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Renaissance Political Theory in Translation: John Florio and the *Basilikon Doron*

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Abstract & Keywords

English:

When King James VI of Scotland ascended to the throne of England in 1603, John Florio (1553-1625), well known as one of the most outstanding interpreters of Italian humanistic culture in Elizabethan England, and the celebrated translator of Montaigne's *Essais* into English (1603), chose out of James's numerous works to translate the *Basilikon Doron* into Italian. This work represents a lesser known and seemingly less relevant chapter in the history of translation than the *Essays*, and yet it is particularly interesting for its relevance to both political theory and linguistic practices of the time. This essay will discuss this most unusual case study of early modern translation, aiming to suggest that Florio's translation worked as both linguistic exercise and a meditation on politics, and to establish some measure of the influence exercised by a major player of Italian culture in Elizabethan England on the political lexicon of early-modern England.

Keywords: John Florio, Basilikon Doron, cultural translation, early modern political theory, early modern England

> Politia, *policie, politike or ciuill gouernment, the gouernance and rule or policie of a towne or common-wealth, a politike regiment.*
> Politica, *a booke written of policie, or touching the ciuill gouernment of a state.*
> Repùblica, *a common-wealth, a free estate, the weale publike.*
> (Florio's 1598 *Italian/English Dictionary*)

Translation and manipulation: introduction and methodological issues

A strong wind of change has swept over the vast domain of translation studies for the last thirty years, changing our perception of the historic and cultural significance of translation and repositioning it within the broader sphere of cultural studies. One such macroscopic change is that we have come to abandon the idea of a mere 'linguistic transfer taking place in a static and binary world of source/target text, source/target language, and faithful/unfaithful, literal/free renderings.' (Hosington 2015: 8). Eclectic methods and approaches within the area of Translation Studies, pioneered and then implemented by scholars like Susan Bassnett, André Lefevere, Theo Hermans, and Gideon Toury, have drawn attention to the crucial importance of historical and social context for translation: what counts is not solely which words are chosen on the page, but what ideological and social reasons lie behind the translator's decisions and approach, and what effects they have produced (Lefevere 1992). Translation tends to be presented as 'manipulation undertaken in the service of power', thus, engaged in an ideological mission (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990, preface) which different text-types and different receptors shape and re-address (Reiss, Vermeer 1984). 'As a result of these and other avenues of translative research', Hosington persuasively argues, 'translations are now seen as complex constructs, influenced by time, space, socio-historical and socio-cultural contexts, and the intentions of any one of the multiple agents collaborating in their production.' (Hosington 2015: 9).

All these approaches appear particularly suited to frame European early modern translation practices, which were crucial to the spreading of culture and learning and 'played a crucial role in enabling greater communication between peoples and advancing social and political movements beyond narrow national borders' (Hosington 2015: 5-6; Rhodes et al. 2013; Armstrong 2013; Morini 2006; Matthiessen 1931). At a time when national languages all over Europe were seeking to establish a primary role for themselves in the emerging process of the construction of national identities, translations aimed to contribute to the linguistic and cultural enrichment of vernaculars which had to measure themselves up against the prestigious models of Latin, Italian, and French culture, both through imitation and opposition.**[1]**

Italian culture, as we know, had a particularly significant impact in Tudor England, and equally significant was the role played by the small community of Italian Protestant refugees in London during the sixteenth century in the formation of English national identity. A rising nation seemed to be negotiating its nascent image with a precarious group of intermediaries who could depend on no greater resources than those of their cultural legacy, which they essentially communicated by textual means in the forms of a literal and a metaphorical translation of culture, manners, books, and words – with translation understood as *translatio studii* (Wyatt 2005; Burke 2005; Pfister 2005, 2009; Montini 2008). John Florio was certainly one of the most influential members in this informal community, whose well-deserved reputation came to be attached to his role as one of the most outstanding interpreters of Italian humanist culture in Elizabethan England and to his celebrated translation of Montaigne's *Essays* into English in 1603.

And yet, in the same year (and an *annus mirabilis* it was) as King James VI of Scotland ascended to the throne of England, Florio accomplished a work that is less known and seemingly less relevant to the history of translation than the *Essays*, but one made more intriguing, to say the least, by its likely bearings on both political theory and linguistic practices of the time.**[2]** He chose to translate into Italian the *Basilikon Doron* (henceforth

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BD), the pedagogical treatise on government which James VI of Scotland wrote and addressed to his son and heir Henry in 1599 and later had published in London, in 1603. In the preface to his translation, Florio celebrated the king as 'Cesarea Maestà', and stated that his writings were so full of wisdom that they would last forever, 'ogni secolo'.

In this essay we shall examine this unusual case of early modern translation. Texts that dealt with monarchs and their stories were extremely widespread across Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries, and political theory therefore concentrated on the relevant qualities necessary to be a monarch. The study of political ideas in early modern Europe needs be approached in terms of the intellectual context and tradition in which they developed in order to better understand 'what a particular text is designed to do and how it relates to the political culture in question' (Baldwin 2007:101). Translations and their implicit uprooting from the source culture and repositioning in a target culture help the reader understand the function and aim of the text translated not just in the target culture but even, as it has at times been the case, its reverse effects upon the culture from which the text originally emerged.

There is more. Florio's *BD* is an important text, we believe, not only because its ST is of exceptional importance, having been composed by a royal (and living) author; nor merely because it was later translated multiple times and was considered of particular relevance to European politics and diplomacy.**[3]** Over and above these facts, there is also the purely textual standpoint of a multi-layered work which incorporates a variety of text-types (the complex structure of the *BD* is made up of two dedicatory epistles, one poem and a pamphlet, which is also a letter) and which engaged the translator's ideology as well as his stylistic expertise. Ultimately, our aim is to suggest that this translation worked as both linguistic exercise and a meditation on politics, and to establish some measure of the influence exercised by a major player of Italian culture in Elizabethan England on the political lexicon of early-modern England.

King James's Education of a Christian Prince

As scholar and author of numerous works, James was certainly a most learned king: the range of his production includes original poems and meditations on the Bible; translations and prose works on witchcraft and tobacco; works of political theory and, of course, his addresses to Parliament. It is also unusual for his times that he should have had his works published, with his 1616 Folio *Workes* appearing only a few months after Ben Jonson's *First Folio* (McIlwain 1965; Goldberg 1989; Montini 1994). Still, after forty-five years of Queen Elizabeth's glorious reign, the *Basilikon Doron* not only acted as an advanced and in some regards controversial visiting card for the new king before his English subjects and the European courts; it also remained his most popular work for a long time. And indeed the book provided the new English subjects with an insight into the mind of this 'lawfull good King', who 'acknowledgeth himself ordained for his people (...) as their natural father and kindly maister' (King James I 1603: 2-3).

King James VI had begun composing his 'kingly gift' in the summer or early autumn of 1598 when uncertainty attended his hopes for succession to the throne of England and Prince Henry was only four years old: ostensibly, the work started out as a meditation on death and was duly called his 'Testament and latter-will' (King James I 1603: 7-8). In accordance with the humanist tradition, James intended that his work should be a persuasive, instructive handbook of imperial kingship for Prince Henry and his close associates but also destined to reach a wider audience (Cramsie 2009), and was divided into three books: 'Of a Kings Christian Duties towards God'; 'Of a Kings dutie in his office'; 'of a Kings Behavior in Indifferent Things'. The first book was devoted to precepts regarding a king's relationship to his God: it should be the young king's duty to act as a good Christian; to love, to serve, and to fear God; to read the Holy Bible, pray assiduously and always be thankful to Him for His mercy. The second book detailed the sovereign's responsibilities in office: acting as a good king, and not a "tyrant", he will govern with justice and equality, and will be familiar with his subjects. For his court he must select loyal gentlemen and at war he will appoint old but worthy Captains to lead an army. The third book, finally, covered such 'indifferent Things' as made up the daily life of a monarch: his clothing, food, and amusements, as well as his writing and speaking, upon consideration of the fact that the king's life is 'a law-booke and a mirrour' to his subjects, who 'may see, by [his] image, what life they should leade'. (King James I 1603:61).

By design, James's work followed in the *de principe* literary tradition – a textual legacy of Western culture dating back to the Classical Age, from Xenophon's *Cyroepedia* to Pliny's *Panegyricus* and Seneca's *De Clementia*, and continuing into the Middle Ages, especially in Northern Europe. A number of early modern humanist treatises, as exemplified by Erasmus's *Institutio Principis Christiani* (1516) or Thomas Elyot's *The Book Named the Governour* (1531), advocated careful princely education as a prerequisite for good monarchical rule, and emphasis upon the education of princes was a central theme in Renaissance political thought and humanist debate at large. Traditionally, the genre involved the two text-types of *specula* and *institutiones*, with the first designed as presenting the 'mirror' to the perfect prince and the second as describing the prince's education. The humanist curriculum was meant as a form of 'learning for public life' and a necessary stage in shaping the minds of those who were destined to govern the polity, as the consensus was that this method and curriculum 'would enhance the commonwealth' (Pollnitz 2015:9). Besides studying classical languages, students were taught to speak and write eloquently by the precepts of Isocrates, Demosthenes, Cicero, and Quintilian. In observance to a Roman ideal, the liberal education aimed to prepare students to hold their place in the *res publica*, changed over the upbringing of royal children, and helped reshape the political and religious culture of early modern Britain (Pollnitz 2015: 2). The Erasmian project to mitigate the use of power by means of the liberal arts did not work entirely with English and Scottish princes, but it certainly heightened their interest in letters: princes, male and female alike, would spend more time on biblical knowledge, reading widely and exercising their discursive skills in order to affirm their authority on church and state: they were taught and trained, in other words, *to wield their pens like swords*. (Pollnitz 2015:15). Although rebelling against the liberal education of his own tutor, George Buchanan, James was one of the best representatives of this ideology of power: in his 1599 prefatory letter to prince Henry, James explained that the purpose of the *BD* was to instruct him 'in all the points of his calling' and urged his son to 'study to know well [his] owne craft (...) which is to rule [his] people' (King James 1603:2, 47). Despite emphasizing the similarity between the curricula of royal schoolrooms and those of grammar schools, he argued that 'princes were distinguished by their calling and that their education must be specific to their divinely ordained duty' (Pollnitz 2015: 318): they were supposed, that is, to focus their attention on the 'science of gouernment'. (*BD*, p.61).

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It may well be a reflection of the circumstances in which it was published that the *Basilikon Doron* belongs to that class of books whose immediate success is greater than their lasting fame (Craigie 1944, II:1): it aroused such a great deal of interest that it immediately became the object of numerous translations into many languages. The manuscript, in the king's own hand, written in Middle Scots and now preserved in BL Royal MS 18. B xv, came out in 1599 and was soon followed by a first Anglicized printed version in Edinburgh, though only in seven copies, by Robert Waldegrave (STC 14348) (Wormald 1991): in fact, this was the first interlingual translation of *BD*. However, when Queen Elizabeth I died in 1603 and James's accession to the throne of England was confirmed, Waldegrave printed a second edition, in English (STC14349), so that James's new subjects could read the book. In a matter of weeks, this edition counted about 14,000 copies, which certainly served to satisfy the interest of the English subjects as to their new king's principles of statecraft and, thus, enable them to have some foresight about his notions on kingship and their prospects under his government.**[4]** The textual history of the *Basilikon Doron* involves a complex relationship among the three extant versions, the manuscript and the two Waldegrave prints. 'The two which most resemble each other are the autograph MS. and the first Waldegrave print.' The 1603 edition 'was far from being a mere reprint of the earlier one, for many changes were introduced.'(Craigie 1944-50, II: 88), the text was so thoroughly revised that hardly a sentence remained as it had been originally written: the first of the two sonnets in the Waldegrave print of 1599 was dropped; numerous marginal glosses referring to classical authors were added; and what is more important, a new section entitled *To the Reader* was added, about a fifth in length of the original work, explaining among other things why issuing a new version had been necessary. The 1603 copy is certainly the most accurate and representative, not only because it was personally amended by the author, but also because, after 1603, James's literary works were collected in an in-folio, published in 1616, then in 1620, and finally in 1682 by order of King Charles II.

Diplomats and ambassadors were summoned to provide translations of the *BD* in their own languages. A book in the mirror-for-princes tradition could not only contribute to show James's political ideas to his English subjects, but also present him to the wider world of European politics (Lyall 2002; Petrina forthcoming). Numerous editions appeared in French, both manuscript and in print (on 29 September 1603, Sir Thomas Parry, the English ambassador in France, sent Robert Cecil a copy of the printed translation by the French Protestant scholar Jean Hotman, asking for the king's opinion about the several changes which had been made in order to render the text more acceptable to the Pope). The English Jesuit Robert Parsons had it translated in Latin for Pope Clemente VIII as testified by the following letter:

> Beatissimo padre,
> Con questa vanno l'ultimi folij della traduttione del libro del Re d'Inglaterra, commandatici da *Vostra Santità*, il padre che l'ha tradotto è huomo dotto et confidente et s'ha sforzato d'esprimere la vera sentenza dell'autore, et reddere sensum sensui; ci resta che preghiamo Iddio (come facciamo) che inspiri a sua Maiestà d'esseguir nel suo gouerno, le cose ben dette et scritte in questo libro, et correggere quelle, nelle quali per causa dell'educatione Iddio fin qui non gli ha dato bastante luce o più presto egli non ha aperto l'occhi, il che speriamo per la gratia [hole in MS]...diuina, et con l'aiuto di Vostra Beatitudine potrà far con tempo, et così restiamo pregando, et per la lunga et prospera vita di *Vostra Santità* la quale Iddio mundi saluator conserue, et questo umilmente baccio li suoi sacri piedi etc.
>
> Di Vostra Beatitudine
> Humillissimo seruo in Cristo
> Roberto Personio[5]

Unfortunately, the result was so poor that the Pope had to ask the Papal Nuncio in Paris for a copy of the Latin translation published by John Norton in London in 1604.

The book was also translated into Dutch and printed twice in Amsterdam in 1603, into German and printed at Spires in 1604, into Swedish in 1606, and an even a partial Welsh translation in 1604 was attempted, containing about one third of the complete work. There was, also, a verse rendition by William Willymat, with the text arranged in parallel English and Latin text (Baldwin 2007: 119). As far as Southern Europe was concerned, the translator John Pemberton was commissioned to translate the *BD* into Spanish, and John Florio translated it into Italian: both editions failed to make it from manuscript to print.**[6]**

The rapid spread of translations across Europe certainly testifies both to the interest the new English king aroused and to the concerted propaganda to launch his political ideas across boundaries. 'The impetus for translations', as Baldwin puts it, 'was James's desire to be a *rex pacificus* in a divided Europe, and his identity no doubt helped to sell the work'. (Baldwin 2007: 120-121).

Florio's *Basilikon Doron*: *Istruttioni et ammaestramenti della Serenissima Maestà d'Inghilterra, di Scozia, di Francia et d'Irlandia, al Prencipe Henrico, suo carissimo figliuolo [Instructions and teachings of His Most Serene Majesty of England, of Scotland, of France and of Ireland to Prince Henry, his beloved son]*

As soon as King James settled in London, John Florio sought the means by which to strengthen his link with the new dynasty and presented his own *dono regale* [royal gift] to the king (Yates 1934:248). John Florio had an established reputation in Elizabethan London (Yates 1934; O'Connor 2004): teacher, lexicographer, translator, 'Italus ore, Anglus pectore' (as the inscription on his own portrait records), all his works fed upon negotiations between two countries and languages. His valuable linguistic competence is documented in the conversation textbooks he composed for the teaching of Italian (*First Fruits*,1578; *Second Fruits*, 1591), the English-Italian dictionaries (*A World of Words*, 1598; *Queen Anna's New World of Words*, 1611), and translations from French and Italian into English.

While Florio's fame as a translator owes much to his Montaigne, his translations from Italian into English are also worth mentioning: the most prestigious one, although the attribution is still controversial, was Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1620) (Wright 1953; Armstrong 2013; Montini 2014); but there is also his *A shorte and briefe translation of the two navigations and discoveries to the northweast partes called Newe France* (1580), a translation into English of Ramusio's Italian version of the work by Jacques Cartier; and finally, some parts of Traiano Boccalini's *Ragguagli di Parnaso*, which were published after Florio's death as *The New-Found Politicke*.

The translation of James's *BD*, however, stands as a unique enterprise in Florio's career due to certain linguistic as well as visual and material aspects: the text was in all certainty intended as a tribute to the new king and as a work upon which the Queen, who could write and speak Italian quite well, could exercise herself (Pellegrini

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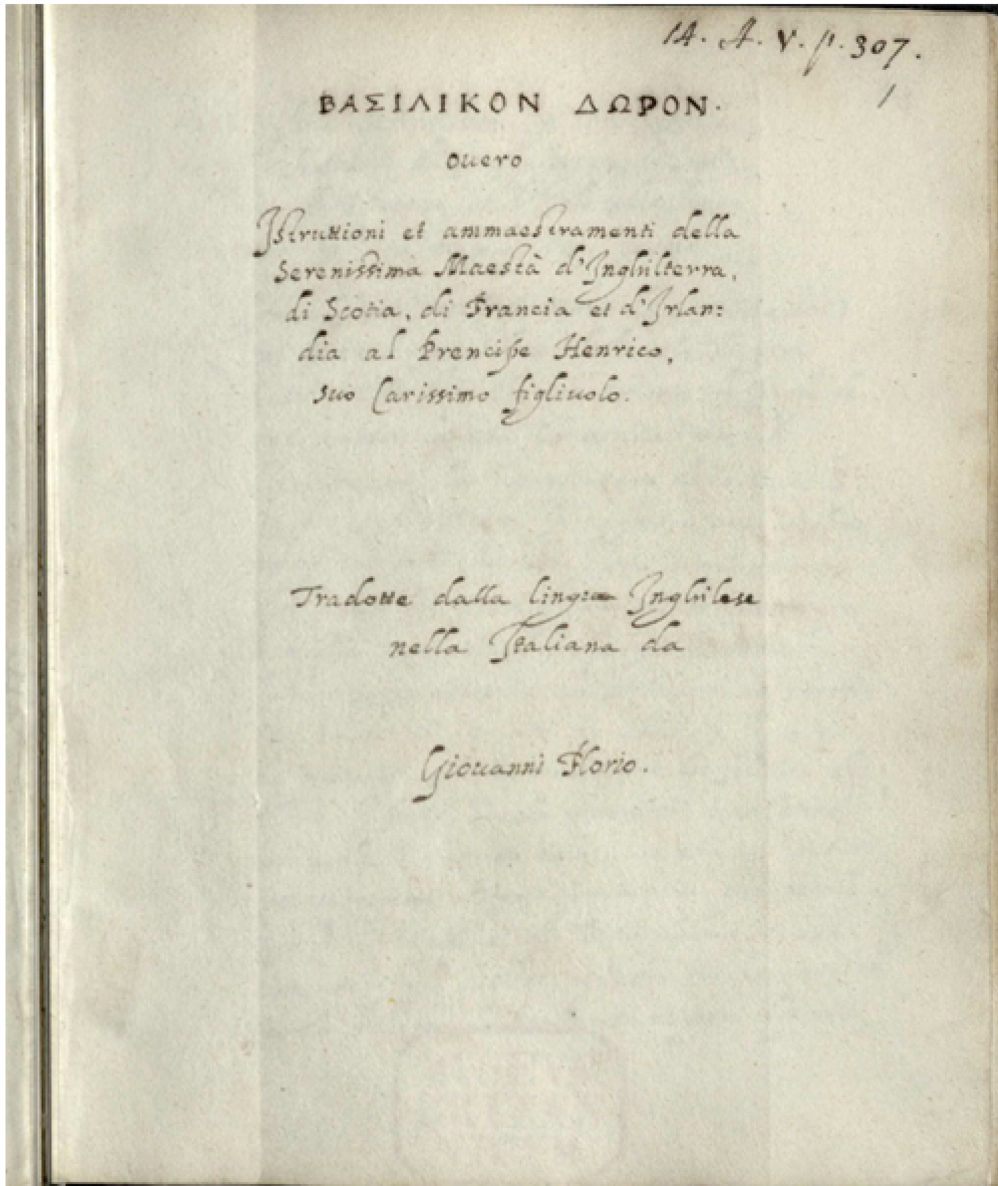
1961:39),**[7]** and is the only example of translation by Florio from English into Italian (Wyatt 2010). The original manuscript, which went unnoticed for a long time, is held at the British Library as Royal MS 14. A. V. and is a signed holograph translation from the 1603 second edition of *BD*, although the preface to the Reader is omitted. It was composed on 68 quarto leaves and is bound with an entirely unrelated Italian treatise.**[8]**

Apparently, no printed version of the text was ever produced, despite Florio's confident expectations, expressed openly in the final lines of his dedication ('[...] anzi in iscritto, aspettandone la censura, che per istampa, presentando della sufficientia...'). As to issues attending the intended destination of Florio's translation, which may have been conceived for an Italian readership, it is possible that James's Protestantism was eventually deemed an insuperable obstacle to surmount 'to have appeal across the confessional divide' (Baldwin 2007: 120), unless we take its foremost intended audience to have been the inner circle of the Stuart court. Interesting questions may further be posed vis-à-vis Florio's omission of the preface: all this would ostensibly go against the campaign to show James's kingly and intellectual credibility.

Unlike the *Essays*, Florio's manuscript is endowed with a very simple and limited paratextual apparatus, perhaps designedly so with a view to a more elaborated printed edition.**[9]** The general editorial framework of the original text remained unchanged for the most part, though with omissions and additions made by Florio for his designated audience. After the title page (Fig. 1), the translator's Italian dedication to the King follows (Fig.2a and Fig.2b) and, as Frances Yates reasonably surmises, 'from the wording of this it appears that the translation was his own idea and not undertaken by royal command.' (Yates 1934: 248). As for the remainder of the work, the authorial paratext and the translated text by and large follow the 1603 source text, consisting of, namely, only one sonnet (3r), the letter to Prince Henry (4-5), and tripartite book division James had arranged. As for the "information design" of the book, and especially the *mise-en-page* of text and paratext, Florio faithfully replicated the layout of his original: James's marginal glosses are accurately and fully reproduced and collocated in the right and left margins of the page.**[10]**


14. A. V. f. 307.

ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΟΝ ΔΩΡΟΝ·

ouero

Istruttioni et ammaestramenti della Serenissima Maestà d'Inghilterra, di Scotia, di Francia et d'Irlandia al Prencipe Henrico, suo carissimo figliuolo.

Tradotte dalla lingua Inghilese nella Italiana da

Giouanni Florio.

Figure 1: The title page

Florio opens with a dedication in which he pays tribute to the king by ranking his work among the most eminent examples in its genre:

> [2r] *Alla sacratissima, et Serenissima Maestà d'Inghilterra, di Scotia, di Francia, et d'Irlandia, longa felicità e felicissimo regno.*

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Come a Cesare, cos' (perdonimi la S.V. Maestà) mi pare si possa dire a l'Emulo di ogni Cesarea Maestà; Chi non ardisce di parlarle, non conosce la sua Clemenza; ma chi l'ardisce, non ha risentimento della Maestà. Questa arditezza mi fa maggiore, anzi miglior'animo, conciosiache non altre composizioni che le sue ho preso baldanza di presentare a quella sacra Maestà, la quale come ha fatto cose grandissime da scriuersi da' grandi, così ha scritti concetti mirabili da leggersi da ognuno; cosa da riadempire la felicità di Plinio. I fatti benché vittoriosi (disse Catone) sono utili, e durano solo un'età: ma scritti cotanto ripieni d'ogni prudentia, ogni secolo. Questa Cyropaedia di Zenophonte, questi comentarij di Cesare, questo testamento di Carolo quinto da tradursi in ogni lingua; [2v] anzi queste istruttioni di Costantino Leone al Cesareo suo figliuolo (fin'al dì d'hoggi in Venetia, come un tesoro, riserbate) anzi in iscritto, aspettandone la censura, che per istampa, presentando della sufficientia, humilissimamente inchinandosi alla sacrata mano la offerisce il

Di S.S.Maestà
hum.mo e fedelissimo suddito
et seruitore
Giouanni Florio[11]

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Alla Sacratissima, et Serenissima
Maestà d'Inghilterra, di Scotia,
di Francia, et d'Irlandia, longa
felicità et felicissimo regno.

Come a Cesare, così (perdonimi la S. V. Maestà)
mi pare si possa dire al'Emulo di ogni
Cesarea Maestà; Chi non ardisce di parlarle,
non conosce la sua Clemenza: ma chi
l'ardisce, non ha risentimento della Maestà.
Questa arditezza mi fà maggiore, anzi miglior'
animo, conciosiache non altre compositioni
che le sue ho preso baldanza di presentare
a quella sacra Maestà, la quale come ha
fatto cose grandissime da scriversi da' grandi,
così ha scritti concetti mirabili da leggersi
da ogniuno: cosa da riadempire la felicità di
Plinio. I fatti, benche vittoriosi (disse Catone)
sono utili, e durano solo una età: ma scritti
cotanto ripieni d'ogni prudentia, ogni secolo.
Questa Cyropedia di Zenophonte, questi
comentarij di Cesare, questo testamento di
Carolo quinto da tradursi in ogni lingua:

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

anzi queste istruttioni di Costantino leone
al Cesareo suo figliuolo (fin al dì d'hoggi
in Venetia, come un tesoro, riserbate)
anzi in iscritto, aspettandone la censura,
che per istampa, presumendo della
sufficientia, humilissimamente inchinandosi
alla sacrata mano le offerisce il

Di S. S. Maestà

hum^{mo} e fedelissimo suddito
et servitore

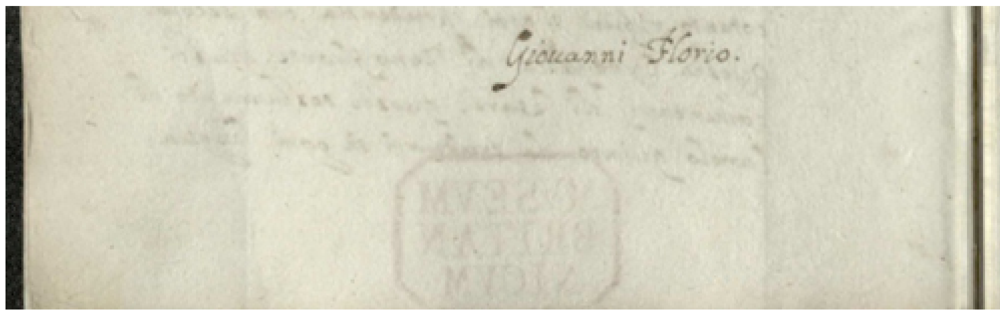

Figure 2a and 2b: The dedication

The distinctive trait of Florio's particular tribute to the king, 'Emulo di ogni Cesarea Maestà' [the equal of all Caesarian Majesty] hinges upon his extolling the king's writing skills: 'I fatti benché vittoriosi (disse Catone) sono utili, e durano solo un'età: ma scritti cotanto ripieni d'ogni prudentia, ogni secolo' [Although victorious events are useful (said Cato), they only last an age: but writings full of so much wisdom, all the centuries]. Indeed, in his writings on the subject of regality, James (as theoretician and king), reiterated the substantial connection between writing and power:**[12]** as Jonathan Goldberg argued in his pioneering *James I and the Politics of Literature*, in King James's doctrine of regality and exercise of power, 'writing represents authority' (Goldberg 1989: xi), and Florio patently confirms this by the wording of his dedication. The authority of the king was literally founded on writing, and the notion was spelt out again, for instance, in a speech to the English Parliament delivered in 1607, four years after the successful second edition of the *BD*:

> Here I sit and gouerne it (scil. Scotland) with my Pen, I write and it is done, (…) which others could not doe by the sword (…) Iames the first, bred here in England, brought the Lawes thither in a written hand. (McIlwain 1965: 301)

The king writes, and thus dominates the world, imprinting it with his seal. As a book, on the other hand, the *BD* is rather to be taken by its addressee as a companion and friend, with James inaugurating a pedagogy of writing which is coherently presented throughout his manual.**[13]** At the beginning of Book III of the *BD*, the section dealing with 'a Kings Behaviour in Indifferent Things', James enlists "writing" among the things classed as indifferent but in fact necessary, and goes into a detailed description of the style to which the king-to-be should seek to conform:

> Now as to your writing, which is nothing else, but a forme of en-registrate speech; use a plaine, short, but stately stile, both in your Proclamations and missiues, especially to forraine Princes (King James I 1603: 47).

Rather than starting, as might have been expected, with the king's letter to the Reader (which is entirely omitted), Florio's translation of the *BD* opens with an exercise in poetic translation provided by the introductory sonnet (Fig.3):

THE ARGVMENT
SONNET.
God giues not Kings the stile of Gods *in vaine,*
For on his throne his Scepter do they swey:
And as their subiects ought them to obey,
So Kings should feare and serue their God againe.
If then ye would enjoy a happie raigne,
Obserue the statutes of your heauenly King,
And from his Lawe, make all your Lawes to spring:
Since his Lieutenant here ye should remaine,
Reward the iust, be stedfast, true, and plaine,
Represse the proud, maintaining aye the right;
Walke always so, as euer in his sight,
Who guards the godly, plaguing the prophane:
And so ye shall in Princely vertues shine,
Resembling right your mightie King Diuine.

Sonetto di S.S.M. sopra il presente libro
A' Rè di Dei Dio non da il nome in vano.
Suo scettro nel suo soglio sostenendo;
Soggetti lor', lor ubidir' douendo,
A' Rè temer', seruir' lor' Dio è sano.
Se dunque vuoi felice esser' sourano
Del Rè celeste fa' detti riuerire;
Dalle sue leggi fa le tue leggi uscire;
Qui scritto viceré sei di sua mano.
Premia i giusti, sij pio, fermo e piano,
Doma i superbi, il dritto mantenendo;
Si sempr' andrai, com'al suo viso essendo.
Che guard'il giusto, castiga il profano;
Nelle Regal' virtù sì splenderai
Possent'Ethereo Rè rassembierai.

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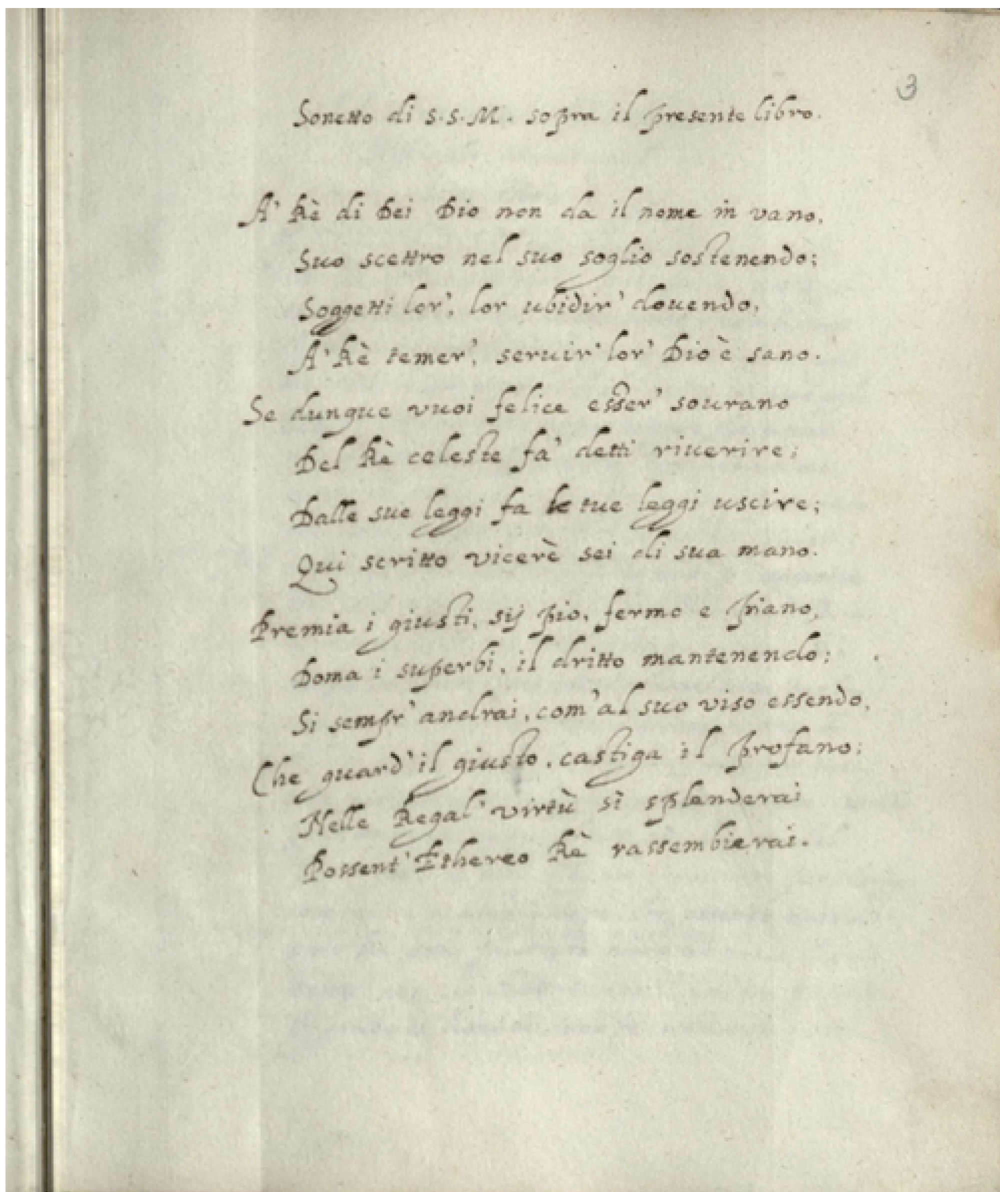

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Sonetto di S.S.M. sopra il presente libro.

A' Re di bei Dio non da il nome in vano,
Suo scettro nel suo soglio sostenendo:
Soggetti lor', lor ubidir' douendo,
A' Re temer', seruir' lor' Dio è sano.
Se dunque vuoi felice esser' sourano
Del Re celeste fa' detti riuerire;
Dalle sue leggi fa le tue leggi uscire;
Qui scritto vicerè sei di sua mano.
Premia i giusti, sij pio, fermo e piano,
Doma i superbi, il dritto mantenendo:
Si sempr' anelrai, com' al suo viso essendo,
Che guard' il giusto, castiga il profano:
Nelle Regal' virtù si splenderai
Possent' Ethereo Re rassembierai.

Figure 3: The introductory sonnet

James proposes the introductory sonnet as poetical equivalent of the theoretical and political programme of regality expounded in the entire pamphlet: the message to the prince and its ultimate educational aim is that a king should model himself on the style of the divinity, becoming a copy and deputy of God on earth. In the first quatrain, three entities, God, Kings, and subjects, are cast in a rigid hierarchical relation, as the simile suggests (ll.3-4): as subjects are called to pay obedience to Kings, so Kings are to God. The second stanza shifts the focus onto the addressee, Prince Henry, whose tasks are unambiguously detailed through a sequence of directives in the imperative which bridge over to the third quatrain, composing a clear-cut catalogue of duties to be accomplished ‘If then ye would enjoy a happie raigne’. The final couplet recapitulates the prince’s goal, as God’s “Lieutenant”, in the formula of a theory of resemblance.

Florio’s translation offers an interesting case in point of what, in current translational terms, would be defined as an example of both formal and/or dynamic equivalence (Nida 1964). On the one hand, he is anxious to render the royal author’s words and poetical structure as faithfully as possible; on the other hand, a ‘creative transposition’ (Jakobson 1959/2012:131) is needed to reach a persuasive similarity. The rhyming pattern in James’s composition follows the ABBA pattern that is typical of a sonnet, with the peculiarity that the first and last lines in each quatrain present the same rhyming sound /eI/ (1-4/ 5-8/9-12) and thus produce additional internal couplets at lines 4-5 and 8-9. The Italian sonnet achieves the same rhyming effect by the recurrent use of gerunds (‘sostenendo’, ‘douendo’, ‘mantenendo’, ‘essendo’), but also, somewhat unaccountably, reshuffles the word-order in the English sentence and greatly intensifies the bland alliterative pattern in the original to a dubious fourfold alliteration of “di”/”Dei”/”Dio”/”dà”, as appears in the following visualization:

English ST	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	God	giues	not	Kings	the stile	of Gods	in vaine
Literal transfer	1	3	2	4	5	6	7
	Dio	non	dà	Ai Re	lo stile	degli Dei	invano
Literary transfer	4	6	1	3	2	5	7

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A’ Rè di Dei Dio non da il nome In vano

There is more. On the same line Florio introduces a radical and seemingly unnecessary lexical shift where James’ ‘stile’ is rendered into Italian as ‘nome’ – which introduces a variant meaning and limits the semantic scope of the original term, whereas the simple use of ‘stile’(It) for ‘stile’ (En) would have permitted an inclusive interpretation: ‘style’ as a mode of expression both political and literary shared by God and Kings.**[14]**

The final paratextual section of the book is made up by James’s letter to Henry, the famous incipit of which is reproduced in Florio’s translation below:

TO HENRY
MY DEAREST
SONNE, AND
naturall Successor.

> WHome-to can so rightly appertaine this booke of instructions to a Prince in all the points of his calling, as well generall, as a Christian towards God; as particular, as a King towards his people? Whome-to, I say, can it so justly appertaine, as unto you my dearest Sonne? Since I the Authour thereof, as your naturall Father, must be carefull for your godly and vertuous education, as my eldest Sonne, and the first fruites of Gods blessing towards me in my posteritie: and as a King must timously prouide for your training up in all the pointes of a Kings Office; since yee are my naturall and lawfull successour therein; that being rightly enformed hereby, of the weight of your burthen, ye may in time begin to consider, that being borne to be a King, ye are rather borne to *onus,* then *honos.* (King James I 1603:4-5)
>
> *Ad Henrico mio dilettissimo figliuolo et natural’successore.* (4r)
>
> A chi può debitamente appartenere questo libro di istruttioni per un Prencipe, in tutte le particolarità della sua vocatione; tanto generali, come Christiano verso Iddio; quanto particolari, come Rè uerso il suo popolo? Achi (dico io) può egli piu giuridicamente appartenere, che a uoi mio dilettissimo figliuolo? Poscia che a me, autor’ di esso, come a uostro genitor’ naturale, conuiene esser’ sollecito per la uostra pia et virtuosa educatione, essendo mio primogenito figliuolo, e primitie della benedittione d’Iddio uerso me et la mia successione; e come Rè mi fa mestieri, proueder’ a buonhora per la vostra creanza in tutte le circostanze del debito et officio del Rè; stante che in esso uoi siete mio natural’ e legittimo successore: essendo perfettamente raguagliato ed istrutto del pondo postoui in su gl’homeri possiate per tempo cominciare a considerare, che essendo nato ad esser Rè, sete pitosto nato ad onus, che ad honos.
>
> [To whom can duly belong this book of instructions to a Prince, in all of the particulars of his calling; as much for the general, as a Christian towards God; as for the particular, as King towards his people? To whom (I say) can it rightfully belong, other than you my dearest son? Since it befits me, its author, as your natural parent, to be solicitous with regard to your pious and virtuous education, as my first-born son, and the first fruit of God’s blessing unto me and my succession; and as King it is my task to provide in good time to [shape] your manners in all of the circumstances of the duties and office of a King; given that therein you are my natural and legitimate successor; being perfectly briefed and instructed of the weight placed unto your humeri you may in [good] time begin to consider that being born to become King, you are rather born ad onus that ad honos.]

As different text-types, epistolary and expository prose, the letter and subsequent chapters in the pamphlet commanded distinct ‘translation tactics’ (Lefevere 1992:97-108); a call to which Florio responded with a translation of a quality as high and literal, as a text written by a living and reigning English king would demand: arguably, the higher the prestige of the original text, the greater was the strain on the translator to keep closely to the author’s lexicogrammar. However, Florio managed to bring inventiveness to the text and expertly altered the import of King James’s precepts so as to convey a message that his intended audience would comprehend.

We are sufficiently knowledgeable on translation practices from the period not to expect to find Florio’s notions regarding translation to be detailed in any particular treatise (Morini 2006; Denton 2016; Rhodes et al. 2013): what emerges lies in the paratextual apparatuses, such as the Preface, and the address to the reader in the *Essays*, out of which Florio’s ideas about translation emerge with some clarity. He thus refers to his target text as a ‘secondary creation’ and to himself as translator as a ‘foster-father’, ostensibly conforming to what we would regard a vertical model of translation. In his translation of *BD*, Florio confirms his tendency to comply with the reading habits of his age by operating on the plane of *elocution*; as translator, Florio thus adapts the author’s style of writing to his own, lending a new sound and rhythm to the text (Pellegrini 1961; Montini 2014). As Massimiliano Morini noted, ‘The English discovered that rhetorical translation also meant domestication, for the transformation of rhetorical elements of the original could be effected with an eye on the rights of the target language rather than of the original author. Of course, the paths of the new and the old freedom crossed in the Tudor era.’ (Morini 2006: 28). The text is domesticated to meet the expectations of its new target audience and the structured principle which shapes the enterprise is that of *copia*, increase, and crescendo, and what Puttenham would call ‘the “climbing” figure of *climax*, a scheme that presents a mounting over a series of words, clauses or sentences’ (Elam 1984: 252). While operating in different ways upon different linguistic levels (viz. phonemes, lexemes, word order, and syntax), Florio develops a homogeneous strategy of addition and expansion which closely resembles his previous work on Montaigne and is especially to be appreciated at the level of lexical choices (Iamartino 1992; Greenblatt, Platt 2014). Finally, Florio’s re-fashioning of *BD* is accomplished by recurring devices: the heaping of synonymic nouns, adjectives, and verbs; the constant explication of implicit meanings; the frequent addition of Italian proverbs, to cite the most conspicuous.

Examples are to be found scattered across the whole text: from the frontispiece, where ‘instructions’, ‘istruttioni’ is reinforced and doubled with ‘ammaestramenti’ [teachings] and where ‘His Maiesties’ is amplified with ‘della Serenissima Maestà d’Inghilterra, di Scozia, di Francia et d’Irlandia’; to the main text, where ‘My Sonne’ often becomes ‘*carissimo* figliuol mio’ [dearest son of mine]. As we scan the two texts, we find ‘which bannisheth shame’ (47) rendered with ‘che caccia ogni vergogna, o *rispetto*’ [which banishes all shame, or reserve] (f.12v.); ‘as in a mirrour’ with ‘*limpido* speglio’[clear mirror]; ‘when conscience is a sleepe’ with ‘quando la conscientia è addormentata e *sopita*’ [when conscience is asleep and slumbering]; ‘frame the common-weale euer to advance his particular’(57) with ‘formare et *indurre* la repubblica ad avuanzare et *secondare* il suo particolare’ [inform and induce the republic to pursue and second its particular] (f.15r); ‘the disorder of the country’ (65) with ‘la *confusione* e disordine del regno’ [the confusion and disorder of the kingdom] (f.17r); and so on. As the examples

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show, there is a pattern whereby one Italian term (usually the first) is a close match to the English word, while the other contributes a further explanatory note (Pellegrini 1966: 25-38).

However much he may wish to tread with all due caution and diplomacy around his king's words, Florio's didactic *penchant* ultimately prevails upon the text as a form of domestication. A proverb is thus first rendered almost word for word, with some expansion, but then further translated into an Italian equivalent:

> Yet is it euill to get out of the fleshe, that is bred in the bone, as the olde proverb sayeth. Be very ware then in making choise of your seruantes and companie (King James 1603:107)
>
> Egli è nondimeno cosa difficile a cauar'della carne quello che è generato nelle ossa, o come dice qull'antico e trito prouerbio Italiano. Quello che s'ha da natura, fino alla fossa dura. Siate dunque molto circospetto ed aueduto nel' far'elletione de' vostri seruenti e seguaci (31r-31v).
>
> [It is nonetheless difficult to get out of the flesh that which is generated in the bone, or as that ancient and trite Italian proveb says. That which is given to us by Nature, lasts to the grave. Be thus very circumspect and provident in making the choice of your servants and retinue]

Again, in a final example, Florio appears to have placed a new interpretation on certain concepts (or did the original meaning escape him?):

> As for the particular poynts of Religion, I neede not to dilate them; I am no hypocrite, follow my footesteppes, and your own present education therein. I thanke God, I was neuer ashamed to giue account of my profession, *howsoeuer the malitious lying tongues of some haue traduced me.* (King James I 1603:6, my emphasis).
>
> Circa i punti particolari di Religione, non accade che io mi stenda molto: io non sono hipocrito, seguite le mie vestigia, e la vostra presente educatione in essa. Io rendo gratie a Dio, che non hebbi mai vergogna di render' conto della mia professione; comunque *le maligne et mendaci lingue d'alcuni m'habbiano trafitto, o cerco d'infamarmi*. (7v)
>
> [As for the particular points of Religion, it needs not that I write at length; I am not a hypocrite, follow my steps and your present education in it. I give thanks to God, that I never felt shame in accounting for my profession; however the malign and mendacious tongues of some have have speared me or have sought to defame me]

In the ST the author plays on the semantic connection between "tongues" and "translation", whereas in Florio the characteristics of the tongues are doubled ('maligne and mendaci') [malign and mendacious] and their effects amplified ("*m'habbiano trafitto, o cerco d'infamarmi*") [have speared me or seek to defame me]. Thus, losing the original pun, Florio makes up by introducing a new one which transparently refers back to the familiar adage, "Ne ferisce più la lingua che la spada" [the tongue injures more (of them) than the sword].

Political lexicon and semantic domains

In his translation of the *BD*, Florio gives special attention to the political lexicon which occurs throughout the pamphlet, but especially in Book II. Arguably, the circulation of Italian political treatises played a special role in the development of English domestic political discourse, resulting in what has been appropriately called a 'Machiavellian moment' (Pocock 1975). Through the works of such influential writers as Niccolò Machiavelli, Francesco Guicciardini, and Baldassare Castiglione, Italian doctrines regarding statecraft were absorbed, debated, or challenged (as the case would have it) and the premises were established for 'Italian *politica* [to provide] both vocabulary and historical examples for the persistent domestic debates about sovereignty, crisis, and national identity' (Redmond 2009:3). The definition supplied by John Florio of the word *politica* in his 1598 Italian dictionary focused specifically on the *textual* dissemination of political theory from Italy across to England: 'a booke written of policie, or touching the ciuill government of a state'. (Florio 1598:283)

A few examples of political lexicon will illustrate the breadth of Florio's peculiar understanding of the terms involved: 'calling', besides 'vocatione' [vocation] (14r), is also translated 'funtione' [function/role]; 'a burthen of government' received from God, is rendered with 'un'assunto di governo'[a taking upon (oneself) of government] (14v) where "assunto" in his 1598 *Dictionary* may be "charge" or "office": in both cases a more technical word attenuates the emphasis on responsibility and the almost physical and spiritual effort of government conveyed by James's lexical choices. Likewise for "affections", which in the English text come significantly close to "appetite" (King James I 1603: 4-5) and obviously refer to the irrational drives possessing human beings, which in Florio's manuscript may be designated as 'attioni' [actions] (7r). Interestingly, "popolo" (usually translating "people") is also used to translate "neighbour" and "kingdom" – the former first occurring where James refers to the service to God, and being lifted out of the Gospel (thus "il prossimo" [neighbour], in Italian):

> nothing else, but the exercise of Religion towards God, and of equitie towards your *neighbour*" (King James I 1603:5, my emphasis),
>
> il che non è altro, che un essercitio di religione verso Dio, e di equità uerso il vostro *popolo*. (7v).
>
> [which is nothing else, than an exercise of religion towards God and of equity towards your people]

In the second example, Florio's choice seems to attenuate the political slant in order to stress the bond between James and his people:

> and if my conscience had not resolued me, that all my Religion presently professed by me and my *kingdome*. (King James I 1603: 6, my emphasis)
>
> et se la mia conscienza non m'hauesse chiarito, che tutta la religione, della quale ed io ed il mio *popolo* facciamo hora professione [...]
>
> [and if my conscience had not clarified to me, that all of the Religion, of which both I and my people make now profession]

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There are two major keywords, however, namely *common-weal* and *republic*, which may be usefully sought throughout the text both for the meaning to which they alluded in the English early modern context and for the special significance they were attributed in connection with Italian political *maîtres à penser*, like Machiavelli or Guicciardini.

Across early modern Europe the dominance of the monarchic tradition did not exclude a 'republican discourse', whose keywords drew on classical texts, like Cicero or Plutarch, which had a great influence on political ideas. The commonweal/th family of words and variants forms –*common-weal*, *common-weale*, *common-weale*, *commonwealth* --, were keywords of English constitutional culture from the fourteenth to the mid-seventeenth century: as compound words, they carried an implicit meaning of Englishness which testifies to the remarkable development and enrichment of the English vernacular; they were not to be intended as a synonym of *state*, but preserved the original meaning of 'good things to all people' to the extent that the actual form of government (whether this be monarchy, republic, or else) was in a sense secondary to the benefits it was expected to bring to the commonwealth: in other words, the governing body of the state was to serve this greater community (Rollison 2010).**[15]** The most recurrent variant out of the ten occurrences in the second book of the *BD* is the form *commonweale*/*common-weale*, which Florio tends to translate *repubblica/republica,* even when a form of the word *republic* also occurs in the same context, as in the following example:

> will then frame the Common-weale ever to advance his particular: building his suretie upon his peoples miserie; and in the end (as a step-father and an uncouth hireling) makeup his owne hand upon the ruines of the Republicke (King James I 1603: 25-26)
>
> a formare et indurre la *repubblica* ad auanzare et secondare il suo particolare; fondando la sua sicurezza sopra la miseria de' suoi sudditi, ed in ultimo (come patrigno e mercenario) attende ad arricchirsi con la ruina della *republica*. (15r; my emphasis).
>
> [to form and induce the republic to further and second its particular; founding its security upon the misery of its subjects, and in the end (as step-father and mercenary) seeks to become rich from the ruin of the republic.]

Florio has rephrased the sentence by adopting his usual doubling of verbs, but also using "republica" to translate "Common-weal" as well as "Republicke", since at the beginning of the seventeenth century they were still regarded as equivalent, and the term *republic* had not specialized to designate a 'republic' in the modern sense. However, the Italian term "republica" may acquire an additional connotation in Florio's political context which alludes to republicanism and republican ideas. As Andrew Hadfield has persuasively argued:

> Republicanism was either directly or indirectly a central feature of English political life from the early sixteenth century onwards. The arguments of the "commonwealth men", a group of reformers influenced by Italian humanist ideals and keen to reform administrative and constitutional structures, as well as public life in England, can be seen as the first significant entry of republicanism into English political thought (Hadfield 2004:8)**[16]**

The "Italian humanist ideals" were unquestionably part of the cultural legacy which Florio, as the "Inglese italianato", represented and almost personified in Elizabethan England. If it is impossible to envisage a Republican Florio, his choice to translate "Common-weal" as "republica" seems to evoke contextualized interpretations, and it may even allude to specific political programmes which the contemporary reader, the European and learned recipient in this case, could easily understand. In this perspective, Florio's translation followed a strategy of domestication in which the translator was able to cloak his authorial voice behind the mask of royal authority, presenting the royal precepts to the humanist, Italian-speaking world.

Conclusions

In a culturally oriented perspective, Peter Burke suggests six crucial questions to be answered for a correct analysis of early modern translations: 'Who translates? With what intentions? What? For whom? In what manner? With what consequences?' (Burke 2007a:11). If we follow his guidelines, the case study discussed in the essay, John Florio's translation of King James I's *Basilikon Doron*, seems to have offered interesting answers to understand the potential role and function in the political context both of the original text and of its translation into Italian, the language of humanistic prestige, along with Latin, in Elizabethan England and early modern Europe.

By contrast with the history of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and as for the *Essays*, Florio overtly accepts and declares the paternity of this translation and does not hesitate over whether to sign his work, presumably in the desire to tightly link his life and fortune to the new king; this aim and the ingrained courtly nature of Florio's connections, both scholarly and social, certainly explains a lot about the intentions with which the translation was made. This explanation, however, cannot be taken very far. Arguably, the number of languages and translators involved in the enterprise to spread the news about the English monarch's political ideas testify to the relevance of an event which was potentially influential on politics in many European courts. Florio, the most prestigious Italian-speaking teacher and lexicographer, Montaigne's translator and a celebrity in Elizabethan London, was certainly considered the most authoritative voice to convey the English royal word into 'the linguistic and cultural world of the Italian *cinquecento*' (Wyatt 2010: 75). His style was well known and accepted as a form of refinement of the English language, with his usual arsenal of devices typical of Euphuism, and 'translation-as-domestication' could hardly find a better rendering. The royal court was certainly intended as the first audience: Florio's aristocratic patrons had been restored to their power by the new king and his reputation was at its peak; Italian ambassadors at the Stuart court, from Venice or from Tuscany, could be the ideal receptors as well as vehicles of transmission to their Italian masters of the king's political theory of regality and especially of his future political strategies rendered in Italian (Kyle 2012; Petrina forthcoming). However, things turned out differently and both the original book and Florio's translational enterprise, apparently endowed with the most qualified components to make it a success, faced a number of failures. The Pope put the *BD* on the Index; Henry, the first elected addressee, died prematurely in 1612 and the booklet had to be re-addressed to James's second son, the future Charles I, who would die in a few years, defeated and beheaded by the first European revolution against a monarchy. John Florio's translation, beautifully hand-written by the renowned Italian master, was destined not to be printed and disseminated among the courts of Europe, nor among the Italian courts; and in the absence of a wide and renewed audience, it almost disappeared from view.

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Notes

[1] Elizabethan England saw a great increase in the translation of continental printed books, and there was a particularly growing demand for texts of Italian origin as 'by the second half of the century Italian had overtaken French as the prestigious language to be acquired by the elite, due in no small part to Elizabethan Italophilia' (Armstrong 2007:42). The remarkable growth in printed English translations during the XVI century has been shown by the Warwick *Renaissance Cultural Crossroads* database, which provides the following figures: 1560-1569:370 published titles; 1570-1579: 57; 1580-1589:615; 159-1599:611. Hosington, Brenda et al. *Renaissance Cultural Crossroads* **http://www.hrionline.ac.uk** [accessed 14 December 2017].

[2] Craigie dated the manuscript to 1603 (Craigie 1944-1950, vol.2: 171), although others tend to be more uncertain about the date. See Wyatt 2010.

[3] King James I's *BD* is included among the few cases of translations from Renaissance England to the continent before the 1660s. See Burke 2004: 115-117.

[4]In fact, Wormald (1991) claims that the multiple translations from Middle Scots into English contributed to remarkable misreadings and misunderstandings among the English subjects, and for this reason James decided to add a 'Preface to the Reader' in the 1603 London edition of *BD*.

[5] Letter from Robert Parsons to the Pope, Vatican Library, Rome, *Fondo Borghese*, iv.95. 'Most Blessed Father, herewith you will find enclosed the last pages of the king of England's book in translation, ordered by Your Holiness. The Father who translated it is a learned and trusty man; he tried to express the author's true meaning, and render sensum sensui; all that is left is [to send] our prayer to God (and we do pray) that in his government the King may carry out all the good things written in his book, and amend those which because of his education have not been enlightened by the divine light so far, or which he has not opened his eyes to yet; and we do hope he will perform all this in due time and with the help of divine Grace and Your holiness. Therefore we pray for Your Holiness' long and prosperous life, that God, mundi salvator, may preserve. Humbly I kiss your holy feet. Your very humble servant, Robert Parsons' (my translation).

[6] However, a few studies have drawn attention to translations in manuscript and to their cultural influence in early modern Europe. See Love 1993; Bouza 2001.

[7]Gift exchanges in the early modern period often had much to do with power and patronage. This was especially true in the gift exchanges to monarchs and also between them (See Levin 2018).

[8] In Italy Florio's translation had escaped the scholars' attention until Giuliano Pellegrini accurately introduced and transcribed the manuscript in his *John Florio e il Basilikon Doron di James VI: un esempio inedito di versione elisabettiana*, (1961).

[9] 'The early modern book is of course a supremely expressive object in and of itself' (Armstrong 2015: 78) and tells much about the scope and purpose of a text. In the last two decades focus on the book as an object rather than merely as the text in translation, inaugurated by scholars like D.F.McKenzie, Roger Chartier, Jerome McGann, has moved the debate out to the margins of the page and beyond, investigating the ways in which the text is informed by its material and historical contexts and the transformations that can occur as it moves from reader to reader. (Armstrong 2014:4). If one pays due observance to the cultural turn encouraged by bibliographical studies and represented by the frameworks of textual studies and of the history of the book, the peculiar story of the *BD* qua book adds an interesting dimension to its circulation.

[10] Recent studies within the area of descriptive and functionalist Translation Studies have put the spotlight on the role played by the reproduction and visual lay-out in early modern translation books, especially in bilingual textual examples (Kress/Van Leeuwen 1996; Coldiron 2012; Armstrong 2013). 'The book as object thus serves as a way into the many histories of the mobile text in its production, reception and dissemination over time'. (Armstrong 2015: 78).

[11] To the most sacred and serene King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, enduring happiness and most peaceful reign. As one would to Caesar, so - if your Majesty will forgive my being so bold - I believe one may say to the equal of all Caesarian Majesty; Those who dare not speak to the King, will never know His clemency; but those who do, will never regret having approached their Majesty. The same audacity must encourage me and uplift my spirits, since I have been so bold as to present none other than His own compositions to His most sacred Majesty, who, as he has done such great things as to be remembered among the greatest, has also set down admirable concepts for all to read; which would make even Pliny most happy. Facts, however victorious (as Cato said) are useful, and last only one age; but when they are written down, and guided by the virtue of prudence, they will last for all ages. This Cyropaedia by Xenophon; these Commentaries by Caesar; this testament of Charles the fifth to be translated in every language; [2v] even more, these instructions by Constantine Leo to his Caesarean son (until today preserved like treasure in Venice), now indited pending your censoring, then in print if they are acceptable – most humbly are offered, kneeling to your most sacred Hand, the humble and faithful servant of your Majesty, Giovanni Florio. (my translation)

[12] Writing was part of the prince's education and specific manuals were compiled to cultivate both how to write and how to indite, as necessary abilities to shape a noble and regal identity. Among the most well known handwriting manuals: Jean de Beau Chesne and John Baildon, *A Book Containing Divers Sortes Of Hands* (1602); Peter Bales and John Davies of Hereford, *The Writing Schoolmaster* (1590); Martin Billingsley, *The Pens Excellencie or The Secretaries Delight* (1618). See also Goldberg 1990.

[13] In the letter to the Reader, which Florio does not include in its translation, James writes: 'It only rests to pray thee (charitable Reader) interprete fauourably *this birth of mine*, according to integritie of the author, and

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not looking for perfection the work itself. (...) and specially that since *it was first written in secret*, and is now published, not of ambition, but of a kinde of necessitie;it must be taken of all men, for *the trew image of my very minde*, *and forme of the rule*, which I haue prescribed to my selfe and mine.' (*BD*, p.1, my emphasis). And in a letter to Prince Henry in 1603: 'My son, I am glad that by your letter I may perceive that ye make some progress in learning, although I suspect ye have rather written than indited it. For I confess I long to receive a letter from you that made be wholly yours, as well matter, as form, as well formed by your mind as drawn by your fingers.' (Akrigg 1984:219-220).

[14] My thanks go to the anonymous reviewers to the article who brought to my attention a possible translation strategy which may reveal both foreignizing and domesticating tendencies: in Florio's Italian version, on the one hand, the sonnet is not rendered into the Italian Petrarchan structure (two quatrains and two tercets), but keeps the English lay-out (three quatrains and one couplet), with a foreignizing effect of the translation as a whole; on the other hand, Florio uses hendecasyllables, which seem to reproduce the rhythm of iambic pentameters and result in a functional equivalent with a domesticating aim.

[15] In *Oxford English Dictionary* the first meaning of both words 'Common weal/commonweal' and 'commonwealth' is respectively 1. Common well-being; esp. the general good, public welfare, prosperity of the community; and 1. Public welfare; general good and advantage, see Commonweal (**www.oed.com/view/Entry/37260** e **www.oed.com/view/Entry/372601** , last access: 20/11/2017).

[16] On republicanism in early modern England see also: Worden 1991; Peltonen 1995.

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