

ENTRADIT- Edizione nazionale del Compendio delle traduzioni italiane nel mondo

PREMISE: TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

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The proposed compendium is the result of a choral and interdisciplinary work developed from and based on the concept of “Italian as a language of culture” as conceived by both Professor Riccardo Campa in his text *“Il convivio linguistico”* (2019) and by Professor Massimo Vedovelli. According to this theoretical framework (which revolutionizes the traditional concepts of language and culture based primarily on nationalism, monolingualism and centralism as well as on prestige and exclusivity) Italian is a language of culture because it is «a pervasive substratum of Western civilization development»ⁱ Hence, this project (which presents itself as a non-exhaustive systematization, open to changes and new ideas) aims to demonstrate the way in which Italian literature (whether it be scientific, artistic or philosophical) influenced other cultures, particularly Western cultures. Our theoretical and applicative framework is based on the idea that the dissemination of Italian as a cultural substratum of other symbolic and value systems has also been possible thanks to translations; which are to be considered not only as a process but also as a product of material culture. In this respect, the compendium intends on retracing the translation, publication and material chains that have introduced Italy’s great authors to other cultures. It is important to underline that the compendium is not intended to be only a catalogue of data and bibliographic references; it is rather a detailed map by which the user can be guided among the translations of Italian works in the world, and a starting point for qualitative investigations, both from a

comparative and a contrastive perspective, both synchronically and diachronically.

Hence, this compendium aims to be a research tool and, as such, it needs both quantitative methods and approaches that represent the instrumental, measurable and exact nature of the catalogue, and qualitative approaches to highlight the not-yet-known relations between elements of material and non-material culture: books and translations, authors and translators. Qualitative approaches that aim to underline the chronological relations: what the process of translation and dissemination of a translated work is; in which cultures a certain work is translated first and why. Finally, qualitative approaches may synchronically investigate the relations as well: what is the geographical distribution of a translation in a certain period time?; what Countries currently own translations of Italian works? and which foreign language is the text most frequently translated into? The complexity of such research questions requires an equally complex methodology. We are convinced that multiple approaches and methods make any investigation complete and more exhaustive, especially when the subjects are symbolic systems such as languages and cultures. We agree with De Mauro who writes: «[...] the universe of symbolic forms that is such a vast and complex universe cannot be properly explored without the help of sciences that are distant from each other but, despite using different methods and investigating different theoretical objects, shed some light on the linguistic subject»ⁱⁱⁱ.

1. Tools: Google Documents and Google Sheets

Before proceeding with the data collection, a list of national libraries and union libraries around the world was compiled, also taking notes of the links to access the digital catalogues of every institution. For this reason, Google Documents was deemed the most effective tool to work remotely and asynchronously, especially during the pandemic. The data of this investigation was collected and compiled in a database on Google Sheets. This tool, that is not unlike Microsoft Excel, has benefits from several points of view: first, it is reliable because (being directly linked to Google Drive) it makes losing data almost impossible since all work is always automatically saved. Furthermore, the direct link to Google Drive makes the files accessible from any computer or other-device workstation. In addition, such a tool makes it possible to work online and to edit sheets simultaneously by several users who can communicate by a dedicated chat on the very same sheet. Finally, similarly to Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets makes it possible to create geographical graphs on the bases of the data collected and extracted from pivot tables that give an account of the actual dissemination of the translations of Italian works.

1.1 Digital catalogues and libraries

The search for the works was conducted in two distinct phases and with different tools: in the first phase, we used Worldcat^{iv} a catalogue that collects the bibliographic records of 170 Countries all over the world^v. Through this catalogue, we were able to conduct a search for the author or title of a certain work. The records that are stored in Worldcat can be consulted by publication date, edition date, format (paper or digital) and by language. The advantages of such a tool are numerous: on the one hand, it makes it possible to search for a work in various countries at the same time and provides a link to the library where the work is stored; on the other hand, it makes it possible to explore all the available editions in very little time and to check in which languages the work is available. On the contrary, one of the drawbacks of this tool is the lack of uniformity when searching for a specific title: indeed, it is possible to find the

same text recorded under different (sometimes slightly different, other times very different) titles. In these special cases, we were required to contact the libraries that hold texts whose bibliographic records needed further clarification with regards to the title, translator, and the publication date. Another drawback is the duration of the reported links: in fact, links often expire because the records do not include a permanent link (or permalink). In these cases, we had to search the library of reference. For this reason, Worldcat was used first and the results were subsequently checked with Karlsruhe Virtueller Katalog (KVK)^{vi} (created and managed by the Institute of Technology of Karlsruhe, the main international metacatalogue and has proved to be more reliable than Worldcat). KVK, in fact, makes it possible to search for a certain work in the catalogues of the selected countries. Such a process avoids any issues with expired links (a problem frequently encountered with Worldcat). Furthermore, KVK is connected to Worldcat, to the most common e-commerce sites and to various digital libraries such as: EROMM : European Register Of Microform And Digital Masters, Hathi Trust, Europeana, Google Books and Internet Archive. Finally, a further inspection on the presence of the works in each catalogue of the national libraries was conducted.

To make the works that no longer have the copyright available, we used pages such as: archive.org, a non-profit digital library, europeana.eu and other digital libraries including Gallica^{vii} (France) and Münchener Digitalisierungszentrum^{viii}, the archives of the Bavarian State Library, that provide the pdf files of the works that are no longer protected by copyright. Besides the above-mentioned digital libraries, we also addressed Google Books, where some works are available in a digital format. Among the specific tools for Giordano Bruno, Tommaso Campanella e Bernardino Telesio, there are la Bibliotheca Bruniana Electronica^{ix}, il Centro Internazionale di Studi telesiani, bruniani e campanelliani^x where a pdf copy of *La bibliografia di Giordano Bruno e degli scritti ad esso attinenti* (1926) by Virgilio Salvestrini was found and consulted; and the 'Archivio Giordano Bruno'^{xi}. After the online research on Giordano Bruno's works in the world, we also checked the first and second editions of Salvestrini's bibliography, that is, *Bibliografia di Giordano Bruno: 1582-1950* (1958) and, finally,

Bibliografia di Giordano Bruno 1951-2000 (2002) by Maria Elena Severini. Regarding Tommaso Campanella, Bibliografia degli scritti di Tommaso Campanella (1940) by Luigi Firpo was consulted. Finally, regarding Bernardino Telesio, the work Bernardino Telesio. Con appendice bibliografica (2018) by Gentile e Bondi was consulted.

2. Approach and Methodology

The methods used in the development of this project are a direct consequence of the main goal of the compendium: demonstrating that Italian culture (that is the symbolic and value systems that has been characterizing our Peninsula) is the substratum of the many cultures it has come in contact with. To do so, as mentioned in the introduction, we relied and have been relying on both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Hence, the quantitative methods used in the data collection and elaboration will be described. From specific bibliometric techniques to the statistic rudiments of certain software; from data collection on the Internet – that has been the main source of this project as, for contingent reasons, it has been conducted during one of the worst pandemics in recent centuries – to the applications of cultural geography principles. Ultimately, the possible applications of the quantitative analysis to the qualitative analysis will be explained: from the comparative and contrastive analysis of different literature systems to investigations in the field of lexicon; from translation analysis to geo-cultural speculations.

2.1 Quantitative methods and approaches

Despite the fact that the compendium is not only a mere catalogue of sources and bibliographic references, as we have repeatedly said, data collection represented and has been representing an essential and crucial phase for the qualitative analysis as well, especially for an accurate and exhaustive comparative analysis, and for the efficiency of the compendium as a research tool for linguists, translators, historians, bibliography experts and other professionals. Below, we are going to illustrate the phases of the research process and the theoretical framework underlying the research. The first phase of the work consists of the selection of the authors and the works that would be able to demonstrate the Italian cultural substratum which lies behind other cultures. Different lines of influence were identified. Within them, some personalities were selected: intellectuals, writers, philosophers and scientists who, thanks to the Italian symbolic linguistic system, expressed their values, discoveries, and speculations, affecting other personalities who translated – in the etymological

sense of the term – the Italian culture in their own cultures. To mention a few: Telesio, Campanella, Giordano Bruno, Gianbattista Vico and Machiavelli.

Once the research object was identified, we focused on the selection of the authors and the works that could best represent Italian culture in the world and the linguistic criterion was the main one in this choice because we are convinced that languages are symbolic systems that convey and create cultural identity. Almost all the selected works, in fact, are in Italian vulgar or contemporary Italianⁱⁱⁱ, except for a few Latin works that are essential both as metatexts and for their impact on other literary movements and scientific disciplines (for instance, *De Rerum Natura* by Telesio). Then, we identified their publication date, place of publication, publisher and/or patron who funded the publication and the possible personalities to whom the work is dedicated to. Such elements, that might seem marginal, are actually fundamental to building a catalogue full of accurate information to contextualize the work itself and to conduct exhaustive qualitative research. The exact same process was conducted with the translated works because their translators, publication date, place of publication publisher and/or patron and dedications were investigated, collected, and recorded in the databases. Regarding the translated works, we decided to insert any reprint, new edition or translation of thesis dissertations because, as we are going to explain, they represent essential data for the diachronic and synchronic analysis.

Once the criteria for our data collection were established, we reflected on the most adequate tools to report data, and to create the skeleton of the online catalogue. The choice fell on Google Documents and Google Sheets for several reasons such as: the possibility to edit files simultaneously, the possibility to work collectively, the online storage, the free accessibility of the two programs, the option to use and share files by any userⁱⁱⁱⁱ.

The theoretical framework underlying our quantitative analysis ranges from bibliometric and citation analysis methods to the application – even if rudimental – of statistical methods and geo-cultural approaches which has made it possible to create diachronic and synchronic online maps.

Bibliometrics is a discipline developed in the 70s. Its main purpose is to analyze the data of bibliographic catalogues quantitatively by applying statistical and mathematical concepts. This term is the umbrella term for many other parallel disciplines: scientometrics, infometrics, and webmetrics. The latter, in particular, is one of the objects of our research because it applies statistical and

mathematical concepts for the quantitative analysis of any source available on the Internet, and as we have previously mentioned, the results of our work have been elaborated on the basis of data almost exclusively found on the digital catalogues of several global libraries and collections^{xx}. Concerning bibliometrics and webmetrics, we particularly share the basic principles consisting of identifying quantitative relations among authors – including, in our case, the authors of the translated works – publications and publishers. However, it is important to highlight the fact that the principles and methods of such disciplines are usually used with scientific publications to measure their dissemination and (indirectly) their quality. Instead, in our case, the field of application is Italian literature, and the main object is to identify the dissemination of the works which both create and pass on Italian culture, diachronically and synchronically. The most common methods of bibliometric analysis are the citation method which, generally speaking, identifies the number of times a certain publication is listed in other bibliographies, indexes and documents^{xx}. Regarding our project, we did not use this exact method but applied its key principles to our field of research: from the bibliographic information about the selected Italian authors to their translators in other languages; from the citations of the original works in critic editions to partial translations in essays and other texts. In short, the bibliometric approach was and has been fundamental during the phase of document collection, identification of translations, translators, publishers, and other elements useful to the qualitative investigation.

Once all the data were collected, thanks to the aforementioned methods and tools, the elaboration of this information made it possible to extract some statistical data, relevant to the qualitative analysis.

Particularly, we decided to extract data on the number of translators of a certain work, the number of publishing companies, the number of languages into which a certain work was translated and, the number of libraries that own a certain translated work. Through cross-referencing of data, elaborating statistics, both diachronically and synchronically, it is possible and helpful to investigate the impact and the dissemination of a certain work historically and at the present time. Furthermore, the statistical and numerical

investigations lay the foundation for the development of geo-cultural maps, created to highlight the geographical dissemination of the selected translated works. Pivot tables in Google Sheets make it possible to focus on the research of certain geographical and linguistic areas, drafting speculations about the relations and cultural exchanges among translators of the same work from different geo-linguistic areas (e.g.: in Bruno's analysis, we noticed that part of Japanese translations was elaborated from French translations as well as Hebrew translations were based on English texts). Hence, the application of mathematic and statistical approaches marked a preliminary phase that was fundamental not only for the quantitative analysis but for the qualitative one, highlighting relations that would have otherwise been difficult to observe.

The final elaboration of data culminated in the creation of cultural maps attributable to the field of cultural geographic, a discipline that saw Von Humboldt and Kapp as its precursors but actually developed scientifically only in the 1930s with Carl Sauer. From the 1980s, with the Structuralism crisis, the current of "New Cultural Geography" took hold. It investigates the meaning of culture from various perspectives: from the post-modern to the eclectic; from the spiritualistic vision to the semiotic vision^{xxi}. Generally speaking, cultural geography, among the several aspects explored, mainly investigates the way in which cultural elements and systems have spread and disseminated in certain geographical areas, highlighting relations of geographical and cultural contact^{xxii}. Hence, our research shares such a principle with cultural geography: investigating the modality in which culture, both conceptual and material, has spread geographically.

As it can be noticed, our quantitative analysis alone requires a very vast and interdisciplinary theoretical framework: from rudiments of humanistic statistics to bibliometric and cultural geography principles. A framework that, in spite of being vast, lays the foundation for the development of various qualitative investigations: from translation speculations to lexicon analysis, from comparative and contrastive literature analysis to bibliometric research.

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ⁱ Specifically: paragraphs 1 e 1.1 are written by Marilena Pescini; paragraphs 2 e 2.1. are written by Giulia Staggini.

ⁱⁱ Our translation. Campa R. (2019), *Il convivio linguistico. Riflessioni sul ruolo dell'italiano nel mondo contemporaneo*, Carocci editore, p.26.

ⁱⁱⁱ Our translation. De Mauro T. (2008), *Il linguaggio tra natura e storia*, Roma: Mondadori Università, p. 7.

^{iv} <https://www.worldcat.org>

^v <https://web.archive.org/web/20111204001206/http://www.oclc.org/ca/en/worldcat/statistics/countries.htm>

^{vi} <https://kvk.bibliothek.kit.edu/>

^{vii} <https://gallica.bnf.fr/>

^{viii} <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/>

^{ix} <http://www.giordanobruno.it/bibliotheca/bruniana.html>

^x <http://www.telesio.eu/>

^{xi} <http://www.iliesi.cnr.it/AGB/intro.php?op=2>

^{xii} It is important to remind that linguistic fragmentation has always characterized Italic Peninsula and we would like to highlight that the wide linguistic space of Italians was dominated more by dialects and regional varieties than neostandard Italian until few decades ago, as explained in the investigation “Italiano 2000” (De Mauro, T., Vedovelli, M., Barni, M., & Miraglia, L. (2002). Italiano 2000. I pubblici e le.).

^{xiii} See paragraph 1.

^{xiv} Anziliero, T., & RIDI, R. (2012). *La bibliometria: metodi e strumenti per la misurazione della ricerca scientifica e delle raccolte bibliotecarie* (Università Ca'Foscari Venezia).

^{xv} For further information about bibliometrics and citation analysis, see: Araújo, C. A. (2006); Ardanuy, J. (2012); De Bellis, N. (2014); Turbanti, S. (2018).

^{xvi} Bonazzi, A. (2014). *Manuale di geografia culturale*. Gius. Laterza & Figli Spa.

^{xvii} For further information about cultural geography, see: Claval, P., & Isenburg, T. (1974); Vallega, A. (2003); Mercatanti, L. (2011); Bonazzi, A. (2014).