

# Cultural Pluralism through Translation? Imagining the Italian *Other* in the Habsburg Monarchy

## Du pluralisme culturel par la voie de la traduction? Imaginer *l'Autre* italien au sein de la monarchie des Habsbourg

Michaela Wolf

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Résumé de l'article

Les relations historiques qui existaient entre la péninsule italienne et l'Autriche se manifestent dans la réception de la production littéraire italienne au sein de la monarchie habsbourgeoise. Ce phénomène peut se voir dans la formation d'un canon littéraire qui s'appuie toujours sur des mécanismes sélectifs. Nous savons dans quelle mesure ces sélections contribuent à la formation des hégémonies culturelles.

Notre contribution offre une analyse de la création de *l'Autre*, création réalisée à travers l'activité de traduction qui avait lieu dans le contexte de la réception de la littérature nationale italienne à l'intérieur de la monarchie. On posera la question de savoir ce qui a été accepté sur le marché culturel de la monarchie habsbourgeoise et quels ont été les critères pour la réception d'une littérature traduite de l'italien. Après avoir présenté une synthèse des différents aspects de l'image italienne créée à travers les contacts interculturels, nous présenterons les manières par lesquelles les images ont été discutées, créées et représentées par la voie de la traduction. L'analyse de quelques paratextes démontrera le fait que la marge réservée pour *l'Autre* culturel italien y était assez étroite et largement réduite aux valorisations stéréotypées de la culture italienne.

# Cultural Pluralism through Translation? Imagining the Italian *Other* in the Habsburg Monarchy

Michaela Wolf

## 1. Introduction

As capital of the Habsburg Monarchy, Vienna exported its political, social and economic system, its legislation, education, music and theatre and other cultural forms to the remotest parts of its crown lands. The results of these “exportations”, together with the historical implications involved in the process, are ultimately reflected in the tension between the concepts of multiracial state versus national state in the nineteenth century. Likewise, during the formation of a national Italian state in the course of the “Risorgimento”, the historical relationships between “Italy”<sup>1</sup> and the Habsburg Monarchy are also reflected in the reception of Italian literary production. The reception processes along those relationships are characterized above all by the various fractures at their historical intersections. Here, the year 1866 can be interpreted as a key year in the reorientation of the Monarchy’s foreign policy, in the course of which the loss of the Lombardo-Venetian territories gave rise to the establishment of an independent

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<sup>1</sup> The term “Italy” is used here in a generalized sense and comprises the regions where Italian culture was produced over the centuries, regardless whether these regions were — at different times and under varying circumstances — under Habsburg rule or not. It is therefore used as a merely geographical term.

Italian national state, thus contributing to a new orientation in cultural politics.

Against this background, this paper will discuss the formation of the *Other* through the activity of translating national Italian literature into German, and the publication of these translations by publishing houses in the Habsburg Monarchy. It will analyze what was accepted on the cultural market of the Habsburg Monarchy and what the criteria for the reception of translated Italian literature were. It will be argued that the creation of cultural pluralism through translation was only possible on certain, limited, levels. In the context of works translated from Italian, cultural pluralism can be regarded as only a restricted phenomenon in the period in question, between 1848 and 1918.

Methodologically, I will proceed along two major lines. Firstly, the quantitative analysis will attempt to show that it is difficult to identify traces of the formation of an image created through translation. In contrast, the qualitative analysis, which deepens the insight into the agencies and reasons for the reception (successful or otherwise) of Italian written production, will illustrate that some attempts were made to influence the receiving culture through explicit or implicit translation and reception strategies. A survey of the presence of Italian culture in the Habsburg Monarchy and of the various aspects of the Italian image will form the basis of this analysis.

## **2. Italian culture in the Habsburg Monarchy**

Despite latent political tensions, Vienna was unanimously accepted as the center of cultural exchange in the Habsburg

Monarchy. As far as Italian culture is concerned, the multitude of cultural traces had been a tradition since the Renaissance period at the latest, shaping Vienna's intellectual and cultural life throughout the centuries.<sup>2</sup> The importation of Italian culture was promoted not only by the confessional endeavors of the Counter-Reformation, but also by the Habsburg marriage policy. The intensive presence of Italian culture even gave rise to the concept of the "italianization" of Habsburg culture, which could also be traced linguistically. Under Maria Theresia, Italian was already being taught in various schools and academies (Kanduth 1997, p. 444). In Vienna's theatres and operas, works were often performed in the Italian language, thus enabling people with a command of Italian to participate more actively in Vienna's cultural life. Most of these Italian-speakers were part of the thinly distributed high *bourgeois* cultured class or the nobility; but apparently members of the Civil Service could also speak Italian.<sup>3</sup> This point, however, should not be overstated, since other languages had explicit priority over Italian due to their political relevance: French, for instance, was the language of diplomacy, and Bohemia and Hungary, because of their politically important role, imposed a command of their languages on many civil servants and military members of the central government. The quite considerable number of Italians permanently or temporarily resident in Vienna did, though, contribute to an Italian-influenced cultural scene in the capital<sup>4</sup> — in addition to many other cultures and

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<sup>2</sup> The literature on the historical cultural contacts between Italy and the Habsburg Monarchy is extensive. See, for instance, Kramer (1954), Landau (1879), Veiter (1965), Kanduth (1990), Jacobs (1988), Gottas (1993).

<sup>3</sup> This is also reported in a letter by Grillparzer to Goethe. See Kanduth 1997, p. 444.

<sup>4</sup> See mainly Ricaldone (1986) and Himmel (1972).

peoples from the multiracial Austrian-Hungarian Empire. The Italian dominance of the artistic scene lasted over two centuries and left its mark on many aspects of Viennese life, such as architecture, literature, theatre, medicine, military affairs, banking, publishing, coffee houses, and even chimney sweeps. Thus, it was not surprising that in the seventeenth century one out of two foreigners resident in Vienna was Italian (Ricaldone 1986, p. 15).

### **3. The Italian image in the Habsburg Monarchy**

The combination of the Italian presence in Vienna throughout the centuries and the writings of German-speaking intellectuals, merchants, etc., who had traveled through Italy produced a somewhat multifaceted image of Italian culture in the Habsburg Monarchy.<sup>5</sup> The characteristics of this image vary from the perception of Italy as a sophisticated artistic Mecca to the bitterest “hereditary enmity” (Berghold 1997a, p. 1).

Italy has always been seen in the rest of Europe as the gate to the ancient world, as the center of Christianity and a window on western history. For many scholars, Italy was a symbol of human perfection in spirit and sensuousness unattainable in German-speaking cultures (see Emrich 1965, p. 259). Travelers to Italy delivered an idealized picture in their reports, stressing both man and landscape as bearers of antique history and art. At a certain historical moment, there was hardly a single “northern” architect, painter or musician who had not passed a period

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<sup>5</sup> An exhaustive study of the Italian image in the Habsburg Monarchy dealing with various aspects (historical, psychological, philological, etc.) still remains to be done. For the image of the Habsburg Monarchy in Italy see, especially, Garms-Cornides, 1994.

of apprenticeship in Italy. Between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, three phases of travelling to Italy can be identified: the gentlemen's travels or "Grand Tours" (seventeenth century), the travels of writers and artists (eighteenth century) and the phase of scientific travelling (nineteenth century).

Johann Joachim Winckelmann's interpretation of antique art entailed a reorientation of artistic perceptions in German culture. Winckelmann, an archaeologist and art historian, highlighted the importance of sensing Italy's mild climate and its creative ease, and believed he recognized in the Italian human being the beauty and spirit of a Greek sculpture (Emrich 1965, p. 271). In a different way, Wilhelm Heinse oriented his perception of Italian culture along the lines of physical beauty and sensual pleasure, seeing the Italian as a person who lives unaffected by conventions and prejudice. According to Heinse, it was these characteristics that allowed the *uomo universale* of the fifteenth and sixteenth century to take shape. Heinse thus created an Italian image which anticipated some features of Romanticism: the interest in the southern life style and thus the general romantic longing for the South. Despite his aesthetic perspective, Heinse also emphasized the sharp contrasts between rich and poor in Italy (Grimm/Breymayer/Erhart 1990, p. 53).

A crucial turning point in the creation of the image of Italy was Goethe's *Italian Journey*. As is well known, this book is not the documentation of a fresh and authentic experience but a text which Goethe wrote about 30 years after his return. The *Italian Journey* is therefore a text by the aged Goethe, who retrospectively tried to turn his stay in Italy into a very specific period of his artistic and

personal development. The objective of Goethe's journey was not "real" Italy, but Antiquity, which combined nature and art in a perfect way. In his book, the traveler Goethe is endowed with all the virtues suited to a man of the classical age and which were considered characteristic of the members of the educated *bourgeoisie* in the nineteenth century: calmness, poise, firmness of character, moderate behavior, detachment from all potential irritation caused by nature or art, great care in the contemplation of aesthetic views, the willingness to accept a canon of judgement for the multitude of works of art and — above all — the ability to appropriate the *Other* (Tauber 1996, pp. 63-64). At first sight, Goethe's travel experiences seem to be rather individual ones, but his ability to stylize his own subjective experience into a symbol of human experience in general gave his descriptions a model function for subsequent generations of travelers. At the same time, it created a myth which overshadowed reality and made of Italy an idyllic paradise.

According to the view widely held in the Romantic period, the "longing" (*Sehnsucht*) for a southern lifestyle and nature was indispensable for people who engaged in literature, arts or music. Yet many of the artists, writers or musicians who took part in the formation of a Romantic image of Italy, such as Eichendorff or E.T.A. Hoffmann, had never been there. This may have contributed to the fact that Italy became a land of phantasy and dreams.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a shift of emphasis towards scientific and socio-political interests, with the inclusion of economic and political questions in reflections on Italy, became more common. The two dominant trends, historicism and nationalism, were

responsible for a filtered experience of Italian culture, occasionally resulting in disdainful remarks on the “national character of Italian culture” (Grimm/Breymayer/Erhart 1990, p. 15). In this respect, the idealizing exaltation of Antiquity may probably be seen as the result of efforts to negate the national reality of Italian territories. Certainly, this agenda was important in representations of Italy at the time. In his analysis of the Habsburg Monarchy’s basic attitude towards Italy at the turn of the century, Fritz Fellner has proposed four “ideological blockages” (Fellner 1982, pp. 121-127), which, in his opinion, hindered a more unbiased view of contemporary Italy. Firstly, there was the limited conception of Italy created through classical education, which resulted in an overvaluing of antique traditions. Another blockage was caused by clericalism: certain Austrian clerical circles with strong influence on political and cultural activities could not forget that Italy’s unification had been completed only with the dissolution of the Pope’s temporal dominion. Thirdly, various patriotic and nationalist groups in the Habsburg Monarchy resented the fact that the formation and establishment of the Italian realm had only been achieved through the suppression of Austrian hegemony on the Italian peninsula. The fourth blockage was, according to Fellner, the fixation on archival historical research, which, furthermore, concentrated on the Italian history of the Middle Ages and Renaissance and ignored “everything that had happened after the sack of Rome” (Furlani/Wandruszka 1973, p. 11<sup>6</sup>). This

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<sup>6</sup> All translations of German and Italian are my own unless otherwise noted.



historiographical approach prevented *a priori* any consideration of Italy's recent history.<sup>7</sup>

To sum up, it can be said that in view of the collective imagination, which may be the result of conflicts between uncritical traditions and transmissions of topoi, stereotypes and *clichés* (Heitmann/Scamardi 1993, p. 1), the image of Italy in the Habsburg Monarchy in the late nineteenth century can be regarded as a mixture of the images produced in the various preceding historical periods. The image produced by Goethe's *Italian Journey* was still present and was gradually — although timidly — being interlaced with images determined by persistent political and ideological tensions between Italy and the Habsburg Monarchy. The following sections will investigate the ways in which these images were discussed, created and represented through translation.

#### **4. The reception of Italian literature in the nineteenth century**

For the reception of Italian literature in the nineteenth century, the conditions of production and reception in general are of paramount interest. Among the factors involved are questions like the economic and social role of publishers, authors and cultural patrons, the general situation of the book market, censorship, the characteristics of the reading public or the impact of reviews. The specific

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<sup>7</sup> Another, later, approach to analyzing the conflicting communication between Italy and the Habsburg Monarchy including Austria can be seen in Berghold, 1997b, who discusses the conflict zones (language barriers, differing norms of everyday life in interpersonal communication and the practice of realizing different models of life) by adopting a mixture of psychoanalytical and historical methods (see Berghold 1997b, pp. 49-59).

context of translation raises further questions: the selection of texts to be translated, the economic and social role of translators, the strategies adopted, the inclusion of paratexts, the dictionaries in use, the reviews in journals and newspapers, and the compilation of anthologies.

The corpus to be analyzed in this paper covers the period between 1848 and 1918. A project being conducted at the Universities of Freiburg and Kiel, Germany, has compiled a bibliography of German translations from the Italian language (Hausmann/Kapp, 1992<sup>8</sup>). For the period in question, that bibliography lists 1408 titles, covering all German-speaking countries. Of these, 227 titles were published in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in the following cities: Abbazia, Breslau, Brixen, Budapest, Feldkirch, Graz, Innsbruck, Kattowitz, Linz, Prague, Salzburg, Trieste and Vienna. 146 titles are monographs, whereas 81 are included in journals and newspapers. 28 monographs and 20 essays in journals have still not been traced.<sup>9</sup>

The genres of the 179 translations in question cover a broad range. The following list may not correspond to strict systematics of genre typology,<sup>10</sup> but will, I hope, reflect the great variety of issues translated into German.

Literary works:

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<sup>8</sup> This first volume only covers translations published up to 1730. The second volume has not yet been published, but I was able to access the data relevant for the period in question. I would like to thank Dr. Stefani Arnold for her help.

<sup>9</sup> As mentioned, up to now it has not been possible to trace all texts published in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; this is why 48 texts are missing from the table.

<sup>10</sup> I mainly followed Ruttkowski (1973).

novel	33	
poetry	24	
novella	14	
drama	13	
comedy		13
biography	11	
tragedy		7
short story	6	
memoirs		5
opera libretto	2	
epic poetry	1	
<i>feuilleton</i>	1	
journey description	1	
devotional book		1

Non-literary works:

art history	16	
religion		6
history	4	
military		4
philosophy	3	
ecclesiastical history	3	
sociocritics	3	
criminal psychology	2	
politics	1	
jurisprudence	1	
theology		1
medicine	1	
physics		1
natural phenomena	1	

A closer look at the corpus, which should allow us to find out more specifically what sorts of texts were translated into German and published on Habsburg territory, will show that a distinction can be made between texts originally written earlier but translated or re-edited in the period in question, such as Boccaccio or Leonardo da Vinci (about 15 per cent of all the texts) and those texts which originally date from the period. Among the latter, a large number deal with subjects which—in view of the politically tense situation—appear rather “harmless”: comedies, religious and moral texts, descriptions of journeys, etc. (about 70 per cent). Politically relevant texts account for only around 15 per cent. A third group of texts should be mentioned, which were not originally published between 1848 and 1918 but had a certain political impact on the Italian Risorgimento. They include mainly works written by Vincenzo Monti. However, such texts account for only about 1 per cent of the total. The overwhelming majority present a rather “harmless” image of Italian culture in the German language which contrasts with texts that reflect the attempt to create a national Italian literature and which, alongside literary texts, also include subjects such as history or biography.

The men and women who translated these texts into German came from very diverse disciplines and *milieux*. They included writers, journalists, scholars, priests, librarians or military officers. In terms of social roles, in view of their professions most of the translators can be regarded as advocates of the Empire’s traditional cultural policy and did not represent a potential for imminent change. The rather heterogeneous composition of the translators’ professions gives rise to several questions: Who was responsible for the choice of texts to be translated? What was the role of publishing policy? And which other

factors contributed to the distribution and reception of texts originating in Italy? In order to approach some answers to these questions, I will first discuss the translation strategies adopted in the texts. I will restrict myself here to the analysis of paratexts, where many translators (and sometimes editors) point out their translation methods and other details concerning translation.

Compared with translations in the eighteenth century, nineteenth-century translations (at least from Italian into German) are less frequently accompanied by paratexts. Translations published in journals are generally not preceded by a paratext and thus can be left aside in the present investigation. Out of the 118 monographs so far analyzed, only 48 contain paratexts (introduction, preface, afterword, footnotes, glosses, dedication). Most paratexts include information on the author, the contents of the book translated, the reasons for publication, and of course the translation strategies adopted.

It is in the comments on translation strategies that the translators' concerns are most transparent. The traditional dichotomy of faithful versus free translation, which leaves no space for a more detailed discussion on the purpose of translation, still seems to be a standard: 14 translators profess that they want to do justice to the original and humbly apologize for the shortcomings of their translation. The original, in other words, is seen as the measure of all things. Other translators want to satisfy the target audience in order to meet their (presumed) interests; they therefore cut some passages, give additional information to clarify passages which would be understandable only to the Italian reading audience, and add "scholarly comments" in order to make good the

shortcomings of readers without a classical education, namely women. While criticism (for example in the prefaces to historical or biographical texts) regarding the Empire's policies on national questions is rarely admitted (see below), there are some translators who overtly advocate the *status quo* in Italy.<sup>11</sup>

Regarding the creation of images through translation, two prefaces are of particular interest. Both texts were published by Hartleben in Vienna. The different purposes followed by the translators and set out in their paratexts reflect an image which is quite homogeneous but nonetheless interwoven with attempts to remodel a traditional view. The first text is Cesare Balbo's<sup>12</sup> *Geschichte Italiens von den ältesten Zeiten bis zum Jahre 1814* (Balbo, 1851). After finishing the translation, Richard Moll switches from translator to historian and continues compiling Italian history up to 1851. If Balbo's concern was to "raise national consciousness" through his book, Moll's is to "instruct the German-speaking audience on the character and the views of the nation" (Moll, 1851, pp. 8-9). The translator-historian is convinced that in order to understand the Italians at the crucial historic moment when they are attempting to unite and become a nation, it is necessary to analyze contemporary Italian history "following the author's purpose" — that is, Moll writes the history "from a national Italian standpoint" (ibid., p. 10). In so doing, he not only fully respects Balbo's national concerns, but even stresses Italian national political claims by refraining from taking a critical position from the

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<sup>11</sup> See Klitsche de la Grange, 1865, Margotti, 1860a and 1860b.

<sup>12</sup> Cesare Balbo (1789-1853), political writer and politician. He was a liberal but cautious constitutionalist and was Prime Minister of Sardinia-Piedmont in 1848. His most famous book *Delle Speranze d'Italia* (1844) shows the anti-revolutionary nature of this patriotism and liberalism.

perspective of an Austrian historian. By emphasizing the importance of the intellectual formation of the Italians, the translator-historian follows Balbo's interest in accelerating the unification process. With his translation and re-inscription, Moll contributes to a public opinion in the Habsburg Monarchy which is open to a more sophisticated image of Italian reality.

Edmondo De Amicis'<sup>13</sup> travel report *Marokko* (1883) is another example of how an image can be created or reinforced through translation. The translator, Amand von Schweiger-Lerchenfeld,<sup>14</sup> explains in his preface that the book is not a direct translation of the original, but a free adaptation that aims to give an in-depth view of Moroccan ethnographic and historical details. He also argues that as De Amicis's report is full of allusions of national importance — “allusions to Italian persons and historical circumstances”, for example (Schweiger-Lerchenfeld 1883, p. 1) — which are not comprehensible to German-speaking readers, it is his duty to “eliminate this patriotic and intimate character and create a new book” (ibid.). On the other hand, he adds several chapters<sup>15</sup> with the purpose of offering the readers a more comprehensive view of Morocco. What seems particularly interesting in this paratext is the tendency to promote an orientalist discourse as revealed by Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978). In his

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<sup>13</sup> Edmondo De Amicis (1846-1898), novelist and author of popular travel books and children's stories. His most important work is *Cuore* (1886, “The Heart of a Boy”), written in the form of a schoolboy's diary.

<sup>14</sup> Amand Freiherr von Schweiger-Lerchenfeld (1846-1910), author of socio-critical and technical texts.

<sup>15</sup> The chapters added are on “South Morocco” and “The Spanish-Moroccan War of 1860”.

study, Said shows the collusion between literary texts and Western political domination, which results in the creation of images of the Orient that separate the spheres of the colonizer and the colonized. Schweiger-Lerchenfeld argues, for example, that he scrupulously tried to maintain the passages which described characteristic scenes of Moroccan life. The following examples will show the orientalist character De Amicis gave his text and which was taken up and emphasized by the translator:

These scenes, descriptions, and pictures [...] are so characteristic, *so colorful* and witty that [...] they are uncontestedly the *main adornment* and the main value of the book. [...].

For him [the author, De Amicis], landscapes and backdrops are the *coloring pencils for a dazzling mosaic*, and the scenes he describes are the *emanations of an exotic, ever-surprising life to which adhere the colors of the Orient* and which *recall the glorious period of past greatness* (Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, 1883, p. 2; my emphasis).<sup>16</sup>

The representation of Morocco focuses on decorative elements, giving the impression that a shift from subject to object has taken place: secondary elements are moved to the center, and the agents “behind” these elements are never mentioned. If they were ever subjects of their history, it was in the (“glorious”) past. This covertly discriminatory rendering of Morocco through Western discourse reflects a stereotyped view which is “a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern over the Orient” (Said, 1978, p. 95).

The translator’s paratext focuses on aesthetic elements, thus demoting social or political realities. This converges with the distinctive features of the image of Italy

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<sup>16</sup> “Diese [...] Szenen, Schilderungen und Einzelbilder sind so charakteristisch, so farbig und geistreich durchgeführt, daß sie [...] unbestritten den Hauptschmuck und Hauptwerth des vorliegenden Buches bilden. [...] Ihm [dem Autor] sind Landschaften und Staffagen die wechselnden Farbstifte eines blendenden Mosaiks, Szenen und Vorfällenheiten die Emanationen eines fremdartigen, in Allem und Jedem überraschenden Lebens, dem die Farben des Orients anhaften, und das die Erinnerungen an das glänzende Zeitalter vergangener Größen wachruft” (Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, 1883, p. 2).



in German-speaking countries as already discussed. In such a context, some further examples illustrate the persistence of an idyllic and paradisiacal land where, in Goethe's words, "the lemons blossom". Karl Erdmann Edler, for instance, a poet and professor of literary studies, translated Constantin Nigra's best known poems into German (Nigra, 1899). At the end of his preface, Edler bemoans the impossibility of rendering the Italian text adequately into German, and paints a picture of the Italian original which reflects the stereotyped idyllic myth:

The blaze of colors, sweet scents and melodiousness of the original can be rendered only insufficiently into German. The translation cannot be more than the mere reflection of glowing Mediterranean celestial lights on Nordic forests [...] (Edler, 1899, p. 7).

Similarly, the translator of Giovanni Prati's *Le ultime ore di Torquato Tasso* (1860), J.E. Waldfreund,<sup>17</sup> included the Italian version in his German edition "for those who know the sweet Italian language". In his dedication to the president of the Tyrolean Radetzky Association, he stresses the dichotomy between the president's wandering through the Alps and his own sojourn in the "bright sunny south where I reposed under dark cypresses" (Waldfreund, 1860, p. dedication).<sup>18</sup>

The image of Italian culture in the late phase of the Habsburg Monarchy seems to perpetuate the much-cited Romantic image. The case of Balbo's history is not really

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<sup>17</sup> Waldfreund is a pseudonym of Peter Moser (1829-1909), writer, folklorist and teacher in Rovereto.

<sup>18</sup> Another example is Giovanni Galli's dedication to Giovanni Battista Ughetti's "Zwischen Ärzten und Klienten. Erinnerungen eines alten Arztes", where he alludes to the stereotyped "love for the Mediterranean sun" (Galli, 1907, dedication).

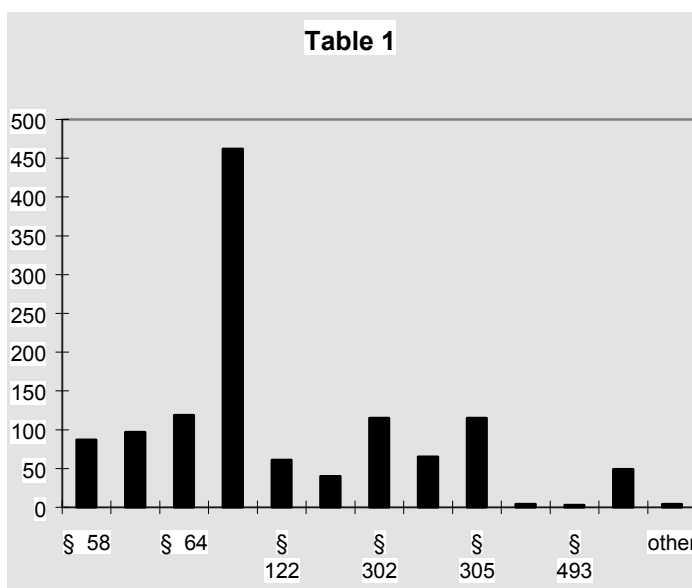
an exception to the rule, but if it is seen as an attempt to reflect a more multifaceted image of Italian contemporary reality, Moll's preface certainly cannot be regarded as typical of the recurrent image represented in the majority of prefaces. At this point the question of the nature of the agents behind the creation or perpetuation of this image arises. What instruments existed to channel the publication of Italian texts? And which authors and texts were admitted to the publication market after the abolition of censorship in 1848?

### **5. “*Nihil obstat*” after 1848?**

It should first be mentioned that after the abolition of censorship in 1848, the criteria for banning publications apparently did not change to any great degree. One difference, of course, was that after 1848 books, journals and other texts could be published without subjection to the complicated procedure of censorship. Only *post festum* was it possible to try the author, publisher or translator if the publication violated the penal legislation of the time. Interestingly, detailed research on the differences between the norms underlying censorship before 1848 and the different articles of penal legislation afterwards has never been undertaken. In general, it seems that Metternich's attempt to “shield the *bourgeoisie* from ideas hostile to the system” (Marx, 1959, p. 5) is reflected in post-1848 legislation and was perpetuated until the disintegration of the Empire.

The legislation of the period in question deserves closer attention. In 1896 the *Catalogus Librorum in Austria Prohibitorum* (Einsle, 1896) was published, followed by a supplement in 1902 (Junker, 1902), which listed the

publications banned between 1863 and 1901. The first edition begins with the relevant articles of the penal legislation and the press law of 1863. The major items of legislation are high treason (§ 58), lese-majesty (§ 63, 64), incitement to hatred of the Emperor (§ 65), disturbance of worship (§ 122), and violation of public morals and modesty (§ 516).



Original Italian texts and German translations, published in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and banned between 1863 and 1901

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| § 58  | High treason                           |
| § 63  | Lese-majesty                           |
| § 64  | Insulting the Emperor or Court members |
| § 65  | Disturbance of the peace               |
| § 122 | Disturbance of worship                 |

§ 300	Incitement to rebellion against the authorities
§ 302	Provocation of hostility towards particular nationalities
§ 303	Offending a legally recognized religion
§ 305	Official degradation of marriage, family etc.
§ 491	Insult
§ 493	Insult
§ 516	Violation of public morals and modesty

About one fifth of the publications banned between 1863 and 1901 are in the Italian language (once an Italian-language publication is banned, so is its translation). Of the banned publications, 16 authors appear in my corpus (with a total of 42 titles in Italian which appear in the index); 4 titles in German by 2 authors (Boccaccio and Casanova) are also included in our corpus.

The choice of the titles banned clearly reflect the image of the *Other* that is not admitted: political ideas which (especially after 1866) mirror developments in the new Italian realm; other, more radical, political ideas closely related to the advent of socialist and anarchist ideology; publications generally aiming to empower the working class or the most underprivileged people; texts which recall the process of the Italian independence from Austria; any sort of writing against the Catholic Church; and texts rooted in Italian patriotism. Even at the end of the century, the authors most frequently banned are Carducci, Garibaldi and Mazzini.

In some cases, however, it was not penal legislation that determined the reception of Italian literature, but what may be called *bon goût*. In the Burgtheater in Vienna, for

example, Heinrich Laube as artistic director from 1849 to 1867 gave priority to French comedy and did not present any Italian plays. This was not necessarily due to his political ideas.<sup>19</sup> It is also interesting that the Burgtheater did not later open itself to new tendencies in the Italian theatre like Giovanni Verga or Luigi Capuana and their “verism”, the Italian version of the German naturalism, but instead to the more *bourgeois* drama of the likes of the “Milanese poets”, a lighter version of contemporary theatre than verism’s realistic exposition of southern Italian social problems.

## 6. Other exclusion procedures

What do the criteria of admittance apparently at work here mean for the creation of the *Other* in Habsburg Vienna? First, the complexity of the reception circumstances must be considered. As mentioned, there are many agents involved in the reception of literature. Out of the variety of agents, I have so far focused on the translators’ concerns as set out in their paratexts and on the question of banned literature. In terms of the corpus, this applies to German translations of Italian literature between 1848 and 1918 collected from catalogues, bibliographies and anthologies; another criterion for reception is the presence of the German translations in Austrian libraries. The result of research in seven major libraries<sup>20</sup> has shown that the majority of politically contested literature<sup>21</sup> is not listed in

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<sup>19</sup> For details see Detken (1998).

<sup>20</sup> These libraries are the National Library in Vienna, the University Libraries in Vienna, Graz, Innsbruck and Salzburg, and the Regional Libraries in Vienna and Styria.

<sup>21</sup> Examples are Pietro Gori (1910, *Die Legende des Ersten Mai*), a large number of the works of Giuseppe Mazzini and Silvio Pellico, and others.

the library catalogues. That does not, of course, mean that this kind of literature was not to be found in the private libraries of *bourgeois* families at the time, but it does mean that such texts were not available to the wider public.<sup>22</sup>

Selection mechanisms are obviously key agents in the reception process. Selection, in the present case, is relevant on two levels: the admission of imported literature through translation, and once translated, that literature's admission into the reading market. To be sure, it cannot be said that there was a systematic resistance to translation in the Habsburg Monarchy — the massive translation of French comedy alone is enough to disprove that. However, there certainly was resistance to particular kinds of translation. It is clear — and this applies to any kind of communication between cultures — that the stronger the target system's tradition, the stronger will be the resistance to the importation of values (Lambert, 1995, p. 164). Censorship, seen as a metaphor, is a defender and guardian of tradition that not only delimits the *Other*, but also acts as an immunization against the phenomenon of change. It stabilizes tradition and strengthens and regulates something that by its very nature is hard to pin down (Assmann/Assmann, 1987, p. 11). Bourdieu indicates the mechanisms which help internalize the factors underlying censorship, and portrays the phenomenon of censorship as follows:

Censorship is only perfect and invisible when nobody has anything to say except what he is objectively authorized to say (Bourdieu, 1982, p. 169).

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<sup>22</sup> A thorough analysis of the behaviour of nineteenth-century readers would be very helpful in shedding light on this question. For an initial reading, see Martino, 1982.

The degree to which this is true for selection mechanisms in the context of literature imported to the Habsburg Monarchy remains to be analyzed.

In the case of translation, selection mechanisms also reflect the protection of power against any sort of subversion, and the decision whether and what to translate is crucial for the creation of the image of the *Other*.<sup>23</sup> Finally, examining the answer how a text is translated can result in a definition of the relationship to the *Other*: the relationship between the importing culture and the *Other* is inscribed in the translation strategy.

### **7. A margin for the cultural *Other*?**

For the reception of Italian literature, exclusion or appropriation of the *Other* seems to prevail in the nineteenth-century field of translation. The margin left for the Italian cultural *Other* was very narrow and mostly reduced to stereotypical views of Italian culture. In the context of Italian literature, the immediate consequences of censorship, strict penal legislation and the rules of admission tended to reaffirm the “blockages” identified by Fellner. The image of Italy in the Habsburg Monarchy still seems to be dominated by remnants of Romanticism and the souvenirs found in Goethe’s travelling bags. A closer inspection of the agencies of Italian literature’s reception showed a tendency towards cautious transparency in creating a more sophisticated image of Italian reality (such

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<sup>23</sup> The decision not to translate the literature of the *Other* can also be construed as a means of protecting or promoting an emergent literature, as in the case of Quebec literature. See Woodsworth, 1994, p. 61.

as Moll, 1851). Some translations and their paratexts even contain a double bind: they stress aesthetic factors while simultaneously emphasizing political issues such as the original's patriotic elements (Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, 1883).<sup>24</sup> These tentative examples, however, do not represent the mainstream, and remain exceptions in terms of both quantity and quality.

If, in a wider context, the concept of "image" is viewed as the representation of a foreign cultural reality (Pageaux, 1981, p. 170f), the images created through the translation of Italian literature certainly reflect a reality which is not particularly representative of Italian politics and the Italian society of the period in question. This is due to two factors: firstly, the selection level, where literary and technical texts obviously demonstrating social and political reality were hardly admitted to translation and publication. Secondly, on the text level, the political dimension, which can be regarded as constitutive of literary images (Dohmen, 1994, p. 15), seems to be neglected. In the paratexts analyzed so far, there are repeated attempts to overshadow the reference systems of the original texts. On both levels, literary images contributed only very little to another feature constitutive for the creation of images: the formation of public opinion. Only to a limited extent did the image created through translation supply additional elements to cultural pluralism on the cultural scene of Habsburg Monarchy, with the prevailing image remaining restricted to more or less stereotyped cultural components.

This paper can only give an initial survey of a long-term study on the reception of Italian literature in the Habsburg Monarchy. Further research on the subject might include the analysis of reviews, the book market, theatre programs, and related issues. Regarding the creation of images through the reception of literature, I have here tried to identify the images current in nineteenth-century paratexts of German translations and to distinguish the selection mechanisms in the field of translation. In a further

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<sup>24</sup> For other examples see Ferrari, 1885 and Giuliano, 1914.



step, I examined the tendencies in the development of these images and the broader (for example ideological or social) context within which they can be viewed. Finally, the question of whether the literary discourse created through translation had an impact on cultural politics in the Habsburg Monarchy remains to be discussed, and would require detailed studies in historical discourse analysis. It should, however, be borne in mind that whatever the nature of literary images, they inevitably question contemporary value systems. This is precisely what offers the potential for a continued interrogation of cultural hegemonies.

University of Graz

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**ABSTRACT: Cultural Pluralism through Translation? Imagining the Italian *Other* in the Habsburg Monarchy**

— The historical relationships between the Italian peninsula and Austria are also reflected in the reception of Italian literary production in the Habsburg monarchy. This can be seen in the formation of a literary canon which always goes together with selective mechanisms. These selections decisively contribute to the formation of cultural hegemonies.

This paper presents the creation of the *Other* through the activity of translation in the context of the reception of national Italian literature in the Habsburg Monarchy. It will analyze what was accepted on the cultural market of the

Habsburg Monarchy and what the criteria for the reception of translated Italian literature were. Against the background of a short survey of the various aspects of the Italian image created through intercultural contacts, this paper investigates the ways in which these images were discussed, created and represented through translation. The analysis of some paratexts will show that the margin left for the Italian cultural *Other* was quite narrow and largely reduced to stereotypical views of Italian culture.

**RÉSUMÉ : Du pluralisme culturel par la voie de la traduction? Imaginer *l'Autre* italien au sein de la monarchie des Habsbourg** —Les relations historiques qui existaient entre la péninsule italienne et l'Autriche se manifestent dans la réception de la production littéraire italienne au sein de la monarchie habsbourgeoise. Ce phénomène peut se voir dans la formation d'un canon littéraire qui s'appuie toujours sur des mécanismes sélectifs. Nous savons dans quelle mesure ces sélections contribuent à la formation des hégémonies culturelles.

Notre contribution offre une analyse de la création de *l'Autre*, création réalisée à travers l'activité de traduction qui avait lieu dans le contexte de la réception de la littérature nationale italienne à l'intérieur de la monarchie. On posera la question de savoir ce qui a été accepté sur le marché culturel de la monarchie habsbourgeoise et quels ont été les critères pour la réception d'une littérature traduite de l'italien. Après avoir présenté une synthèse des différents aspects de l'image italienne créée à travers les contacts interculturels, nous présenterons les manières par lesquelles les images ont été discutées, créées et représentées par la voie de la traduction. L'analyse de quelques paratextes démontrera le fait que la marge réservée pour l'*Autre* culturel italien y



était assez étroite et largement réduite aux valorisations stéréotypées de la culture italienne.

**Key words:** Translation, alterity, translation history, censorship, imagology.

**Mots-clés :** traduction, altérité, histoire de la traduction, censure, imagologie.

**Michaela Wolf: Department for Translation and Interpretation,  
University of Graz, Merangasse 70, A-8010 GRAZ  
E-mail: [michaela.wolf@uni-graz.at](mailto:michaela.wolf@uni-graz.at)**