

SPECIALIZED TRANSLATORS AT WORK DURING THE RISORGIMENTO: THE *BIBLIOTECA DELL'ECONOMISTA* AND ITS ENGLISH-ITALIAN TRANSLATIONS (1851-1868)

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1. INTRODUCTION

During the *Risorgimento*, with the establishment of the Italian state and its liberal institutions, Political Economy became a subject of particular interest in many cultural and political environments all over the country. Considered the best discipline to cope with the new political reality, its study was promoted by a network of social institutions and individuals through the publication of a large number of informative texts such as books and book series, handbooks, encyclopaedias and specialized dictionaries.

Between 1850 and 1860 Francesco Ferrara, the Sicilian economist, edited the *Biblioteca dell'Economista* (BE), a collection of economic treatises that Ferrara and his research assistants translated from French, German and English into Italian.

Research on these texts has been carried out mainly by historians of economics who have analysed the gradual systematization of economic science, and the typology of texts through which Political Economy as a discipline was spread in Italy and abroad (Bianchini *et al.* 1996; Augello & Guidi 2007; Barucci 2009). Since the 1980s economists and applied linguists have carried out research on economic discourse with a multiplicity of approaches covering all the varieties of economic writing (McCloskey 1985; Bazerman 1988; Dudley-Evans & Henderson 1990; Swales 1990; Henderson *et al.* 1993; Gotti 2003; Hyland & Bondi 2006).

Taking the economic and linguistic literature on the subject into account, the paper deals with the BE as an early corpus of specialized translation and considers the different text-types included in it and the influence of English on the early evolution of the Italian language of economics.

Sections 1 and 2 deal with the assumptions which led to the creation of the BE and the English economic texts that were made known in Italy thanks to Francesco Ferrara (1851-1868). Section 3 gives an overview of the translation work and shows how this important venture could be exploited for linguistic, translational and contrastive research. Section 4 analyses the translation of Ricardo's *The High Price of Bullions* and focuses on some of the strategies used by translators. Finally, Section 5 deals with the critical debate on the language of economics in the years of the BE and on Ferrara's involvement in the development of the Italian language of economics.

A bibliographical list of all the BE translations from English into Italian will be appended to the paper.

2. THE BE EDITORIAL VENTURE

La Biblioteca dell'Economista (1854-1922) was a set of about 150 economic classics collected in five series amounting to a total of 71 volumes. Four prestigious editors – Francesco Ferrara (1851-1868), Gerolamo Boccardo (1876-1892), Salvatore Cognetti de Martis (1896-1901) and Pasquale Jannaccone (1901-1922) – contributed to this editorial venture printed in Turin by the ambitious Luigi Pompa, whose enterprise was the forerunner of the current UTET (*Unione Tipografico Editrice Torinese*)

publishing house. The BE fell within the numerous initiatives unifying the Italians culturally and linguistically during the *Risorgimento*, and was also part of a process which systematized and internationalized Political Economy in mid-19th century Italy.

In particular, the first two series of the BE edited by Ferrara were distinguishable from the others because, apart from the output of Italian economists, they included the translations of the most important foreign writers of economics until the mid-19th century, so that nowadays they represent an authoritative bibliographical source for all scholars interested in studying the evolution of this discipline (Barucci 2009).

Recently appointed professor of Economics at Turin University, Francesco Ferrara (1810-1900) first met Luigi Pomba in 1848. Ferrara was the leader of the so-called “orthodox liberalists” (*ortodossi liberisti*) who had founded the Italian *Adam Smith Association* and were contributors to the Florentine journal *L'Economista*. Before carrying out the BE project, he had also been co-founder and editor of the *Giornale di statistica* (Palermo, 1836) that was among the first thematic and school-oriented Italian journals, in which foreign theories were traditionally translated and commented (Travagliante 1996). Hence, thanks to Ferrara, who may be considered an Italian forerunner of the globalization of economic science, the BE series I-II represented the front door through which the economic thought of the Physiocrats, Marginalists, Historicists and Socialists and the works by classic and contemporary economists such as Quesnay, Say, Ricardo, Bastiat, Carey and Jevons entered the Italian editorial market (Magliulo 2007).

Ferrara and Pomba found inspiration in Guillaumin's *Collection des principaux économistes* (1840-1848), a Parisian series of economic texts that had affirmed the *école libérale* by promoting classical liberal economic ideas of French and British tradition.

Although France was the country where most economic works had been translated and the French influence was felt in most fields of Italian culture, things began to change with Ferrara and his BE. If compared to Guillaumin's *Collection*, the BE gathered a wider range of text typologies and, in particular, monographs on the main economic categories, which were the expression of different schools besides the French and British ones.

Another feature which made the BE unique was its inclusion of minor works by such English scholars as Bailey, Eisdell, Rae, Scrope, Torrens and Whately. These works would never have been translated into French and would not have circulated in Italy either, had it not been for the BE. (Bianchini *et al.* 1996; Magliulo 2007).

3. FOSTERING ECONOMICS THROUGH TRANSLATIONS

The first series of the BE (henceforth BE-I) was made up of thirteen volumes and gathers the general treatises (*Trattati complessivi*) that had been recognized as the canonical texts of the discipline in Italy, France, Britain, the United States and Russia.

It included nineteen works by British and American economists of which only the authors' names and the BE-I date of publication are here reported, while a more detailed list follows the bibliography of this article: Smith (1851), J. S. Mill (1851), McCulloch (1853), Carey (1853), Lauderdale (1854), Malthus (1854a; 1854b), Senior (1854), J. Mill (1854), Eisdell (1855), Scrope (1855), Chalmers (1855), Banskfield (1855), E.P. Smith (1855), Torrens (1856), Bailey (1856), Whately (1856), Ricardo (1856) and Rae (1856).

Recently research by Augello & Guidi (2007: XXXVII) has shown that only three of the above-mentioned authors (Smith, Senior and J. Mill) could boast previous Italian translations, twelve had already been translated into French and only two of them (Eisdell and Scrope) had never been translated into either French or Italian.

Without going into the features of each text, it can be summarized that the *Principles, Lectures, Treatises, Elements, Manuals* and *Critical Essays* on Political Economy of the BE-I introduced economics as a science in Italy.

Their discourse organization and terminology did not present the features of specialized languages highlighted today (Gotti 2003), because they were still influenced by the strong philosophical background of their authors who used language in an extremely natural way and sometimes adopted the techniques of literary genres with various informative purposes.

Nevertheless, as economists often used different terms to name old and new concepts, an international debate arose on the language of economics, in which such well-known economists as Smith, Malthus, Senior and Ricardo, took part (see Section 5).

In this part of the article, two of Ferrara's translations have been taken into account because of the specific nature of their source-text: Malthus' *Definitions in Political Economy* (1827; 1854b) and Senior's *An outline of the science of political economy* (1836; 1854). Malthus wrote an essay of a metalinguistic nature in which he focused on questions of essential interest for both economics and linguistics and he provided some theoretical principles that economic scholars should follow when defining their terms (Gotti 2003: 243-255). Ferrara justified its inclusion in the series by pointing out that the essay contributed to giving the reader an overall view of Malthusian ideas; moreover, since Guillaumin (1846: 401-534) had included the French translation in his *Collection*, Ferrara considered it opportune to do the same for Italian readers (Ferrara 1955: 328).

As regards Senior's work, when Ferrara was editing the fifth volume of the BE, Senior was a professor of Political Economy at Oxford University. His work, *An outline of the science of political economy*, was classified by the BE editor as a compendium, and in particular the best elementary handbook in English because its discourse organization was much clearer than that of other British economists and comparable only to Smith's use of language (Ferrara 1955: 344).

The second series of the BE (henceforth BE-II) consisted of thirteen volumes too and gathered only works (labelled as *Trattati speciali*) dealing with specific subjects such as agriculture (vol. I-II), taxes (IX-X) and pauperism (XIII). Translators, then, were faced with a new and more technical terminology, which needed equivalent terms in Italian. Moreover, besides the thematic pamphlets by British and American economists whose general treatises had already been included in the BE-I (e.g. McCulloch, Malthus, and Ricardo), in the second series Ferrara collected the translations of about thirty English works, among which – as shown in the second list at the end of this article – there are single chapters of books from Andrew Ure's *The Philosophy of Manufactures* (1835) or Charles Babbage's *On the Economy of Machines and Manufactures* (1835); articles from well-known journals such as the *Edinburgh Review*, *Blackwood Magazine*, *The Economist* or *Quarterly Review*; and statistical notes from the *Companion to the Almanac* such as Augustus De Morgan's (1856) considerations on the history of English coins.

4. GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE TRANSLATION WORKFLOW

The translation work carried out by Ferrara in the BE is particularly interesting for two reasons. Firstly, it represents an early example of specialized translation when economics was becoming a science and its language was developing at the same time. Historians of economic thought considered the five BE series as the mirror of the progressive specialization of economic science at a national and international level (Augello & Guidi 2007: XXV).

Secondly, with Ferrara, economic translations acquired a new function: they were no longer useful for simply spreading ideologies, but they also became the main tools to foster the study of economic science in a country, such as Italy was at that time, in which governors and governed lacked a

basic education of economics that allowed them to tackle the new political reality.

On the basis of these assumptions, this Section will provide some information and examples of Ferrara's methodology in selecting English texts and producing the corresponding Italian ones. To achieve this goal, most of the general information on Ferrara's linguistic skills and his approach to translation was culled from his correspondence (Ferrara 2001) and from his introductions to some BE-I translations (Ferrara 1955). Unfortunately, in fact, documents, contracts and source-texts presumably useful to describing the translation process, or at least the relative agreements between publisher and editor, were lost during the fire in Pomba's archives in 1943.

Ferrara's letters show that he was accustomed to reading French and English and to translating from these languages into his mother tongue. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that he was more familiar with French than English since he used to write in French to the Parisian Joseph Garnier (1813-1881) but in Italian to the American economist Charles Henry Carey (1793-1879).

Although at first he intended simply to revise the BE translations (Ferrara 1955: XI-XII), Ferrara was completely involved in translation work since he used to translate three hours a day with the help of stenographers to publish on time (Ferrara 2001: 265-267). Letters also prove that he was helped in the translation work by eminent figures like the Sicilian jurist Emerico Amari (1810-1870) who translated Ricardo's *The High Price of Bullion* (Ricardo 1810; Ferrara 2001: 290) and by Giuseppe Bastianello (1805-1874) who probably translated Carey and some French texts (Neppi Modona 1979: 18-23).

In addition, the introductions to the BE volumes contain invaluable information about the source-texts and other translations consulted by Ferrara to achieve the best target-text possible. For example, Smith's work, *Ricerche sopra la natura e le cause della ricchezza delle nazioni* (1851), was preceded by a four-page introductory note entitled '*Avvertimento premesso alla Ricchezza delle Nazioni di Adamo Smith*' that describes the sources on which the Italian translation was based (Ferrara 1955: 163-166).

After listing the first English editions published during Smith's lifetime and after his death, Ferrara indicated the well-known version commented by McCulloch (1828) as his source-text. Nevertheless, French translations by Blavet (1781) and Roucher (1792) were consulted, although the more accurate translation by Garnier (1843) was the main tool of comparison.

Ferrara's note to Smith is also interesting because it reveals how during the translation workflow the relationship between the translator and the reader was predominant, as proved in the following passage:

"The intelligent hand that carried it out and the care in comparing it with previous translations, lead us to believe that we have done a service to the Italian youth whose need became greater as Smith's fame rose with the passing of time". (Ferrara 1855: 164)

Hence translation is seen as a means (or a "service", to use Ferrara's words) to initiate the young who lacked specific knowledge in the masterpieces of economics. Moreover, the note was concluded by advising the reader that the reading order of Smith's *Wealth of Nations* had been changed and conformed to Garnier's discourse organization (1843) because it was considered clearer than Smith's.

In another case, that is, the introduction to Lauderdale, Malthus, Mill and Senior, Ferrara (1955: 294-365) quoted for the first time an Italian translation as a tool of comparison. This was Giovanni Arrivabene's translation into Italian of James Mill's *Elements of Political Economy* (1821; 1830), which Ferrara transferred in its entirety into the BE, except for some variations making the author's thought clearer.

Arrivabene's translations were also taken into account by Ferrara a second time, when he dealt with Senior's *An outline of the science of political economy* (1836; 1854). In 1835, Arrivabene had published some

lectures on political economy by Senior together with other unpublished lectures in French with the title *Principes fondamentaux de l'économie politique* (Senior 1835). The same work had been later translated into Italian by Arrivabene himself (Senior 1836) and was included by Ferrara in the BE, although as regards Senior's work, the BE editor advised the reader that its first publication went back to 1835, but the source text of BE translators had been its second edition published in 1850 (Ferrara 1955: 343).

It can be concluded that the BE editor and his assistants were experts in economics, and accustomed to reading foreign languages such as French and English. The result of their work in the BE, the specific domain dealt with and their methods allow us to consider them experts in economic translations. Moreover, although at that time French was more widely known than English and most texts had been already translated into French, the BE translators began directly from the most authoritative English source texts, using Guillaumin's translations only for comparison.

5. RICARDO'S *THE HIGH PRICE OF BULLION* TRANSLATION

The topic dealt with in *The High Price of Bullion* had been first presented by Ricardo in 1809 through some letters published in the Whig London newspaper *The Morning Chronicle*. He had observed that a great part of the public denied the progressive depreciation of the paper-currency, and those who admitted the fact had ascribed it to any cause but that which to him appeared the real one. In 1810, Ricardo decided to republish his opinion on this question in such a way that it would rise to a wider debate (Ricardo 1810:iii [*Introduction*]).¹

The booklet was the first systematized work by Ricardo, which introduced him into the English and European debate on economics, representing the basis for the classical approach to the theory of money. It was addressed to a high-educated English readership interested and/or involved in the economic affairs of England: politicians, ordinary citizens and the members of the Bullion Committee (a special commission set up by the English government to carry out Ricardo's suggestions).

The Italian target text, whose title is *Dell'alto prezzo dei metalli preziosi*, was published in the sixth volume of the BE, II series, in 1857 (BE-II VI: 199-243). Apart from the fame of Ricardo and the importance of the pamphlet itself, the translation was chosen for the present analysis because, while all the BE translators were anonymous as was usual in most editorial ventures at that time, the translator of *Dell'alto prezzo dei metalli preziosi* is the only clearly identifiable in the Sicilian jurist Emerico Amari (Guccione 2011: 367).

Amari, a politically committed friend of Ferrara's, was a scholar of noble rank whose interests ranged from criminal and comparative law to history, philosophy, statistics, economics, as well as classic and modern literature. Therefore, his knowledge of foreign languages – such as English – can be explained by his vast culture and the traditional education reserved to upper class gentlemen of his period (Aqarone 1960).

1

As stated in Ricardo's *Introduction* to the first edition of the booklet, printed in London for John Murray (1810), the purpose was, "from the admitted principles of political economy" to advance reasons which in his opinion proved that the paper-currency of England was at a "considerable discount, proceeding from a superabundance in its quantity, and not from any want of confidence in the Bank of England, or from any doubts of their ability to fulfill their engagements" (Ricardo 1810: iii-iv [*Introduction*]). The pamphlet contained interesting observations on some difficult questions related to the exchange theories and the first considerations on the possibility to exchange bank notes with bullions.

This Section focuses on some of the translation strategies used by the BE editor in translating Ricardo's *The High Price of Bullion [A Proof of the Depreciation of Bank Notes]* (1810). The Italian translation was compared with both the source text and its French version, which had already been published in 1847 by Fonteyraud editor of the *Ouvres Complètes* of David Ricardo for Guillaumin's *Collection*. Fonteyraud had based his translation mainly on McCulloch's *The Works of David Ricardo* (1888).

The aim of the following analysis is to detect some of the linguistic habits that – not explained by the structural or stylistic differences between the two languages – were adopted by the Italian and French translators. Special attention has been paid to the Italian text and to the particular rendering of some cohesive elements and specialized terms that allow us to presume that Ferrara and Amari tried to make Ricardo's pamphlet as comprehensible as possible to the non-specialist Italian reader.

The first aspect that influenced the various stylistic choices regards the different purposes of Ricardo and his translators. This is at once clear at the beginning of the source-text [Sample 1] where Ricardo uses the passive voice whereas both Fonteyraud and Amari turn the sentences into the active voice, notwithstanding the possibility of maintaining the same structure in the target languages:

[1]

"The precious metals employed for circulating the commodities of the world, previously to the establishment of banks, **have been supposed by the most approved writers** on political economy **to have been divided into certain proportions among the different civilized nations of the earth**, according to the state of their commerce and wealth, and therefore according to the number and frequency of the payments which they had to perform". (Ricardo 1888 [1811]: 263)

[1a]

"Les écrivains les plus estimés en Économie politique ont supposé que les métaux précieux employés comme agents de la circulation des marchandises, antérieurement à l'établissement des banques, s'étaient répartis parmi les nations les plus civilisées du globe dans de certaines proportions, déterminées par la situation de leur commerce et de leurs richesses, et conséquemment, par le nombre et la fréquence de leurs paiements". (Fonteyraud 1847: 401)

[1b]

"I più riputati scrittori di economia politica hanno creduto, che i metalli preziosi, adoperati per far circolare le mercanzie del mondo, prima che si fossero fondati dei banchi, sieno stati distribuiti in determinate proporzioni tra le varie nazioni incivilite della terra, secondo lo stato del loro commercio e della loro ricchezza, e perciò secondo il numero e la frequenza dei pagamenti, ch'esse dovevano eseguire". (Amari 1857: 199)

Granted that scientific writing in English very often relies on passive structures, the use of the active or passive voices has different pragmatic functions: the author uses the passive voice to quote other studies on the subject that he agrees with; otherwise, he uses the active voice to point out his personal choice, to follow a specific line of research or to distance himself from the statements of other scholars (Scarpa 2008:46). The rendering of the active structure, or conversely its substitution with the passive in the translation can affect the amount of information given in the clause, the linear arrangement of semantic elements such as agent and affected entity, and the focus of the message (Baker 1992:106; Sinclair 1990:343).

Ricardo uses the passive voice to deal with the subject objectively and to draw the reader's attention to his analysis, because – as already mentioned – he wanted to make his opinion widely known to interested readers. Fonteyraud and Amari prefer the active structure to highlight the role and the

opinions of the agents, viz. the main opinions of the authoritative writers on monetary matters. As a matter of fact, the French translations aimed at establishing the liberal school in France while the BE was conceived as a tool to foster the study of great economists among young Italians.

The comparison between source and target texts also highlights that Amari – even more than Fonteyraud – tried to clarify some parts of Ricardo’s argumentation. Some extracts from the source-text and the Italian and French translations are here reproduced to exemplify some of the linguistic devices used by Amari and Fonteyraud.

The strategies – exemplified in the sample passages – concern cohesion and the reference of textual relations as defined by Halliday & Hasan (1976)² and the rendering of terminology that is one of the most interesting traits in this comparative analysis focused on language.

As far as cohesion is concerned, Fonteyraud and Amari make different choices, using cohesive markers that do not depend on the grammatical systems and stylistic preferences in Italian or French. As shown in sample [2] where the items in bold mark the differences between source and target texts, Ricardo uses pronominal cohesion to refer back to a participant (e.g. the bank), which has already been introduced into the discourse:

[2]

“**The Bank** might continue to issue *their* notes, and the specie be exported with advantage to the country, while **their** notes were payable in specie on demand, because they could never issue more notes than the value of the coin which would have circulated had there been no bank.

If they attempted to exceed this amount, the excess would be immediately returned to them for specie; because our currency, being **thereby** diminished in value, could be advantageously exported, and could not be retained in our circulation”. (Ricardo 1888 [1811]: 236-237)

On some of these occasions, the BE translator is more likely to repeat the participant’s name (i.e. il banco) as shown in sample [2a] at the beginning of the second paragraph and to substitute some personal references like the possessive “*their notes*” with demonstratives like “*quei biglietti*”. Moreover, in the same passage Amari replaces the connective “*thereby*” with “*per quella eccedenza*”, so specifying the cause of the reduction in the currency value:

[2a]

“**Il banco** potrebbe continuare a emettere fuori i suoi biglietti, e la moneta potrebbe continuare ad esportarsi con profitto pel paese, finché **quei biglietti** fossero pagabili in contanti e a vista, perché esso non emetterebbe mai biglietti per un valore maggiore di quello della moneta, che sarebbe circolata dove non vi fosse stato un banco.

Se il banco tentasse oltrepassare questo limite, la porzione eccedente gli sarebbe immediatamente ritornata indietro per cambiarla in contanti, poiché la nostra moneta circolante essendo **per quella eccedenza** diminuita di valore, potrebbe con vantaggio esportarsi, e non potrebbe essere ritenuta nella nostra circolazione”. (Amari 1857: 202)

Unlike Amari, in the French translation [2b], Fonteyraud does not take some of Ricardo’s cohesive markers into account (i.e. “*des coins [...] les billets*”). He introduces synonyms (i.e. *des coins*), maintains the pronominal cohesion in the second sentence (i.e. “*Si elle*”) and adds a connective (i.e.

“*En effet*”) in the final part where a different organization of Ricardo’s discourse highlights the personal stylistic choices of the French translator:

[2b]

“**Le banque** pourrait à émettre ses billets et l’exportation **des coins** continuer à être avantageuse au pays, tant que **les billets** seraient remboursables on espèces a volonté, car elle ne saurait jamais créer une masse de billets supérieure à la valeur du numéraire qui eût alimenté la circulation en l’absence d’une banque.

Si elle essayait de dépasser cette somme, elle verrait l’excédant lui revenir en échange d’espèces. **En effet**, la valeur de notre monnaie étant **alors** diminuée, provoquerait l’exportation du numéraire et l’enlèverait à notre circulation”. (Fonteyraud 1847: 405)

In other passages, as in sample [3], Ricardo uses general words (i.e. “*object*”) to refer back to a longer chunk already mentioned within the paragraph (i.e. [they] operate as an inducement to the exportation either of bullion, or of coin):

[3]

“The establishment of the bank, and the consequent issue of its notes, therefore, as well as the discovery of the mine, operate as **an inducement to the exportation either of bullion, or of coin**, and are beneficial only in as far as that **object** may be accomplished”. (Ricardo 1888 [1811]: 235)

Unlike Fonteyraud [3a] who begins a new paragraph to render the concept in French and introduces a new item (i.e. “*une condition nécessaire*”) that seems voluntarily to strengthen Ricardo’s statement, Amari [3b] appears to have reproduced the source text more faithfully only by making the concept more explicit through lexical repetition (i.e. *esportazione*):

[3a]

“L’établissement de la banque, et l’émission subséquente de ses billets agissent donc, comme la découverte d’une mine, à titre de stimulant, sur l’**exportation** des lingots ou du numéraire. **Cette action est même une condition nécessaire sans laquelle ils ne présenteraient aucun avantage**”. (Fonteyraud 1847: 403)

[3b]

“Lo stabilimento del banco adunque, e l’emissione dei biglietti che ne segue, del pari che la scoperta di una miniera, **agiscono come una spinta all’esportazione**, sia dei metalli, sia della moneta; e sono vantaggiosi solamente sino al punto in cui possa ottenersi quella **esportazione**”. (Amari 1857: 200-201)

As far as the rendering of terminology from English into Italian is concerned, Ricardo’s pamphlet introduced new concepts that, although known by the source language readers, were certainly unfamiliar to the target language ones. Also, what characterized Ricardo’s discourse was the lexical repetition of some terms defining different concepts in the same parts of the text. For this reason these terms required a semantic explicitation, viz. the choice of more specific words in the target text (Baker 2001: 83). ‘Explicitation’ is here meant as the “process of introducing information into the target language which is present only implicitly in the source language, but can be derived from the context or the situation” rather than the structural differences between languages (Vinay & Darbelnet 1977:8 in Baker 2001:80).

The investigation at word level reveals the key terms related to the monetary domain and focal to the understanding of the whole text i.e. *bank note, debasement, decrease, deficiency, depreciation, bill, bill of exchange,*

*circulating medium, circulation, coin, currency, increase, money, nominal price, nominal value, real value, revenue, specie, stock, value, etc.*³

It is worth noting, for example, the different translations that Amari made of *currency* and *specie*. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) lists *Currency* [4a] as “that which is current as a medium of exchange; the circulating medium (whether coins or notes); the money of a country in actual use” by quoting Adam Smith among the English authors who first used *currency* with this semantic extension. Amari translates it in more than ten different ways according to its collocations and its implicit meaning within the text even though the search of *currency* equivalent – in the available and authoritative English-Italian dictionaries of that time – shows that the only rendering for the single word *currency* was “*corso*” and that only the collocation *currency of money* had the meaning of “*corso della moneta*” (Baretti 1839, s.v. *CURRENCY*).

As shown in one of the most significant passages of Ricardo’s pamphlet, sample [4], *currency* appears eight times in two consecutive small paragraphs. Amari translates *currency* [4a] by such lexical explicitation as “*danaro circolante*” and “*moneta circolante*” and by a superordinate term like “*circolazione*”:

[4]

“[the law against melting, or exporting of coin and the free exportation of gold bullion] would be a real depreciation of our **currency**, raising the prices of all other commodities in the same proportion as it increased that of gold bullion. [...] The law against the exportation of the coin has this tendency [...]. Thus, then, it appears that the **currency** of one country can never for any length of time be much more valuable [...]; that excess of **currency** is but a relative term; [...] though the **currency** of each country were doubled or trebled, neither country would be conscious of an excess of **currency**. The prices of commodities would every where rise, on account of the increase of **currency**, but there would be no exportation of money from either. But if these proportions be destroyed by England alone doubling her **currency**, while that of France, Holland, &c., &c., continued as before, we should then be conscious of an excess in our **currency** [...]”. (Ricardo 1888 [1811]: 236)

[4a]

“[la legge contro la fusione o l’esportazione della moneta e una libera esportazione dell’oro in verghe] sarebbe un vero svilimento del nostro **danaro circolante**, elevando i prezzi di tutte le mercanzie nella medesima proporzione in cui aumentato quello dell’oro in verghe. [...] La legge contro l’esportazione della moneta ha questa tendenza [...]. Così dunque si fa manifesto che la **moneta circolante** non può giammai avere più valore di quella di un altro [...]; che l’eccesso di **circolazione** non è se non un termine relativo; [...] quand’anche la **moneta circolante** di ciaschedun paese fosse raddoppiata, o triplicata, nessuno di essi s’accorgerebbe d’un eccesso di **circolazione**. I prezzi delle merci dappertutto aumenterebbero in proporzione della **moneta circolante**, ma non vi sarebbe esportazione di moneta da nessuno di quei paesi. Ma dove quelle proporzioni fossero distrutte in Inghilterra solamente, raddoppiando la quantità della sua **moneta circolante**, mentre quella di Francia, Olanda, ecc., continuasse nella

quantità di prima, allora noi ci accorgeremmo di un eccesso nella nostra **circolazione**". (Amari 1857: 201-202)

On other occasions the BE translator renders the same entity with "moneta" or also with such phrases as "danaro in circolazione" and "specie di circolazione" or with synonyms like "medio circolante" which is the calque of "circulating medium". Some collocations like *paper currency* or *metallic currency* are instead translated with "carta circolante" or "circolazione della carta", "danaro circolante metallico" or "circolazione metallica".

Fonteyraud (1847: 404-405) translates the above-mentioned tokens of *currency* [4] by paraphrasing the first three and by substituting the last four tokens with superordinate words: "système monétaire", "la circulation d'un pays", "ces mots excès de circulation", "circulations", "circulation" and "monnaie" (sample [4b]):

[4b]

"[la loi dirigée contre la fusion or l'exportation du numéraire et une libre exportation des lingots d'or] Il y aurait là une dépréciation réelle de notre **système monétaire**, qui élèverait les prix de toutes le autres commodités dans un rapport direct avec l'accroissement de la valeur des lingots d'or. [...] La loi contre l'exportation du numéraire (coin) a réellement cette tendance. [...]. Il ressort donc de tous ces faits que [...] la **circulation d'un pays** ne peut jamais avoir pendant longtemps une valeur très-supérieure à celle d'une autre nation; que, de plus, **ces mots excès de circulation**, ne sont que des termes relatifs; qu'enfin [...] ces diverses **circulations** conservaient leurs proportions relatives tout en doublant ou triplant d'une manière absolue, aucun des pays ne se ressentirait d'une exubérance de **monnaie**. Le prix des marchandises s'élèverait partout sous l'influence de cette **circulation** multipliée, mais nulle part on n'exporterait du numéraire. Mais ces proportions seraient détruites si, la **circulation** de l'Angleterre seule doublant, celles de Hollande, de France, etc., restaient les mêmes. Nous reconnaitrions alors un excès dans notre **circulation**". (Fonteyraud 1847: 405)

As far as the Latin borrowing *specie* (abl. sing. of *species*, orig. adopted in the phr. *in specie*) is concerned, the OED defines it in [3c] as "Of sums or amounts: In actual coin; in money" and as [6] "Coin; coined money. Also a commodity serving as a means of exchange or trade". Notwithstanding its Latin origin, *specie* was presumably a new term for the BE translator, without any equivalence in Italian. As a matter of fact, in Baretti's dictionary (1839), for example, the single term is listed in its plural form *species* with the meaning of "moneta" or "*le parti che compongono un totale*" and also in the collocation "*to pay in specie*" to mean "*pagare una somma in contanti*" (Baretti 1839, s.v. *SPECIES*).

Ricardo uses the term to mean "cash" as defined by the entries [3c] and [6] of the OED. He also collocates the term in items such as "the specie leaving the country", "the exportation of the specie", "their notes were payable in specie", "the excess would be immediately returned to them for specie" and "to export specie". *Specie* is translated by Amari with "metalli preziosi", "moneta" and "specie monetata" (1857: 201), with the apparently contradictory explicitation "moneta metallica" (1857: 204), metaphoric expressions like "moneta sonante" or "biglietti in moneta" to distinguish *specie* from paper money. On the contrary, *in specie* is translated by Amari with more literal expressions like "in contanti" (1857: 202) or paraphrases as above like "pagamenti in moneta sonante" (1857: 244).

Unlike Amari in translating *specie*, Fonteyraud is more bent to avoiding synonyms preferring lexical repetition and using *espèces* :

[5] “Quelques esprits pourraient s’alarmer en voyant les **espèces** abandonner le pays [...]. La loi, il est vrai, a suivi ces idées en prohibant l’exportation des **monnaies métalliques**”. (Fonteyraud 1847 : 403-4)

[5a]

“Qualcuno potrebbe concepire qualche apprensione al vedere i **metalli monetati** abbandonare il paese [...]: veramente la legge pare che così lo riguardi per le sue sanzioni contro l’esportazione della **specie monetata**”. (Amari 1857: 201)

[6]

“Ainsi donc, pour acquitter une dette, on n’expédiera **des espèces** au dehors que dans le cas où elles seront surabondantes; que dans le cas où elles constitueront la marchandise d’exportation la moins chère. Si à la même époque la banque payait ses **billets en espèces**, la demande de l’or s’accroîtrait rapidement et tendrait à satisfaire ces besoins additionnels”. (Fonteyraud 1847 :409-410)

[6a]

“Così adunque la **moneta sonante** sarebbe mandata fuori in pagamento di un debito, solo quando fosse sovrabbondante: solo quando fosse la merce più vantaggiosamente esportabile. Se in tale occasione il banco pagasse i suoi **biglietti in moneta**, allora l’oro sarebbe richiesto a tal uopo”. (Amari 1857: 205)

As pointed out by translation scholars, in specialized texts the English preference is to repeat the same term or the expression for reasons of monoreferentiality and clarity. On the contrary, Italian writers are inclined to use lexical variation and avoid repetition by adopting specific procedures that resort to the mechanisms of lexicon-grammar or lexicon cohesion (Scarpa 2008: 156-158; Musacchio 2007).

Amari, it can be argued, must have thought readers would have trouble in understanding the text if the same term was translated with the same equivalent in Italian irrespective of the meaning of a polysemous word in the source text (Myers 1991: 6-9). This choice was coherent with Ferrara’s aim to make translations easily understandable for non-expert Italian readers.

6. THE LANGUAGE OF ECONOMICS AND FERRARA’S CONSIDERATIONS

The BE translation process involved Ferrara in two debates concerning the systematisation of the language of economics on the one hand, and what variety of the Italian language had to unify Italians linguistically on the other.

At the beginning of the 19th century general language was the main source of economic terminology and, for this reason, many key terms such as ‘wealth’, ‘capital’, ‘labour’ or ‘value’ lacked monosemous and universally accepted definitions. To remedy this polysemy, such economists as Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, Whately and Senior had proposed different methodological approaches, which recommended precision in economic language from divergent standpoints (Maccabelli 1998).

Smith and his followers were in favour of a conventional language in which the free use of terms and definitions was allowed to scholars under the condition that each term, once defined, was used coherently throughout the work. On the contrary, Ricardo had suggested the introduction of new monosemous terms that would give economics the status of an abstract and deductive science. His theories widen the gap between the language of economics and general language, so much so that his discourse was considered innovative and uncommon. As a matter of fact, in his *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1821) – chapter 1, section 1, on value –

Ricardo wrote “I am told that I adopt new and unusual language, not reconcilable with the new principles of the science. To me it appears that the unusual and, indeed, inconsistent language is that used by my opponents” (Ricardo 1888 [1811]: 5).

Smith’s and Ricardo’s considerations were soon questioned by Malthus (1827: 2) who underlined the incongruence between Smith’s definitions and doctrines, and who considered Ricardo’s proposal for a new terminology more appropriate for hard sciences like chemistry or botany whose “great variety of objects, not in general use, must be arranged and described so as best to enable us to remember their characteristic distinctions” (Malthus 1827: 3). Moreover, in *Political Economy* a nomenclature (such as Lavoisier’s chemical one) would not be equally useful in promoting scientific advancement, because economics was more comparable to sciences as morals or politics where “terms are comparatively few, and of constant application in the daily concerns of life” (Malthus 1827: 3). In this way, Malthus combined his preference for general language with a conception of political economy as practical rather than abstract knowledge in the Aristotelian sense (Maccabelli 1998). The author of *Definitions in Political Economy* finally recommended rigour and precision in defining the terms of economics and suggested to overcome polysemy by looking at the definitions given by the most representative authors of each economic theory.

Applied linguists have recently highlighted that the great merit of Malthus was to realize for the first time a close link between “the definition of a term and the particular scientific procedure which has brought it about” (Gotti 2003: 254). Malthus also pointed out

“the double requirement for successful terminological definitions in political economy, which depend both on consistency with the theoretical structure of the conceptual field of that particular discipline and on reference to the established usage of that term in general language”. (Gotti 2003: 255)

Finally, Whately and in particular his follower Senior agreed with Malthus on the belief of general language as main source of economic language, but unlike the latter they took inspiration from the Aristotelian syllogism and the scientific methodology of genre and species classification to achieve a stable terminology followed by strict definitions (Maccabelli 1998).

As far as Italian general and economic language are concerned, in Ferrara’s day many Italians spoke only dialect and were illiterate. In some northern regions such as Piedmont, the main language among scholars and politicians was often French, so linguistic unification was just as necessary as political unification.

Piedmont became the leading region in political and linguistic unification and a special role in this direction was played by publishers such as Pomba who, less exposed to the extremely puristic influence of the Crusca Academy, undertook numerous editorial ventures to spread science in Italian all over the country (Marazzini 2002: 285). For this reason, each BE editor was required to translate from French, English, and German into Italian because – quoting Pomba – “science belonged to humanity and could not be the privilege of only one nation” (Ferrara 1955: XIII).

It is interesting to underline that Ferrara’s aim was to translate foreign texts into pure Italian. As a matter of fact, in the above-mentioned translation of Ricardo, not only does Amari avoid as much as possible the introduction of borrowings but he also seems to avoid Italian equivalents of French origin. This is the case – for example – of *to suppose* in [Sample 1] translated with *credere* [Sample 1b] instead of the French calques *supporre* from *supposer* used by Fonteyraud [Sample 1a].

Hence, the BE translation work added an element of stability to the Italian language of economics, and the language debates carried out by the Italian literary movements clearly influenced the BE translators when creating the Italian equivalents of English economic terms.

Ferrara's translations imported the whole terminology referred to the theories on wealth, labour, capital and value that had been stated in the works of the above-mentioned English economists (Malthus 1854a). Semantic borrowings and calques such as *estensione della domanda* or *dell'offerta*, *valore reale* or *ominale*, *lavoro produttivo* or *improduttivo*, *rendita* were introduced into Italian, even though, on some occasions, the BE editor did not fail to pursue his ideological and linguistic battles by rendering, for example, 'labour' into its Sicilian equivalent *travaglio*.⁴

New terms such as *ristagno* from *ristagnare* to translate 'stagnation' were brought into existence and, if necessary, their original and general meaning was metaphorically extended, while other foreign terms, such as those referred to units like *peck*, *quarter* and *bushel* (Malthus 1854a) entered the target-texts without any linguistic adaptation or meaning explication (BE-I V).

An eminent scholar like Ferrara also made considerations and recommendations on both general and economic language and showed his awareness of being part of the national and international process that had been affirming the scientific value of economics and the consequent specialization of its language throughout all his introductions to translations. In all the pages introducing foreign authors Ferrara recommended precision in the language of economics and assured his readers that he had always aimed at translating his source texts as faithfully as possible unless a literal translation would not make the author's thought clear.

In the first BE-I introduction – *Ragguaglio alla scuola fisiocratica* – the editor highlighted that economists often used words belonging to general language or coined words from G. or L. roots. With regard to the Physiocrats, for example, Ferrara argued (1855: 83) that they used the old name "Political Economy" to designate a science, and considered it convenient to name their theories on the government of nature with a newly coined word "Physiocracy" based on Greek.

In the introduction to Smith's book, the BE editor recommended the need to stabilize economic terminology in order to explain economic concepts more clearly to his young and inexpert readers. Ferrara criticized Malthus for his *Definitions in Political Economy* (1827; 1854b), because he thought the latter was more interested in questioning the choice of words than in giving the right term for a concept. Quoting Ferrara, Malthus also "cut off, developed and changed" most concepts to fit them with a given word and its more obvious meaning in general language (Ferrara 1955: 330).

7. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to affirm the value of Ferrara's BE as an early example of specialized translation from English into Italian in the field of economics. To achieve this goal, it was necessary to deal with the assumptions that led to this publishing venture and to highlight what Ferrara's correspondence and introductions suggest on his general approach to English works and their translation.

Although it is a well-known fact that Ferrara was helped by other translators, they were frequently anonymous. Nevertheless, research on the identity and the background of Ferrara's co-workers (such as Amari) could be interesting for both economists and linguists; that would help to recreate the composite process that involved translators in dealing with economics, interpreting each concept and choosing how to rephrase it in Italian. The comparison between source and target texts of Ricardo's *The High Price of*

Bullion showed that Amari tried to make most of the concepts in the source text explicit, while Fonteyraud was more inclined to personalize the target text style without turning to explicitation.

The political period in which Ferrara and his research assistants carried out their translations also makes the BE worthy of note for the role that it played in stabilizing the Italian language of economics. Introductions reveal that Ferrara translated from the most authoritative original editions of each English text, but he also compared them with French translations (if they existed).

This means that, since Ferrara's BE has been one of the main bibliographical sources for the study of economics for long time, a further analysis will be needed to show to what extent the Italian language of economics has been influenced by English directly or indirectly through French (Iamartino 1999; 2001). It could also quantify, for example, how French translators influenced Ferrara's interpretation of economic concepts and how BE translators were led to create calques from French rather than introduce English loanwords or coin new Italian terms.

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APPENDICES

ENGLISH-ITALIAN TRANSLATIONS IN THE BE (1851-1868)

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