EDITING AND TRANSLATING PLINY IN RENAISSANCE ITALY:

Agency, collaboration and visibility[1]

By Andrea Rizzi

Abstract: *The present article applies a recent approach concerning visibility and agency articulated by Mairi McLaughlin, Theo Hermans and Sharon Deane-Cox. It does so by making a case study of paratextual features of successive editions and translations of Pliny the Elder's Natural History produced in late Quattrocento and Cinquecento Italy. The aim is to illuminate specific ways in which editors, translators or printers made themselves manifestly visible to readers, and asserted their agency by claiming different types of collaboration: synchronous (translator and printer working together on a new project), asynchronous (translator, editor or printer expressly acknowledging the work of an earlier translator or editor, whether perfunctorily or otherwise) or concealed (editors or translators availing themselves of earlier works by fellow scholars without acknowledgement). Asynchronous collaboration is an understudied aspect of Renaissance translation. This article is an attempt to fill this gap.*

Introduction

In a 2012 essay, Anne Coldiron re-examined Lawrence Venuti's claim that the notion of invisible translators and translation has dominated the history of British and American translation. Coldiron's study invited scholars to study and re-evaluate marks of translators' visibility.[2] 'Visibility' refers to the multiple and complex ways in which translators and their editors or publishers present their work, and the value they place upon it, their aspirations, and

[2] Coldiron 2012. Coldiron's essay is a direct response to Lawrence Venuti's study of the translator's invisibility in English translations from the mid-seventeenth century to the present. See Venuti 1995/2008.

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collaboration through the dedication or presentation letters that accompany their translations. By way of response to Coldiron's call, this article examines the paratextual features of Italian Renaissance editions and translations of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* to gauge how editors and translators asserted various degrees of visibility by making claims of collaboration with printers and fellow scholars.[3]

How does one assess the visibility of translators? In her analysis of a corpus of twenty-first-century translated and original French fictions, Mairi McLaughlin suggests that translators are always visible, since they are bound to leave linguistic or cultural traces that are either overtly visible, covertly visible, or 'invisibly' visible. By 'invisibly visible' McLaughlin means that even when the work of translators is only perceptible by means of linguistic analysis, some visibility is always present.[4] A highly conspicuous example of a twentieth-century translator's 'overt visibility' is found in Clement Egerton's 1939 discordant translation of the seventeenth-century Chinese novel *Jin P'ing Mei* as *The Golden Lotus*, published in London by George Routledge. In this English version, the translator declares that the book had to be "produced in its entirety", and resorts to Latin where he considered passages in the narrative too sexually explicit.[5] Code-switching (between Latin and English) in the body of *The Golden Lotus* of 1939 denotes the translator's and publisher's dissociation from the novel's frank descriptions of sexual activity. The use of Latin is therefore a means to soften or conceal the pornographic content of the novel. This is an evident case of a modern translator and publisher manifestly interpolating into the translation evidence of a shared ideological concern about the novel's sexual morality — collaborating to determine an acceptable (or tolerable) textual intervention.

A different way of evidencing the "translator's individual and social signature" is suggested by Theo Hermans. Twenty-first-century readers should see translation as reported or echoed speech in which "the translator, as an authorial presence, lets the original author speak in his or her own name". According to Hermans, this type of reading unsettles conventional perceptions of contemporary translation and gives more prominence to the agency of translators.[6] Here, 'agency' refers to the strategies undertaken by editors, translators and printers — and others associated with the book market for translations — to position themselves and their work whether overtly or

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[3] On microhistory and translation history see Adamo 2006.

[4] McLaughlin 2008, 62. A re-historization of translators' invisibility, with a focus on the English Renaissance, is offered by Coldiron 2012. I will discuss Coldiron's re-assessment of this history at the end of this article.

[5] Egerton 1939. I have taken Egerton's statement from Hermans 2014, 291.

[6] Hermans 2014, 299.

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covertly.[7] While describing paratextual interventions as "straightforward [...] visible traces" and "formal translatorial intrusions", Hermans also encourages broader study of "the translator's role in mediating the values inscribed in the translation to its prospective readers".[8] His suggestion has been taken up by Sharon Deane-Cox in her study of retranslations and re-editions of Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and George Sand's *Le Mare au Diable* in late nineteenth- and twentieth- century England. There, she considered paratextual, textual and extratextual elements contributing to the production and reception of re-editions or retranslations. The paratext often provides evidence "for the type and extent of interactions between the (re)translations".[9] It also sheds light on economic or symbolic motivations underpinning retranslation or re-editing, the translators', printers', or editors' agency, and the dynamics of the target literary system.[10]

The present article follows Hermans's and Deane-Cox's investigation of translators' or editors' paratextual posturing aimed at bolstering the symbolic capital of their work. It does so by making a case study of the paratextual features of successive editions and translations of Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* produced in late Quattrocento and Cinquecento Italy. The aim is to illuminate specific ways in which editors, translators or printers made themselves manifestly visible to readers and asserted their agency by claiming different types of collaboration: synchronous (translator and printer working together on a new project), asynchronous (translator, editor or printer expressly acknowledging the work of an earlier translator or editor, whether perfunctorily or otherwise) or concealed (editors or translators availing themselves of earlier works by fellow scholars without acknowledgement). The resultant textual mobility could effectively collapse linear time; also, at least in some instances, it could share claims to agency among different individuals. All the Renaissance editors and translators discussed here (Giovanni Andrea Bussi, Cristoforo Landino, Giovanni Brancati, Antonio Brucioli and Ludovico Domenichi) exploited collaboration as an editorial practice aimed at attracting readers, while also canvassing literary allegiances between present and past editors, translators and printers. Claims of collaborative editing and translation — an interdependence of translators, whether alongside their contemporaries, or over generations — emerge strongly in the case study examined here.

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[7] Inghilleri 2005/2014, 66. See also Wolf & Fukari 2007, 1–3.

[8] Hermans 2014, 287.

[9] Deane-Cox 2014, 34.

[10] Deane-Cox, 48. Unfortunately, premodern literature scholars cannot always rely on extratextual material such as book reviews or book contracts, thus making it difficult to gauge the reception of retranslations or re-editions in the target literary field.

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A brief clarification is necessary at this point. Following from Deane-Cox's study, in this article I examine editors and translators together. Such an approach arises from the recognition of the fact that, in some instances, early modern translators and editors were also printers or worked with texts in all three capacities (William Caxton and Aldo Manuzio being the most notable examples in Renaissance Europe). That is, in practice the roles of editor, translator and printer were not always easily distinguishable. As a result, credit or criticism for new publications could not be precisely dispensed. Even if editors, proofreaders or *correttori* were often scorned for their lack of care, their insufficient expertise or knowledge and their insatiable greed, they were just as often praised for their beneficial work, and charged with the task of translating from Latin into the vernacular.[11] Furthermore, with reference to an ancient text such as Pliny's *Natural History*, it is fruitful to consider both editing and translation as aspects of the larger process of recontextualisation. Translation always involves editing and editing frequently requires some level of translation.[12]

Multiple versions — multiple interests

The Quattrocento and Cinquecento editors and translators of Pliny's *Natural History* discussed below were all humanists — multilingual intellectuals with well-established careers in teaching, editing, publishing and translating. They were often required to produce vernacular versions of Latin translations from Greek, an activity that did not conform to their career and financial aspirations: the skills of the translator and requests of the patron or printer were not always complementary, thus magnifying the difficulties that they understood to inhere in the work of translation.[13]

Indeed, Italian Renaissance editors and translators referred openly to these difficulties, as well as to the restrictions of time, and the particular requests underscoring their work. The possibility of a perfect translation postulated by Leonardo Bruni in his *On the Correct Way to Translate* (*De interpretatione recta*, 1424–1426) remained for the Renaissance translator a mirage or, as Belén Bistué has observed, a paradox: the difficulty of the task was well understood to make any translation imperfect even as it remained a significant stimulus for new translations and adaptations of specific works. Furthermore, the notion of translation as a unifying process in which the source text was

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[11] Richardson 1994, 3–4. See also Trovato 2009, 51–102.
[12] Peterson 2006.
[13] Biow 2015, 44 and 119. See also Terpening 1997, *passim*, and Richardson 1994, 90–91.

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'fully' transferred into a new text contradicted the fact that translation always created a double.[14]

Moreover, beyond the Brunian ideals, successive versions of the same text could clearly reveal the need for its ongoing revision and re-contextualisation. Early modern printers exploited this variability by feeding into the market multiple revised editions, new translations or re-translations. However, these, and the agents involved in their production, did not entirely displace earlier editors and translators. Instead, the newer publications entered into dialogue with preceding versions, thus offering readers and patrons choice. This dialogue is evidenced in the extremely rich corpus of paratexts created to accompany Quattrocento and Cinquecento translations, which frequently articulates the social, cultural and linguistic context for editing and translation.[15] Also, in contrast to Bruni's early theorisation of translation as a unitary and single-authored achievement, this corpus reveals a profoundly collaborative approach to the task of translation.[16]

The successive Latin editions and vernacular versions of Pliny's *Natural History* under discussion shed light on the relationship between two often concomitant factors in the print industry and practice of translation in the Renaissance: on the one hand, the market for printed books was subject to merciless economic forces that required publishers, editors and translators to compete against one another. On the other hand, the scope of the translating, editing and printing activities that were essential to the same market was often determined by the 'old-fashioned' rules of patronage.[17] This article shows how collaboration between financiers, patrons and intellectuals in the production of successive editions and translations allowed for the coexistence of multiple interests and cultural conditions. Specifically, the editors and translators often acknowledged the value of one another's work, even when allegedly competing for money and prestige. By giving visibility to themselves and to earlier agents of translation, editors, translators and printers accounted for the multiple alignments underlying Renaissance translation: bolstering the literary capital of start text, legitimizing the latest translator or

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[14] Bistué 2013, 4–8, and Bistué 2017.

[15] See Rizzi 2017, Richardson 1994, and Richardson 2009.

[16] Bruni's theorisation remained highly influential throughout the Italian Renaissance, chiefly thanks to the hundreds of re-editions and translations of his own translations from Greek into Latin. See Hankins 2006.

[17] Fierce competition in the Italian Renaissance print industry is discussed by Trovato 2009, 29–31 and Richardson 1994, 90–91. Printing as a practice closely linked to patronage and gift-giving is discussed by Roberts 2013 in the context of Francesco Berlinghieri's *Geographia*.

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editor, or making collaborative claims aimed at enhancing social and cultural capital.[18]

The visible editors of Pliny's *Natural History*

The encyclopedic scientific work by Pliny the Elder known as the *Natural History* was undoubtedly one the most prized and studied ancient texts of the Italian fifteenth century.[19] During the last three decades of the Quattrocento (1469–1499), eighteen Latin and vernacular incunable editions and translations were produced.[20] The importance accorded these books was so great that some copies were printed on parchment, making them five to seven times more expensive than the paper-based versions.[21] As for the philological restoration of Pliny's Latin text, this challenge preoccupied several mid-fifteenth-century Italian scholars, and promised a lucrative business opportunity for printers. The first printed and full edition of Pliny's *Natural History* to appear in the early modern world was Johannes de Spira's in 1469, in Venice.[22] This was complemented within less than a year by Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz's 1470 edition, published in Rome under the editorial expertise of Giovanni Andrea Bussi (1417–1475).[23]

As fifteenth-century readers had already come to expect from a first printed edition of an ancient work, the preface of Spira's 1469 first early modern edition focuses on Pliny as the author of the treatise: on his life, and on his reception by other Classical authors. Therefore, this edition opens with a passage from the life of Pliny the Elder written by the early Imperial Roman historian Suetonius. By contrast, in the 1470 edition, the first paratextual feature is a dedication to Pope Paul II (r. 1464–1471) contributed by the editor Giovanni Andrea Bussi.[24] There follow two epistles by Pliny the Younger

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[18] I use here 'start' instead of 'source' text in agreement with Pym 2016. Like today, Renaissance translators often did not work just from a single text.

[19] On the reception of Pliny in late Quattrocento and Cinquecento see Fera 1995.

[20] Rozzo 2011, 74 and n4.

[21] Rozzo 2011, 77 and n21.

[22] Pliny 1469. I have consulted Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, INC. V. 001 (accessed online at http://www.internetculturale.it/jmms/iccuviewer/iccu.jsp?id=oai%3A193.206.197.121%3A18%3AVE0049%3AVEAE128055&mode=all&teca=marciana on 11 April 2017), and Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, OEXV 10 RES (accessed online at https://archive.org/details/OEXV10R on 8 April 2017). On late Quattrocento Latin editions of Pliny's work see Rozzo 2011, 82–84; Monfasani 1988, 1–31, and Sabbadini 1900.

[23] Pliny 1470. I have consulted München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, BSB-Ink P-600 (accessed online at http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0006/bsb00063289/images/ on 4 April 2017), ISTC ip00787000. On Bussi see Haig Gaisser 2008, 160–172.

[24] On Pope Paul II, printing, and the Roman curia during his rule see among others Carver 2007, 163–172, and Feld 1988.

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(*Epistula ad Marcum* and *Epistula ad Tacitum*), and excerpts from Suetonius, Tertullian and Eusebius on Pliny the Elder's life and work.[25] Two years later, in 1472, Nicolas Jenson republished the 1470 edition of the *Natural History* in Venice, but Bussi's dedication is placed at the end of the volume, with Pliny the Younger's letters and the other excerpts from ancient authors still preceding the main narrative.[26] Possibly, by reshuffling the order of the paratextual materials from the 1470 edition, Jenson aimed to downplay Bussi's editorial role, or to present the text printed in Venice as notably different from the previous edition. That said, Bussi's dedication to Pope Paul II was not removed altogether, in an open recognition of his editorial work. So Bussi's overt visibility was perhaps reduced but not eradicated.

Some months afterwards, in 1473, another edition of the Latin text was published in Rome, once again by Sweynheym and Pannartz. In this new edition, the paratextual extracts from ancient sources are found reorganised once more, with the more obvious difference appearing on the first page: the letter by Pliny of the Younger is here correctly addressed to Vespasian instead of Domitian (Domitian had been wrongly stated in the previous editions).[27] This conspicuous emendation was intended to serve as proof of the significant improvement and refinement of the Latin text.

The 1473 edition published in Rome was edited by the humanist Niccolò Perotti (1430?–1480), although his name does not appear anywhere in the text.[28] During his lifetime, Perotti was known for his fierce opposition to the practice by contemporary editors of leaving traces of their work in the form of personal comments or clearly identifiable emendations: he went so far as to describe the use of editorial prefaces as "joining a sewer to the altar" (*arae cloacam iungere*).[29] Nevertheless, the lively humanist debates elicited by the editing and translation of Latin and Greek texts at the time made Perotti's identity visible to the readers and patrons for whom these printed works were intended. With reference to the 1473 edition of the *Natural History*, fellow scholar Domizio Calderini was vitriolic in his critique, claiming to have found

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[25] See Rozzo 2011, 85.

[26] Pliny 1472. I have consulted London, British Library, C.2.d.7 (IC.19663), and Boston, Public Library, Q.401.25 (accessed online at https://archive.org/details/caiiplyniisecund 00plin on 12 March 2017).

[27] Pliny 1473. Compare f. 3v in the 1470 edition ("Caius Plinius Secundus Novocomensis Domitiano suo salutem") against f. 1r in the 1473 edition ("C. Plynius Secundus Novocomensis Vespasiano suo salutem").

[28] I have consulted the copy held in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, RES-S-107. On Perotti and his philological work on Pliny's text see Monfasani 1988 and Charlet 2003b, 177–82. See also D'Alessandro 2015 and Charlet 2011, 2–6.

[29] Charlet 2003b, 70. See also Feld 1988, 30–32. and Monfasani 1988, 5 and 26.

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more than 275 errors in the publication.[30] Humanist critiques and invectives were eminently public, and were often followed by rebuttals and further vehement literary and personal attacks.[31]

Within such a short turnaround of editions (produced between 1469 and 1473) the traceable reorganisation of the paratextual material, as well as the emendations made to the Latin text, allowed readers and patrons to discern and appreciate the differences between the four iterations of Pliny's work. But the paratextual elements also point to a highly collaborative environment. As indicated above, Perotti refused to plainly mark Pliny's text with his own editorial interventions, while he publicly attacked Bussi's use of prefaces for the purpose of achieving visibility. Bussi responded to Perotti's scathing comments in the preface to his edition of Cicero's letters: "I would gain from working anonymously and from not writing prefaces", wrote Bussi, since they attracted the disapproval of "very fastidious men".[32] Bussi explains that his choice to make his role visible to the readers and patron was for the benefit of the printing venture, and for the benefit of the "rough, if not to say rustic, readers" (*asperioribus, ne dicam rusticis*).[33] Bussi also reveals the collaborative nature of his editorial work: he availed himself of the assistance of fellow scholars, whom he acknowledges openly. For instance, in the above-mentioned preface to Cicero's letters, Bussi reveals the assistance of Cardinal Giacomo Ammannati-Piccolomini for the edition of Cicero's letters to Atticus.[34] The preface to his edition of Pliny mentions the collaboration of Theodore Gaza in the preparation of the proofs — using the verb *adiuvare* to emphasise the practical nature of the textual assistance rendered.[35]

Collaboration was in fact extremely common among humanists, as well as between scholars and artists, and editors, translators and printers. Marsilio Ficino, George of Trebizond and Aldo Manuzio are some of the key figures

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[30] Rozzo 2011, 91. See also Monfasani 2011, 184, Charlet 2003a, 11–12. See also Charlet 2003b, and Charlet 1999.

[31] On humanist invective see Rizzi 2015, 123.

[32] Here is the full passage from Bussi's preface to his edition of Cicero's Letters (Rome: Sweynheym and Pannartz, 1470) reads as follows: "Si labor meus est nauseae viris delicatissimis […] relinquant eos asperioribus […]. Errores si sunt qui mihi inscribi debeant, multum per eos lucror, autoris nomine epistola oppressa celato." I quote from Bussi 1978, 47.

[33] Bussi 1978, 47.

[34] Bussi 1978, 47: "Equidem hac in parte praecipue adiutus ab elegantissimo dignissimo-que fratre tuo Sancti Chrysogoni cardinale Papiensi […]".

[35] See Bussi 1978, 44: "Iuvit sane ac mirifice iuvit conatus meos […] Theodorus meus Gaza". Perotti himself had collaborated with fellow humanists on the publication of Cardinal Bessarion's *In calumniatorem Platonis* (1469). Perotti translated several of Bessarion's works from Greek into Latin silently. See Monfasani 1988, 13. On Bessarion's *In calumniatorem Platonis* see Del Soldato 2012, 109–122: especially 114–121.

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of Quattrocento Italy to take full advantage of humanist practices of collaboration in the editing and translation of texts. It is also well known how humanists relied on more established scholars and friends to ensure that their Latin texts would meet the highest intellectual and philological standards. Humanist culture was made possible by the practice of peer emendations or corrections.[36]

Evidently, the four Latin editions of Pliny discussed here were the result of multiple collaborative practices: joint editing, solicited or unsolicited corrections spurred by competition, and silent or explicit acknowledgement of reliance on earlier publications. These editions reveal the multiple and intertextual process of textual mediation from manuscript to print, and from one edition to the next. In this often-dialogic process, editors and printers chose (or were forced to choose) anonymity, or to declare their own authority, while leaving indelible traces of their agency in the edited text, and formally in the paratextual frame.

Visible translators of Pliny

Another significant process in the Renaissance mediation of Pliny's work occurred through the successive translations of the *Natural History* from Latin into the vernacular. In 1474, King Ferdinand of Naples (c. 1458–1494, also known as Ferrante) commissioned Cristoforo Landino to translate the treatise into the Florentine language. The two codices containing this translation are beautifully decorated and richly bound.[37] Yet Landino's translation does not appear to have satisfied the king, who had wished to offer this work as a gift to Charles the Bold, to celebrate the betrothal of Charles's daughter Mary to Federico, Ferdinand's second son.[38] The king turned to Giovanni Brancati (1440s–1481?), a distinguished humanist at his court, to obtain another vernacular version of Pliny's text, this time in Neapolitan.[39] Brancati took a highly critical stance against Landino's Tuscan version, to the point that he desisted from improving the manuscript version Landino had just presented to King Ferdinand. Rather, Brancati set out to translate Pliny

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[36] See Grafton 2001, 150–154 and Rizzo 1973, 265–268.

[37] The two manuscripts are described in Antonazzo 2011, 346–347. The manuscripts are held in Madrid, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de El Escorial, mss. H.1.2 and H.1.3. See also Barbato 2001.

[38] Marcelli 2011.

[39] On the reception of Landino's translation at the Neapolitan court and Brancati's version see Passarelli 2003. The only copy of Brancati's translation is in manuscript and incomplete: Madrid, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de El Escorial, mss. H.1.9. More broadly on Landino's vernacular translation see Landino 1974; Cardini 1973, and Fubini 1995. Landino seems to have used the 1472 Latin edition of Pliny edited by Bussi: see Ageno 1956, 491, and Passarelli 2003, 117.

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anew, using the Latin edition prepared by Filippo Beroaldo and published in 1476, in Parma.[40] Brancati's approach could not have been more different to that taken by Landino: instead of promoting the vernacular (Tuscan in the case of Landino; Neapolitan in the case of Brancati), Brancati Latinised the local vernacular, in clear opposition to the progressive Tuscanisation of the Italian vernaculars.[41]

Despite the lukewarm reception of Landino's translation at the court of Naples, it was published by Nicholas Jenson in Florence in 1476 thanks to the financial support of two expatriate Florentine merchants based in Venice, Girolamo Strozzi and Giambattista Ridolfi.[42] This 1476 printed version of Landino's translation preserves the preface that Landino addressed to the Neapolitan king. Jenson printed a staggering 1,025 copies of Landino's Tuscan version of the *Natural History*. To print such numbers, the two Florentine merchants needed to invest the extraordinary sum of 1,520 ducats, including the fifty paid to the translator: this was a considerable investment, even for affluent merchants, making it likely that King Ferdinand was involved in the printing venture.[43] Presumably, the two expatriate Florentines sensed a market for the Florentine translation of the ancient text, and took advantage of the patronage of the king of Naples to carry out the printing venture with Venice-based printer Jenson. Landino's preface (or *prohemio*) addressed to King Ferdinand sets out a number of significant points regarding the scope and shared interests underpinning this translation:

> conoscendo gran parte degli huomini essere ignari delle latine lettere: hai voluto anchora in questa parte sovvenire a quegli et dare opera che Plinio di latino diventi thoscano et di romano fiorentino acciocché essendo scripto in lingua commune a tutta Italia et a molte externe nationi assai familiare l'opera tua giovi a molti.

> knowing that many people do not understand Latin, you wished to bear them again in mind in this matter by providing Pliny's Latin work turned into Tuscan, and from Roman into Florentine, being written in the language used throughout Italy and familiar to many foreign nations, so that your work would be useful to many.[44]

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[40] Pliny 1476A. More precisely, Brancati used Landino's version for Book One before moving to Beroaldo's edition. See Gentile 1961, 713.

[41] On Brancati's language in his translation of Pliny's text see Barbato 2001, 22–26.

[42] See de Roover 1953.

[43] Edler De Roover and Ugo Rozzo have put forward this suggestion. See Rozzo 2011, 94–97.

[44] Pliny 1476, 1v.

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In this statement, Landino promotes the Florentine language as the most apt vehicle for the dissemination of ancient knowledge beyond the small, elitist, Latinate readership. Such a positive view of the Florentine vernacular is underpinned by Lorenzo de' Medici's promotion of the Florentine language across the Italian peninsula, and more than likely provoked Brancati's counter-translation of Pliny into Neapolitan. The promotion of the Florentine language and translation is framed by Landino as a collaboration between the translator (that is, himself) and the dedicatee. Landino takes for granted that both share the same objective; that is, to make Pliny accessible and useful to a broader readership than ever before.

Another passage from the 1476 printed preface — and a long section that follows — promotes the Aragonese rule that had faced strong opposition from local lords (1459–1462):

> certamente nessun sarà o sì ignaro delle cose facte ne' nostri tempi o sì iniquo iudice et stimatore di quelle che non conceda te meritissimamente dovere tra' e' più laudati regi obtenere amplissimo et augusto seggio.

> Certainly no one will be so uninformed of current affairs or unjust an evaluator or judge of these as to not admit that you have very much deserved to obtain a very distinguished and an honoured place among the most praised kings.[45]

Here, Landino's praise of King Ferdinand in a lengthy section of the preface is essentially the same as that found in the manuscript version presented to the ruler almost two years before. Having paid Landino 200 ducats for his efforts, the king was still considered deserving of fully fledged praise in the printed version. And in fact his patronage of Landino had not ceased with the alleged failure of the manuscript translation into Tuscan and his subsequent request for a Neapolitan rendition: the Neapolitan king must have recognised the opportunity to promote his rule through the printed translation. Patronage, entrepreneurship and the personal financial gains and prestige of the translator converged in this 1476 edition of Pliny. And the market responded extremely positively, as demonstrated by the numerous extant illuminated copies of this edition, some in parchment.[46]

Jumping a few decades and editions ahead, in 1543 Antonio Brucioli (1486–1566) edited Landino's vernacular translation. Since 1529 Brucioli had been exiled from Florence following the return of the Medici family. He

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[45] Pliny 1476, 2r.
[46] See for instance Oxford, Bodleian Library, Arch. G b.6. This copy was Filippo Strozzi's. The illumination and binding were completed in 1483. Other illuminated copies are mentioned by Rozzo 2011, 96. Armstrong 2003, 141–155.

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spent most of his career in Venice working as printer, editor, revisor, translator and spy. During the period 1543 to 1545 he sought to establish connections with the Duke of Tuscany, Cosimo I Medici, so as to pave the way for his own return to Florence as an official printer. In 1544 his commentary on St Paul's letters was published in Venice by the Brucioli brothers' press.[47] This work is dedicated to Cosimo I. Brucioli was turning his attention towards the Florentine leader because his own religious ideas were being criticised more and more for their "heretical undertones coming from Germany".[48]

These same years first saw Brucioli editing Landino's translation of the *Natural History* (1543), and then producing a new translation. In the 1543 edition — printed by Gabriele Giolito in Venice — the translation is clearly presented as Landino's. Brucioli is nevertheless named in the title as having edited the text:

> nuovamente in molti luoghi, dove quella mancava, supplito, et da infiniti errori emendata, et con somma diligenza corretta per Antonio Brucioli

> newly completed in the many places where text was missing, with numerous errors emended, and most diligently corrected by Antonio Brucioli.[49]

The title-page also explains to the reader that this new edition contains a corrected (*castigata*) table of contents, and there have been added "many chapters that did not exist in the other editions" ("aggiuntovi molti capitoli, che nelle altre impressioni non erano").[50] Finally, this new edition of Landino's translation is also furnished with a life of Pliny the Elder, a more thorough index and a glossary of difficult and unknown terms. The provision of a glossary harks back to Landino's own discussion, in his preface to King Ferdinand, of the arduous Latin words found in the *Natural History*.

In his dedication to Gabriele Giolito, Brucioli presents this edition as his gift to his publisher: "I wished to present Pliny's work before you, offering you some of my own emendations" ("Ho voluto il presente libro di Plinio mettervi avanti, dedicandovi alcune mie correttioni fattevi sopra").[51] The collaboration between the Giolito publishing house and Brucioli had been

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[47] Barbieri 2000. See also Lear 1972.

[48] In 1544, Dominican theologian Ambrogio Catarino condemned Brucioli's vernacular translation and commentary of the *New Testament*. See Barbieri 2000, 714.

[49] Pliny 1543, title-page.

[50] Pliny 1543, title-page.

[51] Pliny 1543, ii.

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growing steadily in the years between 1538 and 1543. This collaboration, however, ended abruptly almost immediately after the publication of Landino's translation. The fact that in 1544 the Dominican theologian Ambrogio Catarino had accused Brucioli of heretical ideas, as we have pointed out in note 48, must have played some part in this sudden change, since the theologian was very close to Gabriele Giolito.[52]

What is relevant here is that both Brucioli and the young printer Giolito acknowledged Landino's work as translator. Their 1543 edition of the *Natural History* in Tuscan is presented as a more accurate edition of the 1476 translation printed by Jenson: "translated by Cristoforo Landino and newly completed in the many places where text was missing" ("tradotta per Christophoro Landino, et nuovamente in molti luoghi, dove quella mancava, supplito").[53] This new version is expressly framed as a collaborative work in which the ancient author, the Quattrocento translator, and the Cinquecento editor-translator and printer are visible, or are pointed out to the reader. In other words, the collaborative nature of this translation is claimed to promote the appeal and marketability of the product.

During the sixteenth century, it was extremely common for printers and editors to promote the care taken with newly edited texts, as well as the texts' resultant reliability, especially in connection with a translation of an esteemed ancient work.[54] Even so, in the prefatory material of their 1543 *Natural History*, Brucioli and Giolito do not reveal that, rather than depending on the Florence 1476 edition, they reprinted one published in 1534 by Tommanso Ballarino in Venice.[55] According to its title-page, the earlier 1476 edition had been checked and improved ("in molti luoghi dove quella mancava supplíto et da infiniti errori emendata, et con somma diligenza corretta") by one Giovan de Francesio, who also wrote a preface to the reader.[56] Brucioli and Giolito's wholesale reprint of this 1534 edition made good sense in market terms: the more recent edition had already revised and standardised the fifteenth-century text, thus offering a less outdated text in a more normalised Florentine language.

To sum up, Brucioli's 1543 edition reveals the complex negotiations underpinning editorial collaboration in early modern print culture: from the recognition of earlier editors and translators (Landino) to the unacknow-ledged reprinting of Ballarino's 1534 edition. In this instance, printer and

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[52] Nuovo & Coppens 2005, 229.
[53] Pliny 1543, title-page.
[54] Richardson 1994, 5 and *passim*.
[55] Richardson 1994, 106–107. Pliny 1534.
[56] Pliny 1534, title-page. Giovan de Francesio's name appears on the page containing the preface to the reader.

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editor worked together to promote their work by affirming the literary reputation of the Quattrocento translator while effectively supplanting a ten-year-old edition of the same text.

The story of Brucioli's 1543 edition does not end here. In 1548, Brucioli claimed to have produced a new translation of the *Natural History* in an obvious attempt to supplant Landino's translation and, by corollary, his own previous work as its editor. The 1548 title-page presents the work as "Natural History by C. Pliny the Elder, newly translated from Latin into the Tuscan vernacular by Antonio Brucioli".[57] A first impression suggests that for this edition Brucioli rejected some editorial features present in his 1543 edition: the table of contents and the glossary have been omitted. Furthermore, the 1548 edition contains several new explanatory marginalia concerning the meaning of specific terms.[58] On closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that several of these marginal notes are taken almost verbatim from Landino's translation.[59] Similarly, the preface addressed to Leone Strozzi and written by Brucioli in the first person mirrors Landino's preface to King Ferdinand. Both texts praise their dedicatee for his military skills and prowess, and stress their patrons' appreciation of ancient learning and languages.[60] In fact, this publication might be described as a partial and unconfessed or 'covert' merger of two preceding versions of Pliny's text: Landino's translation (from the 1534 edition) and Brucioli's own 1543 printed edition.[61] Somewhat

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[57] Pliny 1548. The translation is dedicated to Leone Strozzi (1515–1554), an exile from Medicean Florence.

[58] Brambilla 2011.

[59] Brambilla 2011.

[60] Pliny 1548, ii–iii: "Ma finalmente dalla peritia della militare disciplina cominciando, poi che questa appare al mondo, più che questa appare al mondo, più che ogni altra ammirabile, nessuno è che habbia cognitione degli egregii fatti vostri […] che sempre sia veduto risplendere in voi il valore degli antique et più lodati capitani […] per la gran virtù et peritia militare, che sempre è stata in voi. […] Ma che dirò io poi delle lettere grece, et latine, le quali di non altrimenti risplendono in voi che lucerne ardenti sopra allo candeliere d'oro"; Pliny 1476, 4–6: "Qual parte adunque è sì ardua nella militare disciplina la quale per mancamento d'animo tu non habbi adempiuto. […] Et al presente intendendo quanto sia utile et gioconda la cognitione delle chose scripte in Plinio per farle comuni a quegli che non sanno le latine lettere."

[61] Compare the first lines of Pliny 1476, 15: "DITERMINAI O GIOCONDISSIMO imperadore con epistola forse di troppa licentia narrarti e libri della naturale historia, opera nuova alle muse de tuoi Romani"; Pliny 1534, * vi: "DITERMINAI O GIOCONDISSIMO IMPERAdore con epistola forse di troppo licentia narrarti e libri della historia naturale: opera novella alle muse romane": and Pliny 1548, iiii: "Io ho determinato, giocondissimo imperatore, con epistola, forse di troppo licentia, narrarti i libri della naturale historia, opera novella alle muse romane". The only noticeable difference in Brucioli's 1548 edition is that Brucioli corrects the name of the emperor to whom the preface is addressed: Vespasian instead of Domitian. This mistake had already been fixed in the 1473 Latin edition, as

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paradoxically, where the title-page effaces Landino's work as a translator and Brucioli's own previous work as an editor, Brucioli-the-editor-and-publisher placed himself in direct competition with Brucioli-the-translator. However, an expert mid-sixteenth-century reader of Pliny would have easily recognised in this 1548 edition traces of Landino's work and Brucioli's earlier editorial efforts.

A few words should be said about yet another vernacular translation of Pliny's text: Ludovico Domenichi's 1561 rendering of the *Natural History*.[62] In effect, the commercial success of this version made Brucioli's 1548 edition obsolete. Published by Gabriele Giolito, Domenichi's version contains most of the features seen in the 1476 printed version of Landino's translation, and in Brucioli's 1543 edition. Across the densely printed title-page the names of previous translators are duly acknowledged by Domenichi, and earlier translators are excused for their shortcomings, since the Latin texts they had at their disposal were untrustworthy and corrupt:

> Assaissimi luoghi sono in Plinio scorretti, et molto mal conci, de' quali nessuno se ne trova restituito, né emendato. Bene è vero, che per essersi Christophoro Landino, huomo secondo quei tempi scientiato et dotto, abbattuto a testi guasti e scorretti […] Né però mi attribuisco io tanto di sapere, ch'io mi dia a credere d'havere inteso tutto quello, che il Landino prima, e il Brucciolo dopo lui non hanno né veduto né inteso. Perché, sì come io ho detto, non dubito punto, che se essi quei buoni et corretti testi havessero havuto, i quali a noi, mercé d'alcuni eccellentissimi, et d'ogni lode degni huomini sono venuti in mano; et molto meglio, et più fedelmente assai, che non si vede, havrebbono tradotto.

> Very many places in Pliny are corrupt and in a bad state, none of which have been restored or emended. Truth is that Cristoforo Landino, a very learned and scholarly man of his time, was disheartened by the corrupt readings and errors. [...] However, I do not claim to be more knowledgeable or to have understood everything that, first Landino, then Brucioli, did not see or comprehend. For, as I have already said, I have no doubt that, had they had at their disposal the same fine, corrected texts we have today — thanks to some most excellent and praiseworthy men — they would have translated [Pliny] much better and more faithfully.[63]

discussed above, but both Pliny 1534 and Pliny 1543 had repeated the mistake. This error was probably caused by the fact that Landino's translation does not name the emperor.

[62] Pliny 1561. On Domenichi see D'Alessandro 1978, Piscini 1992, and Carrano 2010.

[63] Pliny 1561, aiiii.

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As seen in all the editions of the *Natural History* discussed above, the paratext affords various levels of visibility and invisibility to past and contemporary agents involved in the successive editions and translations of Pliny's work. The identities of the author, translators, editors and printers are made explicit for the benefit of the readers and named patron. Domenichi positions his publishing effort as a fine, corrected text in which different authorial and translative stances are acknowledged and reviewed.

Conclusion

Building on the work of McLaughlin, Hermans, and Deane-Cox concerning the visibility and agency of translators, the present study has shed new light on paratextual posturing by Italian Renaissance translators, editors, and printers across successive editions of Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*. In particular, the case study presented in this article shows how Italian Renaissance editors, translators and printers made a practice of collaborating on new editions of ancient texts, and habitually designated this practice in paratextual materials — particularly in their first-person prefaces, if not also on the title-pages of their editions. Collaboration posturing gave visibility to the agents involved in textual production, even when their names did not appear in the text or paratexts. Newer versions or translations did not necessarily exclude earlier ones. Instead, successive versions could involve more roles and could give greater agency to interpreters and readers of an ancient text such as Pliny's.

The collaborative nature of editing and translation revealed here has the potential to challenge current understandings of Renaissance translation. It undermines the perception of humanist translation as a solitary activity in which the intellectual skills of one person were developed, tested and textually displayed. Bruni's influential *On the Correct Way to Translate* deliberately eschews translation as a collaborative and ongoing enterprise. However, successive editions and translations of Pliny's *Natural History* in Quattrocento and Cinquecento Italy reveal how a newly completed translation underscored and openly demanded collaboration from scholars and patrons, who were asked to improve or approve of the work. Furthermore, the editorial and translative practices illustrated in this case study — paratextually represented in ways that evoke an ongoing dialogue across time and place — challenge habitual ideas about the rigid temporal and cultural boundaries between Latin and vernacular cultures in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy.

The successive and collaborative editions and translations of Pliny's *Historia Naturalis* witness the pervasiveness of what Bistué has termed an "unthinkable practice": multi-version texts produced in succession in an

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ongoing process of translation, editing and textual positioning.[64] The pervasive collaborative practice in the production of re-editions and re-translations discussed here enhanced, in the Italian Renaissance, opportunities for the visibility of editors, translators and printers. Collaboration also gave visibility to the strategies undertaken by editors, translators and printers to position themselves and their work whether overtly or covertly.[65]

With implications for our understanding of editing and translation today, the key finding of this article is that, collaboration not only was synchronous — for example editor or translators assisting one another while working at the same desk — but it was perceived by Quattrocento and Cinquecento editors and translators as a dialogue across time and place: the textual mobility outlined here collapsed time and, at least in some of the cases examined below, agency. Such a scope of reference for scholars of translation history poses fascinating interpretive challenges: the collaborative, transnational and 'multimedia' nature of Renaissance translation requires an interdisciplinary approach.[66]

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[64] Bistué 2013, 53, and *passim*.
[65] See note 7 above.
[66] See for instance Pym 2014, 198–199, O'Sullivan 2012, 136, and Hosington 2015, 12.

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