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Title: Whose Pirandello? Analysis and Comparison of Variant English Translations of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*.

Abstract Approved: Richard Keller

This thesis explores the transformations that a text undergoes in translation. Three English translations of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (a play originally written in Italian) were studied and compared in order to indicate what happens to the meaning, style, and voice of the original text. Even though a comparison, this thesis does not attempt to evaluate the translations with the aim of designating a standard translation--such a concept is shown to be unattainable and even undesirable.

The following analyzes variances between these three translations, points at which the original text has been substantially modified, and idiosyncratic choices of the translators. This text also touches upon the contexts in which the translations were completed, as well as theoretical assumptions about translation, and draws conclusions from these about the factors that influence translation. Also included are chapters on the major textual versions of the original play, and the history of the play's translation in Britain and the United States. The study suggests that translation, by its nature, is an important modification of the original; the nature of this modification is shown to be a combination of a translator's approach to his or her craft, and expectations of the text's intended audiences.

WHOSE PIRANDELLO?

ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON OF VARIANT ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF LUIGI PIRANDELLO'S *SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR*

A Thesis

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This work is dedicated to my parents, who started building a library for me from the day I was born, taught me Italian, and supported all my career choices, including those that have kept me away from them for so long.

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Chapter I

Introduction

> Il Padre: Ma se è tutto qui il male! Nelle parole! Abbiamo tutti dentro un mondo di cose; ciascuno un suo mondo di cose! E come possiamo intenderci, signore, se nelle parole ch'io dico metto il senso e il valore delle cose come sono dentro di me; mentre, chi le ascolta, inevitabilmente le assume col senso e col valore che hanno per sè, del mondo com'egli l'ha dentro? Crediamo d'intenderci; non c'intendiamo mai![1] (60)

> Il Padre: Eh, dico, la rappresentazione che farà . . . difficilmente potrà essere una rappresentazione di me, com' io realmente sono. Sarà piuttosto--a parte la figura--sarà piuttosto com' egli interpreterà ch' io sia, com' egli mi sentirà--se mi sentirà--e non com' io dentro di me mi sento.E mi pare che di questo, chi sia chiamato a giudicar di noi, dovrebbe tener conto[2].... (94)

The problem that the central character of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* speaks about in these passages is very similar to the one that has haunted translation for too long--the challenge of transferring meaning (in all its nuances) from one language into another. Pirandello himself addressed the difficulty, likening translators to actors and illustrators in an attitude similar to that of the Father in *Six*

Characters, asserting that the task of absolute fidelity to the source text is an impossible one, and thus translation a series of frustrated approximations of the original text ("Illustratori" 217). Since the posited ideal of absolute identity between the original and translated texts is unattainable, translators approach translation from different theoretical positions, mostly centering on the "literal" vs. "free" translation dichotomy, achieving varying degrees of similarity to the original text. Hence the idea of this work--to see what happens when different translators take on the same text; what happens to the text and to concepts such as "voice" or "intention," which we take for granted in discussing literary works in translation. Given that the majority of readers have no option but to read foreign texts in translation, the investigation of the transformations that a text undergoes during the translation process becomes that much more relevant.

To this end, what follows will analyze English translations of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, a play originally written in Italian. *Six Characters* is probably Pirandello's most famous and most anthologized play; it is now recognized as a twentieth-century classic, one of the most influential dramatic works of the century. The play has become a staple in most drama collections (or sections of drama collections) devoted to experimental theater.

The reason for the play's originality lies in its premise: six characters out of the fantasy of an author who, having imagined them, refuses to write about them, appear one day to a theater company in the middle of rehearsing. The characters insist on representing their drama, asking the director of the theater company to serve as an author. What follows is a series of attempts to reproduce the characters' lives on stage; attempts

which will all fail as the characters are never happy with the authenticity of representation, and protest against every modification of the reality of their lives while constantly quarreling with each other, the director, and the actors of the company.

The family of characters consists of the Father, his wife the Mother, their Son, and three younger children that the Mother has had with another man. The eldest of these, the Stepdaughter, is forced by poverty to work as a prostitute for Madame Pace (a character invoked later in the play), and under these circumstances she meets the Father. Once their respective identities become known, the Mother and her children move in with the Father, encountering the hostility of the Son. As a result of their inability to fit into the new environment, the two younger children die (one drowns and the other kills himself) and the Stepdaughter runs away, leaving the Father, the Mother, and their alienated Son together.

This is the story that the characters are trying to reenact, and they manage to reconstruct two scenes--the encounter in the store/bordello between the Stepdaughter and the Father, and the death of the younger children. The actors of the company attempt to represent the characters and are constantly interrupted, criticized, and ridiculed. At the end of the play, the characters gone, a bewildered director complains that they made him waste a whole day. As Pirandello puts it in his preface to the 1925 edition of the play, the drama of the characters is "the drama of being in search of an author, of being refused" (17). The general sense of the play is that of the difficulty of transferring perceived reality into represented (stage) reality.

Six Characters is interesting from a textual perspective as well. The play exists in several textual versions in the original (two of these are significantly different) and, being a play, it lends itself to constant transformation on the stage as it is interpreted and performed by actors and directors. Philip Gaskell describes three textual stages of a play, "the script, the written version of what was originally intended to be said. . . . the performance text, what is actually said in one or more performances. . . . the reading text, the version subsequently published by author or editor as a record of what might or should have been said" (245). The picture becomes even more complicated when translations of a play are considered, since translated texts would very likely go through the same textual stages as the original[3]. For practical purposes, however, this project is based on the reading texts of the original, and translations based on these texts.

The state of translation of Pirandello's work into English was another consideration in the choice of text--it appears that there is a lot of Pirandello to be translated or retranslated into English. In 1988 Giuseppe Faustini complains that Pirandello's work remains "virtually inaccessible" to English-speaking audiences; he calls for good translations of the entire Pirandellian opus in English (36). Giovanni Bussino also makes a point of calling for new translations to replace the older ones, which are often in British English. "[E]very generation ideally should translate anew," Bussino writes (29). The history of translation of *Six Characters* is a case in point: the first and most anthologized translation of the play is Edward Storer's 1922 translation. The other two main translations under consideration were published in the '90s (a seventy year or

more gap): these are Anthony Caputi's 1991 translation for the Norton Critical Edition series, and Mark Musa's 1995 translation for Penguin.

What follows is an analysis of the transformations of the original text in each translation, and a comparison of the translators' choices and their approaches to translating. The first chapter deals with the two most important variants of the original text, the variants that modern translators are faced with when making a choice of the original text to translate from, while the second chapter delineates a history of the English translations of *Six Characters*. The third and fourth chapters will look into the differences in meaning, changes to, and departures from the original texts that occur in the translations, as well as matters of style and diction in the three translations. A final chapter is dedicated to the theoretical implications of these findings for all translated texts. It is not my intention to evaluate or pass judgement on the texts under analysis, not simply out of modesty, but rather because I seriously doubt the validity of such judgements given that translation comes down to a series of aesthetic, subjective choices a translator makes. This project does not undertake to examine all available English translations of *Six Characters*; while a more exhaustive approach would provide more material upon which to draw conclusions, it would not alter those conclusions qualitatively.

From here on the various texts will be referred to in the following manner: the 1921 text, the 1925 text (to indicate the first and fourth editions of the original text respectively); the Storer text (to indicate the 1922 Edward Storer translation); the Caputi text (for the 1991 Anthony Caputi translation); the Musa text (for the 1995 Mark Musa translation). All literal Italian translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

Chapter II

Versions of the Original Play

Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore was first performed in Rome, in the Teatro Valle, on May 19, 1921 (Romei LXXXIII). It was a theatrical disaster which, nevertheless, was followed by more successful performances until the September 27, 1921 performance in Milan that established the play as an important theatrical artifact to be reckoned with (Bonino XI-XIII)[1]. The Italian performances were soon followed by performances in London, New York, Paris and Berlin (Romei LXXXIII-IV). On May 18, 1925, Pirandello directed a new, revised version of the play, the text of which was published later that year. In 1933 *Sei Personaggi* appeared again with minor revisions in vol. I of the Mondadori edition of Pirandello's collected works.

The story of the reading text that we have is very closely connected to that of the performance text, to the point that some consider the 1925 edition of the play as a performance text, especially because Pirandello himself directed the 1925 Roman performance and was very much involved in its first production (Bonino VII; Romei LXXXIV). Furthermore, it has been pointed out that the 1923 Parisian performance of *Six Characters*, directed by George Pitoeff, influenced Pirandello's conception of the revised 1925 edition[2]. However, for practical reasons, I will compare the 1921, 1923 and 1925 reading texts, and especially the 1921 and 1925 texts, given the radical nature of the changes that occur in the 1925 edition, and the fact that these two are the texts the English translators under consideration claim to have used.

Pirandello started working on the idea that became *Six Characters* as early as 1906, when he wrote "Personaggi", a short story treating the subject of an author who receives a visit from his own characaters. Five years later (1911) he took up the idea again in one of the stories of *Novelle per un Anno*, entitled "La Tragedia d'un Personaggio". As can be deduced from a 1917 letter to his son, at the time Pirandello was working on a "romanzo da fare" ("novel in the making") entitled *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* (Bonino VIII-X). The novel was never "made", yet between 1920 and 1921 Pirandello worked on the play of the same title (Romei LXXXIII).

The first edition of the play *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore: commedia da fare*, appeared in 1921 as Vol. II of the series *Maschere Nude: Teatro di Luigi Pirandello*, published by Bemporad, Firenze. This edition was followed in 1923 by a second, slightly revised edition, published by the same Bemporad, and a new impression of the play in 1924 (the 1924 text, technically an impression, figures nevertheless as a third edition, a designation I will also use). In 1925, by the same publisher and as part of the same series, came out a fourth, revised edition of the play, which included an introduction written by the author ("quarta edizione riveduta e corretta con l'aggiunta d'una prefazione"). This edition of the play contained major revisions that made it a quite different text from the 1921 edition. (Of some importance here is the fact that this version of the play came after the various theatrical performances, including international ones, and is considered by some a "*livre de regie*" [Romei LXXXII].) In 1931 Pirandello changed publishers, beginning a cooperation with Mondadori, for whom he prepared a thematic collection of his plays (as opposed to the chronological criterion of previous editions). In volume I of

this series (Tutto il Teatro di Luigi Pirandello. Maschere Nude) Pirandello included his "trilogy of plays within plays," one of which is a slightly revised new edition of *Sei personaggi*. This would be the last edition of the play during the author's lifetime.

For most, the definitive text of the play is that of 1933, the last one to have been edited by the author himself, as the 1995 (1993) Garzanti edition points out, regarding the entire Mondadori series as the authoritative source for all of Pirandello's plays. However, a 1993 Einaudi edition prefers the 1925 text, quoting as an authority on the matter the Italian Pirandello scholar Alessandro D'Amico who, in 1986, wrote that the 1925 edition "can be considered as the definitive one" (qtd. in Bonino VIII). This controversy, however, is not so relevant to the present study since Italian commentators agree that the revisions of 1933 were not essential. Yet it is important to note that while Bonino claims to have printed the 1925 edition, the text of the play in the Einaudi edition is rather a conflated 1925 edition, containing changes that were introduced later. There is, however, no indication in the prefatory material that the editor is presenting a conflated text, and he constantly refers to it as the 1925 text. The differences between the Einaudi and the actual fourth edition published in 1925 are not major--one line and one stage direction are altered, and the scene between the characters is separated by the rest of the action by a title[3]. Interestingly, Caputi also claims to have based his translation on the 1925 text, but in fact is using a later edition, as is clear from the above-mentioned altered line and stage direction--a fact that would lead one to speculate that he might have used the Einaudi text.

Since these discrepancies are minimal, it is safe to compare the 1921 and 1925 editions as the two radical versions of the original. The differences between the 1921 and

1925 editions are numerous, both at the larger, structural level, and at the lexical, stylistic level. Some of these changes had already been effected in the 1923 edition, where Pirandello cut a number of lines and changed the tense of the verbs in the stage directions from the present to the future. The 1925 changes follow the trend started in 1923 toward a more theatrical, more stage-aware text, with important changes in the stage directions, addition of lines and characters, and several cuts and transpositions. As a result the 1925 text emphasizes on the one hand action (it is a more dynamic and suspenseful play), and on the other the fantastic, "created" nature of the characters.

The text of the 1925 play is markedly different from that of the 1921. As the play opens, the description of the stage itself is different. In the 1925 text Pirandello adds two sets of stairs that connect the stage with the sitting area. The stairs are there to help move the action along: they figure prominently in the stage directions, and become especially important to the entrance of the Characters (who make a spectacle of climbing on stage) and the exit of the Stepdaughter at the very end (she stops and laughs on each step). A piano is added too, to be used later as accompaniment for the song and dance number the Stepdaughter performs upon her entrance. The changes in props (piano) and scenery (stairs) contribute to the tendency of the 1925 edition toward action.

The same effect is also achieved by the increased importance that the actors of the company play from the very beginning. Two new characters appear in the 1925 text, a Technician (Macchinista) and the Stage Manager (Direttore di Scena, already added in 1923). There is a brief exchange between the two, followed by the entrance of the actors and director. Instead of the silent presence of the secretary (the '21 text), there is a brief

exchange added here as well, between the director and his secretary; whereas another addition occurs with the delayed entrance of the Leading Actress, who is late for the rehearsal, and yet another exchange between her and the director. All in all, there are sixteen additional exchanges between the members of the theatrical company, their effect being to enhance the role of the actors in the play and provide some action on stage before the entrance of the characters. A nice contrast is then achieved when the liveliness of the beginning is opposed to the "frozen" aspect of the characters, serving to emphasize the artificial nature of the latter, even upon their entrance.

Following in the vein of emphasizing the difference between actors and characters, Pirandello changes the initial description of the characters and the stage directions for their entrance. Thus in the '21 they enter from the stage door (12-3), just like the actors, an entrance accompanied by a special lighting effect that suggests their nature as products of the fantasy ("realtà create," as Pirandello, this time explicitely, calls them in the stage direction of the '25 edition). At the same time, however, the author emphasizes the "real" nature of their appearances, by describing them as real people with real expressions. In the '25 edition the characters appear from the same door as the audience would (whereas the actors come in through the stage door), and walk toward the stage through the auditorium. The entrance is also prolonged by the time it takes to walk to the stage, and made more dramatic by special lighting directions. Pirandello takes particular care to suggest that the characters and actors should be represented as very different in nature. He writes of the necessity to use all possible technical means to distinguish between the characters and the actors. He also suggests what he considers to be the best technical

solution--having the characters wear masks--and even goes into the practical details of the use of masks. This would obviously increase the theatrical nature of the performance, even though, as Bonino points out, there is a discrepancy in the stage directions regarding the entrance of the characters in that, while adding the suggestion of their wearing masks, Pirandello does not remove the other description of their faces and normal clothes that he used in the '21 edition (XVIII). The emphasis on performance and artifice in the '25 text is enhanced further by having the characters climb on stage in a rather theatrical and orchestrated manner that causes the actors to applaud (46), instead of having them simply appear on stage.

From this point until the end of the first part of the play (there are no acts or scenes to allow for a formal division), there are no major structural changes except for a number of cuts, especially of speeches of the Father, the effect of which will be addressed later. The beginning of the second part, however, is radically different in the '21 and '25 editions. Almost five pages of the '21 edition (60-4) have been cut out of the '25 edition, with one of the monologues moved to the very end of the play. This particular monologue of the Stepdaughter (accompanied by action performed by the Boy and the Little Girl, and which culminates in the drowning of the Little Girl), is very explanatory in nature and, in a sense, gives away the end of the story, which in the '25 edition is only hinted at but never fully spelled out, adding an element of suspense. The other material that was the beginning of the second part in the earlier version is left out of the play entirely. The reasons for this could be two: the emphasis on action, which the dialogue between the mother and the son (or rather a monologue of the son) takes away from, and the all too

real nature of the exchanges between the characters, which undermines their "created" nature (this second explanation is suggested by Bonino, also quoting other critics [XXX]). In the '25 edition, then, the second part starts with the activity of getting the stage ready for the performance of the characters, and proceeds along similar lines as the '21 edition, until the beginning of the third part.

As the third part of the play begins, the scenery for the "play within the play" is already there in the '21 edition (112), but only slightly suggested in the '25 edition. Thus in the '21 edition, after deciding on what the stage should look like for the garden scene, the director turns around, looks at the scenery, and says: "Oh, it's already there. Well done.[3]" (130) By contrast, the '25 edition makes the building of the scenery part of the play, with the director giving specific orders, stage hands coming and going, a technician nailing the trees to the floor, and the "sky" backdrop being let down on the stage--and it is even the wrong color (141-2). This entire scene draws a very visible, concrete distinction between the "real" nature of the events for the characters, and the artifice of recreating life on a stage with a white cloth for a sky. The building of the scenery drives home once again for the characters--just as it did in the second part of the play--the impossibility of recreating their drama on stage. In this same third part the confrontation between the father and the son turns from "slight" aggravation into a physical fight that concludes with the father being thrown on the floor. The Stepdaughter's monologue-scene, including the drowning of the little girl, occurs at the end, just before the suicide of the boy, thus reinforcing the necessary link between the two events and, as Bonino suggests, serving as climax to the drama of the characters (XXII).

The ending of the play is also quite different in the two editions. Whereas in the '21 edition the play ends with the director saying "Fiction! reality! Go to hell all of you! Nothing like this has ever happened to me before! They wasted my entire day"[4] (141), the '25 edition breaks this line into two sequences (156-7). The first, "Fiction! reality! Go to hell all of you! Lights! Lights! Lights!" is followed by a suggestion that the entire stage be innundated by a very bright light. The second is addressed to the actors: "Nothing like this has ever happened to me before! They wasted my entire day!" with the addition of a few more lines of a practical character as the director sends the actors home and asks the electrician to turn the lights off. Immediately after, the very bright light is followed by complete darkness, then by a green spotlight pointed at the characters behind the "sky" backdrop. At this point, the director hurries away from the stage, and the Stepdaughter runs away too, stopping and laughing on each step of the stairs, and continuing to laugh even outside the auditorium. Obvioiusly, the author took particular care to create a more theatrical ending for the play. Critics had in fact observed that the original ending was rather too abrupt (Bonino XXVII-VIII), and so Pirandello adds lighting effects and stage directions that construct a more striking ending without adding much by way of lines.

Thus far, I have only delineated the major structural differences between the two texts. The other important differences consist in a few substantial cuts, especially of speeches that do not appear in the '25 edition, and serious revision of the stage directions. Once again, these changes give the play a more theatrical nature, add action, "lighten up" the philosophical parts, and stress the distinction between the actors and characters. Giovanna Romei writes that, in fact, the changes in stage directions are the most marked

distinction between the two texts (LXXXII). The first and most important change in the latter is already in place in the 1923 edition--the shift in tense from the present to the future. Romei's explanation for this shift (a common sense one) is that it is a movement from the representation of the stage reality as something happening at the moment, to a suggestion of it as a "created" reality every time the play is performed (LXXXII).

While becoming suggestions rather than a representation of reality, the stage directions also get much more detailed in the 1925 edition, probably as a result of the fact that Pirandello directed that year's Roman production himself. The actors and the director are given a more prominent part--the members of the company interact among themselves and react to the characters (they run away from the stage as Madame Pace arrives, for example, or applaud the Stepdaughter's performance, quarrel with the characters, and so on) much more than in the '21 edition. The acting out of the scenes between the characters also assumes a more theatrical, "representational" nature as the director steps on and off the stage to inspect or interrupt the action, as any director would during a rehearsal. The actions of the characters and actors on stage are blocked in much more detail in the '25 edition than they were in the '21 edition, with special emphasis on maintaining constant action on stage. The directions also suggest more drammatic action; as mentioned above, the conflict between father and son in the third part turns into a physical fight with the father ending up on the floor (and remaning there until his exit). When the boy shoots himself, his body is picked up and taken behind the backdrop where the actors and characters also disappear, leaving the director alone on stage. The

confrontation between the mother and Madame Pace is also more violent--in the '25 edition the mother tears the wig off Madame Pace's head and throws it on the floor.

A word on Madame Pace herself. The '25 edition stage direction that describes her physical appearance is quite different from that of '21, and much more theatrical, as is the Stepdaughter's and the Actors' reaction to her entrance. The 1925 edition presents a clearly more entertaining scene. Compare the two:

> 1921: [. . .] grassa megera dai boffici capelli ossigenati, tutta ritinta, vestita con gofia eleganza, di seta nera e con una lunga catena d'argento attorno all vita, da cui pende un pajo di forbici. Subito la Figliastra le corre incontro, tra il momentaneo stupore degli Attori. (80)
> (She is a fat, oldish woman with puffy oxygenated hair. She is rouged and powdered, dressed with a comical elegance in black silk. Round her waist is a long silver chain from which hangs a pair of scissors. The Stepdaughter runs over to her at once amid the stupor of the actors. [Storer 40])

> 1925: [. . .] megera d'enorme grassezza, con una pomposa parruca di lana color carota e una rosa fiammante da un lato, alla spagnola; tutta ritinta, vestita con goffa eleganza di seta rossa sgargiante, un ventaglio di piume in una mano e l'altra mano levata a sorreggere tra due dita la sigaretta accesa. Subito, all'apparizione, gli Attori e il Capocomic schizzeranno via dal palcoscenico con un urlo di spavento, precipitandosi dalla scaletta e

accenneranno di fuggire per il corridojo. La Figliastra, invece, accorrerà a Madame Pace, umile, come davanti a una padrona. (98-9)

(She is an enormously fat old hag wearing a voluminous carrot-coloured wig made of wool with a flaming-red rose to one side--Spanish style; all dolled up, dressed in a clumsily elegant gown of gaudy red silk with a fan of feathers in one hand, and the other hand raised, holding between two fingers a lit cigarette. With her appearance the Actors and the Director rush from the stage with a shout of fear and head for the stairs as if to flee down the aisle. The Stepdaughter, instead, runs towards Madame Pace; she appears submissive, as towards a mistress. [Musa 38])

Not only does the outrageous appearance of Madame Pace add yet another touch of comedy, it also creates commotion on stage, with the actors running toward the audience in the auditorium. It is safe to say that the attention of the audience is secured.

One interesting typographical difference between these two editions is that they look different on the page--the punctuation in the '25 edition clearly suggests that actors and characters interrupt each other constantly, rendering their exchanges more dynamic. Here is an example:

1921:

Direttore: E là, lei, un giorno, incontrò....

La Figliastra (subito, indicando il Padre): Lui, lui, sissignore, vecchio cliente! Vedrà che scena da rappresentare! Superba!

Il Padre: Col sopravvenire di lei, della madre...

La Figliastra (subito, perfidamente) Quasi a tempo!

Il Padre (gridando): No, a tempo, a tempo! etc. (46-7)

1925:

Il Capocomico (subito): E là, lei, un giorno, incontrò--

La Figliastra (indicando il Padre): -- lui, lui, sissignore! vecchio cliente!

Vedrà che scena da rappresentare! Superba!

Il Padre: Col sopravvenire di lei, della madre --

La Figliastra (subito, perfidamente) -- quasi a tempo --

Il Padre (gridando) --no, a tempo, a tempo! etc. (72)

As can be seen, the exchange remains the same, even in the stage directions, and yet the appearance on the page, with the dashes and incomplete sentences, suggests a more dynamic nature to the dialogue, serving as direction for the characters to interrupt each other constantly.

There is, then, more action in the '25 edition--and less talk. Several cuts, some of which already in effect for the '23 edition, leave out entire intellectual discussions, taking lines away from the Father especially. One such speech in the first part of the play is quite explanatory in nature. In it the Father summarizes what will happen after the family moves to his house. Only the first two sentences are left in the '25 edition, suggesting rather than telling what is to happen: "Oh, ma lui glielo leva subito, l'impaccio, sa! E anche quella bambina, che e anzi la prima ad andarsene. . ." (77). (Oh, but you'll be rid of

him immediately. And even of the little girl, who is in fact the first to go.") Obviously, the author was intent on not revealing too much. Later in the '21 edition, the Father and Director engage in a discussion on reality, illusion, and suffering, or rather the Father "instructs" the Director on all of the above, causing the latter to exclaim "In the name of God, at least stop this philosophizing and let's at least finish up this play" (121). And that's exactly what the author does, gets rid of some of the philosophy and gets on with the play. Individual lines are also cut from various longer speeches of the Father, most of these variations on themes elaborated elsewhere.

Yet another cut is worth mentioning--the brief dialogue between the Mother and Son at the beginning of the second part, in which the Son complains about his position. It has been mentioned that Bonino explains this with Pirandello's effort not to "humanize" the characters too much (XXII). I would add that, besides the fact that after the cut the second part begins immediately with the business of setting up the stage, this dialogue contradicted somehow with the rather taciturn nature of the Son, who does not really like to explain himself.

Pirandello was already working on the changes in 1923, for the second edition of the play (there is no evidence that the performance text changed before 1925). One wonders if all these changes took place as a result of the failure of the first performance, or the mixed reviews, or the fact that the play was considered too "cerebral", and Pirandello was trying to make it more dramatic and appealing to the audiences by adding action and creating more suspense than he originally had. Whatever the reason, these changes affect meaning as well, since there is a definite attempt to enhance the element of

artifice in the characters, who, in everything they do, are part of the discussion on reality, performance, and the creative process that the play engages in. But more importantly--the text that the Italian audiences were familiar with is substantially and qualitatively different from the text that appeared in English language anthologies well into the the '80s (the Storer text). Depending on what text they happen upon, different English-speaking readers may have very different images of the play. Yet another intriguing implication is the choice of original texts translators are faced with, a choice that they have even though they all seem to prefer the "final" version of the play, as appears in all Mondadori editions since 1933. One could argue that the changes to the first edition represent Pirandello's surrender to the tastes of the public and critics. But this a point that I would rather leave to Italian scholars engaged in compiling critical editions of Pirandello's work. Instead, in the following chapters I will concentrate on the various English texts of the play.

Chapter III

The English Translations--Brief History

The 1922 Storer translation is the first English language translation of *Six Characters*. It is also the most anthologized translation, appearing regularly in drama collections since the date of its first publication. The translation was initally published by E.P. Dutton, in a volume entitled *Three Plays*. The latest edition is the 1998 Dover Thrift (in a separate volume). In the introduction to its first edition Arthur Livingston, another early Pirandello translator, writes that the text of the play is "that of the translation designated by the author and which was used in the sensational productions of the play given in London and New York" (ix).

From a bibliography of Pirandello's works in translation compiled in 1965 one learns of the existence of other English language translations of *Six Characters*. One of these is by Frederick May, done in 1950 for the Riley-Smith Theatre in Leeds, England. This apparently was the text of the play used in a BBC telecast (1954) and radiocast (1959). Yet another translation seems to have been made for (or chosen by) the Phoenix Theatre in New York, this one by Tyrone Guthrie and Michael Wagner in 1955. I am yet to come across these two texts, but the same bibliography indicates Frederick May to be the translator of a number of Pirandello's works (1362-72).

In 1952 Eric Bentley edited a collection of five plays by Pirandello in a volume entitled *Naked Masks*, using the Storer translation for *Six Characters*. For the first time Bentley included the author's introduction to the *Six Characters* (in Bentley's own

translation), as an appendix. Yet another appendix contains a list of translations of the plays in English, from which it appears that the only one the author was aware of was the Storer translation. Subsequently, however, Bentley set out to translate the plays himself. In 1991 Northwestern University Press published Bentley's *Pirandello's Major Plays*, containing *Right You Are, Six Characters in Search of an Author, Emperor Henry,* and *The Man with the Flower in His Mouth*, all his own translations. The copyright date on the translation of *Six Characters* is 1970. A new edition, this time under the title *Pirandello: Plays* but using the same translation of *Six Characters* appeared in 1998. Both 1991 and 1998 collections contain a unique apparatus of Translator's Notes after each play. In these notes, even though tentatively, Bentley is the first translator to tackle the problem of the textual versions of the original texts (he even includes substantial passages from the first edition of the original). The translator says he is using the "final version" of the play, for which he does not give a date, and mentions the 1921 (first) and 1923 (second) editions as the only stages of revision he is aware of (117). More interestingly, this is the only translator to pass judgement on the Storer translation: "The Dutton text, by Edward Storer, is literal but often erroneous" (117).

In terms of publication dates the Bentley English version is the latest one, yet the actual translation was completed in 1970, as indicated by the copyright date. In 1982 Methuen of London published a collection of three Pirandello plays, one of them *Six Characters* in a translation by John Linstrum. The translation was first used in a British production of the play in 1979 by the Greenwich Theatre, England. The introduction to the Methuen volume mentions yet another translation used in both a 1963 British

performance and an earlier (date is not given) New York performance, this one by Paul Avila Mayer (xxviii). The translation collected in this text is clearly based upon the same final version of the play all translators except Storer use, even though it claims to have used the 1924 (third) edition. Yet another collection in two volumes appeared in 1988, *Pirandello: Collected Plays*, published by John Calder (London) and Riverrun Press (New York). Edited by Robert Rietty, this volume presents a new translation of the play, commissioned for this edition, by Felicity Firth. There are no textual notes in these volumes indicating which original texts the translators used. In fact, the date given for the Italian text of *Six Characters* is 1921, even though the text is that of the 1933, final version.

Anthony Caputi retranslated the text for *Eight Modern Plays*, a collection edited by Caputi in 1991, a second edition of which appeared in 1996. In a note to the translated text of *Six Characters* Caputi claims to have based his translation on the 1925 text, which "has . . . been accepted as the definitive version of the play" (210). The collection is part of the Norton Critical Edition series and it is directed at an audience of students and teachers. The back cover of the book clarifies the purpose and methodology of the entire collection:

> The most accurate and readable translations have been chosen for plays originally in foreign languages, including a new translation of Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* by the editor, based on the definitive Italian text of 1925. Each play has been carefully annotated for the student reader--foreign words and phrases are translated, allusions

beyond the range of general knowledge are explained, and historical material is included as needed.

In the Backgrounds and Criticism section of the book the translator/editor has also included a passage from his *Pirandello and the Crisis of Modern Consciousness*, in which he touches upon the differences between the two major variants of the original text. Published at the same time, the Bentley and Caputi translations seem to be the first important American translations (the earlier ones had been conspicuously British, as Pirandello scholars complained in the late '80s)

The Musa translation is part of *Six Characters and Other Plays*, a collection of three plays (all translated by Mark Musa) published by Penguin in 1995--and thus the most recent translation of the play. The Introduction is not very clear as to which edition this translation was based on; Musa opens it with a factual mistake, claiming that the preface to the play was added in 1924 (and not 1925, as was the case)[1]. However, the translation is clearly based on the 1933 edition.

Two problems emerged while considering all this material: there are simply too many English translations, and the translators are not very clear about which editions of the original they are using. The second difficulty calls for careful reading and collation of translated texts against all available variants of the original; because the differences between the 1925 and 1933 editions are small, a conflated 1925 text can be used to compare against all translations. As to the number of texts, time and resource limitations dictated that this project be far from a comprehensive study of all English translations of *Six Characters*. The choice of Storer, Caputi and Musa (with Bentley, Firth, and

Linstrum used to illustrate some points of interest) was based on practical and historical considerations. The Storer text is the first translation, the text that made the play famous in the English-speaking world; the Musa and Caputi texts are the most recent ones. Also, the Musa and Caputi texts have been published as Penguin and Norton editions respectively, which makes them very accessible to teachers and students, as well as other readers, and highly likely to be used in the English or Drama classrooms.

It is truly amazing how all these translations of the same play are different from each other, sometimes considerably so. To some extent all translations modify and transform a text, reflecting different readings and theories of translation; yet a comparative assessment can be made, and various choices can be tracked down and even explained to some degree. Andrew Chesterman describes five theoretical translation assessment models: retrospective, prospective, lateral, introspective, and pedagogical. Leaving aside the pedagogical model, which is used in the process of translator training or certification, the other four models defined by Chesterman that focus on, respectively, the relation (equivalency) between source (original) and target (translated) texts, the effects of the source and target texts, the degree to which translated texts meet the expectations of readers, and the reasons for which translators have made their choices (123-141).

I believe all four models can be used simultaneously in assessing translation, and I have chosen to do so. Thus, there are explanations of omissions, perceived mistranslations, and other departures from the original text in both form and content; the effects of the original and translated texts have been compared, a necessarily subjective analysis that includes, in Chesterman's terms, intended as well as (unintended) side-effects

(130). Further, all three translations have been analyzed in the contexts in which they occurred (time, place, function at the time, publisher etc.), and explanations suggested as to the reasons that translators have made specific (erroneous or simply ideosyncratic) choices.

Chapter IV

Matters of Content--Variants, Ommissions, Modifications, Mistranslations.

The Storer text

Translating *Six Characters* for performance, Storer seems to approach the play with the intention of simplifying it; lines have been left out and long speeches are at times shortened, presenting the gist of arguments rather than their often convoluted development. Furthermore, the meaning conveyed by the translation is at times different from the meaning of the original--on one or two occasions it is radically different. While it is possible to speculate on the reasons for leaving out a number of the lines from the original text, other ommissions are difficult, if at all possible, to explain. Even though the ideas of the play are not lost in translation, a lot of the nuances are. Because of the large number of departures from the original, a list of the most substantial ones is provided in an appendix.

A good example of cutting lines that are problematic to translate occurs in Act Two of the Storer text where the Father's attempt to correct the Leading Man's rendering of his line has been left out in its entirety. The Leading Man (playing the Father) says "'Ah . . . Ma . . . dico, non sarà la prima volta, spero . . ." to which the Father reacts by suggesting that the actual line had ended with "è vero?" A brief exchange ensues on whether the actor should say "spero" ("I hope") or "è vero?" ("is it true?") (97). In the translation the line is rendered as "'Ah, but . . . I say . . . this is not the first time that you have come here, is it?'" both when the Father says it and when the Leading Man

reproduces it (45, 48). Thus a discussion of the appropriate word to use would not make sense in the context, and is cut out. The same practice is followed later, when the translator leaves out two lines that are mostly a comment on an uncommon expression used by the Stepdaughter, "si dissuga tutto," and which the Director has never heard before (129). Because Storer chose to translate the above expression[1] with the common English "consumes him" and "wastes him away" (65), the line in which the Director comments upon the word choice is out of place.

Possibly as a result of misreading, in a few cases the meaning of the lines has been changed or modified. One of the lines of the Stepdaughter completely misses the meaning of the original when "Mi faceva notare la roba che aveva sciupata, dandola a cucire a mia madre; e diffalcava, diffalcava" (46) ("She would point out the material that had been ruined by my mother's sewing and she kept reducing the pay") is translated as "She would point out to me that I had torn one of my frocks and she would give it back to my mother to mend" (23). It is possible to explain this error as a misreading on the part of the translator: if "dandola" is not understood as referring to "sciupata", (literally: "She pointed out the material she had ruined by giving it to my mother to sew") but rather as an independent verb, while "avev*o*" instead of "aveva" changes the person of the verb (literally: "She pointed out the material *I* had ruined, *giving* it to my mother to sew" where "giving" becomes an action parallel to "pointing").

On another occasion the translation has the Son use the pronoun "he" when context and a later line make it clear that he should be saying "she"--a crucial point since the gender of the pronoun would indicate whether the Son is talking about the

Stepdaughter or the Father (15). A similar departure from the original has the Stepdaughter say "when *a man seeks* to simplify life" (22) when the original has her say "quando *si* è *costretti* a 'semplificarla' la vita" ("when one is forced to simplify life") (45). Here the change of the verb from the reflexive to the active, paired with the subject "a man", possibly used in its meaning as "human being", creates the impression that the Stepdaughter is talking of the Father instead of herself. Possibly, this is what the translator meant, since he also changed the verb from "forced" to "seeks", in keeping with the sentence as an accusation of the Father rather than an explanation of the Stepdaughter's position in life. Even though meaning changes, the sentence remains consistent in the context of translation.

Whereas these are examples of more obvious changes in meaning, subtle modifications are present throughout the translation. Two such subtler distortions of the original occur in lines spoken by the Mother. The first of these also appears as problematic in Musa, and deserves a brief discussion as an instance where two of the translations add a level of ambiguity that (to my understanding) is not present in the original text. The following exchange takes place between the Father and the Mother, as the Father discusses the "other man" in the Mother's life:

> Il Padre: [. . .] E il suo drama--(potente, signore, potente)--consiste tutto, difatti, in questi quattro figli dei due uomini ch'ella ebbe.
>
> La Madre: Io, li ebbi? Hai il coraggio di dire che fui io ad averli, come se li avessi voluti? Fu lui, signore! Me lo diede lui, quell' altro; per forza! (27)

Storer translates this as:

> The Father: [. . .] her drama--powerful, sir, I assure you--lies, as a matter of fact, all in these four children she has had by two men.
>
> The Mother: I had them? Have you got the courage to say that I wanted them? It was his doing. It was he who gave me that other man, who forced me to go away with him. (13)

In the mother's reply the antecedent of "them" is "these four children" (at least grammatically it appears so), but it would not make sense for her to say that she did not want her children, since she is presented as an incarnation of motherhood. Reading the translation before the original I was struck by the Mother's subtle subversion of the Father's representation of her as only and exclusively a mother--the assertion that she had not wanted her own children. However, the original is unambiguous[2]--the antecendent of "them" ("gli") is "the men" ("uomini"), and the Father's line would be more clearly rendered as "Her drama . . . consists of these four children from the two men that she had."

The other distortion of the Mother's lines occurs a few pages later, when the Father is talking about her reaction after he sent away the secretary. Having perceived a complicity and understanding between his secretary and his wife, the Father fires his employee and describes the Mother's ensuing conduct as lost and erratic, attributing the change in her behavior to her missing the other man. The mother's response to that description is: "Eh, sfido!", a clear indication of disagreement with the Father, even though one that does not have an equivalent in English. The translation, failing to convey

the disagreement renders this line as "Ah yes . . . !", which is normally understood to express agreement, the opposite of the original. In the original the Father reacts to her line by guessing what she is about to say next "Il figlio, è vero?" ("The son, right?" i.e. "You're saying the cause of your behavior was the son, right?"); in the translation there is no apparent motivation (and not a very clear meaning) for the Father's line: "(suddenly turning to Mother) It's true about the son, anyway, isn't it?" (17)

These kinds of changes, even though they do not affect the macroelements in the play, or prevent the reader from grasping the ideas, are nevertheless significant departures from what the author was trying to convey. The same can be said for some of the cuts and simplifications of the longer speeches in the play where, even though the gist of the ideas remains, overall effects such as awkwardness or verbosity are lost. Sometimes these cuts seem entirely unjustified, as is the case with the Stepdaughter's long monologue in the beginning of act two where the explanation for how the Little Girl drowns ("You want to catch one of these ducks") is missing from the translation, together with a few lines addressed to the Boy in which the Stepdaughter blames him for their sister's death. Some of the Father's speeches could have been simplified for the same reasons Pirandello himself shortened or cut them in subsequent editions (Storer is translating the first edition)--they are long and convoluted and do not play very well, as the Italian performances of the play indicated. But that, of course, is only speculation. Instead, the change in effect is quite palpable; here is one example:

> Il Padre: [. . .] si crede "uno" ma è vero: è "tanti", signore, "tanti" secondo tutte le possibilita d'essere che sono in noi. ("we believe ourselves "one"

but instead we are "many", sir, "many", according to all the possibilities of being that are in us.") (48)

The Father [. . .] We believe this conscience to be a single thing, but it is many-sided. (23)

The idea is the same; yet in the original the Father sounds more awkward and his argument less common-sense than in the translated version.

A play translated for performance, the Storer text of *Six Characters* reflects a rather "free" approach to translation. More precisely, the translator privileges target-language clarity and flow (avoiding awkwardness, simplifying semantically complex passages) rather than so-called fidelity to the original. At the same time I agree with Bentley who characterizes Storer's translation as "literal" (117). This is no contradiction in terms--in most cases word choice and even word order reflect the source quite closely, and only depart from it when the source meaning or expression get in the way of the target language--practices that indicate a rather pragmatic approach.

The Musa and Caputi texts

Unlike the English version of Storer, the Musa and Caputi translations were not written wih the theater stage in mind, but rather as reading texts. Both authors seek to render the play in its entirety, and very few lines are missing from their texts. Reading these translations simultaneosly provides the experience of watching two readers reach occasionally different conclusions, and two writers make consistently different decisions regarding the best way to express the same idea. To generalize: where Caputi explains

the idea of the original, Musa's text allows for more ambiguity. Despite overall strategies, the two translators' decisions are a result of the ways in which they read the text.

Here are a few examples of variant readings. In the Italian text ('25 edition) the Father says: "[. . .] la natura si serve da strumento della fantasia umana per proseguire, piu alta, la sua opera di creazione" (45). Caputi reads this as "nature makes use of the imagination to carry its creative work--this work that could be called crazy--forward, ever higher" (216); Musa as "nature serves as instrument of the human fantasy in order to pursue creation at a higher level" (12). Obviously, Caputi adds the phrase "this work that could be called crazy," apparently to stress the function of the line as the Father's reaction to the Director's accusation of madness. More importantly, the agents in these two sentences are different--"nature" in Caputi and "human fantasy" in Musa--the statements are each other's logical opposites. It seems to me that Caputi's reading is closer to the original meaning, but that is beside the point.

Other ambiguous phrases in the original provide an even greater opportunity for variant readings. Thus, describing the Mother's attempts to ingratiate herself with the Son, and her constant failures, the Stepdaughter ends the speech with "Che gusto!" (130). Even in context[3], the phrase could be interpreted in two ways, as it has been, despite the fact that the preceding "Io ne godo moltissimo" ("I enjoy it greatly") would seem to suggest the most common reading Musa sticks to: "How I relish it!" (53). Yet Caputi provides an alternative reading, in which the sentence refers to the Mother: "I can't imagine what she gets out of it" (246). Either of these readings is hard to contest. The same is true of another of Stepdaughter's lines, when she says that her father has died:

"Per sua fortuna è morto" (54). The problem here is that the pronoun "sua" could be taken to refer to the Mother, the Father, or the dead man--and all readings make sense grammatically and logically, especially since there is no stage direction to indicate the tone of the Stepdaughter's line. Musa renders the line "Fortunately for *her*, he is dead" (17); Caputi writes, "He's the lucky one: he's dead" (220). Looking at other translations, Bentley agrees with Caputi in writing, "He had the good luck to die" (77), whereas Linstrum goes for the third option: "Luckily for *him* he died" with the Father's prompt response indicating that the line is addressed to the Father (82).

There are other instances where the translations depart in their interpretation of the text, but the above examples should suffice to show how a lot of the decisions these translators make are a direct result of their understanding of the text. At times, however, these decisions seem to be a result of a translator's *mis*understanding of text. This is the case with Caputi's reading of the Stepdaughter's "when one is forced to simplify life" speech (already mentioned with regard to Storer's translation) as: "When anyone tries to simplify life--by reducing it to the level of beasts, for example--and he throws out all the human encumbrances of aspiration, innocence, all sense of the ideal, duty, decency, and shame, nothing is more contemptible and nauseous than his remorse" (226). As was the case with Storer, the implications of the verb "forced" are overlooked and the verb itself substituted by the more fitting (in the new context) "tries".

There are a few mistranslations in Musa that can be easily explained as misreadings. Thus the Stepdaughter asks the Director (by way of explaining the reason she blames the Father for her prostitution): "Per chi cade nella colpa, signore, il

responsabile di tutte le colpe che seguono, non è sempre chi, primo, determinò la caduta?" (124). Musa translates this as: "For the one who falls in error, sir, the person responsible for all the errors that follow is not always the one who first determined the downfall" (50). By taking out the question mark, transforming the sentence into a statement, the line reverses the meaning of the original which would have been better expressed by a tag-question ending to the translated sentence. Or further, when the mother says, "il mio strazio non è finto, signore!" (125) Musa reads the line as "My anguish is not over, sir!" (51). The problem here is that "finto" (false; pretended) is very similar to "finito" (finished) in form. By the very end of the play a stage direction reads: "Rintronerà dietro gli alberi, dove il Giovinetto e rimasto nascosto, un colpo di rivoltella" (literally: "Behind the trees where the Boy has been hiding will resound a gun shot") (154). Yet Musa reads "rintronera" as "ritornera" ("will return; will go back" as opposed to "will resound") rendering the stage direction thus: "He goes back behind the trees where the Young Boy remains hidden; a shot from the revolver" (65). Not much meaning is lost, of course, but the blocking is somewhat confusing since in the very next sentence the Son is shown performing the same action: "With a cry of anguish, the Mother runs in that direction, together with the Son and all Actors amid the general confusion" (65).

It is enlightening to read both translations simultaneously--not only because they open up different possibilities for interpretation of the play, but also because on one curious occasion they complete each other. This happens in the very end, where the original has two different groups of Actors entering from the left and right wings, giving conflicting information on the condition of the Boy:

Altri Attori da Destra: Finzione? Realta! realta! E' morto!

Altri Attori da Sinistra: No! Finzione! Finzione! (155-6).

Caputi chooses to leave out the line of the Actors entering from the left (255), whereas Musa leaves out the line of the Actors entering from the right (65). I do not see a reason for these cuts in any of the translated texts, and it seems that it must be a coincidence the two translators ommit different lines.

Once again, perhaps even more so than with the Storer text, the meaning of the original play is not lost, and both translations are perfectly valid. However, they are quite different in the approach they take to the task of translating. Possibly with his audience of students in mind, Caputi tends to explain and clarify a lot of the meaning, sometimes modifying its nuances in the process. Thus when in the Italian text the Father says: "Dico che può stimarsi realmente una pazzia, sissgnore, sforzarsi di fare il contrario: cioè, di crearne di verosimili, perchè pajano vere" (44) Caputi takes the line one step further, and "the opposite" of the original becomes "what life does not do", "I'm saying that there is something crazy about doing what life does not do, that is, making its absurdities seem plausible so that they then appear to be true" (216). Consider also the following example: the Son says, speaking of the Actors and the Director, "Noi non siamo mica dentro di lei, e i suoi attori stanno a guardarci da fuori" (149), a line which Musa translates "We are not inside of you, and your actors are looking at us from the outside" (63). Instead of opting for the very close, practically literal translation of Musa, Caputi prefers an explanation rather: "You haven't the faintest idea of what we are; the best your actors can do is to

study us, from outside" (253). The meaning is perfectly correct, but what is suggested in the original ("you don't know us") is spelled out in the translation.

Speaking of the Mother, the Father says, "Non è una donna; è una madre" ("She's not a woman; she's a mother") (54). The contrast between woman and mother as two separate modes of existence seems intentional, and it is reinforced in the first edition of the play by the Son's monologue, in which he expresses his dismay at having seen his mother and father as woman and man instead (64). Caputi, however, translates this as "No, she's not that kind of woman. She's a mother" (220). In this case the distinction between woman and mother, crucial to the character and to Pirandello[4], is blurred.

In contrast, Musa chooses to stay as close to the original text as possible, sometimes even following the word order of the Italian. Here is an example of one of the confusing speeches of the Father:

> The drama for me, sir, lies all in this: in the conscience I have, which every one of us has--you see--we think we are 'one' with 'one' conscience, but it is not true: it is 'many', sir, 'many' according to all the possibilities of being that are in us: 'one' with this, 'one' with that--all very different! So we have the illusion of always being at the same time 'one for everyone' and always 'this one' that we believe we are in everything we do. (26)

This translation transmits the idea of the original as well as the sense of confusion, awkwardness, and struggle for words that characterizes the Italian passage. Yet at the same time the speech is opaque and the first reaction of a reader could be a confused "huh?!" Caputi, instead, is considerably clearer:

> For me the drama is precisely in that, in my consciousness that I, that each of us, in fact, believes himself to be one person, when that's not true. Each of us is many persons, many, depending on all the possibilities for being within us. For this man we're one person, for that one another. We're multiple. Yet we live with the illusion that we're the same for everyone--always the same person in everything we do. (227)

The Musa translation almost forces a second reading. One could argue both ways: that this is a desirable effect, or that it obscures the text unnecessarily, depending on one's critical position on either side of "literal" vs. "free"; "foreign" vs. "domesticated"; "ambiguous" vs. "clear."

The same critical position would also determine the choice of style, or voice, in translation. Here again, Musa and Caputi are fairly consistent in their tendenicies toward, respectively, staying as close to the original as possible, and creating a fluent English text. Yet even so both translators oscillate between positions at times, deciding which features of the original they will preserve, and which ones they will displace or modify. Stylistic choices are discussed in the next chapter, but there is one noteworthy instance in which Musa and Caputi seem to switch places--their treatment of Madame Pace's speech.

Musa has Madame Pace speak an unspecified "odd, garbled mixture of languages", yet it turns out she is trying to speak English, as indicated by her line: "Ima tink you noa very nica tink you laugh a me I trying to speaka as a good I can English, senor!" (41). Here Musa departs from the original, making Madame Pace sound like a Brooklynese Italian in order to maintain the consistency within the translated text where the characters

are speaking English. It is an attitude that almost denies the state of the text as translation, even though the Italian title of the play in rehearsal, earlier in the text, is only translated in a note (5). Caputi, on the other hand, has Madame Pace speak Spanish-English he names "half Spanish, half Italian": "Ah, no mi seem cortesia make comico da me when I speak Italian, senor" (237). The situation is rather strange since she is not, after all, trying to speak Italian, nor is anybody else; this particular choice calls for the reader to accept that we are reading a translation of an Italian play.

Chapter V

Matters of Style and Other Editorial Choices

In a note before the play opens Pirandello writes that this play has no acts or scenes. Indeed, there are no such divisions in the Italian text, even though there are two major interruptions in the play after which the text resumes on a different page. The standard Italian text (but not the 1925 text) introduces the scene played by the Father and Stepdaughter under the subtitle "La Scena"; Eric Bentley follows this model, and there are no act or scene divisions in his translation. Other translators, however, choose to divide the play into acts. Thus, in the Storer translation the note that announces the absence of formal divisions comes right after "Act I"; in Caputi that note is immediately above his "Act One" indication. Caputi places the act designations in square brackets, as if to indicate that these are his own additions. The choice is in keeping with the overall principles of translation--the play reads more easily if divided into acts. Musa solves the problem differently--he divides the play into two Acts (only breaking at the point of the 15 minute break in the original text) and eliminates the contradictory note to achieve consistency. Does it matter whether a translation of *Six Characters* follows Pirandello's directions as to formal division or, say, stage directions, elements of the play that will only become visible in a reading text?

It is an interesting question. In 1923 Pirandello changed the tense of his stage directions from the present to the future, as has been explained earlier; all translations of later texts have stage directions in the present. The choice of tense is clearly a deliberate

one on the part of the author, yet when the play is performed the audience is not even aware of such details. Faced with the unusual case of stage directions in the future tense, English translators, without exceptions that I am aware of, follow the standard English practice, presenting stage directions in the present. Most of them opt for a division in acts that also follows the more standard practices of the English play.

In that respect these translations take part in what Lawrence Venuti calls a process of domestication, which makes the foreign text more accessible to English audiences (43). Yet "domestication" (stripped of its pejorative connotations) is not an easy term to define since, after all, the act of rendering a text into English for an English audience *is* one of domestication anyway. One crucial question that one asks with regard to the process of domestication (defined as de-foreignization) is whether the characters in the play "speak" English or Italian and, most critics would add, which of these choices is the most desirable. Because this is a play, the rhythms and cadences of language are also important to the actors who will perform the parts. Domestication is inevitable when a foreign play is performed by an English-speaking actor who will tend to employ the rhythms and intonation of English while speaking words that were meant to be spoken by Italians. Not only, then, does this process occur whenever the play is performed in English, but also the ways in which the text becomes "Anglicized" depend on whether the play is performed in British or American English. What, then, happens to Pirandello's *style*, to his *voice*?

Some critics hold that Pirandello does not have such a distinctive style. Faustino uses expressions like "direct language" and "simple, economic style" to describe Pirandello's writing (36). Paolo Di Sacco complains that Pirandello's work has not been

popular in Italy partly due to the misperception among critics of a lack of style, of a "badly-written page" (171). In contrast, Di Sacco describes Pirandello's writing as painstaking work to achieve unique formal qualities that become "natural" to the author and the characters (172). Drawing on the work of other Pirandello scholars, Di Sacco defines some of the characteristics of the style: highly original, emphatic and dense punctuation; a strong rhythm based on repetition; a marked presence of adjectives; and ample use of enumeration (173). Generalizing, Di Sacco writes that the word itself becomes in Pirandello "the locus of the vain effort of the subject in search of a predicate, of a formulation that would confer stability and completeness" (173). One could argue, then, that language in Pirandello is meant to express confusion and failure on the part of the subject/individual/character to convey definite meanings. But let us go into the specifics of the play.

Six Characters is marked by three important stylistic characteristics, affecting mostly the two major characters, the Father and the Stepdaughter: repetition, long sentences, and idiosyncratic punctuation (this last one important only in the context of a reading text). Repetition is a general trait of the play that all characters share, the Director, for example, does quite a bit of it, especially when giving directions and orders: "Stiamo a sentire! Stiamo a sentire!" (57), "Ma sì! ma sì! Ma lasci sentire adesso!" (62), "Veniamo al fatto, veniamo al fatto, signori miei!" (71), "Sgombrino, sgombrino, signori!" (88) etc. etc. However, in this play repetition is mostly present in the speech of the Stepdaughter, who is constantly repeating words, phrases, and entire sentences: "di viverla, di viverla questa scena", "Non è vero! Non è vero!", "Qui non si narra! Qui non si

narra!" etc. This peculiarity of her speech is quite fitting to her personality--young, impetuous, with a tendency to voice her opinions and require constant attention. It also transmits a certain sense of urgency, anxiety, and overflowing energy on her part, this overabundance of speech.

The first long speech of the Stepdaughter (with repetitions in italics) is a good illustration of this characteristic:

> *Peggio! Peggio*! Eh altro, signore! *Peggio*! Senta, per favore: ce lo faccia rappresentar subito, questo dramma, perchè vedrà che a un certo punto, io--*-quando quest' amorino qua* . . . --vede come è bellina? . . . --*cara! cara!* ebbene, quando quest' amorino qua, Dio la toglierà d'improvviso a quella povera madre: e quest' imbecilino qua . . . farà la più grossa delle corbellerie, proprio da quello stupido che è . . . --allora vedrà che io *prenderò il volo*! Sissignore! *Prenderò il volo! il volo*! *E non mi par l'ora*, creda, *non mi par l'ora*! Perchè, dopo quello che è avvenuto di molto intimo tra me e lui . . . non posso più vedermi in questa compagnia, ad assistere allo strazio di quella madre per quel tomo là . . . --*lo guardi! lo guardi*!--indifferente, gelido *lui*, perchè è il figlio legittimo, *lui*! pieno di sprezzo per me, per quello là . . . per quella creaturina; che siamo *bastardi*--ha capito? *bastardi*. . . . E questa povera madre--*lui*--che è la madre comune di noi tutti--non la vuol riconoscere per madre anche sua--e la considera dall'alto in basso, *lui*, come madre soltanto di noi tre *bastardi*--vile! (51-52 my emphasis)

The stage directions I chose not to include in this passage show the Stepdaughter moving around the stage, interacting with the other characters and the Director, kissing the Little Girl, pulling the Little Boy and pushing him back, pointing at the Son etc. But even without the stage directions the level of energy comes across through the words. Even more than the Stepdaughter's pointed finger, it is her emphatic repetition of "lui" ("he") that sets the Son apart. Syntactically separated and repeated four times, that "lui" sounds more and more like an accusation. Not only does she repeat words here, structures are repeated as well, lending the speech a rhythm to go with the Stepdaughter's whirling on the stage. Notice, for example, the reappearance of the "quando questo" ("when this") clause. At the same time her sentences are constantly broken by parenthetical words and expressions, punctuated by dashes and exclamation marks; it almost feels as if she hardly has the patience to complete one sentence.

The Father, on the other hand, also very keen on being the center of attention and running the show, is a rather cerebral, talkative man given to philosophizing, and gets most of the long speeches in the play. He tends to use long, often confusing, and awkward, but always eloquent constructions At times entire long speeches of the Father are built as one sentence, sometimes punctuated with dashes and semicolons. It is in his speech especially that the effort to express oneself through language is most visible, and it is here that this effort fails most miserably. A lot of the syntactical opacity of the Father's language is a direct expression of his struggle with self-expression as a character without a stage reality. Consider this example where the Father addresses the question of the illusion of human existence:

> Soltanto per sapere, signore, se veramente lei com'è adesso, si vede . . . come vede per esempio, a distanza di tempo, quel che lei era una volta, con tutte le illusioni che allora si faceva; con tutte le cose, dentro e intorno a lei, come allora le parevano--ed erano, erano realmente per lei!--Ebbene, signore: ripensando a quelle illusioni che adesso lei non si fa più; a tutte quelle cose che ora non le "sembrano" più come per lei "erano" un tempo; non si sente mancare, non dico queste tavole di palcoscenico, ma il terreno, il terreno sotto i piedi, argomentando che ugualmente "questo" come lei ora si sente, tutta la sua realtà d'oggi cosi come'è, è destinata a parerle illusione domani? (135-36)

This speech consists of two sentences; one of them broken by a semicolon and a parenthetical clause between dashes, the other by a semicolon. The second sentence is a question addressed to the Director who, not having understood, as the stage direction indicates, answers with a "So? What are you trying to say?" (136).

Thus, a literal translation that observes the syntax and punctuation of the original runs the risk of having audiences react in a manner similar to that of the Director. Furthermore, both excessive repetition and long sentences are to be avoided in English if possible. In a prescriptive stylistic guide for translators of Pirandello, Giovanni Bussino suggests that these abide by the rules of English to achieve "'speakable' and 'actable' as well as readable" translations (31). Bussino calls for translators to avoid starting sentences with conjunctions; to break up "long, involved sentences in conformity with the more staccato requirements of English"; and to simplify punctuation to bring it closer to

"current English" (32). Musa and Caputi settle for a compromise--Caputi preserves most of the repetitive nature of the language, but breaks up long sentences and normalizes punctuation, whereas Musa keeps the long sentences but avoids repetition whenever possible, and normalizes punctuation.

The Father's speech on the multiple sides of one's personality, for example, is made up of nine sentences in Italian and in the Musa text, but of fifteen sentences in the Caputi text. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, the meaning of this speech becomes clearer in Caputi, but the sense of constant frustration of meaning comes out in Musa. Similarly, the Father's first speech on page 138 of the original goes from three sentences in the original, to four in the Musa translation, to five in the Caputi translation. As a result the Caputi text would be easier to perform (even though it is not intended as a performance text). Speaking of Pirandello's plays, the Director says:

> Che vuole che le faccia io se dalla Francia non ci viene più una buona commedia, e ci siamo ridotti a mettere in iscena commedie di Pirandello, che chi l'intende è bravo, fatte apposta di maniera che nè attori nè critici nè pubblico ne restino mai contenti? (38)

Following the Italian syntax Musa translates this as:

> What can I do if France can't produce any good theatre and we are reduced to putting on Pirandello's plays which you have to be lucky to understand and which are written in a way never to please either critics or actors or public. (8)

Caputi decides to break this sentence into three:

> What do you want from me if France isn't sending us anything good just now and we have to do plays by Pirandello? Three cheers for whoever understands them! They're made expressly to irritate everyone--actors, critics, and the public. (214)

Musa chooses to pack two relative clauses into one long sentence with no punctuation--not exactly the kind of sentence that rolls easily off the tongue. Caputi, on the other hand, translates "chi l'intende è bravo" as "three cheers for whoever understands them," and makes this into a logical point of emphasis and an opportunity for a break in the speech. The meaning is easier to convey, especially when spoken, the speech more entertaining.

But while he tries to abide by the syntax of the original, Musa tends to avoid repetition and uses synonyms instead--choosing to repeat the ideas rather than the exact expressions. In this sense Musa fits Milan Kundera's characterization of translators as "crazy about synonyms" (147). Where the Director says "Ma sì! sì!" (37) Musa translates "Certainly, of course" (8); when the Father uses the verb "volere" twice in "ma se lei vuole e i suoi attori vogliono" (49), Musa chooses to use a synonym "But if you wish, and your actors are willing" (14); or the Director's cry "Veniamo al fatto, veniamo al fatto, signori miei" (71) is translated as "Let's get to the point, my friends, let's get to the point" (226) by Caputi and "Let's get to the *point*. Let's get to the *event*, ladies and gentlemen" (25 my emphasis) by Musa. Most of the time Musa finds alternatives to using repetition as a means of emphasis, as is the case with the Stepdaughter's famous cry "Qui non si narra! qui non si narra!" (60), rendered by this translator as "You can't tell a story here. Not here. No narration" (19), and by Caputi as "This is no place to tell stories. Here they

don't tell stories" (222). Musa avoids repetition of words but chooses sentence fragments that repeat the negative construction (can't, not, no), whereas Caputi stays closer to the Italian text by repeating the phrase ("tell stories") twice, even though he does not repeat the whole sentence either. In the end, the amount of repetition in the translations is not even comparable to the Italian text, not even the Caputi translation which use this stylistic device more than any other. In both cases, however, most of the punctuation is normalized for the English audiences[1].

Clearly, both translators are concerned with preserving the delicate balance between "faithfulness" and clarity of translation. In terms of syntax their priorities are slightly different, yet there is a sense of the compromise between this faithfulness and clarity, a compromise forced by having these Italian characters speak English. How English do they really sound? In the 1988 Felicity Firth translation a Stage Hand refers to the Stage Manager as "mate" (3), the Director complains about the place being a "bloody zoo" (5), the Father uses a Dickens character (Mr. Micawber) to replace the obscure reference to Don Abbondio (13), the Leading Actress refers to the Stepdaughter as "duckie" (45) and so on--these people would sound quite credible with a British accent. Similarly, Storer's Director swears much like any English gentleman would have in 1922, using expressions such as: "for Heaven's sake," "Good heavens," "By Jove" and variations upon these. From this distance Storer's language assumes an archaic feel to it, which is due to a modern reader's unfamiliarity with 1920s British English, rather than any conscious attempts to preserve the foreign nature of the play. Thus odd translations like "incubus" (19) for "incubo" when "nightmare" would have been more appropriate, or "live

germs . . . [who] had the fortune to find a fecundating matrix . . ." (10) when neither "germ" nor "matrix" are commonly used to mean "seed" or "womb" in modern American English, become normal when one takes a look at an Italian-English dictionary of the time. A turn-of-the-century dictionary translates "incubo" for example as "incubus" with "nightmare" given in parenthesis (238). The same dictionary shows that it is possible to render a word-play on "concertare" literally, translating the verb as "to concert," even though this use of the word would sound unfamiliar to a modern reader (10). Apart from word choices that are clearly mistakes like, say, "robes" for "roba" ("stuff, material") (23), "vendetta" for "vendetta" ("revenge") (64), or "chance" for "motivo" ("reason") (15) etc., most of the translation sounds quite English.

By contrast, the Musa and Caputi (American) translations are recent enough to be comparable. The Musa text preserves some of the foreignness through choices like use of Italian words translated in footnotes but not in the text, and British spelling. The British spelling could be a result of editorial requirements, but even so it appears faintly foreign to American readers. Caputi, on the other hand, translates all foreign words and employs modern theatrical jargon to describe the goings-on on the stage (words like "flats, apron, flies, wings," instructions like "you have to make the scene carry;" "take down the lights," etc.). Also, the long, complex sentences used by Musa contrast with the shorter, snappier Caputi ones, producing different rhythms. Not only is meaning in Caputi easier to grasp, the text is easier to speak as well, as would become clear if the above-quoted lines by the Director are read aloud. Whereas with Musa one would have to decide on sentence

breaks, with Caputi the punctuation is already there; if self-expression is painful and constantly frustrated in Pirandello, it becomes quite fluent in Caputi.

One could go on indeterminately with this discussion, yet one crucial point arises even after a brief analysis like this: it is practically impossible to talk of the author's voice in a translated text. What used to be the author's voice (leaving out, for a moment, editorial influences on any text) becomes a mix influenced by the translator's own language at the time the translation is completed, as well as the translator's intentions with regard to the author's voice. These intentions could be to create a text that sounds foreign, translated, difficult, or one that sounds natural and contemporary enough to make us forget we are reading a translation. Neither approach is unskilled or imperialistic (Venuti, for example, claims that the tendency to "Anglicize" texts is an expression of Anglo hegemony; Bussino calls anything foreign-sounding "translatorese"); they are rather reflections of the pressures of context and theories of the time on the translator.

Chapter VI

Conclusions

The research completed, and the characteristics of translations outlined, I found myself facing an unpleasant question: "So, what?" What do these findings regarding original and translated texts of *Six Characters* mean? In the continuum between a celebration of *differance* that makes all translations equally valid, and an assessment model that seeks to establish *the* "best" English translation, I found myself vaccillating between an objective, descriptive approach, and an evaluative, judgemental one. I found myself constantly having to avoid the question, "Which of these translations would I assign in a literature class?" The problems were further compounded by the very nature of textual research with its constant surprises and setbacks, hunting expeditions in search of original editions, and the huge amount of factual information that had to be sifted through. Furthermore, despite some experience with translation from both languages, I am not a native speaker of either English or Italian, a factor that influences the degree of authority with which I could approach texts translated by English-speaking professional translators with a training in Italian language and literature.

As I already mentioned in the introduction, the scope of this project is determined by facts that are both objective (time and resources) and subjective (ethical and aesthetic convictions). While I could not realistically survey every English translation of Pirandello's play within the limits of a Master's thesis, I chose not to pass any judgement as to the comparative value of the translations--in other words I am not desginating a

"standard" translation. What follows is a brief discussion of the questions that arose during the analysis of the texts and their implications for translation (and translation editing) in general.

The translation process can be construed as a series of choices a translator makes, the first of which is the choice to translate. The translation exigency can be internal or external--a translator freels the need to render or re-render a foreign text, or he/she is commissioned to do so. Next, there is a textual decision to be made--the text that one translates from, especially important in the case of multiple editions of the original work. Lastly, translation has to occur, a constant revision process only interrupted by deadlines, as Chesterman says (119). In the course of translating and revising, the translator has to decide first on an interpretation, or reading of the original, and then on the best way to covey this meaning in the target language. The best way, of course, is highly subjective, depending on the values of the translator, and those of his or her publisher/intended audience. More specifically, under what circumstances does translation occur in the case of the three texts of *Six Characters*?

The first translator of the play, Edward Storer, completed his work in England, in 1922. His text was used in the first performances of the play in England and the US, and was subsequently published in the E.P.Dutton collection. At the time Storer had only one text of the original available, the same text that had been recently performed in Italy; the author was alive and very much involved with the foreign productions of the play. The introduction to the collection of plays claims that the text is the "translation designated by the author" (Livingston ix). Even though this is obviously a legitimizing claim, there is no

reason to doubt that Pirandello either chose the Storer text from a number of other translations, or approved of it. Because the play was written for performance (and so was the translation), it is logical to assume that Storer had in mind the expectations of the theater-going English audiences, as well as the requirements of the stage, or the specific theatrical company that would produce the play. It is curious to note, for example, that most of the lines that have been ommitted from the translation belong to the Stepdaughter, and one is tempted to think that it might have something to do with the preferences of the actress playing the Stepdaughter in the English production. Or one could safely assume that either standards of decency or censorship are the reasons behind the ommission of a line in which the Stepdaughter describes herself taking off her clothes.

Speculation aside, Storer certainly worked within the context of the British theater and British English in the 1920s, as well as current theories of translation. The overall translation strategy seems to be one of pragmatic literalness, by which I mean that the translator chooses to remain quite faithful to the original text whenever possible, while eliminating non-essential lines that get in the way of a clear English meaning (as has been indicated previously). For the same practical reasons, it seems, stage directions have also been shortened, long speeches simplified, and excessive repetition eliminated. In the process, Storer proceeds to "Anglicize" the text, operating under what Venuti calls the fluency principle, deemed by him to be the dominant mode of translation in Anglo culture. Let's take the case of Madame Pace, an instance in which a translator has to make a choice between literal translation and modification.

The original text indicates that Madame Pace speaks a mixture of Italian and Spanish. Storer translates her broken Italian as "half English, half Italian" as in this line: "Itta seem not verra polite gentlemen laugha atta me eef I trya best speaka English" (31). We are faced with a paradoxical situation--the play takes place in Italy, yet the foreign Madame Pace is trying to speak *English*, which she mixes with Italian. Italian then becomes the foreign language--a paradox from the perspective of the original text. However, on a stage where there is no indication of place and the actors speak English, Italian would be the foreign language, even though, as Bussino points out, earlier in the play the translator chose to use the Italian currency, *lire* (34). Here, the translator opts for a solution that is consistent with the English version rather than the Italian one, a solution which makes perfect sense in the practical circumstances of a performance on the Engish stage.

Eric Bentley holds that the Storer translation is flawed. As another reader, eighty years after that translation was completed, I tend to agree with Bentley. Yet I am aware of the historical gap and the practical and ideological position on which my judgements depend. This is, after all, the text that made Pirandello famous in the English-speaking world, and there is no evidence of another translation before 1950. Despite a number of errors (mostly caused by misreadings on the part of the translator) the overall meaning of the original play is preserved; there are no changes in the structure of the play or the course of the action. The fact that the translator ommits a debate on the importance of having the actor repeat the character's line verbatim, for example, does not break the (much desired) flow of the play, nor does it change its meaning since there are other

elements in the play that show the characters' obsession with an exact reproduction of their existence on stage. As the Director says in *Six Characters*, "is it true?" or "I hope," what difference does it make?

The difference it makes depends on the expectations of the audience (of readers or theater goers). To the Father in the play it makes a big difference--he wants his words repeated verbatim, much like authors who insist on the primacy of the original text over translation, asking for literal translations that preserve even the accidentals of the original. To someone like Kundera, for example, the Storer translation would be an abomination. "I once left a publisher for the sole reason that he tried to change my semicolons to periods," Kundera says, complaining about publishers' fascination with "flow" as a primary value in translation (130). However, if an English audience expects the play to sound clear and understandable, or if the aim of the theatrical company is to convey meaning clearly and avoid awkwardness, long sentences would need to be broken. It appears that in the 1920s theater audiences and critics alike preferred to forget about the existence of the translator as the link between them and the foreign author. None of the major reviews of the New York premiere mentions the translator, or the quality of the translation (Illiano).

As times change, so do languages and aesthetic values; hence the tendency to retranslate. In the 1950s Bentley found the Storer translation acceptable, in the 1970s he was unhappy enough with it to retranslate. In 1988 Faustini attributes Pirandello's limited success in English-speaking countries to the quality of the English translations (36), Bussino suggests that every generation translate anew (29). In 1991 Caputi was unhappy

enough with the state of the English translations of the play that he chose to re-translate it, and so on.

For every new translation of the play there is a new context and a new critical stance--and with them new legitimizing claims. The last of these translations, the 1998 Bentley volume of *Plays*, claims on its back cover that Bentley's English versions "capture the playwright's voice with remarkable perception. He has provided texts that are the standard for American productions, sensitive both to what is uniquely 'Sicilian' in Pirandello's language and to the rigors of the American stage." It is hard to tell what these "uniquely 'Sicilian'" characteristics are, or what exactly is meant by "rigors of the American stage", yet the meaning of the above is clear. The texts are proclaimed as standards and a rationale is provided--the translations are both faithful to Pirandello ("capture the playwright's voice") *and* accessible ("sensitive . . . to the rigors of the American stage"). While promotion such as this cannot say much about the translation, it says a lot about contemporary requirements. (Of course, all Storer had to do was claim the author's approval--the ultimate authority, even though Pirandello did not know English well).

Anthony Caputi's translation occurs in the context of a Norton Critical Edition--that fact alone has a number of implications, since the Norton stamp lends any text a certain authority. In fact, the title page announces the "authoritative texts" of eight plays. On the back cover, Norton also clarifies the criteria of the selection, quoted earlier: "The most *accurate* and *readable* translations have been chosen for plays originally in foreign languages, including a new translation of Pirandello's Six Characters in Search of an

Author by the editor, based on the *definitive* Italian text of 1925" (my emphasis). Norton's standards are similiar to those of the Bentley edition--the balance between faithfulness to the foreign text (accuracy) and expectations of the audience (readability). Here, however, claims of accuracy, also reinforced by the use of the "definitive Italian text," override those dealing with more abstract notions like the capture of an author's voice. It is an almost scientific approach to translation.

Even so, the back cover of the Norton text prints a factual error--it claims to have used the 1925 edition, even though the translation is based on a text slightly different from that of 1925. This seemingly minor textual fact raises the problem of a translator's textual awareness--how much do translators know about the variants of the text they are translating? In the case of *Six Characters* the answer is "not much." It is safe to conclude that most translations are based on later, standard Italian editions of the play, and that the translators have not actually looked at the texts they are claiming to translate (Bentley, for example, is not aware of the 1925 variant, even though he uses the author's introduction from that edition). A careful examination of the existing variants might lead to a translator's choice to use an edition other than the standard--even though doing so would undermine the translation's claim to standard status. Whatever the outcome, textual awareness leads to a better understanding of the original text, explaining features like stage directions in the future tense, for example. Another problem for the post-1925 translator of *Six Characters* is the question of whether to print the author's introduction to the play or not. The introduction is not essential to an understanding of the play, yet it is reprinted in its Italian editions, and referred to by almost all translators. Bentley chooses

to print the preface as an Appendix; Musa and Caputi leave it out; the Rietty collection includes the Introduction before the play, as in the original. Once again, it is a matter of context and a translator's intention. If, for example, a translator aims at reproducing the 1925 edition of *Six Characters*, he/she should include the Introduction, and leave out additions that were made to the text in subsequent editions; if a translator is more interested in adapting the play to a late 20th century context, he/she might find the author's perspective offered in the Introduction limiting to an understanding of the play.

Context might possibly explain the reason the Penguin edition of the play, translated by Mark Musa, limits itself to a review of the translator's brilliant career, without claiming to be *the* standard text The back cover blurb focuses on Pirandello and the content of the plays, with only a mention of the name of the translator. One might conclude that Penguin expects its readers to be primarily concerned with the plays, their content, and their author, not the translation. How many readers (who have not undertaken a project such as this) are aware of the translator, or variant translations, or problems of textuality in the texts they read? The answer could be that Penguin prefers not to draw attention to the translator, but rather to create the illusion shared by the play's first English audiences--that the reader is getting the author's, rather than the translator's voice. Even the translator's own introduction focuses on Pirandello and does not make references to the translation. Bussino advises, "The reader . . . should get the impression that he is experiencing primarily the art of Pirandello rather than that of the translator, however artful and clever the latter may be" (32). The key word here is "impression"--whether such self-effacing attitude on the part of the translator is desirable or not, the goal

of not interfering with the original text is unattainable since every translation is an instance of modification. What the above quotation is proclaiming is not the importance of the author's art, but rather the importance of creating an illusion for the reader.

For this kind of reading to be effective, a reader must view the text as a finished product, overlooking textual history and variants, as well as consider translation a vehicle of communication that simply places the foreign text in a different linguistic context. In order to facilitate this process, a translator has to strive for fluency, the illusion that one is *not* reading a translation. One other way to achieve this "invisibility" of the translator as Venuti and Chesterman call it, is to make as little mention of the translator as possible, just as Musa does in his introduction, where he does not even once address his work as translator but focuses on the author instead. In contrast, both Venuti and Chesterman call for the translator's "visibility," from both a critical and practical perspective (copyright laws and the like). The conflict is one of authority, similar to the one defined by Peter Shillingsburg in the case of textual editing. Shillingsburg holds that it is the editor's perception of the authoritative entity (author, editor, social context, readers, booksellers, etc.) that determines the kind of editing approach one will use (25-6). Similarly, the translator will be "visible" or "invisible" based on whom one vests with authority over the text in translation.

If the author is considered the primary authority in the translated text, then all attempts will be made to stress the author's presence (and the translator's absence), a practice that Venuti traces through centuries of translation in the English-speaking world. Venuti's own approach is one in which authority for the translation rests with the

translator, and he calls for the revision of reading practices so that a translation is read as such, with an awareness of its nature: "Reading a translation as a translation means reflecting on its conditions, the domestic dialects and discourses in which it is written and the domestic cultural situation in which it is read. This reading is historicizing: it draws a distinction between the (foreign) past and the (domestic) present" (312). Reading translation in context means, in this case, keeping in mind the exigencies of a Norton text written for an audience of students, or the historical moment and requirements of the stage that influenced the Storer translation. A view of translation that tends to historicize calls for translation to be assessed against the context in which it was created, and the expectations of its intended audiences, as well as the intentions of its translator. If what matters to a Norton editor is accuracy and readability, than the Caputi text meets both requirements, for example.

What this means in practical terms is that I would prefer to use the more "speakable" Caputi text in a drama class, but the more literal Musa text in a literature class (despite occasional errors that tend to occur more often in the latter); and would never fail to use the Storer translation in a class on Pirandello, if only for the historical value of this translation. As Chesterman points out, what we define as translation errors are failures to meet expectations or requirements of the translation (121); even though some of these expectations are universal, such as the one that the meaning of the translated text be the same as that of the original. Chesterman also suggests that the translator become visible by setting forth (possibly in an introduction) the criteria on which the present translation is

based, criteria that will help define the readers' expectations of the translated texts and help avoid the readers' frustration when these expectations are not met (181).

Yet another practical implication, then, is that there is no point in designating standard translated editions--except for the obvious economic reasons. The "standard" will depend on reader and editor expectations, and will comply with the requirements on translation at the time a translation is completed. If, say, the Storer translation was intended to be "actable" on an English stage, conform with contemporary standards of decency, and get Pirandello's point across, then the many errors that this translation contains are not relevant. Yet, twenty years later that translation had become sorely dated as a new generation with new requirements came of age as translators. "A translation is never final," Chesterman writes. "It is thus quite natural that certain texts (usually canonized ones) should be translated over and over again, as new generations have different views and different expectations of what a translation should be" (118). Should each generation translate anew? Does not this process take away from the original text which remains the same as its translations are updated? In the Pirandello text the characters' Italian has become obsolete to a certain extent (in spelling, for example, Pirandelo uses "j" where modern Italian uses "i"). At the same time we expect the English translations to be constantly updated to meet the expectations of the readership.

If we accept the idea of the author as primary agent, and text as a finished product, then translation should only aim to get closer and closer to the original, preserving its every feature--a task that no translator has really tried to undertake in the case of *Six Characters*. Indeed, such literal translation that surrenders all authority to the source

language text would sound strange from a target language perspective, and thus in all probability be deemed inappropriate. If, instead, we view the translator as the primary agent, it is the translator's values and intentions that matter, and his choices of style or voice are indisputable so long as the text is still a translation. If, however, it is the reader's authority over text that matters, new translations must be completed every time that the readers' sensibilities change, the implication being that the marketplace determines translation standards. In this triangle between author, translator, and reader it is often editorial exigencies that define values. Given this web of relationships, any proclamation of standard status is bound to be challenged sooner or later.

I want to advance yet another view, a final thought at the conclusion of much tedious analysis. Before embarking on this project I had no idea what I would find--I did not know I was dealing with textual variants of the original, for example, or how many English translations there really were. Only now do I see the text of *Six Characters* as a multifaceted, unfinished, living entity rather than a text fixed and contained between the list of characters and the final curtain. Even so, much has been left out--performance texts, for example, have not even been considered. Possibly, a good way of editing would be one that presents a text as unfinished, in all its major textual variants, with the first English translation included together with the most recent translations and stage adaptations (such as Robert Brustein's, for example). Such an edition, impractical as it sounds, would take into consideration not just the text of the play, but its textual and stage history as well. One wonders if there is an audience for such an editorial venture, yet at a

time when notions of text and authorship are being constantly debated, one can safely assume that readers are ready for a more self-conscious approach to translated texts.

Notes

Chapter I

[1] But if all the trouble lies there! In the words! We all have a whole world of things inside; everyone his own world! So how can we understand each other, sir, if in the words I say I put the meaning and value of things as I feel them inside, while, whoever listens to them, inevitably hears in them the meaning and value of things as they are inside of *him*? We think we understand each other; we never do! (my translation)

[2] But, I say, your representation . . . could hardly be a representation of me as I really am. It will rather be--looks aside--it will rather be your interpretation of how I am, the way you will feel me--if you do--and not the way I feel myself, inside. And I think that whoever is called upon to judge us should keep this in mind. (my translation)

[3] An excellent example of a director's performance text is Robert Brustein's adaptation of the play.

Chapter II

[1] In his edition of *Sei Personaggi in Cerca d'Autore*, Guido Davico Bonino reprints theatrical reviews of the time, as well as eye-witness accounts of Pirandello's friends and collaborators which address the reception of the play in Italy during its first year. For excerpts from reviews of the first New York performance of the play see Antonino Illano's "The New York Premiere of *Six Characters*: A Note with Excerpts from Reviews." *Romance Notes* 13 (1971): 18-25.

[2] For a discussion of the above see Lorch, Jennifer. "The 1923 text of *Sei Personaggi in Cerca d'Autore* and Pitoeff production of 1925." *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society* 2 (1982): 32-47.

[3] The alterations are as follows:

In the 1925 edition, page 87, the exchange between the Capocomico and the Suggeritore reads:

Il Capocomico (con lieta sorpresa): Ah, benissimo! Conosce la stenografia?

Il Suggeritore: Un pochino, sissignore.

In the Einaudi edition the same exchange reads:

Il Capocomico (con lieta sorpresa): Ah, benissimo! Conosce la stenografia?

Il Suggeritore: Non saprò suggerire; ma la stenografia . . .

A stage direction on page 47 is simply:

Il Direttore di Scena (eseguendo)

Yet in the Einaudi that same stage direction (page 31) is:

Il Direttore di Scena (facendosi avanti, ma poi fermandosi, come trattenuto da uno strano sgomento).

Also, in the Einaudi edition, page 63, the scene between the characters (after the Capocomico says "E lei, attento, attento a scrivere, adesso!") is introduced by the heading "La scena"; in the 1925 edition there is no such division.

[4] "Ah, è già fatto? Benissimo."

[5] "Finzione! realta'! Andate al diavolo tutti quanti! Non mi è mai capitata una cosa simile! E mi hanno fatto perdere una giornata!"

Chapter III

[1] In a brief email correspondence the translator conceded that he "must have" used the 1925 edition.

Chapter IV

[1] The verb is literally untranslatable, but Musa approximates its meaning quite nicely with "sucks him up," even though he changes the verb from the reflexive to the active mood.

[2] I understand that it is possible to argue that the ambiguity was intended since, logically, not having wanted the man also implies not having wanted his children. However, I am not really arguing the virtue of one interpretation over the other.

[3] Here is the entire speech:

La Figliastra (interrompendo con sdegno, e seguitando): --di placarmi, di consigliarmi che questo dispetto non gli fosse fatto! (al Capocomico) La contenti, la contenti, perchè è vero! Io me ne godo moltissimo, perchè intanto, si può vedere: più lei è così supplice, più tenta d'entrargli nel cuore, e più quello lì si tien lontano: "as-sen-te!" Che gusto! (130)

[4] The woman-mother dychotomy in Pirandello's work has been extensively investigated by Daniela Bini.

Chapter V

[1] Speaking of puncuation, this is the place to mention an interesting use of the quotation marks in the Caputi text. During the bordello scene between the Father and

Stepdaughter the original (and other translations) render the lines of the characters without quotation marks, but those of the actors with quotation marks around them, emphasizing the fact that the actor's lines are a quotation of the characters'. Caputi, however, chooses to place the lines in quotation marks both times, in a way making them equal in "authenticity" both when spoken by the characters and when spoken by the actors. It is a minor point to some extent, especially in performance, yet it assumes some importance when considering that this translation was prepared as a reading text.

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Appendix

The following is a rather detailed look at points of variance between the Storer text and the meaning of the Italian text. The Italian text is referred to as ST (source text), and the Storer text as TT (target/translated text). Literal translations of the Italian text are given in square brackets.

Ommissions.

The following lines from the ST are missing in the TT:

La Figliastra: . . . .Ma vi assicuro ch'era molto pallido, molto pallido, in quel momento! (al Direttore): Creda a me, signore! (32)

[But I assure you he was pale, very pale at the moment! Believe me, sir!]

In the TT the same speech ends with "I leave that to him (indicating Father)." (15)

La Figliastra: Qui non si narra! Qui non si narra!

Il Padre: Ma io non narro! voglio spiegargli. (33)

[Stepdaughter: There is no narrative here! There is no narrative here!

Father: But I'm not narrating! I want to explain.]

La Figliastra: Lo penso lui, invece, per loro--e lo fece! (36)

[Stepdaughter: Instead, he thought it for them--and he did it]

TT: Stepdaughter: So he thought of it--for them! (17)

(Stepdaughter's monologue in the beginning of the second part)

La Figliastra: Siamo su un palcoscenico, sai? (60)

[Stepdaughter: We are on a stage, you know?"]

The next question refers to this line: "Che è il palcoscenico?" "What is the stage?" and appears in the TT as well; the missing line creates a break in the logic of conversation.

"Tu la vuoi acchiappare, una di queste anatrelle" (61)

[You want to catch one of these ducks]

The sentence indicates the action that causes the little girl to drown.

"Che stai a far qui, sempre con codest' aria di mendico? Sarà anche per causa tua, se quella piccina s'affoga; per questo tuo star così, come se io facendovi entrare in casa di lui non avessi pagato per tutti!"

[What are you doing here, always looking like a beggar? It will be your fault too if this little girl drowns; because of you staying away like that, as if I hadn't suffered enough for everybody getting you to enter his house.]

La Figliastra: Ma per Madame e un' altra cosa, signori: c'e la galera! (83)

[But it's different for the Madam, she could go to jail.]

TT: "But for Madame it's quite a different matter." (41)

Il Primo Attore: "Ah . . . Ma . . . dico, non sarà la prima volta, spero . . . "

Il Padre (correggendo, irresistibilmente): Non "spero" -- "è vero?" "è vero?"

Il Direttore: Dice "è vero?" -- interrogazione . . .

Il Primo Attore (accennando al Suggeritore) Io ho sentito "spero!"

Il Direttore: Ma sì! E' lo stesso! "E' vero" o "spero" Prosegua, prosegua . . . (97)

TT: Leading Man: Ah, but . . . I say. . . this is not the first time that you have come here, is it? (48)

The rest of the exchange is missing from the TT; the reason probably that the debate was over the right word to use, the "is it true" vs. "I hope" at the end of the sentence but the TT sentence ends in "is it?" which would not give rise to much debate.

La Figliastra: [. . .] E io, con tutto il mio lutto nel cuore, di appena due mesi, me ne sono andata là, vede? là, dietro quel paravento, e con queste dita che mi ballano dall' onta, dal ribrezzo, mi sono sganciato il busto, la veste . . . .(103)

TT: Stepdaughter: And I; with my two months' mourning in my heart, went there behind that screen, and with these fingers tingling with shame . . . (51)

The missing part "I took off my dress, my brassiere" could have been ommitted for reasons of decency or censorship.

La Figliastra: Si dissuga, signore, si dissuga tutto!

Il Direttore: Non ho mai sentito codesta parola! E va bene: "crescendo soltanto negli occhi", è vero?

La Figliastra: Sissignore: eccolo lì! (lo indica presso la Madre).

Il Direttore: Brava! E poi contemporaneamente . . . . (129)

TT: Stepdaughter: Consumes him, sir, wastes him away!

Manager: Well, it may be. And then at the same time . . .(65)

The missing lines (the middle two) refer to the expression the Stepdaughter uses to describe the boy "si dissuga" literally untranslatable with the approximations used by the other two translators being "sucks him up" and "drains him" respectively; an expression the Director says he's never heard before. Having translated the expression into "consumes him", Storer ommits the Director's line; it would not make sense in the new context.

The TT ommits also a few stage directions or simplifies others. Here are the two most significant departures from the ST.

(Il Padre eseguisce, quasi sbigottito. E' pallidissimo; ma, già investito nella realtà della sua vita creata, sorride appressandosi dal fondo, come alieno ancora del dramma che sta per abbattersi su lui. Gli Attori si fan subito intenti alla scena che comincia.) (89)

The Father does as he is told , looking troubled and perplexed at first. But as soon as he begins to move, the reality of the action affects him, and he begins to smile and to be more natura. The Actors watch intently. (45)

The missing part is "as if a stranger to the drama that is about to hit him."

Accorre disperatamente anche lui. (141)

[Desperate, runs away also] This is the indication of the exit of the Father at the very end, and is missing in TT.

Changes or modifications in meaning:

At some points the TT changes the meaning of the ST or makes it unnecessarily obscure and ambiguous; at other times parts of the longer speeches are simplified.

Speaking of the Mother's other man, the Father says:

ST: "Ella ebbe un altro uomo." (26-7)

TT: "she has had a lover." (13)

The difference between "other man" and "lover" would be negligible otherwise, but in the context it is clear that the relationship between the Mother and the other man in her life was not one of lovers, the Father also emphasizes that.

ST: Il Figlio: E s'è comperato il diritto di tiranneggiarci tutti, con quelle cento lire che lui stava per pagare, e che per fortuna non ebbe poi motivo--badi bene--di pagare. (31)

TT: Son: And he thinks he has bought the right to tyrannise over us all with those hundred lire he was going to pay; but which, fortunately--note this gentlemen--he had no chance of paying. (15)

In the ST the Son is talking about the Stepdaughter (not the Father, as it seems from the TT), so the line should read: "And she bought the right to tyrannise us all . . ." The gender of the pronoun becomes clear later, when the Stepdaughter refers back to this line, saying, in the TT: "He says I have tyrannized over everyone" (17).

Also, the word "motivo" is translated as "chance" which changes the meaning of the line from "didn't have reason to pay" to "didn't have a chance to pay," a slight difference, though.

ST: Il Padre: Se si potesse prevedere tutto il male che può nascere dal bene, che crediamo di fare! (34)

[If we could predict all the evil that can come out of the good we believe we're doing.]

TT: Father: If we could see all the evil that may spring from good, what should we do? (16)

ST: Il Padre: Benissimo! Lo cacciai difatti, signore! Ma vidi allora questa povera donna restarmi per casa come sperduta, come una di quelle bestie senza padrone, che si raccolgono per carità.

La Madre: Eh, sfido! (36-7)

[untranslatable indication of disagreement; Musa translates this as "No wonder", Caputi as "Eh, naturally."]

Il Padre: (subito, voltandosi a lei, come per prevenire) Il figlio, è vero?

[(immediately turning to her, as if to anticipate her) The son, right?]

TT: Mother: Ah yes....!

Father (suddenly turning to Mother) It's true about the son, anyway, isn't it? (17)

The translation fails to convey the idea that the Mother is disagreeing with the Father on his interpretation of her behavior which was not due, as he implies, to the departure of the secretary but to the absence of the son. Sensing what she is about to say, the Father turns to her and finishes her sentence: "The son, isn't it?" in other words "You are going to say the son was the cause, right?"

ST: Il Padre: [. . .] come una pietra su una fossa, la nostra dignità, che nasconde e sepellisce ai nostri stessi occhi ogni segno e il ricordo stesso della vergogna. (34)

[like a tombstone, this dignity of ours, that hides and buries even from our own eyes every sign and memory of our shame.]

TT: Father: [. . .] as if it were a tombstone to place on the grave of one's shame, and a monument to hide and sign the memory of our weaknesses. (21)

ST: La Figliastra: Perchè quando si è costretti a "semplificarla" la vita--così, bestialmente--buttando via tutto l'ingombro "umano" d'ogni casta aspirazione, d'ogni puro sentimento, idealità, doveri, il pudore, la vergogna, niente fa più sdegno e nausea di certi rimorsi. . . (45)

TT: Stepdaughter: When a man seeks to "simplify" life bestially, throwing aside every relic of humanity, every chaste aspiration, every pure feeling, all sense of ideality, duty, modesty, shame . . . then nothing is more revolting and nauseous than a certain kind of remorse. (22)

In the ST the Stepdaughter is speaking of herself (thus the "when *one* is *forced* to simplify life"; in the TT it seems she is speaking of the father "when a *man seeks* to simplify life")

ST: La Figliastra: Mi faceva notare la roba che aveva sciupata, dandola a cucire a mia madre; e diffalcava, diffalcava. (46)

[Stepdaughter: She would point out the material that had been ruined by my mother's sewing/that she had ruined by giving it to my mother to sew and she kept reducing the pay.]

TT: Stepdaugher: She would point out to me that I had torn one of my frocks and she would give it back to my mother to mend. (23)

ST: Il Padre: si crede "uno" ma è vero: è "tanti", signore, "tanti" secondo tutte le possibilità d'essere che sono in noi. (48)

TT: Father: We believe this conscience to be a single thing, but it is many-sided. (23)

The translation takes away the awkwardness of the original line and simplifies it: "we believe to be one, but in truth we are many persons, many, depending on all the possibilities of being that are within us."

ST: La Madre: Io sono viva e presente sempre, in ogni momento del mio strazio, che si rinnova, vivo e presente sempre. (108)
TT: Mother: I live and feel every minute of my torture. (53)

TT ommits the second part of the sentence: "that [the torture] always renews itself, real and in the present."

These are the major points of departure between the original text and the 1922 English translation. I have overlooked fine points of word choice and language use since these are within any translator's discretion to handle as appropriate and very much a matter of taste. The above, instead, are points of the text where the original has either been changed, simplified, or simply cut out of the translation.

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Whose Pirandello? Analysis and Comparison of Variant English Translations of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*.

Title of Thesis

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Signature of Graduate Office Staff

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