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Charting the Future of Translation History

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Microhistory of Translation

The problem of historical awareness in research concerned with translation is — this is my main assumption — an issue which still deserves a great deal of reflection and investigation. I believe that the challenges posed by historical paradigms and historiographic models can open the study of translation to the dimension of the past with the whole deep, intricate and problematic nexus of questions it brings along with it. In the considerations that follow I would like to take up some of these questions with reference to clues offered by a particular paradigm, that of microhistory, and interrelate them with the claims and the issues at stake in translation history.

Since the mid-1970s, microhistory has proposed that historical research seek out and define different, diverse — possibly new — historical subjects, such as the circumscribed phenomena of human agency maintained in sharp focus against the abstractions of sociologically or institutionally inspired history.¹ Microhistorians have privileged the study of marginal individual cases in their “normal exceptional”²

transgressions of what is commonly described as the mainstream continuity in the understanding of the past. To this end, researchers have drawn attention to documents and archives previously neglected or read with purposes different from those that, for instance, allowed historian Carlo Ginzburg to bring to light the “cosmos of a Sixteenth century miller” (the title of one of his most famous “microhistorical” accounts [1976]). In line with the general debate about history, this movement has stimulated not only a rethinking of issues regarding sources and archives, but also a redefinition of the relationship with the past as a fragmentary dialogue, and an awareness of the narrative nature of history in relation to the subjective position of the historian.

How can these issues concern translation history? As a preliminary step to answering this question, I believe that some remarks on the role of historical awareness in translation history are needed.

Historical awareness

Translation history is at a point where history in general, after the optimistic approaches of the so-called *Nouvelle Histoire*, is faced with doubts and questions: the loss of trust in certainty and quantification, the abandonment of traditional periodizations of historical topics, or the questioning of categories (social classes, professional classifications) or strong interpretative models (Marxist, structuralist, or whatever). Yet history is still there. There has, of course, been Foucault’s (1969) dismissal of “history” in favour of an “archaeology” of knowledge; but the constant of his thought, though it underwent several transformations during his lifetime, can be found in an attempt to historicize the great abstractions and reformulate them in the realm of social and historical constructions. And there has also been the deconstructionist dismissal of the metaphysical subject, but this, perhaps paradoxically, has opened the possibility of identifying new, different players that acted in the past and were not recognized as such. The post-structuralist approach found its radical epilogue in statements and perspectives which have changed the way history looks at itself. For instance, we have Richard Rorty’s

(1991) claim that truth, and above all any supposed historical truth, is entirely dependent on context, and thus a historian should never impose her own truth upon another's. Or Hayden White's awareness of what he has called "the content of the form" (1987), the positivistic narrative models that trap the writing of history within the linearity of accounts which present the world as a coherency, on its way from a "beginning" to an "end."

Taking into account all these problems, even "au bord de la falaise" (on the brink of ruin) as Roger Chartier (1998), after Michel de Certeau, described the present condition of historical research, historians have put forward an understanding of historical truth and objectivity which admits that it is impossible for any research to be neutral and accepts the fact that seeking knowledge involves a struggle among diverse, even material, factors. For example, Dominick LaCapra in 1985 brought forward this list of related concerns central to historiography:

The complex nature of history as a dialogical exchange both with the past and with others inquiring into it; the role of critical theory in historical understanding; the relation of historiography to other disciplines; and the need for historians to respond creatively to newer challenges in contemporary thought. (LaCapra 1985, 9)

Not that what I proposed to consider as the problem of historical awareness has not been taken into account in relation to translation history. Since the 1990s in translation studies there has been, on the one hand, a significant increase in research that explicitly defines itself as "history of translation," and, on the other, various attempts at establishing a specific methodological frame capable of pointing out possible future developments as well as current failures and deficiencies. In particular, scholars involved in descriptive translation studies have repeatedly highlighted the underdevelopment of historical reflection and historical research in the field of translation studies. For instance, in 1992 Anthony Pym wrote a "complaint concerning the lack of history in Translation histories" and in 1993 José Lambert outlined a programme of research to

be done in relation to history, historiography and the discipline.

Lieven D'hulst (1996) focused on methodological questions in the historiography of translation, pointing out the need for historical awareness in the definition of an interdisciplinary field of study and in the understanding of origins and development of ancient and modern theories. To D'hulst, the acquisition of a truly historical dimension is related to the consideration of traditionally neglected sources and correlated disciplines, a productive interaction between contemporary and historical concepts beyond progress-oriented models, and the awareness of a "paradigm" within the field of studies.³ Together with this, D'hulst on a number of occasions underlined (1991, 1993, 2001) the need to practice an epistemologically conscious historiography of translation theories, in order to put forward a metalinguistic understanding of the historicity of the study of translation both in the past and in the present, but also with the aim of avoiding the indirect effect of confining "the role of the historian to that of a mere subsidiary, a presenter or an illustrator" (D'hulst 1993, 83; our translation). For the historian of translation, only from a theoretically grounded reflection does the awareness of the variety of possible "methods of historiography" derive. And the next step forward from this awareness is the consideration of the "almost overwhelming" range "of possible categories of historical facts." As D'hulst states (2001, 4), in translation history, "although anything in fact is a candidate, not everything is a relevant candidate *a priori*" to become an object of study. There is no neutral choice in this sense. As Toury writes in this regard:

Far from being a neutral procedure, establishing an object of study is necessarily a function of the *theory* in whose terms it is constituted, which is always geared to cater for certain needs. Its establishment and justification are therefore intimately connected with the *questions* one wishes to pose, the possible *methods* of dealing with the objects of study with an eye to those questions — and, indeed, the kind of *answers* which would count as admissible. (Toury 1995, 23)

Therefore, when history is involved, different methods of historiography and historical theories relate to different objects of study. I wish now to try to reflect on what a microhistorical perspective can add to these considerations.

New objects of study

With the advent of microhistory, what came explicitly to light was a claim to novelty in history that consisted in a reduction of the scale of historical research, seen as more rewarding than the massive accumulation of repetitive evidence in order to isolate and test many abstractions of social or economic thought (Muir 1991, viii). This way individual experiences, voices lost in the past, apparently irrelevant exceptional cases took the centre of the stage. Even when microhistorians have studied great, famous men, such as Galileo Galilei, they have focused on obscure clues that have traditionally been ignored or dismissed as insignificant.

When looking at works and research that, explicitly or implicitly, claim to define themselves as histories of translation, in most cases one can find a common general concern not far removed from the microhistorical goal to discover or rediscover previously neglected subjects, alien to the grand narratives of traditional history. Even a quick survey of a number of these works provides grounds to say that they all try to highlight — albeit from different perspectives and with different specific aims — the neglect of translation's role as a cultural practice, and of translators as cultural agents, by historical investigation seeking to define a coherent and organic cultural history in which the shifts of boundaries between and within cultures are deliberately denied.

Indeed, it is in these issues and perspectives that historians of translation find prime motivation for their research. For instance, Pym (1998) advances a "hypothesis projecting intercultural belonging," on the basis of which he claims that writing a history of translation is necessary to the priorities of current intercultural stances, in order that the past may be read from the point of view of central issues of the present. Another example: Tymoczko, in *Translation in a Postcolonial Context*, places at the

centre of her interest translation's role as a tool for investigating the colonization and decolonization of Irish culture. More specifically, she writes that her volume

investigates the translation of early Irish literary texts as one of the discursive practices that contributed to freeing Ireland from colonialism, a discursive practice that took its place among other discursive practices that shaped Ireland's resistance to England and led eventually to political action and physical confrontation (Tymoczko 1999, 15).

Yet already Antoine Berman had focused, within romantic culture, on the translational dimension because it was in that space that he tried to recover "une autre dimension littéraire" (Berman 1984) opposed to monologism and absolutist self-reflection, a dimension where history, ethics, and analytical practices could be linked in view of a dialogical relationship (in a sense close to the formulation of Mikhail Bakhtin). And Lawrence Venuti's reuse of Schleiermacher's theory in the binary opposition of domesticating and foreignizing translation strategies serves the agenda of denouncing the invisibility of translators in what he calls "a history of translation" (this being the subheading of his well-known 1995 book). Even more explicit in referring to the dimension of otherness is Michael Cronin in his 1996 *Translating Ireland*, which he describes as "a history of encounters" (Cronin 1996, 1) wherein the role of translators as creative and inventive mediators has been largely ignored in traditional reconstructions. He claims to have highlighted, through his historical approach, the necessity of considering "the presence of the other" and to have made "a case for dialogue and renewal" (Cronin 1996, 200), receptiveness, reciprocity, and so forth. All this, and we have still not mentioned those works that highlighted the role translation played in the assertion of women's awareness as oppositional to dominant ideologies (such as Krontiris 1992 or, more recently, Agorni 2002).

Therefore, generally speaking, it can be affirmed that the first commitment of translation history has been the desire to highlight the

disrupting role translation played in cultural history, posing it as the exceptional case that goes against traditional, consolidated, but never neutral reconstructions.

These claims against traditional reconstructions have for many decades now been at stake in the general debate about history. In particular there has been an awareness of the fact that historical coherence is actually gained through marginalizing and suppressing anything not leading in a definite, teleological direction, through according privilege only to certain perspectives and subjects, and, instrumentally, through affirming or denying cultural boundaries. Traditional reconstructions were founded on the telling of a peculiar Western "story," based on a success- and progress-oriented model aimed at the neutralization of various forms of otherness and diversity.

As I said, translation in history is often presented as an alternative view, as a perspective that reveals new aspects of the past. But it is possibly in order to prove these assumptions via strong, acceptable evidence that more striking, high-profile topics of investigation have been privileged with a prominent focus on what could be called "canonized," visible topics, issues, subjects, and events. Because if we consider the paradigm that identifies a continuity between past and current translation histories we find in most of them, almost paradoxically, a particular emphasis placed on explicit theorizations, on translations purposefully justified, on the visible interventions of translators as operators, regardless of the theoretical and methodological frames they refer to. For instance, Georges Mounin, in his *Teoria e storia della traduzione*, accords the role of "transforming translation into a concrete activity" only to Roman "systematic thought on the art and the craft of translating" (Mounin 1965; our translation). Hence, no translation before written theory. And this is especially true for Steiner's *After Babel*, purposefully directed towards establishing a canonized great tradition (in a strictly highbrow-Western-male sense) in translation history (Steiner 1975); or for Edmond Cary's *Grands traducteurs français*, whose very title is a declaration of intent (Cary 1963). But one may also think of Antoine Berman's insightful rereading of German translation theories

in the romantic period, where the main focus is on theoretical declarations by established intellectuals (Berman 1984); or, in the 1990s, of the various collections and anthologies of Western translation theories (from Robinson 1997 to Venuti 2000, for example), of translation theory in France from 1748 to 1847 (D'hulst 1990) and so on; or of the account in *Translators through History*, edited by Delisle and Woodsworth, that singles out the most significant episodes, meaning also the most visible.

From these different points of view some issues may remain marginalized: among others, translation strategies and practices that in the past were widely accepted but never theoretically systematized, translators' experiences carried on in the context of a generally underrated intellectual activity, interactions between production, circulation, and use of translations, and many other aspects of the discipline that could become objects of study in microhistorical terms. The key to this possibility — this is what I will try to discuss later on — is strictly linked to a dynamic and never problem-free questioning of the past.

In dialogue with the past

In fact, it was as a result of my research on eighteenth-century translations of novels in a cultural area defined as Italian that these questions came to my attention. That research aimed to describe and highlight the role of translation in the context of the rise and the inferior status of the modern novel as a genre in the eighteenth century, in relation to the formation of new audiences as well as new reading practices. The process of this formation was linked to a change in the rates of scholarship and literacy and to the growth of the publishing market. I argued that translations were addressed to a lower-middle standard of enlarged public (to the extent that we can label the eighteenth-century reading public as "low" or "wide") constituted mostly by women; they were an important factor for the definition of a female reading public which had not been considered as a separate entity before (Adamo 2001). It is in this regard that the function of translation had to be delineated through the analysis of different kinds of documentation: not only textual and

paratextual elements in the translations, but also the translators' own statements contained in prefaces and dedications, in their letters and memoirs, or in publishing data (when available).

Especially at the stages of corpus definition, collection of materials, and problem focusing, many facts came to light that failed to fit into any of the possible existing models. For instance, it was evident not only that many translations of my corpus-in-progress didn't define themselves as such — they were "hidden" translations just as the identity of the translators was in its turn often hidden behind a veil of anonymity or pseudonymity — but also that these translations seemed not to acknowledge the dictates of contemporary written, formalized theories, those that have been transmitted and canonized. It was not just a matter of "translators' (or translations') invisibility," as Venuti puts it, but of problematic, hardly identifiable, visibility. For instance, there was an intense theorizing about translation throughout the period I was taking into account, but explicit theory referred mainly to translation from the classical languages, Greek and Latin (Mari 1995; Gensini 1989), whereas nothing corresponded to the actual translation practices I was observing in the translated novels of my corpus. The widespread practice of translation or retranslation of novels (a new, not canonized, but increasingly more significant genre) from French into Italian had no previous grounds to refer to. It was a practice deeply rooted in the needs of the publishing market and in the demands of the active and creative cultural consumption of the readers. What I wanted to recover was the variety and the complexity of the translation practices far beyond established theories and norms.⁴ Problems included the translators' differing representations, their different ways of manifesting their presence and agency,⁵ and the challenge of grasping the traces of women readers in that setting.

All the necessary clues were hidden in the "normal exceptional" obscurity of the past. And the very idea of the obscurity I was dealing with came to me from the past. This is how a translator made her/his presence felt:

If the translation is not perfect . . . , readers, please, don't be surprised. Someone who was born, was brought up, and grew up in obscurity can't distinguish her/himself too much. (Benoiste 1771)

The focus on the problems set by the choice of the object of study is linked to a condition of historical work that, while it may imply naïveté, is nevertheless undeniable: the historian's most distinctive problem is that posed by temporality itself. In microhistory, for example, new and alternative objects of studies clearly represent just fragments of the past and never aspire to grasp its totality. But actually, they offer an alternative method for the evaluation of historical evidence through what Carlo Ginzburg has called the conjectural paradigm — that is, an apparently systematic way to sort out fragmentary clues through abduction (Ginzburg 2000 [1979]). This use of minority approaches that call for interdisciplinary methodologies avoids the dangers of constructing grand narratives a priori. The past remains undeniably other, something virtually unknowable with which the historian can only negotiate her investigations in order to have a glimpse of what Natalie Zemon Davis (1981) has called "the social creativity of the so-called inarticulate."

The questioning of the past in these terms is not an issue taken for granted in translation history. In 1993 Paul St-Pierre recognized that the relation between history and translation can be considered in two different ways: on the one hand, one can interrogate this relation in order to get a better knowledge of the origins of translation; on the other, the intertwining of these two elements can lead to the definition of the contexts in which translation practices take place and of the influence the contexts exert on the practices (St-Pierre 1993, 9). From this differentiation St-Pierre has drawn the consideration that, of these two different approaches, only the former actually has something to do with the awareness of the past as such, since "*l'importance du contexte en traduction peut être démontrée par une étude strictement synchronique*" (the importance of context in translation can be demonstrated by a strictly synchronic study; St-Pierre 1993, 9; our translation). And if we

move from theory to practice, taking as an example Pym's *Negotiating the Frontier*, we can see that, actually, this relation becomes virtually problem free. First of all, Pym declares that his study of single cases is transparently linked to the possibility of addressing "issues of a more general nature beyond the concerns of local colour and narrow historical representations" (Pym 2000, 1). Then he admits that the real purpose of his investigation is not the past but the present question of "how cultures should interrelate," and history has the only instrumental role in helping to answer that question. The paradigm of investigation adopted by Pym not only deliberately avoids taking into account the problem of what can be described as anachronism but also explicitly configures an effacement of the dimension of otherness of the past.

The assumption in microhistory is that the past is utterly alien to the present and it is not just there ready to answer our questions, as Pym states. According to Ginzburg, (as explained by Muir 1991, xii), for example,

the proper goal of the historian is not to explore the historical implications of a contemporary theory or problem, but to write about things that are totally forgotten and completely irrelevant to the present, to produce a history that is 'really dead.'

Naturally, this is a rather utopian goal and it has been very much criticized both by those who still try to elaborate a strong, totalizing model for the knowledge of the past and by those who believe that history is nothing but narrative representation. However, even a critic of Ginzburg such as Dominick LaCapra⁶ has warned that "the past is not an 'it' in the sense of an objectified entity that may either be neutrally represented in and for itself or projectively reprocessed in terms of our narrowly 'presentist' interest" (LaCapra 1987, 10).

In this sense the model of microhistorical analysis is particularly challenging also for the history of translation, because it helps to highlight some naive beliefs in the possibility of a transparent instrumental history and offers a dialogic hermeneutic dimension from where to start

asking new questions without overstating or idealizing the notion of dialogue itself. In fact, the dialogue does not take place with the past itself but with material remains that need to be interrogated as evidence in order to produce what is considered historical knowledge.

Sources and archives

Naturally, it is the historian's questioning that turns the material remains from the past into evidence, for evidence is only evidence in relation to a particular account. But is there any influence of the past on the historian involved in these operations? As Joyce Appleby and others have observed, for the historian any kind of knowledge depends on the attempt to figure out the past (Appleby et al. 1994). Records are left by people who themselves lived in that past. Yet the records are extant in the present. The past as a series of events is gone. What stay on visibly in the present are the physical traces of past living, the materials or objects that historians turn into evidence when they begin asking questions. Accordingly, how much and in what ways do the material remains of the past affect the researcher whose principal task is to reconstruct, interpret, and preserve artefacts from the past?

I believe that translation history is deeply concerned with these issues since the generalized marginality of translation practices has prevented records from being linked in the present in a systematized, recognizable way. Catalogues, archives, libraries dedicated to translation are rare if they exist at all; records of translators' experiences have not often been conserved and passed on. Translators are only in a few cases easily identifiable individuals whose experiences left clear records that we still have access to; consequently, the records sometimes have to be searched for elsewhere than in traditional sources and recognized archives.

The dominating practices of the past, along with their present reproduction, may still be operating an effacement of more silent experiences and subjects. Sources in translation history are often the result of a process of negotiation between the fundamental intention with

which documents were conserved and the struggle to establish a dialogue with what fell out of that intention. Questions of selectivity and the significance of documents are always at stake when dealing with an object of study such as "translation," which actually tends to be erratic, heterogeneous, and idiosyncratic, and thus constantly questions the definitions attributed to it. Instead of aspiring to objective documentary reconstructions which look for "facts" about some "reality" in an acritically conceived past and emphasize coherence and continuity, we can take another approach. The more fundamentally sound effort might be to recover the many silenced voices of translation without imposing an overly strict interpretive model that would efface their complexity and richness.

Recovering the voice of marginal subjects on the grounds of fragmented and apparently minor data was not only the first commitment of microhistory but was also very present to Michel Foucault when he, for example, devoted himself to the study of "la vie des hommes infâmes" (the lives of infamous men; Foucault 2001). Microhistorians evinced the same fascination and involvement as Foucault, also in an emotional sense, with the exceptional liveliness and transgressive energy that emanated from obscure lives whose traces remained trapped in the archives. And both wanted to see there a subversive potential for confronting power. But if Ginzburg, for example, conceded the employment of philological evidence (albeit in unconventional ways) in order to use archival documents in the writing of history, Foucault was very critical of verification standards deriving from a modern scientific discourse that refamiliarizes the past so it conforms to the terms of the present. He was looking for an accurate way of resorting to archives which does not essentialize, but considers them critically, and starts at points where the documents are more problematic, opaque, and alien as the only way to let lost voices speak for themselves.⁷

On these premises, Arlette Farge has stated that the historian should try to find the right place in her writing for quotations, words drawn from the past that in historical writing could represent the presence of a difference, of a real gap (Farge 1989). It is probably not the same to tell

the story of an obscure translator from the point of view of the ego of the historian or from a seemingly neutral third-person account as it is to discover even a very small corpus of her own statements and bring it to light, putting it in the context of the writing of history.

Indeed, the writing of history is the product of different choices and aims. It is never just a neutral account, but a narrative aimed at producing knowledge of the past, a form which belongs, after all, to the realm of storytelling.

The content of the form

As theorists such as Michel de Certeau and Paul Ricoeur explained, the work of historians produces texts that can be analyzed as such. Historical accounts and fictional narrations share the same ways of representing their characters, the same way of constructing their temporality, the same models of causality (Certeau 1975, Ricoeur 1983). From a more radical perspective, as that of Hayden White, for example, history can even be seen as merely a narrative fiction written for teleological, self-interested purposes.⁸ I do not want to suggest that one has no choice but to share these assertions, but I think that the question from where they stemmed is still not a minor one. "What does it mean to think historically, and what are the unique characteristics of a specifically historic method of inquiry?" asked White at the beginning of his *Metahistory* (White 1973, 1). And this led him to analyze the different narrative and rhetorical forms that the fictional character of historical reconstructions can assume.

If the same kind of analysis is applied to existing histories of translation one can detect an extremely differentiated and variegated approach to these issues. On the one hand we have, for example, Pym, who believes that translation history is concerned mainly with translators, points toward awareness of the form, and puts forward what can be seen as a kind of autobiographical writing able to bring to light the experiences of people as characters he meets. Yet there are also collective anonymous accounts such as those in Delisle and Woodsworth's *Translators through History*, or the narrations of a character involved in a

plot pointing to a definite end, found in Maria Tymoczko's book. And also translation histories that openly rely on master narratives, with a third-person narrator who objectifies aims and motivations such as the legitimacy of a minority language (Corbett 1999), the affirmation of a national unified tradition (Ruiz Casanova 2000) or the reasons for a theory (namely Skopos theory in the case of Vermeer 1992). Different narrative devices for different aims. Yet the awareness of these devices has been only vaguely postulated in translation history. This is, for example, how Pym dismisses the problem: "Indeed one could probably just tell the stories and trust their entertainment value to carry all else. Yet amusement is not our sole purpose here" (Pym 2000, 1).

As far as I know, no specific reflection or good exemplification of alternatives that can shed light on the heterogeneity of translation as a subject has been proposed. But if one looks again at the model that has been considered here, one can see that among the microhistorians it was Ginzburg in particular that offered a striking exemplification of how narrative and history can melt together in a theoretically grounded way able to establish an interrelation between the object, the motivation, and the result of the research. In his *Il formaggio e i vermi* he proposed a consciously constructed narration which makes the reader participate in the difficulties of the research, of the shifting conjectures conducted by the historian upon fragmentary clues and aimed at catching otherness in the past.⁹ This way the goal of the historian and all the complexity of his theoretical frame finds an ideal concretization in writing.

Conclusion

To conclude, I would like to raise a question about the possibility of elaborating on similar issues in translation history on the grounds of an awareness of all the complex nexus of problems the simple word "history" brings. In such a landscape, where history is mainly concerned with doubts and questions, is there any space for a history of translation? Are there any grounds for writing this history if the constitutive

hybridity or interculturality of translation may lose its disruptive potential when involved in the tricks of master narratives and “master” objects of study? The definition of the object of study in terms of novelty, fragmentariness and transgression; the acknowledgement of the potential otherness of the past not reduced to an instrumental tool for inquiring into the present; the consideration of the highly problematic status of sources and archives; and the theoretical as well as practical consciousness of the narrative dimension of historical writing are all challenges and hints that microhistory can pose to the history of translation. Taking them into account could mean working in a field of study open to diverse, stimulating questioning, where microhistory is only one of the many models and issues at stake.

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Notes

1. All those who have written on microhistory agree that the most distinctive and unifying element in all research that recognizes itself as microhistorical can be identified in the reduction of scale, from which all other aspects derive. See, for instance, Levi (1991), Muir (1991), Grendi (1994), and Revel (1994). See also Ginzburg and Poni (1979) for the stress put on individual cases.
2. The oxymoronic phrase “normal exceptional” was proposed by Grendi (1977) as an indication of what microhistory should seek.
3. I am referring here to Thomas Kuhn’s well-known notion of “paradigm” as an intersubjective agreement, as the product of consensus within a group or a set of shared understandings that dictates what research is important and what problems need to be solved in a given discipline at a given moment (Kuhn 1970 [1962]).
4. “Augmented work,” “drawn from French,” “brought from French,” “arbitrary translation,” “improved edition” — these were only some examples of the multifarious ways translation was referred to. Moreover, some works were defined only as “edited by” or “compiled by,” and when the first source text was in English, I also found it designated as “imitated from English by” plus

the name of the French translator or even as a “work written in English, then translated into French, and now transported from French into Italian” (such as in La Place n.d.).

5. For instance, in many cases the translator’s name was not indicated or the real name was hidden behind a pseudonym. In others, there were additional indications about the translator. For example, one novel was described as a “Gallant story drawn into Italian from French by Dr. Giulio Monti, churchman from Bologna” (Lesage 1728); in another case more emphasis was laid on the name and the status of the last translator than on other people who, in different ways, had made their contribution to the text: “Work brought from Spanish into French by Mr. N. N. and from French into Italian by Abbé Nicola Felletti” (Lesage 1714); or in some cases the gender and the class of the translator were clearly specified, such as in “Novella translated into French by a noble Lady” (Anonymous n.d.).
6. See LaCapra (1985), 45–69, for instance.
7. A different attempt to apply Foucault’s thought to the consideration of translation in history is St-Pierre (1993a). Here St-Pierre applied Foucault’s argument for an archaeology of knowledge to the study of translation as a discursive practice and outlined a specific program, taking into account the limits of forms of the translatable and of conservation, memory, reactivation, and appropriation in relation to translation in social and historical contexts. (St-Pierre 1993a, 61–68).
8. Discussions of history and narrative have become more common in the last decades (see Roberts 2001), but — as Stone (1979) has explained — they are not only characteristic of our contemporary times.
9. The importance of narration and storytelling in his historical writing has been especially underlined in Ginzburg (1994). For an analysis of the characteristics of Ginzburg’s writing see Serna and Pons (2000).

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