensnare the hearts of men and women who are in love with them]
(VIII, I, 1-4)

when complaining of the ‘tricks’ employed to modify and enhance physical appearance. Ariosto’s effort to avoid the singling out of just one of the sexes is impressive: not only is the term ‘incantatore’ repeated in both its feminine and masculine form, but, two lines later, the concept is reiterated in the use of the nouns ‘uomini’ and ‘donne’; the attack is exclusively towards narcissism and is, truly, universal. Harington’s version, on the contrary, seems directed only to women:

Oh strange enchantments used now adayes,
Oh charmers strange among us dayly found,
[...]
blinding mens conceits, and them fast tying,
With simulation, fraud, deceit and lying.

But he that had the rule and ring of reason,
Should soone their frauds, their crafts and guile discover.

(VIII, I, 1-2, 7-8; II, 1-2)

Although there is no explicit mention of women in the passage, the victims of this wave of narcissism are presented as exclusively male (I, 7; II, 1).

A more complex case of Harington’s misogyny can be found when Ariosto, regretting Orlando’s madness, wishes that the once valiant knight could find revenge from the ungrateful Angelica, and then broadens this desire to the rest of her sex, because ‘ad ogni modo tutte sono ingratitude, / né si trova tra loro oncia di buono’ (‘they’re a nasty tribe and not an ounce of good is to be found in any of them!’), LXXIV, 3-4). The translator, of course, retains these two lines, and then expands in a moralistic, fiercer invective against women:

I would the like might hap to all the kinde,
For in a thousand good there is not one,
All be so proud, unthankfull and unkinde,
With flinty hearts, carelesse of others mone,
In their owne lusts carrid most headlong blinde.

(XXIX, LXX, 2-6)

The example is peculiar, because the author himself produces two unusually misogynistic lines. However, Ariosto immediately corrects himself, writing, using a beautiful musical metaphor, that he should stop composing before the strings of his violin, loosened by certain hurtful memories, play a music very different to the positive one he has produced in the rest of the poem, where women's praises are consistently sung. Conversely, Harington, ignoring the metaphor, concludes his canto with the line 'sometime for saying truth one may be chidden' (LXX, 8), thus not restricting his misogynistic comments to a momentary burst of anger like Ariosto does, but granting them universal value, so clear with his choice of the term 'truth'.

As seen in the previous section, sometimes Harington's misogynistic attacks are subtler, taking the form of simple terminological additions which are, however, often sufficient to reveal a hint of stereotypical anti-feminism. This is the case with a passage in the sixth canto, when the English duke Astolfo, transformed into a myrtle tree by the sorceress Alcina, accuses all women of having too instable an intellect: 'her wanton, wavering, wily womans wit' (L, 2) – almost an aria from *Rigoletto* – is a strong accusation, enhanced by the use of a very good alliteration. Ariosto, indeed, mentions 'il suo mobil ingegno' ('the fickleness of her nature', L, 1), but in the original text there are no generalisations, and, given the context (the speaker is a man transformed into a bush), Alcina's unstable intellect is far more likely to be caused by her being a witch, rather than by her sex. The same situation can be found again in canto XVIII, where Harington adds a simile which is not present in the original text:

But loe the weather oft doth change her cheare,
Ev'n as a woman oft doth change her will.

(XVIII, LXIV, 5-6)

In this instance, the addition of the comment 'Simile' in a marginal note, a usual habit on the part of Harington, attributes, in the readers' view, the line to Ariosto: evidently, a result that the translator does not perceive as dangerous.

Omissions of entire passages are another practical way employed by Harington to silence the women of the epic. One such case is Melissa's thirteenth-canto exposition to Bradamante of the illustrious women of the Este family. Ariosto has Bradamante wonder whether, among her ancestors, any woman can be considered as worthy as those men that the same Melissa had illustrated to Bradamante during their first encounter (III, XXIV). There, Ariosto had dedicated thirty-six stanzas to a list of

mainly male (although some women were already included) ancestors, and Harington had compressed them to twenty-three, thus retaining two-thirds of the names; here, Ariosto dedicates fifteen octaves to a complimentary list of the most distinguished female members of the Estensi, and Harington omits, in this case, more than half of Ariosto's text, reducing the stanzas to seven. Moreover, the quality of the omissions is different: whereas in the third canto the translator had compressed the list of names by omitting individuals on an apparently casual, occasional basis, in the thirteenth canto he both compresses some lines in the initial stanzas and omits whole groups of octaves (most evidently, the five between the LXIII and the LXVII). Never before had he omitted such a large group of stanzas as in this case: and this choice is consequential, because the effect of the casual omission of names in a random order is a simple reduction in the number of lines, without limiting the inspiring effect that the list has on readers (the result that Harington evidently and justifiably wanted to achieve, so as not to bore his readers with endless listing of unfamiliar names). If Harington's readers had compared his translation with the original, as he himself wished, they would have noticed the occasional omission of certain names, read the names in question, and retained the overall effect of awe without modification, compared to Ariosto's readers. On the contrary, by excising the passage *entirely*, the impression that Harington's readers would receive upon a comparison with the original is rather different: that of the complete insignificance of the women praised in the Italian text.

Among these omissions, the translator even excludes the praise of Isabella d'Este as patroness of the arts: the extraordinarily educated marchioness of Mantua, a true Maecenas who helped to transform her court into a splendid centre of culture, enjoys three very complimentary stanzas offered by her contemporary Ariosto, who proclaims

De la tua chiara stirpe uscirà quella
d'opere illustri e di bei studi amica,
ch'io non so ben se più leggiadra e bella
mi debba dire, o più saggia e pudica,
liberale e magnanima Isabella,
che del bel lume suo di e notte aprica
farà la terra che sul Menzo siede
[...]

Conchiudo in somma ch'ella avrà, per dono
de la virtù e del ciel, ciò ch'è di buono.

[Your illustrious house shall give birth to that friend of glorious deeds and fair studies, liberal, great-hearted Isabel; I know not which to put first, her beauty and grace, or her sagacity and virtue. Day and night her city set by the Mincio – Mantua, shall bask in her sunshine (...). In a word, then, all that is good shall be hers, both as to merits and as to natural gifts]

(XIII, LIX, 1-7; LXI, 7-8)

Harington maintains only the lines relating to her modesty, deliberately ignoring the praise on her culture and presenting, in the eight lines he devotes to her, Isabella as nothing more than a housewife:

Shall I begin with her whose vertue rare
 Shall with her husband live in happy strife,
 Whether his valiant actions may compare,
 Or be prefer'd before her honest life?
 He fights abroad against king *Charles* at Tare,
 She staid at home a chaste and sober wife:
Penelope in spending chaste her dayes,
 As worthy as *Uliesses* was of praise.

(XIII, LII)

Although Ariosto's Isabella is undoubtedly endowed with honesty and modesty, the main reason for her exaltation on the part of the Italian poet is clearly her role as a magnanimous, learned benefactress of the arts (2); to confine her to anonymity (there is no mention of her name in Harington's single stanza) and to reduce her role to a 'chaste and sober wife', explicitly stating that her domain should be 'at home' and highlighting this with a comparison with Penelope – the epitome of uxorial fidelity and domesticity – is inexplicable. Such an omission becomes even more curious in the light of the presence, in England, of outstanding patronesses of the arts: it would have been very easy, for Harington, to draw a comparison between Isabella and some of her equally worthy English counterparts, such as the Countess of Pembroke or even Queen Elizabeth herself.

Particularly fascinating are a few, sensuous passages in which Ariosto elaborates on writing and, specifically, women's writing. The author drops a brief hint in canto XX, which opens with two symmetrical octaves, respectively beginning with '[l]e donne antique hanno mirabil cose / fatto' ('ancient women have achieved distinction', I, 1-2) and '[l]e donne son venute in eccellenza' ('women have proved their excellence', II, 1) – two semantically synonymous lines which, however, do not have the effect of resulting repetitive – stressing the excellence of women in any of the fields in which ladies test themselves, be it letters or arms. Stylistically, Harington does not reproduce the symmetry of the two stanzas and, by focusing, in his marginal

notes, on two pairs of examples rather than on the wider praise of women in general (the notes mention Harpalice and Camilla first, and then Corinna and Sappho), he seems to limit slightly the universality of the original text. The explicit proto-feminism of the Italian original, which has also been highlighted by Mario Santoro in his overview of Ariosto's proto-feminism (Santoro 1973: 113; Santoro 1989: 86)³⁷ becomes more obvious in the ensuing octaves. In the second stanza, the author reveals how men, being envious of learned women, try to minimise their achievements. Even learned male writers are presented by Ariosto as maliciously burying and hiding the merits of their female counterparts:

Ben mi par di veder ch'al secol nostro
tanta virtù fra belle donne emerga,
che può dare opra a carte et ad inchiostro,
perché nei futuri anni si disperga,
e perché, odiose lingue, il mal dir vostro
con vostra eterna infamia si sommerga.

[In our own day I can clearly see such virtues evident among fair ladies that ink and paper is needed with which to record it all for posterity; this way, too, the calumnies of evil tongues may be drowned in perpetual shame]

(XX, III, 1-6)

Leaving unspecified the celebration of women's qualities, Ariosto does not limit his praise to chastity or modesty: he leaves an open door for women's active achievements, as well as expanding on a powerful anathema against those 'hateful tongues' who dismiss women's worth. Conversely, the translator employs a familiar habit in his third stanza, where his praise of women turns out to be exclusively a praise of chastity and virtue:

For sure I see in this our present age,
Such vertuous parts in their sweet sex to grow,
The young so sober, and the rest so sage,
And all so chaste, as writers shall (I know),
Have work enough to fill full many a page.

(XX, III, 1-5)

Seventeen cantos later, Ariosto reprises the discourse begun here, transforming it into an ample and detailed celebration of women writers. Providing a link with his

³⁷ 'Alle donne viene rivendicata l'attitudine per tutte le arti a cui esse si dedichino [...]. E viene indicata maliziosamente la causa della scarsa conoscenza delle loro virtù nel comportamento degli uomini dettato o da invidia o da ignoranza' ['Women are praised for their ability in every art they devote themselves to (...). And, tongue-in-cheek, the poet indicates, as the cause of the lack of recognition of their virtues, men's behaviour, caused by envy or ignorance', Santoro 1973: 114].

direct subject matter (Bradamante and Marfisa) through his open regret that the two knights did not write their own *cantari*, the Italian poet proclaims that the risk that women be forgotten or ignored has become almost non-existent, as they are now able to render themselves immortal, without having to recur to the help of (normally envious and thus untrustworthy) men (XXXVII, XXI-XXIII). Perhaps unsurprisingly, Harington modifies completely the original lines so that Ariosto's claim that the risk of forgetting women has disappeared is not caused by the fact that at last women have started writing themselves, but rather by the fact that *he* (Harington, or the author?) can improve the situation and *he* can talk about and praise them (XV). The attack on women writers is implicit, but very evident, as they are obliterated from the argument. Harington misses Ariosto's true meaning in the same way in the following stanza, where he admits that he is not good enough to talk about Bradamante's and Marfisa's adventures, thus highlighting once again his distorted point of view: according to the translator, it is not possible to talk more about the two knights because the (male) translator is not good enough; in Ariosto, that is not possible because the author does not know more about their adventures – providing another link with the previous lines, and advocating/fantasising the writings of their own adventures on the part of the two heroines:

Donne, io conchiudo in somma, ch'ogni etate
molte ha di voi degne d'istoria avute;
ma per invidia di scrittori state
non sète dopo morte conosciute:
il che più non sarà, poi che voi fate
per voi stesse immortal vostra virtute.
Se far le due cognate sapean questo,
si sapria meglio ogni lor degno gesto.

[To conclude, ladies, every age has produced many a woman meriting a legend, but the envy of writers has deprived you of posthumous renown. This will no longer be true now that you see to assuring your own immortality. Had the two sisters-in-law been capable of this (to write), each of their excellent deeds would be better known]

(XXXVII, xxiii)

Harington's translation of the stanza is extraordinarily deceiving:

But to conclude both these and others prayse,
That I may follow on my present storie,
I say that both in these and former dayes,
Faire dames have merited great fame and glorie;
Which though by writers envie much decayes,
Yet need you not therefore now to be sorie,
Because amongst us all it is intended,

What appears to be a literal, faithful translation hides in reality a number of deliberate changes and differences that render the English stanza semantically opposite to its original version. Where Ariosto presents a clear, logical argument in which he exposes how women can avenge the past unfair treatment they have been subjected to – ignorance and oblivion – by starting to write themselves (lines 5-6), Harington admits that men have been envious in the past, and asks his readers to believe that, now, those same men ('us all' cannot be intended as anything else) will suddenly change their attitude to sing in praise of women. Moreover, Harington, unlike Ariosto, consistently uses a male perspective, never allowing women their voice, and this is the detail that flaws his translation the most: even if readers believe the translator in that men will start 'mending' the 'foule fault' of forgetting women, it will still be men who write in women's praise. Ariosto desires the opposite and calls for women to write and create their own literature (and this is, at last, a female perspective): this dream of a 'new canon' is completely lost in the translation.

Interestingly, some critics seem to have been deceived by Harington's rendition, or, perhaps, by the lack of an exhaustive, comparative study of the two versions. Pamela Benson, for instance, exalts Harington's translation of this canto, saying that

[H]is is nearly as forceful an encomium of modern women as Ariosto's, and his notes to the poem extend Ariosto's thought by providing examples of English women writers. If one is awarding praise for the writing of epitaphs for deceased spouses, Harington notes:

that honorable Ladie (widow of the late Lord *John Russell*) deserveth no lesse commendation, having done as much for two husbands [...].

Although Ariosto's original passage more frequently urges women to write about other women, Harington's translation reproduces Ariosto's essential points – women can and should write, and they can achieve fame for themselves and others by doing so – and his note suggests that there are English women capable of doing the job. Harington's lines on this topic are more radical in their English context than Ariosto's were in their Italian one.

(Benson 1997: 52)

Unfortunately, the critic's comments are not accompanied by any form of textual comparison between the two versions, or even, for that matter, by any form of quotation except for the citation from Harington's post-canto notes (thus, a paratextual element). The critic's conclusions, then, seem slightly simplistic, and not sufficiently the fruit of a detailed stylistic and linguistic analysis as above; more importantly, they are contradicted soon after (Benson 1997: 55), when Benson

recognises that Harington transforms the proto-feminism of Ariosto's comments on women's writing into pro-feminism, with its consequent focus on domesticity.

Ariosto's argument becomes both more persuasive and less theoretical in his enthusiastic celebration of a number of Italian Renaissance women poets. Harshly criticising the omnipresent envy on the part of men, which does not allow women's merits to be recognised as they should be, Ariosto expresses his regret at the fact that women have not dedicated themselves enough to literary studies:

Se, come in acquistar qualch'altro dono
che senza industria non può dar Natura,
affaticate notte e dì si sono
con somma diligenza e lunga cura
le valorose donne, e se con buono
successo n'è uscit'opra non oscura,
così si fosson poste a quelli studi
ch'immortal fanno le mortal virtudi

[If those accomplished ladies who have striven night and day with the most diligent application to acquire some gift that Nature bestows only upon the industrious – and some brilliant work will have been the happy product – if those ladies, I say, had devoted themselves instead to those studies which confer immortality upon mortal virtues...]

(XXXVII, 1)

This passage has been highlighted by Mario Santoro as an example of Ariosto's 'exaltation of woman' ('esaltazione della donna', Santoro 1973: 116):

La disparità della fama delle donne rispetto a quella degli uomini (disparità che è insieme causa ed effetto del pregiudizio circa la pretesa superiorità dell'altro sesso) viene prospettata dal poeta come il risultato dell'antagonismo degli uomini che non contenti di accrescere il loro prestigio si studiano di mettere in rilievo le deficienze e gli errori delle donne e di oscurarne in ogni modo la fama.

[The difference between the reputation of women compared to men (a difference which is both cause and effect of the prejudice of the supposed superiority of one sex) is presented by the poet as the result of men's antagonism, who, not happy with increasing their prestige, make an effort to underline deficiencies and mistakes on the part of women, and to obscure in any possible way their reputation]

(Santoro 1973: 117-118)

Harington's women receive a different treatment:

If worthie Ladies would but take such pain,
In studies that immortall glorie raise,
As they do often take in matters vaine,
Deserving none at all, or little praise,
Which notwithstanding that they might obtain,
They have employed many nights and dayes;
To have thereby some trifling want supplied,
That niggard nature had to them denied

The translator independently criticises women, accusing them of wasting precious days in ‘matters vaine’ and ‘trifling’ activities; the most immediate result of this criticism is that of spurring readers into thinking that the lack of praise of women is simply the deserved punishment that these receive for favouring trivial activities over the higher literary studies. In two difficult lines in the fourth stanza, Ariosto highlights how men’s lies regarding women are not only far from the truth, but not even remotely near it; Harington translates these lines softening the criticism and simply stating men’s attempts to conceal women’s qualities. The translator, then, omits another large group of stanzas, the six between VIII and XIV, in which the author lists contemporary poets who have written favourably about women, and which include Ariosto’s enthusiastic assertion that, since women can now satisfy their thirst at Mount Helicon’s spring, they have reached such a position in which they could write in praise of men, and not *vice versa*.

Finally, the translator is much colder than Ariosto when praising the poetess Vittoria Colonna, a Renaissance Petrarchist, who

[H]a non pur sé fatta immortale
col dolce stil di che il miglior non odo;
ma può qualunque di cui parli o scriva,
trar dal sepolcro, e far ch’eterno viva.

[Has not only made herself immortal with a style, a sweetness I have never heard bettered; but
(who) can draw from the grave and immortalise whomsoever she speaks or writes about]
(XXXVII, XVI, 5-8)

Ariosto’s panegyric is impressive; Harington tones it down greatly, erasing the sonneteer’s ability to rise herself to fame and even restricting to her husband only her ability to immortalise whomever she writes about:

That such a gift unto her spouse doth give,
That being dead she still doth make him live
[...]

such a wife, so vertuous, chaste, and rare,
As ev’n thy soule it selfe could not desire
A louder trumpe thy praises out to sound

(XXXVII, XIII, 7-8; XIV, 5-7)

Enlarging on what was written above about Harington's apparent disapproval of women writers, it now seems that, perhaps, in Harington's view women writers are acceptable, but only if they fulfil the domestic role of virtuous and chaste wives first – and limit their poetic ability to the celebration of their husbands.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this close comparison of elements of Harington's translation alongside the original version has demonstrated that there is a distinctive trait of misogyny in the English text, both in the representation of the female knights and in that of the other female characters of the poem. Whether this behaviour is caused in him by the influence of the numerous annotated editions of the poem, which were circulating in an attempt to moralise what was considered to be too liberal a work and which he frequently used whilst translating³⁸, or whether the root of Harington's treatment of the women of the poem is an intrinsic, personal misogyny, is virtually impossible to know. What is certain, upon comparing the translation with its original version, is that Harington stresses the feminine qualities of the female knights of the poem whenever possible, not hesitating to sacrifice faithfulness in order to do so. This behaviour, perhaps an attempt to define women according to traditional social roles, seems highly influenced by a strong sense of *decorum*, which allows comparisons to be drawn between Harington's view of the female knights and those expressed in the misogynistic treatises of the 'pamphlet wars' of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, such as *Hic Mulier* (1620):

For since the days of Adam women were never so Masculine [...]: man in body by attire, man in behaviour by rude complement, man in nature by aptness to anger, man in action by pursuing revenge, man in wearing weapons, man in using weapons, and, in brief, so much man in all things that they are neither men nor women, but just good for nothing.

(*Hic Mulier*, 265; 269-270)

Although the pamphlet was published some three decades later than Harington's translation, it is easy to see similarities between the masculine women condemned in it and the most martial qualities of Ariosto's female knights; perhaps it is not surprising that Harington, whose attempt to moralise the *Furioso* is unquestionable

³⁸ See p. 18.

(the mere presence of the para-textual material, from the 'Allegorie' to the post-canto annotations on the 'Morall', is proof of that), tries, in his translation, to minimise the masculine aspects of the heroines and favour those that he held as more feminine. Indeed, the pamphlet becomes even more explicit in its criticism of masculine women, mentioning, among others, the two prominent women warriors of Ariosto's epic as examples not to be followed literally, but rather understood allegorically:

The weapon of a virtuous woman was her tears, which every good man pitied and every valiant man honored; the weapon of a cruel man is his sword, which neither Law allows nor reason defends. And will you leave the excellent shield of innocence for this deformed instrument of disgrace? [...] [D]o not become the idle Sisters of foolish Don Quixote, to believe every vain Fable which you read or to think you may be attired like Bradamant, who was often taken for Ricardetto, her brother; that you may fight like Marfiza and win husbands with conquest; or ride astride like Claridiana and make Giants fall at your stirrups. The Morals will give you better meanings, which if you shun and take the gross imitations, the first will deprive you of all good society; the second, of noble affections; and the third, of all beloved modesty. You shall lose all the charms of women's natural perfections, have no presence to win respect, no beauty to enchant men's hearts, nor no bashfulness to excuse the vilest imputations.³⁹

(270-271)

Sir John would have certainly agreed with the first comment, given the quantity of tears enforced by him upon the poem's heroines, as well as with the subtler criticism of the female knights and consequent preference for allegorical readings of their adventures, mirrored in his moralistic interpretation of the *Furioso*. The same attitude expressed in *Hic Mulier* and acted out by Harington is visible in other contemporary convictions: Janet Clare's comment on the censure imposed on women's reading concludes with an apt quotation from Juan Luis Vives, '[c]ertain works – including, for example, romance literature, with its emphasis on knightly conduct – should be prohibited, for "it can not lightly be a chaste mayd that is occupied thynkyng of armour"' (Clare 1997: 38). Thus, Harington's attempts to ignore the references to effeminate men (as shown by his treatment of the episode of the Amazons and his original attack on narcissism) have a similar purpose to his censure of warrior women: both cross-dressing and male narcissism are seen as a deviance from natural sexual roles, as going against 'the Renaissance belief in the necessity of proper distinctions between the sexes' (Henderson and McManus 1985: 18) and, by extension, as a challenge to gender hierarchy.

³⁹ In turn, *Haec Vir* (1620), pamphlet written in response to *Hic Mulier*, quotes two stanzas from Ariosto to demonstrate the existence of effeminate men long before the emergence of masculine women (288).

When Harington does seem to increase the explicitness of certain passages (as exemplified by the lines relating to the two maids from Alcina's kingdom), he does so in order to clarify his depiction of a particular character; in other words, he presents the female characters of whom he disapproves as performing, thinking, or uttering explicitly sexual (and, thus, morally wrong, if the translation wants to be moralising) words or actions in order to present them in a more negative light than they are in the original. Harington's changes are, thus, an act of condemnation, not of bawdiness: denying this and maintaining that the translator elaborated on the original version's bawdiness for added humour simply denotes a significant misreading of the relationship between Ariosto's and Harington's texts.

Similarly, the wanton tale of Giocondo translated from canto XXVIII and circulated by Harington as a self-contained story is marked by a light-hearted misogyny that goes hand in hand with the bawdiness of the only anti-feminist episode of the *Orlando Furioso*. Although it has been demonstrated that it is not correct to say that Harington increased the bawdiness of the Ariostean version, it is at the same time true that he did not make any effort to minimise it; however, as with the two maids from Alcina's kingdom, the bawdiness of the tale, for Harington, acts as a support of the traditional misogynistic claim of women's sexual insatiability, also seen in the translator's jocular additions to the Amazons' episode. Henderson and McManus' definition of the Henrician anti-feminist pamphlet *The Schoolhouse of Women* (1541) as being 'full of misogynist humor, sexual puns, and earthy stories, all related with obvious zest and a mischievous tone' (Henderson and McManus 1985: 34) could also apply to, and in fact recapitulates perfectly, Harington's translation of the Giocondo tale.

The instances in which the translator increases or accepts Ariosto's bawdiness are, however, very few, and limited to the examples cited above, contrary to what has been stated by some critics (Rich 1940: 124-125; Johnson-Haddad 1994: 328). More importantly, they all serve the specific agenda of adding misogyny to the *Furioso*. After all, the categorisation of Harington as a morally upright, and not bawdy, writer is corroborated by the study of the translator's attitude towards other literary examples. For instance, as Ruth Hughey has demonstrated, it was Sir John Harington himself who tore away the lower half of folio 30 of what is now known as the Arundel Harington Manuscript of Tudor Poetry, on whose recto remains a partial note, in his hand, declaring 'Iohn Harington / hoc vt obsœnissimũ'. The presence of

an 'improper drawing' in that part of the page (Hughey 1960: 11) led Harington to such a dramatic decision; his understatement of Ariosto's omnipresent sexuality, then, should not come as a surprise. His attitude towards women in his literary works is also confirmed by that shown when he is writing *in propria persona*. Jason Scott-Warren, analysing Harington's behaviour towards his godmother, Queen Elizabeth, as discernible from his prose work *A Tract on the Succession to the Crown (A.D. 1602)*, has concluded that

Harington's approaches to the 'women on top' at the Elizabethan court are all underwritten by a playful, yet insistent misogyny; for him, as for so many early commentators, a world governed by women was a world turned upside down. Many of his writings make veiled attacks on female courtiers, whose accomplishments render them unsuitable members of a patriarchal society.

(Scott-Warren 2003: 228)

In the *Furioso*, the misogyny is perhaps less playful, but equally insistent; furthermore, the 'veiled attacks' on the female courtiers who accomplish too much are strikingly similar to the translator's silencing of the accomplishments of literary patronesses and women poets discovered in the last section, and his resolute accentuation of the more traditional virtues of these individuals becomes, suddenly, easier to explain.

Chapter Two

Female Figures in Elizabethan Translations of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*

Richard Carew of Antony (1555-1620) published his five-canto partial translation of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, entitled *Godfrey of Bouloigne* – the first rendition of Tasso's poem in England – in 1594. The translation, in decasyllables, is extremely close to the original (as Morini notes, '[Carew] prefers to betray the English language rather than the *Liberata*', Morini 2006: 125⁴⁰), and is particularly important for another reason, its bilingualism, as has been discussed in the Introduction.

Carew's translation has received almost exclusively negative criticism, mainly because of its excessive literalness; comparisons with Fairfax are almost inevitable, and usually resolved favourably for the latter. Alexander Grosart's comment is indicative:

[Carew's translation] cannot for one moment compare with Edward Fairfax's full translation (or transfusion). It lacks the imaginative light, the inner melody, the richness of unerring epithet, the quaint grandeur of the great folio, that holds its own even beside George Chapman's *Homer*.

(Grosart 1881: VI-VIII)

The only voice out of this chorus is that of D. Wood, whose study is extremely praiseful of Carew:

I am not suggesting that Carew's version can or should be more popular than Fairfax's, which is delightful and easy to read, fluent and musical, full of rich, witty, decorative Elizabethan poetry. However, serious reservations must be made in the familiar claim that Fairfax comes close to the spirit of Tasso's poetry. For this one must turn to Carew who, at his best, writes poetry that avoids those deviations from Tasso that in Fairfax are insidious and persistent.

(Wood 1978: 4)

Wood's positive reception of Carew, initially presented only in contrastive terms with Fairfax's and favoured not *per se* but because of certain defects of Fairfax's, such as omissions and additions which act 'like a commentary' (Wood 1978: 2), eventually becomes an appreciation for its intrinsic merits – the first time that this has happened in criticism:

⁴⁰ Although Morini's later comment that 'the proximity between Italian and English creates a third language which exists only in this translation' (Morini 2006: 126) is perhaps a little exaggerated.

The finest moments, then, in Carew's translation are due to his care in not altering what he finds in Tasso [...]. Fairfax's translation makes friends more easily for Carew's readers will find many obstacles in his language with its frequent clumsiness. Beyond this, however, there is poetry and, in this poetry, the translator's integrity is such that we really do meet Tasso englished.

(Wood 1978: 12)

Even the poet's occasional awkwardness is justified with the suggestion that the translation was pirated by the publisher and printed without Carew's consent before a final revision could be made; the hypothesis, which would justify the lack of fluency of the translation, and which originates mainly in the 'several instances of [...] extremely dislocated syntax' (Wood 1978: 4) is corroborated by F. E. Halliday as well:

[Carew] apparently had translated the whole of *Jerusalem Delivered*, a manuscript copy of which had somehow or other got into the hands of the piratical stationer Hunt. Carew was not unnaturally angry when he heard that Hunt proposed to have it printed, and [...] he asked him not to, on the grounds, whether genuine or not, that the poem was incompletely revised. Hunt replied that the first five cantos were already in the press, but agreed to stay the rest "till the summer". They were never published, and what happened to them, if they really were written as Hunt implies, we do not know.

(quoted in Morini 2006: 136)

Both this (plausible) reason and the classification of the translation as produced, at least partially, as a language-learning aid rationalise and excuse the undeniable occasional awkwardness of Carew's language; and both points must be kept in mind, as an omnipresent *caveat*, when analysing the translation.

Edward Fairfax (ca. 1568-ca. 1632), great-uncle of that Lord Fairfax of Cameron (Thomas Fairfax, 1612-1671) whose Nun Appleton estate so inspired Andrew Marvell, is known almost exclusively for his *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or, The Recoverie of Jerusalem*, the first complete translation of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* in England, published in 1600 for the first time and in several more enthusiastic editions during the course of the seventeenth century and beyond:

Charles Knight, editor of one of the two 1817 editions, has called it the finest translation in our language, a judgement in which Saintsbury and Douglas Bush, among later critics, seem to concur. Certainly, of all verse translations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this is the smoothest in versification, the most profound in influence, and probably the most finely poetic.⁴¹

⁴¹ For instance, the 1687 edition is prefaced by 'A Poem, Occasioned by the present Edition of Godfrey of Bulloigne' whose second and third stanzas recite: 'See here, you dull Translators, look with shame / Upon this stately Monument of Fame, / And, to amaze you more, reflect how long / It is, since first 'twas taught in the English Tongue, / In what a darke Age it was brought to light; / Dark? No, our age

(Bell 1954: 27)

Bell himself, commenting on Fairfax's two-fold 'respect' (for his original, but also for his own genius) and establishing an inevitable parallel with Harington, celebrates the translation in very similar terms:

[Fairfax] seems to have set to work with a profound respect for his text, and with a desire to render its spirit into English. He has made, for example, none of the willful condensations and changes that we find in Harington. On the other hand, he had a certain respect for his own genius, and a confidence in the goodness of his poetic imagination. And he had a desire to make his version beautiful, even at the expense of its accuracy [...]. [H]e has created a masterpiece of vigorous and on the whole faithful interpretation, a translation able to stand

with any other in our language, as a rendition of a classic and an original work of art.

(Bell 1954: 52)

However, not all criticism agrees on the worth of the translation, and Morini, for instance, states that

Fairfax does not invest Tasso with the same energy which Harington pours into the English *Furioso*: he neither possesses Harington's careless *sprezzatura* nor his dominant personality. He does not cut any stanzas, and he does not comment on what he translates. Fairfax merely wants to make things easier, for himself as well as for the reader: he splits up the prosodic flow in order to make his *Godfrey* more readable, and adds fillers, lists, and commonplace comments to get out of a tight spot or when he cannot follow Tasso's subtleties.

(Morini 2006: 130)

The judgement is slightly harsh: the absence of an *apparatus criticus* does not necessarily imply that the translation lacks spirit and energy; more importantly, while it is true that Fairfax's style is overflowing with 'lists' and Spenserian repetitions, these seem caused by personal preference (as even the most superficial analysis of his original poems reveals) and not by translating difficulties. In a similar way, the translation is richer in classical allusions and in proverbs than the original; and all these peculiarly Elizabethan characteristics truly make Fairfax's poem fit Brooke and

is dark, & that was bright. / Of all those Versions which now brightest shine, / Most (Fairfax) are but
Foils to set off thine: / Ev'n Horace can't of too much Justice boast, / His unaffected, easie Style is lost;
/ and Ogilby's, the Lumber of the stall; / But thy Translation does atone for all. // 'Tis true, some few
exploded Words we find / To which we've Obligation to be kind; / For, if the Truth is scann'd, we must
allow / They're better than the New admitted now: / Our language is at best, and it will fail / As
th'Inundation of French Words prevail. / Let Waller be our Standard, all beyond, / Tho' spoke at Court
is Foppery and fond.' (Fairfax 1687: 'A Poem', II-III); in the Introduction to the 1865 edition, Robert A.
Willmott says of it that '[t]he animation of an original lives and breathes throughout it. The style is
singularly lucid and musical [...]. Fairfax is a simpler Spenser, with a diction often rich and
encumbered, but flowing gracefully under the weight of its embroidery and gold' (Willmott 1865:
xvii).

Shaaber's statement that 'Elizabethan translations are always more Elizabethan than translated' (Brooke and Shaaber 1967: 434).

The two extant translations of Torquato Tasso's poem *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581), Edward Fairfax's 1600 complete rendition and Richard Carew's 1594 five-canto partial translation, provide excellent specimens of two translation methods, different but both supported by contemporary translation theories. Whilst neither translator is so free as to lose sight of the original version (a fault which, as seen above, can often be found in Sir John Harington's *Orlando Furioso*), their fidelity takes two very different forms. Carew's translation is *ad verbum*; it is characterised by complete literalness and a word-by-word rendition, almost resembling the Medieval vernacular versions of the Bible, never brave enough to distance themselves from the sacrality of the original text, whose *auctoritas* is unquestioned and untouched. Fairfax's translation, conversely, is *ad sententiam*, a version which is looser, more idiomatic but still semantically reliable. Throughout the poem, Fairfax is faithful to Tasso's formal and content-related decisions, although, being free of the author's peculiar inner contradictions, his translation of the poem is more limpidly moralistic and, inevitably, void of that subtextual sensuality with which Tasso had to live all of his life and which he constantly tried to repress. Carew, on the other hand, constantly striving for a word-by-word translation, produces a version that is in all aspects similar to the original one, and which, at times, produces examples of phonemic translation. André Lefevere notes that '[p]honemic translation works best when it translates least, in other words, it is moderately successful only in its etymological and onomatopoeic calques, and in calques of proper names' (Lefevere 1975: 95); in Carew, the calques of the Italian terms create some peculiar neologisms. Indeed, for Carew, the translator's role is, simply, that of reproducing the original words and form in a different language, but in as similar a way as possible to the Italian. His identity is virtually indistinguishable from that of the author. This chapter will first observe the differing methods of the two translators of Tasso, and will then study the creative imitators of the Italian epic, Edmund Spenser and Samuel Daniel, also analysing their mediating influence on Fairfax, highlighting several instances of this 'mediating influence', which is to be intended as the process through which Fairfax, while translating from his chosen source text, felt, more or less directly, the influence of the

works and of the style of two other authors from the same target language and culture as his own.

Introductory

The differences between Carew's and Fairfax's translating techniques are visible from the *incipit* of the work. Both translators' versions of the opening stanza of the poem are remarkably faithful, although Carew strives to maintain also a terminological similarity whereas Fairfax's rendition is rather free in its structure, as he chooses to dedicate one line each to the two subjects of the poem, which in the original and in Carew are grouped together in the first line:

Canto l'armi pietose e 'l Capitano
Che 'l Gran Sepolcro liberò di Cristo

(I, I, 1-2)

I Sing the warre made in the Holy Land,
And the Great Chiefe that Christs great tombe did free

(Fairfax, I, I, 1-2)

I SING the godly armes, and that Chieftaine,
Who great Sepulchre of our Lord did free.

(Carew, I, I, 1-2)

Fairfax maintains the focus on the strictly religious theme of the epic by making explicit, in the first line, the holy location of the war mentioned, whereas Tasso prefers to stress it in the single adjective 'pietose'. However, all poets crucially concentrate on the 'war', and apparently ignore the love element entirely, the theme so important in the two previous epics of the Italian Renaissance (*Orlando Innamorato* and *Furioso*). Carew's rendition is careful especially in its choice of terms, with 'Sepulchre' (for Fairfax's 'tombe') which is a close translation of the Italian 'Sepolcro'. Similar terminological choices are to be found later in the octave, when Godfrey's 'glorioso acquisto' (I, 4) becomes 'braue atchieument' in Fairfax (I, 4), but remains 'glorious conquest' (I, 4) in Carew. Similarly, the choruses that surround the Muse in the sky, Tasso's 'infra i beati cori' (II, 3), become longer and paraphrased in Fairfax, 'where legions of bright angels sing' (II, 4), whereas Carew maintains the original version's conciseness: 'amids the Quyers blest' (II, 3). The brevity of this rendition also allows the translator to maintain the attribution of

'golden' (II, 4) to the crown worn by the Muse, in true accordance with the Italian 'aurea corona' (II, 4). These examples, which are held throughout the translations, demonstrate on one hand how close Carew was to the ideal of a strict literal translation which sacrifices everything to the faithful reproduction of the original's language, such as that which would have been put forward, much later, by Nabokov. On the other hand, these first examples also show how Fairfax partly embodied, well ahead of its time, the ideal of the invisible translator: somebody whose version is so fluent, so in tune with the tone and the spirit of the original as to disappear, almost, from the text, leaving visibility only the author. Naturally, because Fairfax's translation is so entrenched in Elizabethan times, some of the peculiarities of the age remained in his work, such as repetitions, mythological additions and so forth. Generally speaking, however, his rendition is remarkably 'invisible', especially when compared to Sir John Harington, who was very present and very visible in his *Ariosto* – from the title page onwards.

One of the most interesting aspects of a comparison between the two translations is the opportunity to examine the different interpretations that the two Englishmen give to Tasso's Italian. For instance, Tasso's 'spira', in '[t]u spira al petto mio celesti ardori' (I, II, 5) becomes, in Fairfax, '[i]nspire life in my wit, my thoughts vpraise' (I, II, 5); Fairfax thus intends Tasso's 'spirare' as a synonym of 'ispirare', 'to inspire', whereas Carew prefers another reading, with the meaning 'to breathe'; he also maintains the metaphor of the flames for poetic inspiration: '[c]elestiall flames breath thou into my brest' (I, II, 5). Equally faithful on the part of Carew is the rendition of the traditional defence of the mixture of true and fictitious events in poetry, which makes explicit and justifies the presence of fictitious elements in the epic; the theme is maintained carefully by Fairfax as well:

My verse ennoble, and forgiue the thing,
If fictions light I mixe with truth diuine,
And fill these lines with others praise then thine.

(Fairfax, I, II, 6-8)

Enlighten thou my Song, and pardon where,
I fainings weaue with truth, and verse with art,
Of pleasings deckt, wherein thou hast no part.

(Carew, I, II, 6-8)

Tu rischiara il mio canto, e tu perdona
Se intesso fregi al ver, se adorno in parte
D'altri dilette, che de' tuoi, le carte.

(I, II, 6-8)

Carew maintains a greater degree of terminological similarity, always choosing the translations closest to the original: 'enlighten' for 'rischiara' (nuance lost in Fairfax's 'ennoble'), 'weaue' for 'intesso' (again, nuance lost in the later translator's 'mixe'). The traditional simile of the ill child cured by a medicine mixed with sugar, in Tasso

Succhi amari ingannato intanto ei beve,
E dall'inganno suo vita riceve.

(I, III, 7-8),

becomes in Carew

Beguilde he drinkes some bitter iuyce the while,
And doth his life receiue from such a guile.

(I, III, 7-8)

and in Fairfax

To make them taste the potions sharpe we give;
They drinke deceiu'd; and so deceiu'd, they liue.

(I, III, 7-8)

The latter poet gives readers a first hint of his taste for elaborateness in his final line '[t]hey drinke deceiu'd; and so deceiued, they liue' (III, 8) for the more basic Italian 'dall'inganno suo vita riceve' (III, 8).

The faithfulness of the translations of the opening stanzas is extremely important, partly because Tasso is very careful to respect the traditional scheme of classical epic, consisting of the exposition of the theme (stanza 1), the invocation to the Muse (stanzas 2-3) and the dedication to the author's patron (stanzas 4-5); and partly because Tasso – who 'was, in a way, a critic even more than he was a poet'⁴² (Larivaille 1987: 29) – utilises it to state one of his most important theorisations about epic writing, that despite narrating true stories the poet must add episodes and details of his own invention in order to differentiate himself from an historian⁴³.

⁴² ('Come, quasi prima che poeta, egli sia stato addirittura teorico').

⁴³ In the first of Tasso's *Discorsi dell'arte poetica* (composed 1565 onwards) the author writes: 'chi nessuna cosa fingesse, chi in somma s'obligasse a que' particolari ch'ivi son contenuti, poeta non sarebbe, ma istorico.' ('[The writer] who did not invent anything, who, indeed, remained faithful to those details that are contained [in histories], would not be a poet, but an historian', quoted in Baldi et al 1993: II, I, 686). Spenser, in the *Letter to Raleigh*, also differentiates between 'Poet' and 'Historiographer', although he substantiates this difference in the use of chronology in recounting stories (*Letter to Raleigh*, 45 ff.).

Fairfax's translation is characterised by a subtle Protestantism, which emerges from time to time in his version of the poem, usually in the form of enhanced moralism (see discussion below). It is essential to note, however, that his ability as a translator, and perhaps his respect for Tasso, never allow him to mistranslate. Indeed, his slight changes never betray an ideological attitude akin to that which characterised Harington's poem, but, rather, confirm his ability to understand the spirit of the original and, simply, to enhance, sporadically, a moralism that was already present in Tasso himself. This is exemplified by his additions to Tancredi's speech aimed at assuaging Rinaldo's rage for having been banished from the Christian camp, following his murder of a fellow knight. The translation, a list of moralising *sententiae*, is entirely original, and recalls a paean to temperance which would not look out of place in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*:

Appease your wrath, your courage fierce asswage,
 Patience, a praise; forbearance, is a treasure;
 Suffrance, an angell is; a monster, rage.

(V, XLVII, 2-4)

Yet, it is when Fairfax writes about love that his moralising, Protestant voice is at its most visible. For instance, he transforms the notion of love in the revelation of Olindo's love for Sofronia, in the second canto:

Amor, ch'or cieco, or Argo, ora ne veli
 Di benda gli occhi, ora ce gli apri e giri,
 Tu per mille custodie entro ai più casti

Verginei alberghi il guardo altrui portasti.

(II, XV, 5-8)

Loue that now blinde, now *Argos*, now with vaile
 Dost blind thine eyes, now open wide dost see,
 Thou through a thousand watchers into chast
 Maides lodgings others sight conueyed hast.

(Carew, II, XV, 5-8)

O subtile loue, a thousand wiles thou hast
 By humble suit, by service, or by hire,
 To win a maidens hold, a thing soone donne,
 For nature fram'd all women to be wonne.

(Fairfax, II, XV, 5-8)

Whereas Carew's version is literal, the only change relating to the pronoun ('thine' in line 2), Fairfax pens a free group of lines on love, dangerous because it is 'subtile', and concludes with an unflattering generalisation of women's weak will, which does

not appear in either of the other versions. By doing this, in fact, he almost inverts the sense of the original, which stresses the purity of women, symbolised in the consecutive adjectives ‘casti verginei’ in the superlative. Similarly, Fairfax’s Sofronia complains to Olindo ‘hath fond loue thy hart so ouergone?’ (II, XXX, 7), connoting his love negatively with the original addition of ‘fond’.

Fairfax never modifies the text to suit his purposes with the same intentionality seen in Harington’s translation: his modifications are never programmatic, but sporadic, and often serve to *enrich* the original plan, accommodating Tasso’s tone and spirit thoroughly. In two instances only does Fairfax seem to distance himself explicitly from the original – both cases are religious references, and the change takes the form, merely, of the addition of parenthetical sentences or the omission of a few words. First, during the account of the theft of a portrait of the Virgin Mary, deliberately hidden by Aladino, the Pagan King of Jerusalem, in order to find a motive for his much-anticipated massacre of Christians, Fairfax shortens Tasso’s

[Q]uivi è il volto
Di colei che sua diva e madre face
Quel vulgo del suo Dio nato e sepolto.

(II, v, 2-4),

which Carew literally translates as

[H]er caru’d picture there,
On whom as Goddesses vulgar sort relies,
And mother that their bury’d God did beare.

(Carew, II, v, 2-4),

into

On which the image consecrated lies
Of Christes deere mother, call’d a virgin bright.

(Fairfax, II, v, 3-4)

Fairfax omits Carew’s ‘Goddesses’ (for the Italian ‘diva’), preferring to insert a neutral epithet (‘Christes deere mother’) for the Virgin Mary. Similarly, Fairfax also avoids Tasso’s and Carew’s later classification of the holy image as ‘casta’, ‘chast’ (VII, 4), calling it merely ‘image’ (VII, 4) and possibly showing a desire to distance himself from the Catholic icon, in a time when, despite (or perhaps because of) the replacement of Mary with the Virgin Queen, the destruction of portraits of the Virgin Mary was not limited to the actions in the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, but was extended to real-life Elizabethan England too.

A second instance is when the narrator mentions that Erminia will be celebrated

Là nella bella Italia, ov'è la sede
Del valor vero e della vera Fede.

[There, in beautiful Italy, the seat of true valour and of true Faith]

(VI, LXXVII, 7-8)

Fairfax's brave rendition is semantically faithful; although Tasso's celebration of the Catholic religion is toned down through the addition of a parenthetical sentence, the translator does not radically change the meaning of the original:

In Italie, a land (as each one tels)
Where valour true, and true religion dwels.

(VI, LXXVII, 7-8)

In general, Fairfax's distancing is nothing more than a soft modification, a whisper, and is entirely inconsequential to the meaning of the lines, which is rigorously preserved.

Another remarkable trait of the 1600 translation is Fairfax's insistent addition of proverbial lines, repetitions, metaphors and similes, of which some are tautological, some simply curious. This is exemplified by Fairfax's revelation that the theft of the painting of the Virgin Mary was, in fact, Aladino's excuse to massacre the Christians living in Jerusalem:

All ruth, compassion, mercie he forgot,
A staffe to beate that dog he long had sought,
'Let them all die,' quoth he, 'kill great and small,

So shall th'offender perish sure withall.

(II, XI, 6-8)

And, whereas Tasso's (and Carew's) Aladino then qualifies his decision by explaining '[p]ur che 'l reo non si salvi, il giusto pèra / e l'innocente' ('[s]o that the guiltie be not sau'd, let die / The iust and innocent', XII, 1-2), Fairfax's character has a more idiomatic '[t]o spill the wine with poison mixt who spares? / Slay then the righteous, with the faultie one'. Later, the English poet will create another interesting metaphor when describing Tancredi's unopenness to Armida's love: '[h]is sailes were filled with another winde' (V, LXV, 3) is his way of expressing the hero's captivation with Clorinda, which Carew unmetaphorically describes as '[f]or other longings his whole brest possesse' (LXV, 3), translating literally Tasso's 'ch'altro desio gli ingombra il seno' (LXV, 3).

Similarly, Tasso's 'rapido sì, ma rapido con legge' (III, II, 8), literal in Carew ('[s]wiftly, but swiftnes such as order stayes', II, 8) is expanded and becomes, in the English version,

He rules them yet, and rankes them in their haste,
For well he knowes disordred speed, makes waste.

(III, II, 7-8)

Later, the Italian's 'e chi potria tal cosa / Tener celata?' ('and who could have kept such a thing secret?', VIII, XLVIII, 5-6) becomes in the translation 'for alwaies rumors bad, / Are furthest spread' (XLVIII, 5-6).

The instances are so numerous that it is sufficient to consider one canto or one episode to find these original additions sprinkled around generously: in just the conclusion of the fourth canto, for example, Fairfax adds lines such as '[s]he thought to strike the iron that was hot' (LXXXVI, 3), a generalisation of Tasso's specific 'e più s'invaglia, quanto appar più altera' (rendered by Carew as '[a]nd she more longing doth more stately breed', LXXXIX, 8) into '[f]or hardest gotten things, are most desired' (LXXXIX, 8), and, finally, a *sententia*, framed by the willing intervention of the translator in the first person plural, at the conclusion of the passage recounting Armida's victims:

And with this craft a thousand soules welneare,
In snares of foolish ruth and loue she hent,
And kept as slaues, by which we fitly proue,
That witlesse pitie, breedeth fruitlesse loue.

(Fairfax, IV, XC, 5-8)

Tasso and Carew write the passage in a more descriptive way, without intromissions or judgements except for the adjective 'semplicette', 'simple', which, splendidly, just hints at the gullibility of Armida's victims:

E con quest'arti a lagrimar intanto
Seco mill'alme semplicette astringe,
E in foco di pietà strali d'amore
Tempra, onde pèra a sì fort'arme il core.

(IV, XC, 5-8)

The whiles to weepe in deede by such her art,
A thousand simple soules she does constraine,
And shafts of loue seasons in pities fire,
That armes so strong may hart giue death to hire.

(Carew, IV, XC, 5-8)

The addition of the proverbial lines might reveal not only a personal preference on the part of Fairfax⁴⁴, but also a more significant aspect of the translation. Analysing the use of proverbs in the *Jew of Malta*, Stephen Greenblatt has discovered that '[a]s the essence of proverbs is their anonymity, the effect of their recurrent use by Barabas is to render him more and more typical, to de-individualise him' (Greenblatt 1980: 208). Fairfax's use of proverbial lines, then, might reveal an attempt, not necessarily a conscious one, to render his poem non-statal, universal, so as to be of relevance not only for Italy, but for England too; Fairfax's, then, is an attempt to 'English', or rather universalise, the poem in a soft, almost subtle way, with the result of being less intrusive and, perhaps, more successful than Harington.

Repetitions are even more common than proverbs in the translation, and, although Tasso himself is prone to this habit, Fairfax often goes to the extreme. For instance, Fairfax's extended praise of Olindo's self-sacrifice is characterised by the two triplets in the concluding line,

*Olindo, blessed be this act of thyne,
True witnes of thy great and heau'nly minde,
Where sunne, moone, stars, of loue, faith, vertue, shine.*

(Fairfax, II, LIII, 2-4)

which are a rich elaboration of Tasso's

*Ch'atto potè mostrar che generoso
Petto al fine ha d'amore amor destato.*

(II, LIII, 2-3),

translated by Carew as an interrogative sentence,

*What act could show that in a noble brest,
Loue in the end another loue hath mou'd?*

(Carew, II, LIII, 2-3)

Another example can be found during the description of Clorinda's birth and infancy: Tasso's 'e piange e prega' ('she both cried, and prayed', XII, XXIII, 8), referring to the mother of the heroine, is changed into a lengthy, and extremely repetitive, '[s]he plain'd, she mourn'd, she wept, she sigh'd, she praid' (XXIII, 8).

⁴⁴ A preference which was, incidentally, perfectly ordinary in the Renaissance and which mirrors that attitude that Stephen Greenblatt has found in Marlowe as well: Barabas' desire for 'infinite riches in a little room', in the opening scene of the *Jew of Malta*, takes form, linguistically, in a preference for proverbs, because 'their terseness corresponds to that concentration of material wealth that Barabas celebrates' (Greenblatt 1980: 208).

In moments of higher lyricism, however, it is Fairfax, rather than the too literal Carew, who shows extraordinary poetic qualities. This is the case in one of the final stanzas of the canto:

Era la notte, allor ch'alto riposo
 Han l'onde e i venti, e pareo muto il mondo:
 Gli animali lassi, e quei che il mare ondoso,
 O de' liquidi laghi alberga il fondo,
 E chi si giace in tana, o in mandra ascoso,
 E i pinti augelli, nell'oblio giocondo,
 Sotto il silenzio de' secreti orrori,
 Sopian gli affanni, e raddolciano i cori.

(II, xcvi)

Fairfax beautifully translates as

Now spread the night her spangled canopie,
 And summon'd every restless eie to sleepe:
 On beds of tender grasse the beastes downe lie,
 The fishes slumbred in the silent deepe,
 Unheard was serpents hisse, and dragons crie,
 Birds left to sing, and Philomene to weepe,
 Onely that noice heau'ns rolling circles kest,
 Sung lullabie, to bring the world to rest.

(Fairfax, II, xcvi)

Tasso's liquid consonants ('liquidi laghi') are replicated in Fairfax's beautiful concluding line ('lullabie'); moreover, Fairfax adds the mythological reference in the sixth line⁴⁵, for Tasso's vague 'augelli'. In fact, the mention of Philomene bears a striking resemblance to Petrarch's famous sonnet CCCX:

Zephro torna, e 'l bel tempo rimena,
 e i fiori et l'erbe, sua dolce famiglia,
 et garrir Progne, et pianger Philomena

[Zephyr comes back and brings back the fair weather, the flowers and the grass, his sweet family, and Procne tweets, and Philomene weeps]

(*Canzoniere*, CCCX, 1-3)

Both Petrarch and Fairfax are unique in their mention of the grass ('tender grasse' in Fairfax, 3; 'l'erbe' in Petrarch, 2), and, more significantly, Fairfax's sixth line shares the same image with Petrarch's third. Neither detail is present in 'The Soote Season',

⁴⁵ The addition of mythological references is probably the most frequent modification that Fairfax makes to Tasso's epic, and some significant instances of this habit – especially Fairfax's references to Cynthia – will be highlighted in the course of this chapter. However, as Mario Praz noted, in doing so Fairfax 'contraven[es] the precepts of Tasso, who would have liked to exclude mythology altogether from a Christian epos' (Praz 1958: 315).

Surrey's version of the Petrarchan sonnet, and it thus seems likely that Fairfax was directly inspired by Petrarch for his translation of these Tassian lines. Carew's word-by-word version is not as poetic, as it cannot maintain the musicality of the Italian nor show the sophisticated references visible in Fairfax:

Now was it night, when in deepe rest enrold
 Are waues & windes, and mute the world doth show
 Weari'd the beasts, and those that bottome hold,
 Of billow'd Sea, and of moyst streames that flow,
 And who are lodged in caue, or pend in fold,
 And painted flyers in obliuion low,
 Vnder their secret horrors silenced,
 Stilled their cares, and their harts suppled.

(Carew, II, xcvi)

Similarly, another poetic octave is maintained brilliantly in Fairfax and is equally impressive in both poets, despite some minor differences:

Era la notte, e il suo stellato velo
 Chiaro spiegava e senza nube alcuna;
 E già spargea rai luminosi e gelo
 Di vive perle la sorgente luna.
 L'innamorata donna iva col cielo
 Le sue fiamme sfogando ad una ad una;
 E secretari del suo amore antico
 Fea i muti campi e quel silenzio amico.

[It was night, and her starry veil was spread clear, and without any clouds; and already the rising moon spread luminous rays and frost of live pearls. The enamoured woman was venting her flames to the sky, one by one; and she let the mute fields and that friendly silence know of her ancient love]

(VI, CIII)

The first two lines echo very strongly the Horatian *incipit* 'Nox erat et caelo fulgebat Luna sereno' (*Epodes*, XV, 1), which Fairfax, with his omission of the opening words and the reference to the cloudless sky, does not seem to notice:

Inuested in her starrie vaile, the night
 In her kinde armes embraced all this round,
 The siluer moone from sea vprising bright
 Spred frostie pearle on the canded ground:
 And *Cynthia* like for beauties glorious light,
 The loue-sicke Nymph threw glistring beames around,
 And counsellors of her old loue, she made
 Those vallies dumbe, that silence, and that shade.

(VI, CIII)

On his part, Fairfax adds the Cynthia metaphor⁴⁶, not present in Tasso; both poets, however, manage to isolate their stanza from the clash of the armours of the surrounding octaves and create a highly poetic and beautiful group of verses.

Female characters of the poem

An analysis of Fairfax's (and Carew's, albeit limited to the first five cantos) treatment of the female characters of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* is interesting not only because it provides a useful source of contrast with Harington's representation of women in his version of the *Orlando Furioso*, but also because, as in other Renaissance epics, most of the central episodes of the poem seem to rotate around women. In addition, the women of the epic are, without doubt, the characters that have appealed to and inspired English imitators of the *Liberata* most evidently and most substantially: Edmund Spenser and Samuel Daniel were clearly attracted to the witch Armida, with Spenser also using the minor character of Erminia in his own pastoral episode. The preference of these poets for lesser female characters over more important male ones is indicative of the interest that Tasso's women stirred in their readers.

Sofronia

The first relevant female character of the *Liberata* is the Christian quasi-martyr Sofronia, who accuses herself for the theft of the image of the Virgin Mary, lest Aladino effectuate his threatened mass execution of Christians. She is, thus, a very noble character and is accordingly introduced by Tasso:

Vergine era fra lor di già matura
verginità, d'alti pensieri e regi
[...]
E' il suo pregio maggior che tra le mura
d'angusta casa asconde i suoi gran pregi,

⁴⁶ Fairfax's independent use of Elizabeth's epithet will be discussed below (p. 102).

e de' vegheggiatori ella s'involà
a le lodi, a gli sguardi, inculta e sola.

(II, XIV, 1-2, 5-8)

Amongst them was a mayd of maidenhed
To ripenesse growne, of high and noble thought
[...]
to vertue brought
Accompt, most priz'd because straight cabyned,
Twixt wals her prices great to hide she sought.
And of her wooers vnbepranct and sole,
Both from the laud, and from the lookes she stole.

(Carew, II, XIV, 1-2, 5-8)

Among them dwelt (her parents ioy and pleasure)
A maide, whose fruit was ripe, not oueryeared,
[...]
Her labour goodnes; godlines her leasure,
Her house the heau'n by this full moone aye cleared,
For there, from louers eies withdrawne, alone
With virgin beames this spotlesse *Cynthia* shone.

(Fairfax, II, XIV, 1-2, 5-8)

Apart from minor divergences, such as the addition of the parenthetical sentence in Fairfax's first line, the major difference between the three versions is that Fairfax places a great stress on the comparison between Sofronia and Cynthia, both through the explicit metaphor of the last line ('this spotlesse *Cynthia*'), in which the connection between the goddess of the moon and virginity is reinforced not only by 'spotlesse', but also by the specification 'with virgin beames', and through the previous metaphor in line 6, 'this full moone'. Of course, given the connection between epithets and metaphors of 'Cynthia' and Elizabeth⁴⁷, Fairfax's choice of metaphor suggests a complimentary comparison between the Queen (dedicatee of the translation) and that paragon of virtue and integrity represented by Tasso's Sofronia, and starts a pattern – the repeated use of Cynthia epithets – that will be of relevance throughout the poem.

The following stanza is characterised by a high degree of sophistication in the Italian, which Fairfax and Carew both maintain, although the latter does not seem able to reproduce the elevated tone throughout the octave:

Colei Sofronia, Olindo egli s'appella,

⁴⁷ Elkin C. Wilson, in his exhaustive study of Elizabeth's epithets, dedicates one chapter to 'Cynthia' (Wilson 1966: 273-320). Spenser, writing to Sir Walter Raleigh about his representation of Elizabeth in Belpheobe, explains that he 'fashion[ed] her name according to [Raleigh's] owne excellent concept of Cynthia, (Phoebe and Cynthia being both names of Diana)' (*Letter to Raleigh*, 36-37).

D'una cittade entrambi e d'una fede.
 Ei che modesto è sì, com'essa è bella,
 Brama assai, poco spera, e nulla chiede,
 Né sa scoprirsi, o non ardisce; ed ella
 O lo sprezza, o nol vede, o non s'avvede.
 Così finora il misero ha servito
 O non visto, o mal noto, o mal gradito.

(II, XVI)

Sofronia shee, *Olindo* he hath name,
 One Citie both, and one faith both they haue,
 For modest he, for faire she carries fame,
 Desire much, little hope, nought he doth craue,
 Nor can it show, or dares not do the same,
 And she or scornes, or seeth not, or gaue
 No semblance, so till then par thrall he peakt,
 Or not seene, or ill knowne, or smally reakt.

(Carew, II, XVI)

Sophronia she, *Olindo* hight the yuth,
 Both of one towne, both in one faith were taught,
 She faire, he full of bashfulnes and truth,
 Lou'd much, hop'd little, and desired nought,
 He durst not speake, by suit to purchase ruth,
 She saw not, markt not, wist not what he sought,
 Thus lou'd, thus seru'd he long, but not regarded,
 Vnseene, vnmarkt, vnptied, vnrewarded.

(Fairfax, II, XVI)

Carew is very literal in his translation, but does not manage to maintain the syntactic conciseness present in the original version, so that Tasso's sixth line, for instance, comprised in one verse in the Italian, is expanded into two lines in Carew. Tasso's sixth line is, incidentally, perhaps the most perfect of the stanza, with its beautiful assonance 'nol vede/non s'avvede' which describes a very human behaviour. Fairfax translates it perfectly, and equally faithfully he renders the rest of the stanza; he also, curiously, shares with Tasso a perhaps excessive final line, denoted in the Italian by a triple repetition of the 'o' and, in the English, by the constant alliteration which links the four words in the line. This is a rare instance in which Fairfax is the more faithful translator: his version reproduces the conciseness of the original syntax, maintaining, however, also the elaborateness of the conceit, all whilst being semantically correct. Carew's final 'smally reakt' seems slightly prosaic, compared to Tasso's 'mal gradito': Fairfax's elaborated final couplet reveals, on the contrary, that the later translator's passion for extravagant repetitions is actually born out of the realisation that Tasso himself enjoys using this trait, as shown by an equally ornate final couplet in the Italian, and this emphasises once again the closeness of tone between author and translator.

A peculiar metaphor is invented by Fairfax when describing Sofronia's virtuous walking through the mass of people on a Jerusalem street, a passage which shows imperfections in both translators. In fact, Tasso's

La vergine tra 'l vulgo uscì soletta,
Non coprì sue bellezze, e non l'espone,
Raccolse gli occhi, andò nel vel ristretta,
Con ischive maniere e generose.
Non sai ben dir s'adorna o se negletta,
Se caso od arte il bel volto compose.
Di natura, d'Amor, de' cieli amici
Le negligenze sue sono artifici.

(II, XVIII)

becomes in Carew

This maide alone through preace of vulgar went,
Bewty she couers not, nor sets to sight,
Shadow'd her eyes, in vayle her bodie pent,
With manner coy, yet coy in noble plight,
I note where car'de, or carelesse ornament,
Where chance, or art her fairest countnance dight.
Friended by heau'ns, by nature, and by loue,
Her meere neglects most artificiall proue.

(Carew, II, XVIII),

a correct translation on the whole, but faulted by Carew's authorial intromission in the fifth line, which in the Italian version is an address to the reader, and by a misunderstanding in the final couplet: in Tasso, the lines mean that her beauty and her manners are gifts created by the heavens ('artifici' 'de' cieli amici'); Carew seems to misunderstand this and writes that her careless 'neglects' seem 'artificiall'. Fairfax, on the other hand, introduces a few metaphors in the octave and translates so freely that it is impossible to judge his understanding of the lines:

And foorth she went, a shop for merchandise
Full of rich stuffe, but none for sale exposed,
A vaile obscur'd the sunshine of her eies,
The rose within her selfe her sweetnes closed,
Each ornament about her seemely lies,
By curious chance, or careless art, composed;
For what she most neglects, most curious proue,
So beautie's helpt by nature, heau'n and loue.

(Fairfax, II, XVIII)

Fairfax omits the detail of Sofronia's solitude whilst walking in Jerusalem, given in Tasso by 'soletta' and in Carew by 'alone' and essential because it prefigures

Sofronia's sexual inaccessibility, then elaborated in the ensuing octaves. Original with Fairfax are also the rose metaphor in the fourth line (which could be intended both as a reference to the *carpe diem* tradition, thus prefiguring the *canto della rosa* passage, and as a metaphor for Elizabeth, as the rose was another iconographical symbol to indicate the Virgin Queen⁴⁸) and, more importantly, the curious – and not entirely appropriate – shop metaphor, which occupies the opening two lines. This unusual terminological choice is, in fact, the first indication of Spenser's mediating influence on Fairfax's translation of Tasso: during the description of Guyon's encounter with Amavia, Spenser writes that the knight

[T]hen gan softly feel
Her feeble pulse, to proue if any drop
Of liuing blood yet in her veynes did hop;
Which when he felt to moue, he hoped faire
To call backe life to her forsaken shop.

(Spenser, Book II, I, XLIII, 3-7)

Spenser's rare use of 'shop' as a metaphor for 'body' might have inspired Fairfax with the similar metaphor used in the Sofronia episode. Indeed, Fairfax seems rather prone to remembering Spenserian rarities: later on in the poem, Fairfax will translate Tasso's '[n]on cade già, nè pur si torce in sella' ('he neither falls, nor twists on the saddle', VI, XXXII, 4) as 'he non shooke, nor stagged in his cell'. The use of 'cell' for 'saddle' is quite peculiar and recalls Spenser's use of 'sell' when translating from Ariosto in *The Faerie Queene* (III, III, LX, 6-7)⁴⁹, of which this terminological choice is perhaps a deliberate echo, and certainly a memory. Similarly, he will reveal another reminiscence of *The Faerie Queene* when he compares, independently of Tasso, Satan's eyes to 'two beacons' (IV, VII, 4), a simile which echoes Spenser's association of the Dragon's 'blazing eyes' (I, XI, XIV, 1) 'as two broad beacons, sett in open fieldes' (3).

A divergence shared by both translators is to be found in the description of the meeting between the self-accusing Sofronia and King Aladino. According to Tasso,

S'egli era d'alma o se costei di viso
Severa manco, ei diveniane amante;
Ma ritrosa beltà ritroso core
Non prende, e sono i vezzi esca d'Amore.

(II, XX, 5-8)

⁴⁸ Again, see Elkin C. Wilson (Wilson 1966: 134-135).

⁴⁹ See p. 197. Interestingly, the *OED* only lists three occurrences of the word before 1800: one is by Spenser (Book II, VIII, XXXI, 3), one is by Fairfax (instance above).

Carew maintains correctly the hypothetical sentence, but modifies the final couplet:

Had he a mind; or she a countnance brought
Ought lesse seure, loue had him snar'd in line.
But wayward bewtie, wayward hart to moue
Serues farre vnfit, kindnes is bait of loue.

(Carew, II, XX, 5-8)

In the translation, it seems that kindness is the ingredient Sofronia lacks to make the king fall in love with her; in Tasso, conversely, it is a much more ensnaring 'vezzi', 'flatteries', which is not necessarily a positive quality, as it can imply deceit as well. Fairfax translates the hypothetical sentence correctly, shares with Carew the use of the adjective 'wayward' and then brings one step further the concluding line; reading his version, a reader can gather that Sofronia not only lacks 'kindnes', specifically 'a smile', but even shows 'a frowne', an attitude that Tasso's Sofronia, with her modesty and humbleness, is certainly far from displaying.

That had her eies dispos'd their lookes to play,
The king had snared been in loues strong lace,
But wayward beautie doth not fancie moue,
A frowne forbids, a smile engendreth loue.

(Fairfax, II, XX, 5-8)

Similarly, a parallel divergence is to be found in Sofronia's confession; where Tasso concludes it by having her say 'io son colei / che tu ricerchi, e me punir tu dèi' (XXI, 7-8), and Carew faithfully translates 'I am she, / That so thou seekst, and punisht ought to be' (XXI, 7-8), Fairfax introduces an unexpected 'mine that fault, that fact, / Mine be the glorie of that vertuous act' (XXI, 7-8). The change is interesting, both because there is a contradiction between the admission of guilt ('mine that fault') and the pride Sofronia clearly shows ('glorie'; 'vertuous'), and because her proud profession of responsibility seems out of character, as Tasso's humble Sofronia would hardly be capable of boasting in such a way.

Carew precisely translates also Sofronia's description when condemned to death. Tasso's

E smarrisce il bel volto in un colore
Che non è pallidezza, ma candore

(II, XXVI, 7-8)

and its strong Petrarchan echoes ('Pallida no, ma più che neve bianca', *Triumphus Mortis*, I, 166) are faithfully maintained by Carew, although his habitual, literal

rendition does not allow for speculation as to whether he grasped the Petrarchan reference or simply strove to translate word by word:

And her faire face is taynted with a hew,
That doth not palenesse, but a whitenesse shew.

(Carew, II, XXVI, 7-8)

Fairfax, conversely, compresses the couplet into an unspecific single line, simply writing '[h]er damaske late, now chang'd to purest white' (XXVI, 7-8).

When the two young Christians ('[t]wo harmlesse turtles', XXXII, 8, in Fairfax's original definition) are tied on the stake, Tasso's description of Olindo's lament that the knots used to tie them up and the fire burning them are not (as they should be) love's ties and love's fire acts as a brief but important prefiguration of the similar device used in the episode of Clorinda's death. Fairfax translates this correctly, with the line '[f]ar other flames and bonds kinde louers proue' (XXXIV, 1): his use of the superlative 'far other' aims to reproduce Tasso's beautiful '[a]ltre fiamme, altri nodi Amor promise' (XXXIV, 1), which recalls the Ariostean passage about Astolfo on the Moon in its rare use of 'altri' as a synonym of 'different'. Carew, conversely, maintains the sophistication of the line through the insertion of a chiasmus, '[f]lames other, other knots loue promised' (XXXIV, 1). Carew's rendition is, unsurprisingly, the more faithful, translating the Italian word by word albeit omitting – like Fairfax – the personification of Love. Fairfax, however, balances this with the insertion, in the same stanza, of Cupid and, more importantly, of an address to Hymen: Olindo's question

O *Hymen* say, what furie doth thee moue
To lend thy lampes to light a tragedie?

(Fairfax, II, XXXIV, 5-6)

is entirely original, and can be only remotely inspired by the regret, on the part of Tasso's Olindo, of not having been able to share Sofronia's bed and, instead, having to be content to share her pyre.

Clorinda

The most important female character of the poem, as far as plot treatment is concerned, is certainly Clorinda, the complex heroine created by Tasso echoing the

Ariostean Bradamante, with whom she shares extraordinary prowess in battle, but also representing the idealised, unattainable beloved, being the object of the Christian hero Tancredi's unrequited love: in Paul Larivaille's definition, she is 'persistently two-faced' (Larivaille 1987: 184)⁵⁰. She is, in other words, the woman on the pedestal of the courtly love tradition in the eyes of Tancredi, and the virgin warrior of epic origin and renowned precedents in her own perspective. The first description of the lovesick Tancredi betrays some traits of Tasso's Counter-Reformation conscience, which Carew maintains more or less carefully. The poets say there is not

[O] feritor maggiore,
O più bel di maniere e di sembianti,
O più eccelso ed intrepido di core.
S'alcun'ombra di colpa i suoi gran vanti
Rende men chari, è sol follia d'amore:
nato fra l'arme, amor di breve vista,
che si nutre d'affanni, e forza acquista.

(I, LXV, 2-8)

[A] brauer warrier,
Nor of a stomacke noble more or stout,
Nor countnance and conditions more faire,
If cloud of blame wrapt his deserts about
Them dimme, loues folly sole the fault must beare,
Aboue⁵¹ twixt battailes borne, bred of short sight,
Fed with afflictions, still accreeuing might.

(I, XLV, 2-8)

Carew maintains the panegyric on the knight's ability in battle and beautiful appearance, although he idiomatically praises his 'stomacke' instead of his 'core', 'heart'. Fairfax, conversely, avoids mentioning the pleasant appearance of the knight but, unsurprisingly, maintains the negative connotation of love:

[A] prince of greater might,
With maiestie his noble count'nance shone,
Hie were his thoughts, his hart was bold in fight,
No shamefull vice his worth had ouergone,
His fault was loue, by vnaduised sight;
Bred in the dangers of aduentrous armes,
And nurst with grieues, with sorrowes, woes, & harmes.

⁵⁰ Clorinda is 'both unique and persistently two-faced, and thus can be analysed from two complementary perspectives that only with her death will coincide' ('insieme unica e persistentemente bifronte e perciò analizzabile da due punti di vista complementari che solo con la morte dell'eroina finiscono col coincidere', Larivaille 1987: 184).

⁵¹ In the Bodleian copy of Carew's translation, this line presents an interesting marginal note, written in a seemingly Renaissance hand: '[a]boue' is corrected with 'a Love', a more faithful translation of the Italian line and an indication that the printed 'aboue' could be, in fact, a misprint; more importantly, a sign that reveals a careful, side-by-side reading of the two versions, printed together in that edition.

The listing of the last line, habitual on the part of Fairfax, is original with him; equally ornate is the subsequent

Egli mirolla, ed ammirò la bella
Sembianza, e d'essa si compiacque, e n'arse.
Oh meraviglia! Amor, ch'appena è nato,
Già grande vola, e già trionfa armato.

(I, XLVII, 5-8)

Her feature he beheld, he held the same
Most faire, he likes, his liking fire doth light
Of loue, O wonder! loue then scarcely bred
Grew great, and flew and in armes triumphed.

(Carew, I, XLVII, 5-8)

On her at gaze his longing lookes he set,
Sight, wonder; wonder, loue; loue bred his caire,
O loue, o wonder; loue new borne, new bred,
Now growne, now arm'd, this champion captiue led.

(Fairfax, I, XLVII, 5-8)

Where Tasso describes Tancredi's enamouring of Clorinda in a descriptive way, void of repetitions and with only two notable stylistic devices (the use of the assonance in the verbs 'mirare' and 'ammirare' in the first line, and the *enjambement* in 'bella / sembianza', original because 'bella' is, at a first impression, passable to be intended as both an adjective and a noun, meaning 'the beautiful one' [Clorinda]), Fairfax decides to give more importance to this moment and does so in the only way he knows, by repeating each concept twice – 'new borne'/'new bred', 'now growne'/'now arm'd' – and by enriching the stanza with numerous figures of speech, in particular the paragram in the repetitions above, and the double epizeuxis ('wonder'; 'wonder', 'loue'; 'loue') in the second line. Carew's version, in this instance, appears rather ornate too, with its own double repetition ('likes'/'liking', 'loue'/'loue') over two lines, and with the first line characterised by a chiasmus and a paregmenon ('beheld'/'held').

A significant change is made by Fairfax in the following stanza. Where Tasso and Carew describe Clorinda as running away because she is outnumbered by enemies, 'e se non era / Ch'altri quivi arrivàr, ben l'assaliva' (XLVIII, 1-2), rendered by Carew as 'she th'assaylers part / Had playd, saue others there by chance arriue' (XLVIII, 1-2) – rather faithful, except for the addition of 'by chance' –, Fairfax does not present the intervention of the rival soldiers as reality, but as a projection of Clorinda's fears:

‘and but some wight / She fear’d might come to aide him as they fought’ (XLVIII, 1-2). The latter translator’s depiction of Clorinda is slightly less complimentary, picturing her as afraid.

Clorinda’s first significant appearance in the poem, in defence of Olindo and Sofronia whom she sees tied on the stake, is translated faithfully by both translators, although Fairfax adds a curious metaphor of his own invention to describe the warrior’s easily recognizable helmet: his ‘[b]y which bright signe well knowne was that faire Inne’ (XXXVIII, 8) is absent from the other versions and echoes the shop metaphor used, earlier in the same canto, for Sofronia. Both translators are faithful when maintaining the heroine’s scorn for traditional female occupations, although Carew is more literal, translating Tasso’s

Fuggì gli abiti molli e i lochi chiusi,
Chè ne’ campi onestate anco si serba

(II, XXXIX, 5-6)

as

Gay clothing, and close cabbanes eke she flyes,
For goodnes eu’n in fields may safe remaine

(Carew, II, XXXIX, 5-6)

The causal sentence of the second line is not maintained by Fairfax, who also substitutes the verb ‘fuggire’, ‘to flee’, for a plainer ‘to hate’:

She hated chambers, closets, secret mewes,
And in broad fields preseru’d her maidenhed

(Fairfax, II, XXXIX, 5-6)

Again, it is interesting to note the different meanings that the two translators have given to Tasso’s ‘onestate’: both Carew’s ‘goodnes’ and Fairfax’s ‘maidenhed’ are correct translations of the Italian term, although Fairfax’s choice, which refers specifically to Clorinda’s chastity, is probably the closer interpretation of Tasso’s intentions, as the author will use the term again with the specific meaning of ‘chastity’ later on in the poem (VI, XCVIII, 6).

In addition, Tasso’s description of Clorinda’s adolescence is translated by Fairfax with definite echoes of Britomart’s own account of her youth in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*: the latter’s

I loathed haue my life to lead,
As Ladies wont, in pleasures wanton lap,

To finger the fine needle and nyce thread

(Spenser, II, VI, 6-8)

is comparable to Fairfax's

Her loftie hand would of it selfe refuse
To touch the daintie needle, or nice thred

(Fairfax, II, XXXIX, 3-4)

especially with regard to the 'daintie needle, or nice thread' which echoes Spenser's 'fine needle and nyce thread'.

The later translator then omits a complimentary line about Clorinda: Tasso praises her prowess in battle writing that 'val la destra sua per cento mani' (III, XV, 6), which is enhanced by Carew into '[h]er hand the price from thousand hands doth gaine' (XV, 6). Fairfax invents that 'she broke the helme, and pearst the armed brest' (XV, 6), but rectifies the omission of the compliment in his beautiful final couplet, of which the last verse, entirely original with him, is an elaboration of the previous line, present also in the other versions: '[h]er men the paths rode through made by her sword, / They passe the streame where she had found the ford' (XV, 7-8).

When Clorinda is revealed, in the following stanza, both translators seem to miss a pair of beautiful references, in two consecutive lines, to Petrarchan poems:

E le chiome dorate al vento sparse,
Giovane donna in mezzo 'l campo apparse

(III, XXI, 7-8)

The first line is an accurate paraphrase of the opening verse of 'Erano i capei d'oro a l'aura sparsi' (*Canzoniere*, XC, 1), as well as echoing one of Tasso's own sonnets⁵², whereas the second shares the *incipit* with 'Giovene donna sotto un verde lauro' (*ibid.*, XXX, 1). Fairfax modifies the lines greatly, adding a traditional simile:

About her shoulders shone her golden locks,
Like sunnie beames, on Alabaster rocks.

(Fairfax, III, XXI, 7-8)

Carew, conversely, is more faithful, but changes the syntax of the original:

And golden lockes vnto the wind displayd,
She midst the field appeares a youthly mayd.

⁵² 'Costei, che su la fronte ha sparsa al vento / l'errante chioma d'or, Fortuna pare' ('She, who displays to the wind her flowing golden locks on her forehead, resembles Fortune', *Rime*, I, LXXXI, 1-2).

Both translators change a parenthetical sentence in which Tasso exclaims, referring to Tancredi's enamoured heart, 'ov'è il suo essemplio inciso' (XXII, 6). Carew is for once more poetic, writing 'thy hart (her pictures shrine)' (XXII, 6), whereas Fairfax has a longer 'the shape of whose sweet face / the god of loue did in thy hart compile' (XXII, 6). The latter then concludes the stanza with another original metaphor: Carew's and Tasso's simple descriptive line evoking the first encounter of Tancredi and Clorinda (in Carew's words, 'she whom quenching thirst / At solitarie spring thou sawest first', XXII, 7-8) becomes, in the later English version, '[t]he same that left thee by the cooling streame, / Safe from sunnes heat, but scorcht with beauties beame' (XXII, 7-8).

The Petrarchan references mentioned above somehow anticipate the heavy Petrarchism of the whole passage, which Carew and Fairfax appear to notice and to translate accordingly; particularly notable are Tancredi's reflection that

[V]an le percosse vote
Talor, che la sua destra armata stende;
Ma colpo mai del bello ignudo volto
Non cade in fallo, e sempre il cor m'è colto.

(III, XXIV, 5-8),

the metaphor of the prisoner ('un prigion suo fere / già inerme, e supplichevole e tremante', XXV, 3-4); and the giving of Tancredi's heart to Clorinda (XXVII, 4-6).

Carew translates more faithfully than Fairfax:

[E]ch blow vnharmefull dyes,
Which force of her right hand (though armed) lends,
But neuer blow from her faire naked face
Falles vaine, but in my heart findes lighting place.

(Carew, III, XXIV, 4-8)

[N]o stroke of thy strong hand
Can vanquish *Tancred*, but thy conquest lies
In those faire eies, which fierie weapons dart,
That finde no lighting place except this hart.

(Fairfax, III, XXIV, 5-8)

The later translator substitutes Carew's 'faire naked face', a beautiful rendering of 'bello ignudo volto' of the helmetless Clorinda, with conventional 'faire eies'; in the ensuing octave, he retains the offering of Tancredi's heart to his beloved, but omits the mention of the prisoner, in favour of a generalisation on women:

For pleasing words in womens eare finde place,
And gentle harts with humble suits are moued

(Fairfax, III, XXV, 3-4)

It seems that the English poet drew inspiration from the adjectives used by Tasso in reference to Tancredi, but changed their subject to Clorinda and, by extension, to all women. Similarly, soon after Fairfax chooses to omit the adjective 'pauroso' (XXVII, 1) when Tasso explains that love has rendered he who until then was fearful, bold: in Carew's words, 'him of fearfull earst, hardy / now makes' (XXVII, 1-2); Fairfax only writes 'and desprate loue had made him bold' (XXVII, 1), entirely missing Tasso's amusing image of this central Christian knight being shyly 'fearful', almost like a schoolboy, in front of his loved lady. Fairfax's preference for proverbs is visible once again at the conclusion of this stanza, when he adds independently '[t]he Eagle made the turtle doue her pray' (XXVII, 8); Tasso simply states that it was time Clorinda took possession of her lover's heart, a concept which the English poet prefers to render through a proverbial line.

Fairfax omits also part of a reference to Clorinda, with the result of portraying her less effectively than the other two versions. In the original, Tasso states that the heroine, with her head bare after Tancredi's blow caused her helmet to fall, proceeds uncaring, conscious of her innate strength. The Italian poet's 'e come esser senz'elmo a lei non caglia' (XXVI, 3) remains unchanged in Carew's translation, 'as she were of wanted helme recklesse' (XXVI, 3), but the explanation is omitted in the later translation, in which Fairfax simply states that she 'helmlesse to the forrestward gan hie' (XXVI, 3).

Equally different is the first half of the following stanza. Tasso enjoys a rare moment of great irony, when he writes that

Ecco io chino le braccia, e t'appresento
Senza difesa il petto: or chè nol fiedi?
Vuoi ch' agevoli l'opra? Io son contento
Tarmi l'usbergo or or, se nudo il chiedi.

(III, XXVIII, 1-4)

The last line, which almost creates an Ariostean smile, is ignored by Fairfax, who also modifies greatly the preceding verses:

'Saue with thy grace, or let thine anger kill,
Loue hath disarm'd my life of all defence;
An easie labour harmlesse blood to spill,
Strike then, and punish where there is none offence.'

Although it is clear that Fairfax draws inspiration for his lines from the original ('loue hath disarm'd my life' echoes the Tassian 't'appresento senza difesa il petto'), the two versions differ semantically. The two interrogative sentences of the original are missing in the translation; in addition, Fairfax pens a general complaint against love, guilty of rendering Tancredi defenceless, whereas in the elaborate Italian version it is Tancredi himself who disarms, *desiring* Clorinda to take possession of what belongs to her – his heart. Finally, the 'easie labour' of the English poem is what Tancredi thinks Clorinda is facing, while in Tasso it was, again, Tancredi himself who strove to render the 'labour' as easy as possible, perhaps sensing a surprised hesitation on the part of the heroine. Carew's translation is much more faithful, but is clearly not as poetic:

Behold mine armes downe held you I present,
Fencelesse my brest, why stay you it to cleaue?
Will you dispatch the worke? now, now content
Of curets go, if corps that bare I leaue.

(Carew, III, XXVIII, 1-4)

Carew maintains the two interrogative sentences, but his rendition seems awkward, especially in the final line. His effort to choose the closest translation possible at all times is evident again in the ensuing stanza, in his rendition of Tasso's 'uomo inumano' (XXIX, 3) as 'vnmanly man' (XXIX, 3), whereas Fairfax paraphrases into 'soldier wilde, carelesse to win or loes' (XXIX, 3).

Fairfax also changes another stanza conclusion, this time, in fact, enhancing the quality of the octave. Where Tasso and, with him, Carew simply write that Tancredi, seeing his Clorinda hurt by a Christian's sword, hits the villain in revenge, Fairfax elaborates adding that '[t]he smart was his, though she receiu'd the wound' (XXX, 8). In this verse, the English poet finds a brilliant way to describe Tancredi and Clorinda's unity of soul, despite belonging to two opposite camps. This addition is made at the expense of a beautiful ruby simile which, extensive in Tasso and Carew, is only one line long in Fairfax, 'so rubies set in flaming gold appeare' (XXX, 5). It is, however, as effective as the other two versions:

Come rosseggia l'or che di rubini
Per man d'illustre artefice sfaville.

(III, XXX, 5-6)

As gold growes ruddie, which (some rubyes ground

By skilfull workeman set) doth sparkles shed.

(Carew, III, XXX, 5-6)

Not so good is Fairfax's conclusion of the following stanza, where the translator writes '[a]nd now she flies, and now she turned againe' (XXXI, 8) for Tasso's refined

Or si volge, or rivolge; or fugge, or fuga;
Né si può dir la sua caccia, né fuga.

(III, XXXI, 7-8),

particularly noteworthy for the paregmenon, the paronomasia and for the rhyme using 'fuga' as a verb and as a noun; the first two figures of speech are maintained by Carew, who manages to create a translation that could be deemed semantically and stylistically perfect:

Now turnes she, now returns, now fight, now flight
She makes, nor chac'd, nor chacer term'd aright.

(Carew, III, XXXI, 7-8)

Fairfax, conversely, changes the octave radically, postponing the mention of Clorinda to the following stanza, modifying the first simile with the addition of graphical details and with the description of a hunt in an original location, rather than a game, and finally misunderstanding the second simile, whose game is called 'tennise':

As the swift Vre by Volgaes rolling flood
Chas'd through the plaines the mastiue curres toforne,
Flies to the succour of some neighbor wood,
And often turnes againe his dreadfull horne
Against the dogs imbru'd in sweat and blood,
That bite not, till the beast to flight retorne;
Or as the Moores at their strange tennise run
Defenst, the flying balles vnhurt to shun:

So ronne *Clorinda*.

(Fairfax, III, XXXII; XXXIII, 1)

The sixth-canto description of Clorinda's epiphany to Tancredi is equally impressive in both poets:

When vnawares his eyes he chanst to lift,
And on the hill beheld the warlike maid,
As white as snowe vpon the Alpine clift
The virgin shone, in siluer armes arraid,
Her ventall vp so hie, that he descride
Her goodly visage, and her beauties pride.

(VI, XXVI, 3-8)

Quando in leggiadro aspetto e pellegrino

S'offerse agli occhi suoi l'alta guerriera.
 Bianche vie più che neve in giogo alpino
 Avea le sopravveste, e la visiera
 Alta tenea dal volto, e sovra un'erta,
 Tutta, quant'ella è grande, era scoperta.

[When, with a beautiful and unusual appearance, the tall warrior offered herself to his eyes.
 Her vest was whiter than alpine snow, and the visor was raised on her face; on a hilltop she
 appeared in all her greatness]

(VI, XXVI, 3-8)

The Italian has perhaps a better *incipit*, thanks to the use of the verb 'offerirsi', as though Clorinda, like a mythological goddess, *chose* to appear to Tancredi: Fairfax misses this nuance in favour of a decidedly fortuitous meeting, caused by the knight's lifting of his eyes only to meet hers. The prosecution of the stanza is remarkably faithful, maintaining as it does the metaphor (transformed into a simile) of the Alpine snow; however, original with Fairfax are the personification of the 'ventall', and the last line, in which Tasso describes the heroine standing, immobile, on a rock. Fairfax, thus, misses the peculiar note of this description of Clorinda, the emphasis on her height, which will be reprised, in highly similar terms, later on in the poem (XI, XXVII, 7-8), and consequently misses the link between the numerous adjectives and epithets that, in the original, focus on her physical greatness ('alta' repeated twice; 'sovra un'erta'; 'grande') and the heroine's implicit spiritual greatness, also hinted at by the colour of her armour, 'bianche più che neve in giogo alpino' and thus symbolising purity.

It is interesting to note how Fairfax, following the original, is not afraid of describing the heroine's goriest deeds. This attitude is particularly notable when compared to Sir John Harington's habit, seen in the previous chapter, of censoring the bloodiest actions of his heroines: Fairfax demonstrates no shyness in the description of parts of bodies, still half alive, rolling on the ground, and parting of heads from the hand of the female knight. This is exemplified by the account of an extremely brutal war accident:

Non lontana è Clorinda, e già non meno
 par che di tronche membra il campo asperga
 [...]

Tronchi i nervi e 'l gogozzuol reciso,
 Gio rotando a cader prima la testa,
 Prima bruttò di polve immonda il viso,
 Che giù cadesse il tronco: il tronco resta
 (miserabile mostro) in sella assiso;
 Ma libero del fren, con mille rote

Calcitrando il destrier, da sé lo scuote.

[Not far away, Clorinda equally seems to spread chopped limbs around the field (...). With the nerves cut and the throat slashed, the face gets stained with dirty dust before the body falls down: the body stays (what horrible monster) sat on the saddle; but, free of the reins, with a thousand spins, the steed bucks it off]

(IX, LXVIII, 1-2; LXX)

Not far from him, amid the blood and dust,
Heads, armes, and legs *Clorinda* strowed wide
[...]

And cut the sinewes and the throte in twaine,
The head fell downe vpon the earth belowe,
And soil'd with dust the visage on the plaine;
The headlesse trunke (a wofull thing to knowe)
Still in the saddle seated did remaine,
Vntill his stead (that felt the raines at large)
With leapes and flings that burden did discharge.

(IX, LXVIII, 1-2; LXX)

Although the second line shows some minor differences – Tasso's 'asperg[ere]', which has primarily religious connotations, is dropped in the translation in favour of Fairfax's habitual repetitions, which seem to anticipate the obsessive bodily description in the subsequent encounter between Tancredi and Clorinda –, both poets are rather bold in their account of the female knight's violence. Similarly, both share the image of lines 6-7, recalling the mythological centaur and acting as a brief break from the violence of the stanzas, immediately reprised by the description of the horse bucking the corpse off.

A slight, but consequential, change is made by Fairfax when describing the encounter between the two main female knights of the poem, Clorinda and the Christian Gildippe; although the translation is faithful, there is one detail that Fairfax inserts:

Era il sesso il medesimo, e simil era
L'ardimento e il valore in questa e in quella:
Ma far prova di lor non è lor dato;
Ch'a nemico maggior le serba il fato.

[Their sex was the same, and similar was the prowess and the valour in both of them: yet, they are not allowed to prove themselves against each other; for they are reserved for a mightier enemy]

(IX, LXXI, 5-8)

Like was their sexe, their beautie and their hew,
Like was their youth, their courage and their might;
Yet fortune would they should the battaile trie;
Of mightier foes, for both were fram'd to die.

(IX, LXXI, 5-8)

Fairfax's is an important anticipation: Tasso leaves the final line rather neutral, simply mentioning that the two heroines are destined to a greater foe. The translator's revelation that the fate of the women will be, in fact, a duel culminating in their death is striking, especially considering that their fate will only be accomplished much later in the poem (canto XII for Clorinda, and canto XX – the final one – for Gildippe).

Another of Clorinda's grand entrances, this time her appearance on a Jerusalem tower, is majestically rendered by both poets. Fairfax adds a favourite simile, comparing the warrior to Cynthia: '*Clorinda* on the corner towre alone, / In siluer armes like rising *Cinthia* shone' (XI, XXVII, 7-8). These two lines translate Tasso's 'in su la torre altissima angolare / Sovra tutti Clorinda eccelsa appare' ('high up on the corner tower, above everybody, the excellent Clorinda appears', XXVII, 7-8), apparently simpler but in reality endowed with alliterations, with that beautiful, rare attribute to the knight ('eccelsa') and, more importantly, with adjectives and complements from the semantic field of height, which highlight Clorinda's importance and really present her as the head of the Pagan camp: 'altissima', 'angolare', 'sovra tutti', adjectives that refer to the tower on the literal level, but to Clorinda herself on the metaphorical level (so much so that Georges Güntert reads references to towers as symbolising the warrior more than any other metaphor or image in the *Liberata*, Güntert 1986: 69).

Another complimentary verse in celebration of Clorinda is rendered positively by the translator; Tasso explains that witnessing the heroine's actions has spurred her fellow Pagan women to an unprecedented patriotic love:

[M]irando la vergine gagliarda,
Vero amor della patria arma le donne:
Correr le vedi, e collocarsi in guarda
Con chiome sparse e con succinte gonne,
E lanciar dardi, e non mostrar paura,
D' esporre il petto per le amante mura.

[Admiring the valiant virgin, the women are armed with true love for their country: you can see them run, and guard, with loose hair and shortened skirts, and throw darts, and not show any fear, to expose their breasts for their beloved walls]

(XI, LVIII, 3-8)

Fairfax renders as

The women that *Clorindaes* strength behould,
Their countries loue to warre encouraged
They weapons got and fight like men they would,
Their gownes tuckt vp, their lockes were loose and spred,
Sharpe darts they cast, and without dread or feare

The passage records an important moment: this female action is not accomplished by one extraordinary character, such as Clorinda, active only because she is exceptionally strong and thus unique, but it is enlarged to all women, who are, at last, on a par with men; Fairfax renders these lines especially powerful, by independently adding the comparison with male soldiers in line 5. In addition, both poets talk of Clorinda as a role model for these fighting women serenely and naturally, so that, especially considering Fairfax's repeated use of Cynthia-centred metaphors for Clorinda, and the consequent exploitation of Elizabeth's epithet for the poem's heroine, an identification between Fairfax's Clorinda and the Queen would, at this point, seem established.

Fairfax's positive portrayal of women is visible once again soon after, when he modifies Tasso's final address of Argante to his followers: in an attempt to spur them, he calls them 'Franchi no, ma Franche' ('not Frenchmen, but Frenchwomen', LXI, 8), using the female ending also for 'stanche' (LXI, 7) and thus trying to minimise his followers' virility. Fairfax omits the joke, perhaps realising its inappropriateness, after the recent celebration of female citizens fighting in war just a few octaves before. His final couplet ends with '[w]hat are you wearie for a change so short?' (LXI, 8), without gendering the question at all, and this shows Fairfax's thoughtful, attentive translation process.

The twelfth canto begins with a strong complaint on the part of Clorinda, who regrets the fact that male knights are out battling for their camp whereas she is restricted within the walls, as a bowman. The others, she says, are doing 'unusual and strange wonders' ('meraviglie inusitate e strane', III, 2, a beautiful expression in its simplicity that almost recalls infantile language and which is translated by Fairfax as 'strange things', III, 2). In a 'disdainful rejection of her own condition as a woman, considered as a state of inferiority'⁵³ (Getto 1977: 122), she rhetorically wonders: '[d]unque sol tanto a donna, e non più lice?' ('thus, is a woman only allowed this much, and nothing more?' III, 8). In the translation, the rhetorical question is eliminated and, in its place, Fairfax supplies a somewhat melancholic assertion: '[b]ut that was all a womans hand could doo' (III, 8). The realisation that she cannot show

⁵³ ('Un rifiuto sdegnoso della propria condizione di donna, sentita come una condizione di inferiorità').

her prowess in battle, then, leads the knight to another bitter rhetorical exclamation, which sounds half ironic, half threatening:

Chè non riprendo la femminea vesta,
S'io ne son degna, e non mi chiudo in cella?

[Why don't I wear again my feminine clothes, if I am not worthy of battle, why don't I lock myself in a cell?]

(XII, IV, 5-6)

Why take I not againe my virgins weed?
And spend my daies in secret cell vnknow?

(XII, IV, 5-6)

The translation is remarkable here; in the ensuing stanzas, Clorinda's speech has an awakening effect on Argante, standing beside her, who is spurred into action by her charisma. However, Fairfax misses an important detail when he fails to translate Argante's self-definition as 'nell'armi [...] consorte' (VII, 7) of Clorinda; the use of the term 'consorte' ('spouse') seems to stress that Clorinda is, and can only be, wedded to weapons. Fairfax tones it down, simply writing 'thy fellow haue I beene in armes' (VII, 7).

During Tasso's lengthy description of Clorinda's infancy, the passage regarding the appearance of a Christian spirit requesting that the baby Clorinda be baptised is characterised by a strong sense of humanity on the part of Tasso, which is missed by Fairfax. In the original, the spirit proclaims that he endowed 'the waters [drowning Clorinda] with intelligence', and the 'wild lioness [attacking her] with piety' ('pietade a le fere, e mente a l'acque', XII, XXXVII, 2), whereas the adjectives chosen by Fairfax, 'waters milde, tygresse tame' (XXXVII, 2), both belong to a semantic field appropriate for animals and miss the distinctive humanisation of the original version. Indeed, Fairfax never seems able to make good use of Tasso's (de-)humanisations; earlier in the poem, during the description of an enraged Satan, both Tasso and Carew donated a great sense of animalism with their simile of the devil as a wounded bull. While Fairfax wrote simply that

He wept for rage
[...]
He chokt his curses, to himselfe he spake,
Such noises wilde bulls, that softly bellow make.

(Fairfax, IV, I, 6-8),

Tasso had a different semantic choice:

Ambo le labbra per furor si morse;

E, qual tauro ferito, il suo dolore
Versò mugghiando e sospirando fuore.

(IV, I, 6-8);

Carew's translation was literal:

Both lips through rage he champs, and gnaweth fast:
And his fell griefe, as some begoared Bull,
Roaring and sighing, out he belkes at full.

(Carew, IV, I, 6-8)

Tasso's and Carew's biting of the lips was a much more instinctive, brutish act than the extremely human weeping; similarly, the use of the term 'mugghiando' reinforced the already powerful simile. Fairfax, on the contrary, once again utilised a very human 'spake', obtaining the opposite effect compared to the original version: complete dehumanisation there, and humanisation here.

Following the description of Clorinda's early years, one of the central episodes of the poem takes place: the final encounter between the heroine and Tancredi. The episode is characterised by a very specific agenda on the part of Tasso, who, in another of the many conflictual ambiguities of the poem, writes of their nocturnal duel in terms more appropriate for a love encounter, which however can never be viable in this instance because the two antagonist knights, instead of loving each other, are trying to kill each other (Clorinda because she sees Tancredi merely as an enemy, and Tancredi because he is unaware that the Pagan warrior whom he is fighting is his beloved):

Tre volte il cavalier la donna stringe
Con le robuste braccia; ed altrettante
Da que' nodi tenaci ella si scinge,
Nodi di fier nemico, e non d'amante.

[Three times the knight holds the woman in his strong arms; and three times she frees herself from those stubborn embraces; an enemy's embraces, not a lover's]

(XII, LVII, 1-4)

Thrice his strong armes he fouldes about her waste,
And thrice was forst to let the virgine goe,
For she disdained to be so embraste,
No louer would have strain'd his mistress soe.

(XII, LVII, 1-4)

Not only does Fairfax translate faithfully the first three lines; he even takes the lovers metaphor further, avoiding to specify, like Tasso does, that Tancredi is a foe rather than a lover, and writing an original fourth line – showing his perfect understanding of the original tone – which leads Colin Burrow to state that the translator 'luxuriates

in the suppressed erotic subtext' (Burrow 1993: 169). Tasso's same stylistic process is used in the central octave describing Clorinda's death at the hands of Tancredi:

Ma ecco omai l'ora fatale è giunta
Che il viver di Clorinda al suo fin deve.
Spinge egli il ferro nel bel sen di punta,
Che vi si immerge, e il sangue avido beve;
E la vesta, che d'or vago trapunta
Le mammelle stringea tenera e leve,
L'empie di un caldo fiume. Ella già sente
Morirsi; e il piè le manca egro e languente.

[But now alas, the fatal hour has come when Clorinda's life must come to an end. He pushes the pointed iron into her beautiful breast, that goes in deep, and thirstily drinks her blood; and her robe, that, embroidered with gold, held lightly and tenderly her nipples, filled with a warm river. She feels she is dying; and her foot trembles, ill and languid]

(XII, LXIV)

But now alas, the fatall howre arriues,
That her sweete life must leaue that tender hold,
His sword into her bosom deepe he driues,
And bath'd in lukewarme blood his iron cold,
Betweene her brests the cruell weapon riuies
Her curious square, embost with swelling gold,
Her knees grow weake, the paines of death she feeles,
And like a falling Cedar bends and reeles.

(XII, LXIV)

Tasso's stanza is permeated with ambiguous terms, that, without the context, could be intended as either belonging to the semantic field of love or, as is the case, of war or death, such as 'languente'. Similarly, the image of the sword being greedy ('avid') when drinking from the heroine's beautiful bosom, the extremely voyeuristic fourth line about her breasts, as well as the ensuing image of the knights being overflowed with a 'caldo fiume' would all be appropriate as part of a stanza on the first encounter between two lovers. Fairfax, in this case, fails to maintain this ambiguity entirely; 'the paines of death' are unequivocal in meaning, whereas in the Italian the use of the verb 'to feel' ('sente morirsi') almost carries sexual connotations. However, the translator maintains the authorial intervention in the first line (the second in this passage, after the direct address to Tancredi in stanza LXXVI), important because it is revealing of Tasso's identification with his character and of the subjective quality of the narration; he also notices and retains another important nuance in Tancredi's monologue, when he calls Clorinda's corpse 'reliquie' (LXXVIII, 2), translated as 'reliques' (LXXVIII, 1); the religious undertone is very strong in both poets.

The narration of Tancredi wounding the body of the late Clorinda, now transformed into a tree (precisely, a cypress, symbol of death), is carefully rendered by Fairfax. Ominous is the entrance to the enchanted wood: for attentive readers, in the original version there is a strong reference to the previous episode of the physical killing of Clorinda. In fact, there Tancredi had felt ‘un non so che di flebile e soave’ (XII, LXVI, 6) that had persuaded him to baptise the dying woman and, consequently, discover her true identity, with much pain; here, it is ‘un non so che confuso’ (XIII, XL, 7) that prevents him from entering the wood in which he will ‘see’ again his beloved. In this second instance, just as it was in the previous occasion, Fairfax ignores this *je ne sais quoi*, this instinctive, ominous feeling that Tancredi has.

When the wounded tree, bleeding, laments (the episode is clearly modelled on the *Aeneid*’s Polidorus and Dante’s Pier delle Vigne), Tasso prepares his readers for the marvellous event by exclaiming ‘O meraviglia!’ (XLI, 2), an exclamation omitted by Fairfax who, instead, proceeds with the description of the blood pouring from the torn branch. And Fairfax does so unfortunately, because in the Italian Tasso capably puts in practice his theorisation on the marvellous and verisimilar qualities that any work of literature should present; he does this by anticipating the marvellous quality of the event with the narrator’s exclamation, and grants it verisimilitude thanks to the explanation that the talking branch was the magician Ismeno’s work⁵⁴. Tasso concentrates, then, on the bright red colour that the soil has taken, whereas Fairfax beautifully, and archaically, states that the ‘verdant plaine’ ‘bebled’ (XLI, 4). He then translates liberally one of the ensuing stanzas, omitting Tasso’s ‘solo è fievole in amore’ (‘he is only weak as far as love is concerned’, XLVI, 3), an explanation for Tancredi’s gullibility in believing in the identity of the branch as Clorinda. Fairfax’s version is free: ‘[w]ith faigned showes of tender loue made soft, / A spirit false did with vaine plants betray’ (XLVI, 3-4).

⁵⁴ In the first of his *Discorsi dell’arte poetica*, Tasso had stated: ‘[p]uò esser dunque una madesima azione e meravigliosa e verisimile: meravigliosa, riguardandola in se stessa, e circonscritta dentro a i termini naturali; verisimile, considerandola divisa da questi termini nella sua cagione, la quale è una virtù soprannaturale, potente, ed avvezza ad operar simili meraviglie’ (‘the same action can be both marvellous and verisimilar: marvellous, if it is considered on its own, and within its natural limits; verisimilar, if it is considered without these terms in its cause, which is a powerful, supernatural entity, used to perform such marvels’, quoted in Baldi et al 1993: II, I, 687-688). Colin Burrow adds that ‘[f]or Tasso this debate becomes a battle within his hero. Tancred confronts and half-credits his own delusive, digressive fictions and the desires from which they stem; and these fabulous imaginings are associated with fictional sources of dubious propriety’ (Burrow 1993: 79).

Erminia's appearance, and the revelation to the readers of her love for Tancredi, are both important: the princess, daughter to the King of Antioch and thus Pagan, but deeply enamoured of Tancredi after having been a (respected and honoured) prisoner of war of the Christian hero, is, like Sofronia, a minor but extremely interesting female character to emerge in the poem. In addition, her love for Tancredi both replicates and outlives the corresponding love of Tancredi for Clorinda: unlike the latter, however, Erminia's will have a positive resolution. Fairfax anticipates the princess' strong passion by revealing that she 'felt her hart with loues hot feuer quake' (III, XVII, 6), for Tasso's much softer 'già sente palpitarsi il petto' (XVII, 6), rendered by Carew as 'her hart feeles in a panting plight' (XVII, 6). When questioned by the king, the princess hides what she feels for the Christian champion:

Poi gli dice infingevole, e nasconde
Sotto il manto dell'odio altro desio

(III, XIX, 1-2)

Although Fairfax misses the author's splendid 'infingevole', his rendition of the rest of the verse is perfect, and even the metaphor of clothes is retained:

At last she spake, and with a craftie slight
Her secret loue disguis'd in clothes of hate

(Fairfax, III, XIX, 1-2)

Carew's translation is similar; he too omits 'infingevole' but maintains the metaphor:

Then sithens she contriues, and seekes to hide
Another longinge vnder cloke of hate

(Carew, III, XIX, 1-2)

Erminia then puns on her real feelings for Tancredi in a very important stanza, which again acts as a prefiguration of the later ambiguity in the episode of Clorinda's death, an ambiguity between love and hatred images and terms which is a peculiar trait of the poem. Both translators render it brilliantly:

Egli è il prence Tancredi: oh prigioniero
Mio fosse un giorno! e no 'l vorrei già morto:
Vivo il vorrei, perch' in me desse al fero
Desio dolce vendetta alcun conforto.
Così parlava: e de' suoi detti il vero

Da chi l'udiva in altro senso è torto;
 E fuor n'uscì con le sue voci estreme
 Misto un sospir che 'ndarno ella già preme.

(III, XX)

The prince *Tancred* it is, ah once that hee
 My prisner were, but yet aliuie, not sleine
 I would him haue, that fierce desire in mee
 Of sweete reuenge might so some comfort geine:
 This sayd she, and her words by hearers bee
 Wrong turned from right sence, as she did meane.
 And this last speech a mingled sigh out brought,
 Which to suppressse, but all in vaine she sought.

(Carew, III, XX)

'*Tancred* he hight, O *Macon* would he weare
 My thrall, ere fates him of this life depriue,
 For to his hatefull head such spite I beare,
 I would him reauue his cruell hart on liue.'
 Thus said she, they that her complainings heare
 In other sense her wishes credit giue.
 She sigh'd withall, they constred all amisse,
 And thought she wisht to kill, who long'd to kisse.

(Fairfax, III, XX)

Fairfax inserts independently the reference to Macon, as well as the denigrating adjectives ('hatefull'; 'cruell') in Erminia's speech. In addition, the final line is entirely original with him: Carew has a faithful translation of Tasso's much plainer version, and both are less successful than Fairfax's concise, sensational conclusion.

The English poet renders quite well the stanza describing Erminia's enamourment of Tancredi:

Her bodie free, captiued was her hart,
 And loue the keies did of that prison beare,
 Prepar'd to goe it was a death to part,
 From that kinde Lord, and from that prison deare:
 But thou O honour which esteemed art,
 The chieftest vesture noble Ladies weare,
 Enforcest her against her will, to wend
 To *Aladine*, her mothers dearest frend.⁵⁵

(VI, LVIII)

Così se il corpo libertà riebbe,
 Fu l'alma sempre in servitute astretta.
 Ben molto a lei d'abbandonare increbbe
 Il signor caro e la prigion diletta;
 Ma l'onestà regal, che mai non debbe
 Da magnanima donna esser negletta,

⁵⁵ This final line is inexplicably changed by Fairfax, who invents the friendship between Erminia's mother and the King of Jerusalem and ignores the detail of mother and daughter escaping to an allied land together. The translator, in fact, seems to think that the girl's mother is already in Jerusalem, as in the following stanza he states, independently, that the princess is 'entertained, / By that old tyrant and her mother deare' (LIX, 1-2).

La costringe a partirsi, e con l'antica
Madre a ricoverarsi in terra amica.

[Thus, although her body was free again, her soul was forever enslaved. She resented much to abandon her dear lord and her beloved servitude; but royal honesty, that should never be forgotten by a noble lady, forced her to part, and take refuge with her old mother in a friendly country]

(VI, LVIII)

The initial two lines in the Italian are compressed into the first line in Fairfax, who reserves the second line for a traditional image, love holding the keys to the lover's heart; remarkably faithful is the fourth line. Fairfax then omits the adjective 'regal' referring to honesty, which is peculiar in the Italian because it could be intended as referring either to Erminia, royal because she is a princess, or to honesty itself, royal because it is the first among the virtues. Fairfax seems to prefer this latter interpretation and devotes two lines to an original, direct address to Honour.

A significant modification is to be found in the ensuing group of stanzas, when Tasso writes that Erminia, having by chance found Tancredi almost lifeless and before curing him with the herbs she knows so well, is tempted to use them malignly, in order to revenge, by killing Tancredi, her friends' and relatives' deaths at the hands of Christians. Fairfax chooses not to give his Erminia any such thoughts, probably because 'no treason should her spotlesse person staine':

Some cursed weeds her cunning hand did knoe,
That could augment his harme, encrease his paine;
But she abhorr'd to be reuenged soe,
No treason should her spotlesse person staine.

(VI, LXVIII, 3-6)

Tasso portrays a much more ambiguous Erminia:

Pensa talor d'erba nocente e ria
Succo sparger in lui, che l'avvelene;
Ma schiva poi la man vergine e pia
Trattar l'arti maligne, e se n'astiene.

[She sometimes thinks about giving him the juice of some toxic and lethal herb, so as to poison him; but then her virgin and pious hand avoids to be involved in malign arts, and abstains]

(VI, LXVIII, 3-6)

- Fairfax also invents two moralistic couplets as conclusions of two consecutive stanzas, which form part of the speeches that Love and Honour, heavily personified in both versions, give the princess, undecided whether to concede herself to Tancredi or

preserve her virginity. Fairfax, following his stern Protestant conscience, enhances the moralism greatly:

Or lose that iewell Ladies hold so deare?
Is maidenhood so great a load to beare.

(VI, LXXI, 7-8)

Ahi, nel tenero cor questi pensieri
Chi svegliar può! che pensi? oimè, che sperì?

[Alas, who can awaken in a tender heart these thoughts? What are you thinking, alas, what are you hoping?]

(VI, LXXI, 7-8)

The second couplet, Honour's conclusive advice to Erminia, presents an even stronger divergence:

Thy Lord will iudge thou sinnest beyond measure,
If vainly thus thou waste so rich a treasure.

(VI, LXXII, 7-8)

'Non sei di me tu degna'; e ti conceda
Vulgare agli altri e mal gradita preda.

['You are not worthy of me' [Tancredi would say]; and he would give you to the other soldiers, as a vulgar and ill-accepted prey]

(VI, LXXII, 7-8)

In the final line, the focus of the two poets is clearly opposite: in Tasso this is entirely mundane ('vulgare agli altri') and is thus limited to reputation only, whereas in Fairfax there is a very strong (perhaps even excessive) stress on the post-mortem consequences of Erminia's decision, and the focus is on sinfulness, rather than reputation.

Conversely, Fairfax translates beautifully Erminia's soliloquy in which she declares her envy for Clorinda, the 'warlike maid', and regrets her own feminine lifestyle:

E tra sè dice sospirando: Oh quanto
Beata è la fortissima donzella!
Quant'io la invidio! e non le invidio il vanto
O il femminile onor dell'esser bella;
A lei non tarda i passi il lungo manto,
Né il suo valor rinchiude invida cella;
Ma veste l'armi, e, se d'uscirne agogna,
Vassene; e non la tien tema o vergogna.

Ah perché forti a me natura e il cielo
Altrettanto non fèr le membra e il petto,
Onde potessi anch'io la gonna e il velo

Cangiar nella corazza e nell'elmetto?

[And, sighing, she says to herself: O, how blessed is the mighty maid! How much I envy her! And I don't envy the claim, the feminine honour of being beautiful; she is not made slower, in her walk, by a long skirt, neither does an envious cell keep her valour a secret. She wears weapons, and if she wishes to go out, she goes; she is not held back by fear or shame. / Alas, why did not Nature and the skies make my own limbs and breasts equally strong, so that I, too, could change skirts and veil for armour and helmet?]

(VI, LXXXII; LXXXIII, 1-4)

And sighing, softly to herself she said,
'How blessed is this virgin in her might?
How I enuie the glorie of the maid,
Yet enuie not her shape or beauties light;
Her steps are not with trailing garments staid,
Nor chambers hide her valours shining bright;
But arm'd she rides, and breaketh sword and speare,
Nor is her strength restrain'd by shame or feare.

'Alas, why did not heau'n these members fraile,
with liuely force and vigor strengthen so?
That I this silken gowne, and slender vaile
Might for a brestplate, and an helme forgoe?

(VI, LXXXII; LXXXIII, 1-4)

Both poets make explicit the constriction of the private chamber, and Erminia's preference for freedom of movement over the celebration of beauty; Fairfax adds the ability to ride armed, absent in Tasso, who conversely genders 'the honour of beauty' as specifically 'feminine'. Both poets, however, maintain the address to the Heavens and have Erminia indicate, as the cause for the superior state of Clorinda, lesser physical strength on her part.

The princess' dream of fighting (specifically, fighting in order to save Tancredi, of whom she witnessed the wounding in duel from the city walls) continues and grows until she decides to steal her friend's armour and wear it herself. In Tasso, she does this in order not to be '[c]om'una pur del vil femmineo volgo' ('just one of those vulgar women', VI, LXXXVI, 4), a decidedly negative definition thanks to the use of the adjective 'vil'. Fairfax corrects this misogynistic touch, eliminating the line altogether and writing, instead, '[w]hy yeeld I thus to complaints and sorrowings, / As if all hope and helpe were perisht quight?' (LXXXVI, 3-4). The translator, perhaps, stresses the power of love (which helps the weak princess to carry the armour) slightly excessively: 'Loue, strong, bold, mightie, neuer-tired loue' (LXXXVII, 1) for Tasso's simpler 'mi farà possente / Amor' ('Love will render me strong', LXXXVII, 1-2).

When Erminia is about to enter the battlefield dressed as Clorinda, Fairfax is more romantic, dedicating a full line to the traditional rose metaphor which also acts as a prefiguration of the *canto della rosa* passage in Armida's garden (XVI, XIV-XV):

To him she purpos'd to present the rose
Pure, spotlesse, cleane, vntoucht of mortall wight

(VI, XCVIII, 5-6),

Tasso has a much more prosaic

A lui secreta ed improvvisa amante
Con sicura onestà giunger desia

[She wanted, with the certainty of her honesty, to go to him, as an unexpected and secret lover]

(VI, XCVIII, 5-6)

Erminia is the protagonist of an extended bucolic episode in the seventh canto, which is important because the pastoral nature of the passage marks a notable change from the usual battlefield description, with which it contrasts heavily and not entirely harmoniously: as Baldi has noted, this parenthetical episode is not comparable to Ariosto's balanced variation of themes, but is, rather,

[U]na stanchezza per gli scontri, il sangue e le morti, un bisogno di pace e idillio, un abbandono a vagheggiare scenari quieti e riposanti, quasi a dimenticare la ferocia e la crudeltà barbarica della guerra.

[A tiredness for battles, blood and deaths, a need for peace and tranquillity, a haven to fantasise about quiet and relaxing scenes, almost forgetting the ferocity and the barbaric cruelty of war]

(Baldi et al 1993: II, I, 702)

Erminia, departed from the town at night and then lost in the woods, encounters an old shepherd who is frightened by her knightly attire. She lifts her helmet to show her face and they exchange a moving conversation, marked by a notable difference in the two versions: in Tasso the shepherd addresses her as '[f]iglia' ('daughter', VIII, 5), whereas in Fairfax he calls her '[m]y sonne' (VIII, 5). It is possible that the English poet did not consider it likely that Erminia's raising of her helmet was sufficient to let the shepherd recognise her sex; unfortunately, the moment in which the shepherd does realise she is a woman is never made explicit in the English version. However, Fairfax maintains, correctly, the essential point of the dialogue, the strong sense that Erminia

has immediately and instinctively found a parental figure in the old shepherd, which, in turn, is revealing of her helplessness and need for protection.

Erminia's idyllic stay with the shepherd's family is an episode famously used by Spenser⁵⁶, with whose version Fairfax also shows familiarity. The shepherd's reminiscence of his time at court, which Spenser mostly translates from Tasso, shows complex relations between the three texts:

Tempo già fu, quando più l'uom vaneggia
Ne l'età prima, ch'ebbi altro desio
E disdegnai di pasturar la greggia;
E fuggii dal paese a me natio,
E vissi in Menfi un tempo, e ne la reggia
Fra i ministri del re fui posto anch'io,
E benchè fossi guardian de gli orti
Vidi e conobbi pur l'inique corti.

Pur lusingato da speranza ardità
Soffrìi lunga stagion ciò che più spiace;
Ma poi ch'insieme con l'età fiorita
Mancò la speme e la baldanza audace,
Piansi i riposi di quest'umil vita
E sospirai la mia perduta pace
E dissi: 'O corte, a Dio'.

[There was a time (when man is most foolish, in the prime of years) when I had different wishes, and resented being a shepherd; I escaped from my native village and lived in Memphis for a while, and in the royal palace I was placed, among the King's ministers; and although I was simply a gardener I saw and knew the courts. / Flattered by brave hope, I suffered for a long time that which displeases man most; but when, together with the youth, hope and brave pride also faded, I regretted the quietness of this humble life and I sighed for my lost peace, and said: 'O court, farewell']

(VII, XII; XIII, 1-7)

'Time was (for each one hath his doting time)
(These siluer locks were golden tresses then)
That countrie life I hated as a crime,
And from the forrests sweet contentment ran,
To Memphis stately pallace would I clime,
And there became the mightie Caliphes man,
And though I but a simple gardner weare,
Yet could I marke abuses, see and heare.

'Entised on with hope of future gaine,
I suffred long what did my soule displease;
But when my youth was spent, my hope was vaine,
I felt my natue strength at last decrease;
I gan my losse of lustie yeeres complaine,
And wisht I had enioy'd the countries peace.
I bod the court farewell

(Fairfax, VII, XII; XIII, 1-7)

⁵⁶ For instance, William Drummond of Hawthornden, a man who 'took great delight in detecting borrowings and literary imitation' (Macdonald 1971: 13) annotated his copy of *The Faerie Queene*, writing in particular at Book VI, IX, XX: "all this is Tor. Tassos can. 7.1 Gier. of Erminia che poco é il desiderio e poco é il nostro bisogno, onde la vita si conservi".

The time was once, in my first prime of yeares,
 When pride of youth forth pricked my desire,
 That I disdain'd amongst mine equall peares
 To follow sheepe, and shepheards base attire:
 For further fortune then I would inquire.
 And leauing home, to roiall court I sought;
 Where I did sell my selfe for yearly hire,
 And in the Princes garden daily wrought:
 There I beheld such vainenesse, as I neuer thought.

With sight whereof soone cloyd, and long deluded
 With idle hopes, which them doe entertaine,
 After I had ten yeares my selfe excluded
 From natiue home, and spent my youth in vaine,
 I gan my follies to my selfe to plaine,
 And this sweete peace, whose lacke did then appeare.

(Spenser, Book VI, IX, XXIV; XXV, 1-6)

Fairfax adds the two parenthetical sentences at the beginning of the shepherd's speech, avoiding Tasso's extremely negative connotation of youth ('quando più l'uom vaneggia'), which, conversely, Spenser maintains with his 'pride of youth' in the second line. Moreover, the loss of personal freedom which, in Tasso, sickened the shepherd so much as to force him to return to the country ('soffrii lunga stagion ciò che più spiace'), and which is emphasised in Spenser with his striking 'I did sell my selfe for yearly hire', is not as evident in Fairfax, whose shepherd seems to leave the court when his hope of advancement has become vain: thus, in Tasso the vanity of the man's hope is simply the obvious consequence of the iniquity of court life, whereas in Fairfax it rather seems connected with the aging nature of the shepherd. The attack on court is, in general, not as strong in the translation as it is in the original version.

It must be noted that here, paradoxically, Spenser is at times a closer translator of Tasso than Fairfax himself, as is especially the case in line 3 of the first octave, of which the passage from *The Faerie Queene* is an accurate translation, unlike Fairfax's version which, adding that 'hated as a crime', does not convey the arrogant disdain hinted at in the other two texts. On the other hand, Fairfax borrows from Spenser random terms, most notably 'natiue', 'idle hopes'/'hope', 'sweete peace'/'countries peace', and, more significantly, 'spent my youth in vaine'/'my youth was spent'; in addition, it is only Fairfax and Spenser who specifically mention the old shepherd's home, calling it a 'cottage' (Spenser XVI, 5; Fairfax XVII, 2), whereas Tasso vaguely writes 'la conduce ov'è l'antica moglie' ('he leads her where his aged wife is', XVII, 3).

Spenser is also a closer translator than Fairfax in other lines of this same passage: his description of Calidore helping Pastorella '[the goats'] *rugged* teats to hold, / And out of them to presse the milke' (XXXVII, 8-9) is an extremely literal translation of Tasso's 'da l'*irsute* mamme il latte preme' (XVIII, 7, emphases added), whereas Fairfax has a much more liberal (and practical)

Her little flocks to pasture would she guide,
And milke her goates, and in their folds them place,
Both cheese and butter could she make, and frame
Herselfe to please the shepherd and his dame.

(Fairfax, VII, XVIII, 5-8)

Similarly, Erminia's reaction at the conclusion of the shepherd's speech in Tasso is closer to that of Calidore in Spenser than that of Fairfax's Erminia:

Mentre ei così ragiona, Erminia pende
da la soave bocca intenta e cheta

[While thus he speaks, Erminia hangs upon his dear mouth, attentive and quiet]

(VII, XIV, 1-2)

Whylest thus he talkt, the knight with greedy eare
Hong still vpon his melting mouth attent

(Spenser, IX, XXVI, 1-2)

While thus he spake, *Erminia* husht and still
His wise discourses heard, with great attention

(Fairfax, VII, XIV, 1-2)

Spenser's literal use of Tasso's idiomatic sentence 'pende da la [...] bocca' enables him to pun on one of the etymologies of *Melibœ* ('honey-toned', Hamilton 2001: 662); moreover, his 'attent' resembles phonically the original's 'intenta'; conversely, Fairfax avoids altogether any mention of the shepherd's mouth.

Stylistically, Fairfax misses, forcedly, an almost excessive, four-word alliteration that Tasso presents at the end of a later stanza: '[i]l pietoso pastor pianse al suo pianto' ('the pious shepherd wept at her weeping', XVI, 8), which renders the line rather heavy (especially because of the three words sharing not one but two letters, 'pi'). Fairfax's version is much better: '[a]nd wept, and with her wept that shepherd old' (XVI, 8), whilst still maintaining the alliteration; the translator also maintains the focus on the tears, so important in this passage – as Giovanni Getto discovered, tears are present extensively in the episode (in nine octaves there is a mention of tears or weeping) and contribute to the pathetic quality of the passage (Getto 1977: 139). Fairfax maintains them, and also faithfully translates the Petrarchan image of the

protagonist dreaming of dying and being found, lifeless, by her lover (an image present in the *Canzoniere*'s 'Chiare, fresche e dolci acque', III, 27-37).

In these same stanzas, Fairfax also shows his translating art at its best; particularly impressive is his rendition of a line in the previous octave, Tasso's '[e] biade ancor, benchè non molte, e strame / Che pasca de' corsier l'avida fame' ('and corn, although not much, and hay to satisfy the insatiable hunger of the steeds', XLVII, 7-8): Fairfax writes that '[a]nd corne, although not much, and hay to feed / Their noble steeds and coursers when they need' (XLVII, 7-8). Although the line is neither important nor difficult, Fairfax's simple translation is praiseworthy: the English poet maintains exactly the same rhythm of the Italian, seems to choose terms according to their assonance with the Italian ('coursers' for 'corsier', but especially the beautiful 'and corne' for 'ancor'), and manages to maintain the beautiful descending tone of the first line with the parenthetical 'although not much'. Here, truly, Fairfax embodies the ideal of the 'invisible translator' with breathtaking suavity and ability.

A good translation is, similarly, that of the final couplet describing Erminia's discovery of Tancredi's almost lifeless body after another duel, with Argante. Tasso's

Vista la faccia scolorita e bella,
Non scese, no, precipitò di sella.

[Seeing his face, fair and pale, she dismounted, no, she jumped off the saddle]

(XIX, CIV, 7-8)

And when she sawe his face, pale, bloodlesse, dead,
She lighted, nay, she tumbled from her stead.

(XIX, CIV, 7-8)

The final line is remarkably faithful; the preceding verse, however, is marked by Fairfax's habitual reiterations and presents adjectives original with the translator (notably, the 'bella' of the Italian is omitted, in favour of synonyms of the first term used).

An unclear point is to be found a few stanzas later, when Erminia, believing Tancredi dead, cries, desperately, that

E forse allor, s'era a cercarlo ardita,
Quel davi tu, ch'ora convien che involo.

[Perhaps, then, had I been bold enough to ask for it, you would have given me [that kiss],
which now I am forced to steal]

(XIX, CVIII, 5-6)

Perchance if we aliue had hapt to meete,

They had beene giu'n which now are stolne.

(XIX, CVIII, 5-6)

The final line is correct, but the opening verse presents a difference in the first part of the hypothesis: Tasso's Erminia complains that she was not bold enough to ask for a kiss from Tancredi alive; Fairfax's heroine regrets that the two lovers had not met before Tancredi's death, which is, of course, an event that did happen, as is discernible from the previous lines of this same stanza. The use of the verb 'to meet' indicates, thus, a certain degree of distraction on the part of the English poet.

Armida

Armida, beautiful enchantress of royal descent, is another extremely complex Tassian character: negative because of her subtleness and falsity, guilty of kidnapping the Christian hero Rinaldo into her world of languor and lust, she is 'the most fascinating, but also the most complex woman of the *Liberata*, and perhaps the character most poetically desired by the author' (Larivaille 1987: 195)⁵⁷. Her bewitching nature certainly appealed to English readers too, as she is probably the character that had the greatest influence on Elizabethan poets emulous of Tasso, stirring the imitators' imagination much more than any other figure of the *Liberata*. Her first appearance in the poem is, naturally, centred on the description of her outstanding beauty, and is rather voyeuristic in all three writers. Tasso first poetically describes how

D'auro ha la chioma, ed or dal bianco velo
Traluce involta, or discoperta appare.
[...]

Ma nella bocca, ond'esce aura amorosa,
Sola rosseggia e semplice la rosa.

Mostra il bel petto le sue nevi ignude,
Onde il foco d'amor si nutre e desta:
Parte appar delle mamme acerbe e crude,
Parte altrui ne ricopre invida vesta.

(IV, XXIX, 3-4; XXX, 7-8; XXXI, 1-4)

Carew is extremely faithful and manages to pen a central passage worthy of Tasso's:

⁵⁷ ('La donna più interessante, ma la donna più complessa della *Liberata* e la creatura tassiana forse più liricamente vagheggiata dall'autore').

Gold are her lockes, which in white shadow pent,
Eft do but glimpse, eft all disclosde appeare
[...]

But in her mouth whence breath of loue out goes,
Ruddy alone and single bloomes the Rose.

Her bosome faire musters his naked snow,
Whence fire of loue is nourisht and reuiues,
Her pappes bitter vnripe in part doe show,
And part th'enuious weed from sight depriues.

(Carew, IV, XXIX, 3-4; XXX, 7-8; XXXI, 1-4)

Fairfax is equally explicit, but fails to mention that the veil Armida is wearing is white and thus misses on the symbolism of the colour, which is interesting, in Tasso, because it is paradoxical: Armida is not chaste and pure, the implication made by the colour of the veil is false, and her representation is, thus, similar to Ariosto's highly contradictory portrayals of Angelica:

A tinsell vaile her amber locks did shrowd,
That stroue to couer what it could not hide,
[...]
The marble goddesse, set at *Gnidos*, naked,
She seem'd, were she vncloath'd, or that awaked.
[...]

Her lips, where bloomes nought but the single rose,
Still blush, for still they kisse, while still they close.

Her breasts, two hills orespred with purest snow,
Sweet, smooth and supple, soft and gently swelling,
Between them lies a milken dale below,
Where loue, youth, gladnes, whitenes make their dwelling,
Her breasts halfe hid, and halfe were laid to show

(Fairfax, IV, XXIX, 3-4, 7-8; XXX, 7-8; XXXI, 1-5)

However, with the possible exception of the alliterative line 2 of stanza XXXI, perhaps slightly excessive in its use of adjectives, Fairfax's English verses are as poetic as the original ones; notable is the addition of the 'hills' metaphor in stanza XXXI, not present in the Italian, and the antanaclasis ('still' as adverb and adjective) in the second line of stanza XXX, which is equally original. Similarly, the comparison of Armida to the statue of Aphrodite in stanza XXIX is original with him: Tasso and Carew have, instead, a four-line simile comparing her to the sun periodically hidden by clouds, which Fairfax reduces to two lines only. Even more interesting is a parallel simile in the preceding octave,

As when a comet doth in skies appeare,
The people stand amazed at the light

which originally is

Si come là dove cometa o stella
Non più vista di giorno, in ciel risplende

(IV, XXVIII, 5-6)

and in Carew

As when some Starre or Comete strange ascends,
And in cleere day through sky his beames doth shed

(Carew, IV, XXVIII, 5-6)

That Carew is the more faithful of the two translators is not surprising; what is fascinating, however, is the fact that Fairfax's version is closer to an equivalent simile found in the 1592 *Complaint of Rosamond* by another of Tasso's admirers⁵⁸, Samuel Daniel:

Looke how a Comet at the first appearing,
Drawes all mens eyes with wonder to behold it

(*Complaint of Rosamond*, 113-114)

Fairfax and Daniel importantly share the detail of the amazement, or wonder, of the witnesses, which is absent from the other two versions; they also share the omission of 'stella', 'star', the consequent concentration on the comet, and the common terminological choice of the verb 'to appear'. It thus seems that Fairfax was not only influenced by Spenser but also by Samuel Daniel, thus demonstrating a striking knowledge of and familiarity with his contemporary poets⁵⁹.

In general, in the Armida passage, Fairfax seems intent on maintaining the poeticality of the Italian, and seems as taken by Armida's beauty as Tasso; in order to pen equally beautiful lines, however, he realises that he needs to distance himself from literalness. As a result, the stanzas relating to Armida are amongst the freest of the poem, but, at the same time, they do maintain a vague semantical faithfulness which renders them perhaps the most appropriate translation for the passage. Carew, in his painstaking effort to render his translation as *similar* (syntactically, phonically, sometimes even terminologically) to the Italian as possible, drifts, at times, into a

⁵⁸ In 1603, in his *Defence of Ryme*, Samuel Daniel called Tasso 'the wonder of Italy' (l. 438) and the *Gerusalemme Liberata* 'that admirable Poem [...], comparable to the best of the ancients' (ll. 439-440).

⁵⁹ Samuel Daniel, an 'excellent Italianist, with a wide knowledge of Italian literature' in Johanna Procter's definition (Procter 1984: 83) was, in turn, profoundly inspired by the *Gerusalemme Liberata* (see below, pp. 150-152).

certain awkwardness: for instance, his unique choice of the verb in his line ‘her loose haire, / Which nature selfe to waues *recrispelled*’ (XXX, 2) for the Italian ‘crin disciolto, / che natura per sè *rincrespa* in onde’ (XXX, 2, emphases added). Because of the assonance of the Italian verb and the corresponding English neologism, as well as of ‘nature selfe’ and ‘natura per sè’, the lines could be considered as examples of phonemic translation⁶⁰.

A slight difference is to be found a few stanzas later, when the first victim of Armida’s beauty, Godfrey’s own brother, is described by Fairfax as a ‘foule’ fallen in ‘the snare’:

This was the foule that first fell in the snare,
He saw her faire, and hopte to finde her kinde

(Fairfax, IV, XXXIV, 1)

The fowl metaphor is inserted independently by Fairfax, who consequently does not need the ominous sign of Eustazio’s gullibility given by Tasso through the subtle simile ‘come al lume farfalla, ei si rivolse / a lo splendor de la beltà divina’ (XXXIV, 1-2). Carew translates the simile beautifully, as ‘[a]s Fly at flame, so he about turned / At the brightnes of this bewtie deuine’ (XXXIV, 1-2).

When asked whether she is a goddess or a mortal being, Armida answers ambiguously, playing on the true meaning of the question. In the Italian, the woman says

Cosa vedi, signor, non pur mortale,
Ma già morta a i diletti, al duol sol viva

(IV, XXXVI, 3-4)

Carew translates literally but his first line does not reproduce Tasso’s *double entendre* equally effectively:

You see one Sir, not subiect sole to death,
But dead to ioy, onely to woe aliue

(Carew, IV, XXXVI, 3-4)

The translator’s ‘subiect to death’ does not allow the same ambiguity that is present in the Italian, where ‘cosa [...] non mortale’ (‘not a mortal thing’) can truly refer to a divinity. Fairfax’s version is even further than Carew’s from the effectiveness of the original:

⁶⁰ As theorised by André Lefevere (Lefevere 1975: 95); see p. 90.

A haplesse maid I am, both borne to die,
And dead to ioy, that liue in care and woe

(Fairfax, IV, XXXVI, 3-4)

The first line ignores almost entirely the pun on the divinity of the woman, and consequently is much weaker than the other renditions. Conversely, Fairfax manages to pen an effective couplet at the conclusion of Armida's address to Godfrey: Tasso's plain 's'hai potuto a molti il regno tòrre, / fia gloria egual nel regno or me riporre' (XLI, 7-8), rendered by Carew as 'as thou couldst their realmes from many rend, / So mine restord will equall glory lend' (XLI, 7-8), becomes witty and effective in Fairfax: 'since thou canst at will performe the thing, / More is thy praise to make, than kill a king' (XLI, 7-8). The prosecution of the woman's speech is equally liberal in Fairfax; he adds independently her 'in Christ I haue no hope nor trust' (XLII, 2), whereas Carew and Tasso have simply a reiteration that Armida's and Godfrey's faiths are different; similarly, he adds an original metaphor, '[w]ho scorneth gold because it lies in dust?' (XLII, 4), a strong rhetorical question expressed by Armida in order to champion her own cause and which is perhaps not entirely appropriate, given the context presenting Armida as a modest, humble woman appealing exclusively to Godfrey's generosity rather than stressing the justice of her request.

An interesting metaphor is chosen by Fairfax to conclude the next stanza, and is inserted within the lie-ridden speech that Armida gives in order to move Godfrey into a war in her defence:

This Paragon should Queene *Armida* wed,
A goodly swaine to be a Princesse pheare,
A louely partner of a Ladies bed,
A noble head, a golden crowne to weare:
His glosing sire his errand daily fed,
And sugred speeches whispred in mine eare,
To make me take this darling in mine armes,
But still the adder stopt her eares from charmes.

(Fairfax, IV, XLVII)

The English poet fills his stanza with metaphors, all of which are absent in the original; particularly notable is the final one, in which Armida is compared to an adder, a comparison enhanced by the extreme feminisation of the serpent ('her', 8). As readers know, Armida does indeed share many aspects with the subtle animal, exemplified by her cunning deception of Godfrey with this very story. Tasso prefers a

more sophisticated syntax, which includes a good *enjambement* (3-4), to the metaphors:

Ora il mio buon custode ad uom sì degno
Unirmi in matrimonio in sè prefisse,
E farlo del mio letto e del mio regno
Consorte; e chiaro a me più volte il disse.
Usò la lingua e l'arte, usò l'ingegno,
Perché il bramato effetto indi seguisse:
Ma promessa da me non trasse mai;
Anzi ritrosa ognor tacqui, or negai.

(IV, XLVII)

Carew, typically, provides a careful translation:

Now my good gardein, with so braue a mate
In wedlockes bondes resolves me fast to knit,
And him of bed, and of my royall state
Consort to make, and oft he told me it:
He vsde his tongue, and traines he vsde his pate,
That wisht effect might to his purpose fit:
Yet could he neuer me to promise sway,
But sowre still held my peace, or gaue a nay.

(Carew, IV, XLVII)

Fairfax seems to favour particularly the addition of details, such as his insertion of the specification in Armida's revelation that her mother appeared to her, often, in dreams: Carew's 'oft' (XII, 1), which faithfully translates Tasso's equally vague 'spesso' (XII, 1), becomes in Fairfax an original '[t]hree times' (XII, 1), preferred by the translator probably because of the numerological significance of the number three⁶¹.

The same translator also modifies greatly Godfrey's striking accusation of unchasteness: whereas Tasso and Carew have the king accusing Armida of sleeping with many a lover, Fairfax restricts the unchasteness to a more credible, and perhaps less guilty, affair with Aronte, the man who saved Armida; stylistically, he creates a highly dramatic moment with the addition of two parenthetical sentences, almost resembling theatrical asides, aimed at emphasising Armida's words and capturing the audience's feelings:

[T]hat each night I slept (O foule vntruth!)
(Mine honor lost) by this *Arontes* side

(Fairfax, IV, LVII, 5-6)

⁶¹ Traditionally, in biblical numerology the number three represents Divine Perfection, being the number of the Holy Trinity. Three is of course also the number of the Theological Virtues.

The parenthetical sentences are entirely original:

[C]h'io seguendo un mio lascivo istinto,
Volea raccormi a mille amanti in seno

[That I, following my own lusty instinct, wished to reach a thousand lovers' arms]
(IV, LVII, 5-6)

Indeed, Fairfax seems to be inspired by the theatre: soon after, he will develop another interesting theatrical metaphor, when he presents Rinaldo and Godfrey offering the Pagan enemies the possibility to witness a 'tragedy' in the form of a duel between them. Tasso writes that

Fera tragedia vuol che s'appresenti
Per lor diporto a le nemiche genti
(V, XLIII, 7-8)

Carew translates beautifully, and, through the capitalisation of 'Tragedie', the presentation of the 'tragedy' in the first person singular ('Ile [...] present'), and the sheer strength of the words 'the *shoe* / Present for pastime' (emphasis added), echoes a theatrical prologue much more so than the Italian version:

Ile of a dismall Tragedy the shoe
Present for pastime to our forraine foe.
(Carew, V, XLIII, 7-8)

Fairfax almost seems to draw inspiration from the metaphor of the original, and elaborates on it:

That of our tragedie the late done fact,
May be the first, and this the second, act.
(Fairfax, V, XLIII, 7-8)

Similarly, Fairfax introduces an original conceit whilst describing Armida's desperation after Godfrey's refusal of help; he omits Tasso's voyeuristic

Ma il chiaro umor, che di sì spesse stille
Le belle gote e 'l seno adorno rende,
Opra effetto di foco, il qual in mille
Petti serpe celato e vi s'apprende.
(IV, LXXVI, 1-4)

which is translated literally by Carew, as

But that cleere humour which embellisheth

Her bosome and faire cheekes with drops so thicke,
Workes the effect of fire, and close creepeth
Into a thousand breasts, and there doth sticke.

(Carew, IV, LXXVI, 1-4)

Particularly notable are Carew's alliterative use of 'creepeth' for 'serpe', and his natural, necessary but not at all unpoetic paraphrasing of 'opra' as 'workes the effect of fire'. Fairfax changes the stanza entirely:

Thrice twenty *Cupids* vnperceiued flew
To gather vp this licour, ere it fall,
And of each drop an arrow forged new,
Else, as it came, snatcht vp the christall ball,
And at rebellious harts for wilde fire threw.

(Fairfax, IV, LXXVI, 1-5)

Although Fairfax maintains the image of the fire entering witnesses' hearts, that of the sixty Cupids transforming Armida's tears into arrows of love is an entirely original one. Similarly, he modifies the conclusion of the stanza, which Carew unusually does not translate as literally as is his habit: Tasso's 'crudel, che tal beltà turba e consuma' (LXXVII, 8), becomes in Fairfax a *sententia*, '[h]ard is that hart which beautie makes not soft' (LXXVII, 8); Carew is closer to the original's meaning, but seems to miss the transitive quality of Tasso's verb and writes '[f]ell man that broyles, and such a bewtie wastes' (LXXVII, 8). Similarly, Fairfax adds another sensational conclusion when he has Eustazio defending Armida's case on the grounds that 'ill deserues he to be term'd a knight, / That beares a blunt sword, in a Ladies right' (LXXXI, 7-8).

Armida's vain attempts to win Godfrey over are interestingly portrayed by Fairfax. Despite maintaining Tasso's simile of the 'saturo augel' (LXII, 3), the sated bird who does not fly for more food, however enticing this looks, the translator reduces it to two lines and devotes the second half of the stanza to a moralising explanation:

So he, whom fulnesse of delight assureth,
What long repentance comes of loues short pleasure,
Her crafts, her artes, her selfe and all despiseth,
So base affections fall, when vertue riseth.

(Fairfax, V, LXII, 5-8)

Carew, conversely, translates correctly, switching from the bird simile into a metaphorical couplet referring to Godfrey, and thus following Tasso literally:

So he full of the world, frayle pleasures all
Scornes, and mounts to the sky by vncouth way:
And what so snares, vnfaithfull loue contriues,

Gainst his faire flight he of effect depriues.

(Carew, V, LXII, 5-8)

Tal ei sazio del mondo i piacer frali
Sprezza, e se 'n poggia al Ciel per via romita,
E quante insidie al suo bel volo tende
L'infido amor, tutte fallaci rende.

(V, LXII, 5-8)

Unfortunately, neither translator manages to render appropriately Tasso's beautiful couplet

Vincilao che, sì grave e saggio inante,
Canuto or pargoleggia e vecchio amante.

[Vincilao who, hitherto grave and wise, now, white-haired and old, cries like a baby]
(V, LXXIII, 7-8)

The beautiful neologism 'pargoleggia', much strengthened by its oxymoronic proximity to the dittology 'canuto' and 'vecchio', is necessarily but unfortunately lost in both English versions:

Wincelay who so graue and sage tofore,
Now old is loue, and a princox hore.

(Carew, V, LXXIII, 7-8)

Old *Wenceslaus*, that felt *Cupids* rage
Now in his doting, and his dying age.

(Fairfax, V, LXXIII, 7-8)

Both Carew and Fairfax add slight moralisations to Tasso's rather neutral comment of the conversion made, for love of Armida, by one of the ten knights:

Rambaldo ultimo fu, che farsi elesse
Poi, fé cangiando, di Giesù nemico,
(tanto pote Amor dunque?)

(V, LXXV, 5-7)

Rambaldo was the last, who changing creedes,
Made choice gainst *Jesus* damned foe to kick,
Eu'n so much loue could do

(Carew, V, LXXV, 5-7)

Rambaldo last, whom wicked lust so leedes,
That he forsooke his Saviour with mischance;
This wretch the tenth was, who was thus deluded.

(Fairfax, V, LXXV, 5-7)

While Tasso writes unjudgementally, adding perhaps only a touch of surprise to his parenthetical question, Carew adds a negative adjective, qualifying the 'foe' as 'damned' and doing so independently of Tasso. Fairfax goes one step further, and pens three denigratory lines, characterised primarily by the fact that, rather than

Tasso's and Carew's 'loue', it is 'wicked lust' that spurs the proselyte to convert, and by the final line, original with the later translator, which is connotated negatively thanks to the use of the terms 'wretch' and 'deluded'.

Fairfax modifies slightly the description of Armida's leaving; he omits the Tamburlaine-sque detail of the 'conqueresse' (V, LXXIX, 1) riding 'in Triumph' (Carew, translating Tasso's 'trionfo', LXXIX, 2), thus missing a beautiful nuance. Soon after, the later translator misses another memorable definition of Armida: Tasso's 'la tiranna de l'alme' (LXXXIII, 6), beautifully translated by Carew as 'their soules Tyrant' (LXXXIII, 6), is reduced, by Fairfax, to an euphemistic 'gentle Princesse' (LXXXIII, 6).

The portrayal of Armida's enchanted garden is particularly important because it provided inspiration for Spenser's Bower of Bliss, in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*. The similarities between the two episodes have been noted by a number of critics⁶²; however, Spenser's mediating influence on Fairfax is especially visible in this episode and this aspect has received less critical attention. The description of the garden is distributed over three cantos, and begins with the account of a lake in which nothing sinks, narrated by Fairfax in terms analogous to Phaedria's lake in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*:

This is the lake in which yet neuer might
Ought that hath weight sinke to the bottome downe.

(Fairfax, X, LXII, 1-2)

Ne ought mote euer sinck downe to the bottom there.

(Spenser, Book II, VI, XLVI, 9)

Questo è lo stagno in cui nulla di greve
Si getta mai che giunga insino al basso

[This is the pond in which nothing heavy can be thrown, that reaches the bottom]

(X, LXII, 1-2)

The Spenserian line seems to have inspired Fairfax's, whose choice of 'sinke to the bottome downe' is identical to *The Faerie Queene*'s 'sinck downe to the bottom' and is not the most obvious translation of the Italian, which presents the verb 'giungere' ('to reach'), rather than the more specific 'affondare' ('to sink').

Carlo and Ubaldo's fifteenth-canto voyage in rescue of Rinaldo parallels that of Guyon towards Acrasia's Bower in Spenser's poem, beginning from the very

⁶² For instance, Koepfel 1889 (pp. 349 ff), Blanchard 1925 (pp. 208-209) and Durling 1954.

departure of the knights in a canto *incipit* that, in all three poets, opens with descriptions of the dawn:

Now when the rosy fingred Morning faire,
Weary of aged *Tithones* saffron bed

(Spenser, Book I, II, VII, 1-2)

The rosie fingered morne with gladsome ray,
Rose to her taske from old *Tithonus* lap

(Fairfax, XV, I, 1-2)

The similarities between Fairfax and Spenser are evident: both poets share the same epithet for the personified Morning as well as the mythological mention of Eos' lover Tithonus; even where they differ, it is usually with a synonym ('aged'/'old'; 'bed'/'lap'). Tasso does not have a close equivalent at all:

Già richiamava il bel nascente raggio
A l'opre ogni animal ch'in terra alberga

[The fair morning beam was already calling up to work every animal living on the earth]
(XV, I, 1-2)

However, it is with the description proper of the Bower that the similarities between the three poets are no longer confined to plot parallels, and are at their most visible. Spenser's 'mighty staffe' (II, XII, XL, 3) is modelled on Tasso's 'verga aurea immortale' ('immortal golden staff', XV, XLIX, 5) which becomes in Fairfax 'charmed rod' (XV, XLIX, 5); in the two English poets, the rod has power over 'monster[s]' (Spenser XL, 9; Fairfax XLIX, 4), whereas Tasso mentions either a serpent ('serpente', XLIX, 4) or a beast ('fèra', XLVII, 8; 'belva', XLIX, 6), leaving the sole indication of its monstrosity to the adjective 'diversa' (XLVII, 8).

The garden itself, enclosed and paradisiacal according to the convention of the *locus amoenus*, as described by Spenser seems to be again a source of inspiration for Fairfax: Tasso's comment that, in Armida's garden,

E quel che 'l bello e 'l caro accresce a l'opre,
L'arte, che tutto fa, nulla si scopre.

[And what even adds to the beauty and worthiness of the garden, is that Art, which has created all, cannot be seen anywhere]

(XVI, IX, 7-8)

is translated by Fairfax as

And that which beautie most, most woonder brought,
No where appeared the arte which all this wrought.

(XVI, IX, 7-8)

Spenser expresses the same idea in terms very similar to Fairfax's:

And that, which all faire workes doth most aggrace,
The art, which all that wrought, appeared in no place.

(Book II, XII, LVIII, 8-9)

Fairfax seems to have drawn from Spenser throughout his couplet, beginning it with identical words and moulding his final verse in the shape of the Spenserian last line; in turn, Spenser's 'aggrace' resembles, tonally and graphically, Tasso's 'accresce'.

Triple terminological and semantic relations of this type are visible throughout this episode; Spenser elaborates on the debate on art and nature and offers the later translator terms and adjectives that Fairfax does not seem able to resist:

Stimi (sì misto il culto è co 'l negletto)
Sol naturali e gli ornamenti e i siti.
Di natura arte par, che per diletto
L'imitatrice sua scherzando imiti.

[The artificial is so mixed with the natural that the ornaments and the places could be considered purely natural. They look like an artificial product of Nature, as if Nature, for a joke, imitated its own imitator]

(XVI, X, 1-4)

One would haue thought, (so cunningly, the rude
And scorned partes were mingled with the fine,)
That nature had for wantonnesse ensude
Art, and that Art at nature did repine;
So striuing each th'other to vndermine,
Each did the others worke more beautify.

(Spenser, XII, LIX, 1-6)

So with the rude the polisht mingled was,
That naturall seemd all, and euery part,
Nature would craft in counterfaiting pas,
And imitate her imitator art.

(Fairfax, XVI, X, 1-4)

The two English stanzas are almost complementary as translations of the Italian: although Fairfax is unsurprisingly the closest, especially in his final line, Spenser preserves some details omitted by the former, such as the introductory 'one would haue thought', the parenthesis and 'for wantonnesse', which translates 'per diletto'. On the other hand, Fairfax uses the Spenserian 'rude' and 'mingled', just as, a few stanzas later, he will go on to employ other Spenserian adjectives:

The ioyous birdes shrouded in chearefull shade,
 Their notes vnto the voice attempred sweet;
 Th' Angelicall soft trembling voyces made
 To th' instruments diuine responce meet:
 The siluer sounding instruments did meet
 With the base murmure of the waters fall:
 The waters fall with difference discreet,
 Now soft, now loud, vnto the wind did call:
 The gentle warbling wind low answered to all.

(Spenser, XII, LXXI)

The ioyous birds, hid vnder greenewood shade,
 Sung merrie notes on euery branch and bow,
 The winde, (that in the leaues and waters plaid)
 With murmur sweete, now song, and whistled now,
 Ceased the birds, the winde loud answer made:
 And while they sung, it rumbled soft and low;
 Thus, were it happe or cunning, chance or art,
 The winde in this strange musicke bore his part.

(Fairfax, XVI, XII)

Vezzosi augelli infra le verdi fronde
 Temprano a prova lascivette note;
 Mormora l'aura, e fa le foglie e l'onde
 Garrir che variamente ella percote.
 Quando taccion gli augelli alto risponde,
 Quando cantan gli augei più lieve scote;
 Sia caso od arte, or accompagna, ed ora
 Alterna i versi lor la musica òra.

[Charming birds in the green foliage sing, vying with each other, lascivious songs; the wind murmurs, and makes the leaves and the waves, which it invests with its diverse blowing, sing. When the birds are silent, it answers loudly; when the birds sing, it blows more softly; whether

by chance or art, now it accompanies, now it alternates the birds' song]

(XVI, XII)

Again, the two English stanzas seem to be almost complementary: unlike Fairfax, Spenser – albeit adding another element to the original symphony, the water – inserts ‘with difference discreet’, which translates beautifully the Italian ‘variamente’. The earlier poet is also the only one able to reproduce Tasso’s extremely musical, onomatopoeic stanza. His mediating influence on Fairfax is visible again: if similarities such as ‘answer made’/‘answered’ can be purely coincidental, being the most obvious translations for ‘risponde’, other choices like the introductory ‘ioyous birds’ are not, because that adjective is not even a correct translation for the Italian ‘vezzosi’, which is characterised by a nuance of wantonness lacking in ‘joyous’. Similarly, both Spenser and Fairfax specify that the birds are hidden in the shade, whereas Tasso mentions ‘fronde’ (‘branches’), hinting with the adverb ‘infra’ that the

volatiles are not exposed to light but avoiding to state it explicitly, unlike the two other poets⁶³.

Both Tasso and Spenser famously share the image of the two nude damsels bathing in the river, and Fairfax shows his familiarity with the Spenserian poem when he adds details not present in the *Liberata*:

E scherzando se 'n van per l'acqua chiara
Due donzellette garrule e lascive,
Ch'or si spruzzano il volto, or fanno a gara
Chi prima a un segno destinato arrive.
Si tuffano talor, e 'l capo e 'l dorso
Scoprono al fin dopo il celato corso.

[And, playing, two joyful and lusty young damsels were bathing in the clear waters, now spraying each other's faces, now vying to see who the first was to a given spot. Sometimes they dive, and finally the head and the body reappear, after being hidden]

(XV, LVIII, 3-8)

As *Guyon* hapned by the same to wend,
Two naked Damzelles he therein espyde,
Which therein bathing, seemed to contend,
And wrestle wantonly, ne car'd to hide,

Their dainty partes from vew of any, which them eyd.

(Spenser, Book II, XII, LXIII, 5-9)

They sawe two naked virgins bathe and diue,
That sometimes toying, sometimes wrastling stood,
Sometimes for speed and skill in swimming striue,
Now vnderneath they diude, now rose aboue,
And tising baites laid foorth of lust and loue.

(Fairfax, XV, LVIII, 3-8)

Fairfax's imitation of Spenser is clear in his depiction of the virgins wrestling, an image directly borrowed from *The Faerie Queene* and which is absent in Tasso, whose damsels only joke and engage in friendly swimming contests. In addition, Spenser's surrounding stanzas seem to inspire Fairfax with random elements: for instance, the translator's 'a *dropping christall plaide*' (LV, 6) and '[t]he plentious spring *a thousand streams* downe powres' (LV, 8) respectively recall Spenser's 'drops of Christall' (LXI, 9) and '[i]nfinitt *streames* continually did well' (LXII, 1, emphases

⁶³ The same stanza inspired another Elizabethan poet, Thomas Watson, who paraphrased it in his *Italian Madrigal Englished* (1590): 'Evry singing bird, *that in the wood reioyces, / come & assist me, with your charming voices: / Zephirus, come too, & make the leaues & the fountaines / Gently to send a whispring sound vnto the mountains: / And from thence pleasant Echo, sweetly replying, / stay here playing, where my Phillis now is lying, / And louely Graces with wanton Satyres come & play, / dancing & singing a hornpype or a rundelay*' (quoted in Murphy 1943: 375-6). Joan Murphy calls this single stanza 'the first printed English imitation of any part of the *Gerusalemme liberata*' (Murphy 1943: 376), although Watson only vaguely retains Tasso's imagery.

added). However, it is with the following octave that the translation's resemblance to the English poem reaches its climax:

As that faire Starre, the messenger of morne,
His deawy face out of the sea doth reare:
Or as the *Cyprian* goddessse, newly borne
Of th'Oceans fruitfull froth, did first appeare:
Such seemed they, and so their yellow heare
Christalline humour dropped downe apace.

(Spenser, XII, LXV, 1-6)

As when the morning starre escapt and fled,
From greedie waues with dewie beames vp flies,
Or as the Queene of loue, new borne and bred
Of th' Oceans fruitfull froth, did first arise:
So vented she, her golden lockes foorth shed
Round pearles and cristall moist therein which lies

(Fairfax, XV, LX, 1-6)

The comparison is striking; not only do the two poets share the same choice of words in many cases ('deawy'/'dewie', '[c]hristalline humour'/'cristall moist'), but there is virtually no difference between Fairfax's lines 3-4 and their Spenserian equivalent (3-4), even if both English versions are literal translations of Tasso:

Qual matutina stella esce de l'onde
Rugiadosa e stillante, o come fuore
Spuntò nascendo già da le feconde
Spume de l'ocean la dea d'amore,
Tal apparve costei, tal le sue bionde
Chiome stillavan cristallino umore.

[Like a morning star, coming out of the waves watery and dewy, or like the goddess of love, being born out of the fertile foams of the ocean, in the same way she appeared, in the same way her fair locks dripped with crystal moist]

(XV, LX, 1-6)

The description of Armida's garden continues in canto XVI, where indications of Spenser's influence on the translator of the *Liberata* are more and more visible. Tasso's beautiful *carpe diem* song, recited by a bird which is described as a male in the Italian ('egli cantò', XIV, 1), is sung by one gendered as female in the translation ('quoth she', XIV, 1). The difference is consequential, because the message conveyed in the song (not to wait too long, for beauty is ephemeral) is traditionally uttered by a male character and its exposition on the part of an animal specifically gendered as female has a different connotation. However, the song is most notable for its closeness with Spenser's parallel text:

Ah see, who so fayre thing doest faine to see,
 In springing flowre the image of thy day;
 Ah see the Virgin Rose, how sweetly shee
 Doth first peepe foorth with bashfull modestee,
 That fairer seemes, the lesse ye see her may;
 Lo see soone after, how more bold and free
 Her bared bosome she doth broad display;
 Lo see soone after, how she fades, and falls away.

So passeth, in the passing of a day,
 Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre,
 Ne more doth florish after first decay,
 That earst was sought to deck both bed and bowre,
 Of many a Lady', and many a Paramowre:
 Gather therefore the Rose, whilst yet is prime,
 For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre:
 Gather the Rose of loue, whilst yet is time,
 Whilst louing thou mayst loued be with equall crime.

(Spenser, XII, LXXIV, 2-9; LXXV)

'The gentlie budding rose (quoth she) behold,
 That first scant peeping foorth with virgin beames,
 Halfe ope, halfe shut, her beauties doth vpfold
 In their deare leaues, and lesse seene, fairer seames,
 And after spreeds them foorth more broad and bold,
 Then languisheth and dies in last extreames,
 Nor seemes the same, that decked bed and boure
 Of many a ladie late, and paramoure:

'So, in the passing of a day, doth pas
 The bud and blossome of the life of man,
 Nor ere doth flourish more, but like the gras
 Cut downe, becommeth withred, pale and wan:
 O gather then the rose while time thou has,
 Short is the day, done when it scant began,
 Gather the rose of loue, while yet thou mast
 Louing, be lou'd; embrasing, be embrast.'

(Fairfax, XVI, XIV; XV)

- Deh mira - egli cantò - spuntar la rosa
 Dal verde suo modesta e verginella,
 Che mezzo aperta ancora e mezzo ascosa,
 Quanto si mostra men, tanto è più bella.
 Ecco poi nudo il sen già baldanzosa
 Dispiega; ecco poi langue e non par quella,
 Quella non par che desiata inanti
 Fu da mille donzelle e mille amanti.

Così trapassa al trapassar d'un giorno
 De la vita mortale il fiore e 'l verde;
 Né perché faccia indietro april ritorno,
 Si rinfiora ella mai, né si rinverde.
 Cogliam la rosa in su 'l mattino adorno
 Di questo dì, che tosto il seren perde;
 Cogliam d'amor la rosa: amiamo or quando
 Esser si puote riamato amando.-

[- Oh, admire - he sang - the rose being born, out of the greenery, modest and virgin, which,
 half open and half hidden, yet, is the more beautiful the less it shows. Here, it displays now,
 bold, the nude breast, here, now it dies and does not look itself anymore, the rose that, until

now, was desired by a thousand maids and a thousand lovers. In the same way, in the passing of a day, do pass the flower and the youth of mortal life; and, though spring comes back, it never flowers again, or becomes green again. Let us gather the rose in the morning of our day, because it soon loses its beauty; let us gather the rose of love: let us love when we can, loving, be loved back]

(XVI, XIV; XV)

Fairfax borrows directly 'peep[ing] forth', and Spenser's 'bold and free / her [...] bosome she doth broad display' becomes in the translation 'spreads them forth more broad and bold'; in the ensuing stanza, the similarities are even more obvious, with the sentence 'in the passing of a day' opening both English versions and the Spenserian words 'the bud, the flowre' repeated in Fairfax, albeit with minor modifications ('the bud and blossome'). Tasso's final double apostrophe to 'gather the rose' is carefully maintained by both Spenser and Fairfax, and both poets modify the first part of the apostrophe to create three different, but similar and equally powerful variations on the same theme. Stylistically, Tasso's final line, which recalls terminologically and phonically the beautiful Dantean 'Amor, ch'a nullo amato amar perdona' (*Inferno*, V, 103), is a masterpiece of sophisticated figures of speech, from internal rhymes ('amor' / 'or') to *enjambements*, from assonances to paregmenons. Fairfax fails to render the beauty of the lines in his translation, limiting his rhetorical ability to a play on assonance and repetition but crucially missing the complexity and sophistication of the original.

It is extremely interesting to note that another Elizabethan poet, Samuel Daniel, borrowed elements from the bird's song for those, among his own sonnets, centred on the *carpe diem* theme:

Look *Delia* how wee steeme the half-blown Rose,
The image of thy blush and Summers honor:
Whilst in her tender Greene she doth inclose
That pure sweete beutie, Time bestows vpon her.
No sooner spreades her glorie in the ayre,
But straight her ful-blowne pride is in declining;
She then is scorn'd that late adorn'd the fayre:
So cloudes thy beutie, after fayrest shining.
No Aprill can reuiue thy withred flowers,
Whose blooming grace adorne thy glorie now:
Swift speedy Time, feathred with flying howers,
Dissolues the beutie of the fairest brow.
O let not then such riches waste in vaine;
But loue whilst that thou maist be lou'd againe.

(*Delia*, XXXI)

Daniel shares with Tasso the image of the 'half-blown rose', hidden in the greenery (an element omitted by Spenser), and the common mention of the flower's pride; more importantly, he is the only poet to reproduce the mention of April, in a similar context. Finally, Daniel's concluding line is an extremely faithful translation of Tasso's couplet; in fact, it is paradoxically the closest, given the addition, on the part of Fairfax, of the tautological 'embrace' phrase, whereas Spenser, of course, differentiates his version by introducing a connotation of sin with 'with equall crime'.

However, Daniel does not restrict his borrowings from the *Liberata* to the bird's song; Tasso's influence on him is also visible in the canto *incipit*, the description of Armida's palace:

Tondo è il ricco edificio; e nel più chiuso
 Grembo di lui, ch' è quasi centro al giro,
 Un giardin v'ha ch'adorno è sovra l'uso
 Di quanti più famosi unqua fioriro:
 D'intorno inosservabile e confuso
 Ordin di loggie i demon fabri ordiro:
 E, tra le oblique vie di quel fallace
 Ravolgimento, impenetrabil giace.

[The beautiful palace is round; and in its most internal part, which is almost in the exact centre of the building, there is a garden, which is more beautiful than any other garden that ever existed: around it, the demonic workers built a random and intricate series of loggias; and the garden lies, impenetrable, among the tortuous ways of that deceptive maze]

(XVI, 1)

A stately Pallace he forthwith did buyld,
 Whose intricate innumerable wayes,
 With such confused errors so beguil'd
 Th'vnguided entlers with vncertaine strays,
 And doubtfull turnings kept them in delayes,
 With bootlesse labor leading them about,
 Able to finde no way, nor in, nor out.

Within the closed bosome of which frame,
 That seru'd a Center to that goodly round:
 Were lodgings, with a garden to the same,
 With sweetest flowers that eu'r adorn'd the ground.
 And all the pleasures that delight hath found,
 To entertaine the sence of wanton eyes,
 Fuell of loue, from whence lusts flames arise.

(*Complaint of Rosamond*, 463-476)

Besides the obvious thematic similarity, Daniel seems to paraphrase the Italian text, at times translating rather literally, as is the case with the description of the garden, at other times expanding on the *Liberata*, as with the passage on the intricacy of the palace, which is longer in the English poem. The extent of Daniel's knowledge of the

Italian poem is especially visible in certain direct influences, such as 'nel più chiuso / grembo' [of the palace] which becomes, in *Rosamond*, '[w]ithin the closed bosome'; other terminological influences are shown by Daniel's 'confused' [errors] for Tasso's 'confuso' [ordin], and by the shared choice of having a line virtually formed by an adjective pair (line 2 in Daniel, and 5 in Tasso). Both *Delia* and *Complaint of Rosamond* were published, in the same volume, in 1592: on one hand, this proves an interest in Tasso's poem early in Daniel's creative career, while on the other hand it justifies his mediating influence on Fairfax, who clearly had access to a copy of Daniel's poems⁶⁴.

Fairfax continues to draw liberally from *The Faerie Queene*: after the bird has concluded its song, Spenser writes '[h]e ceast' (LXXVI, 1), of which Fairfax modifies only the pronoun ('she ceast', XVI, 1), in accordance with his original gendering of the bird as female. Similarly, the bird's speech is praised and confirmed by a 'quire of birds' (XVI, 2), inspired by the Spenserian 'quire of birdes' (LXXVI, 1); and a few stanzas later, Fairfax's 'sweat-drops bright, white, round, like pearles of Inde' (XVIII, 4) is not found in Tasso, who simply mentions Armida's 'bei sudor' ('fair sweat', XVIII, 4). A parallel for the translator's line is, on the other hand, to be found in Spenser: Acrasia sweats '[f]ew drops, more cleare then Nectar / [...] like pure Orient perles' (LXXVIII, 4-5).

A more consequential change in the gender of the speaker is visible soon after, with the game that Rinaldo and Armida play on her mirror – symbol *par excellence* of narcissism, and central to a couple of Petrarchan sonnets too⁶⁵. Tasso's octave begins, again, in a more articulate manner:

L'uno di servitù, l'altra d'impero
 Si gloria; ella in sè stessa, ed egli in lei.
 Volgi, dicea, deh volgi, il cavaliero,
 A me quegli occhi, onde beata béi.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Jason Lawrence mentions another imitation from Tasso in two of Daniel's later works, in *The Civil Warres* (Book V, CXI, 1599) and in *Musophilus* (1599): the former presents 'a close paraphrase, with the final line a direct translation' (Lawrence 2005: 89) of Tasso's image of the river Po and its affluents overflowing its banks (IX, XLVI), although Daniel transforms the Po into the Severn; in the latter, it is the 'streame of words' of the English language that bursts 'hie / Aboue the vsuall banks' (928-929).

⁶⁵ *Canzoniere*, XLV and XLVI; in particular, cf. 'non deuea specchio farvi per mio danno / a voi stessa piacendo, aspra et superba' (XLV, 10-11), and 'ma piu ne colpo i micidiali specchi / che 'n vagheggiar voi stessa avete stanchi' (XLVI, 7-8).

⁶⁶ Tasso's final two lines seem to have inspired also Samuel Daniel, who included some highly similar verses in his sonnet 'O why dooth *Delia* credite so her glasse': 'Then leaue your glasse, and gaze your selfe on mee, / That Mirrour shewes what powre is in your face', *Delia*, XXIX, 9-10).

[He for his servitude, she for her command are pleased; she in herself, he in her. The knight said, turn, oh, turn those eyes to me, with which you, blessed, bless me]

(XVI, XXI, 1-4)

Her, to commaund; to serue, it pleas'd the knight;
He proud of bondage; of her Empire, shee;
'My deare (she said) that blessest with thy sight
euen blessed Angels, turne thine eies to me.

(XVI, XXI, 1-4)

Fairfax virtually ignores the second line, expanding instead the first into two synonymous verses. This is interesting, because that verse in Tasso presented a striking resemblance with the Miltonic '[h]ee for God only, shee for God in him' (*Paradise Lost*, IV, 299). In addition, Fairfax seems to misunderstand who the speaker in the stanza is, attributing the sentence to Armida and rendering the overall meaning of the passage unclear – in the original, it is Rinaldo who, completely subjugated to his lover, begs for her to look at him; the opposite situation is neither plausible nor clear. As the rest of the speech is translated faithfully by Fairfax, even where the speaker is unambiguously Rinaldo, it is likely that this, rather than a comprehension mistake on the part of the translator, is a simple distraction, never corrected in the following editions of the poem.

When Spenser follows Tasso's poem closely, Fairfax seems to adhere more to *The Faerie Queene* than to the Italian original. This is the case, for example, with another Tassian octave which Fairfax models on its Spenserian imitation:

E i famelici sguardi avidamente
In lei pascendo si consuma e strugge.
S'inchina, e i dolci baci ella sovente
Liba or da gli occhi e da le labbra or sugge,
Ed in quel punto ei sospirar si sente
Profondo si che pensi: «Or l'alma fugge
E 'n lei trapassa peregrina.»

[With his hungry eyes devouring her, he was consumed, and pined. She bends to him, and, often, sweetly kisses now his eyes, now his lips, and at that point he sighs deeply, and thinks: «Now my soul is fleeing me, and passes into her, like a pilgrim»]

(XVI, XIX, 1-7)

And all that while, right ouer him she hong,
With her false eyes fast fixed in his sight,
As seeking medicine, whence she was stong,
Or greedily depasturing delight:
And oft inclining downe with kisses light,
For feare of waking him, his lips bedewd,
And through his humid eyes did sucke his spright,
Quite molten into lust and pleasure lewd;
Wherewith she sighed soft, as if his case she rewd.

(Spenser, Book II, XII, LXXIII)

His hungrie eies vpon her face he fed,
 And feeding them so, pinde himselfe away;
 And she, declining often downe her hed,
 His lippes, his cheekes, his eies kist, as he lay,
 Wherewith he sigh'd, as if his soule had fled
 From his fraile breast to hers, and there would stay
 With her beloued sprite

(Fairfax, XVI, XIX, 1-7)

Although Fairfax and Spenser choose different ways of rendering Tasso's 'liba' ('depasturing' in *The Faerie Queene*, 'feeding' in the translation), Fairfax borrows from Spenser numerous other details and terms: Spenser's 'inclining downe' appears in the English version of the *Liberata* as 'declining [...] downe', whereas the sentence 'wherewith she sighed' is repeated by Fairfax, who modifies the pronoun to adapt it to Tasso's stanza but maintains the syntactical structure unaltered, even continuing his line with the Spenserian 'as if his [soule had fled]'.

The following description of Armida and Rinaldo's love, contained within stanzas XXIV to XXVI, is characterised on the stylistic side by Fairfax's habitual repetitions and tautologies, and on the semantic side by slight moralisations against love placed by the translator at the conclusion of the description. Tasso's

Teneri sdegni, e placide e tranquille
 Repulse, e cari vezzi, e liete paci,
 Sorrise parolette, e dolci stille
 Di pianto, e sospir tronchi, e molli baci

[Tender disdains, and quiet and tranquil repulses, and dear joys, and happy peaces, little words said with a smile, and sweet drops of tears, and broken sighs, and soft kisses]

(XVI, xxv, 1-4)

is characterised by a regular adjective-noun scheme, which is however varied through the addition of supplementary adjectives and through complements of specification. Fairfax's version is, on the contrary, simply a repetition of synonyms and at times resembles an endless listing of nouns:

Of milde denaies, of tender scornes, of sweet
 Repulses, warre, peace, hope, despaire, ioy, feare,
 Of smiles, ieastes, mirth, woe, grieffe and sad regret;
 Sighes, sorrowes, teares, embracements, kisses deare

(XVI, xxv, 1-4)

Fairfax then concludes the passage by adding to his last line that Rinaldo was walking 'alone, saue for an hermit false call'd *Loue*' (XXVI, 8), whereas Tasso elegantly writes

that Rinaldo, whenever Armida was not with him, was a 'romito amante', without moralisations. However, the translator creates an exceptional epithet when rendering Tasso's definition of Rinaldo, 'egregio campion d'una fanciulla' ('eminent champion of a maid', XXXII, 8), as a very original 'carpet champion for a wanton dame' (XXXII, 8). His couplet defining Armida is, on the contrary, neither good nor clear:

To be lou'd, she lou'd, yet whilst they wow
Her louers all she hates, that pleas'd her will,
To conquer men, and conqu' red so, to kill.

(XVI, XXXVIII, 6-8)

Tasso has a much better

Ch'amò d'esser amata, odiò gli amanti;
Sé gradi sola, e, fuor di sé, in altrui
Sol qualche effetto de' begli occhi sui.

[She loved to be loved; she hated her lovers; she only liked herself, and, apart from herself, she only liked in others some effect of her own beautiful eyes]

(XVI, XXXVIII, 6-8)

The insertion of the verb 'to kill' is original with Fairfax; Tasso concentrates exclusively on Armida's overflowing vanity, creating a celebration of self-love.

In the following canto, Armida's declaration of fitness for battle, which is effectively the fourth celebration of female warriors in the poem (after those of Clorinda, Gildippe and Erminia) is translated very faithfully by Fairfax:

Donna son io, ma regal donna: indegno
Già di reina il guerreggiar non parme.
Usi ogni arte regal chi vuole il regno;
Dansi all'istessa man lo scettro e l'arme:
Saprà la mia (né torpe al ferro, o langue)
Ferire, e trar dalle ferite il sangue.

[I am a woman, but a royal woman: it does not seem unworthy of a queen to fight in arms. Who wants a kingdom should use any royal art: the same hand should know how to use both scepter and sword. My hand (which is not lazy or fearful when holding the sword) will know how to wound, and how to kill through wounding]

(XVII, XLIII, 3-8)

A dame, a virgin, but a royall maid,
And worthie seemes this warre a princesse hight,
For by the sword, the scepter is vpstaid,
This hand can use them both, with skill and might,
This hand of mine can strike, and at each blow
Thy foes and ours kill, wound, and ouerthrow.

(XVII, XLIII, 3-8)

The translator ignores the difficult parenthetical sentence that explained how the woman's hand is not lazy to pick up the weapons; he also specifies, in the second line, that Armida thought 'this warre' apt, whereas Tasso generalises on all battling. However, Fairfax's added anaphora of 'this hand' is not, for once, repetitive, and contributes to a well-translated octave.

Rinaldo's eighteenth-canto ascent to Mount Oliveto, which symbolises his purification from the excesses of sensuality experienced with Armida, presents a major divergence in the two poets, when Fairfax translates too freely the second half of one of the opening stanzas:

Ma non è chi vagheggi o questa o quelle,
E miriam noi torbida luce e bruna
Ch'un girar d'occhi, un balenar di riso,
Scopre in breve confin di fragil viso.

[But there is no-one who desires this (the Moon) or those (the stars); instead, we stare at that dark and impure light produced by a turn of the eye, by a sudden smile in the brief life of a mortal face]

(XVIII, XIII, 5-8)

So framed all by their creators might,
That still they live and shine, and nere shall die,
Till (in a moment) with the last daies brand

They burne, and with them burnes sea, aire and land.

(XVIII, XIII, 5-8)

Tasso's Rinaldo is reflecting on the fact that nobody admires the moon or the stars ('questa o quelle'), which are timeless; mortals focus, instead, on the ephemeral beauty of a woman's face ('fragil viso' that shows a 'torbida luce e bruna', a beautiful oxymoron), caducous and destined to disappear in a very short time compared to the vastity and eternity of the infinite universe. Fairfax writes, or understands, the opposite; his Rinaldo does not ponder the opportunity of abandoning mundane passions in favour of spiritual, and thus eternal, love, but, instead, pessimistically reflects on the vanity of all things, *including* 'sea, aire and land' and the entire world. This divergence is extremely important, as it misses the central passage in Rinaldo's process of purification. The contrast between the beauties of a woman's face (to be intended as Armida) and the beauties of the sky is also important since, when Rinaldo was in Armida's garden, he once said that her face was worthy of having the universe as its mirror:

Specchio t'è degno il cielo, e nelle stelle
Puoi riguardar le tue sembianze belle.

[The sky is a mirror worthy of you, and in the stars you can admire your own beautiful shape]
(XVI, XXII, 7-8)

O let the skies thy woorthie mirroure bee!
And in cleere starres thy shape and image see.

(XVI, XXII, 7-8)

Rinaldo, after the purification on Mount Oliveto, is conscious of the difference in value between Armida's face and the beauty of the infinite sky; that is to say, he now knows the difference between false earthly love, to be despised, and true love for God, the only kind of love to be laudable. By eliminating Rinaldo's outspoken rejection of the former and preference for the latter, Fairfax commits a great translation mistake, missing the implications of Rinaldo's reflection and of the entire episode.

A beautifully translated octave is, conversely, the one describing Armida, finally face-to-face with Rinaldo, undecided whether to kill him or not:

Sorse amor contro l'ira, e fe palese
Che vive il foco suo ch'ascoso tenne.
La man tre volte a saettar distese,
Tre volte essa inchinolla, e si ritenne.
Pur vinse alfin lo sdegno; e l'arco tese,
E fé volar del suo quadrel le penne.
Lo stral volò; ma con lo strale un voto
Subito uscì, che vada il colpo a vôto.

[Love arose against anger, and made clear that the fire, that Armida kept hidden, is still alive. Her arm spread out thrice to send the arrow, and thrice she laid the bow down, abstaining herself. Finally, anger prevailed; and she stretched the bow, and let the arrow fly out. The arrow flew out; but, with it, a spell immediately went out: that the arrow should miss its target]

(XX, LXIII)

Loue brideled furie, and reuiu'd of new
His fire, not dead, though buried in displeasure,
Three times her angrie hand the bow vp drew,
And thrice againe let slacke the string at leasure;
But wrath preuail'd at last, the reed out flew,
For loue findes meane, but hatred knowes no measure,
Out flew the shaft, but with the shaft, this charme,
This wish she sent: heau'ns grant it doe no harme.

(XX, LXIII)

Fairfax pens a splendid final verse, and even manages to render in the best possible way Tasso's difficult rhyme 'voto' (vow) / 'vôto' (vain), that is maintaining the paragram in 'charme' / 'harme'. The only blot of the stanza is the sixth line, in which

the translator, after an unfortunate terminological choice ('hatred'), adds a sentence absent in the original version which renders the octave unclear: in Tasso, in the end love prevails on hatred, while in Fairfax the opposite seems to happen.

Conclusions

Despite both translations being, overall, correct and faithful, especially when compared to Sir John Harington's *Orlando Furioso*, some important differences are visible. In particular, there is a stark contrast between Carew's extreme literalness, which in some instances renders his text un-idiomatic and awkward to read, and Fairfax's faithful looseness, in which he strives to be semantically faithful but also to create a poem which is interesting, idiomatic and flowing for an English readership.

Of course, his translation being so close to the original, Carew is much less likely to commit translation mistakes than Fairfax; however, this does not imply that Carew is a better translator, but simply that his closeness to the original enables him to reproduce Tasso's tone (and, sometimes, even Tasso's vocabulary) extremely easily. On the other hand, Fairfax's version is blotted by sporadic mistakes, misunderstandings and instances in which he simply fails to reproduce Tasso's elevated poetry, while at other times he manages to pen some splendid lines, which grant him the state of a poet in his own right, and which enable readers to see the embodiment of the ideal, 'invisible translator' more precisely than in any of the other English translations analysed.

Whether Fairfax knew Carew's version is impossible to say with certainty, and, without any mention of the earlier translation anywhere on the part of Fairfax, it is only possible to speculate. The texts themselves do not offer much help; on one hand, there are a few instances in which the two translations are strikingly similar: for example, their rendition of Tasso's 'innocenti gli assolvo, e rei gli dono' (II, LII, 8), which is, in Carew, '[g]uiltlesse I quit, guiltie I giue them you' (LII, 8) and, in Fairfax, '[g]uiltlesse I quite; guiltie, I set them free' (LII, 8). Similarly, Tasso's later 'che 'n te pietate innessorabil rende' (IV, LXXI, 8) becomes, in Carew, '[w]hich makes in thee eu'n pitie pitillesse' (LXXI, 8), and so remains in Fairfax: '[h]ath made eu'n pitie, pitillesse in thee' (LXXI, 8). On the other hand, it is important to realise that, although the lines are almost identical, in both instances the translators' choices are the most

obvious ways in which the original lines could have been correctly translated. Besides, the presence of certain mistakes on the part of the later translator seems to indicate that he did not have Carew's text at his disposal. This is exemplified by his misunderstanding of Tasso's

[C]rebbe il figlio; e mai nè stile
Di cavalier, nè nobil arte apprese,
Nulla di pellegrino o di gentile
Gli piacque mai, né mai troppo alto intese

(IV, XLVI, 1-4),

in which Fairfax states the opposite,

Which sonne, within short while, did vndertake
Degree of knighthood, as beseem'd him well,
Yet neuer durst he for his Ladies sake
Breake sword or lance

(Fairfax, IV, XLVI, 1-4)

Carew does not make the same mistake, and correctly writes that

[H]is sonne grew, but neuer ought
Of knightly parts, or noble artes he reakes,
Nothing thats rare, no gentlemanlike thought
Buside his head, nor too much wit it breakes

(Carew, IV, XLVI, 1-4)

The instances in which the two translators share similar verses and words, albeit striking, are too scarce and sparse to suggest that Fairfax's knowledge of the rival translation, if it existed at all, was limited beyond the knowledge of a few stanzas.

Chapter Three

From Partial Translations to Adaptations and Imitations

Female figures, and the episodes centred around them, seem to form the passages that most inspired English authors, to a surprising extent: it has been seen in the previous chapter how minor, parenthetical figures, such as Erminia, for instance, seem to have left a lasting mark on certain English poets more than the true 'heroes' of the epics, such as Tancredi or Godfrey. The same happens with Ariosto, whose fragile Ginevra is the originator of the first English translations of the *Furioso* and the protagonist of the most frequently-translated single episode of any of the three major epics. Similarly, Robert Tofte, the only Elizabethan translator of the *Orlando Innamorato*, first chose to English a poem in which, perhaps more than in any other, love and eroticism play an essential role, even making some peculiarly sensual additions to it, and then turned to two episodes, this time from Ariosto, centred, again, on women, (in)fidelity, and love.

Tofte's Boiardo: *Orlando Innamorato* [sic]

Robert Tofte (1562-1619) was a prolific writer who composed two sonnet sequences (*Laura*, 1597, and *Alba*, 1598) and translated from the French (Pierre Joulet's Tassesque *Les Amours d'Armide*, in 1597) as well as from the Italian, the knowledge of which he perhaps acquired, and certainly improved, during his travels. Beside his partial versions of Ariosto and Boiardo, he also translated *Ariosto's Satyres* (published in 1608 and attributed to Gervase Markham, an error corrected in the ensuing editions), as well as Ercole Tasso's *Dello Ammogliarsi*, Englished as *Of Mariage and Wiving* (1598).

Certainly, Tofte enjoyed a lengthy sojourn in Italy in the early 1590s (and precisely between March 1591 and June 1594, Williams 1937: 287) where he seems to have composed a great deal and where he could doubtlessly improve his knowledge of the language; while in Italy he met, in 1591⁶⁷, Sir Edward Dymoke and another Italianist, Samuel Daniel (*ibid.*). His *Laura* records the toponyms where some of the

⁶⁷ And precisely between March and November of that year (Lawrence 2005: 71).

sonnets were written, including Venice, Siena, Pisa, Mantua, Rome, Florence and Naples, thus providing exact indications on the geographical choices of his journey; similarly, the *Two Tales, translated out of Ariosto: the one in dispraise of men, the other in disgrace of women. With certaine other Italian stanzas and prouverbs*, published in 1597 by Valentine Sims, had been composed respectively in Siena in 1592 and in Naples in 1593. In 1598, the same publisher printed Tofte's *Orlando Innamorato. The three first Bookes of that famous Noble Gentleman and learned Poet, Mathew Maria Boiardo Earle of Scandiano in Lombardie. Done into English Heroicall Verse, by R.T. Gentleman*⁶⁸. It is most likely that Robert Tofte's decision to begin a translation of Matteo Maria Boiardo's 1483 poem *Orlando Innamorato* was spurred by the popularity of its 'sequel'⁶⁹, the *Orlando Furioso*: after all, even in Italy it was only with the first publication of the latter in 1516 that an interest in the preceding events to Ariosto's great poem was aroused, and, with that interest, there also started a series of re-writings, the so-called *rifacimenti*, to polish Boiardo's Lombard tone and colloquialisms and to elevate the style of the poem. One of these, Ludovico Domenichi's 1544 *Riforma dell'Orlando Innamorato*, is the version that the English sonneteer almost certainly used⁷⁰.

Tofte's extreme familiarity with Italian literature, customs and geography, transpiring from his marginal annotations, has been studied by Glyn Pursglove (Pursglove 1984: 114-116), leading the critic to conclude that

Tofte's version of Boiardo can be seen then as part of a larger interest, both scholarly and creative, in Italian life and letters in general, and in the achievements of Renaissance Ferrara in particular.

(Pursglove 1984: 116)

⁶⁸ Although there is no further reference to the Italian original in Tofte's dedicatory letter to Lady Margaret Morgan, wife of Sir Morgan of Chilworth, the poet, in the traditional *captatio benevolentiae*, apologises for his 'simple Translation' with the beautiful image of having 'sent it vnto [her] these short dayes in Christmas, that reading the same by candle-light, [she] may the lesse perceive the faults thereof' (dedication).

⁶⁹ Torquato Tasso, in his *Discorsi dell'arte poetica*, wrote that the two poems must be considered not 'come due libri distinti, ma come un poema solo, cominciato dall'uno, e con le medesime fila, benché meglio annodate e meglio colorite, dall'altro poeta condotte al fine' (not 'as two distinct books, but as one single poem, started by one poet and finished by the other with the same threads, albeit better entwined and better coloured', quoted in Anceschi 1978: XXI); even more significantly, Ariosto himself spoke of his *Furioso* as a 'gionta' ('addition') to the *Orlando Innamorato* (quoted in Gareffi 1984: 48).

⁷⁰ There can be little doubt that Tofte used Domenichi's *rifacimento*, as shown, among other examples, by his translation of II, 65 and III, 22. Williams, in particular, suggests the Venice edition of 1588 (Williams 1937: 415).

Pursglove, in his very brief analysis of Tofte's translation from Boiardo, first praises him as 'rarely less than competent' (*ibid.*: 117), stating that '[f]or the most part Tofte translates his original stanza by stanza, but he occasionally takes *successful* liberties, primarily by expanding in a pleasantly discursive fashion' [emphasis added]⁷¹ (*ibid.*, 119). However, the critic soon dismisses him as a 'minor figure' (*ibid.*, 121), even writing that

Tofte's version of the opening cantos of the *Orlando Innamorato* is not so remarkable that we need wish that Alba had ceased to wrong «in cruel wise» his «harmless heart» and that Il Disgratiato had gone on to produce translations of some more of at least some of the poem's many remaining cantos.

(Pursglove 1984: 121)

and reducing Tofte's merit to that, certainly valuable but perhaps insufficient, of providing evidence of the 'fascination exerted by the Court poets of Ferrara upon at least one Elizabethan man of letters' (*ibid.*). Similarly, James V. Mirollo's study of the reception of Boiardo in England devotes only a few lines to Tofte:

La traduzione, in rime piuttosto impacciate, vide la luce nel 1598. Il traduttore, Robert Tofte, fu uno di quegli elisabettiani minori che avevano esperienza d'Italia e leggevano i poeti italiani con entusiasmo. Dopo aver sperimentato con alcuni brani del *Furioso* poco prima, il Tofte pubblicò il suo Boiardo, e nello stesso anno un canzoniere intitolato *Laura*.

[The translation, in rather awkward verse, was published in 1598. The translator, Robert Tofte, was one of those minor Elizabethans that had experience of Italy and enthusiastically read the Italian poets. After experimenting with some passages of the *Furioso* shortly before, Tofte published his Boiardo, and, in the same year, a sonnet sequence entitled *Laura*]

(Mirollo 1970: 320)

The time has come for a more exhaustive re-evaluation of Tofte's partial translation.

Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* is characterised by a serene, explicit eroticism: as Giuseppe Anceschi notes,

La presenza [...] di un erotismo pulito ed esplicito che coinvolge prima o poi ogni personaggio è certamente l'elemento più caratteristico dell'intero poema.

[The presence of a clean, explicit eroticism, which involves sooner or later every character, is certainly the most characteristic element of the whole poem]

(Anceschi 1978: XII)

Indeed, Boiardo's eroticism is not entirely dissimilar to Ariosto's, but the behaviour of the two translators is dramatically different: where Sir John Harington omitted and

⁷¹ The 'success' of his additions will be, naturally, discussed in the course of this chapter.

minimised, Tofte respects and even enhances, literally using the first three cantos of the *Innamorato* to pen his own – and partially original – love poem.

Love, indeed, is treated in both versions of the poem in a unique way: without moralisations or judgements, it is both positive and protagonist; love not only gives the title to the poem, but it also gives it its *raison d'être*, and drives all of the characters: truly, in the *Innamorato*, *omnia vincit amor*. Tofte does not oppose the centrality of love in the poem, and is, thematically, very faithful to his original. This is perhaps surprising when the literary context – the other important examples of Elizabethan translations of Italian epic poems – is considered: Harington's poem abounded in moralistic comments on love, in open contrast to the Italian original; Fairfax's translation presented, to a minor extent, a similar attitude, although, in his case, his words mostly respected Tasso's outlook on the subject.

Another important observation to make is that no addition or modification made by Tofte is uncharacteristic for the heroes and heroines involved; unlike in other renditions, where the translators sometimes attributed inappropriate actions or words to the heroines (such as Sofronia in Fairfax, and Bradamante with, in lesser measure, other warriors in Harington), Tofte never follows suit, so that, for instance, Angelica's enhanced eroticism is perfectly consistent with Boiardo's depiction of the oxymoronic 'expert virgin', that is of a woman who, like many of the Scandianese poet's female figures, is much more amorous (and knowledgeable in love matters) than the valiant, but clumsy, male knights.

The additions made by Tofte can be roughly divided into three groups. First of all, the translator likes to add one or more stanzas, briefly summarising 'The Argument' of the book, to the *incipit* of each canto. This practice is not unusual, and was shared by Harington as well. The second type of addition centres on the insertion of verses of amorous complaint to the addressee of the translation, and object of Tofte's love, a lady referred to as Alba⁷². Finally, Tofte adds entire octaves, not present in the original, sometimes of general interest and, at other times, to enhance the eroticism of the original passages. The latter additions are, of course, the most interesting for our purposes.

⁷² *Alba* is, of course, also the title of Tofte's heavily Petrarchist sonnet sequence (1598).

The translation opens with introductory octaves which are not present in Boiardo's poem; in fact, the opening passage resembles more Ariosto's *incipit* than Boiardo's, especially in its continuous stock references to the loved woman and her cruelty:

I SING of Him that Wonders wrought through Loue,
That Monsters, Fiends, and Giants huge did tame,
And many a weary Iorny oft did proue,
To seeke, to finde what lost had bin his gaine,
A cruell Heart with pittie milde to moue
(Which he too faithlesse found vnto his paine:)
So neere and deere he loude her, and so well,
As (for her sake) distraught of wit he fell.

Famous ORLANDO was the Man I meane,
And faire ANGELICA that vsde him so,
These two must be the subiect of my Theame,
If my Deare ALBA so much fauor show,
Who in her hate to me is too extreame.
(Like sea that neuer ebbes, but still doth flow)
My comfort's this, though high my Thoughts be plac't,
If I obtaine not, None shall Shee's so chaste.

(I, II-III)

Tofte shows a continuous concern with Ariosto's poem, both through the references to the loved woman which are, in effect, a translation of Ariostean lines, and by mentioning the madness of Orlando, an episode which, of course, forms the centre of the *Orlando Furioso*, but which was never foretold by Boiardo:

Non vi par già, signor, meraviglioso
Odir cantar de Orlando innamorato,
Ché qualunche nel mondo è più orgoglioso,
È da Amor vinto, al tutto subiugato;
Né forte braccio, né ardire animoso,
Né scudo o maglia, né brando affilato,
Né altra possanza può mai far diffesa,
Che al fin non sia da Amor battuta e presa.

Questa novella è nota a poca gente,
Perché Turpino istesso la nascose,
Credendo forse a quel conte valente
Esser le sue scritture dispettose,
Poi che contra ad Amor pur fu perdente
Colui che vinse tutte l'altre cose:
Dico di Orlando, il cavalliero adatto.
Non più parole ormai, veniamo al fatto.

[Don't think it strange, my lord, to hear me sing about Orlando in love, for even the proudest man in the world is won and entirely subjugated by Love. Neither strong arm nor brave courage, neither shield or mail, nor sharpened blade, nor other power can help in defence, which, in the end, Love does not defeat and conquer. / This tale is only known to few people, as Turpin himself kept it secret, thinking, perhaps, that the valiant Count might be offended by his account. For he, who lost against Love, had won against everything else: I am referring to Orlando, brave knight. Enough words: here are the facts]

Ariosto's *incipit* shares many characteristics with Tofte's own beginning of the poem:

Dirò d'Orlando in un medesimo tratto
 cosa non detta in prosa mai, né in rima:
 che per amor venne in furore e matto,
 d'uom che sì saggio era stimato prima;
 se da colei che tal quasi m'ha fatto,
 che 'l poco ingegno ad or ad or mi lima,
 me ne sarà però tanto concesso,
 che mi basti a finir quanto ho promesso.

[I shall tell of Orlando, too, setting down what has never before been recounted in prose or rhyme: of Orlando, driven raving mad by love—and he a man who had been always esteemed for his great prudence—if she, who has reduced me almost to a like condition, and even now is eroding my last fragments of sanity, leaves me yet with sufficient to complete what I have undertaken]

(*Orlando Furioso*, I, II)

Ariosto and Tofte both anticipate that Orlando's love will ultimately lead to his madness; in addition, they share the final, stock detail of their loved lady not allowing them to complete their work because of her cruelty. This spontaneous affinity with Ariostean modes and fashions, which is shown throughout the poem – such as in Tofte's independent address to the 'sweete Ladies' (III, XLIII, 5) which recalls Ariosto's frequent references to the female readership and audience of his poem – finds an important confirmation in Tofte's rendition of two episodes from canto XLIII of the *Orlando Furioso*, the *Two Tales*.

Tofte's first additions act as a general overview of the poem; however, this pattern of adding introductory stanzas is held throughout the translation, with three octaves added to each of the second and third cantos. Of these three, at least one is about the translator's beloved, whom he refers to as his muse, and who is also the dedicatee of a short poem which opens the work. More additions can be found as the translation of each canto progresses. For instance, Tofte pens one stanza regarding the Maganza family, which is entirely original with him:

These *Magansesi* were a noble House,
 And next to *Charles*, mong'st Peeres the chiefst of all:
 Yet were they Cowards, base, and timorous,
 Traitors, and pickthankes, enuious, full of gall,
 Fewe was there of them counted vallerous,
 Or held for courage-worthy Knightes and tall:
 Yet *Charles*, them more then they deseru'd held deere,
 Because of kinne to him so nigh they were.

(I, XIV)

Although it is true that, with the prosecution of the story, members of the Maganza family will be revealed as traitors, there is no indication in Boiardo's first canto that this is going to happen, and, thus, the translator's anticipation is rather important.

Besides this clarification, Tofte's other additions are mainly concerned with love episodes: first, he elaborates on Orlando's monologue about the propriety of wooing Angelica, because

She is a heathen, I a Christen borne,
Nor know I if she me will euer like,
May be shee'le other loue, and me will scorne,
(And yet for him she is, that best can fight;)
I know not if my fortune be forlorne,
Yet for her sake, Ile trie her brothers might:
My hop's that soone shall ended be this strife,
Either Ile win her, or Ile lose my life.

(I, xxxi)

This part of the monologue is invented by Tofte, and perhaps used by him as a further investigation of the knight's inner thoughts, not explored with sufficient depth by Boiardo; the author, in fact, devotes only two stanzas to the hero's considerations, the first of which, is, incidentally, translated almost perfectly by Tofte:

'Ahi paccio Orlando!' nel suo cor dicia
'Come te lasci a voglia trasportare!
Non vedi tu lo error che te desvia,
E tanto contra a Dio te fa fallare?
Dove mi mena la fortuna mia?
Vedome preso e non mi posso aitare;
Io, che stimavo tutto il mondo nulla,
Senza arme vinto son da una fanciulla.

['Ah, mad Orlando!' –he was telling himself in his heart– 'How easily you let yourself go! Can't you see the error that is leading you on the wrong way, and is making you sin against God? Where is my fortune taking me? I know I am caught, and yet I cannot help myself; I, who esteemed the whole world nothing, am conquered, without weapons, by a maid']

(I, xxx)

Alas fond man, he to him selfe then saide,
Why giu'st thou so large raine vnto thy will?
Perceiu'st thou not in errors thou dost wade?
And gainst thy God (as peruerse) sinnest still?
Ah how am I by Fortune ouerlaide!
I see my fault, yet cannot mend this ill:
I that the worldes great'st force did set at naught,
Am by a seelly girle orecome and caught.

(I, xxix)

Tofte's version is highly faithful and a little more sophisticated than Boiardo's, especially thanks to the insertion of the metaphor in the second line; and it is exactly this fidelity that contrasts so starkly with the inventiveness of the following stanza.

However, the translator has his Orlando speak in a very appropriate fashion, never out of character and, in fact, almost anticipates the hero's madness when handling his bewilderment in lines 3 and 4, when his mind swings from respect and fear (that Angelica keeps somebody else in her heart, and that her desire must consequently be respected) to disrespect and hope (that he can win her in battle, irrespective of her feelings towards him).

Even more interesting are the additions that can be found towards the end of the translation, when, after Angelica has drunk from the Fountain of Love and has thus developed an affection for Rinaldo, she catches him asleep in a conventional *locus amoenus*, only to see him discard her in disgust upon his awakening; she then offers herself to him as she desperately follows him through the forest:

Thou hast not slept enough, then light on growne,
And for thee I'le prouide a Princely Bedde,
My daintie Corse shall be thy Cowch of downe,
My Skinne shall serue for finest sheetes in stedde:
Where thou, o're eares, thy selfe with ioy mayst drowne,
My softe Breastes, pillowes shall be for thy head:
Whilst Nymphes and Graces shall about thee keepe,
With heauenly Musicke lulling thee asleepe.

(III, XLIX)

Boiardo does not share the generous words uttered by Tofte's Angelica; in fact, he cuts her speech short by writing merely that '[q]ueste e molte altre più dolci parole / La damigella va gettando invano' ('these and more sweet words the damsel keeps throwing away, in vain', III, XLVI, 1-2). Yet, Tofte's additional words mirror so beautifully Angelica's character – the once disdainful princess who refuses to believe that she has been rejected, and tries to persuade her beloved (but also, perhaps, herself) that he has 'not slept enough' – that they seem to come straight out of the original character's mouth, and not through the translator's pen. Immediately after, after giving up the *quête*, Angelica herself falls asleep, dreaming – of course – about Rinaldo:

So sweetly sleeps shee, as she seemes to smile,
And in her dreame *Rinaldo* oft doth call
Whilst to embrace him, shee her armes the while,
Stretcheth out wide, and sudden wakes withall;
But when she sees how fancies her beguile,
She pitious weepes, and teares like pearle lets fall,
Sighing, her staines womb doth pant and moue,
Period of Ioy, round Center of sweet Loue.

(III, LV)

In the description of the dream, entirely original with Tofte (Boiardo's heroine simply sleeps), there is a very strong climactic crescendo, which emerges from conventional alliterative lines (1 and 4) and stock images ('teares like pearle') into an acme, the final couplet, which reprises the metaphors inspired by Angelica's body in Tofte's previous addition, and which, like those, is centred on lines of extremely powerful eroticism.

Again, neither of these additions are out of character, as Boiardo himself constantly hints at Angelica as an erotically experienced woman, and, accordingly, plays on the oxymoronic qualities of her definition and reputation as a virgin. Tofte certainly enjoys highlighting the woman's sexuality, and the words that she murmurs over Rinaldo do fit in the passage extremely well; yet, they are entirely original, and it is curious that the major additions made by the translator to the poem are so sexually charged. Indeed, Tofte heightens the eroticism in another octave too,

Thus wailing shee teares som her eyes forth powers,
And turning to the Beech where (fore) he lay,
Thrise happie Herbes, and treble blessed Flowers,
That toucht so sweet a Countnance she doth say,
Far better is your fortune then is ours,
Since you haue kist whom not once touch I may,
Ah might I (as you had) such fauour found,
I willing would be dead, low in the ground.

(III, LIII)

E così lamentando ebbe voltata
Verso il faggio la vista lacrimosa:
– Beati fior, – dicendo – erba beata,
Che toccasti la faccia graziosa,
Quanta invidia vi porto a questa fiata!
Oh quanto è vostra sorte avventurosa
Più della mia! Che mo torria a morire,
Se sopra lui me dovesse venire. –

[And as she lamented, she turned her weeping eyes towards the beech. 'Oh happy flowers – she was saying – happy leaves, who touched his lovely face, how do I envy you! How much more fortunate is your fate than mine! I, who would die, if he came on top of me']

(III, XII)

Tofte's verbs 'kist' and 'touch' are original, as Boiardo's only tactile terminological choice is the 'toccasti' in line 4, rendered by the translator as 'toucht'; it must be, however, noted that the English poet omits that splendid, and most earthy, final line ('if only he would come on top of me') in favour of a much softer 'might I [...] such fauour found'.

The eroticism of the Angelica passages is not the only sentiment Tofte enhances; he also heightens the pathetic nature of the episode of Argalia's death, killed in duel by Ferraú. Whereas Boiardo pens a descriptive octave,

Qui stette Ferragù ne la foresta
Sin che quello ebbe sua vita a finire;
E poi che vide che al tutto era morto,
In braccio il prende quel barone acorto.

[Here in the forest Ferragù stayed until Argalia died; and, when he saw that he really was dead, he took the brave baron in his arms]

(III, LXVI, 5-8),

Tofte adds two elements – the tears ('weeping') and the mourning ('piteous mone'), also highlighting the hug ('he him embraceth') –, developing in greater depth the Pagan knight's characterisation:

Ferraw stands by him till his breath's forth fledde,
Weeping vpon his luelesse Corse amaine;
And seeing him as colde as any stone,
He him embraceth; making piteous mone.

(III, LXXI, 5-8)

The translator also adds a stanza to the narration of Orlando's admiring gaze towards Angelica:

Così mirando quella se diletta
Il franco conte, ragionando in vano.
Oh quanto sé a battaglia meglio assetta
Che d'amar donne quel baron soprano!
Perché qualunque ha tempo, e tempo aspetta,
Spesso se trova vota aver la mano:
Come al presente a lui venne a incontrare,
Che perse un gran piacer per aspettare.

[Thus the brave Count delights himself, admiring her, and reasoning in vain. Oh, how much better suited to battle, rather than to love women, is that grand baron! Because, when somebody has a chance, and yet he waits wasting time, often ends up with empty hands: as happened in this case to him, who, through waiting, missed out on great pleasure]

(III, LXXI)

Thus looking on her, spends his time
And to no end stands whispering all in vaine:
(Poore Soule) he better farre knowes how to fight,
Then Ladies faire with Loue to entertaine.
'For who finds Time and cannot take it right,
Vnworthie's of such fortune and such game,
As to him hapt, who much himselfe did wrong,
Loosing sweete sporte with gazing euer-long.

'The Eye was made, rare Beautie to admire,
And (as an Obiect sweete) presents the same

To Fancie, Fancie straight the Heart on fire
 'Doth set, which seekes by meanes it to obtaine:
 The Fruites of Beautie to enioy, more doth require
 Then looking on: To looke on is small gaine;
 Vnworthy he, to tread Loues daintie Maze,
 That might be dallying, and yet idly stayes.

(III, LXXVI; LXXVII)

The first stanza is an extremely faithful translation of the original octave, of which the concluding couplet is especially remarkable, with the alliterative 'sweete sporte' for Boiardo's much plainer 'gran piacer'. However, Tofte's second stanza, in effect an elaboration of the second part of the preceding octave, is entirely original with the English poet, and shows some highly sophisticated elements, such as the double epanalepsis of lines 3 and 6.

Finally, Tofte creates an entirely original conclusion to his poem, which parallels his introductory stanzas in its continuous references to the translator's mistress, and, like the opening octaves, cannot be found in – or even inspired by – any passage in the original:

FAIRE Shadowe of a Substance passing Faire,
 The Picture of my Mistris Excellence,
 Receiue these lines impolished and bare,
 For vnto thee, and none else are they meant,
 Daine to accept them what so e're they are,
 Since for thy sake, few idle houres I spent:
 So cristall-like still cleare may run thy BROOKE,
 Worthy on whom, all eyes may gaze and looke.

The time may come (Ah that t'wold not be long)
 If my dread ALBA, leaue in cruell wise,
 My harmlesse heart (ne're stainte for faith) to wrong,
 My Muse now dead, againe to life shall rise,
 Singing anew, ORLANDOS lonely song,
 Through vertue of those Diamond sparkes, her eyes,
 When her and thee LOVES TWINS borne of Delight,
 Ile (Herrald-like) display, in Coullours right.

FINIS. *Il Disgratiato*. R. T. G.

(III, LXXXVIII; LXXXIX)

The final signature, 'il Disgratiato' (also used in the sonnet sequence *Alba*), is an evident sign of Tofte's familiarity with the Italian language, and reinforces, at the same time, the theme of the beloved's cruelty. More importantly, it could be ascertained that the translator desires to pick up the poem again from where he left it (LXXXIX, 4-5), although, of course, this never happened. It is also interesting to note

that there is a major caesura between the Conclusion and the final lines of the translation proper:

Neuer was fought on earth so strange a fray,
As in the Canto following downe Ile set,
Still are they bent their valour to assay,
Orlando that he thus is crost doth fret,
And thinke not but hot *Ferraw* chafes as fast:
But heere a while my ship shall Anchor cast.

(III, LXXXVII, 3-8)

Ora se fece la crudel baruffa,
Come ne l'altro canto avró contato:
Vedrete come l'un l'altro rituffa.
Piú che mai fosse, Orlando era turbato;
Di Feraguto non dico niente,
Che mai non fu senza ira al suo vivente.

[The cruel battle now began, as I, in the following canto, will recount: you'll see how they lash out on each other. Orlando was angrier than ever; of Feraguto I cannot say anything, because he was always angry, all of his life]

(III, LXXXI, 3-8)

Interestingly, there is one, essential modification: whereas the first part of the octave is a faithful translation of the Italian lines, and seems to indicate that the poem will continue normally, the final verse is rather ambiguous, and could be intended both as a traditional metaphor for a canto conclusion and, in a more literal sense, as the announcement of the necessity for a pause of indeterminate length. In the first case, the caesura might also indicate a certain temporal distance between the two octaves, and a consequent, unexpected change in the translator's situation that forced him to a rather brutal, and certainly early, halt to his work.

Other minor additions, albeit unimportant, further reveal the tastes of the time, such as a penchant for proverbs: although not as consistently present as in Fairfax, some proverbial lines do appear in Tofte too, for instance his original '[w]ood old and drie burnes soon in such a case' (I, XXXII, 3) to explain the sudden desire for Angelica on the part of the elderly, white-haired Namò of Bavaria.

Although the Scandianese poet is not as sophisticated as Ariosto or Tasso, there are, of course, instances in which Tofte cannot maintain Boiardo's sparkles. One such example is the account of the comical adventures of the English Duke Astolfo, an extraordinary figure characterised by outstanding beauty which is, however, unequalled by valour; the irony lies, in Boiardo, in the extremely high opinion that the knight holds of himself:

Segnor, sappiate ch' Astolfo lo Inglese
 Non ebbe di bellezze il simigliante;
 Molto fu ricco, ma più fu cortese,
 Leggiadro e nel vestire e nel sembiante.
 La forza sua non vedo assai palese,
 Ché molte fiate cadde del ferrante.
 Lui suolea dir che gli era per sciagura,
 E tornava a cader senza paura.

[Lords, you must know that the English Astolfo was of incomparable beauty; he was rich, but even kinder, graceful both in clothing and in appearance. His strength, however, I can't see very clearly, as many times he fell off his horse. He used to say it was just bad luck, and kept on falling, without fear]

(I, LX)

One thing I now must tell you by the way:
 No Baron was as English *Astolfe* faire
 Courtlike and kinde, and rich in his array.
 But somewhat wantonly himselfe he bare,
 Commend his valour yet not much I may,
 For many times ill lucke hapt to his share;
 Yet would he say, t'was chaunce, not want of skill,
 He was vnhorst; such his excuse was still.

(I, LX)

Tofte maintains the authorial intervention in the opening line, and produces a faithful translation in general, with the exception of the invented line 4; however, he allows the final part of the octave to lengthen so much that it loses Boiardo's succinctness, and he completely misses the wonderful concluding line, worthy of any Ariostean verse, which transforms the passage and defines the character perfectly. Astolfo's adventures are, without exception, narrated very comically by Boiardo, and Tofte does not seem always able to reproduce them effectively. Another example is given by Charlemagne's reaction to Astolfo's appearance on the battlefield: the original's 'e ci manca questa altra vergogna' (II, LXVII, 8) becomes in the translation a much weaker 'we shall shamde be presently' (II, LXII, 8) when, in the Italian, it rather resembles a more colloquial, but extremely comical 'that's just what we need'.

Similarly, Boiardo's description of Argalia's proposal that Angelica marry Ferrau, 'per questo ad Angelica non piacque, / Ché lei voleva ad ogni modo un biondo' ('Angelica did not like it, as she absolutely wanted a blond one', II, XI, 1-2) loses effectiveness in the translation, when Tofte's '*Angelica* mislikes him for this cause, / For she did loue the Flaxen yellowish heare' (II, XIV, 1-2) does not maintain the sense that Angelica has a true agenda ('ad ogni modo') as regards the hunt for a husband, ironic because it is in contrast with her self-presented image of an inexperienced virgin.

However, more often than not Tofte is able to maintain the same register and the same tone as the original poem, occasionally with a surprising, apparent ease. This is the case, for instance, with his '[h]e wondring talkes, and talking wonders more' (I, XXXV, 3) for Boiardo's beautiful '[m]ira parlando e mirando favella' (I, XXXV, 4), or with the Petrarchan images in Orlando's monologue, 'ardo d'amore e giazo in zelosia' (II, XXIII, 8) beautifully rendered by Tofte as '[I] burne in Loue, and freeze in Ielousie' (II, XXVI, 8), a line seemingly straight out of Tofte's Petrarchist works, *Laura* and *Alba*. Even Boiardo's couplet anticipating Angelica's discovery of her beloved Rinaldo is translated in an almost perfect manner:

Dorme il barone, e nulla se sentiva;
Ecco ventura che sopra gli ariva

[The baron sleeps, and can't feel a thing; look what adventure arrives upon him]
(III, XXXIX, 7-8)

Sleepe doth our Baron, and doth take a nappe:
But now behold what Fortune did him happe.

(III, XLII, 7-8)

The two versions share the same light colloquiality, the same tone, and especially the same images: remembering how much Fairfax, otherwise a literal translator, differed from Tasso in the final couplets, the part of the octave in which he generally took the greatest freedom, Tofte's easy translation is praiseworthy.

At other times, the English poet effortlessly improves on the original by eliminating the author's awkwardness, as is the case with his explanation of Angelica's magic ring, slightly confused in Boiardo who writes

Ma sua virtù faceva l'omo invisibile,
Se al manco lato in bocca se portava:
Portato in dito, ogni incanto guastava.

[Its virtue was to render men invisible, if it was kept on the left side of the mouth: worn on a finger, it uncharmed all spells]

(I, XXXIX, 6-8)

For being in ones mouth, it men did saue
Vnscene, and kept them as inuisible;
Holding it on the left side, without harme,
And worne on hand, all witchcrafts did vncharme.

(I, XXXIX, 5-8)

Tofte's last line is as concise as Boiardo's, but more beautiful and purer, free from those dialectal colloquialisms of which the Italian poet was often accused by his contemporaries, such as the modest 'guastava'. A careful reader of the *Innamorato*,

Tofte reveals his attentiveness in his ironic definition of Angelica as ‘the Virgin’ (I, XLV, 1), absent in the original but entirely appropriate; similarly, unlike Fairfax, his choice of metaphors, even when original, is always in some way inspired by Boiardo’s words. For instance, the translator’s invented line ‘[Galasrone] would vse them worse then curs or mastiues be’ (I, XL, 8), referring to the prisoners whom Angelica’s father wishes to take, is absent in the *Innamorato* but clearly inspired by Boiardo’s simultaneous definition of Galasrone as a ‘maledetto cane’ (‘damned dog’, I, XL, 8).

Another improvement on the original is to be found in the account of Astolfo’s barely credible successes on the battlefield, the merit of an enchanted spear; Tofte originally adds the line ‘*Astolfo* knowth not how this courage came’ (II, XXII, 3), which beautifully describes the knight’s own surprise at this new-found prowess in battle that he has never before experienced.

Boiardo’s style is extremely earthy and colloquial, at times reaching sheer vulgarity (hence the immense popularity of the several ‘rifacimenti’, versions of the poem which maintain the entertainment and the irony of the plot but are cleansed from the excessive colloquialisms and vulgarities). Tofte seems to accept the original’s stylistic challenges quite openly: Boiardo’s Grandonio’s ‘de altro che di coppa so giuocare’ (II, LXIII, 6) becomes ‘[m]ore then to bib and quaffe my cunning showes’ (II, LVIII, 6); and whenever he cannot match the original, for instance with Boiardo’s superb neologism ‘svilaneggiando’ (II, LVIII, 6), he makes up for it in another location, in this case with the equally beautiful onomatopoeia ‘all the fields with trumpets tantara ring’ (II, LIV, 6). Another example is given when he narrates Rinaldo’s change of feelings for Angelica after drinking from the Fountain of Hate: Tofte’s original ‘[h]e worse then Toade *Angelica* doth hate’ (III, XXXIX, 8) is prosaic, but appropriate to the poem’s tone.

It is only with Boiardo’s most extreme earthiness that Tofte takes a step back and softens the original, so that he transforms the author’s ‘Orlando, traditor bastardo / Figliol de una puttana, rinegato!’ (II, LIV, 8; LV, 1) into ‘*Orlando* stoute [...] / Sonne of a Queane base got’ (II, LIX, 8; LX, 1), semantically identical but less vulgar. Similarly, Tofte omits the listing of insults and denigratory epithets that Astolfo yells at Grifone in the presence of Charlemagne: his ‘Can felone, / Ladro, ribaldo, maledetto e rio’ (III, XXVIII, 3-4) are softened by Tofte in a simple ‘base Rascall’ (III, XXXI, 3),

although this lessened hostility does not entirely justify the Emperor's reaction to send the English knight to prison as a punishment for insulting a fellow Crusader.

The translation is not free from mistakes, of course, but these rarely modify the semantics of the text, being nothing more than inconsequential misunderstandings. One such misinterpretation can be found when Tofte writes

Astolfo hearing such a noyse and dyn,
Begun out of his heauie sleepe to come:
Besides the Gyants showte had waked him,
Whose Eccho to his eares from Meade did runne

(I, LXXXIV, 1-4)

instead of Boiardo's

A quel rumore Astolfo se è levato,
Che sino allora ancor forte dormia,
Né il crido de' giganti l'ha svegliato
Che tutta fe' tremar la prataria.

[Astolfo awoke upon hearing that noise, for up till then he was fast asleep, and not even the Giants' shouts had woken him up, which had made the whole plain tremble]

(I, LXXXIV, 1-4)

Unlike in the Italian version, in Tofte Astolfo is awoken by the noise made by the belligerents; in this way, however, the comicality of Ferraú's outburst of anger being louder than a battle between giants is inevitably lost.

An inappropriate choice on the part of Tofte is his original insertion of the parenthetical sentence 'though to doe so grieues my heart' (I, LXXXV, 7) when describing Argalia's angry attack against Ferraú. Unless ironic, the sentence is rather unsuitable for the circumstance, as the two knights' exchange is full of verbal abuse. Similarly, when translating the beautiful passage recording, as if in slow motion, Rinaldo's change of affections towards Angelica, he transforms Boiardo's 'odiava' (III, XXXVI, 8) into 'forgate' (III, XXXVIII, 8), a terminological choice which is certainly less clear than the author's.

Tofte's Ariosto: *Two Tales*

Both the Ariostean episodes translated by Tofte derive from canto XLIII of the *Orlando Furioso*; both were written in Italy (the first was composed in Siena in July

1592, and the second was compiled in Naples one year after) but published a few years later (1597). The translator not only records the canto and stanza number marking the beginning of his translation, but he even reproduces the first line of the Italian original, thus providing his readers with an exact and unmistakable context for his two versions. Tofte's rendition will be compared not only with the original, but also with Sir John Harington's translation of the same canto; Queen Elizabeth's godson, throughout his poem, tends to be more faithful to the original exactly in the translation of the self-contained tales, and thus provides an excellent source of comparison with Tofte.

'The First Tale: Cant. 43 Stanza 11'

Rinaldo, after drinking from the Fountain of Hate, has now freed himself from his love for Angelica. Having heard of the decisive battle between Pagans and Christians, in the form of a triple duel between the main knights of each camp, he rushes back to Lipadusa in the hope of participating in the battle. Along the way, he stops at various courts on the Pianura Padana, and avails himself of the courts' multicultural environment to conduct a search on the fidelity of women. During his first night at an inn near Mantua, the paladin is offered an enchanted cup which, if drunk by a man whose wife is faithful, perfectly holds the wine within, but which spills if drunk by a man who has been betrayed. In this 'rewriting of the Fall in modern dress', in Benson's beautiful definition (Benson 1992: 113), Rinaldo rejects the temptation to drink, preferring to remain ignorant of his wife's behaviour, and his host, envying his wisdom, tearfully narrates his story.

Omitting the context, Tofte starts his translation with the host's first words, thus *in medias res* and without mentioning the cup or explaining its magical effect. This decision will affect the clarity of the translation later on, when the cup reappears again and Tofte cannot justify its presence (XXXIV, 3). The fact that the sonneteer sacrifices the clarity of the plot in favour of the accuracy of the version is extremely significant, and suggests that the tales were originally devised as translations exercises, as personal self-testing, rather than as a work composed with publication in mind.

The translator's poetic qualities are immediately evident in his Narrator's self-description; his beautiful line 'Nature that fault supplide with beauty rare' (II, 3) is a literal, yet poetic translation of Ariosto's 'al difetto di lei supplí Natura' (XII, 3), with

which it shares the same terminological choice for the main verb ('supplide'/'suppli'); Harington's rendition is not as concise, although his three-line-long version does include the phrase 'beauty rare' (XII, 5). There are, in fact, some similarities between the two English translations: for instance, Ariosto's description of the natural father of the Narrator's wife as 'di tutte l'arti oltre ogni creder dotto' (XIII, 2) becomes, in Tofte, 'whose learning did surmount / Beyond all credit farre' (III, 2-3), and, in Harington, 'learn'd and wise, and old beyond all credit' (XIII, 2), although, clearly, the latter shifts the focus of the shared phrase 'beyond all credit' from the man's learning to his age. A more extended terminological resemblance can be found in the description of the old man's protection of his daughter from temptations: Ariosto's '[a] vecchie donne e caste fe' nutrire / la figlia' (XV, 1-2) is rendered by Harington as '[h]e caused chaste old women her to nourish / in this same house' (XV, 1-2), and expressed in very similar terms by Tofte, '[b]y women old and chaste, his daughter deere / He causde in this for to be nourished' (V, 1-2).

Alluding to the old man's successful seduction of the mother of the Narrator's wife, Ariosto's euphemistical 'con premio ottenne una matrona bella' (XIII, 7) is transformed by Harington into a more explicit 'with his wealth so wrought her / That at the last he gat of her a daughter' (XIII, 7), whilst Tofte's version shows a hint of sad resignation in its original parenthetical sentence, 'through gifts (such was his lot,) / He of a matron faire, a maide begot' (III, 7). The same concept is reprised in the following octave, where Ariosto's concise 'per mercede / vendé sua castità' ('for a price sold her chastity', XIV, 2-3) becomes, in Harington, 'to sell her chastity for filthy pelf' (XIV), where the addition of the judgemental adjective contributes to connote the lines negatively. Tofte's version is somehow closer to Harington's than to the original, adding, as it does, another derogatory adjective: '[l]ike to the mother, who for greedy gaine, / Did sell that gemme (sans price) her chastitie' (IV, 2-3).

Tofte seems to improve on Ariosto's original when he pens a beautiful line, 'when he his daughter iudged ripe / To ioyne with man in nuptiall married bed' (VII, 1-2), where the emphasis given by the synonymous 'nuptiall' and 'married' provides a contrast with the theme of the episode – infidelity – and anticipates his wide, original use of contrasts in his 'Second Tale'.

Ariosto's clear eighteenth-stanza reference to Dante's famed sonnet in his sequence *Vita Nuova*, 'Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare', is entirely lost in Harington, but Tofte preserves an echo of it. The Dantean lines

Ella si va, sentendosi laudare,
[...]
e par che sia una cosa venuta
da cielo in terra a miracol mostrare.

[She walks, amid praise (...), and seems a thing sent from Heaven to Earth to show what a miracle is]

(XXVI, 5, 7-8)

are very similar, both semantically and terminologically (especially in the employment of the term 'cosa' referred to a person), to Ariosto's

Vedila andare, odine il suono e il canto:
celeste e non mortal cosa parea

[To see her move, to hear her play music and sing she seemed divine, not (a mortal thing)]
(XVIII, 5-6)

Harington omits the lines entirely, whereas Tofte is more faithful to the original verses:

Her touch on lute, and song did well describe,
In heau'n, and not on earth that she was bore.

(VIII, 5-6)

The echo is, nevertheless, less vivid, because of the focus on the music (the only part of the lines which Ariosto adds independently of Dante) and the consequent elimination of the phrase 'vedila andare', a parallel of the Medieval poet's '[e]lla si va'. Conversely, it is Harington who, soon after, develops Ariosto's and Tofte's brief metaphor into a fully elaborate image, when describing the Narrator's attempted rejection of Melissa's advances: the author's '[non potea sanar] l'amorosa piaga / col rimedio che dar non le potria' (XXI, 6-7), faithfully translated by Tofte as '[she could not move me to] heale her amorous wound remedillesse, / With plaister such as well I could not giue' (XI, 6-7), becomes, in Harington,

She could not move nor turn on no condition,
To cure her malady, or ease her smart,
I still refused to be her Physition,
Because the med'cine that of me she sought,
As injurie unto my wife I thought.

(XXI, 4-8)

The traditional metaphor of love as sickness is prolonged and more explicit, and it also includes a pun on 'injury', which can be read out of metaphor or still as a part of it; it is, in any case, much more elaborate than in the other versions.

The later translator also chooses to modify the structure of the central part of the episode. In Ariosto, and in Harington with him, it is the Narrator who recounts the first meeting between his wife and her long-time suitor (XXXIII) whose shape the Narrator himself will eventually adopt in order to tempt her, whilst in the partial English translation it is Melissa who informs the man of the presence of the second lover (XXIII). Although both versions are plausible, and the substance of the story does not vary at all, the change demonstrates Tofte's careful reading and handling of his original: the narration does, indeed, flow better when it is Melissa who reveals the existence of an old lover of the Narrator's wife, because her ensuing suggestion that the host should take the lover's shape to win the woman becomes the natural consequence of her revelation.

A testimony to Tofte's engagement with his translation is his effort to replace the rhetorical devices he is forced to omit with other figures of speech, often equally sophisticated; for instance, at the beginning of Melissa's speech to the Narrator persuading him to test his wife's fidelity, he substitutes Ariosto's chiasmic repetition 'ch'io sia fedele a chi fedel mi sia' (XXIV, 8) for another sophisticated figure of speech, the polyptoton in '[s]he praised mine intent, / Faithfull to be where faithfulness was meant' (XIV, 7-8). Harington's version is plain: 'I do but well so true to be / Vnto my wife, if she were so to me' (XXIV, 7-8). Similarly, when the Narrator reveals his true identity to his wife, who has just consented to betray him, Tofte eliminates Ariosto's double chiasmus in 'ambi di color di morte, / muti ambi, ambi restián con gli occhi bassi' (XL, 1-2), and transforms them into a symmetrical, but equally effective, '[b]oth of vs pale became, as death most like, / Both of vs speechlesse, with our eyes on ground (XXX, 1-2). Harington maintains the triple repetition of the Italian: '[w]e both do look like ashes, pale and wan, / We both stand dumb, we both cast down our eye' (XL, 1-2), where the effectiveness of the second line, better than Tofte's, is balanced by the less powerful set phrase of the first, 'pale and wan'.

Harington is also more successful than Tofte when describing the moment of the woman's consent: his 'th' Orient Pearls, and stones that shone so cleare, / Did mollifie her heart, to my desire' (XXXVIII, 3-4) is a praiseworthy rendition of Ariosto's striking

‘il veder fiammeggiar poi, come fuoco, / le belle gemme, il duro cor fe’ molle’ (XXXVIII, 3-4), where the image of the flames is a perfect parallel with the woman’s flickering will, as well as with the pseudo-lover’s flaming heart. Tofte is not able to render adequately the lines, plainer in his version: ‘seeing those costly gems, which shone more cleare / Than fire, her stubberne hart, strait meek became’ (XXVIII, 3-4). Interestingly, the partial translator borrows Harington’s image of the orient pearls soon after, albeit metaphorically: his independent ‘teares like orient pearles on cheekes let fall’ (XXX, 8) adds a conventional, yet elegant tone to the octave.

A final difference can be found in the Narrator’s bitter conclusion of his story; Ariosto’s text conveys very powerfully the sense that the man has exceeded his limits and should not have desired to know more of his wife than that which is reasonable:

Il mio voler cercare oltre alla meta
che de la donna sua cercar si deve,
fa che mai piú trovar ora quieta
non può la vita mia, sia lunga o breve.

[The result of my urge to explore beyond the limit permissible in investigating one’s wife has been that I shall never know another hour’s peace in my life, whatever its duration]

(XLV, 1-4)

Tofte, albeit not using the term ‘limit’ as explicitly as Ariosto (‘meta’), leaves the meaning virtually unchanged:

My curious will, which made me search to know,
(More than I ought) the manners of my Wife,
Makes care and grieve fresh in me still to grow,
And forceth me to leade a hellish life.

(XXXV, 1-4)

Conversely, Harington does not convey the sense of a limit at all, choosing, in the first line, a peculiar verb which seems more adequate for an object, rather than a person:

My overmuch desire to sift my wife
In so precise and in so straight a sort,
Doth cause that now I shall not all my life
Live one good houre, endure it long or short.

(XLV, 1-4)

Tofte chooses to conclude his ‘First Tale’ with the addition of an entirely original stanza, which resembles the poet’s conclusion of the partial translation of the *Orlando Innamorato* in its inclusion of a few proto-feminist lines. In particular, the final couplet of the original stanza added by Tofte is a quick, witty remark which perfectly acts as a moral for the whole story:

Thus saide and ceast, the wofull Caualiere,
 Who liude in anguish to his latest day,
 Too late repenting that his louely Pheere
 Through folly his, he forst to go her way:
 A caueat good for iealous heads to beare
 In minde, lest for their paines they finde like pay.
 To whom I wish such lucke as had this Knight,
 And to their Wiues like change for their delight.

(XXXVII)

The whole stanza, an apology for the wife's behaviour, never hints at any moment at the wife's own weakness, which, by being ignored, seems to be entirely excused and justified.

'The Second Tale: Cant. 43 Stanza 73'

The second episode translated by Tofte, which in Ariosto's poem follows almost immediately the first, is another narrative centred on the theme of the (in)fidelity of women; Rinaldo, still desiring to investigate the subject, moves on towards Ferrara and, during the journey, listens to a tale narrated by the bargeman accompanying him. The story originally presents male faithfulness as equally important as its female counterpart, virtually advocating equality of expectations and conduct in both sexes; it also suggests, as a not too implicit moral of the story, that women might be bad, but men are infinitely worse. Tofte's translation begins a few stanzas into the bargeman's story, and, as in the first tale, is preceded by a note reproducing Ariosto's opening line.

Tofte translates the introductory stanza faithfully, explaining, according to the original, that judge Anselmo 'sought a wife, which wel might show / His match, for birth, for fame and honesty' (I, 5-6), adding that this ideal was finally found in the shape of the 'fairiest Wench that euer trod on ground' (I, 8), an elaboration of Ariosto's 'una di bellezza sopraumana' (LXXII, 8). Harington, conversely, invents a final couplet which immediately casts a negative light on Anselmo's wife, whose representation in the other two versions is highly, and exclusively, complimentary: '[t]hey wedded were, for better and for worse, / So he her person lik'd, so she his purse' (LXVII, 7-8). The detail of the woman's cupidity is entirely original, and, in Harington, it acts as a prefiguration of her eventual seduction on the part of Adonio, accomplished partly through the offer of money and riches: the translator's addition

suggests that, in the same way that she married for money, she will as easily be tempted into betraying her husband for the same reason.

Tofte, however, unusually modifies Ariosto's lines in the following stanza: he wonders whether the woman, as

[S]he did seeme al Loue and Amorousnes,
And for his state (perhaps) too lustie was,

Whose yeeres (good man) craude not such youthfulness

(II, 2-4)

Tofte adds, independently, the final adjective of line 2, as well as originally attributing Anselmo's inadequacy to his age, whereas Ariosto's concerns are limited to his status as a man of law, which implies a quiet, uneventful life; in addition, in the original the woman is not 'lustie', but simply

[P]area tutto amore e leggadria,
e di molto più, forse, ch'ai riposi,
ch'allo stato di lui non convenia.

[she seemed made of love and delicacy – too much so, perhaps, for his peace of mind, (for his status)]

(LXXIII, 2-4)

Harington's version is, in this rare instance, the more faithful, although he swaps Ariosto's and Tofte's hypothetical question in favour of a more assertive '[n]ot fit indeed for him, that was to rest, / And to his bookes, more then to sports dispos'd' (LXVIII, 3-4).

With the exception of this misunderstanding, Tofte's other additions in this early stage of the translation enhance the original poem: when describing the impoverished Adonio's forced rural interlude, the translator explains that

[W]ith salt teares and sighes most heauily,
Along the citties moated wall doth rome,
Nor can he Lady his, from memory
Let slip, (a cause of second grieve and mone)

(VI, 3-6)

The final parenthetical sentence is original, and only slightly inspired by Ariosto's 'la donna che del cor gli era regina, / già non oblia per la seconda ambascia' (LXXVII, 5-6); while the Italian Adonio simply does not forget his beloved Argia because of his

unforeseen change of fortune, Tofte's character grieves twice, both for his poverty and for his unrequited love.

Tofte increases the intensity of Anselmo's desperation when he is told he must leave the town – and, consequently, his beautiful young wife – to act as the Pope's orator for an unspecified time. The translator expands Ariosto's brief image 'se veduto aprir s'avesse il fianco / e vedutosi trar con mano il core' ('had he seen his side ripped open and a hand reach in to pluck out his heart', LXXXIII, 3-4), rendering it more powerful thanks to his vivid vocabulary:

[H]e supported had with lesser griefe,
His bowels ripped forth for to haue seene:
And bloody heart, torne out, without reliefe

(XII, 2-4)

Harington's version is, in comparison, extremely weak, and is limited to the single line '[i]t seemed unto him a grievous case' (LXXVII, 4).

Another difference can be found when, during Anselmo's attempted *suasoria* to convince his wife to remain faithful to him, Ariosto concentrates on the idea that chastity is worth more when it is tested, and has the judge presenting their current situation as the ideal opportunity for his wife to prove her fidelity. This sense of greater worth of chastity when under trial is lost in Tofte, who writes simply that 'such Vertue, alwayes triumphes bare, / Which being forc'te, yeeldes not, for life or Pelfe' (XIII, 6-7), and who also omits the idea of the wife experiencing, for the first time, uncontrolled chastity: 'or gran campo avria per questa assenza, / di far di pudicizia esperienza' ('now, in his absence, she would have ample occasion to make trial of her chastity', LXXXIV, 7-8). Harington maintains this final image, although he opens the second part of the octave with an original line:

This is the vertue that defends her owner,
And now she may (he saith) with great facility
Attaine great praise, and shew thereof great proof,
While he is forc'd to stay so far aloof.

(LXXVIII, 5-8)

During the innocent wife's anxious self-defence, Harington adds another original detail, that the woman is 'yet free from such disease' (LXXIX, 3), thus anticipating, once again, the woman's betrayal with the employment of the adverb 'yet' (as well as connoting it extremely negatively, as a 'disease'). In Tofte's and Ariosto's versions, incidentally very similar also in their choice of similes, there is no indication that the

woman will not be faithful to the judge, and the stanza is centred solely on Argia's desperation at her husband's hitherto unjustified lack of faith in her.

When Anselmo, still unsatisfied, turns to a magician who will be able to reveal with greater certainty his wife's behaviour in his absence, both translators choose to conclude the respective octaves with stronger words than those used by Ariosto, in a climax of harshness which sees Harington penning the most powerful line of the three. While Ariosto has a relatively neutral 'da guadagno e da prezzo corrotta' ('greed for gain would corrupt her', LXXXVIII, 8), Tofte adds a pair of derogatory terms, 'fouly being corrupt by gaine most base' (XVII, 8); Harington goes even further, and almost hints at prostitution with his verbal choice: 'for lucre's sake directly hir'd' (LXXXII, 8).

In an attempt to prevent Argia's greed (which, of course, has not manifested itself yet, but which the judge knows will be the cause of her seduction), Anselmo, before parting from her, leaves her all of his possessions and estates. Tofte's version presents a striking realism, especially noticeable in the colloquialism of the parenthetical sentence and in the final line, characterised by practical repetitions:

Such jewels and gold, as he had vnder key,
(For he had mountaines) to her gaue he all,
Rents, Leases, Debts, Reuenues of his land

(XIX, 5-7)

The apparently excessive practicality of Tofte's lines provides, in fact, an excellent contrast with the extreme abstraction of the metaphorical conclusion of the previous stanza, '[s]heel sell her Honor at a worthlesse price' (XVIII, 8); this may also symbolise the contrast between the judge's pragmatism, already shown in his need to know exactly what the future holds for his wife, and which cannot take into account his wife's emotions and feelings (epitomised by his refusal to listen to her sincere pleas, and turn to the magician instead), and his wife's more passionate nature, proven by the fact that, ultimately, she is won not only by money and riches, but also by the realisation that her lover is a young, handsome and devoted long-time suitor of hers.

Such a well-defined contrast is absent in Harington and Ariosto; the former has, simply, 'his jewels, plate, and stock' (LXXXIV, 5), while the Italian poet has a longer, but much less detailed than Tofte's,

[C]iò che tenea di gioie e di danari
(che n'avea somma) pose in suo potere:
rendite e frutti di ogni possessione,

e ciò ch'ha al mondo, in man tutto le pone

[he placed in her keeping all the jewels and money he possessed (which was plenty); all his worldly goods, all the income deriving therefrom he placed in her hands]

(XC, 5-8)

Tofte demonstrates, once again, that he is a very careful reader of Ariosto when, during Anselmo's suggestion that his wife should move to the countryside in his absence, he uses the feminine pronoun ('to her Mannor wend', XXI, 2), perfectly consistent with the judge's recent bestowal of his properties to Argia: the manor now is, like everything else, rightly hers. Harington does not perceive this detail, and writes 'at his countrey house' (LXXXVI, 5): an inconsequential difference, which, however, shows (and it is a recurring trait) a certain lack of attention on the part of the earlier English poet.

During the description of the couple's parting, neither translator is able to reproduce Ariosto's beautiful final line 'perché non ha nella sua fede fede' ('he places no faith in her fidelity', XCIII, 8), extremely sophisticated in its use of both epizeuxis and antanaclasis ('fede' as 'faith' and 'fidelity'): Tofte tries a pun with 'because her Faith he did mistrust' (XXII, 8) whereas Harington modifies the line entirely, '[h]er manners have not been so light and vicious / [...] to move him to be thus suspicious' (LXXXVII, 7-8). However, Tofte enriches his octave with the metaphor of 'pearly drops' (XXII, 3), a standard phrase used once already in the 'First Tale'; in this instance, it translates the Italian 'fiumicel' ('little stream', XCIII, 4), rendered by Harington with 'kindly tears' (LXXXVII, 3).

Tofte suffers two awkward moments when rendering Manto's speech to Adonio, who had unknowingly saved the fairy, in the shape of a serpent, from a peasant's rage. Although the translator is conscious that, being a fairy, Manto could not have died that day (XXX, 8), he has her thanking Adonio for saving her life: '[f]rom country Carle thou sau'dst this life of mine, / Who in this place, me, dead for feare sore fraid' (XXX, 3-4). If the latter reference to death is clearly metaphorical, the former can only be intended literally, and, given the fact that it cannot be a misunderstanding, it amounts to translation mistake. In order not to contradict Manto's nature, both Ariosto and Harington avoid mentioning death: the translator writes that Adonio 'saved [her] from danger and distresse' (XCV, 5), while the author has her gratefully admit that '[s]e tu non eri, io non andava asciolta / ch'io non portassi rotto e capo e schene' ('had you not come, I should not have escaped a fractured skull and back', CI, 5-6).

Similarly, soon after Tofte makes a second unfortunate choice, this time on a terminological level: his oxymoron ‘ice to flame, and fire to melt like Ice’ (XXXI, 8) does not function as well as Harington’s more traditional ‘[i]ce turn to flame, and fire congeal to ice’ (XCVI, 8), a literal translation of Ariosto’s ‘s’infiamma il ghiaccio, e si congela il fuoco’ (‘kindle ice and freeze fire’, CII, 8).

When Adonio finally succeeds in seducing Argia, the three poets employ radically different tones in their treatment of the culminating moment of the seduction. Ariosto’s elaborate pattern almost acts as an apology for the woman’s decision:

De la puttana sua balia i conforti,
i prieghi de l’amante e la presenza,
il veder che guadagno se l’apporti,
del misero dottor la lunga assenza,
lo sperar ch’alcun mai non lo rapporti,
fêro ai casti pensier tal violenza,
ch’ella accettò il bel cane, e per mercede
in braccio e in preda al suo amator si diede.

[The encouragement of her shameless nurse, the entreaties, the mere presence of her lover, the sight of the wealth he was bringing her, the unfortunate judge’s absence, the hope that no one would ever report her: these factors all did such violence to her (chaste thoughts) that she accepted the dog and in payment abandoned herself into her lover’s arms]

(CXV)

The author’s use of so strong a phrase as ‘fêro [...] tal vïolenza’ – terms that would be more appropriate for a rape, not for the voluntary embracing of a lover: ‘far violenza’ can, indeed, mean ‘to rape’ –, combined with the lengthy list of reasons and circumstances working against what are, intrinsically, the woman’s pure thoughts (‘casti pensier’) seems to justify Argia, almost presenting her as the innocent victim of an unfortunate situation, subjected to excessive temptation, misguided by a conspiring nurse (‘puttana’, ‘whore’, according to Ariosto) and finally persuaded, as the last straw, by her husband’s absence and the hope of the secrecy of her affair. The use, in the concluding line, of the term ‘preda’ (‘prey’), and of the rarer ‘amator’ instead of ‘amante’, is not a coincidence: the former reinforces Argia’s identification as the victim, whilst the latter emphasises that, until now, all the loving was done by Adonio, and not by Argia; the active ending of the noun implies that Adonio’s feelings are not, yet, corresponded, and thus stresses again Argia’s fundamental purity.

Tofte maintains, virtually unchanged, the long list of justifications:

The counsell still (her Proxie) to her gaue,
The prayers of her Louer there in place,

The gaine she sawe by this which she should haue,
 The wretched Doctors absence in like case,
 The hope that none for this would her depraue,
 Each thought most caste from breast away did chase:
 As she the Dog doth take, which to requite,
 She yeeldes her selfe a pray to his delight.

(XLIV)

Although the translator does not manage to reproduce the sense of violence that was so strong in the original, he shares with Ariosto the use of the term 'pray', which, even on its own, contributes to present the woman as a victim, rather than as committing a crime. Harington, conversely, modifies the conclusion of the octave radically, thus presenting Argia in a wholly different light:

Thus her true louers presence, and his prayer,
 The comforts of her nurse, that whorish drudge,
 The great rewards he presently did pay her,
 The absence long of that same iealous Iudge;
 And lastly hope that sure none would bewray her,
 Wip't from her conscience scruple all and grudge,
 So that she tooke his dog, and for his laber,
 Gaue him free leaue to play vpon her taber.

(CIX)

Harington does not modify the five-line-long list of reasons for Argia's adultery, but largely changes the rest of the stanza: omitting all references to her 'casti pensier', the 'thought[s] most chaste' that played an important part in the characterisation of the woman in both Tofte and Ariosto, he independently adds that harsh '[w]ip't from her conscience scruple all'. This, combined with the explicit conclusion, renders his Argia's adultery a much more deliberate, and less forced, decision than it was in the original: the difference between Harington's line and Ariosto's 'fêro ai casti pensier tal violenza' is striking, and rather unjustified.

The idea of the conspiring nurse is central also to another poem, Samuel Daniel's 1592 *Complaint of Rosamond*. There, a 'seeming Matron, yet a sinfull monster' (222) has been persuaded by Henry II to tempt Rosamond into yielding to the king's attentions, thus leading to the eponymous heroine's seduction and eventual suicide. The 'Matron' does so 'with the smoothest speech / That Court and age could cunningly deuise' (225-226) – a speech which takes the form of an eleven-stanza *suasoria*, perhaps comparable to Argia's Nurse's 'conforti'. However, there are no terminological or substantial plot similarities, apart from the vague parallel of the Nurse's tempting role, which may suggest Daniel's knowledge of the Argia passage in Ariosto.

Tofte continues to portray Argia in a favourable light, increasing her defence soon after, when he adds, independently of Ariosto, the second line in ‘through great gifts corrupted was his Wife, / By one whom she did loue and honour chiefe’ (XLVII, 1-2): because Ariosto and Harington simply state that the woman has given herself to another man, without mentioning her love for him, Tofte’s addition acquires importance, and acts as a further validation of Argia’s infidelity. The translator even seems to distance himself from Ariosto’s misogynistic touch in the line ‘ch’ove feminine son, son liti e risse’ (CXX, 8): by inserting the line between quotation marks, “‘For where as Women be, is strife and warre’” (XLIX, 8), Tofte renders it akin to an authorial *sententia*, and shows his detachment from it.

Unlike Harington, whose tendency to moralise Ariosto’s poem never really allows him to appreciate the author’s irony, Tofte is able to pick up and elaborate on it, often adding ironic remarks of his own, always consonant to the spirit of the original. Such is the case, for example, with his addition of the concluding line in the stanza describing Anselmo’s encounter with a deformed Ethiopian man (another of Manto’s brilliant creations) who invites him inside his magical castle:

He spieth an Ethiopie, standing at the doore,
In shape deformde, so vgly, as in minde,
So bad a Good-face, he n’er saw before,
Nor possible his match so foule to finde,
Than Esope thousand times deformed more,
His Lookes, enough to make One (sodaine) blinde,
Besmeerde, begreasde, Tom Tarrarag in Attire,
Nor yet the halfe I tell of this sweete Squire.

(LXIV)

Tofte seems at ease with Ariosto’s already hyperbolic description of the Ethiopian, and adds a few original details, such as the final line and the beautiful adynaton of line 6, greatly enhancing the original octave:

Vede inanzi alla porta uno Etïopo
con naso e labri grossi; e ben gli é avviso
che non vedesse mai, prima né dopo,
un così sozzo e dispiacevol viso;
poi di fattezze, qual si pinge Esopo,
d’attristar, se vi fosse, il paradiso;
bisunto e sporco, e d’abito mendico:
né a mezzo ancor di sua bruttezza io dico.

[Before the gate he saw an Ethiopian with broad nose and thick lips. Never before or since, he was convinced, had he set eyes upon so hideously repulsive a face. For the rest, he shared the deformities attributed to Aesop—enough to depress a saint in paradise. He was greasy, dirty, dressed like a beggar, and I have gone but half-way towards describing his ugliness]

In fact, the contrast between the beauty of the palace and the ugliness of the man is so unpleasant that Anselmo wonders whether he is dreaming; again, Tofte manages to pen two beautiful lines worthy of Ariosto's, enhancing the colloquiality of the original to a comical effect: the Italian 'non sapea se fosse ebbro, o se sognassi, / o pur se 'l cervel scemo a volo andassi' ('[h]e did not know whether he were drunk or dreaming, or whether his wits had taken flight', CXXXIV, 7-8) becomes in the *Two Tales* an equally beautiful '[h]e knew not if he slept, or waken were, / Or if his Braine did swimme with double beere' (LXIII, 7-8), in which the final line is slightly inspired by Ariosto's 'ebbro', but brilliantly elaborated and largely original. Harington's serious '[i]f so himselfe were sleeping then or waking, / Or if his troubled brayne, were in due taking' (CXXVII, 7-8) lacks the colloquiality of the other two versions and cannot match Tofte's striking lines. Similarly, the earlier translator is not able to maintain the irony in the description of the Ethiopian (transformed by him into a gypsy); abundant in colloquialisms in the first lines, the stanza goes on to lose strength, and not even the final image of Paradise (borrowed from Ariosto, but moved here to a more prominent position) is as powerful as in the original, where, despite being relegated in the central lines of the octave, it derives its brilliance from the beautiful verb 'attristar':

He sees a *Gibsen* standing at the doore,
 All blab-lipt, beetle browd, and bottle nozed,
 Most greasie, nastie, his apparell poore,
 His other parts, as Painters are disposed,
 To giue to *Esop*, such a Blackamore,
 Could not be seene elsewhere, as he supposed,
 So vile a visage, and so bad a grace,
 To make ev'n Paradise a loathsome place.

(CXXVIII)

Tofte invents another line soon after, when Anselmo, overwhelmed by the beauty of the palace, asks at what price he can buy it. Whilst Ariosto writes that

[Anselmo] spesso dice: « Non potria quant'oro
 é sotto il sol pagare il loco egregio ».
 A questo gli risponde il brutto Moro,
 e dice: « E questo ancor trova il suo pregio:
 se non d'oro o d'argento, nondimeno
 pagar lo puó quel che vi costa meno ».

[He kept repeating, "Not all the gold under the sun could purchase this extraordinary palace."
 To this the ugly Moor replied, "Even this has its price: if not with gold or silver, nonetheless it
 may be bought with what costs you least"]

(CXXXVIII, 3-8),

and Harington translates faithfully, simply adding a mythological reference,

[The Iudge] sweares he thought that ten times *Cræsus* gold,
Were scant a price, so rare a house to buy;
Yet may (the *Negro* saith) this house be sold,
Though not for coyne (for not for coyne care I)
Yet for some other ware, which sure I guesse,
You will esteeme at price a great deale lesse.

(CXXXII, 3-8)

Tofte's version is the best of the three:

And often saith, the Worldes whole Wealth is nought,
In Price to Pallace this so rich and faire:
The lothsome Moore, who long these words had sought
Strait saide, And yet at Worth they valedwed are,
Through Gold not Siluer thou for this canst pay,
Yet, what doth cost thee lesse, giue me thou may.

(LXVII, 3-8)

The unique addition of the line 'who long these words had sought' gives a real sense of a plan, revealing that the surreal situation in which Anselmo has incurred is, in fact, all part of the plot devised by Argia for her revenge; despite being absent in Ariosto, it suits perfectly the context, and the other two versions seem almost incomplete without it – a clear sign of the effectiveness of Tofte's addition.

Harington then makes a consequential modification when omitting the comparison between Anselmo's and Argia's adulterous acts in favour of a biblical reference. Ariosto's 'gli fa la medesima richiesta / ch'avea già Adonio alla sua moglie fatta' (CXXXIX, 1-2), literally rendered by Tofte as '[the Ethiopian] doth make to him Request, / As did Adonio to his Wife before' (LXVIII, 1-2), becomes in Harington 'he made to him the like request, / As Sodomits did make for guests of *Lot*' (CXXXIII, 1-2); instead of enhancing the octave, however, the reference detracts from it, because it hides the parallel between husband's and wife's adulteries and their implicit weighting in readers' minds (Argia's offence being the less culpable of the two, because it was committed with a young, handsome and male lover).

When Anselmo finally consents to the Ethiopian's 'brutta domanda e disonesta' ('this loathsome, disgraceful request', CXXXIX, 3), and then Argia materialises just as her husband is coupling with the ugly man, Tofte adds a detail to her surprise, writing of her (not entirely genuine) amazement at finding the judge 'do[ing] such Sinne, and with so foule a Chuffe' (LXIX, 5); the second part of the line is original with the translator, and again acts as an implicit contrast with the attractiveness of Argia's own lover.

Whilst, as far as the 'First Tale' was concerned, it was impossible to determine, with any certainty, that Tofte knew Harington's translation of only one year before, with the second translation the similarities between the two versions are more visible, which seems to prove a certain degree of familiarity on Tofte's part with the other work. Argia's description, in Tofte, as 'so wittie and so faire' (II, 8) recalls Harington's 'too fairie, and wittie' (LXVIII, 8), for Ariosto's 'troppo accorta e troppo bella' (LXXIII, 8); both Harington and Tofte choose the term 'clown' (LXXIII, 2 and VII, 1 respectively) to indicate the 'villan' (LXXVIII, 1) tormenting the snake Manto in a bush. Soon after, the two English poets share a virtually identical line, in their rendition of Ariosto's rather general

[Adonio] é forza al fin che torni alla bellezza
 Che son di riveder sí gli occhi vaghi.
 Barbuto, afflito, ed assai male in arnese,
 lá donde era venuto, il camin prese.

[Finally he was constrained to return to the beauty upon whom he so longed to set eyes once
 more. Bearded, woe-begone, his clothes in rags, he set out on his return journey]

(LXXXI, 5-8)

Harington fills his penultimate line with detailed adjective-noun pairs which seem to have inspired Tofte:

But that great love he to his mistris bore,
 Him forc'd, though now all out of fashion growth,
 With bushie beard, lean cheeks, and ragged clothes,
 To turne into the place that most he lothes.

(LXXV, 5-8)

And him doth force againe to his louing Wench,
 To turne, his eyes on beauty hers to feede:
 With bushie beard, sicke cheere, and ragged weede,
 His way from whence he came he takes with speede.

(X, 5-8)

Tofte also uses Harington's verb 'to turne', although he modifies the concept: while Harington's Adonio (re)turns to a place he loathes, Tofte's character turns 'his eyes on beauty hers to feed', an image inspired by Ariosto's comment on the beauty of Argia's eyes, but overall original. The two translators share other identical terminological choices; for instance, both their Adonios are described as 'pale and wan' (LXXXIX, 1; XXIV, 1) for Ariosto's more elaborate 'misero e tapino, / [...] pallido e barbuto' (XCV, 1-2), and both have their Mantos transform Adonio into, according to Tofte, 'a pouer Pelegrine, / (...) which begs from doore to doore' (XXXV, 1-2), and, in

Harington, 'a Pilgrim poore' who 'doth for Gods sake beg from doore to doore' (C, 1; 3); Ariosto has '[m]esse in abito lui di pellegrino / il qual per Dio di porta in porta accatti' (CVI, 1-2). Perhaps the most striking resemblance can be found towards the end of the tale, when Argia suggests that both she and her husband should forget each other's infidelities: while Ariosto's character's speech is void of metaphors, Harington's concluding image

I pardon thee, and thou shalt me forgive,
And quite each other, all old debts and driblets,
And set the hares head against the goose gyblets.

(CXXXVI, 6-8)

is maintained by Tofte,

Yet will I not to thee be so vnkinde,
Nor aught Revenge, but this, seeke for my part,
Set the Goosegiblets, gainst the Hare his foote,
Forgiue me, as I thee, from hearty roote.

(LXXI, 5-8)

The rarity of the metaphor chosen by the two poets seems to indicate that this curious parallel is not coincidental. Although, by the time Harington's translation appeared in print, Tofte was already in Italy (Williams 1937: 287), it is possible that the sonneteer had a copy of the English *Furioso* sent to him, or that a copy was brought to him from his native country by a compatriot. Such a suggestion would, of course, imply that Harington's poem not only enjoyed immediate popularity, but also that its publication was highly anticipated, so much that it spurred other poets to almost immediate attempts aimed at emulating, or ameliorating, the first rendition of the poem.

As in his other translations, Tofte concludes his 'Second Tale' with an entirely original epilogue, here followed by an envoy. The former, briefly summarising the conclusion of the story (Argia's forgiveness of her husband, and request of being forgiven by him), concludes with a rather explicit final couplet:

THUS by the wisdom of this Louely Wife,
All former faults (soone) quite forgotten be,
I doubt me (nowadayes) few such are rife,
Which would vnto the same so willing gree,
And chiefly when their Husbands sinne in life
Against sweete BEVTIES HEIRES so monstrously,
But maruell none, the Doctors Hornes were blinde,
Where he should go before, he went behinde.

(LXXIII)

In a similar fashion to the epilogue to the 'First Tale', the translator seems to forget Argia's own adultery, concentrating solely on her husband's 'monstrous sin' and praising the woman's rare benevolence in forgiving him. Tofte's praise of Argia is inspired by Ariosto's own praise of the woman through Rinaldo:

Rinaldo Argia molto lodó, ch'avviso
ebbe d'alzare a quello augello un gioco
ch'alla medesima rete fe' cascallo,
in che cadde ella, ma con minor fallo.

[He greatly praised Argia, who had the wit to snare her bird in the same trap into which she herself had fallen, (but with minor guilt)]

(CXLIV, 5-8)

The passage, which is outside Tofte's translation, does include a mention of the woman's adultery, but stresses that her fault is minor ('con minor fallo'); Harington, who translates the octave, renders the final lines faithfully, but decides to shift the praise from Argia to Manto:

But much [Rinaldo] did *Argias* wit commend,
Or at the least, the wit of her that taught her,
To make the Iudge into that net fall in,
In which her selfe was false with far lesse sin.

(CXXXVIII, 5-8)

Harington's choice to commend Manto rather than Argia is not entirely correct, as in the original readers are never told whether the revenge plan was Manto's invention, or a scheme devised by Argia and simply effected through Manto's supernatural powers.

Finally, Tofte adds a concluding envoy addressed to his own Lady:

AND you (faire Ladie) who haue heard this Tale,
Vouchsafe to thinke I am that Louing Knight,
The Iudge your Husband, though he did not faile
As th'other did, yet failes his Vow once plight,
Not Goodes for you, but Life Ile spend and All,
To ioy once more the fauour of your Sight,
I cannot giue a Golden Dogge as he,
And yet (perhaps) what shall more pleasing be.

(LXXIV)

The final stanza can be considered almost as an allegorical interpretation of the tale: one in which the allegory, however, in perfect accordance with Tofte's style and Ariosto's spirit, is not moralistic, but once again erotic, and whose effect on the readers is almost the creation of one of those Ariostean 'smiles' which Tofte seems to have fully understood, and truly made his own.

Spenser's Ariosto

Spenser's borrowings from Ariosto have been the subject of much critical attention; lists of imitations have been compiled, almost all Spenserian critics recognise the evidence and the importance of his borrowings from the *Furioso*, and yet, new criticism always appears to find something novel to say on the subject⁷³. This section will comparatively analyse Spenser's and Ariosto's heroines, with the aim of highlighting Spenser's imitative process. It has generally been accepted that, rather than the quantity, it is the quality of these imitations which is fascinating: as Paul Alpers has noted,

If we start with a single episode in *The Faerie Queene* and seek out its Ariostan sources, we will often get the impression that Spenser's use of Ariosto is capricious and superficial. On the other hand, if we start with an episode in the *Orlando Furioso* and ask what it produces, influences, or suggests in *The Faerie Queene*, we will get a truer sense of Spenser's familiarity with Ariosto's poem and the ease with which he could draw on it for his own [...]. As many Renaissance writers said, imitation is digestion and absorption, not passive copying. When a major poet is profoundly influenced by another major poet, he undoubtedly puts his own stamp on what he borrows [...]. [T]he poet's use of his predecessor involves an unmistakable transmutation, emphasis of some qualities at the expense of others. But at the same time the borrowings of poets like these characteristically reveal a full and intelligent awareness of the poet imitated.

(Alpers 1967: 197-198)

It is true that, throughout *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser shows his deep knowledge of Ariosto, a knowledge that seems comparable, for example, to Dante's familiarity with Virgil. And, like Dante, Spenser seems to display two well-defined kinds of acquaintance with Ariosto's poem: sometimes he appears to know the poem so perfectly as to be able to reproduce with great fidelity the passages he needs, sometimes literally translating them; this is especially the case with his numerous terminological borrowings, and it might be supposed that the English poet had a copy of the *Furioso* by his side when writing. The second kind of knowledge is his ability to 'digest' Ariosto in the sense used by Alpers: Spenser seems to know the outline of the Italian poem and the development of its episodes in an extraordinarily intimate fashion, and he is thus able to interpret, modify, intertwine and elaborate on episodes, characters, passages as he feels appropriate for what and whom he is writing. It is also

⁷³ Among (many) others, see Alpers 1967, Benson 1992, Brand 1973, Burrow 1993, Fox 1997, Cairncross 1976, Murrin 1980, Praz 1958, Rhu 1993, Wiggins 1988 and 1991.

true that Spenser's clear view of what his own poem meant led him to sacrifice certain aspects of the Italian original: sacrifices of tone, exemplified by the omission of the delightful irony which pervades Ariosto's poem and which is much rarer in the English poem, and sacrifices of plot, as exemplified by the story of Phaon and Claribell, in which the original Italian source is so spoiled of ornaments, so rarified and abstracted, so bare for those who have in mind Ariosto's complex tale, as to recall a tree which, by the time winter comes, has lost all of its fruitful spring-time products.

It is in the third book of *The Faerie Queene* that imitations and similarities become especially evident, and most of these centre around the protagonist of the book, Britomart. The parallels with the Italian poem are often so striking that, as Neil Dodge has commented,

To those who read the *Faery Queen* with Ariosto in mind the opening cantos of Book III are almost startling. At the very outset Britomart appears on the scene, and we at once recognise her for a copy of Bradamante.

(Dodge 1897: 190)

Indeed, Dodge talks of a 'change of world' (Dodge 1897: 194) and believes that, in the third book, the influence of Ariosto on Spenser was so strong that the very method of composition of the latter changed, for the organised, concentrated plots of the initial two books are replaced by

[I]ndependent knights and ladies, whose paths cross and recross, who come and go much as fate drives them, without definite goal, all dominated by Britomart, but not controlled by her. This is manifestly the world of the *Furioso* [...]. That [Spenser's] poem should begin in a world peculiarly his own, and then, as if irresistibly, drift into the world of the *Furioso* is perhaps not without significance.

(*ibid.*, 193; 195)

It is precisely the anomalous quality of Book III that has led other critics to posit elements of Book III as the earliest of *The Faerie Queene*, with Josephine Bennett suggesting that Spenser 'began to write with Ariosto in mind' (Bennett 1960: 234), and that he went through 'two periods of Ariosto imitation, separated by a period of concentration on the moral virtues' (*ibid.*: 103), the first of which forms the beginning of the composition of the English epic and includes tales that ended up in Book III, such as the 'tale of the Squire of Dames, the seduction of Hellenore, and the exploits of Braggadocchio' (*ibid.*: 248)⁷⁴.

⁷⁴ Also see Brand 1965: 230-231; Burrow 1993: 121.

Chronological suggestions aside, Dodge's reminder that the parallels between Spenser and Ariosto start immediately is irrefutable. In the first canto of Spenser's Book III, the appearance of an enchanted spear, which makes Britomart naturally invincible, is inspired by the *Orlando Furioso*, where, starting from the twenty-third canto onwards – when Bradamante is loaned a similarly magical weapon by the English knight Astolfo – the heroine exploits the virtues of the spear whilst being entirely unaware of them throughout the narrative. On the road to Paris, equipped with Astolfo's horse Rabicano and with the spear, she encounters the three kings of Sweden, Norway and Gotland and defeats them easily, thus gaining access to the Rocca di Tristano, a peculiar castle which provides the model for Castle Joyous (the name of which could have been inspired by Boiardo's Palazzo Zoioso, I, VIII) in the continuation of the narrative in Spenser. It is interesting to note that, in this instance, Spenser not only borrows certain elements, such as the spear and the castle episode, from the *Furioso*, but also maintains the same chronological order of those as in the Italian poem; however, differences are substantial and significant. In the first place, in Ariosto the appearance of the enchanted spear is intrinsically connected with Bradamante's unawareness of its virtue, which renders all the passages involved sources of great comicality. Ariosto treats the spear as a disposable, temporary aid that Bradamante receives – the heroine, being endowed with extraordinary courage and prowess, is virtually undefeatable on her own, without the help of enchanted weapons. In Spenser, the spear appears together with Britomart's first appearance, thus leading to the implication that the heroine's worth as a warrior is heavily dependent on the magic qualities of the spear, rather than on her own ability. Spenser will reveal the provenance of the spear later on, when, in canto III, Britomart is enlightened by Merlin about her marriage and her progeny. The terms in which the magical qualities of the two weapons are presented are highly similar:

For neuer wight so fast in sell could sit
But him perforce vnto the ground it bore

(III, LX, 6-7)

[Q]uella lancia d'or, ch'al primo tratto
quanti ne tocca de la sella caccia

[His golden lance, which has only to touch a person to tip him from the saddle]

(VIII, xvii, 5-6)

[L]a lancia che di quanti ne percuote
fa le selle restar subito vòte

Obviously, Spenser shares with Ariosto not only the concept of the omnipotent spear, but also the description of its characteristics, which, for both poets, is centred around the inability of the enemies to remain in the saddle; particularly significant is Spenser's choice of the English noun 'sell' for 'saddle', which clearly recalls, phonetically and graphically, the Italian 'sella', and the use of which, here, is almost unique: the *OED* records it as the second-earliest⁷⁵.

Similarities can also be found in the laws that rule the Rocca di Tristano and Castle Joyous, the explanation of which begins in stanza XXVI. Spenser shares with Ariosto the idea that there is a competition to enter the castle: in the *Furioso* the entrance is reserved exclusively to the most beautiful woman and the most valorous knight (a rule which will give Bradamante the chance to have one of the most beautiful and proto-feminist episodes in the poem, when she proclaims the unjust character of the rule and declares that, for that night, her status as a woman must be considered secondary to her status as a knight), whereas Spenser creates, as a condition of entry, the defeat of Malecasta's six knights and the consequent 'prize' of being honoured with Malecasta's love, which also obviously means the rejection of the winning knight's original lady. This detail may also be inspired by Ariosto, who intertwines the rule of the Rocca with the Queen of Iceland's own quest for a husband and love: she proclaims that she will concede her love to whoever can defeat in battle one of the three Scandinavian kings who are accompanying her (LIII).

Once Britomart has entered the Castle, one of the first adventures to occur to her is a rewriting of the Bradamante and Fiordispina episode in canto XXV of the *Furioso*, a tale that Boiardo had started in his *Orlando Innamorato* and left unfinished, and which Ariosto reprises as a narrative within the narrative (it is not action, but a story reported by Ricciardetto, Bradamante's twin brother). However, in Spenser the woman falling in love with the female warrior because she has failed to recognise her sex is not a reproduction of the gentle Fiordispina but Malecasta, a figure denoted by negative characteristics (as even her name suggests), and who is not in love with Britomart, but rather *in lust* with her, as made clear by Spenser:

⁷⁵ See Chapter Two, p. 105, for Fairfax's use of the rare term.

She seemd a woman of great bountihed,
 And of rare beautie, sauing that askaunce
 Her wanton eyes, ill signed of womanhed,
 Did roll too highly, and too often glaunce,
 Without regard of grace.

(I, XLI, 5-9)

For this was not to loue, but lust inclined.

(I, XLIX, 7)

It is especially interesting that Malecasta's desire is kindled when Britomart raises her helmet in court, thus revealing her beautiful face. The simile used by Spenser recalls one of two similes used by Ariosto to describe the awe of the courtiers when Bradamante disarms at the Rocca:

Come suol fuor de la nube il sole
 Scoprir la faccia limpida e serena:
 cosi, l'elmo levandosi dal viso,
 mostrò la donna aprisse il paradiso.

[When the Sun shows his face, clear and serene, through the clouds: so the damsel, lifting the helmet from her face showed as it were a glimpse of paradise]

(XXXII, LXXX, 4-8)

Spenser, comparing Britomart to the moon, writes that

As when fayre *Cynthia*, in darkesome night,
 Is in a noyous cloud enueloped,
 Where she may finde the substance thin and light,
 Breakes forth her siluer beames, and her bright hed
 Discouers to the world discomfited;
 [...]
 Such was the beautie and the shining ray,
 With which fayre *Britomart* gaue light vnto the day.

(I, XLIII, 1-5, 8-9)

Notwithstanding the opposite settings (nocturnal and diurnal) and the choice of two different celestial bodies, sun for Ariosto and moon for Spenser (a decision spurred by the triple connection between Britomart personifying chastity, Diana/Cynthia/the moon as that virtue's main literary embodiments, and Queen Elizabeth), the similes are virtually the same. In another part of Spenser's third book, however, the same simile reappears, and this time the comparison is between Britomart and the sun: when the heroine raises her helmet, her golden locks are

[L]ike sunny beames,
 That in a cloud their light did long time stay,
 Their vapour vaded, shewe their golden gleames,
 And through the persant aire shoote forth their azure streames.

As on the two previous occasions, also in this case the heroine's revelation of her sex gives rise to a sudden awe amongst the spectators, here the inhabitants of Malbecco's castle.

The development of the Britomart-Malecasta story also portrays a very different kind of desire than that present in the original tale, although in both instances sexual desire plays an important part in the two lovers' minds. Fiordispina is victim of a strong longing for Bradamante, originated by the warrior's exceptional beauty, and reveals her feelings to the woman in a secluded corner of the forest:

Con gli occhi ardenti e coi sospir di fuoco
le mostra l'alma di disio consunta.
Or si scolora in viso, or si raccende;
tanto s'arrischia, ch'un bacio ne prende.

[With burning looks and fiery sighs she showed how consumed she was with desire. She paled and blushed and, summoning her courage, gave her a kiss]

(XXV, XXIX, 5-8)

The terms from the semantic field of 'fire' are used on more than one occasion by Ariosto in this episode, as shown by the even more direct

Per questo non si smorza una scintilla
del fuoco de la donna innamorata.

[These revelations did not abate love-struck Fiordispina's passion one jot]

(XXV, XXXII, 5-6)

Spenser shares with the Italian poet the repeated use of the same semantic field:

Her fickle hart conceiued hasty fyre,
Like sparkes of fire, that fall in sclender flex,
That shortly brent into extreme desyre.

(I, XLVII, 6-8)

And all attonce discovered her desire
With sighes, and sobs, and plaints, and piteous grieffe
The outwards sparkes of her inburning fire.

(I, LIII, 1-3)

The terms used by Ariosto are rather strong, as are the actions he describes: lines such as 'l'alma di disio consunta' are extremely powerful, and so is that incredibly brave kiss that surprises Bradamante and forces her to reveal her sex. However, notwithstanding the strength of the terms, there is neither condemnation on the part of

Ariosto nor moral judgement, and actually the impression that the lines give is that of clear joy and delight in reporting a 'true' story so beautiful as to make its narrator exclaim 'non credo che fabula si conte, / che più di questa istoria bella fosse' ('I don't believe there can be a story more beautiful than this one', XXVII, 5-6). Indeed, although it is unquestionable that Fiordispina is moved by physical desire, she is presented in a way that would make Spenser categorise her as chaste, as her love for Bradamante seems sincere and long lasting, and her spirit totally faithful.

Conversely, sexuality seems to be the exclusive component of Malecasta's love, and her intentions are consistently presented in a negative light, as shown by the choice of adjectives that Spenser makes – for instance, the categorisation of Malecasta's heart as 'fickle', an adjective that could never be applied to Fiordispina. In both poets, the two unsatisfied lovers suffer a restless sleep, described in very similar terms: while Bradamante is quietly sleeping, Fiordispina 'piange e geme / che sempre il suo disir sia più focoso' ('wept and moaned, her desire ever mounting', XXV, XLII, 3-4), just like Malecasta's 'engrieued spright / Could find no rest in such perplexed plight' (I, LIX, 4-5), while Britomart, conversely, enjoys a peaceful sleep.

Britomart and Bradamante, for their part, show greater similarities than their respective lovers when they are compared: strikingly similar is their response to the declaration of love on the part of Fiordispina and Malecasta, which reproduces, in both cases, the traditional reaction of the 'courteous' (male) knight: Ariosto has Bradamante pondering to herself

«Gli è meglio (dicea seco) s'io rifiuto
questa avuta di me credenza stolta
e s'io mi mostro femina gentile,
che lasciar riputarmi un uomo vile»

["My best course is to undeceive her", she decided, "and to reveal myself as a gentle woman rather than to have myself reckoned an ignoble man"]

(XXV, XXX, 5-8)

Similarly, Spenser's Britomart

[W]ould not in discourteise wise,
Scorne the faire offer of good will profest;
For great rebuke it is, loue to despise,
Or rudely sdeigne a gentle harts request.

(I, LV, 1-4)

However, Britomart, whilst maintaining a courteous, knightly behaviour, also realises that Malecasta's love cannot be sincere, wisely considers it as 'too light' (LV, 7), and chooses not to reveal her sex yet. The affair has a bloody conclusion, with the heroine wounded by one of Malecasta's six knights/suitors and, obviously, with no consummation of love. It is worth noting that, in Ariosto, Fiordispina's representation as a positive figure throughout the episode dismisses the notion that the proto-lesbian overtones of the story could be interpreted, to borrow a comment that Helen Hackett reserves for an almost identical scene in Sir Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1593), as the poet 'offering his male readers the titillation of voyeurism upon lesbianism' (Hackett 2000: 121); in fact, the episode actually becomes more dramatic – and with a higher level of pathos – when Ariosto's deep psychological insight into Fiordispina's character is considered, as her desperation for her truly unattainable desire is genuine and painful, and greatly surpasses the simple frustration for her own inability to bed Bradamante. As Paul J. Alpers notes, proof that Ariosto views the young woman's love as non-negative is given by the fact that he presents her unfortunate circumstances 'as if they were part of the oscillations of hope and despair that occur in any of love's victims' (Alpers 1967: 185). Further confirmation of Ariosto's tolerant smile regarding this episode is that the tale does have a positive outcome and Fiordispina's desire is finally granted and satisfied in the shape of Ricciardetto, Bradamante's twin brother who takes advantage of his resemblance to his sister in a slightly dishonest – but again, presented by Ariosto as irreverent and clever, rather than sinful and immoral – way.

Indeed, the most pathetic of Fiordispina's laments is re-utilised by Spenser not in the Malecasta episode, but in the conversation between the old nurse Glauce and Britomart when the latter is lamenting her love for Artégall. As shown by Alpers, the two conversations share the same examples and are complementary (Alpers 1967: 181-182): Britomart's nurse comforts her saying that

Not so th'*Arabian Myrrhe* did sett her mynd,
Nor so did *Byblis* spend her pining hart,
But lou'd their natue flesh against al kynd,
And to their purpose used more wicked art:
Yet playd *Pasiphaë* a more monstrous part

(II, XLI, 1-5)

while Fiordispina, addressing her complaint to Love, shares two of her examples with Glauce:

La moglie del re Nino ebbe disio,
 il figlio amando, scelerato et empio,
 e Mirra il padre, e la Cretense il toro:
 ma gli è più folle il mio, ch'alcun dei loro.

[King Nino's wife was evil and profane in her love for her son; so was Mirra, in love with her father, and Pasiphae with the bull. But my love is greater folly than any of theirs]

(XXV, XXXVI, 5-8)

In addition, Britomart replies to her nurse's consolation saying that

[T]hough my loue be not so lewdly bent,
 As those ye blame, yet may it nough appease
 My raging smart, ne ought my flame relent,
 But rather doth my helplesse grieve augment.
 For they, how euer shamefull and unkinde,
 Yet did possesse their horrible intent:
 [...]

But wicked fortune mine, though minde be good,
 Can haue no end, nor hope of my desire
 But feed on shadowes, whiles I die for food

(II, XLIII, 2-7; XLIV, 1-3)

Fiordispina expresses her complaint in very similar terms:

D'ogn'altro amore, o scelerato o santo,
 il desiato fine sperar potrei;
 saprei partir la rosa da le spine:
 solo il mio desiderio è senza fine!

[Were it a question of any other love, evil or virtuous, I could hope to see it consummated, and I should know how to cull the rose from the briar. My desire alone can have no fulfilment]

(XXV, XXXIV, 4-8)

As Alpers notes, Spenser's use of Fiordispina's lament within Britomart's speech serves to indicate that the English poet did not consider the former character a negative figure (like his own Malecasta), and 'could not have thought of Fiordispina as a character who stands for *impudicitia* or any other vice' (Alpers 1967: 183), which in turn purports Spenser's correct reading of Ariosto's episode. Indeed, Wiggins' opposite stance that Spenser's moralisation implies a conscious repudiation of the Italian passage, through his 'transform[ation of] a mere lascivious tale, an Italian toy, into a moral lesson of transcendent import' (Wiggins 1988: 83), may be valid only while the Malecasta episode is concerned, but becomes unjustified and loses strength when the re-working of Fiordispina's lament within Britomart's speech to Glauce is considered.

Another passage with strong parallels with the Italian poem is Britomart's third-canto visit to Merlin's cave, inspired by the equivalent episode of the description of Bradamante's progeny on the part of the sorceress Melissa, in the corresponding canto of the *Furioso*. It is thus interesting to note the reactions of the two heroines, given the similarity of the situation. Britomart blushes heavily as soon as she first hears her name (XX), a detail borrowed from Ariosto whose Bradamante is slightly embarrassed at the discovery that Merlin has anticipated her arrival, and talked about her, to Melissa. However, Spenser's heroine displays a greater degree of embarrassment and shyness, and the erotic simile that the English poet chooses for her (equalling Britomart to Aurora blushing after a night spent in Tithonus' bed) almost seems inappropriate, as there is no other reference to eroticism in the passage (and even Britomart's love for Artegall is classified as destiny's will, rather than her own infatuation). Bradamante, conversely, merely lowers her eyebrows, in a traditional display of humbleness, before proceeding to wonder what her worth is, to have prophets foreseeing her future (XIII). Merlin, in both cases, reveals how the warriors' progenies derive from blood of Troy:

[F]rom thy wombe a famous Progenee
 Shall spring, out of the auncient Troian blood
 Which shall reuiue the sleeping memoree
 Of those same antique Peres
 [...]

Renowmed kings, and sacred Emperours,
 Thy fruitfull Ofspring, shall from thee descend;
 Braue Captaines, and most mighty warriours
 That shall their conquests through all lands extend,
 And their decayed kingdomes shall amend

(III, XXII, 5-8; XXIII, 1-5)

L'antiquo sangue che venne da Troia,
 per li duo miglior rivi in te commisto,
 produrrà l'ornamento, il fior, la gioia
 d'ogni lignaggio ch'abbia il sol mai visto
 [...]
 Ne la progenie tua con sommi onori
 Saran marchesi, duci e imperatori.

I capitan e i cavallier robusti
 Quindi usciràn, che col ferro e col senno
 Ricuperar tutti gli onor vetusti
 De l'arme invitte alla sua Italia denno

[The blood deriving from ancient Troy, in its two most perfect streams, is to be blended in you to produce the ornament, the flower, the jewel of all dynasties that the sun has ever seen (...). Marquises, dukes and emperors will be in high honour among your posterity. From you shall

spring the captains and dauntless knights who, by their sword and wits, are to reclaim for Italy
all the former honours of unvanquished arms]

(III, XVII, 1-4, 7-8; XVIII, 1-4)

The two prophecies follow a similar pattern: after the declaration of the origin (incidentally, from the same blood), the two Merlins list the descendants in order of rank, starting from crowned rulers (kings and emperors) and proceeding to captains and knights; finally, the descendants are deemed able to restore their respective countries to their original grandeur. Some terminological similarities are notable: in particular, the definition of the Trojan blood as 'auncient'/'antiquo' and the use of the word 'progenie'/'progenie'; but also the adjective added to 'warriors'/'cavallier' and the use of the verb 'reuiue'/'ricuperar' referred to the old honours (in Ariosto), which semantically equals Spenser's 'sleeping memories'. Immediately after this introduction, both wizards establish that the two women's love for Ruggiero and Artegall is divinely inspired and sought:

The man whom heuens haue ordaynd to bee
The spouse of *Britomart*, is *Arthegall*

(III, XXVI, 1-2)

Acciò dunque il voler del ciel si metta
In effetto per te, che di Ruggiero
T'ha per moglier fin da principio eletta

[To give effect, therefore, to Heaven's will, which has from all time appointed you to be
Ruggiero's wife]

(III, XIX, 1-3)

It is equally clear, in both poems, how the union between the couples is Heavens' decision, with its consequent implications of ineluctability; moreover, both heroines are told of their future, premature widowhood through betrayal:

And his last fate him from thee take away,
Too rathe cut off by practise criminall,
Of secrete foes, that him shall make in mischiefe fall

(III, XVIII, 7-9)

[Veder] vendicato il tradimento e il torto
contra quei che gli avranno il padre morto

[The vengeance he shall wreak upon those who by foul treachery shall slay his father]

(III, XXIV, 7-8)

Merlin in Spenser and Melissa in Ariosto then proceed to illustrate, in a comparable general outline, the progeny of the two heroines in a detailed way. Their reaction during the speeches is equally similar: Bradamante is extremely serious and attentive throughout the exposition, waiting until the end to present the questions that have arisen in her mind whilst the magician was talking. This reaction is shared by Britomart, who waits equally patiently until the end of the speech before raising an elaborated, semi-rhetorical question. As Anna Benedetti notes (Benedetti 1914: 123), both women will have these prophecies re-confirmed in a later canto: the ninth in Spenser, when Paridell and Britomart converse in Malbecco's castle; the thirty-second in Ariosto, during Bradamante's admiration of the paintings in the Rocca di Tristano.

The two heroines share similar reactions also in an opposite situation, a moment of weakness: at the beginning of the fourth canto, Britomart's convincing herself of Artegall's virtues recalls Bradamante's similar self-persuasion that Ruggiero loves her, when she suspected his betrayal with the warrior Marfisa. Although there is no evident terminological or syntactical borrowing, there is a similarity in the general plot, as well as in the idea of presenting the book's major female protagonists in a moment full of pathos and away from the battlefields. In Ariosto, from stanza XI of canto XXXII onwards, begins Bradamante's agitated anxiety, which carries the heroine from love to hate, from hope to despair in a whirlwind of extremes, which have, however, her elaborate mental indulgencies as their common trait; in Spenser, Britomart engages in 'a thousand thoughts [which] she fashioned in her mind' (V, 6) and sews dreamy threads around her image of Artegall, enriching it and playing with the picture of him that she saw in the magical glass. Interestingly, the two heroines seem to treasure the very same values in the knights they love: in Ariosto, Bradamante releases her despair and asks rhetorically

Perché, Ruggier, come di te non vive
cavallier di più ardir, di più bellezza,
né che a gran prezzo al tuo valore arrive,
né a' tuoi costumi, né a tua gentilezza;
perché non fai che fra tue illustri e dive
virtù, si dica ancor ch'abbi fermezza?

[As there lives no knight who is more dashing or more handsome than you, Ruggiero, none who is a patch on your valour, your breeding, or your nobility, why could you not have constancy ascribed to you along with your eminent, godlike qualities?]

(XXXII, xxxviii, 1-6)

Spenser, on the other hand, has Britomart dream of

Him such, as fittest she for loue could find,
Wise, warlike, personable, courteous, and kind.

(IV, v, 8-9)

With the exception of 'wise' (which, however, is implied in Bradamante's words as the one quality that Ruggiero lacks, and which, in reality, he possesses, as the readers aware of the untruthfulness of the heroine's suspicions know very well), all the other virtues in Spenser seem borrowed from the Ariostean text.

Britomart's eleventh-canto discovery of the knight Scudamour by a fountain is inspired by Bradamante's finding of the evil Pinabello in the second canto of the *Furioso*⁷⁶. In Ariosto, the heroine is impressed by the sight of the thoughtful, lonely and melancholic knight in what is described as a typical *locus amoenus*, and is spurred by her innate curiosity to ask him the reasons of his sadness. Spenser describes the discovery of Scudamour in analogous terms, and reproduces the geography of Ariosto's *locus amoenus* very faithfully:

Quivi, come i begli occhi prima torse,
d'un cavallier la giovane s'accorse,

d'un cavallier, ch'all'ombra d'un boschetto,
nel margin verde e bianco e rosso e giallo
sedeo pensoso, tacito e soletto
sopra quel chiaro e liquido cristallo.
Lo scudo non lontan pende e l'elmetto
Dal faggio, ove legato era il cavallo;
et avea gli occhi molli e'l viso basso,
e si mostrava addolorato e lasso.

[Here, turning her eyes, the lady noticed the presence of a knight, a knight who was sitting silent, pensive and alone in the shade of a thicket, on the bank – all green and yellow, white, and red – overlooking the limpid crystal spring. His shield hung close by, and his helmet, from a beech-tree to which his horse was tethered; his eyes were downcast and tear-softened, and he looked weary and sorrowing]

(II, XXXIV, 7-8; XXXV)

[Britomart] at last came to a fountaine sheare,
By which there lay a knight all wallowed
Upon the grassy ground, and by him neare
His haberieon, his helmet and his speare;
A little off his shield was rudely throwne
On which the winged boy in colours cleare
Depeinct was, full easie to be knowne.

His face vpon the grownd did groueling ly,
As if he had beene slombring in the shade

(XI, VII, 2-8; VIII, 1-2)

⁷⁶ Harold Blanchard considers a few details inspired by Boiardo (Book I, XVII, XVII-XXII), rather than Ariosto (Blanchard 1925: 843).

With the exception of the horse and of some stylistic features (such as Ariosto's vibrant explosion of colours in the description of the wood – 'nel margin verde e bianco e rosso e giallo' –, which could have, however, inspired the Spenserian detail of the colourfully painted shield that Scudamour owns), almost all of Ariosto's information is reproduced in the English poet's verses. The general outline of the story is similar, as the reason for Scudamour's sadness is his inability to free Amoret from Busirane's castle, and the cause that Pinabello gives for his desperation is that his lover has been kidnapped and is now kept prisoner in a castle; both heroines will then go on to free the captives.

Britomart is not, however, the only heroine to have been inspired by one of the characters depicted by Ariosto: in canto VIII, the description of Florimell almost raped by the old Fisherman resembles the Ariostean episode of the near-rape of Angelica on the part of the old hermit in the corresponding canto of the *Furioso*. The terminological similarities between the Italian and the English texts are notable: for instance, the hermit, upon seeing Angelica, feels that

Quella rara bellezza il cor gli accese,
e gli scaldò le frigide medolle

[Such rare beauty inflamed his heart and warmed the chill marrow in his bones]

(VIII, XXXI, 1-2)

just as Spenser's Fisherman first

[F]elt in his old corage new delight

to gin awake, and stir his frosen spright

(VIII, XXIII, 4-5),

and then discovers that

The sight [of Florimell] in his congealed flesh,
Infixt such secrete sting of greedy lust,
That the drie withered stocke it gan refresh,
And kindled heat, that soone in flame forth burst

(VIII, XXV, 1-4)

Although the metonymy used by Ariosto has other illustrious precedents, such as Catullus, Virgil and Petrarch, the similarities between Spenser and the Italian poet are remarkable: in the precedents, for instance, the 'medolle' that Ariosto calls 'frigide', of which the Spenserian 'frosen' and 'congealed' are accurate translations, are

variously described as 'internal' ('interiorem medullam', in Catullus, *Carmina*, XXXV, 15) or 'trembling' ('tremar', in Petrarch's sonnet CXCVIII, 6). It seems thus clear that Spenser created his line inspired by Ariosto's, and not by the antecedent examples. Indeed, other terminological correspondences can be found in the text, although used in different contexts: this is the case, for example, of Spenser's line 'great comfort of her presence he conceiu'd' (XXIII, 3), which reproduces quite faithfully 'come la donna il cominciò a vedere, / prese, non conoscendolo, conforto' (XLVI, 1-2): the kind of 'comfort' desired and Angelica's and the fisherman's hopes are obviously opposite, but the analogy of the lines is nevertheless evident.

The development of the episode follows a similar pattern: just like Angelica, Florimell rejects the Fisherman's advances; however, in Spenser the man resorts to strength whereas in Ariosto he is so weak that he is forced to induce Angelica to sleep with his magic arts to be able to caress her as he pleases, without fear of resistance on her part. The two poets also share a similar equestrian metaphor for the physical impotency of the two old men: while Spenser comments that 'hard is to teach an old horse amble trew' (XXVI, 3), Ariosto plays on a *double entendre* when he says that the donkey on which the hermit is riding is too slow for him, notwithstanding the continuous spurring and pushing of its rider – to be intended literally, because the hermit is following Angelica on a donkey, but also metaphorically, because ultimately the rape is not successful due to the age and impotency of the hermit, despite the repeated attempts. The episodes do show an obvious correlation also in the employment of Proteus, albeit in different roles: in Ariosto, he is the monster who, following the unjust death of his lover, now requires that young and beautiful virgins be eaten by an Orc sent by him, and whose latest victim is Angelica, who will be saved only by the prompt appearance of Ruggiero on the Hippogriff's back; in Spenser, he is the rescuer of Florimell, although he himself later becomes a threat, having fallen in love with the girl.

In the seventh canto, the character of the Squire of Dames is modelled on the protagonists of the infamous Host's tale in canto XXVIII of the *Furioso*: like Giocondo and King Astolfo, the Squire of Dames travels at length in order to find a chaste woman, an effort which proves not viable – although the Squire does find one girl who resists him and manages to preserve her virginity, whereas his Italian counterparts fail memorably. However, the proto-feminist address to women that introduces Giocondo's story is elaborated and re-utilised by Spenser in two other parts

of the book, when, in canto I, in the middle of Malecasta's story, the English poet directs a full stanza to his female readers and when he opens his ninth canto with a similar address:

Faire Ladies, that to loue captiued arre,
And chaste desires doe nourish in your mind,
Let not her [Malecasta's] fault your sweete affections marre,
Ne blott the bounty of all womankind;
'Mongst thousands good one wanton Dame to find:
Amongst the Roses grow some wicked weeds.

(I, XLIX, 1-6)

Redoubted knights, and honorable Dames,
[...]
Right sore I feare, least with vnworthie blames
This odious argument my rymes should shend,
Or ought your goodly patience offend,
Whiles of a wanton Lady I doe write,
Which with her loose incontinence doth blend
The shyning glory of your soueraine light.

But neuer let th' ensample of the bad
Offend the good
[...]
Ne all are shamed by the fault of one.

(IX, I, 1, 3-8; II, 1-2, 5)

The stanzas seem inspired by two different comments that Ariosto makes in canto XXVIII, the first at the beginning, when he begs women to skip the Giocondo story, and the second when a character (probably a more truly Ariostean voice than the one which has narrated the tale itself), having overheard the bawdy tale now finished, bravely defends the female sex declaring that men are equally unfaithful, fickle and culpable:

Donne, e voi che le donne avete in pregio,
per Dio, non date a questa istoria orecchia
[...]
ben che né macchia vi può dar né fregio
lingua sì vile
[...]

Mettendolo Turpino, anch'io l'ho messo,
non per malivolenza né per gara.
Ch'io vi ami, oltre mia lingua che l'ha espresso,
che mai non fu di celebrarvi avara,
n'ho fatto mille prove; e v'ho dimostro
ch'io son, né potrei essere se non vostro.

[Ladies (and ladies' devotees), by all means disregard this tale (...) although a tongue as common as his can neither sully nor embellish your image (...). As Turpin included it, so have I, but in no spirit of malevolence or provocation. That I dote upon you my tongue has

confessed – it has never stinted your praises – and I have proved it, furthermore, in a thousand ways; I have demonstrated to you that I am, and can only be, yours]

(XXVIII, I, 1-2, 5-6; II, 3-8)

[D]i cento potrà dir degne d'onore
verso una trista che biasmar si debbe.
Non biasmar tutte, ma serbarne fuore
la bontà d'infinite si dovrebbe.

[For one to be chided there are a hundred to be honoured. They should not be damned one and all, then, without making an exception for the virtues of infinite women]

(XXVIII, LXXVIII, 3-6)

Although the first Spenserian example is relatively autonomous and, as A.C. Hamilton notes, probably more influenced by Sidney (Hamilton 2001: 298), there are some parallels between Ariosto and the English poet: for instance, Spenser's fifth line is a translation of Ariosto's opening two in the second example; phonically, there is a prominent and unusual similarity between 'bounty of all womankind' and 'bontà d'infinite' (and, even semantically, there is not a great difference); terminologically, 'blott' may have been inspired by 'macchia'. In Spenser's second example, the similarities are greater; whilst stressing again the uniqueness of Hellenore's negative example, he begs forgiveness for inserting in the poem such an episode. This prayer is shared with Ariosto, who, in the first example, spends almost a full stanza justifying the reasons why he has inserted the Giocondo tale and proclaiming, in the splendid last line, his love and partisanship for women. Moreover, Hamilton notes that, although Spenser does not explicitly say so, 'women are expected to skip the story' (Hamilton 2001: 370); Ariosto, on his part, begs not only women but even those who love and care for them to ignore the Giocondo tale and return to the narrative once the story is over.

A further clear parallel is the fifth-canto episode of Belpheobe and Timias, equivalent to that of Angelica and the soldier Medoro, to be found in canto XIX of the *Furioso*. Ariosto introduces Angelica by describing the woman wandering through the forest, invisible thanks to her magic ring, disdainful and proud, denigrating her previous love for Rinaldo and being, thus, punished by Cupid through the encounter with the wounded Medoro. Spenser has Belpheobe busily chasing a wounded prey through the wood; thus, he presents the heroine in a similar way to Ariosto, in that in both cases the women are in a position of superiority, granted to Angelica by the ring that renders her invisible and to Belpheobe by her abilities as a huntress, and are not threatened or pursued by male warriors (as is, normally, the case). However, the

parallels become more notable when the reaction of the two women to the view of the wounded men is analysed, showing in fact an impressive terminological equality.

Ariosto's Angelica

[I]nsolita pietade in mezzo al petto
si senti entrar per disusate porte
che le fe' il duro cor tenero e molle

[An unaccustomed sense of pity stole into her breast by some unused door, softening her hard heart]

(XIX, xx, 5-7)

Spenser's Belpheobe grows

[F]ull of soft passion and unwonted smart:
the point of pity pierced through her tender hart.

(V, xxx, 8-9)

Not only are both hearts made 'tender' (a perfect translation of the Italian 'tenero') by 'pity'/'pietade': Belpheobe becomes 'full of *soft* passion' (emphasis added) too, which again perfectly translates the rare 'molle' in the Italian text. More importantly, the 'smart', the stinging pain that Belpheobe suddenly feels, is classified as 'unwonted', just like the Italian 'pietade' – the idea of 'pain' is left implicit in the Italian text, but is nevertheless clear as, only a couple of stanzas earlier, Ariosto explained that Cupid was waiting for Angelica, ready to pierce her heart with his arrow – is defined by Ariosto as 'insolita', a concept reinforced soon after when the metaphorical doors to her heart are called 'disusate', because of the normal coldness of the Asian princess. The terminological similarities are both unusual and imposing and are substantial enough to suggest that Spenser wrote the episode with the exact Ariostean words engraved on his mind, if not with the very text by his side.

The *déroulement* of the episode shows other analogies: among the various curative herbs that the two girls know, in both cases the 'panachæa' occupies a prominent position; even if this herb could have been inspired by the *Aeneid*, the two descriptions of the preparation of the potion bear striking resemblances (including terminological ones) with each other, as both poets devote a full stanza to a very detailed, almost cinematographic visualisation of the procedure used by the women to prepare the medicine. Ariosto writes that Angelica

Pestò con sassi l'erba, indi la prese,
e succo ne cavò fra le man bianche;
ne la piaga n'infuse, e ne distese

e pel petto e pel ventre e fin a l'anche:
e fu di tal virtù questo liquore,
che stagnò il sangue, e gli tornò il vigore.

[Crushed the herb with a stone and took it between her white hands and pressed out the juice from it; this she applied to the wound, and spread it also on his chest and belly, down to his hips. Such was the virtue of this juice that the blood was staunched and his vigour returned]
(XIX, XXIV, 3-8)

Spenser similarly writes:

The soueraine weede betwixt two marbles plaine
Shée pownded small, and did in peeces bruze,
And then atweene her lilly handes twaine,
Into his wound the iuice thereof did scruze,
And round about as she could well it vze,
The flesh therewith shée suppld and did steepe,
T'abate all spasme, and soke the swelling bruze.

(V, XXXIII, 1-7)

The description follows the same chronological order; the herbs are prepared in an identical way, with stones ('marbles' and 'sassi'); the hands of the two women are similarly classified as white: 'bianche' in Ariosto, 'lilly' – with metaphor – in Spenser. This particular definition, however, serves opposing purposes in the two poets: in Spenser it hints at the outstanding purity of Belpheobe (who, in fact, will preserve her virginity notwithstanding Timias' love for her); in Ariosto, it both indicates Angelica's royal status (which will render her marriage with a base soldier even more surprising) and it starts a vein of irony in a hitherto dramatic episode (the preceding description of Medoro's terrible wounding, witnessed by his loving friend Cloridano – who, believing Medoro dead, threw himself among the enemies' spears and died next to his friend – was full of pathos), as always happens with the oxymoronic definition of Angelica as pure and virginal. The same implicit irony can be found a few lines later, where Ariosto takes pleasure in highlighting how Angelica's hands spread the dressing on the wound and then progressed lower and lower, around his chest, his stomach and *even* – that 'fin', which hides, underneath the fake surprise, a knowing smile and a benevolent tone of *quod placet, licet* – on his flanks. The description in *The Faerie Queene* is, at first sight, not different, because he too expands Belpheobe's medicine not only on the wound, but 'round about' too; however, there is no malice whatsoever in Spenser, implicit or explicit, as befits a pure maiden like Belpheobe as well as her role as an embodiment of Queen Elizabeth; in fact, the location of the wound is not even mentioned in the English poem. In both

stanzas, finally, the medicine has an extraordinarily rapid effect and the blood is stopped, curing the wound and re-establishing the strength of the men.

From this point onwards, the episode differs greatly in the two poems, as Belpheobe cannot reciprocate Timias' love whereas Angelica loves and desires Medoro, who has, in fact, a rather passive role and merely allows the woman to conduct the courting game. However, a closer inspection reveals further similarities – or rather, adaptations – of the Ariostean text in Spenser's poem: while in Ariosto there is a very strong opposition between the recovering wound in Medoro's body and the growing wound in Angelica's heart, in Spenser this same opposition is present, albeit limited within Timias: it is the conflict between the cured physical wound and the newly born metaphorical one. The terms in which these contrasts are presented are identical: Ariosto's lines

La sua piaga più s'apre e più incrudisce,
quanto più l'altra si restringe e salda.
Il giovine si sana: ella languisce
Di nuova febbre, or agghiacciata, or calda.

[Her wound enlarged and festered in measure as his dwindled and healed. The boy grew better, she languished with a strange fever which made her hot and cold by turns]

(XIX, xxix, 1-4),

which are particularly notable for the strong caesura caused by the semicolon in the middle of the line and for the consequent *enjambement*, devices which both superbly enhance the contrast between the two wounds (physical for Medoro, metaphorical for Angelica), evidently inspired Spenser's

Still as his wound did gather, and grow hole,
So still his hart woxe sore, and health decayd:
Madnesse to saue a part, and lose the whole.

(V, XLIII, 1-3)

The two episodes start to differ in a strikingly complementary manner: Ariosto dedicates two stanzas to a direct address to Orlando, Sacripante, Agricane and the 'mille altri', the thousand other kings, noblemen and honourable knights who, enamoured of Angelica, were proudly disdained by her, and now see themselves overshadowed by a simple, poor soldier; Spenser writes, in stanza XLVII, the opposite, highlighting how foolish Timias' love for Belpheobe is, as he is merely 'a meane Squyre, of meeke and lowly place, / she heuently borne, and of celestiall hew' (3-4).

Not surprisingly, Ariosto's characters will celebrate a wedding, unlike their English counterparts, as Belpheobe, symbolising virginity, cannot yield to physical passion. Indeed, Alistair Fox has indicated, as the foremost reason for Spenser's displacement of Angelica's love from the female to the male protagonist, precisely the 'urgent need to protect Belpheobe (as his type of chaste queen) from unchaste thoughts' (Burrow 1993: 111). The divergence is clearly justified by the two different aims of the poems: if Spenser wanted to represent the Virgin Queen in this character – that side of the Queen which is 'a most vertuous and beautifull Lady' and which the poet admits 'in some places I doe expresse in Belpheobe' (*Letter to Raleigh*, 35-36) – then obviously no marriage could have been contemplated; Ariosto, on the contrary, needed to wed Angelica in order to justify Orlando's madness, which is after all the *raison d'être* of the poem, and his decision to celebrate the marriage between this most beautiful and royal of princesses and a simple soldier is just yet another example of the Ariostean 'smile'.

Just as Fairfax showed, in his translation, a mediating influence from Spenser, the latter poet himself shows George Gascoigne's intermediacy in his imitations from the *Orlando Furioso* in Book III. These influences are especially evident in his replication, at the conclusion of the Malbecco story, of some of the descriptions of Sospetto in Ariosto's second of the *Cinque Canti*⁷⁷. Ariosto narrates, with his usual meta-narrative technique, the tale of a suspicious ruler who, having condemned both himself and his wife to a secluded existence in an impenetrable tower, is killed by the woman, for whom such a shielded life has become unbearable. Once in Hell, however, no torment seems to afflict him, because no torment can compare to that state of constant fear and suspicion that he subjected himself to during his lifetime; he is, then, sent back to Earth, condemned to personify, forever, Suspicion itself. Spenser, after describing Hellenore's escape with Paridell, has the jealous Malbecco wander in search of his wife, whom he eventually finds abandoned by Paridell and

⁷⁷ The *Cinque Canti* are a development of, mainly, two threads of the *Furioso* (the praise of Ruggiero's deeds, and the betrayal of Gano di Maganza), composed by Ariosto around 1518-19 for inclusion in the poem, precisely after the XLV octave of Canto XL. However, Ariosto never brought himself to include the fragment in the *Furioso*, mainly because of the pessimistic tone pervading the cantos, ill suited to that of the rest of the epic; they were only published posthumously, by his son Virginio, as an appendix to the Aldine edition of 1545 (Caretto 1977: vii). The Sospetto passage is part of the account of Gano di Maganza's treachery.

living among satyrs; when she refuses to return to a secluded life with him, he roams randomly until he becomes the embodiment of Jealousy.

A rather careful paraphrase of Ariosto's tale can be found within George Gascoigne's 'The Adventures of Master F.J.', when F.J., uncertain of Dame Elinor's faithfulness, begins to be devoured by jealousy and suspicion; Spenser's description of Malbecco shares certain similarities with Gascoigne's prose passage, some of which cannot be found in Ariosto's original. Although the two caves in which Suspicion and Malbecco find solace are depicted in very similar terms, respectively a 'rock, more than six hundred Cubits right, which hong so suspiciously over the seas' (Gascoigne, 83) and a 'rocky hill, / Ouer the sea, suspended dreadfully' (Spenser, X, LVI, 3-4), both are translations of Ariosto's

Lo scoglio ove 'l Sospetto fa soggiorno
è dal mar alto da seicento braccia,
di rovinose balze cinto intorno,
e da ogni canto di cader minaccia

[The rock where Suspicion dwells is six hundred ells high above the sea, entirely surrounded by lethal cliffs; on every side, it threatens to fall]

(II, XVIII, 1-4)

Conversely, when describing the habits of the long-bearded ruler (who has let his beard grow 'least the barbor might do him a good turne sooner than he looked for it, 82), Gascoigne adds a few explanatory details not present in Ariosto: after describing how well-guarded the tower was, due to the presence of a 'firce mastif' (82; 'un gran mastin' in Ariosto, XI, 7), Ariosto's character simply double-checks that nobody is in the house, not trusting his wife and his other helpers, while Gascoigne's cannot sleep without difficulty: 'betwene fearfull sweate and chyvering cold, with one eye opened & the other closed, he stole somtimes a broken sleepe, devided with many terrible dreames' (82). This detail is shared by Spenser as well, whose Cyclopean Malbecco 'dare neuer sleepe, but that one eye / Still ope he keepes' (LVIII, 6-7).

Gascoigne's prose narrative, which started as a literal paraphrase of the Italian text, slowly becomes freer and enriched with details not present in Ariosto, as exemplified by Suspicion's ingenuous means to prevent oversleeping, invented by Gascoigne:

But to be sure that he shoulde not ouersleepe him selfe, gan stuffe his couch with Porpentine quilles, to the ende that when heauy sleepe ouercame him, and he therby should be constrayned to charge his pallad with more heauie burden, those plumes might then pricke through and so awake him. His garments were steele vpon Iron, and that Iron vppon Iron, and Iron againe, and the more he was armed, the lesse he trusted to be out of daunger.

(84)

This passage well shows Gascoigne's adapting method: while he invents, at times, elaborating freely on the Ariostean text, at other times he provides a faithful, word-by-word prose rendition. This is the case with the final two lines relating Suspicion's dressing: they translate literally Ariosto's 'e ferro sopra ferro e ferro veste: / quanto più s'arma, è tanto men sicuro' ('and he wears iron upon iron upon iron: the more he is armed, the less safe he feels', XX, 3-4). In other words, Gascoigne follows his original, but fills it with details of his own invention whenever he feels there is need for it. Therefore, Charles Prouty's marginal comment that 'Gascoigne's version is a close translation from the Italian' (Prouty 1942: 253) is not entirely accurate⁷⁸.

This chapter has grouped together, for the first time, Spenser's representations of the female characters of the *Furioso*, highlighting, in the process, certain terminological similarities (some of which had been hitherto unnoticed, such as the English poet's rare use of 'sell' for 'saddle' as an echo of the Italian 'sella'), but also utilising Spenser's re-working of Ariosto's women to exemplify the former's imitating process. Spenser's borrowings from Ariosto could, uniquely, be considered *original*, so distant are they from being merely translated; the *Furioso* is, truly, understood and fully digested by the later poet, and Spenser's handling of the Italian

⁷⁸ George Gascoigne, however, was inspired by the main body of the *Furioso* too: he inserted his translation of six stanzas relating Bradamante's jealousy, from canto XXXI, immediately after the completion of the Suspicion tale. Gascoigne's translation is accurate and literal, with slightly more freedom in the last lines of each octave, which tend to have an effective conclusion; in this, it is therefore analogous to Fairfax's version of Tasso. One important exception to this fidelity is the sixth and concluding octave, an original envoy which acts both as a conclusion and as a contextualisation of the description of Bradamante's jealousy in F.J.'s situation:

And me even now, thy gall hath so enfect,
As all the joyes which ever lover found,
And all good haps, that ever Troylus sect,
Atchived yet above the luckles ground:
Can never sweeten one my mouth with mell,
Nor bring my thoughts, againe in rest to dwell.
Of thy mad moodes, and of naught elles I thinke,
In such like seas, fayre Bradamant did sincke.

(85)

Gascoigne's envoy, thus, functions in a manner not too dissimilar from Robert Tofte's own original devices. Similarly, another of Gascoigne's renditions from the main body of the *Furioso* is a semantically faithful, albeit not literal, translation followed by an envoy. In *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, the Elizabethan writer opens his series of poems with 'A translation of Ariosto allegorized' (107), a rendition of Bradamante's XXXIII-canto dream about Ruggiero. The short translation is characterised, stylistically, by repetitions and heavy alliterations; semantically, the translation is faithful, and the only allegory hinted at in the title can be found in the very last line of the poem ('I gather this, / No care can be compared to that, where true love parted is', 107).

epic is so unique probably because it is characterised by the excellence of both these major poets. Anna Benedetti, at the beginning of the century, wrote, somewhat romantically, that

L'Orlando Furioso e la Faerie Queene sono come due visi nei quali le fattezze si annunciano in tutto somiglianti, ma che a un levar di ciglio, a un chiedere intento del nostro occhio indagatore, rispondono con uno sguardo che interamente li tramuta e li separa.

[The *Orlando Furioso* and *The Faerie Queene* are like two faces in which the features are at first glance completely similar, but that, by a mere twitch of the eyebrow, or upon closer inspection, answer back with a look that changes and separates them entirely]

(Benedetti 1914: 105)

The similarities are unquestionable, but what impresses most when reading *The Faerie Queene* is Spenser's ability to pick up the elements he needs and modify them according to his own purposes and desires, which are obviously very different when compared to Ariosto's. Spenser's ability to mould his sources to his serious purpose is pre-eminently visible in his handling of the tale from the *Furioso* that most inspired Elizabethan readers: that of Ariodante and Ginevra.

Variations on the same theme: Ariosto's Cantos IV to VI

Ariosto's story of Ariodante and Ginevra, narrated by the latter's maid Dalinda upon her own rescue on the part of Rinaldo, was the source of many imitations and adaptations, ranging from prose to verse, from translation to vague adaptation. Testament to the tale's immense popularity in the sixteenth century, Prouty counts at least eighteen different versions before Shakespeare used it as the foundation for the plot of *Much Ado About Nothing* (Prouty 1950: 5) in the late 1590s.

Spenser's Phaon and Claribell

Spenser's imitation of the Ariodante and Ginevra story in Book II, canto IV of *The Faerie Queene* has received much critical attention⁷⁹, but its significance in the context of the other translations of the episode requires a few further notes.

⁷⁹ For example, Alpers 1967: 54-69.

Unlike in all the other versions, in Spenser the tale is narrated by the male protagonist, a squire later named as Phaon, for the valid reason that, by the end of the episode, he is the only extant character: his beloved is dead, and the maid has fled. The version is heavily shortened and simplified: without any introductory material, Phaon's friend Philemon reveals the infidelity of Phaon's betrothed, Claribell, for no specific reason if not 'either enuying [Phaon's] toward good, / Or of him selfe to treason ill disposd' (II, IV, 2-3). Ariosto's complex theme of the deception caused by the rival's enamourment and consequent jealousy is here ignored entirely, and, further to hide any direct involvement of the rival, Spenser has a double disguise instead of Ariosto's single one: in *The Faerie Queene*, not only is the maid dressed in her mistress' robes, but Philemon himself is disguised as a 'groome of base degree' (XXIV, 3). Similarly, Claribell's maid, Pryene, is persuaded to wear her mistress' clothes simply because she is told that she will look prettier; there is no mention of Ariosto's much more complex scheme, which saw Polinesso declare that his love for Ginevra would be extinguished upon the occasional possession of Dalinda assuming the *persona* of the princess.

However, in those passages that Spenser does maintain, there seem to be evident, direct Ariostean influences. For instance, in the bedroom scene Ariosto's Ariodante feels 'trapassato il cor d'estrema ambascia' (V, LV, 6), while Spenser's Phaon laments the 'gnawing anguish (...) / infixed in [his] brest' (XXIII, 1-2) when he discovers his beloved's infidelity; again, both lovers cannot precisely distinguish the secret lovers' facial features because of the feeble moonlight in the Italian version, and the 'darkesome shade' (XXVIII, 4) in Spenser; Ariosto's authorial comment '[o]r pensa in che ribrezzo, in che dolor' (L, 5-6) becomes a very similar '[a]h God, what horrore and tormenting grieffe' (XXVIII, 6), with the stress on the same two feelings on the part of the betrayed lover.

It is at this point that the two versions differ and what was suicidal desperation in Ariosto becomes a fierce desire for 'vengeance' (XXIX, 2) in Spenser, so that the innocent Claribell is slain by her own Phaon at the first chance. Even when the terrible mistake is revealed through Pryene's quick confession, Phaon's suicidal thoughts are subordinate to a desire for vengeance, this time directed towards the 'false faytour *Philemon*' (XXX, 6):

Thus heaping crime on crime, and grieffe on grieffe,
To losse of loue adioyning losse of friend,

I meant to purge both with a third mischiefe,
And in my woes beginner it to end.

(IV, xxxi, 1-4)

This is, of course, very far from Ariodante's innocent love, for whom even the discovery of Ginevra's betrayal leads not to homicidal, vengeful thoughts, but simply to solitary desperation first, and then to isolation. Spenser's story ends with Phaon's encounter with Guyon, who has a role more or less similar to that of the hermit in Beverley⁸⁰, albeit, here, more elaborate. Interrupting Phaon's chase of Pryene, which, as Blanchard has shown, shares a plot parallel with Boiardo's episode of Orlando's pursuit of Morgana (Blanchard 1925: 834), the Palmer reveals that it is temperance that will cure his 'fearfully grown affections':

Wrath, gealosie, grieve, loue do thus expell:
Wrath is a fire, and gealosie a weede,
Grieve is a flood, and loue a monster fell;
The fire of sparkes, the weede of little seede,
The flood of drops, the Monster filth did breede:
But sparks, seed, drops, and filth do thus delay;
The sparks soone quench, the springing seed outweed,
The drops dry vp, and filth wipe cleane away:
So shall wrath, gealosy, grieve, loue die and decay.

(IV, xxxv)

Spenser's version is much condensed and constantly concentrated on one purpose, a celebration of temperance; as Alistair Fox notes,

Spenser has fundamentally relocated the meaning of the story away from Ariosto's focus on the injustice of the sexual double standard that men often invoke in their treatment of women, together with the idea that crimes are ultimately impossible to conceal, to a new emphasis on the interior degeneration that is liable to be set in motion by a failure to bridle intemperate emotions.

(Fox 1997: 165)

Ariosto's story is extremely simplified, reduced to its barest essentials, and only one facet of love analysed, that of unbridled passion. All the superfluous elements are erased, in favour of a consistent stress on the negative effects of intemperance, in the shape of excessive passions – whether they be 'wrath, gealosy, grieve', or 'loue'.

Beverley's Ariodanto and Jenevra

Very little is known about Peter Beverley, the first poet to translate any part of an Italian epic poem into English: only one date, that of 1566, when the *Historie of*

⁸⁰ See Chapter Three, p. 228.

Ariodanto and Jenevra was entered in the Stationers' Register, is recorded, and Beverley left no other work, with the exception of a commendatory poem on Geoffrey Fenton's *Tragicall Discourses* (1567). The paucity of information on Beverley is coupled by the scarce critical attention that has been devoted to him; excepting Charles Prouty, his modern editor, only a few critics have concentrated on him beyond the mere mention of his name, and most of this criticism has been unilaterally negative. Mario Praz's comment is exemplary:

Beverley was wise in doing so [never mentioning Ariosto's name in his work], because palming off as Ariosto's the ill-conceived embroideries with which the English poem abounds chiefly in the first part, would have been a lie and an insult.

(Praz 1958: 290)

Although it cannot be denied that Beverley's poem is at times excessively Petrarchist, it is also revealing of contemporary literary fashions, and its 'embroideries' cannot be considered as 'lies' any more than some of Harington's most significant distortions.

Beverley's *Historie of Ariodanto and Jenevra* (1565/1566) is a particularly important version of the tale, as it historically marks the entrance of Ariosto's epic poem into England, being the earliest English translation or adaptation of the *Orlando Furioso*, entered in the Stationers' Register on the 22nd July 1566 and probably composed that year or the year before (Prouty 1950: 67).

Beverley's, however, is not a translation, but rather a lengthy adaptation, reaching almost 3,000 lines (and thus becoming thrice as long as the original, which, with 124 octaves, remained below one thousand lines); it is thus stretched both with the addition of numerous details, not present in the original plot, and with the expansion or the explication of other elements which are briefly mentioned or left implicit in the Italian poem. The structure of the two poems is also different, because in Ariosto the narration begins *in medias res*, with Rinaldo hearing about the cruel Scottish law and deciding to rescue Ginevra (with a further interruption of the chronological order at the end of the narrative, with Ariodante's flashback telling a partial version of the story) while Beverley prefers a strict chronological order, with the brothers' departure from Italy due to Jenevra's fame. Another structural difference is in the narrator, who is the maid Dalinda in the Italian (for all except the final events), but a third-person narrator in the adaptation. Thematically, Beverley's focus is the love story between

Jenevra and Ariodanto, and love in general; as Charles T. Prouty, somewhat ironically, comments,

[T]he lovers become aware of their mutual affection [through a dream]. The dream could have arrived much earlier, but then Beverley would have deprived himself of the opportunity to dilate on such a fine theme as love sickness [...]. Principally [Beverley's] theme is love, and the stereotypes of love behavior are his subjects: but nothing that can be described in alliterative clichés is neglected. Whereas Ariosto canters briskly, Beverley jogs and ambles.

(Prouty 1950: 21)

Ariosto is much more concerned with Dalinda and with the insertion of the proto-feminist invective against the gender-specific double-standards of the law, and, in comparison with Beverley, only touches upon the love between Ariodante and Ginevra. The English author, on the contrary, tries to cover all *exempla* of love, even creating plot situations independently of Ariosto, which then allow him to explore yet more sides of this sentiment. This is exemplified by the two lovers' unawareness of each other's feelings, which permits some hundred verses of complaint (on both sides), fitting beautifully in the unrequited love tradition; or, as Prouty notes, by the secret meetings under the olive-tree and the ring episode, invented, respectively, since 'lovers should have trysts and since what is said on such occasions is worth well recording' and because 'any good love story must include a "suspicion" passage' (Prouty 1950: 22). Yet another example is the topos of the *amor de lohn*, which is left almost implicit in Ariosto but is important and extended in Beverley.

A brief summary of Beverley's plot will show to what extent he adapts and embellishes. The story, as in Ariosto, is set '[am]ongst the vanquisht Regions' (1) of Scotland, where a king has, as his daughter, a paragon of grace, virtue, modesty and beauty called Jenevra. Her fame and name quickly spread across Europe until 'farre of in Italie this ladies name is blown' (25) and reaches two siblings of noble birth, one of whom, Lurcanio, 'speare and shield desird' (29), while the other, Ariodanto, 'more to love aspierd' (30). After selling or converting all their possessions to gold (as Beverley, very practically, explains, 'for cariage light', 36) they tackle the long journey to Scotland until 'the long desired port, and wysshed soyle they finde' (48). Despite his initial fears, the Scottish king decides to welcome them in his palace, so that 'these glad Italians, new courtiers both become' (113). Ariodanto's meeting with the famed lady is delayed for so long that, the night after a royal hunt during which the two brothers show their prowess and the description of which takes up

approximately sixty lines (125-180), he dreams about her, in a passage which best shows Beverley's taste for the redundant:

Ariodant (that longs to see this long desired Dame)
Is also coucht in tumbling bed, where he records her name.
A thousand times, & thus consumes halfe Junos wanny race:
And if he slepe, he dreams strait ways of that most heavenly face.
The Cock crowes forth his dawning note: the day starres shewes in east,
The Nightingale the gladsom tunes sings out with cheerfull brest.
The courtiers rise that use disportes, as pleaseth best their will,
Some Hauks reclayme, some Coursers ride and some do daunce their fill.
Some joye in reading Histories, and some in Musikes art,
Thus time is spent in comly sports, as pleaseth best their hart.

(181-190)

Ariodanto's feelings, which for the first two hundred lines can be classified as stereotypical *amor de lohn*, soon develop into requited, albeit unrevealed, love, when Jenevra becomes enamoured of him in a passage rich in mythological references:

[Jenevra] sayes in her hart this same is he whom I in brest will shrine:
Till sisters three with fatall reele my vitall webbe untwine.
Thus Venus child hath tainted two with his sharpe persing dart:
And yet unknowen to both it is, how eche joyes others hart.

(203-206)

The love, newborn and not yet revealed on either part, is the perfect means for Beverley to explore another traditional situation, that of unrequited love, without contradicting Ariosto's story which presents Ariodante and Ginevra as lovers:

[Ariodante] shunnes the tast of meate,
And to his chamber hies in hast, to coole his scorching heate:
Ther doth he oft record her talke, he sees her smiling cheare,
He sees those colours angellyke, he sees her glistring heare.
He viewes (he thinkes) those Rubie [lippes] that thankt him for his payne,
He feeles (he thinkes) those azurd vaynes that gave him that great gayne:
But when he sees he is deceivd, a thousand sighes departe,
With flouds of teares, and deadly sobbes out from his carefull hart.
And thus begins a long discours of this new tasted fit,
Which as I can I shall declare, thou Pallas guide my wit.

(209-218)

The two final lines do, indeed, represent the beginning of what will be revealed as an extended complaint against love; Beverley, choosing to ignore the reciprocal quality of Ariodanto and Jenevra's feelings, seems to exploit the passage to show his knowledge of the most conventional topoi of the cruelty of love:

[W]hat act hath chaunged thus (oh foole) thy joyfull hart,
That thus thou lothst those pleasant sports, that here in Court are usd,
And seekst a drousie caban couch thy wonted myrth refuse?

[...]

Oh cruell happe and destenie, oh wight unfortunate,
Oh cative vile, unhappe thrise, and borne to cruell fate.
What joy did take thy idell brayne, when thou didst see her face,
Thus to be trapt with heapes of grieve in so short time and space.
Oh Cokadrill of Venus shape why hast thou thus beguild?

(220-222; 231-235)

With the exception of the exotic mention of the crocodile, Ariodanto's torment is very similar to the traditional Petrarchist suffering; Jenevra is subject to similar sorrows, and Beverley describes them equally carefully, if somewhat prolixly, as he himself admits when he introduces the passage on Jenevra's pain with the lines '[m]y pen should rather moisture want to write that I intend: / Then store of cares for to dilate, that would whole volumes spend' (255-256). Jenevra constantly swings from love to hate, first rejecting her own feelings for the Italian because of his more modest origins, then refuting her 'poysned words', inappropriate for her 'praysid wit' (272), until she finally resolves to 'vow Ariodant' (279). Because of this contrast, the passage structurally and thematically resembles Bradamante's invective against her beloved Ruggiero in canto XXXII of the *Furioso*, although there are no specific echoes; in Beverley's poem, moreover, the author presents *both* lovers living similar experiences in similar settings (both spend their days in 'desert walkes', 288, in a passage that seems influenced by Petrarch's sonnet 'Solo et pensoso i più deserti campi', *Canzoniere*, XXXV). Lurcanio, worried by his brother's silent but evident sorrow, questions him, first attributing his behaviour to 'the ayre of this land' (317), then realising that Ariodanto is in love and consequently providing him with well-meant, but by now futile, advice on the importance of choosing the right woman. However, it is only through an oneiric intervention – perhaps inspired by Bradamante's parallel dream about Ruggiero in the *Furioso* (XXXIII, LX-LXIV) – that Ariodanto is spurred into action: one night, he dreams about two ladies, dressed in golden clothes and carrying a distraught Jenevra, who reveal that she is fading away because of her own love for him, which she thinks is not reciprocated. After an instant of uncertainty ('why should I thus trust in dreames that fansies be of mynde: / And eke unconstant groundes of troth, as writers have definde', 417-418), he resolves that the vision might be premonitory, again quoting the authority of ancient poets, sympathetic to his line of thought, to support his decision: '[y]et Poets say that dreames be true and things to come foreshowes' (421). Beverley further supports this claim with a list of mythological, as well as biblical, premonitory dream-visions. Through a clever

persuasion of the Princess' maid, Ariodanto manages to hold Jenevra's book of prayers on the way to the Chapel where, every morning, she devoutly prays; he wishes to insert a letter revealing his feelings, and, for this reason, he 'writ[es] out at large, the cause of his longed proved woe' (497); and Beverley, in a striking process of meta-narrative, summarises through the lover's words all of the events that have hitherto occurred in the story.

When Jenevra reads the letter, her woes are gradually replaced by joy, in a passage in which Beverley, perhaps at his most awkward, tries to correct the conventional images he himself used earlier to indicate the two lovers' suffering:

[T]he happie newes with auncient woes contend:
 So diversly, within her corps, that backward she doth bend.
 In sound, as one that lenger had no power to foster life:
 Among her vexed limes, (I say) there is such mortall strife.
 Thus novel joyes have won the field and banisht woe away:
 And gasping life & breathing breath, do helpe to part the fray.
 The vanisht bloud retires agayne, the dampishe could is fled,
 Assured hope confounds dispayre, and conquers drowsie dred.
 Her scorched hart hath moisture found her seared joyntes are strong,
 The burning heate, and Isie could, that troubled her so longe
 Are quite exild

(549-559)

Beverley uses other stock metaphors, for instance calling Ariodanto the 'wyse Chyrurgion, [who] hath found one salve to cure / His own disease, and hers' (561-562); the 'wisdom' of Ariodanto is, in fact, highlighted again soon after, when the success of the scheme is attributed to 'Melpomens sugred style' (567), thus implying a connection between the sincerity and beauty of the lover's feelings and the elegance of his own words.

Beverley's ensuing few hundred lines are entirely descriptive: Jenevra writes two letters in reply to Ariodanto's confession, one of which is to be inserted inside the prayer book now acting as intermediary between the two lovers, while the other, the answer proper, is to be hidden under an olive tree in the castle's garden. Upon reading the first, brief paper, which only commands him to search for a second letter, Ariodanto has a perhaps excessive reaction ('[h]is clothes he bathes with gushing teares', 734), then convinces himself of Jenevra's feelings because of her altered complexion upon her noticing him. Once again, Ariodanto cites the authority of books to support his belief: '[s]ome say that these be arguments, of vext, and troubled minde: / And sonest seene in lovers face: (as I in writers finde.)' (751-752). The learned theme of the passage is further stressed by an original invocation to the Muses

in medias res; now that Beverley must write of joyful events and no longer of the sorrows of unrequited love, he begs Muses and gods to help him:

Come helpe ye Mountain Ladies al, and leave Pernassus hill:
Come help me with your sugred stile my charge for to fulfill.
And thou, oh Spring of eloquence, come helpe to guyde my hand:
That rudely doth presume to write, in verse but grosly scand:
Of joyes, that had their ginning first of black and lothsome fittes:
Come helpe therfore Apollo thou, to wheat my dulled wittes.
And help oh knights of Cupids crew on whom dame Venus smiles:
To write of blisse, and more then joye, that floudes of cares exiles.

(771-778)

The author's emphasis on writing is even more visible when he corrects himself for a brief digression on Ariodanto's hunting habits (having the man, now free of love's worries, enjoyed a newfound pleasure in hunting and sports):

But why do I of profit speake, wher pleasure is my song?
Or what hath Bloudie Mars to doo, amongst Cupidos throng?
Why sayst thou pen, to speak of him that armed is with joy:
And prest against fayre Ladies foes, his might for to imploy?
Why telst thou not how he hath now disclosed to his love,
(In presence) all his former woes

(847-852)

The initial self-correction becomes an unusual address to the author's pen, guilty of composing lines independently of Beverley's mind. Of course, the hunting theme was extensively present early in the poem too (and will reappear soon after, in the form of hawking, together with other courtly activities such as riding and jousting); what the author seems to complain about here, then, is the fact that the lines are inappropriate in the context of these specific pages, centred exclusively on love.

The appeal to the Muses seen above is reprised and extended when the tone of the poem changes from joyful to sinister, implying that Ariodanto and Jenevra's newly-born relationship has to overcome some obstacles:

Therefore, a dew, without desert, ye Nymphes of Helicon:
Possesse your Mount I need you not let my rude verse alone.
Tis Sibil she that Profitesse: that knowes, the darksome denne
Of Plutos Realm, that must be ayde to guyde my rugged penne.
We must amongst the lothsome shades, seeke out Alecto vile:
That may with mone, and solome tune, deck this my dolefull style.
[...]
And thou (I say) that worker art, of this my changed songe:
Help with thy Snakie hears to show the sting of treason strong.
For thou, thou Witch, thou hellish hagge, thou wrinkled fury fell,
Hast forst my pen that painted blisse, of foule mishappe to tell.

(923-928; 931-934)

Once more, Beverley presents his pen as composing lines and passages with which he does not agree, and which he wishes he could avoid writing: this idea, almost a precursor of the modern theories about the auto-generativity of the discourse, is here employed with a different nuance (the pen is forced by the ever-angry Fury Alecto, rather than being endowed with autonomous creative faculties as implied earlier, in lines 849-852). This fascinating theme is present throughout the poem, and Beverley's pen will be personified in several other places (such as in the lines 'to the court complet with care My pen and I must plie', 2339, and 'to Dalinda once againe, my pen and I must bende', 2544).

It is after one-third of the poem, after almost one thousand lines, that Beverley reconnects with Ariosto's text, and follows the original plot – albeit vaguely – rather than inventing and expanding on it. Explaining Polinesso's plan to deceive Ariodanto into thinking that Jenevra 'nought esteemes his love' (1005), he adds a misogynistic line with the generalisation '[a]s Ladie wilie heades doo oft, the sielie soule to prove' (1006). Another generalisation appears immediately after, when Polinesso becomes frustrated, having spent one full day attempting to befriend Ariodanto, because the latter does not seem interested in sharing with him the news of his love for the Princess. The conniving duke exclaims '[u]nkind [...], is this the curtesie / That you unkind Italians, requite for amitie [?]' (1050), to which a surprised, but always elegant, Ariodanto answers:

[W]e that be of Italie, and borne in foren lande:
Doo think it mearest vanitie, and fond to take in hand.
To treat of that, that profit smal redoundes to them that heare
The same, and most of all, in vayne, that goulden tyme doth weare.

(1059-1062)

Polinesso, having promised Ariodanto a ring (the same that the Italian himself had given Jenevra as a token of love), as proof of the veracity of his accusations on the duplicity of the Princess, remembers that he used to be betrothed to Dalinda, her maid, and decides to use the love that the girl still feels for him as a means to steal the diamond ring. Having easily obtained the ring, Polinesso shows it to Ariodanto, but he denies any courting on his part with a strong profession of modesty. When the man is in his rooms, however, he once again falls prey to excessive emotion, epitomised by the line '[h]is heare right up [...], his teeth [...] joyn[ed] fast' (1311), resembling,

awkwardly, the description of a frightened man rather than that of a man distraught for love.

There ensues a pattern similar to that which followed Ariodanto's first encounter with Jenevra, the realisation of his love for her and his consequent desperation at the supposed univocality of his feelings; here, Ariodanto initially blames Jenevra, wishing his own death, then recollects her vows and promises and chooses not to believe Polinesso, through a series of rhetorical questions which imply the woman's innocence:

Did not her letter show to me, a lovers true intent?
Did not the passion of her mynde to faithfull lynes consent?
[...]
Could this proceed from double mynd could heavenly shape invent:
Such termes of truth, & afterwards to such disceit consent?
[...]
Can craftines finde harborow, within so goodly shape?
When nature servde so worthy corpse could truth from her escape?
[...]
No, no, I doo abandon now my former fonde conceit.

(1351-1352; 1355-1356; 1361-1362; 1365)

The recollection of Jenevra's words, written as well as spoken, soon makes space for the belief that such a beautiful body could only lodge virtuous thoughts, in accordance with the neo-Platonic parallels between physical appearance and interior beauty. And, to highlight the more archaic quality of the passage, these lines are followed by a description of Ariodanto's night with Dream, Sleep, Hope and Slumber allegorised and interacting with one another; the metaphor which sees Hope trying to defend Ariodanto's 'castell' (1388) is at times effective, more often awkward, as shown by the lines depicting Ariodanto the morning after Dream's visit:

[B]y good hap, no harme he had, save only in his head:
A littell scarre, of fond dispayre, that drousie Dreame had made.
Him, Hope doth comfort as he can, and with a lustie cheare:
No harme, (qd he) dismay thee not, discharge this filthy feare.

(1405-1408)

Despite Hope's efforts, however, Ariodanto falls prey, once more, to despair, and, again, wishes his own death, regretting leaving 'pleasant Italy' (1581) to 'lyve in straunge countrie' like 'a banisht wight' (1582) for Jenevra's sake. After Ariodanto's lengthy complaints, Beverley catches up with Ariosto's narrative and readers learn that Polinesso persuades Dalinda to wear, that night, the Princess' clothes 'in signe of [...] despite' (1649), in a passage where the events happen quickly and the narrative

proceeds swiftly. As in Ariosto, Ariodanto, followed by his brother, hides under the window as instructed by Polinesso and there witnesses the encounter between Dalinda, dressed in Jenevra's robes, and the duke.

The ensuing description of Ariodanto's desperation and Lurcanio's persuading speech aimed at consoling his brother vaguely follows Ariosto, paraphrasing the original with the addition of some details; similarly, Ariodanto's failed suicide attempt, witnessed by a traveller who then reports the event at court, is taken from the *Furioso*. What is entirely original, thus, is the Italian's lengthy monologue during which he realises that '[t]he court was causer of [his] care, by court did spryng [his] paine' (1897) and decides to shun it, preferring the company of a hermit. The long speech that Ariodanto delivers to the hermit touches upon the vanity of the world (in accordance with the *vanitas vanitatum* topos of religious literature) and is concluded by a request that almost sounds like a *do ut des* proposal:

Oh father, that the vanities, (which late my ghost did rust,)
Are washt clear from my fretted hart, and now I am in mynd:
(If thou wilt graunt) by more advise more store of grace to finde.
And sith the chast and secret lyfe, abandons fading wealth:
And poore and sparing abstinence lettes in the lasting health:
Deny me not thy felowship, graunt me thy company:
Helpe now to save a sinfull soule that craves a remedy.
So shall I bridell foule desire, and thou do service great
To him, that hath preparad for us (I hope) a heavenly seat.

(1954-1962)

Meanwhile, the traveller has reached the court and reveals to Jenevra that '[t]hrough to much sight, Ariodant hath found untimely death' (1987), with the result of creating unprecedented grief in the Princess' rooms. Although Beverley professes that '[w]hat skreekes, and cries, they send to skies, what carefull paynes they take [...] / Doth passe my wit, and skilles head, in writing plaine to tell' (2016-2018), he immediately lists, with a traditional praeterition, the bewailing actions of the ladies-in-waiting, with an attempted realism that at times renders the passage almost comical:

[O]ne with careles hand her tender fingers wring:
And she with pinching of her nose doth make the bloud out spring.
This matron bends her heavy head, down to her crased brest:
And this, her joyned jawes and teeth, doth force with key to wrest.
She cales for Aqua fortis

(2019-2023)

Ariodanto's death is mourned not only by the 'womens mones' (2087), but also by Lurcanio, whose grief soon takes the form of desire for revenge, spurred by Alecto who has come especially from Hades:

This spightfull spight, thus vomited from ugly lothsome pate
A snake she pulles which for to move Lurcanio more to hate.
She throwes into his bosome right, wher stinging it remaynes:
And poysneth so eche joynt & limme, and swelles so all his vaynes,
That raging, (like a frantike beast,) unto the king he hies.

(2105-2109)

Lurcanio recounts witnessing the Princess (in reality, Dalinda) with another man, leaving the king with no alternative but to commit his own daughter to the death sentence prescribed by Scottish law: as the king tells her, 'thou hast don the deede that hath deserved fyre, / I meane that thou hast purchast deth through whordoms foule desire' (2175-2176). The king, however, also promises her that he will find a knight willing to champion her, and Beverley shows original, touching displays of paternal affection when he describes Jenevra's father rubbing her temples 'with shaking hands' (2252) and consoling her, both for the loss of Ariodanto and for the death sentence, with kisses and hugs (2265).

When Ariodanto hears of the condemned Jenevra and realises that her 'fo' is his own brother, he is again divided between his love for her, which has returned – or perhaps had never disappeared entirely – and brotherly affection:

Now nature, doth forbid him fight against Lurcanio:
(For he it is he knows right well) that was the Princes fo.
Love telles him that his brother hath deserved death by right:
In that he hath accused her that is the lampe of light.
Thus fansies rule within his head, as motions move the minde:
And changing thoughts do alter still, as reason right doth finde.

(2311-2316)

It is interesting to note that, in the Italian's reasoning, issues of guilt or innocence never play a part in his compulsive desire to defend Jenevra: she is 'the lampe of light' and as such she must be saved, irrespective of any actual responsibility. In this, Beverley's Ariodanto resembles Ariosto's Rinaldo, who decides to champion the princess in the original version simply because of the unfair double-standard inherent in Scottish law (IV, LXV).

The narrative becomes more hurried, almost to the point of confusion, in the final passages. Dalinda is sent to a house in the middle of a forest by the deceitful Polinesso, who promises her they will be married in the woods, but in reality plans to

have her killed by the two ruffians accompanying her. Jenevra is ready to die on the pyre and she does so ‘with a cherefull voyce’ (2497), glad she will join God again; her happy resignation is not, however, matched by her people’s, who weep for her as parents weep for their own dead children (2501-2502). Dalinda is about to be killed by the two men, but, proving that ‘in most daungerous tydes oft times doth happen blisse’ (2565), there appears ‘the famous knight Raynaldo’ (2569), who proceeds to rescue the maid and accompany her back to ‘the most unhapiest Scottish court’ (2578), to which she intends to ‘bring the joyfult news that ever came to kyng, / And tell the gladdest tale that earst, a messenger did bring’ (2579-2580). The timely epiphany of Rinaldo, who had never been mentioned before in the poem (and whose presence in Scotland is left unexplained), provides the strongest intertextual reference to Ariosto’s poem; the paladin seems to have jumped out of the Italian epic as an exemplary *deus-ex-machina*, just in time to save Dalinda and to provide, through his actions, the welcome *dénouement* of the long story. Dalinda is able to explain the truth before her king and the condemned Jenevra; Polinesso fights with Rinaldo and is defeated, Dalinda is exiled, and Ariodante and Jenevra ride in triumph through the town until,

[U]pon a solome daye, appointed by the king,
The Princesse and Ariodant, with sacred words and Ring:
Receyve the ryght of mariage, as gladde to them as lyfe:
Who long in blisse did spend their daies and died devoyde of stryfe.

(2799-2802)

Whetstone's Rinaldo and Giletta

Spenser is not the only imitator who uses the translation of the Ariodante and Ginevra tale for a purpose entirely different to that of mainstream translation: George Whetstone (1550-1587) does the same, albeit with a profoundly different style, in the first section of *The Rocke of Regard* (1576). Friend of George Gascoigne (in the praise of whose *A Hundred Sundrie Flowers* he wrote a commendatory poem), his most famous work is *Promos and Cassandra* (1578), a play which inspired the plot of Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure*. Widely travelled, during 1580 he visited Italy, stopping at Rome, Naples and Ravenna; a didactic collection of stories, the *Heptameron of Civill Discourses* (1582), was the fruit of his Italian travels. It is in the partially autobiographic *The Rocke of Regarde* (1576) that he adapts, in prose, the

same story already used by Beverley, that of Ariodante and Ginevra, called, in his version, Rinaldo and Giletta.

Whetstone's 'Discourse of Rinaldo and Giletta' is an epistolary, prosimetrical text, with the main narrative in prose, interspersed with poems on the part of Rinaldo and letters in prose from Giletta. Rinaldo's poems, always signed, can be divided in two groups, those addressed to Giletta and those that he writes to complain of his love-suffering. At times, Whetstone comments briefly on the poem immediately after Rinaldo's signature, and before proceeding with the rest of the story, in a way rather similar to that used by Dante in another *prosimetrum*, the *Vita Nuova*. Whetstone's narrative also contains occasional bilingualism (Giletta, for instance, once addresses her friends '*Buon Giorno*', 80), in a very similar way to the technique used by George Gascoigne, albeit with less frequency and with a more limited selection of languages (only Italian) and thus already highlighting, on a structural level, the similarities between these two texts. Indeed, Charles T. Prouty has commented exhaustively on Whetstone's imitations from his friend Gascoigne, which are to be found especially in the first part of Whetstone's prose narrative and which vary from plot parallels (such as the male protagonists' sicknesses) to direct imitations of situations, devices and particularly of poems (Prouty 1946: 139), as perhaps best exemplified by Whetstone's use, in his 'Beautie leaue off to brag' (61-62), of Gascoigne's 'Beauty shut up thy shop' (75).

Thematically, the prose narrative does not differ much from Beverley's poem. As Prouty notes,

[A]lthough Whetstone borrowed his framework of interpolated poems and letters from Gascoigne and [...] even though there are many echoes of the amusements and diversions found in the *Adventures of Master F.J.*, his interest was not in telling a story or in displaying character but in presenting as much as possible of those stereotypes of love behaviour and love language as he could. It is this interest which led to the elaboration of the wooing and to the alterations in the familiar story which Whetstone took from Ariosto.

(Prouty 1946: 141)

The narrative begins with a brief 'argument', which includes a justification for the choice of prose over verse and the interesting declaration of the anonymity of the original version of the story:

GOOD reader, (to continue thy delight) I have made chaunge of thy exercise of reading bad verse, with the proffer of worsser prose; requesting (as earst I have) that thou wilt vouchsafe my well meaning, and mend what thou findest amisse. This discourse was first written in Italian by an unknowne authour, the argument of whose woorke insueth.

(41-42)

It is, of course, possible that Whetstone did not know the *Orlando Furioso*, partly because the first partial translation of the poem, by Beverley, had made no mention of Ariosto's authorship, and partly because the tale itself was already popular in England, both in Bandello's version and through the intermediary of a few French translations⁸¹. However, as will be seen later, comparable statements elsewhere in the work suggest that Whetstone is here simply playing with his readers, in line with the general tone of his work.

Whetstone changes the Scottish setting to an entirely Italian one, with both protagonists of the tale coming from the same court, Bologna. The tale opens with another love plot, the enamourment of Giletta's brother, Petro da Bologna, with Juliet, which begins as *amor de lohn* but is soon transformed into requited love first, and then marriage. The two pages describing Petro and Juliet's love both give readers a first taste for the author's employment of love themes and for his prolixity, and allow Whetstone to choreograph beautifully the first encounter between the two real protagonists of the story, Rinaldo and Giletta: Roberto Rinaldo, 'a gentleman of better qualities and shape then either of byrth or living' (44) becomes 'so surprised with [the] passing beutie' (*ibid.*) of Petro's sister that he dances at length with her and starts a seemingly impossible courtship, difficult because of their unequal social statuses, Giletta's natural chastity, as well as Rinaldo's awkward, excessively audacious behaviour during the masked dance. The young man is the first who, 'matching his base estate with her highe calling, sawe an impossibilitie of favour' (46); however, 'joyning her curteous disposition with the force of love, was fed with slender hope. Thus [he hang] betweene hap and harme' (*ibid.*), and between hap and harm the tale proceeds to list Rinaldo's sorrows in great detail, through the numerous authorial comments, through the poems that Rinaldo himself composes, and through the narrative.

Whetstone's attention to detail is visible, for instance, in his careful description of the clothes that Rinaldo chooses to wear for his first meeting with Giletta after the dance: 'the next morning he clothed him selfe in russet satten, garded with blacke velvet, which witnessed he did both hope and dread' (47). A similar emphasis on clothing is found in Gascoigne as well, where several lines are devoted to Dame Elinor's attire, including a complex description of a cap worn by her and enriched

⁸¹ In particular, the literal version begun by Saint-Gelais and completed by De Baïf (1572).

with a paper insertion in her own handwriting (72). In Whetstone, as in Gascoigne, Rinaldo's careful choice does not go unnoticed, and Giletta, in order to 'be acquainted (perhaps) with his inward disposition' (49), begs him to compose a sonnet on his selection of attire:

For that I know (maister Rinaldo) you are a very good poet, I injoyne you without further studie to shewe in vearse to what ende you weare blacke upon russet?
(49)

The man's choice does, indeed, become the subject of a poem, the final lines of which explain the significance of the colours along with an appeal for Giletta's love which does not seem suspicious to the courtiers present, exactly because it is conventional:

The ground of hope bewrayes my heart, the gards my desperate feare:
But if with graunt of grace my griefes you meane to quite,
Both hope and dread shall soone be chaungd to colours of delight.
(*ibid.*)

The author's explanation that 'this proffered love to Giletta bred no suspicion, for that every one thought Rinaldo, on so good occasion, could not otherwise choose but proffer some shewe of loving service' (49) is revealing of the frequency of love conventions and is, thus, a love stereotype not only in the reality of the writing process, but also in the 'reality' of the fictional court portrayed by Whetstone.

The author often interferes with the narration with several pseudo-Ariostean comments:

I will now overleape what a number of sowre and sweete thoughtes fead these unfained lovers: one while they were distempered with dread; anon quieted with hope; now desierous with secrete vowe to warrant eache other love; straight hindered by some unfortunate accident, still meashed in the snares of miserie, till time, that eyther (without conditions) might gage the other loyaltie, fayth, and constancie.
(53)

As Beverley did, Whetstone uses the praeterition to run through, concisely, the oscillations of the love story; and like Beverley, he enjoys treating Petrarchist themes, such as his poem

In bondage free I liue, yet free am fettered faste,
In pleasure paine, in paine I find a thousand pleasures plaste,
I frye, yet frozen am, I freese amid the fire,
I haue my wish and want my will, yet both as I desire,
I loue and liue by lokes, and loking workes my woe,
Were loue no god, this life were strange, but as he is, not so.
For through his aukward fitts, I suck such sweete in sower,
As I a yeare of dole would bide, to haue one lightning hower.
I like no life, but such, as worketh with his will,
His wil my wish, my wish to loue betyde good luck or ill,

No choyce shall make mee chaunge, or fancie new desire,
 Although desire first blew the cole, that set my thoughtes on fire.
 But fire, frostes and all, such calme contents doth moue,
 As forst I graunt there is no life, to that is led in loue.
 Yea base I thinke his thought, that would not gladly die,
 To leade but halfe, of halfe an houre, in such delight as I.
 Now thou deare dame, that workste, these sweete affectes in mee,
 Touchsafe my zeale, that onely seeke, to serue and honour thee.
 So shall my thralld brest, for fancies free haue scope,
 If not, it helpes, I haue free will, to loue, and liue in hope.

(54-55)

The lines are clearly inspired by Petrarch's famous sonnet:

Pace non trovo e non ó da far guerra,
 e temo, e spero; e ardo e sono un ghiaccio;
 e volo sopra 'l cielo, e giaccio in terra;
 e nulla stringo, e tutto il mondo abbraccio.
 Tal m'ha in pregion, che non m'apre nè sera,
 nè per suo mi riten nè scioglie il laccio;
 e non m'ancide Amore, e non mi sferra,
 nè mi vuol vivo, nè mi trae d'impaccio.
 Veggio senz'occhi, e non ho lingua, e grido;
 e bramo di perire, e chieggo aita;
 e ho in odio me stesso, e amo altrui.
 Pascomi di dolor, piangendo rido;
 egualmente mi spiace morte e vita:
 in questo stato son, donna, per voi.

[I find no peace, yet I am not in war; I hope and fear, I burn and I am ice; I fly above the sky, and lie on the ground; and I hold nothing, yet embrace the whole world. (Laura) keeps me as a prisoner in such a way that she neither frees nor locks me, she does not keep me as hers, yet does not liberate me. Love does not kill me, nor free me from the chains; Love does not want me alive, yet does not let me die. I see without eyes, I have no tongue yet shout; I wish I could die, and call for help. I hate myself, and love somebody else. I am thriving in pain, and I laugh in tears; I equally dislike both life and death: in this state I am, my Lady, for you.]

(*Canzoniere*, CXXXIV)

The structural and, more importantly, terminological similarities are evident, especially in the opening part of the English poem; in particular, Petrarch's second line is paraphrased by Whetstone in line 3; the latter's first is paralleled by Petrarch's fifth, and the Italian poet's twelfth corresponds to Whetstone's second.

The popularity of the lines, which, by the time *The Rocke of Regard* appeared in print had already been translated into English by Sir Thomas Wyatt, suggests that Whetstone's ensuing gloss is to be intended ironically:

These verses, although they were in number few, yet the sweetnes of the tune, together with the rareness of the invention, running altogether uppon contraries, made them to be singularly well liked, especially of mistresse Giletta, who could now no longer dissemble her love.

(55)

The use of antitheses is conventional, rather than 'rare'; if irony can be posited on Whetstone's part in this instance, then, it could be inferred that his previous profession of the anonymity of the original story was, similarly, not to be intended seriously.

Although Giletta is not certain, yet, of her feelings for Rinaldo, the two lovers spend their days discoursing about love, until Rinaldo demands to know whether his love can thrive, or whether Giletta does not reciprocate it; as he explains, 'either answer wil worke appeasement of my sorrowes, the one with death, the other with delighte' (58). Giletta finally yields to love and the couple exchange not only vows, but even rings, although the relationship has to remain secret because Giletta 'knowe[th her] father and other friends, if they knewe of [their] love, with stormes of displeasure would hinder the accomplishment of [their] desires' (60). Rinaldo, trusting her judgement, 'wil not in one jot contrary Gilettas direction' (*ibid.*), and everything proceeds smoothly, with the composition of poems on the part of the young man and much appreciation of these poetic efforts on Giletta's part, until Rinaldo falls ill, is forced to bed for a long time and falls prey to jealousy, which brings him 'so lowe as that, a live, hee represented the very image of death' (63). Like Beverley, Whetstone relishes the opportunity to analyse all the possible topoi of love, and, like him, even the reciprocal quality of this particular love story is not sufficient reason not to expand on different possibilities, so that his text really becomes a casebook of sentiments and situations. Jealousy is, of course, one that cannot be neglected: and with Rinaldo forced to bed, Whetstone creates a new suitor for Giletta, Seignor Frizaldo, who appears out of nowhere and, because of his noble origins, is much favoured by the Lord de Bologna as a potential son-in-law.

When Giletta visits Rinaldo, in the company of a number of friends among whom there is also Frizaldo, she brings him lilies, and he thanks her by producing immediately a bunch of rosemary. The 'secrete vertue in giliflowers', that 'about whose head they bee bestowed, the same wighte shal not bee much frighted with fearefull fancies' (65), may be too obscure for the company to understand, but does not escape Frizaldo, who, later, surprises Giletta with his knowledge of the couple's love and even puns on the meaning of Rinaldo's gift (offering Giletta roses to go with the rosemary, hinting at Roberto Rinaldo's initials). It is now Frizaldo's intention to increase Rinaldo's natural jealousy (as a marginal note instructs readers, '[j]elosie can never be perfectly quenched', 67), and it is only at this point that Whetstone's

narrative bears significant resemblances with Ariosto's original. In the prose story, however, it is Giletta who devises a plan to assuage Frizaldo's suspicions but which, through a series of unfortunate coincidences and in a way comparable to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, does not work as wished. The woman thinks that, by pretending to hate Rinaldo and to favour Frizaldo, the latter's suspicions will fade; however, rumours of a betrothal between the nobleman and the Lord's daughter soon circulate in court and reach Rinaldo's ear before Giletta has the chance to explain her plan to her lover. This leads to despair, and another poetic outpouring, on the part of Rinaldo, who soon decides to renounce his beloved through the means of a very peculiar *aubade*, playing a goodbye song with his lute. Frizaldo, inexplicably in Giletta's room that night, shows himself by the window, calling the woman 'his subject' deliberately loudly and leaving Rinaldo even more confused and resigned: 'Alas! good Giletta, thy exchange is very hard, to leave to be Rinaldos mystresse to become Frizaldos subject' (70) is his only comment at the scene.

Like Ariosto, then, Whetstone too has a 'witness' scene which leads to a misunderstanding on the part of the lover; the difference is, of course, that in all other versions it is the jealous rival who follows a plan and sets up the situation, whereas in the prose narrative Frizaldo's presence in the woman's room seems entirely fortuitous. Another similarity with the original text is the plot device exploiting the love that the lady's maid, called Dalinda in all other sources and Rosina here, feels for the rival. This is particularly elaborate in Whetstone: Giletta's attempt to inform Rinaldo of her plan takes the shape of a letter carefully hidden inside an apple. Rosina, having spied her lady through a hole in the wall, is persuaded by Frizaldo, upon the promise of marriage, to substitute the passionate letter for Rinaldo with a letter of hatred, written by Frizaldo himself imitating Giletta's handwriting and professing the end of her affection for Rinaldo with an extremely strong conclusion: 'by her that hates the more then shee loves herselfe' (72).

Rinaldo's reaction when he bites into the apple and finds paper instead is, first, of (surprised) joy, then, upon reading, of desperation, and very similar to the one that Beverley's Ariodanto had upon discovering Jenevra's 'hatred'. His is a conventional complaint against the beloved's beautiful appearance, so cruelly unmatched by internal beauty:

Ah God! (quoth hee) how maye it so sweete a face should be matcht with so cruel a hart, such heavenly lookes with such hellish thoughts, so faire a creature with so foule conditions, and so

modest a countenance with so mercilesse a minde? O Giletta! what meanest thou so to eclipse thy honour, darken thy vertue, and spoile thy wonted report of pitie, by murdering of thy faithfull friend?

(73)

Of course, Whetstone has Rinaldo explicitly say that, were it not for the fact that the letter was in her own calligraphy, and that it had been delivered by the lady herself, he would not have believed it; 'but on so certaine a prooffe, in vayne it were to hope' (74), a resignation that certainly adds to the pathos of the episode. The only solution is, as in Ariosto and Beverley, suicide. Rinaldo goes to the River Po, by which he meets a simple man to whom he delivers a note reading '*Giletta, false of faith, Rinaldo nipt so nye, / That, lo! he chose, before his time in stremes of Poo to dy*', followed by an immediate leap into the river. The news reaches Giletta, who despairs; but Whetstone does not have time for her and immediately turns back to Rinaldo, who

[A]fter he had a while felt the furie of the floudes, was wearie of dying, so that for life he laboured unto the shoare; which happily recovered, he felt his stomacke at that instant rather ovecharged with water then love.

(75)

The rather poetic mention of the man 'wearie of dying' contrasts so heavily with the prosaicity of the author's reflections on his stomach that it could be supposed that the whole passage is ironic, and should be read as a parody of the miraculous rescue of Ariodante in the other versions of the tale. The comicality of the episode is heightened when the guilty apple becomes the subject of a poem, in which mythological and biblical references unite in a condemnation of the 'needlesse fruit' (76) which ruined Adam and Eve's prelapsarian happiness, led to the destruction of Troy, and, last but not least, revealed to Rinaldo 'Gilettas scorne, that chaung'd her love to yre' (*ibid.*).

Paul Scanlon notes that, after reaching the shore, Rinaldo 'enters a pastoral world not to be found in the source tale. Probably borrowed from a comparable scene in chivalric romance, a state of woodland madness is set forth' (Scanlon 4-5). Indeed, the idea of the now solitary hero who finds comfort in the woods could be inspired by medieval romances (such as *Sir Orfeo*), but also, more directly, by the 'madness' passages in cantos XXIII and XXIV of the *Orlando Furioso*, which depict the maddened Orlando living, beast-like, in the forest. During this self-imposed exile, Rinaldo realises that living without Giletta's love means dying a thousand deaths every day and experiences, again, suicidal thoughts. This time, however, he decides that his act will have much more effect in forcing Giletta to realise 'his loyaltie and

her owne crueltie' (77) if he kills himself underneath her window, so that she can better hear his 'yawning breath, [his] bloody sighs, and deadly gaspes' (78). This quasi-morbid wish is an element not found in any other version, and, as Prouty notes,

Whetstone does not lack either invention or an awareness of fine pathetic scenes [...]. These romantic resolutions so magnificently anticipate the manifold suicide thoughts of young Werther that we are not at all surprised when we read that, arrived at the fatal spot and "finding his enterprise (by reason of the dead time of night) unlikely to be troubled, before he executed this tragedie" he resolves on a lengthy speech of farewell. There is, of course, great method in this romantic madness, for his groans awake Giletta who hastens outside for a heroic scene of recognition.

(Prouty 1950: 25)

Giletta does, indeed, hear Rinaldo's lamentations, without recognising his voice; the remembrance of her beloved Rinaldo, whom she thinks dead, is sufficient to incite a fit of altruism in her and, for the sake of her late betrothed, she hurries to comfort the man. When she realises he is, indeed, her own Rinaldo, alive, her happiness is indicable, and 'with very joy [she] fell into a swoone' (79), not before, however, scolding Rinaldo for committing suicide despite reading her explicatory letter. Once revived, Giletta develops another plan, to which Rinaldo promptly consents because, as Whetstone's marginal note tells readers, '[t]he womans wit in matters of love [is] quicker than the mans' (80), a concept reprised also in the body of the text:

[A]s it is sayde, the womans wit is more readier then the mans in practices that answereth their liking, experience here makes prooffe of no lesse: for when Giletta espied Rinaldo in a browne studie with debating which way they might best, easiest, and soonest perfect their unsure delighes, she comforting him with a pretie smyle, willed him to commit that charge unto her.

(80)

With Rinaldo's reappearance still a secret, Giletta decides to consent to a marriage with Frizaldo; revealing her original vows with Rinaldo to her father, she asks him to wait one month, for a question of personal conscience; if Rinaldo does not appear within this period, then the marriage can take place. Of course, both the Lord de Bologna and Frizaldo are delighted with such an arrangement, because Rinaldo is still considered dead by the whole of the court. This suspense is left to the characters only, because readers are immediately told, with a heavy anticipation, that Frizaldo

[H]ad no thought how Rinaldo would be avenged of his trecherie, overthrow him in combat, weare his weedes, marrie his wife, and use his provision of pleasure for the honor of his own wedding: he wold not see secret hate, that lay hid in Giletas loving lookes as the snake lurkes in the sweet grasse.

(82)

There is still time, however, for the development of a subplot. The maid Rosina, whose affection for Frizaldo is unchanged and who is understandably confused by the preparations for her betrothed and Giletta's wedding, is persuaded by Frizaldo that the ceremony will not take place and that he intends to 'give her the flip' (84) at the altar (an element that Prouty thinks inspired by Bandello, Prouty 1946: 143), as a revenge for the scorn shown by her when he was her suitor. This speech reassures Rosina, who, in a climax of proverbs, 'thought all was gold that glittered' and 'never remembred howe the poysoned hooke lay wrapt in pleasant bayte, howe the crocodile obtaines her pray with pitifull teares' (84). It is only when the two ruffians (a term that Whetstone shares with Beverley) reveal, drawing their swords, that they have been hired by Frizaldo to slay her, that she realises that her faith is misplaced.

Rinaldo, who secretly lived in the same forest chosen by Frizaldo as the setting for Rosina's murder, witnesses the events and saves, just like Beverley's and Ariosto's homonym, the maid, in a plot device in all similar to the other versions except for the detail that this Rinaldo is, of course, not the timely *deus-ex-machina* of the original but the protagonist of the story, involved in the plot throughout the tale. As in Ariosto, and unlike Beverley, it is the maid who reveals the story in great detail, from the love between Rinaldo and Giletta to the replacement of the letter hidden inside the apple; Rosina's extended speech, like Beverley's Dalinda's, has the effect of a detailed summary of the events taking place in the story. As elsewhere, Frizaldo professes his innocence and prepares himself to defend his word in a duel against an unknown knight, here Rinaldo in disguise; the duel has the added detail of a stress on the honesty of Rinaldo's suit, and the dishonesty of Frizaldo, and it is clear from the start of the single combat that, exactly for a question of justice, Rinaldo will win: he trusts 'both in his force and honest quarell', whereas Frizaldo can only trust 'in his force' (89); similarly, it is 'Rinaldos honest cause [that] doubleth his strength, so that the longer he fought the fearcer he was' (*ibid.*). Inevitably, this *furor* leads to Rinaldo's victory, and Frizaldo's death, without even time for him to repent and confirm the veracity of Rosina's revelations.

A happy wedding ensues, and the tale is concluded by a ship metaphor that proves Whetstone's familiarity with another traditional Petrarchan image: 'after fortune had long threatned the shipwracke of their delightes, their constancie conducted them to the port of their wished desires' (90). Prouty comments that

Truly Whetstone has reinterpreted his sources in a most novel manner. As with Beverley, love has been his theme but it has been handled in the latest fashion. The newest refinements and subtleties are all displayed with a liberal dash of melodramatic seasoning.

(Prouty 1950: 25)

In this respect, then, Whetstone and Beverley are extremely similar, and both enjoy the addition of details on the theme of love not present in the simple Ariostean story.

In a peculiar, extraordinary way, Whetstone's work is the least novel adaptation of the story, because of the 'rhetorical display of fashionable, amorous attitudes and sentiments' (Scanlon 1978: 7) already used by Beverley in poetry and inserted within a structure already used by Gascoigne, that of the partially epistolary, prosimetrical text. At the same time, however, because of the transformation of the pathos into parody, because of the playful, absurd references to the anonymity of the story and to the novelty of stereotypical Petrarchan images, the tale is also the most unique.

Conclusion

This thesis began as an attempt to provide an exhaustive account of the extant Elizabethan translations of the 'three crowns' of Italian epic poetry, and to analyse them in a thoroughly comparative fashion by concentrating on the representation of women, both as a source of major modifications (Chapter One) and as an evident point of interest for the English readership – an interest which surfaces in the partial translations' virtually unanimous preference for episodes and tales with a strong focus on women (Chapters Two and Three).

Over the course of the thesis, several supplementary aspects have emerged. First of all, modifications and, in certain cases, distortions of different types have been highlighted in almost all translations, proving that they are, in a way, inevitable⁸². Even the literalist Carew *distorts*, at times, the syntax of his target language because of excessive attachment to that of the source language, risking his work becoming almost unintelligible precisely because of his fear of shifting too far away from his original, which he treats with a quasi-sacral care. However, although all translations, inevitably, present some form of alterations, it must be noted that significant content-related modifications – in the form of omissions, compressions or additions –, especially when substantial, are more serious and might more severely endanger the quality of the translations than simpler syntactical distortions. In addition, these modifications are, of course, more consequential in those poets, such as Harington, who identify their work as dependent on a source and, therefore, define it as a *translation*, and relatively less significant in those writers, such as Whetstone, Gascoigne or Spenser, who adapt or are inspired by their Italian sources, which they translate more or less faithfully but always with the aim of integrating these sources in their own original works. In these cases, only rarely is the true authorship of the original acknowledged⁸³: although in some instances, such as in Spenser, certain traits

⁸² See Bassnett and Lefevere's comment on translations as rewritings, quoted at the beginning of the Introduction (p. 4).

⁸³ Beverley's, Whetstone's and Spenser's are all unavowed translations. Gascoigne is more problematic, because in the anonymous *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573) he acknowledges Ariosto's authority in several circumstances, but in the revised (and explicitly authored) *The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire* (1575) he denies it by attributing the translations from the Italian to the fictitious Bartello. On this subject, Amina Alyal has commented that '[t]he result is that Bartello is credited with *inventing* poems that are in fact *translations* from Ariosto, Petrarch, or Du Bellay; and because Bartello is a figment of Gascoigne's imagination, what in reality is happening is that

of the source – for example, Ariosto’s irony – are changed at least as visibly as they are in Harington, these modifications are less consequential, exactly because the works are not presented as translations and remain, on the whole, original texts. In other words, in the case of Harington, the principal issue is not that he translated too liberally or too literally, but, rather, that he misunderstood the *spirit* of the original to an extreme extent throughout the work, that this misunderstanding is not a deliberate plan to suit his purposes but a plain mistranslation held throughout the text and, more importantly, that the misinterpreted matter is, uniquely, attributed to Ariosto explicitly and continuously, both through the definition of the text as a translation and through the numerous references to ‘mine author’ in the ancillary material. Harington, thus, exploits the figure of Ariosto as a shield in a way not too dissimilar from Ariosto’s own use of Turpino, with the difference, however, that Turpino is recognised by readers as a fictitious character, whereas Ariosto is not only a real source, but also the real *author* of the translated text. Despite this, Harington, more often than not, superimposes his own interpretation of the original, often even maintaining a relative fidelity of plot, but changing, irremediably, the spirit, mistranslating aspects of the poems and misleading readers to believe the Ariostean authorship of these mistranslations. Spenser also chooses not to reproduce Ariosto’s irony, even where he translates directly, or almost directly, from him. However, as C.P. Brand brilliantly notes,

[Spenser] is not impervious to the humour of the *Furioso* [...]. We cannot certainly equate Spenser with Tasso in the sequence: Boiardo laughed, Ariosto smiled, Tasso was not amused [...]. It is, however, also clear that Spenser did not consider an Ariostesque irony an appropriate tone for his poem as a whole and that he turns with Tasso towards a more serious interpretation of the romance tradition.

(Brand 1973: 106-107)

Indeed, this is the key to understanding the difference in the use, or non-use, of irony in the passages analysed in the course of the thesis in the two English poets: one missed it altogether, when he should have maintained it, his work being a translation; the other noticed and understood it, but *chose* to avoid it in line with the serious tone of his original work. The serious purpose of *The Faerie Queene* is also the reason behind Spenser’s oversimplification of the Ariodante and Ginevra episode and of the Sospetto/Malbecco passage: his determination in focusing solely on one aspect of the

Gascoigne is convolutedly claiming to have written material that was written by other poets’ (Alyal 2004: 116).

stories, a paean to temperance and a tale of jealousy respectively, means that all superfluous elements are omitted, in favour of consistent concentration on the one detail which serves the author's purpose.

For approximately three decades, all renditions from Italian epic poetry took the form of versions of single episodes or passages, with the first complete translations appearing only in 1591 and 1600, thus towards the end of the Elizabethan period; as Mario Praz commented, writing about the author of the *Furioso*, 'Ariosto at the outset was for the English only a story-teller' (Praz 1958: 289), thus read in a way not dissimilar to Bandello or Boccaccio. In fact, if the tale of the Queen's punitive order against Harington is accepted as true – and there is no reason not to believe it – then the first complete translation of an epic poem in Elizabethan England was not the spontaneous result of three decades of partial translations of single passages and random episodes which, almost as though fermenting, eventually led to the *necessary*, long-awaited creation of a full, complete piece; if the tale is to be believed, then Harington's translation was born and originally intended as just one more of this sequence of random tales. Indeed, the merit of offering England the first complete translation of an epic poem should then be attributed to Elizabeth – and knowing her passion for another Italian poet and his work, Tasso, it is difficult not to fantasise about her taking the chance of contributing to English literature in translation by ordering – how inappropriate a punishment for the supposed crime – the translation of the very text by a part of which she had pretended to be appalled.

The quantity and, more importantly, the quality of these early partial translations serve to confirm the Elizabethan fashion for the short story of Italian inspiration, already visible in the numerous collections of tales inspired by Boccaccio, Bandello and other *novellieri*. This is in particular seen in the case of Beverley, Whetstone and Gascoigne, whose works elaborate freely on the Ariostean original, sometimes paraphrase in prose the Italian text, and are, in general, so free as to render it impossible to state with any certainty that the poets had, at their disposal, Ariosto's tale rather than one of the several French translations as an intermediary⁸⁴.

⁸⁴ It is useful to remember that, in Tudor times, it was not so rare to translate a text through another translation in a third language, different from both the source and the target languages: it is the case, for example, of George Pettie's translation of Guazzo's *Civile conversazione*, the English title of which includes an illuminating 'written first in Italian, and nowe translated out of French by George Pettie' (quoted in Morini 2006: 22). Similarly, the only Scottish 'translation' of the *Orlando Furioso*, John

The discussion of these versions informed the third chapter, which has, precisely, grouped together a number of partial translations (from incomplete renditions to versions of single passages or episodes), characterised by extremely varied purposes, methods and scopes. It is exactly the purpose of the translations that forms the second interesting aspect to emerge in this thesis: the analysis of Peter Beverley's *Historie of Ariodanto and Jenevra* has revealed that the lengthy paraphrase of Ariosto's episode stems from a desire to improve on the original, to follow a fashion for Petrarchist themes and topoi, and to render the tale, relatively disadorned in the original, more appealing to its new readership. Similar conclusions have been made for George Whetstone's prose narrative 'The Discourse of Rinaldo and Giletta', which, similarly enriched with amatory details, also seems to betray a parodic intention in its constant, outspoken denial of the imitative quality of the work and in its exaggerated exploitation of Petrarchist conventions. Both authors mould (or stretch) the same tale to fit their readerships' tastes and in both – but especially in Beverley – there seems to be a desire for extreme emulation, a wish to vie not only with Ariosto but even with Petrarch, synthesising and surpassing the whole Petrarchist tradition. Indeed, Quintilian's idea of translation as 'certamen atque æmulationem' (*Institutio Oratoria*, X, 5, 5), the idea of the translator vying with the original, is not limited to Beverley and Whetstone: it also matches perfectly Spenser's desire, famously recorded by Gabriel Harvey, to 'emulate, and hope to ouergo' (116) the *Orlando Furioso*. While the brief, episodic translations on the part of George Gascoigne are, like Spenser's but on a smaller scale, concise because they are tailored to fit 'The Adventures of Master F.J.', the analysis of Robert Tofte's translations has revealed some exciting aspects. An extremely careful reader of both Ariosto and Boiardo – certainly a better reader of the *Orlando Furioso* than Harington, as shown by the complete lack of 'distraction mistakes' which can conversely be found in the latter –, and a very faithful translator in general, he, nevertheless, inserts some considerable additions in both translations, typically in the form of enhanced eroticism, envoys, or addresses to his cruel mistress. The additions are always substantial (Tofte never adds less than one full octave; terminological or single-line additions are entirely ignored by him),

Stewart of Baldynneis' twelve-canto *Roland Furious*, was based on Desportes' *Roland Furieux*, as well as on Ariosto's original (Jack 1972: 57-71; Corbett 1997: 101-102). In the case of Beverley and Whetstone, certain French translations (such as Saint-Gelais and De Baïf's) being very close to the original and the English renditions so liberal, it is impossible to say, even after an accurate linguistic analysis, whether the English writers had, at their disposal, the original or the French translated version.

and are, in this, unique when compared to the rest of the Elizabethan translations of Italian epics, with one possible exception⁸⁵. However, in both partial poems, the additions are significant for another reason: they are never out of character, and in fact often complement the faithful translation of the original stanzas extremely well. Tofte, always considered as a 'minor figure' (Pursglove 1984: 121), recipient of somewhat negative and dismissive criticism, has revealed himself to be perhaps one of the best translators analysed, able to understand, truly, the spirit of his originals (composed, it must be remembered, by two different authors), and elaborate on it enriching it with consonant additions. Considering that the *Two Tales* were composed as a personal exercise, and thus not originally meant for publication, his deviation from the original can be even better understood as the product of a poet who, having entered the spirit of his source text so fully, simply writes on: beyond the *Tales*, beyond the self-imposed exercises, but always within the invisible limits of tone, language, and spirit set by his author; Tofte too, then, shows a desire for emulation, most visible in the additional octaves. In his translation of Ariosto, moreover, the emulation becomes two-fold: besides the natural emulation of the author, there is an equally important desire to vie with his most direct rival. The awareness and possible direct knowledge of Harington's translation of the same lines, as it has been demonstrated, certainly played an important role in his choice of text and – to paraphrase a more famous 'contest' – in his attempt to 'ouergo' the first English version of the *Orlando Furioso*. Tofte's translation from Boiardo works even better, with the English poet seemingly having found an extraordinarily congenial mind in the Ferrarese poet. Tofte seems able to understand and reproduce Boiardo's less sophisticated language with surprising facility, he is not afraid to maintain the author's occasional vulgar or low vocabulary, and he is remarkably at ease with the prominent place that eroticism and sensuality enjoy in the *Orlando Innamorato*. Uniquely, his short translation is praiseworthy even where it invents: as exemplified by Tofte's original octaves on Angelica, his additions fit so beautifully in Boiardo's picture, are so complementary with the authorial details, and maintain the tone and the language of the original so fluently that, distant from Harington's moralistic or misogynistic impositions on Ariosto's *Furioso*, they rather resemble the attentive and respectful work effected by a restorer on a splendid painting.

⁸⁵ George Gascoigne concludes his five-stanza translation of Bradamante's jealousy with an original, summative envoy.

While the third chapter has analysed and evaluated the extant partial translations of the three epic poems, and has revealed the attempt to emulate or imitate creatively as the primary aim for most of these partial or casual translators, the second chapter, with its comparison of two English versions of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, has provided important information regarding two different translation methods and two different translation purposes: while Fairfax's version is an elegant attempt to English a poem of immense popularity, Carew's reveals an attempt to provide a text very close to an interlinear version of the original. André Lefevere's comment, regarding phonemic translations but valid also, by extension, for extremely literal versions, that this type of rendition 'results in the construction of elaborate syntactic jigsaw puzzles and is faintly accessible only to those readers who are already familiar with the source text in the original' (Lefevere 1975: 95), however negative, opens up one important possibility, that of exploiting this extreme faithfulness for language-learning purposes. Indeed, if an excessively literal version does not produce, as a general rule, an acceptable translation, it is the most useful type of rendition when used in the learning process: Hunt's decision to juxtapose an Italian edition next to Carew's text proves that language-learning was one of the primary objectives of the publication, not necessarily intentional on Carew's part, but certainly deliberate on the part of the printer. It also implies that a word-by-word translation, unacceptable as it is according to modern standards, was much more efficient for this specific purpose than any other freer rendition. In fact, out of all the translations analysed it is only Carew's that could, reasonably, help students of Italian with vocabulary issues and with sentence construction, all of the other translations (including Fairfax's and Tofte's, the former for its freedom in the final couplets and for its original use of repetitions and triplets, the latter for its insertion of original stanzas) being too syntactically free to provide a model of that pseudo-interlinear translation so useful for the improvement of a foreign language.

While Fairfax's translation has been proven to be very faithful as far as plot and tone are concerned, it has been noted that his most significant additions concern linguistic aspects (repetition and triplets) or mythological additions. Of these, among the most frequent and important are the references to Cynthia, one of Elizabeth's primary epithets. Both the major translations of Italian epics, Harington's and Fairfax's, are dedicated to Queen Elizabeth; and although the translations are far from

unique in these dedications, each has a connection with the Queen which seems to be more intimate than usual. Harington's version is famously the fruit of the Queen's command; as for the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, Fairfax certainly knew of the Queen's passion for Tasso and of her intimate knowledge of the Italian poem, and was aware that, given that interest and that knowledge, she would have probably noticed and understood the additional references to Cynthia.

Over the course of the study of the rendition of Tasso's female figures, other interesting points have emerged: first of all, an examination of the treatment of the character which seems to have inspired most English poets, Armida, has revealed an extremely complex pattern of influences and cross-influences which go beyond the limits of translation proper. In particular, a side-by-side analysis of the original with the translations and the imitations on the part of Spenser and Daniel has revealed that, paradoxically, at times the latter poets are *closer* translators of Tasso than the official translator, Fairfax. This observation is intimately connected with another striking aspect of the 1600 translation: Spenser's mediating influence on Fairfax, which is visible virtually throughout those passages that, in *The Faerie Queene*, are inspired by, and often translated from, Tasso's poem. These similarities are both stylistic – the repetitions, the triplets, the mythological additions – and textual – the numerous, striking instances in which Fairfax, as if dragged by an irresistible force, follows, instinctively, Spenser before Tasso. Moreover, and perhaps even more importantly, there is another aspect of Spenser's poem that Fairfax borrows: respect for the heroines of the poem, in the form of a consistently positive representation of them. Although his translation is, inevitably, rich in Protestant influences and in moralisations, and is, in this, in line with Tasso's own Counter-Reformation conscience, Fairfax never intervenes on the representation of women: unlike in Harington's translation of the *Orlando Furioso*, in Fairfax there is no deliberate bowdlerisation of actions executed through feminine hands and no minimisation of women's accomplishments. Whether this is caused by personal attitude, by the fact that, by the time of his translation, Elizabeth had reigned, alone, almost a decade more than at the time of Harington's writing, or by something else still is impossible to know, but there is a chance that Spenser, with his depiction of strong female figures and central women warriors, had paved the way for women to be heroines in English poems too. In this respect, Fairfax's added references to Cynthia (an epithet that

Spenser himself uses for Belpheobe) and dedication of the epic to Elizabeth could show, again, Spenser's mediatory activity on the translator.

Spenser's mediating influence on Fairfax, as well as the rarer (but nevertheless significant) occasional influence on the part of Samuel Daniel, is also essential and striking for another aspect: it proves an extremely high degree of intertextuality on the part of Fairfax, who, whilst translating from Tasso's Italian original, also had very clear in mind (or physically at his side) copies of other poets' works. This fascinating habit of intertextual reading and writing can be seen in William Drummond of Hawthornden too, as noted by Jason Lawrence in his analysis of precisely a copy of Fairfax's Tasso owned by the Scottish poet:

Drummond frequently records instances of literary indebtedness, and notes other authors' uses of identical or similar stories in the margins of the book. This kind of broad comparative reading indicates that the scholarly study of the foreign sources for English literature, so popular at the turn of the nineteenth century, was already an important aspect of contemporary reading habits by the start of the seventeenth century.

(Lawrence 2005: 49)

Drummond's approach is replicated, *mutatis mutandis*, by Fairfax: it could be said that Drummond's attitude is passive, simply recording intertextual instances, while Fairfax's is active, *creating* an intertextual text himself: in both cases, however, there is proof of an extremely sophisticated interplay between originals, translations and influences, and a demonstration of an apparently comprehensive knowledge of contemporary literature.

Finally, the analysis of the treatment of the female figures in Sir John Harington's *Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse* has revealed an extremely significant aspect of the translation, the presence of a distinctive trait of misogyny in the English text; its traditional overlooking in criticism has been redressed through a painstaking comparative analysis, essential lest Harington's modifications remain invisible due to ignorance of Ariosto's original (as has been seen, this is one of the reasons for the unawareness of this aspect in some of even the most recent criticism). The study of the warrior heroines (Bradamante, Marfisa and the Amazons), as well as that of the other female characters of the poem – women besides the female knights, whose virile activities might have been the source of specific contempt on the part of Harington – has also confirmed that the misogynistic traits first discovered in the analysis of Harington's treatment of the heroines are, in fact, present in the depiction of virtually

every female character of the *Furioso*, and has been further verified by the analysis of the comments on and addresses to women, thus not limiting it to characters but extending it to, truly, all women related to the poem. The chapter put this misogyny in context, comparing it to similar attitudes to women found in the *querelle des femmes*, but also highlighted its gratuitous quality in a text that, more than any other, proclaims itself to be, above all, a translation, and which, unusual if compared to the other works analysed, constantly calls attention to Ariosto as the author of the work.

A suggestive answer for Harington's misogyny is offered, precisely, by its subtler forms – such as his single terminological modifications, his casual insertion of parenthetical sentences, his rapid omissions of passages centred on women –, which often appears to be natural, almost automatic behaviour. This suggests that his misogyny, rather than methodically employed (and thus showing his desire to add humour to the stanzas, as some critics have stated), is instinctive, and is thus a sign of a personal attitude, certainly consonant with his time, but also more surprising (and ultimately misleading) in the translation of a text that, in its original version, consistently shows a high degree of philogyny: as the author himself beautifully declares to women, as an apology for the Host's tale,

Ch'io v'ami, oltre mia lingua che l'ha espresso,
che mai non fu di celebrarvi avara,
n'ho fatto mille prove; e v'ho dimostro
ch'io son, nè potrei esser se non vostro.

[That I love you, my tongue has confessed – it has never stinted your praises – and I have proved it, furthermore, in a thousand ways; I have demonstrated to you that I am, and can only be, yours].

(XXVIII, II, 5-8)

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Given the subject of the thesis, in this bibliography translations are listed under the translator's surname and not under the author's.

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