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WHAT ABOUT OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY?

'NATIONAL identity', to which reference is made *en passant* by the three members of the Dahrendorf Commission in the report on our University submitted to the Prime Minister, can mean so many things to so many people; but, at the same time, like most other vaguely worded phrases, it can mean so very little too, not so much because it lacks context as because its context has not been clearly and unambiguously defined. Foreigners, even if they are known as experts (this word has assumed a pejorative connotation in Malta), generally know much less about us than we know about ourselves and our society.

Malta is one of the smaller countries of the post-war era which became independent after it took direct responsibility for its own well-being and survival from the British who ruled it from 1813 to 1964. The British, in their turn, took over from the French at the request of the Maltese. The French had taken over from the Order of St. John in 1798, and so on, with a fairly long chain of foreign power-grabbing rulers from various parts of the world. Malta has always been like the small fish whose head has been bitten off, or whose body has been mutilated, by the large fish. In spite of this, we Maltese have maintained our national identity intact. No big fish has yet bitten off our head! But that is no reason for self-complacency. We are living in a dynamic age of ruthless Super Powers which exploit the weakness of the smaller people for their own ends. These Super Powers have replaced the one-time British Empire of which Malta once formed part. The one-time British Empire, on which the sun seems to have set for ever as it set on the one-time Spanish and Islamic empires, has now been re-constituted in a more democratic and autonomous manner and re-named

the British Commonwealth of which we Maltese, who take pride in our European identity, form part. In our newly-born freedom we need bear our past rulers no grudge.

In the new game of power politics, independent Malta has widened and broadened the former very restricted political frontiers. Not long ago all roads from Malta led either to Rome (especially during the Fascist regime) or to England. There were no other roads for us. The world was as small as that! Other roads leading to the Middle East and the far-spread Arab states have linked up Malta with a number of other peoples who, like Malta, are still trying to find their feet. Our ill-luck is that we have no oil-fields (economists and anti-pollutionists might disagree about this!). Though this was a new adventure for Malta, it is after all a repetition, on a much smaller scale, of what had happened long before in other Western European countries which had direct contacts not only with their Western neighbours, but also with Russia, the Near East and the Far East. We Maltese are by no means unhappy because of the new bridge between Malta and North Africa. The more friendly neighbours the better. But we shall feel grievously wronged if that will ever mean the dismantling and pulling down of the older bridges that linked us with Europe where we belong by birthright. We Maltese are the heirs of a nearly 2,000 year old Christianity, a much older civilization than Islam. Intellectually and socially, we are also the joint heirs of the heritage of European creative, scientific genius. Briefly, we are as European as our friends in the free West, with whose peoples we share a common heritage.

Malta has its national identity which is clearly defined by the context of its multi-cultural history. The trouble with some of our politicians (many of them by no means culture-conscious) is that so far they have shown interest in political independence which assigns to them personally some of the powers inherent in its public use, but they have shown little, or no real interest in the promotion of our national identity through those media of which civilised countries make use to create a true mirror of the soul of their people. It takes some time to live down centuries' old colonialism. This, in spite of the fact that we Maltese, no less than other countries, have a national heritage to respect and transmit. What we have not yet obtained from those that rule our destiny by the mandate of the trustful people is an Institute of Maltese Studies or

Culture which could serve as the national headquarters, the rallying place, of Maltese intellectuals and artists, authors and indeed all those who, in one way or another, excel in intellectual or creative work. In Malta we have the following foreign cultural institutes: The British Council, the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura*, the *Alliance Française*, the Arab Institute, the German Circle and the United States Information Service. These cultural institutes (there will be more as time passes) are the shop windows of the countries they represent. Like good cultural salesmen, their Directors feast our eyes with the lavish display of the products of the genius of their people in the form of books, pictures and audio-visual aids. Their one-way traffic in Malta is limited to the products of their own people. These foreign institutes are not here to help us build up, prop or save our national identity from the threat of disintegration. They are here to show us specimens of the genius of their people. And they do it well, like really good cultural salesmen of their respective countries. Our national identity, formed by our cultural heritage, is none of their business. They must rightly contend that, national identity and culture being the responsibility of the local people, they should be no less the responsibility of their government – Malta's government, in our case. Fair enough! It is time that the foreign one-way traffic was complemented by the addition of a Maltese contribution towards the creation of a supplementary two-way, and better still, multi-cultural, traffic. The other way, which will be our way, will have to start from Malta outwards. We are at the moment hit very seriously by the oil crisis which is hitting all the countries of Europe below the belt; but that is not necessarily the worst crisis that we are suffering. We can survive the oil crisis with Europe. But can we survive the crisis of our denationalisation? Many feel that our national identity is in the maelstrom. One just wonders what spurious national identity can emerge from the maelstrom to replace the one we inherited from our fathers? This is perhaps a pessimistic note, yet I am not really pessimistic. Malta has enough forward-looking young people, wiser than some of our short-sighted politicians. These are bravely protecting our national identity from the ill-effects of an accumulation of political and moral erosions to which our country is being subjected all the time.

In the meantime, we continue to edit this Journal written mainly

in the English language (we publish also a Maltese review) because we feel that, in doing so, we are continuing the tradition of the use of the English language by Maltese scholars as an additional medium of their cultural self-expression when they want to communicate with the world outside. Regrettably, the British Council, which culturally and educationally operates on a one-way traffic basis (the reversal of Lord Lloyds' policy) has never shown enough interest in the use of English by the Maltese for the stated purposes. This stand-offish policy is in sharp contrast to the policy of the Italian Institutes which has always promoted the use of Italian as a complementary cultural language in Malta. The *Istituto Italiano di Cultura* is publishing, or anyhow subsidising, an Italian fortnightly review for our school children for whom a group of Maltese authors publish a Maltese monthly review called *Is-Sagħtar.*

Before I finish I would like to point out that all I have said about the one-way traffic of foreign cultural institutes is not intended as a criticism of their policy. Their Directors cannot be expected to do for us what it is the duty of the Government of Malta to do for the Maltese. What we have said is just for record purposes, material for the future history of the use of the English language in Malta and the crying need for a Maltese Cultural Institute which, we feel, must be sponsored by the University and the Government. We wish to make the acquaintance of other peoples but we also wish to introduce ourselves to them. We too have much to show and to be proud of.

Our government has rented public places to several foreign powers for their cultural institutes. I think it is time the government reserved one for the people of Malta before we run out of suitable public buildings.

THE EDITOR

AN AMERICAN TRAVELLER IN GOZO: MATURIN MURRAY BALLOU

By BERNERD C. WEBER

NINETEENTH century travel accounts of the Mediterranean area frequently make mention of Malta, but the sister island of Gozo is often neglected. For this reason the report which follows concerning Gozo, written by a nineteenth century American traveller and journalist, may be of some interest.

Maturin Murray Ballou (1820-1895) was a native of Boston, Massachusetts, the son of a clergyman. Maturin received college preparatory training in the Boston high school and passed his entrance examinations for Harvard University, but then decided not to continue his formal education. He worked for several years in the Boston Post Office and also in the Boston Custom House. He became interested in journalism and served as the first editor and manager of the *Boston Daily Globe* during the years 1872-1874. His work in journalism led to an interest in foreign travel. He made many cruises and journeys concerning which he wrote letters home descriptive of the geographical features of the places which he had visited. Much of the material was later embodied in his books and various periodical publishings. Among his travel accounts particular note may be taken of the following works, many of which went through subsequent editions: *Due West: or Round the World in Ten Months* (1884); *Due South: or Cuba Past and Present* (1885); *Due North: or Glimpses of Scandinavia and Russia* (1887); *Footprints of Travel: or Journeyings in Many Lands* (1888); *Aztec Land* (1890); *The Story of Malta* (1893); *The Pearl of India* (1894).

Certainly Ballou was a great believer in the importance of travel and one who did much to inspire an interest in other lands and other peoples. His many travel accounts made him famous in his own generation. This well-known American journalist and author died on his travels, passing away in Cairo, Egypt, in March, 1895.

Two chapters of Ballou's book on Malta are concerned with the

island of Gozo (namely, Chapters VI and VII). This report by a former Boston editor was one of the first accounts of 'the fabled isle of Calypso' to appear before the American reading public.

GOZO

Gozo, the fabled isle of Calypso, the Gaulos of the Greeks, the Gaulum of the Romans, and the Ghaudex of the Arabs, with its rock-bound, cave-indented shores, is oval in shape, and has the same general characteristics as Malta, but is much more fertile. The undulating surface of the island gives a casual observer the idea of its being a hilly country, yet at only one place does it reach a height of over three hundred feet above sea-level. This is at Dibiegi, where a hill rises to an elevation of about seven hundred feet. When approached from the sea, Gozo appears to lie much lower than Malta proper, and this is really so. Through the early morning haze, both look like huge marine monsters sleeping upon the surface of the waters. The hills we have referred to are singularly conical, but are uniformly flattened at their tops by the disintegrating process of the elements, causing them to present the appearance of a myriad little volcanoes, though they are very innocent of any such dreaded association. In the Hot Lake District of New Zealand, near Ohinemutu, the author has seen a precisely similar appearance, but in the latter instance the effect was undoubtedly produced by volcanic action. The boiling springs, geysers, and hot lakes of this New Zealand district are almost identical in character with our Yellowstone Park phenomena. Both must be the result of smouldering fires far below the surface of the earth. In the New Zealand district an active volcano is near at hand, which often rages with destructive force.

Gozo is beautified with occasional groves of trees, which is an adornment almost entirely wanting in the larger island. These groves, however, are by no means numerous. The one great deficiency of the group is the absence of arboreal vegetation, and yet an abundance of trees could be made to grow and flourish here with very little effort. There are marl beds which might be utilized for the purpose, situated in various parts of the islands, besides which, the rocky formation of the group, as we have shown, is of a

porous nature, full of fissures and crevices, easily admitting the roots of vegetation. There is a tradition that Malta was once covered with trees, and that they were gradually sacrificed to meet the demand for fuel and for other purposes. The cultivation of shade trees about the villages would add an element of beauty, and would afford needed shade, besides promoting a more liberal rainfall, which is so very limited here. Some of the Grand Masters have done much by their personal efforts to induce the planting of fruit and ornamental trees in and about the city. Several of the squares are thus beautified, the trees forming an agreeable shade where in midsummer the glare is almost intolerable in exposed places.

A modern survey shows the circumference of Gozo to be a trifle less than twenty-five miles. It has been famous from time immemorial for the large amount and the delicious quality of the honey which its inhabitants send to market. The thriving fields of red-flowering clover, which is called *sulla* by the natives, and which grows to an average height of three and a half feet, together with an abundance of wild thyme and purple blooming vetch, afford rich food for the industrious bees and the gaudy butterflies, 'Yellow bees, so mad for love of early-blooming flowers.' The peculiar clover of which we speak is indigenous, and a well-grown field, each upright stem surmounted by a large crimson flower, looks more like cultivated roses than simple clover blossoms. When the breeze sweeps gently over these fields, the eye is delighted by broad waves of rich color rising and falling in the warm sunshine, while an indescribable, ripe, harvest smell permeates the atmosphere. The geranium grows to a mammoth size on this island, and tall, dense, and secure hedges of it are not uncommon. In full bloom these form a most striking feature of the landscape, as peculiar as the agave hedges of Mexico. The former, when wearing their full-dress of scarlet, seem like a fiery cordon drawn about the spacious area thus inclosed. The latter, with their pale blue-green sword-like leaves, are as repellent as a line of fixed bayonets, and absolutely impervious to man or beast. The byways of the northwestern part of Gozo are delightful, verdant, and pastoral, while the air is redolent of clover, violets, and hedge roses.

One of the ancient titles of this island was Melita, a name which is believed to be derived from the excellent honey which it has al-

ways produced. We can honestly testify to the delightful aromatic flavor of this delicate article. Truly, it is a land flowing with milk and honey, – Mel-ita, 'Isle of Honey', – its choice goat's milk being also a staple commodity. As for butterflies, to which we have incidentally referred, graceful, leisurely, aerial creatures, nowhere outside of southern India can finer specimens of this beautiful and delicate insect be found. An enthusiastic German naturalist in Valletta told the author that he had secured a rich collection in Gozo, and that he was then on his way to the little Island of Filfla to reap a harvest in another line, namely, among the curious lizard family, which thrive upon its few square rods of rocky soil.

Who ever traveled in out-of-the-way places abroad, without meeting some quaint German naturalist, wearing a green woolen cap with an impossible leather visor, a sort of Domine Samson, in search of ugly centipedes, stinging ants, extraordinary spiders, or other hideous bugs? These 'Innocents Abroad' are all alike, wearing gold-bowed spectacles, and having a chronic disregard for clean linen. One can easily forgive the butterfly enthusiast, these delightful, innocuous insects, exquisite in their frailty and variety of colors, are so like animated flowers; but pray spare us from poisonous bugs, with innumerable crooked legs.

One has not far to go, after landing upon Gozo, before small flocks of well-conditioned, silky-haired goats begin to appear, intelligent-looking animals, with large, gazelle-like eyes and transparent ears. They are generally tended by a barefooted lad or a young girl having the slenderest amount of covering in the shape of clothes. These boys and girls, nine or ten years of age, are often strikingly handsome, the latter betraying a perfection of youthful promise as to form, distinctly seen through their scanty rags. The boys have the blackest of black eyes, and the brownest of brown skins, such as one sees among the Moors who come into Tangier with the caravans arriving from Fez. These sheep tenders would answer admirably as models for an artist, often unconsciously assuming artistic poses, forming grand pictures, and reminding one of the subjects which Murillo delighted in. The quiet self-possession of these children of nature is both impressive and significant. They are utterly untaught, but how graceful in every

movement! It would be as impossible for one of them to be awkward as for a young kitten. Every attitude is statuesque and full of repose. They have borrowed somewhat of the grandeur of their birthplace, bounded by wide, untamed waters and limitless sky. As is often noticed among European peasants thus employed, the girls are always supplied, though never so young, with some knitting or crochet work which keeps their fingers fully employed. In the populous centres, men may loaf in the laziest fashion, and remain quite unemployed, unless it be in the arduous occupation of smoking rank tobacco, but the women seem to be instinctively busy at all times.

We are reminded in this connection of another article of production for which Gozo enjoys a certain and favorable reputation, namely, goat's cheese, a delicate dairy compound, which should be eaten while it is quite fresh. It is so well appreciated by the people of Valletta that little, if any, of the article is ever exported, though choice packages sometimes find their way to the larder of the P. & O. steamers, much to the satisfaction of traveling gourmands. The goats raised upon this island are of a breed which, it would appear, is specially adapted to the local necessities, having singularly well-developed udders, which reach nearly to the ground, and yielding milk profusely, while subsisting upon the most common and inexpensive nourishment. Small herds of these animals are driven by their owners about the streets of the capital, and milked at the doors of the consumers, just as one witnesses to-day in Paris and other continental cities. There is no chance for adulteration when served after this fashion; and we all know that milk challenges our credulity more seriously than nearly any other article of domestic use, where water is so very cheap and accessible.

Cows would require too much pasturage to be profitably kept on these islands, whereas the hardy goats, as we have said, are cheaply fed and easily managed. Sheep, which are kept here in considerable numbers, are quite prolific, often having four lambs at a birth, and rarely less than two. The cows and oxen which are imported are designed almost entirely for food, though some few are employed for domestic or farming purposes. Cattle come almost wholly from the Barbary States. These animals fatten quickly upon the rich clover, which is so cheap and abundant here, thus making

excellent beef. Asses and mules are the chief means in use for transportation, and as a rule they are very fine ones. We were told that Malta-bred animals of this class were in special request throughout southern Italy. The native owner has an Arab's fondness for his horse or mule, feeds him abundantly, and cares for him kindly. Animals thus reared naturally present a better appearance, show finer instincts, and bring better prices. Those of Gozo are remarkable for their size and docility.

The gardens of this island supply the citizens of Valletta with nearly all the vegetables which are required for daily use, together with fowls, turkeys, and geese. Large quantities of green fodder come from the same source for the sustenance of the animals kept for use in the town.

An interesting sight may be enjoyed by going into the principal market of the capital of Malta, in the rear of the Grand Palace, at early morning, where one can watch the various products, fodder, fruits, and vegetables arriving from Gozo. The quantity and excellent condition of the supply gives promise of good fare at the average tables of the citizens. Various game birds are seen, also brought from the sister isle, especially quails. This bird not only breeds freely in the Maltese group, but comes hither at times from Algeria in large flocks, driven thence by the close pursuit of the local sportsmen. The Tunisians make a wholesale slaughter of the quails annually in the month of May, shipping the game thus secured to France, it being a favorite bird with the Parisian gourmands. In the mean time the people of Algeria complain of a fearful increase of the all-devouring locusts, indigenous there, which, when young, form the food supply of the quails. So all extremes outrage some clearly-defined law of nature, and entail prompt punishment. Doubtless the securing of a reasonable number of these birds would do no harm; but when the pursuit is carried to the verge of extermination, some penalty must follow.

During the open season, as it is called, the officers of the British garrison – desperately at a loss, it would seem, to find amusement – resort to Gozo for quail shooting. There is also a certain season of the year when a variety of ducks, plover, snipe, and other aquatic birds may be taken. Only about a score of species of the feathered tribe make their permanent home in the group; but

there are hundreds seen resting here from time to time, on their migratory course to other climes. In stormy weather, dead birds are found at the base of the big lighthouse on Gozo, attracted and half-dazed by the staring eye of fire piercing the darkness of the night. When flying at great speed, they are dashed fatally against the stout glass which shelters the lantern. Similar occurrences are known in Massachusetts Bay, at the lighthouse on Minot's Ledge, where the keeper is enabled to replenish his larder with game birds after a hard blow at night. This lighthouse at Guirdan, Gozo, dominates Cape Demetri, looming far heavenward when observed from the sea, above which it stands four hundred feet, at once gladdening and guiding the seamen in the night-watches.

An attempt was made to introduce hares into Gozo for sporting purposes; but the residents of the island, with the dire experience of Australia and New Zealand before them, protested against it, and fortunately succeeded in averting the dreaded scourge. As is well known, the rabbit pest in the two countries named has assumed such proportions as to defy the combined efforts of the settlers to get rid of them. Every green leaf and tender root which comes in their way is destroyed to appease the hunger of these rabbits; and vegetation is as effectually obliterated from the land as would be the case if visited by millions of locusts.

Let us review, for a moment, the geographical and topographical character of this island.

Gozo is situated off the northeast end of Malta, from which it is separated by a deep channel, less than four miles wide, known as the Straits of Freghi. The principal town and capital is Rabbato, a sleepy, Old-World metropolis, of very little consequence to the outside world. It has been named Victoria by the English. The place contains some five or six thousand inhabitants, besides which there are nine thrifty, though small, villages upon the island. Lacemaking is the almost universal occupation of the people of Rabbato and its vicinity. The incessant clicking of the bobbins, driven by deft fingers, greets the ear on all sides. Of course there is a 'Calypso' Hotel ready to capture the innocent tourist. It is worthy of note that this special industry of fine lacemaking should have prevailed so long in Gozo. For aught that is known, it may have originated here. It is certain that its popularity dates long

prior to the Roman colonization in the Maltese group. Common usage does not retain the title given to the capital in compliment to Queen Victoria of England, and in honor of the Jubilee year. It is popularly known, as it certainly should continue to be, by its original name.

Rabbato is situated very near the centre of the island, on one of a group of conical hills. The citadel overlooking the place is partially in ruins, but was once quite a substantial and extensive fortification, being over half a mile in circumference. Whoever selected the spot as a stronghold could hardly have realized that it was commanded by more than one elevation in the immediate vicinity. Where its walls are not raised upon the edge of a precipitous cliff, it is approached by very steep stone steps, which could only be surmounted by an enemy under a concentrated fire from several points. The place has a deep ditch after the style of the Valletta fortifications, but this old stronghold is rapidly crumbling to pieces. It was a mistake to select this spot for the capital, if for no other reason than on account of the absence of a good water supply. At the Bay of Marsa-el-Forno, near at hand, there is not only a good harbor, but excellent drinking-water in abundance, while the fertile soil makes a charmingly verdant neighbourhood. There are some delightful summer residences on the shore of this bay, the resort of citizens who come hither from Valletta in the 'heated term'. Only those foreigners whose official duties compel them to do so brave the summer heat of Malta in the capital. The naval vessels which have wintered here disperse to their several stations at that season, and invalids return to England or elsewhere.

Rabbato was chosen as the capital of Gozo for the same reason, doubtless, that Madrid was made the seat of government for Spain, because it was so nearly the exact centre of the country, while almost every other recommendation is wanting in both instances. The same remark applies to Città Vecchia, the ancient capital of Malta proper. The small city of Rabbato contains a couple of fairly good hotels, a Jesuit college, a cathedral, and two or three convents. Without wishing to discourage the curious traveler from doing so, we would suggest that when he visits the capital of Gozo, he go prepared to repel an army of mosquitoes. The neighborhood is

famous for this insect pest. The guide, native and to the manner born, remarked that they never troubled him, but devoted their attention entirely to strangers, which affords no consolation to the afflicted.

The visitor finds in this neighborhood some very interesting Phoenician and Roman remains, but mostly of the former and earlier race of colonists upon the island. Among the antiquities is one very remarkable ruin known as La Torre de Giganti, 'the Giant's Tower', which is probably the remains of a prehistoric sacred temple, whose builders bowed before the image of Baal. The careful study of antiquarians points to the fact of its having been formerly the temple of Astarte, the Phoenician Venus. There are others who attributed this ancient monument to a people who inhabited the group before the nomadic tribes of Tyre and Sidon formed a colony in Malta. This singular edifice, be its original purpose what it may, is constructed of stones laid in a very skillful manner, no mortar being used. The builders must have possessed admirable and efficient tools; there is evidence enough to prove this in the careful finish shown in many places. They must also have used powerful machinery to properly adjust such heavy blocks in place. The great antiquity of the Giant's Tower is undisputed. Its style antedates both the Greek and the Roman examples which have been spared to us, and it is plainly the work of a primitive people. It is situated on an eminence not far from Casal Shaara, and forms a large inclosure with walls of great thickness. In shape it is a circular tower open at the top, not unlike the 'Towers of Silence' which form the Parsee edifices near Bombay used for the disposal of the dead. In this tower at Gozo, doubtless, the rites of fire were celebrated; human victims were probably sacrificed here, and their bodies burned. Fire, it will be remembered, was the symbol under which ancient tribes worshiped the sun. The character of this tower is also emphasized by a carved serpent cut in the solid stone, an emblem of religious veneration among the ancient people of the East. Egyptian gods were often represented with the bodies of serpents.

Even in our day, certain sects among the Japanese venerate this reptile as sacred. In Benares, India, bulls, elephants, and monkeys are held to be representatives of divinity. The author has seen in

the Temple of Honan, at Canton, China, a pen of 'sacred' hogs! In the sincere struggle to find some element as representative of the Great and Good, before which to bow down and worship, for these singular devotional freaks seem to be the outcome of such a purpose, one would think that the wildest fanaticism must surely stop short of such excessive grossness.

Touching this most interesting Gozo tower, which it is not unreasonable to say may have stood here for some three thousand years, it shows that the builders, whoever they were, did their work thoroughly. It is entered by two massive doorways, twenty feet in height and five or six wide. The interior is cut up into various apartments, the use of which can only be conjectured. The diameter of the whole is about ninety feet, a considerable portion being paved with large, hewn stones. The whole is supported by a foundation which no earthquake has yet been able to undermine, though, as we are aware, the island has experienced many shocks.

The Bay of Migiarro, which means 'the carting place', is the commercial port of Gozo, so to dignify it, and was once considered of sufficient importance to cause the Knights to erect a substantial stone tower or fort for its defense. This is now in ruins, but the place has become a busy and populous settlement, whose interests centre upon the fisheries of this coast. The beach is a fine one, much resorted to for bathing purposes. Close at hand, southward, is the grand cliff of Ras-el-Taffal, a promonotory nearly two hundred feet in height, crowned by old Fort Chambray, which was named for the member of the brotherhood of St. John whose liberality built it. He was a very rich Knight from Normandy, and when he died, he left one fifth of his large estate to finish this defensive work. The whole sum was required, and much more besides, to complete the well-designed and elaborate fort. It was begun in 1749, and was many years in course of construction, but it is now gradually crumbling away, not being considered of importance.

Notwithstanding their many ancient monuments, the object which seems to be of the most interest to the inhabitants and to tourists is the Grotto of Calypso. This is a rocky fissure on the northwestern shore of the island, situated about a league from Rabbato, and is the spot where the grotto is supposed to have existed. It is now only a simple limestone cavern, presenting no peculiarities

worthy of detail. It has the usual stalactitic incrustations and developments, recalling the much more extensive caves of the same nature which the traveler sees at Matanzas, Cuba. It is quite isolated, but is constantly visited by small parties from Valletta, who drink in romantic ideas from the associations of the place, and refreshment from the clear, sparkling spring which meanders through the cave of the defunct goddess, –

'The fair hair'd nymph with every beauty crown'd.'

While on the spot we seek in vain for those 'verdant groves of alders and poplars, the odoriferous cypresses,' and for 'the meadows clothed in the livery of eternal spring,' with which Homer poetically endowed the voluptuous abode of the Siren whose name he has immortalized. The view presented from the top of the hill crowning the location of the Grotto of Calypso is well worth mentioning, overlooking the Bay of Melleha and most of the island of Gozo, with Comino and Malta in the distance. The surface of the surrounding sea is at all times sprinkled with busy fishing craft, pleasure yachts, row-boats, and large hulls freighted with a wealth of merchandise.

In the neighbourhood of Marsa-el-Fomo, there is a stalgamitic cave of a curious and interesting nature, which was discovered so late as 1888. It is mainly situated under a field that lies close to the village church of Sciara. This cave attracts large numbers of visitors to Gozo, and in many respects is quite unique. It is eighty feet in length and sixty wide, and contains a museum of curiosities which are the wonder and admiration of all who behold them. When the cave is lighted by torches or magnesium wire, the effect is extremely beautiful, the thousands of crystalline stalactites suspended from the ceiling reflecting prismatic colors of extraordinary brilliancy. It is indeed a fairy-like grotto, much more worthy as a dwelling for Homer's nymph than the crude and exposed cavern on the shore, already described. To one at all familiar with these caves, which are found in various parts of the world, it is no special marvel. These cavities are formed by the slow process of well-understood chemical action, the active agent being the carbonic acid gas which is held in solution by the rain-water that percolates through the limestone roof of the cave. This acting upon the limestone dissolves and conveys it away in liquid and gaseous forms.

Not far from here is a curious natural stone arch on the shore, called Tierka Zerka, that is, the 'Azure Window', through which one may look upon the sea as though it were an artificial opening set with clearest glass. It very naturally recalled a somewhat similar freak of nature which occurs on the island of Torghatten, off the coast of Norway, where one gets a sort of telescopic view, through a stone tunnel five hundred feet long, of the blue sea and the islands in range far beyond it.

The next largest town to Rabbato is Casal Nadar, the only one on the island whose population approximates in number to that of the capital. This place is famous for the fruit which is raised in its neighborhood, and especially for its excellent apples and choice ornamental trees. It has nearly four thousand inhabitants. The cultivation of the land is brought to a much higher standard here than in the larger island, but the dwelling-houses are inferior to those of the villages of Malta proper; and yet in estimating the general thrift of the country population of the two islands, the result is decidedly in favor of Gozo.

A pleasant drive of three or four miles from Rabbato, through a garden-like region where poppies, clad in imperial scarlet, peep out from among the hedges to delight the eye, brings one to the Bay of Scilendi, whose perpendicular cliffs contain many rocky caves, few of which, probably, have been explored within the memory of living residents hereabouts. They are believed to have been, in olden times, the rendezvous of corsairs, where their ill-gotten wealth was stored, where they held their revels, and where their prisoners were confined until they were sold into slavery at Constantinople, or on the Barbary Coast. The manifest fertility of the soil lying between here and the capital is owing principally to the irrigating capacity of several invaluable and never-failing springs of pure water with which this region has been exceptionally favored. The tangled masses of kelp and seaweed, which constantly accumulate on the shore, are regularly collected by the thrifty natives and liberally applied to the land as a fertilizer. This material, becoming duly decomposed, imparts its rich chemical properties to the soil, and thus repays the laborer tenfold.

Malta has been pronounced by an act of the English Parliament as belonging to Europe, but the fact that the stratification of the

southern part of the island corresponds exactly with that of the coast of Barbary indicates a similar origin. Ptolemy thought it was African, but Pliny gives it to the Italian coast. Geologists of our day not only believe that the Maltese group was once a part of Sicily, but that in the far past it was also joined to Africa. In evidence of this deduction, carefully prepared maps of soundings taken between the islands and the continent on either side of the group are produced, while in the soil of both Sicily and Malta the skeletons of hyenas and other animals indigenous to Africa are frequently to be found, besides other fossil remains indicating a like conclusion. If this supposition be correct, how great must have been the changes which have taken place in the physical geography of southern Europe and Malta! What a general upheaval and subsidence must have agitated this famous sea in the remote past! That important topographical changes have taken place in these waters and in their relative connection with the land during historic times is well known. A little more than two thousand years ago, the Mediterranean and the Red Sea were united. De Lesseps' canal was no new proposition. Nature had already half done the work by means of the Bitter Lakes, and the modern engineer had only to restore a connection which time had destroyed.

Among many other interesting fossil bones, teeth, and complete skeletons unearthed at Gozo by naturalists, those of a pygmy species of elephants were found, which must have stood but about four feet in height; these were manifestly of African origin. The Ceylon elephant is distinctly different, in size and in several other features. The latter is the species universally met with in India, the beautiful island named having yielded a regular supply to this country from time immemorial.

Dr. Andrew Leith Adams, a distinguished English surgeon and naturalist, who resided for a period of several years in Malta, found fossil bones and teeth of hippopotami in various parts of the group. He says in a published account that he 'unearthed hundreds of elephant's teeth, together with those of other tropical animals'. He also discovered, in caves on the south side of the larger island, vestiges of aquatic birds of a species now extinct, and which in life must have been larger than the swan of our day. The presence of such remains indicates a great change of climatic conditions

between the far past and the present time. It is difficult to imagine that Malta was ever the native land of elephants and sea-horses, but Dr. Adams shows, at least to his own satisfaction, that it was once covered with a productive soil and luxuriant vegetation. According to the same authority, it must have had lakes, rivers, and lagoons; trees and shrubs must have flourished in profusion, and it was doubtless part of a land the principal portion of which is now hidden beneath the surging waters of the Mediterranean.

Some of the most remarkable of Dr. Adams' discoveries were made in the neighborhood of the village of Melleha, north of St. Paul's Bay, on the principal island of the group. Here, in the sides of the ravine below the hamlet, are numerous caves of various sizes, both natural and artificial. Some of these are thought to be Phoenician tombs, as lamps and lachrymatories have been found in them. A few of these caves are now occupied by Maltese as dwellings. The village of Melleha has a very ancient church, partly excavated in the solid rock, which is held in great veneration, as it is said to have been consecrated by the Apostle Paul. It contains a very ancient picture of the Virgin, believed to have been painted by Saint Luke! Penitential pilgrims come from all parts of the group to kneel and pray in this church, a service which, according to the local priests, carries with it absolution for any amount of sin and wickedness. It is needless to say that a good round fee is also contingent thereon.

The inhabitants of Gozo are, as a rule, thrifty, frugal, and industrious; the gipsy-like dark-haired women, who almost invariably have the charm of large, brilliantly expressive eyes, and even the young children, devote themselves assiduously to making the famous Maltese lace, for which a ready and profitable market always exists in European and American cities, especially for the finer quality and more delicate designs. Thus employed, for many hours of the day, they are often seen in family groups, seated by the doors of their humble dwellings, – small, massive, square stone buildings, – singing quaint old songs and gossiping together. Strangers visiting these districts almost always carry away with them, as souvenirs, specimens of this choice article, which has a reputation all over Christendom. The collection of crown laces belonging to the Queen of Italy contains specimens of Maltese lace

reputed to be five centuries old, while photographs of objects found in Egyptian tombs date back the history of this delicate fabric to a thousand years or more before Christ. A choice pattern manufactured from a new material is now being made at Gozo, in small quantities. The basis is a peculiar sort of white silk. The completed fabric of this style is costly, and comes very near to the texture of a spider's web.

The Gozitans speak a language which differs somewhat from that common in Malta proper, and which is generally considered to be a pure native tongue, resembling the Arabic much more closely than does the mixed and confusing dialect of the larger island. The names of places, persons, monuments, household utensils, animals, and articles of food are all Arabic pure and simple. It is curious to realize that this people should have succeeded in keeping aloof from their conquerors so as not only to retain their own language in its purity, but also their personal resemblance to their Mohammedan ancestors. Their complexions are almost as dark as those of the natives of Barbary. Sometimes one detects a tendency to protruding lips and flat noses. When the Knights of St. John took possession of Malta, they found the islanders universally professing the Roman Catholic religion, but yet entirely governed by Arab forms and customs. Their constant intercourse with the Barbary States probably served to confirm them in these inherited proclivities.

At several points on the shore of Gozo where the attempt of an enemy to land might be possible, the Knights during their early sovereignty improvised a sort of ordnance called an earth mortar, after the following process. A hole of the proper dimensions was cut or drilled in the solid rock, at a certain angle trending towards the shore, designed to hold a hundred pounds of gunpowder. The explosive was placed at the bottom, and after a proper fuse was connected therewith, it was covered with a layer of boards to act as a sort of wadding. Upon the boards a ton or more of stones and rocks were placed, which completed the charge. On the approach of an enemy, which would necessarily be by boats, the fuse could be promptly ignited, and a wild discharge of rocks would at once take place, sending the missiles high into the air at an angle which would drop them upon the approaching enemy. These stones,

falling with destructive force upon the boats and upon those who were in them, would scatter death and confusion in their ranks. We have never heard of such a device put in practice elsewhere, but should imagine that it would prove efficacious in a rude way to defend an exposed sea coast. A large or even a small stone descending from a considerable height, under such circumstances, would be sure, if it fell in a boat, to go through its bottom, causing it to fill at once, and would be equally fatal if falling upon the heads or bodies of human beings. The rock, which is of the nature already described, admitted of being easily hewn into such shape as was desired, while exposure to the atmosphere soon hardened it to the required consistency and resisting power. A second discharge of such a mortar might possibly involve as much danger to the defenders as to the enemy. It must be remembered that at this period, between three and four hundred years ago, the use of artillery was comparatively in its infancy, and iron mortars, when they were procurable, were of the crudest manufacture.

As forming a contrast to those days, and to the present means of conducting offensive and defensive warfare, it may be appropriate to mention that the author happened to be at Gibraltar not long ago, when a hundred-ton cannon was landed there. With this extraordinary piece of ordnance, it was believed that an effectual shot might be fired across the strait to Africa! As it is at least twenty miles from the Fortress of the Rock to the opposite coast, we took the declaration of the artillerist who expressed this opinion of the power of the gun with considerable allowance.

Hagar Tal Girnal – the 'General's Rock' – is the name of a small, outlying, and nearly inaccessible ledge off the shore of Gozo, upon which there still grows in profusion, springing from the crevices of the rock, the curious plant known to botanists as *Fungus Melitensis*, Maltese fungus. This was so highly prized by the Knights of St. John as to be most carefully gathered in its prime, dried in the sun, and preserved as a stancher of blood in case of dangerous wounds, and also for the suppression of internal hemorrhage. Indeed, the fungus was believed to possess a variety of valuable medicinal properties. Small packages of it were sent annually by the Knights as precious gifts to the European potentates, it being equally prized by the recipients, who believed it to be

otherwise unattainable. It is certainly a very simple weed, which is in flower about the last of April. When fresh it is of a dark red color, like our sorrel, and is of a spongy softness, but it is no longer held in such high repute either as an internal medicine or as an efficacious dressing for wounds. The famous rock is now seldom, if ever, trodden by the foot of man. It was always difficult of access in rough weather, though it is hardly a hundred yards from the mainland. The nearest village to the General's Rock is Casal Garbo. The people of the neighborhood declare that the famous fungus grows exclusively on this rock, but this assertion is not correct, as we have seen it in bloom on the Mediterranean shore at Leghorn, Tunis, and elsewhere.

The language of the people round about Casal Garbo differs somewhat from that which prevails in the rest of the island, seeming to be more Hebrew than Arabic. It is certainly far from being the latter tongue. This fact has given rise to many suppositions and learned discussions. We were told that the subject was to be carefully investigated by a committee of scientists, linguists, and archaeologists who were specially interested.

One hears about an important alabaster quarry, situated in the northwestern part of Gozo, but the author did not visit it. There are said to be ample evidences of its having been worked in an intelligent manner centuries ago, even before the Roman period, if the indications are rightly interpreted. Among so many nationalities as have at sundry times held possession of this group, it is a very nice distinction to attribute this or that work to any special one.

It has been mentioned that the island of Gozo is much more fertile than Malta proper, though why this should actually be so it would be difficult to explain. There is less rocky surface and more natural soil in the former than in the latter. This is realized at a glance. Certain it is that so far as verdure is concerned, the daisies and the dandelions appear and the grassy lanes of Gozo are aglow with vernal ripeness early in February, while the more drowsy soil of Malta does not awaken until the middle of March. Springtime is the season of the year when the earth sends forth her choicest treasures, even in this semi-tropical, Mediterranean clime, –

'Hanging her infant blossoms on the trees.'

The deep purple vetch which enamels the fields of the islands, especially in Gozo, is beautified by the scarlet poppies which Nature sprinkles here and there with dainty fingers, producing vivid gleams of color in strong and pleasing contrast with the surroundings. Sometimes the ripening wheatfields are made lovely after the same winsome manner.

The rich development and beauty of the tall, stout clover at this early period of the year is particularly noticeable, giving promise of a wealth of harvest calculated to gladden the husbandman's heart, while taxing the industry of the bees from dawn to twilight. We know of but few vegetable products which so richly repay the cultivators as this Maltese clover. Surely writers are not authorized to speak of this group of islands in mid-sea, with all these facts before them, as consisting mainly of a series of bare, weather-beaten rocks. Why mock and mislead us by such misrepresentations? In the wildest and least cultivated districts of Gozo, rosemary and thyme may be seen, showing that regal Nature has her poetic moods even under adverse circumstances, and that she often indulges her fancy in lonely places without regard to the cold appreciation of heedless human eyes, sometimes in her charming caprice outdoing more labored and artistic methods. 'You will find something far greater in the woods than you will find in books,' says St. Bernard.

Regarding the origin of Gozo, Comino, and Malta, we have seen that authorities differ materially. As if still more completely to mystify us upon the subject, Borzesi, a Maltese writer of considerable ability, has seriously attempted to prove that the group is formed of the summits of mountains belonging to the lost land of Atalantis. Signor Grougnet, of Valletta, had formerly in his possession a stone which was dug up from among some ruins near the old capital of Città Vecchia, in 1826, on which was an inscription describing Atalantis, and another to the effect that the Consul Tiberius Sempronius, in the year of Rome 536, ordered the preservation of this stone. This is either an adroitly conceived canard, or it is a suggestion worthy the attention of students of antiquity.

Bidding farewell for a time to Gozo, let us now recross the Straits of Freghi to Malta proper, there to enjoy the unequalled attractions and delights of beautiful Valletta.

I CONTENUTI SEMANTICI NELLA TECNICA DIALOGICA DEL DECAMERON

Di JOSEPH M. BRINCAT

IL FASCINO particolare che la figura del Boccaccio esercita nel campo della critica letteraria dipende dalla sua appartenenza a due mondi ritenuti un tempo inconciliabili. Superata l'opposizione tematica tra la 'Divina Commedia' e la 'commedia umana' (De Sanctis), abbandonato il compromesso schematico di un Boccaccio ultimo rappresentante del Medioevo, nelle opere minori, primo dell'Umanesimo nel *Decameron* (Russo), la critica di oggi preferisce portare le esercitazioni dialettiche sul campo stilistico.

Già il Parodi aveva rilevato: 'La sua dottrina è anche, per così dire, il suo stile ... L'amore del peregrino, del lussuoso, del complicato, del sovrabbondante si mescolava in lui in indissolubile unione col più puro e schietto realismo, minacciando sempre di trionfarne'.[1] Alfredo Schiaffini rivelò poi come il Boccaccio raccolse le esperienze tecniche e formali del Medioevo, osservando anche come il periodo boccaccesco nel *Decameron* è meno paludato e complesso e uniforme che nelle opere minori. Inoltre egli indicò la necessità di distinguere tra novelle e novelle, e non solo tra quelle di contenenza grave e di soggetto comico, ma pure tra quelle di composizione certo antica e più recente, e tra novelle meno o più felicemente riuscite.[2] D'altra parte, la convivenza di tanti rappresentanti delle classi popolari, mercanti, artigiani, contadini, insieme con personaggi più nobili, tutti quanti appartenenti all''autunno del Medioevo',[3] non poteva non far nascere la questione della contemporaneità dello stile eminentemente artificiale e delle parlate più terra terra. Il Contini ricollega concisamente ambedue le questioni quando dichiara: 'La sospensione del *miracolo* decameroniano fra quei due momenti (Medioevo u Umanesimo), reperi-

[1] E.G. PARODI, *Lingua e letteratura: Studi di teoria linguistica e di storia dell'italiano antico*, Venezia, 1957 (a cura di G. Folena).
[2] A. SCHIAFFINI, *Tradizione e poesia nella prosa d'arte italiana dalla latinità medievale a G. Boccaccio*, Genova 1934.
[3] Cfr. V. BRANCA, *Boccaccio medievale*, Firenze, 1956.

bile solo sul filo tecnico-linguistico, equivale all'incontro mimetico, e in primo luogo acustico, con la realtà, una realtà colloquiale e dialogica (il Settembrini parla francamente di 'dialetto') che si estende fino a venare o invadere la lingua del narratore'.[4]

L'interesse si sposta, dunque, sempre più su considerazioni stilistiche e linguistiche. Per il Branca realismo tematico e realismo linguistico sono strettamente connessi: 'Alla rappresentazione di realtà e di figure identiche o simili e alla trattazione di argomenti analoghi, ma condotta su piani e in contesti diversi, dovevano coerentemente corrispondere tessuti linguistici diversi'.[5]

E in merito all'aspetto linguistico del *Decameron* il Battaglia precisa che nell'intento di risolvere il rapporto tra lingua parlata e usuale e lingua scritta e letteraria, la maggior preoccupazione del Boccaccio 'è stata di modellare uno strumento espressivo che fosse idoneo a conferire ai contenuti realistici, empirici, quotidiani, e in prevalenza d'ambito borghese e popolaresco, una veste formale di prestigio letterario. In tal modo ha dilatato le frontiere del territorio linguistico, estendendole alle regioni della realtà e della società che non erano finora entrate a partecipare della vita artistica'.[6]

Non bisogna dimenticare, inoltre, che il tema fu trattato dallo stesso Boccaccio, nell'apologia indirizzata alle 'carissime donne' dell'Introduzione alla IV[a] giornata, che è anche, o soprattutto, una risposta ai suoi critici, dove dichiara che le novelle 'non solamente in fiorentin volgare e in prosa scritte per me sono e senza titolo, ma ancora in istilo umilissimo e rimesso quanto il più si possono'.[7] Una tale dichiarazione sembrerebbe indicativa di un intento consapevole a favore del realismo linguistico, a prescindere dal fatto che simili proteste di avere scritto 'umilmente' erano tradizionali, se non fosse seguita da un'altra che palesa una consapevolezza altrettanto sicura dei meriti artistici delle stesse novelle: 'per che, queste cose tessendo, né dal monte Parnaso né

[4] G. CONTINI, *Letteratura italiana delle origini*, Firenze, 1970, pp. 703-4.
[5] V. BRANCA, *Registri narrativi e stilistici nel Decameron*, in 'Studi sul Boccaccio', vol. 5, p. 31.
[6] S. BATTAGLIA, *Le epoche della letteratura italiana*, Napoli, 1968, p. 384.
[7] Le citazioni dal *Decameron* sono riprodotte secondo l'edizione commentata di Vittore Branca, Firenze, Le Monnier, 1965, della quale si adotta pure la divisione in paragrafi. – IV, Intr. 3.

dalle Muse non mi allontano quanto molti per avventura s'avvisano'.[8] Risulta, pertanto, che la contemporaneità dello stile ornato, artificiale, con il modo spontaneo e popolaresco procede chiaramente dalla volontà dell'autore; alla critica rimane il compito di individuare certe costanti nell'adoperare l'una e l'altra maniera, o come suggerisce il Battaglia, di 'rintracciare le fonti e le forme del realismo all'interno dell'arte, come metodo e tecnica, cioè oltre la stessa considerazione della tematica e dei contenuti e oltre la varietà del repertorio umano e della tipizzazione etico-psicologica'.[9]

Un esame attento dei contenuti semantici del *Decameron*, benché realizzato attraverso una campionatura necessariamente limitata ad una scelta ristretta a tre o quattro novelle per ciascuna giornata, fatte le debite indulgenze nei confronti di una ripartizione dell'argomento che può apparire forse un po' arbitraria, può fornire indicazioni significative su certi aspetti del metodo e della tecnica del Boccaccio, e potrebbe anche far luce sulla questione del compromesso artistico fra ornamento retorico e linguaggio realistico.

Tra le riprese testuali dal patrimonio lessicale dell'uso parlato, la 'concessione' che è fatta più apertamente è costituita dai proverbi, adagi e detti proverbiali. Infatti essi sono spesso presentati esplicitamente dal narratore con frasi come 'E perciò si disse (II 7, 122), 'Suolsi tra' volgari spesse volte dire un cotal proverbio' (II 9, 3), e 'Usano i volgari un sí fatto proverbio' (IV 2, 5). L'impiego che ne fa il Boccaccio è quello tradizionale, cioè essi riassumono una situazione cristallizzandola. Si nota che certe novelle prendono lo spunto da un proverbio, sicché questo viene citato dal narratore all'inizio del racconto, quando si rivolge ancora alla piccola brigata della 'cornice'. Un esempio sintomatico ci viene offerto da Pampinea che apre la seconda novella della IV[a] giornata citando il proverbio 'chi è reo e buono è tenuto può fare il male e non è creduto', e poi aggiunge: 'il quale ampia materia a ciò che m'è stato proposto mi presta di favellare, e ancora a dimostrare quanta e quale sia la ipocrisia de' religiosi'. (IV 2, 5).

Si osserva pure che il Boccaccio ricorre frequentemente ad un proverbio per chiudere la novella: 'E perciò si disse: Bocca ba-

[8] IV, Intr., 36.
[9] S. BATTAGLIA, *La Coscienza letteraria del Medioevo*, Napoli, 1965.

sciata non perde ventura, anzi rinnuova come fa la luna' (II 7, 122); 'acciò che quale asin dà in parete tal riceva' (V 10, 64); 'E cosí, a modo del villan matto, dopo danno fé patto. E viva amore, e muoia soldo, e tutta la brigata' (VII 4, 31). Particolarmente degna di rilievo è la novella nona della II[a] giornata, che inizia e termina con la citazione quasi precisa dello stesso proverbio, che in questo modo dà l'avvio e chiude l'illustrazione che ne fa il narratore: 'Suolsi tra' volgari spesse volte dire un cotal proverbio: che lo 'ngannatore rimane a' piè dello 'ngannato' (3); 'E cosí rimase lo 'ngannatore a piè dello 'ngannato' (75).

In bocca ai personaggi delle novelle, il proverbio è spesso una semplice giustificazione che il parlante trova nella saggezza popolare per il proprio comportamento. Cosí vediamo la moglie di Ricciardo che in un mnologo interiore riflette sulle ragioni per cui dovrebbe cedere al seducente Zima, e infine giunge alla conclusione che 'si è egli meglio fare e pentere, che starsi e pentersi' (III 5, 30); nello stesso modo, messer l'abate, di fronte alla tentazione di una giovane 'bella e fresca', si conforta pensando: 'Egli nol saprà persona mai, e peccato celato è mezzo perdonato' (I 4, 16). Certe volte il proverbio citato dal personaggio può anche chiudere la novella, come quando Jancofiore si lamenta 'Chi ha a far con tosco, non vuole esser losco' (VIII, 10, 67).

Più arduo si fa il tentativo di vagliare i detti comuni e le espressioni riportati testualmente nelle novelle dall'uso vivo, quotidiano, contemporaneo, da quelli modificati, adattati o addirittura inventati dal Boccaccio. La mano dell'autore si riconosce, se non nel detto citato dalla donna che supplica: 'Non volere le tue forze contro ad una femina esercitare: niuna gloria è ad una aquila l'aver vinta una colomba' (VIII 7, 79), almeno nella battuta spiritosa dello scolare beffato: 'Per che, quantunque io aquila non sia, te non colomba ma velenosa serpe conoscendo ...' (VIII 7, 87). Altrettanto creative sono le parole con cui Tessa ammonisce segretamente l'amante in VII, 1, 27: 'Fantasima, fantasima che di notte vai, a coda ritta ci venisti, a coda ritta te n'andrai' – una frase che alle caratteristiche tradizionali degli adagi, cioè brevità, ritmo e rima, aggiunge un elemento che sa di formula magica, avvalendosi pure di una maliziosa equivocità metaforica.

Nei due casi riportati non sfugge l'evidenza del contributo all'individuazione stilistica dei personaggi, che è una delle costanti

stilistiche più sostenute nel *Decameron*. Infatti si avverte che i detti proverbiali usati dalle persone nobili o colte dimostrano meno immaginazione a favore di una certa saggezza, contenuta in coli di gusto antitetico. Ecco Ghismonda che discorre sulla fortuna 'la quale assai sovente li non degni ad alto leva, abbasso lasciando i dignissimi' (IV 1, 38), e similmente Giovanna che spiega ai suoi fratelli perché ha scelto l'umile Federigo: 'ma io voglio avanti uomo che abbia bisogno di ricchezza, che ricchezza che abbia bisogno d'uomo' (V 9, 42). In ambedue le sentenze è evidente il chiasmo ornamentale, mentre vale aggiungere che l'ultima citazione chiude praticamente la novella. Inoltre, a proposito dell'attenzione con cui il Boccaccio varia i suoi contenuti semantici, è ben notevole il confronto del detto proverbiale già citato che apre la novella II 9, dove si narra di mercanti,[10] con l'equivalente più dotto: 'spesse volte avviene che l'arte è dall'arte schernita, e perciè è poco senno il dilettarsi di schernire altrui' (VIII 7, 3), che apre la novella dello scolare Rinieri, 'nobile uomo della nostra città, avendo lungamente studiato a Parigi'. La sentenza viene rintracciata dal Branca nei *Distica Catonis*, I 26: 'Sic ars deluditur arte'. È un dettaglio che attesta la cura dell'autore nel dare il tono alle novelle secondo il vario contenuto anche prima che i personaggi aprano bocca.

Nel *Decameron* abbondano pure espressioni di tono più popolaresco, che si ispirano nella maggior parte alle cose più comuni, se non volgari, della vita quotidiana, e tali espressioni sono generalmente assorbite nel più vivo del dialogo, o nei punti salienti della narrazione. S'incontrano espressioni come 'non saper delle sette volte le sei' (III 1, 11), 'mentire bene per la gola' e 'fiaccare il collo' (IX 6, 26) nelle parole di personaggi di ceto umile come Masetto e la donna dell'oste, e altre più immaginose sia nel dialogo sia nella narrazione: 'prendere un paolin per lo naso' (VIII 7, 8 – la vedova furba); 'di mal pelo avere taccata la coda' (VIII 7, 56 – narr.); 'cavalcare la capra' (II 10, 43, VIII 9, 73 – narr.). Vale ripetere che non è sempre facile riconoscere le espressioni correnti da quelle ritoccate o inventate dal Boccaccio. Non si può ignorare però il fatto che le più immaginose coincidono con i personaggi più coloriti e occorrono nelle situazioni di più alta tensione

[10] In merito sono indicative le parole di Bernabò che protesta: 'Io son mercatante e non filosofo, e come mercatante risponderò' (II 9, 18).

narrativa o di più forte comicità. Calandrino, per esempio, accende tutto il virtuosismo espressivo e la forza mimetica del Boccaccio. Vediamolo nella novella 5ª della IXª giornata, perdutamente innamorato di Niccolosa, dove le battute dei personaggi e del narratore, accentuano, con le iperboli più pittoresche, la sua goffa semplicità: 'Ben ti dico che tu la fai struggere come ghiaccio al sole: per lo corpo di Dio, se tu ci rechi la ribeba tua e canti un poco con essa di quelle tue canzoni innamorate, tu la farai gittare a terra delle finestre per venire a te' (31 – Bruno); 'Calandrino, udendo queste parole, gli pareva essere a' fatti, e andava cantando e saltando tanto lieto che non capeva nel cuoio' (38 – narr.); 'tu m'hai con la piacevolezza tua tratto il filo della camiscia; tu m'hai aggratigliato il cuore colla tua ribeba' (58 – Niccolosa).

Alle battute maliziose dei beffatori, contrastano quelle dei burlati, cioè, per rimanere nella novella appena citata, di Calandrino e di Tessa, che si lasciano condizionare e riprendono le stesse parole e le stesse iperboli, ma su un 'modus' diverso perché i loro sentimenti sono autentici. Calandrino vede Niccolosa 'più bella che una lammia' (15); giura vantando 'io la fregherei a Cristo di cosí fatte cose, non che a Filippo' (17); spiega l'effetto che provoca in lui l'apparizione dell'amata con la frase 'Oimè! sí, ella m'ha morto' (23); e usa espressioni caratteristicamente spregiative: 'a buona otta l'avrebber saputo fare questi giovani di tromba marina, che tutto 'l dí vanno in giù e in sù, e in mille anni non saprebbero accozzare tre man di noccioli' (35), o violentemente mimetiche: 'se io le pongo la branca addosso, per lo verace corpo di Cristo, ché io le farò giuoco che ella mi verrà dietro come va la pazza al figliuolo' (36). Similmente Tessa, la moglie gelosa, usa espressioni tipiche del suo ceto: 'Oimè, ladro piuvico', 'alla croce di Dio' (53), 'Io fo boto a Dio che sono insieme' (61); mentre gli appellativi che lancia furibonda a suo marito, vedendolo con Niccolosa: 'Sozzo can vituperato ... vecchio impazzato ... tristo ... dolente ...' (63-64), nella loro apparente spontaneità sono realmente un sottile gioco verbale che contrasta con la serie di esclamazioni affettive che Calandrino ha appena ricevuto da Niccolosa: 'O Calandrino mio dolce, cuor del corpo mio, anima mia, ben mio, riposo mio ...' (58).

È naturale che il Boccaccio abbia attinto dal linguaggio quotidiano molte delle forme interiettive poste in bocca ai personaggi

umili. Nella maggior parte consistono di invocazioni, non sempre riverenti, alla divinità, il ché non meraviglia poiché è stato osservato che tali allocuzioni sono più frequenti nelle società dove la religione formale svolge un ruolo molto importante. Sicché è presumibile che la varietà delle forme rispecchi bene l'uso parlato del tempo, sia nelle tante forme d'augurio, come 'a Dio v'accomando' e 'andar con Dio', sia nelle invocazioni, come 'per le plaghe di Dio', 'in fé di Dio', 'per lo corpo di Dio', 'se Dio m'aiuti', ed esclamazioni del tipo di 'di che io lodo Iddio quant'io posso' (III 1, 39). D'altra parte, un buon numero delle forme interiettive di maggior espressività saranno da attribuirsi all'autore, che si rivela sempre molto attento alla maniera in cui si esprimono i suoi personaggi. Al saluto correttissimo di un nobiluomo come Ricciardo, detto il Zima, 'il quale sí ornato e sí pulito della persona andava' (5): 'Dio vi dea quella allegrezza e quel bene che voi disiderate il maggiore, e a Dio v'accomando' (24), si oppone la maniera incoerente di un sempliciotto come Ferondo: 'di che io priego Iddio che vi dea il buono anno e le buone calendi, oggi e tuttavia (III, 8, 70).

L'ultimo esempio rientra nel gusto caro al Boccaccio di porre frasi popolaresche illogiche in bocca ai personaggi sciocchi, che accentuano l'ignoranza di chi parla per mezzo di espressioni assurde. Calandrino può mandare un saluto alla sua innamorata che suona cosí: 'Gnaffe! tu le dirai imprima imprima che io le voglio mille moggia di quel buon bene da impregnare' (IX 5, 27). Al gioco possono partecipare impunemente anche i beffatori: ecco come rende l'idea della distanza Maso a Calandrino: 'Haccene più di millanta, che tutta notte canta' (VIII 3, 15), e il monaco bolognese a Ferondo: 'Ohioh! sèvi di lungi delle miglia più di ben la cacheremo' (III 8, 62). Inoltre non è raro che vi prenda parte anche il narratore, come nella novella di frate Alberto (IV, 2), dove madonna Lisetta, la donna sedotta viene presentata come 'bamba e sciocca' (12) e che 'sentia dello scemo' (14), e la sua stupidità viene sottolineata assai spesso durante il racconto con appellativi d'uso o originali dell'autore: 'donna mestola' (16), 'donna zucca al vento' (20), 'Madonna baderla' (24), 'donna pocofila' (27).

Una funzione analoga svolgono nel discorso diretto dei personaggi di bassa condizione le goffe deformazioni di nomi di persona o di luogo molto noti, come 'Ragnolo Braghiello' (III 8, 74 – altrove detto 'l'agnolo Gabriello'), 'il Monte Asinaio' (IV Intr: 15 –

per il Monte Senario), e 'Porcograsso e Vannacena' (VIII 9, 37 – che sarebbero Ipocrasso e Avicenna), oppure le storpiature buffonesche di frasi religiose latine come 'Dio san delle reni' (III 1, 10) dal Ps. XXV. 2 'Ure renes meos', e il 'Verbum-caro-fatti-alle-finestre' (III 10, 45) da Joan. I. 14: 'Verbum caro factum est'. Non è inverosimile che tali interpretazioni popolari abbiano un fondamento di realtà se si pensa che fino a un decennio fa i fedeli incolti, costretti a partecipare nella liturgia latina della Chiesa, fornivano ancora qualche esempio. D'altro canto, però, è da attribuire all'autore l'invenzione caricaturale di certi nomi allusivi che accentuano la burla in novelle come quella di fra Cipolla (VI 10): lo stesso nome del protagonista, che si arricchisce di una connotazione locale (Certaldo era famosa per i cipolli), il venerabile padre messer Nonmiblasmete Sevoipiace (44), Truffia e Buffia, 'paesi molto abitati e con gran popoli' (39).

I dialettalismi, come osserva giustamente il Branca, sono rari nel *Decameron*, specie in confronto con il *Trecentonovelle* del Sacchetti. Non è certo facile tentare una congettura per spiegare questo fenomeno, benché possa sembrare piuttosto indicativa la considerazione che la maggioranza delle novelle sono ambientate in Toscana e parecchie nella stessa Firenze. Pertanto non mancano testimoni di voci dell'uso plebeo, come 'mogliema', 'uguanno' (VIII 6, 27), 'imbolare', 'ladro piuvico' (IX 5, 53), nei luoghi più adatti, ma per tante parole rimane l'incertezza se si debbano chiamare dialettali o meno. Certo, il Boccaccio non doveva provare difficoltà nel trascrivere le parlate regionali: in merito è sufficiente menzionare la lettera da lui scritta in napoletano, citata dal Branca a p. 1005, nota 2 ('e raccomandace, se te chiace, a nuostro compatre Pietro de Lucanjano, ca lu puozziamo bedere alla buoglia suoia'), ma può sorprendere il fatto che in una novella ambientata a Napoli, dove egli visse cosí a lungo, si reperiscono soltanto vocaboli isolati come 'boce' (II 5, 51) e 'scarabone' (59). Non si nega però la possibilità che uno studio molto approfondito riveli altre espressioni di origine dialettale, a parte la sporadica 'che lucertole verminare non paiano' (II 10, 6), che dopo di essere rimasta a lungo oscura ai commentatori si è rivelata di origine appunto napoletana.[11]

[11] *Decameron* a cura di V. Branca, cit., p. 295, nota 7.

Più curiosa è l'osservazione dello stesso Branca che l'uso del dialetto nel *Decameron* può contenere 'una sfumatura schernevole per città non amate: per es. Venezia e Siena'.[12] In verità però, la novella di Cecco Angiolieri non è meno avara in senesismi ('costette', 'cavalle', – IX 4, 15), mentre quella di frate Alberto risulta più interessante perché, oltre alle solite voci isolate come 'bergoli' (IV 2, 12), 'marido' (43) e 'mattapan' (24; è una moneta veneziana d'argento), presenta frasi brevi del tipo di 'mo vedí vu?' (43; vedete voi?), e 'che xè quel? che xè quel?' (53). Assai più frequenti sono i sicilianismi, e non quelli sono consacrati dalla tradizione lirica dei primi secoli ('saccio', 'miso', ecc.), ma anche certe voci più colorite come 'grasta' (IV 5, 24; un vaso di fiori), 'arma' (VIII 10, 15; per anima), 'sapone moscoleato' (16; muschiato, profumato al muschio) e l'affettivo 'toscano acanino' (15), un appellativo di tenerezza che è probabilmente una derivazione dall'arabo 'hanin' e che vale 'caro, amato, dolce'.

I gallicismi e i provenzalismi sono pure riservati ad un uso stilistico ben preciso. Troviamo una serie di provenzalismi nella ballata che Mico da Siena scrive su richiesta di Minuccio, e sono i soliti termini tradizionali della lirica arcaica: 'assapere', 'temenza', 'gravenza', 'spiacenza', 'sicuranza', 'membranza', ecc. (X 7, 21-22). I gallicismi riflettono un uso più vivo e contribuiscono alla tinta esotica della novella aulica del conte d'Anguersa, dove sono posti generalmente nel discorso delle donne gentili francesi: 'madama', 'donare', 'giuliva', 'damigella', 'monsignore lo re', ecc. (II 8). Sono notevoli peraltro, a parte certe voci isolate in altre novelle, come 'messi' (I 5, 13; dal fr. a. *mets*, 'portate, piatti'), e 'trasorier' (VIII, 10, 42; gallicismo frequente anche nei documenti del Regno angioino), i costrutti prettamente francesizzanti che il Boccaccio attribuisce allo scolare che aveva studiato a Parigi: 'io so ciò che n'è, e 'io n'ebbi troppo d'una', (VIII, 7, 52 e 84), già dal Foscolo identificati con le frasi 'je sais ce qui en est', e 'j'en eus trop d'une' (Opere, III, p. 66).

Volendo considerare l'impiego dei paragoni e delle metafore, il lettore si accorge che la fantasia dell'autore è ancora in maggior evidenza, sia nella scelta di quelli che possiamo immaginare più vicini all'uso contemporaneo, sia in altri dove la carica espressiva tradisce la ricerca dell'effetto letterario. Nel frattempo si avverte

[12] Ibid. p. 489, nota 1. Cfr. anche p. 480, nota 3.

che è sempre più chiaro l'intento di adattarli al personaggio e all'ambiente. Anzi i paragoni e le metafore nascono veramente dall'ambiente, poiché per il loro tramite il parlante rivela o conferma la sua provenienza, il suo mestiere, la sua estrazione sociale o la sua disposizione interiore. Vediamo, per esempio, Masetto che, da buon ortolano, trova un parallelo tra la propria situazione nel convento e quella di un gallo nel pollaio: 'io ho inteso che un gallo basta assai bene a dieci galline, ma che dieci uomini possono male o con fatica una femina sodisfare, dove a me conviene servir nove' (III 1, 37). Nello stesso modo, il paragone enunciato da Simone, che sta curando Calandrino pregno, è quello che si aspetterebbe da un medico: 'tu rimarrai più sano che pesce' (IX 3, 28). La grossolanità di Ferondo o di Michele Scalza viene sottolineata con paragoni iperbolici e banali: per il primo la moglie è 'più melata che 'l confetto', e anche 'casciata, melata, dolciata' (III 8, 51 e 66), mentre il secondo, per descrivere i rinomati Baronci pesca paragoni che nella loro elementarietà hanno un che d'ingenuo, come appunto i 'mascelloni che paion d'asino', e il fatto che hanno visi sfigurati 'sí come sogliono essere i visi che fanno da prima i fanciulli che apparano a disegnare' (VI, 6, 14). La ragione, secondo Michele, è che 'i Baronci furon fatti da Domenedio al tempo che egli avea cominciato d'apparare a dipignere, ma gli altri uomini furon fatti poscia che Domenedio seppe dipignere' (14).

Paragoni simili non possono mancare nelle novelle che hanno per protagonista Calandrino, per esempio nella IX 5 quando Bruno accentua la burla 'complimentando' e incoraggiando il goffo sempliciotto innamorato di Niccolosa: 'Oh, tu te la griferai; e' mi par pur vederti morderle con cotesti tuoi denti fatti a bischeri quella sua bocca vermigliuzza e quelle sue gote che paion due rose, e poscia manicarlati tutta quanta' (37). L'ambiente religioso accende l'immaginazione ironica dell'autore che esprime lo scandalo di Abraam giudeo con il paragone della sede papale romana 'più tosto *a* una fucina di diaboliche operazioni che di divine' (I 2, 24), oppure rivela la sottile malizia dell'abate ipocrita che seduce la bella e ingenua moglie di Ferondo con un gioco virtuosistico su una similitudine delle più comuni: 'e dicovi che voi della vostra bellezza, più che altra donna gloriar vi potete, pensando che ella piaccia a' santi, che sono usi di vedere quelle del cielo' (III 8, 25).

I paragoni contenuti nella narrazione manifestano lo stesso scopo stilistico, cioè contribuiscono all'individuazione del personaggio e dell'ambiente, come alla vivacità del racconto. Rinaldo, derubato e costretto a rimanere fuori nel freddo, e lo scolare, beffato e anche lui rimasto fuori durante una nevicata, battono i denti 'come una cicogna' (II 2, 22 e VIII 7, 39); frate Alberto, il 'lupo divenuto pastore', con la sua fine ipocrisia riuscí a procurarsi 'la sua fama di santità in quelle parti troppo maggior che mai non fu di San Francesco in Ascesi' (IV 2, 11); Tancredi piange 'sí forte come farebbe un fanciul ben battuto' (IV 1, 29); la giovane donna beffata a suo turno dallo scolare sviene dalla disperazione: 'quasi come se il mondo sotto i piedi venuto le fosse meno, le fuggí l'animo' (VIII 7, 72).

L'importanza che hanno le metafore in seno al *Decameron* è notevole, sia per l'altissima frequenza con cui si trovano disseminate qua e là per tutta l'opera, sia per il modo in cui la loro presenza ravviva i tanti racconti. Ovviamente i tropi variano secondo il grado di originalità e di espressività che ciascuno reca. Bisogna, per esempio, distinguere quelle metafore che benché servano a rafforzare il significato emotivo del dialogo, avevano già perduto molta della loro efficacia, essendo rese abituali nel linguaggio consueto. Questo tipo di metafore 'spente' può essere rappresentato dalle citazioni seguenti: 'e di lui ... fieramente s'accese' (IV 1, 6 – narr.), 'che vi fosse uscito di mente' (VI, 2, 28 – Cisti); 'Credi tu che io sia santa?' (VII 5, 18 – la moglie del geloso); 'e tu se' una bestia che gli credi' (IX 6, 26 – la donna dell'oste); 'ti priego che tu non mi facci morire amando' (V 4, 8 – Ricciardo); 'e' mi pare che voi siate delle nimiche della fortuna come sono io' (III 9, 38 – la contessa). Tuttavia, un intervento opportuno dell'autore può far rivivere simili metafore, che ricevono cosí nuovi valori evocativi attraverso la loro collocazione nel dialogo. L'esclamazione meravigliata di Ferondo, apparentemente normalissima, 'noi dovremmo essere fuor del mondo, tanto ci ha' (III 8, 63), si arricchisce di una forte carica d'ironia contestuale se si considera che il frate vuole far credere a Ferondo che egli si trova appunto in Purgatorio. Il contesto ha un ruolo fondamentale anche nel seguente esempio dell'impiego di frasi con forza gradatamente impressiva nel condizionamento di Calandrino da parte dei suoi amici che vogliono persuaderlo che è pregno: Nello insinua il so-

spetto che Calandrino non sta bene quasi di sfuggita: 'tu non mi par desso', poi aggiunge 'tu mi pari tutto cambiato'; viene Buffalmacco che dichiara 'tu par mezzo morto', e un terzo, Bruno, incalza 'e' par che tu sia morto'; sicché il povero Calandrino non può fare altro che andare a casa, dicendo alla moglie 'Vieni e cuoprimi bene, ché io mi sento un gran male' (IX 3, 8-16).

L'autore può anche integrare queste metafore nel dialogo sotto la forma di battute più o meno spiritose, come il gioco di parole con 'aquila-colomba-serpe' tra lo scolare e la vedova riprodotto qui addietro. Oppure una metafora corrente come 'gli occhi della mente' (o 'dell'intelletto'; VIII 7, 85, e X 3, 28), mediante una semplice ma efficace contrapposizione con 'gli occhi della fronte' ottiene un effetto nuovo: 'maladetta sia la crudeltà di colui che con gli occhi della fronte or mi ti fa vedere! assai m'era con quegli della mente riguardarti a ciascuna ora' (IV 1, 51 – Ghismonda).

Quest'ultima battuta può essere indicativa di quel tipo di metafore che possiamo chiamare galanti o letterare, che sono caratterizzanti di un ambiente aulico dove i personaggi, di lignaggio nobile o di cultura elevata, fanno sfoggio della loro raffinatezza di maniera o di pensiero. Infatti queste metafore sono sempre inserite in dialoghi sintatticamente complessi, dove il pensiero è spesso contorto in ossequio a esigenze retoriche. Esempi di questo genere abbondano nella novella III 5, nel discorso lungo e ornatissimo dello Zima, architettato secondo la tradizione della trattatistica medievale: 'avete potuto comprendere a quanto amor portarvi m'abbia condotto la vostra bellezza, la qual senza alcun fallo trapassa ciascun'altra che veder mi paresse giammai, lascio stare de' costumi laudevoli e delle virtù singolari che in voi sono, le quali avrebbon forza di pigliare ciascuno alto animo di qualunque uomo' (10); 'Spero tanto essere la vostra cortesia che non sofferrete che io per tanto e tale amore morte riceva per guiderdone, ma con lieta risposta e piena di grazia riconforterete gli spiriti miei, li quali spaventati tutti trieman nel vostro cospetto' (15). Notevole è l'uso della personificazione nella rappresentazione drammatica degli effetti amorosi, che si avvicina alla tecnica cavalcantiana della scomposizione fantastica del proprio mondo interiore, ma benché sia difficile trovare nello stesso *Decameron* brani di tanto virtuosismo stilistico, l'esercizio di tropi galanti non si limita allo Zima. L'abate seduttore non è privo almeno delle formule fonda-

mentali in III 8: 'Adunque mi donerete voi il vostro amore e faretemi contento di voi, per la quale io ardo tutto e mi consumo' (23), e 'tanta forza ha avuto la vostra vaga bellezza, che Amore mi costrigne a cosí fare' (25); Ghismonda, di fronte alla coppa che nontiene il cuore dell'amato Guiscardo, si esprime con una perifrasi vibrante di una forte emotività: 'Ahi! dolcissimo albergo di tutti i miei piaceri' (IV 1, 51 – Ghismonda); Filostrato (nella 'cornice') ricorda la raffinatezza della lieta brigata, esprimendosi con concetti ricercati: 'senza dubbio alcuna rugiada cadere sopra il mio fuoco comincierò a sentire' (IV 2, 3).

In considerazione del fatto che il tema principale del *Decameron* è l'amore,[13] non sorprende la constatazione che le metafore più consistenti sono appunto quelle eufemistiche. Il tabù da pudore suggerisce necessariamente all'autore l'impiego di certi giri di frase per descrivere situazioni che, se fossero mostrate troppo crudamente, offenderebbero il buon gusto oltre che la morale del lettore. Ma da parte sua il Boccaccio si serve felicemente di queste metafore che, se da un lato attenuano i toni troppo spinti di certi

[13] Si vedano in merito le dichiarazioni dell'autore nel *Proemio* e nell'*Introduzione* alla IV[a] giornata (l'autodifesa dalle critiche, la storiella delle 'papere', e spec. i par. 30-36). Inoltre, nella *Conclusione dell'Autore*, si accenna specificamente alle metafore erotiche: 'dico che più non si dee a me esser disdetto d'averle scritte, che generalmente si disdica agli uomini e alle donne di dir tutto dì *foro* e *caviglia* e *mortaio* e *pestello* e *salsiccia* e *mortadello*, e tutto pieno di simiglianti cose.' (Ed. Branca, cit., p. 1239).

La questione, non che risolta dalle vedute più permissive di oggi, si pone con rinnovata immediatezza a causa dell'autentico saccheggio cinematografico delle novelle del *Decameron*. Nella scia dell'opera di Pasolini, non priva di meriti artistici, un gruppo di 'minori' sta producendo una ondata di scelte decameroniane il libero adattamento delle quali non serve ad altro che a deformare la figura del Boccaccio artista. Per conseguenza vale ricordarsi delle parole con cui S. Battaglia riporta il problema nella sua giusta prospettiva: 'Il Boccaccio ha dato per il primo cittadinanza artistica all'osceno. Bisogna ammetterlo senza ipocrisie. Il torto è di chi non vedeva nel *Decameron* se non questo elemento narrativo: e ciò spiega l'opportuna reazione della critica moderna, che additava e riscopriva nell'umanità boccaccesca tanti altri interessi più profondi seri dolorosi e soprattutto delicati. E tuttavia, in nome di questi, non è lecito defraudare il genio del Boccaccio d'una delle sue più generose qualità. E non giova neanche il tentativo di scagionarlo o di accordargli delle attenuanti, appellandosi a un suo presunto pudore e alla discrezione con cui egli dosa il salace e infrena la parola che lo esprime.' (S. BATTAGLIA, *La Coscienza medievale*, cit., p. 695).

momenti del racconto, dall'altro ne mettono in risalto gli elementi più divertenti nella ricerca dell'effetto comico. Si trovano addirittura alcune novelle la cui trama, il dialogo, la stessa terminologia, si basano tutti su una metafora equivoca centrale. È questo il caso della quarta novella della V[a] giornata, dove il gioco ambiguo sulla parola 'usignuolo' sta alla base di tutto il racconto, ma viene introdotto e sviluppato solo nel dialogo, a cui il narratore partecipa soltanto quando il senso figurato ha sostituito senza più dubbi quello originale. Caterina, la giovane innamorata, usa il termine senza malizia alcuna, come semplice pretesto, fra tanti, per ottenere il permesso dei genitori per dormire sul verone (21). Il primo tentativo di equivocità è pure innocente, e viene sotto la forma di una battuta piuttosto seccata del vecchio e 'un poco ritrosetto' messer Lizio, al quale sfugge una ragione plausibile per tanto rumore: 'Che rusignuolo è questo a che ella vuol dormire? Io la farò ancora addormentare al canto delle cicale' (23). L'usignuolo diventa, per i genitori, il motivo principale, scherzosamente, dato che non sono del tutto convinti della scusa del caldo. Intanto l'attenzione del lettore viene centrata appunto su di esso nelle battute con cui padre e madre acconsentono alla richiesta della figlia (25 e 26: 'e dormavi e oda cantar l'usignolo a suo senno'). Interviene il narratore, insinuando l'equivoco malizioso nel racconto di cosa hanno fatto i due giovani innamorati quella notte sul verone: 'molte volte faccendo cantar l'usignolo' (29), poi descrivendo con una lunga perifrasi eufemistica dove Caterina ha posto la mano sinistra. Il gioco si scopre con due battute di messer Lizio (che si delinea come un vecchietto assai spiritoso), che al mattino si ricorda della figlia: 'Lasciami vedere come l'usignolo ha fatto questa notte dormir la Caterina' (31), e poi chiama la moglie: 'Su tosto, donna, lievati e vieni a vedere, che tua figliuola è stata sí vaga dell'usignolo, che ella è stata tanto alla posta che ella l'ha preso e tienlosi in mano' (33). Il narratore riprende la battuta quasi testualmente (36), poi messer Lizio pensa subito alla soluzione giusta, per nulla scomposto, elaborando il senso figurato: 'e' gli converrà che primieramente la sposi sí ch'egli si troverrà aver messo l'usignuolo nella gabbia sua e non nell'altrui (38). La metafora non appare più nel dialogo adesso, ma viene impiegata tre volte dal narratore (39, 44 e 49) per indicare le tre sfumature rivelate nel dialogo, l'ultima volta come conclusione scherzosa secondo l'uso stilistico già ricordato per i proverbi.

La metafora eufemistica maliziosa trae spesso ispirazione ed efficacia dalla situazione stessa, sicché Masetto, al prospetto di essere impiegato come ortolano presso le suore, può dire tra di sé: 'Se voi mi mettete costà entro, io vi lavorrò sí l'orto, che mai non vi fu cosí lavorato' (III 1, 18). Ma molto spesso si tratta di rielaborazioni verbose di espressioni equivoche correnti, com'è appunto questa di 'lavorare la terra', che viene adoperata altrove sotto forme più o meno diverse dal narratore: 'e parendogli terreno da' ferri suoi' (IV 2, 14), oppure serve ad illustrare i presupposti di una novella, come in quella della moglie insoddisfatta dal marito troppo religioso, ma anche bene attento 'non forse alcuno altro le 'nsegnasse conoscere li dí da lavorare, come egli l'aveva insegnate le feste' (II 10, 10). Dal narratore questa metafora è ripresa dall'eloquentissima Bartolomea, che rifiuta l'invito di un riavvicinamento al marito senza ritegno di pudore: 'E s'egli v'era più a grado lo studio delle leggi che la moglie, voi non dovavate pigliarla; benché a me non parve mai che voi giudice foste, anzi mi paravate un banditore di sagre e di feste, sí ben le sapavate, e le digiune e le vigilie. E dicovi che se voi aveste tante feste fatte fare a' lavoratori che le vostre possessioni lavorano, quante faciavate fare a colui che il mio piccol campicello aveva a lavorare, voi non avreste mai ricolto granello di grano' (32). E prosegue, ponendo in confronto la situazione presente: 'anzi di dí e di notte ci si lavora e battecisi la lana' (33).

Altre metafore correnti di contenuto osceno si basano sulla similarità sostanziale, come: 'non avendo mai davanti saputo con che corno gli uomini cozzano' (II 7, 30 – narr.); 'che forse estimava che egli cosí senza coda come senza favella fosse' (III, 1, 20 – narr.; ma cfr. anche IV Intr. 33, VII 1, 27, e IX 10, 15); altre si richiamano ad una azione, come 'scuotere il pelliccione' in IV 10, 46; X 10, 69; e VIII 7, 103: 'E oltre a ciò gli stimate miglior cavalieri e far di più miglia le lor giornate che gli uomini più maturi. Certo io confesso che essi con maggior forza scuotono i pilliccioni, ma gli attempati, sí come esperti, sanno meglio i luoghi dove stanno le pulci, e di gran lunga è da eleggere piuttosto il poco e saporito che il molto e insipido; e il trottar forte rompe e stanca altrui, quantunque sia giovane, dove il soavemente andare, ancora che alquanto più tardi altrui meni allo albergo, egli il vi conduce almen riposato'. Lo scolare inizia e chiude il passo citato con

un'altra metafora, basata sul linguaggio dell'equitazione, che è pure molto comune nello stesso *Decameron*, benché spesso leggermente modificata: 'acciò che di leggier non fosse da caval gittato'; 'dalla quale altra volta aveva prese le mosse quando andava a correr le giumente' (IV 2, 30 – narr.). Altrettanto comuni sono quelle basate su un ingrediente alimentare: 'di cui tutto premendovi, non si farebbe uno scodellin di salsa' (II, 10, 40, – Bartolomea); 'che premendoti tutto, non uscirebbe tanto sugo che bastasse ad una salsa' (IX 5, 64 – Monna Tessa); 'che voi non pesterete più salsa in suo mortaio' (VIII 2, 44 – la Belcolore; ripresa dal chierico: 45). Quest'ultima metafora ricorda un'altra battuta di Bartolomea, che fa un gioco equivoco con le parole 'peccato mortale', 'mortaio' e 'pestello': 'e se io sto in peccato mortaio, io starò quando che sia in peccato pestello' (II 10, 37).

Non sono pochi i casi in cui le metafore erotiche si vestono irriverentemente del linguaggio religioso; basti pensare alla decima novella della III[a] giornata, dove la metafora non viene preparata attraverso il dialogo (come in V 4), ma è dichiarata subito: 'Graziose donne, voi non udiste mai forse dire come il diavolo si rimetta in inferno, e perciò ... il vi vo' dire' (III 10, 3). L'equivoco condiziona poi tutto il dialogo, e ottiene quel particolare effetto comico e ironico intercalato com'è in un discorso quasi solenne, ricco di esclamazioni e formule religiose. Identici sovratoni emanano dai discorsi di frati seduttori, come l'abate che seduce la moglie di Ferondo, che prima la tranquillizza con una sottile distinzione tra santità e peccato, anima e corpo: 'che per questo la santità non diventa minore, per ciò che ella dimora nell'anima e quello che io vi domando è peccato del corpo', poi la conquista con il complimento citato più addietro sulla sua bellezza e quella dei santi (III 8, 25).

L'espediente del linguaggio religioso è pure assai frequente nel *Decameron* e non si limita al gioco per cui si enfatizzano le metafore erotiche. Certe volte serve per accentuare l'ironico rilievo della sciocca religiosità del marito tradito; è questo l'intento del commento del narratore in VII 1, 8: 'la notte gl'insegnò da sei delle laude di suo marito' (ma si nota che il senso equivoco di 'dire orazioni s'incontra spesso in VII 3, dove il seduttore è appunto un frate; cfr. par. 23, 31, 40). Più spesso, però, la satira è diretta contro l'ipocrisia e l'avarizia della Chiesa in generale e dei frati in particolare, e non sempre risulta sottile o bonaria, anzi il narra-

tore si scaglia apertemente o contro l'avarizia: 'gli fece con una buona quantità della grascia di San Giovanni Boccadoro ugner le mani (la quale molto giova alle infermità delle pestilenziose avarizie de' chierici, e spezialmente de' frati Minori, che denari non osano toccare)' (I 6, 9), o contro l'ipocrisia: 'e altissime e rubeste in mordere negli altri li loro medesimi vizi' (IV 2, 5) e anche per mezzo di Pampinea: 'tosto dichiarerei a molti semplici quello che nelle lor cappe larghissime tengon nascoso' (7).

Tuttavia non mancano metafore di ispirazione religiosa senza intenti satirici, e che dunque si possono presumere d'uso corrente. 'Giannotto il levò del sacro fonte' (I 2, 29 – narr.) non vuol dire altro che 'egli fu padrino di battesimo'. S'incontrano anche parole eufemistiche per indicare il diavolo, come il termine 'fistolo': 'infino a tanto che il fistolo uscisse da dosso a suo marito' (VII 5, 12 – narr.); 'ché siete tutti quanti più scarsi che 'l fistolo' (VIII 2, 24 – la Belcolore); insieme a espressioni popolari come 'andare a santo' (VIII 2, 28 e 38) che voleva dire 'in chiesa', quasi a indicare il luogo santo per eccellenza.[14]

A questo punto sembra superfluo ricordare che i paragoni e le metafore considerati sono dotati di quel senso di concretezza che viene dall'esperienza diretta. La maggioranza di loro si ispira alla vita agricola, a cui la società medievale fu cosí vicina, e un bel numero si attinge al mondo zoologico, limitandosi generalmente ad animali domestici ('come si mena un montone per le corna in beccheria', VII 5, 52). Ma non sono insoliti richiami ad esperienze ordinarie della vita quotidiana: 'ché mi pare anzi che no che voi ci stiate a pigione' (II 10, 39 – Bartolomea, per dire al marito che stenta a vivere, ridotto com'è); a fenomeni geografici: 'se Filippo se ne avvedesse, tutta l'acqua d'Amo non ci laverebbe' (IX 5, 26 – Bruno). Ci sono anche riferimenti a giochi di ragazzi: 'non saprebbero accozzare tre man di noccioli' (IX 5, 35 – Calandrino), o di adulti, come gli scacchi: 'egli quella una non fece tavola' (II 10, 7 – narr.), e il gioco degli aliossi: 'di farla in tre pace' (II 10, 39 – Bartolomea; ambedue le espressioni significano 'non far nulla').

Il mercante che si esprime con il detto 'lascio correr due soldi per ventiquattro denari' (II 2, 7 – Rinaldo), il frate che seduce per mezzo di termini religiosi (III 8; III 10; IV 2), il nobile corteggiatore che rielabora il linguaggio cortese tradizionale (III 5), lo sco-

[14] Cfr. *Decameron*, ed. Branca, cit., p. 886, nota 9.

lare con le sue battute argute (VIII 7) e Bartolomea che non ha peli sulla lingua (II 10), non solo mettono in rilievo il proprio carattere, ma contribuiscono a situare il personaggio nel proprio ambiente. Il realismo boccaccesco resta su queste basi socio-linguistiche non meno che sull'istintività e sulla vitalità dei personaggi e delle azioni raccontate. Il dialogo ha tanta importanza nel *Decameron* che non sorprende vedere i personaggi boccacceschi paragonati ad attori. Il Battaglia afferma persino che 'molte novelle hanno perciò un'impostazione da commedia, più che da narrazione'.[15] Infatti non si può negare che il dialogo si distingue tecnicamente dalla narrazione, specie nell'impiego di mezzi allocutivi, di pronomi, e soprattutto nella struttura della frase: gli espedienti retorici dell'*Ars dictandi*, con il cursus, le inversioni, la simmetria dei coli, di anafore, chiasmi ed omoteleuti, e la prosa rimata, s'incontrano naturalmente più spesso nella narrazione, mentre strutture a carattere affettivo distinguono il dialogo, specialmente in quelle situazioni che richiedono un ritmo più rapido.

I contenuti semantici, come abbiamo visto, sono frequentissimi nei discorsi dei vari personaggi, ma si nota anche che non sono limitati al dialogo. Molte volte il narratore, che è come dire l'autore, partecipa con commenti e riferimenti ironici al gioco della beffa, accentua la satira, contribuisce anche lui al tono solenne, aulico o tragico della situazione, per mezzo di proverbi, paragoni e metafore non meno opportuni di quelli delle sue creature. Talvolta arriva perfino a sostituirsi degnamente a loro, come nel discorso indiretto libero che prosegue la confessione di ser Ciappelletto ('e molte volte aveva desiderato d'avere cotali insalatuzze d'erbucce' – I 1, 41), o quando prende in mano la situazione e si lascia trasportare in quell'appassionata invettiva antifratesca che, benché sia posta in bocca a Tedaldo in veste di pellegrino, per la sua lunghezza ed emotività tradisce l'autore che la porta un po' fuori dei limiti della situazione (III 7, 30-54).

Altre volte, il Boccaccio fa sfoggio della sua abilità narrativa proprio attraverso certe trovate originali che riguardano spesso l'impiego del dialogo. Oltre a Tedaldo che diventa il portavoce dell'autore, e l'ironica confessione di Ser Ciappelletto, sono da ricordare l'orazione parodistica di frate Cipolla (VI 10), l'eloquenza aulica

[15] S. BATTAGLIA, *La Coscienza del Med.*, cit., p. 699.

dello Zima, che parla prima per sé, poi per la donna (che rimanendo passiva acconsente), e poi risponde di nuovo per sé (III 5), e forse soprattutto il silenzio del pallafreniere, la cui azione sta tutta nella sua segretezza e che pertanto nella novella, benché egli ne sia il protagonista, non parla mai (III 2). Sono appunto questi virtuosismi dialogici che rilevano la cura stilistica con cui il Boccaccio veste l'acuta attenzione alla vita reale, e che fanno del *Decameron* un mondo cosí vario nella sua tematica e cosí ricco di personaggi ad un tempo fantastici e reali.

SCHOOLS OF PAINTING IN MEDIEVAL MALTA

By GERVASE MATHEW

THIS is a brief and tentative effort to assess the evidence for the existence and character both of mural and panel paintings in Malta before the coming of the Knights of St. John. I have worked at the wall paintings in the disused chapel of the Annunciation at Hal Millieri and in the church of Santa Marija ta' Bir Miftuh, and in the crypt of the Abbatija Tad Dejr and in the cave church of St. Agatha at Rabat. But it is likely that further fragments survive hidden beneath the whitewash or the yellow plaster of some of the older chapels. While although I have examined nearly three hundred panels only seventeen of them can be proved to have been in Malta by 1530.

Greek ikons form a surprisingly high proportion of the paintings in the island. For the most part they are in private ownership; the most important collection that I have examined were the twenty-one ikons in the possession of Mr. Joseph Galea at Mdina. But it is remarkable how many families have from two to four ikons, sometimes showing rare Orthodox conventions like the vision of the dead in the separated diptych in the possession of Mr. Justice Caruana-Curran. Most of these were painted between the seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries and it is probable that the majority came to Malta after the expulsion of the Knights. Stylistically a number of them suggest an origin in Corfu and may have been brought to Malta when it was linked with the Ionian islands by a common English administration. The four Russian ikons that I noted might have come with the corn ships from Odessa. A small painting of the Panaghia Hodegetria had an Arabic inscription which suggests that it was an import from Alexandria. Perhaps the chief significance of the great quantity of ikons is that it implies a demand for them in Malta. Such a demand would have been stimulated by the presence of Greek immigrants in the period of the Knights, groups still represented by such surnames as 'Grech'. But the religious appeal may be much older. It will be noted that nearly all the wall paintings that survive from medieval Malta are cult images shown frontally.

Among the mass of late ikons there are at least three medieval panels which may well have been brought to Malta by the Knights. The most beautiful is the painting known as Our Lady of Damascus now in the care of Father Borgia in the Greek Uniate Church at Valletta. This is reminiscent of the Virgin of Vladimir. It follows the convention of the Panaghia Glykophilousa as the Child presses His cheek against His Mother's. It is certainly Constantinopolitan and possibly Commenian of the late twelfth century. With it must be associated the broken fragments of a similar panel in the same church. In the Inquisitor's Palace at Birgu there is an accomplished ikon of a Mounted Saint which is also very probably Constantinopolitan and of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century; according to tradition it too was brought from Rhodes.

Before 1530 the most obvious links were with the eastern seaboard of Sicily and, indirectly, with Catalonia. On 20 February 1505 Giovanni Salvo d'Antonio made a contract to paint a polyptych for the nuns of San Pietro at Malta. The predella showing Christ surrounded by his Disciples, which is stated to have come from the Benedictine nuns of San Pietro at Mdina and is now in the Cathedral Museum there, was presumably part of that polyptych; it is signed *Magister Saluu de d[...]i de messanensis me pinsit 510.* Another polyptych by the same painter in the same museum represents the *Madonna del Soccorso* flanked by St. Peter and St. James, and surmounted by a Crucifixion scene with the Archangel Gabriel and by the Virgin. But this is only from his workshop. Giovanni Salvo d'Antonio was a nephew of the great Antonello of Messina. His own very distinctive late Renaissance style is easily recognizable. He was employed on the decoration of the cathedral at Messina and signed his first known contract on 6 September 1493.[1] This artist's first cousin Antonio di Saliba, who was born in 1467 and died after 1535, also worked for Maltese patrons; a Deposition by him dated shortly after 1510 is in the church of Santa Marija in Gesù at Rabat.[2] And there is a St. Paul in the Mdina Museum, with serpent, sword and book, which suggests the early sixteenth-century school of Messina.

Behind the Sicilian background there lay a Catalan. With the

[1] S. BOTTARI, *La pittura del quattrocento in Sicilia* (Florence, [1953]), 71, 72 n. 4, 90 (figs. 182-188).

[2] V. BONELLO, *La Madonna nell'Arte* (Malta, 1949), 8 (plate opposite p. 9); BOTTARI, 63-66, 83 (fig. 163); the painting is dated '151 . .'

possible exception of the Virgin of Damascus, the most important medieval painting in Malta is the Retable of St. Paul now in the Mdina Museum but once in the cathedral. It consists of eleven panels and has been dated about 1450. It seems likely that it was commissioned for the Cathedral. This is suggested by the prominence given to the scene of St. Paul's shipwreck and also perhaps by the position accorded to St. Agatha who appears with St. Peter who, according to her legend, healed her breasts when she was in prison. It was once proposed that the Retable was Sienese, but there is nothing in it to suggest Siena. It was either commissioned in Catalonia or comes from a school at Syracuse with Catalan derivatives. When I was working on it I inclined to a Syracusan origin. There is certainly some relation with the Retable of St. Lawrence at Syracuse in the Museo di Palazzo Bellomo and this appears as one of a group for there is resemblance to the polytych 'del Monasterio di Santa Maria' in the same Museum and this in turn is linked with the work of the Master of San Martino. But Catalan influences were strong in early fifteenth-century Syracuse and it is quite possible that the St. Paul Retable came direct from Catalonia, though inconceivable that it should have come from Siena. Clearly direct art-contacts with Spain were possible; in the Mdina Museum there is a Resurrection, a Dormition and a St. Michael of the early fifteenth-century school of Valencia to balance the Madonna from early fifteenth-century Sicily in the Augustinian church at Rabat.

This will provide the necessary setting for an attempt to analyse medieval wall paintings in Malta. The eleven paintings in the church at Hal Millieri and the thirty-one paintings in the cave church of St. Agatha at Rabat may be taken to represent a central grouping though they are perhaps a century apart. All are technically ikons; they are almost invariably single figures, and they are shown frontally in the Byzantine manner for the purpose of invocation. They share common characteristics, one of them seems to be unique; cult images are repeated on the same wall. There are two identical St. Georges at Hal Millieri and there are three St. Leonards and at least twelve St. Agathas at Rabat.

Since this paper is only intended to be a very tentative and personal contribution to the history of the study of Maltese art it is perhaps worth putting on record how I first became associated with the paintings at Hal Millieri and the archaeological characteristics of the site. I had been lecturing in the University at Valletta and I

was told of a barn at Hal Millieri where there were some Byzantine paintings half hidden beneath whitewash and with Greek inscriptions.

Hal Millieri was a deserted village between Zurrieq and Mqabba. It had once been a large village to judge by the number of wells and had had at its centre four small churches: the Annunciation, with the Visitation next to it and opposite St. John the Evangelist with St. Michael's beside it. The village must already have been deserted in 1575 when Mgr. Duzina reported that there was no resident priest.[3] The 'barn' was the old church of the Annunciation, the 'Greek inscriptions' were fragments of Latin Gothic lettering, the paintings seem to be influenced from Sicily not from Byzantium. It was hard to establish the date of the church. It was 'Siculo-Norman' but that was a style that was in use in Malta well into the sixteenth century. Four slightly pointed arches divide it into five bays. Four of these bays are covered with wall paintings. The two paintings on either side of the entrance represent St. George on horse-back fighting the dragon in the presence of the Maiden; the two St. Georges are both facing the same way instead of facing each other. Seven other paintings consist of single figures shown alone, two others consist of figures shown as a pair, the twelfth painting only survives in fragments; a hanging textile which was probably once surmounted by the life-size figure of a saint, as in two of the paintings that survive. The principal colours used were orange and white and blue and red. Each painting was framed with a border of red pigment.

After the church of the Annunciation had been desecrated and put to secular uses the whole interior was kept white-washed; four coats of white-wash have been counted. The remains of white-wash still partially obscure the paintings; until this has been removed it is rash to suggest a date or an iconographic scheme, but I guessed that the date might be early fifteenth century.

Besides St. George, it may be possible to identify some of the other figures. The cult of St. Leonard was well established in late medieval Malta. He is painted three times at Rabat and nine churches are dedicated to him. Traditionally he was a Benedictine. He is first shown as a young deacon carrying a book on a Tuscan panel

[3]Valletta, Archiepiscopal Archives, Visitatio Dusina (1575), f. 140. (Information from the visitations is kindly provided by Mr. Mario Buhagiar.)

dated 1265 and now in the Jarvis collection in the Museum at New Haven and in a painting in Florence in the church of San Leonardo in Arcetri.[4] I have noted the same representation in a fourteenth-century wall painting in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo at Spoleto. The convention went south about 1400 when it can be found at Andria and at Galatina. At Hal Millieri there is the image of a young Deacon carrying a book.

The cult of St. Agatha reached Malta from Sicily but it is clear that it was well rooted there by the fifteenth century. She is shown in company with St. Peter on the Retable for the Cathedral. Eight churches were dedicated to her. An original Sicilian convention for St. Agatha showed her holding a book as in a painting at Castroreale dated 1420; she is shown holding her severed breasts in a painting at Gaeta dated 1456. In the Museum at Syracuse there is an early fifteenth-century St. Agatha holding a scroll. On occasion she is shown in company with St. Peter who healed her.[5] At Hal Millieri there is a woman in a halo carrying a book. She is in the company of a bearded saint who could be the traditional Peter. It might be suggested more tentatively that there is a hermit with a high cowl and a long staff who might be St. Anthony of Fgypt as he is shown at Rabat, but it would be pointless to attempt to identify the three mitred bishops or even perhaps to distinguish between them as the duplication of St. George suggests it is well to be prepared for a multiplication of images.

The church of the Visitation stood next to that of the Annunciation. Clearly the former was the more important of the two; mass was said there weekly as late as 1618.[6] It is likely enough that it also was painted, but it had been abandoned by 1758[7] and now nothing is left except part of its ground plan.

I came back later to Malta at the invitation of Din L-Art Helwa and at the expense of the British Council and spent two months working there on paintings. I found the setting of Hal Millieri had been transformed by the youth group of Din L-Art Helwa under Mario Buhagiar, George Serracino Inglott and Roger Vella Bonavita.

[4] G. KAFTAL, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 627-633.
[5] G. KAFTAL, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting* (Florence, 1965), 5-14.
[6] Visitatio Cagliares (1618), f. 103.
[7] Visitatio Rull (1758-1760), ii, f. 378-379.

They had discovered a quantity of scattered evidence which taken cumulatively strengthened the case for a late medieval date. Three Sicilian coins were found wedged between the original flagstone paving and the later alter platform, all were fifteenth-century, one was of John II of Aragon (1458-1474). There were 'graffiti' of knights in armour, four shards of a medieval painted ware of red on yellow, the fragment of a finely carved stone head. I am still inclined to place the Hal Millieri paintings early in the fifteenth century.

The paintings at Bir Miftuh may prove to be of the same school as Hal Millieri; now they can be studied only in fragment. Santa Marija ta' Bir Miftuh is architecturally the most interesting of the medieval churches surviving in the island; it is also the largest. It was the centre of a parish in 1436, seven later parishes have developed from it. The church began to become derelict after 1656 when a new parish church was built at Gudja.[8] Three of its side doors were blocked with stone and only little more than the foundations remain of the five small chapels that surrounded it. It seems clear that the church was once painted. On the wall half way up a narrow circular staircase leading to the choir loft there is an image of a Virgin carrying a lily. There are fragments of painting along the wall above the main door. It is also clear that two paintings have been white-washed. They could so easily be cleaned that it would be premature to describe them. But apart from the flames which might have accompanied a representation either of St. Paul or St. Vennera, they seem to be images of the same pattern as Hal Millieri; a woman with a palm, a saint with cross, a man shown frontally and then vestiges of other figures; a hand, a foot, perhaps a breast. The arms of the Kings of Aragon are carved on the church walls. At present the middle of the fifteenth century seems a tenable date for the paintings.

It seems likely that there were a number of painted churches in Malta at the time of the coming of the Knights. Don Achille Ferris recorded the destruction of the painted church of San Salvatore at Mdina and of a painted chapel next to the church at Bir Miftuh.[9]

Fifteenth-century Maltese wall painting will perhaps be best

[8] A. FERRIS, *Descrittione storica delle chiese di Malta e Gozo* (Malta, 1866), 348.

[9] A. FERRIS, *Storia ecclesiastica di Malta* (Malta, 1877), 154.

studied against a Sicilian background. It was natural to look for that background on the coast between Messina and Syracuse because of the precedent of the panel paintings. But the only Sicilian parallels that I could find were with the School of Niccolò di Maggio who worked at Trapani, Palermo and Castrogiovanni between 1399 and 1430.[10] The nearest Sicilian approach to the figures at Hal Millieri seems to be the St. Cristina painted by Niccolò in 1402 and now in the Museo Nazionale at Palermo. The Palermo Museum also contains a St. George on horseback which may be related to the charging St. George on the walls of Hal Millieri. But at the most this seems an indirect influence perhaps exercised through some disciple of Maggio. When Hal Millieri and Bir Miftuh have been cleaned it seems likely that Maltese wall painting of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century may be recognized as a distinct variant among Mediterranean schools of painting. Its strongly indigenous quality is emphasised by its contrast with a fresco in the Chapel of St. Dominica at Zabbar showing the Virgin and the Child with St. Catherine of Alexandria; this suggests a date about 1500. It is smooth, accomplished and South Italian, and perhaps by a painter from Catania. On the other hand Hal Millieri has a close relation to one group of the Maltese catacomb paintings.

It is still too early to write anything definitive on the catacombs of Malta, and their extent is unexplored. Clearly they were not only places of burial but the setting for ceremonial meals. A common feature is a circular table carved from the rock with a bench surrounding it except where breached to give access. By custom they are called 'Agape' tables but there is no reason to link them with any Christian agape. Only one Christian inscription has been recorded and that is from the small family catacomb at Marsaskala. Among the 25 Government owned catacombs at St. Paul's at Rabat it is clear from carvings in relief that three belonged to the Weavers' Guild and four to the Jewish community. But inevitably, as the islanders became Christian, Christian engraving and painting would begin to be associated with their burial rites. Perhaps the earliest case is at Hal Resqun close to Bir Miftuh: an engraving of two pelicans and then a crowded scene possibly best explained as the Naming of the Animals in Eden.

The most enigmatic of the catacombs in Malta is that named

[10] BOTTARI, 19-22, 78.

after St. Agatha at Rabat. I would suggest very tentatively that it may have been a hypogeum adapted into a catacomb and that the rock-hewn cave above it was the immemorial shrine of a fertility goddess before it became the crypt of the church at St. Agatha. But Christians were being buried in the catacomb by the fifth and sixth century with the emblems of their immortality. In 1973 I noted in the deeper recesses paintings of a dove, a wreath, a peacock's tail, a shell, a cross between an alpha and an omega, a dove on a branch above a drinking-cup.

The rock-hewn church above the crypt has been covered by paintings; it is likely that once they spread over the roof as well as the walls. For the cave has long been among the most sacred shrines of Malta. St. Agatha is held to have lived in it for three years while hiding from the Governor of Sicily. It is possible that a still older cult was fused with hers. The dominant motif in the paintings is an emphasis on the breasts. St. Agatha is shown bearing her severed breasts; even the Virgin is shown suckling her Child. Thirty-one paintings survive, some only in fragments. There was a partial restoration in 1881 but the restorers' work seems easily recognizable. The paintings were once described as thirteenth-century but that is fantasy. My own feeling is that predominantly they date approximately about 1510. Of course they are often archaic for the early sixteenth century but art in Malta may have been as archaic as 'Siculo-Norman' architecture. Only one stiff hieratic painting could possibly date from the thirteenth or fourteenth century. It is to the left of the entrance, a Virgin with an apostle holding a staff perhaps St. John; it is 65 inches high, 42 wide. It is quite unlike the others; the Virgin might have been copied from a portable ikon. It is possible that other earlier images survive beneath early sixteenth-century over-paintings. Sometimes there may have been votive offerings like the St. Agatha bearing the arms of Falzon. They are of quite different sizes. Occasionally they have charm like the painting (32 inches by 22) showing St. Margaret of Antioch leading her dragon on a rope. But normally they are pedestrian, there is none of the charging grace of the St. George's horse at Hal Millieri. Their interest lies in their iconography and in the evidence they provide for the Maltese conception of the sacred image.

The images are shown frontally for purposes of invocation and essentially in isolation. An analysis of the paintings in St. Agatha

in Rabat will suggest the absence of any detailed iconographic scheme. The series on the right of the cave church between the entrance and the epistle side of the central altar begins with a small St. Leonard, then a battered St. Vennera, then St. Lucy, then St. Agatha, each with her emblem, the flame, the eyes, the breasts. Next there is a St. Agatha (33 inches × 12), beyond there is a large St. Blaize with chalice and crozier (58 × 17), and next to him a large St. Agatha (60 × 26); then the scale alters, there is a bishop only 18 inches by 13 who is perhaps St. Cataldus, then St. Agatha (21 × 12) followed by a St. Agatha over 5 feet high. The line continues behind the altar and down the left side of the cave: St. Leonard, the bishop with pallium and crozier who may have been St. Cataldus, St. Leonard, St. Agatha, St. Agatha, St. Agatha, St. Agatha, a martyr possibly St. Catherine of Alexandria, St. Agatha, St. Margaret of Antioch, St. Anthony Abbot, two unidentifiable images, the broken representation of Mary suckling, St. Agatha, a Virgin and an Apostle (perhaps Mary and John) and at last again St. Agatha. In so far as it has any iconographic scheme it is a shrine to St. Agatha of the breasts.[11]

The two cave churches at Mellieha suggest some parallels with St. Agatha at Rabat. They also have long been sacred. It is held in Malta that St. Paul and St. Luke sheltered there, and that St. Luke painted the Mother and Child on the rock face in the recess of the upper cave. Again it is possible that it was a pre-Christian shrine. The Mother and Child are still quite visible and perhaps are of the same period as the majority of the Rabat paintings.

It may be suggested very tentatively that the Maltese School of wall painting represented by Hal Millieri and Rabat belongs to the phase in the history of the island between 1412 and 1530 and that this also was the true period of 'Siculo-Norman' architecture. It is more difficult to attempt to reconstruct Maltese culture between 1282 and 1412. I could only find one church in either Malta or Gozo which I would attribute to those years and that is the disused chapel at St. Cyr at Gnien Fieres close to the road from Rabat to Fiddien. The near-by Abbatija Tad Dejr has a fragmentary painting which I would incline to place in the same period.[12]

[11] On my last visit to St. Agatha I owed much to the help of the Rev. Victor Camilleri SSP and Brother Bonnet SSP.

[12] On my last visit to Tad Deyr I benefitted greatly from the company of

A Crucifixion was painted in a recess by the opening of a late catacomb there. It was painted in a Gothic manner and skilfully and with sophistication. Technically it seems the best painting in medieval Malta and its Gothic elements might suggest a background in Angevin Naples. But the background would be remote. The small fragments that still remain at Tad-Deyr of an angel, of the Mother of God, of the Crucified and of St. John are very different from the monumental isolated images on the walls at Hal Millieri or St. Agatha, but they have this in common – there seems to be no exact equivalent outside Malta.

my friend the Rev. Mario Zarafa OP. My friends Mrs. V. Greer was also with me not only at Tad Deyr and at Mellieha but in St. Agatha; I owe her so much that I dedicate this article to her.

THE ITALIANS AND THEIR LANGUAGE IN AUSTRALIA

By J.S. RYAN

'Australia's largest non-British and yet probably least understood – or most misunderstood – minority'. W.D. Borrie, p. vi of the Foreword to J.A. Hempel's *Italians in Queensland* (1959).

IT is appropriate to embark upon a survey of this kind at a time when migration to Australia from overseas has lost momentum and the economic recession of 1971, together with changing public attitudes, make it likely that there will be a considerable diminution in immigration from Europe, and that this external source of population increase for Australia may be relatively ignored for many years. It has also been the case, from the late 1960s, that with the improvement of the West-European economy and the creation of the Common Market, the source was already running out and that the Italian influence had almost certainly reached its all-time peak.

Refering particularly to the post World War II influx Professor Borrie more than a decade ago asked the following questions,

> Where have these people settled, what occupations have they followed, how have they brought their families together,..... have Italians integrated to any degree with Australians, do Australians want or expect them to do so –? *(op. cit.*, p. vi)

While these questions are demographic and social and the answers belong strictly to spheres other than language, it is the case that the surviving pointers may ultimately be held to be linguistic and to have been fossilized both in speech and literature.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Revolutions of the Risorgimento and the Wars of Independence had unsettled Italy politically and economically, and had forced many of her citizens to seek a haven overseas. They went to the Argentine, America, and Western Europe and they came to Australia.

Further, late in the nineteenth century and early in this one economic conditions both in Apulia and Sicily were in a chaotic state. Poverty was widespread, and the political events of the period had not improved the lot of the ordinary working man, so that it was hard to retain a sense of pride in and identity with the motherland and the colonial experience was often a decisive one.

Although individual Italians have settled in Australia in all periods and some have attained positions of importance, there was no very considerable influx of Italian settlers until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Subsequently there was a fairly steady flow, both to and from Italy, with large numbers of arrivals during the immigration schemes following both World Wars.

The majority of these incoming Italians have settled in the eastern states, in Queensland almost entirely as labourers or farmers in the sugar-producing areas, and in New South Wales and Victoria preponderantly as town and metropolitan dwellers, particularly as traders, food providers[1] and market gardeners. 'Italians in Sydney congregate where there are Italian grocers, Italian restaurants, Italian boarding houses' (*Sydney Morning Herald* June 30, 1961, p. 2)

There has also been considerable Italian settlement in Western Australia, where many have been and still are employed in the mining and timber-cutting industries and, to a lesser extent, in South Australia. Small groups of Italian fishermen have been established here and there notably in Western Australia and pockets of Italians have worked in the wine industries of New South Wales and South Australia, both as growers and as retailers.

The general migration of Italians to Australia has followed lines somewhat different from those of other nationalities. The tendency has been for groups from one particular place or area in Italy to follow one another to Australia and to settle in a district suitable for carrying on their particular calling. Commonly the men have emigrated first and established themselves before sending

[1] Craig Macgreagor in his survey of popular Australian culture comments that 'most vegetable shops seem to be run by Italians', *Profile of Australia* (1966), p. 148. One Signor Bragato, initially a gold-miner, was appointed in 1888 as the first viticultural expert to the Government of Victoria.

for their fiancees or families.[2] The following paragraph records something of the flavour of one typical early clustering.

'By about 1881, a number of Italians (mostly Sicilians) had settled at Point (Cape) Peron about 19 miles south of Fremantle (W.A.) and formed a fishing concern by pooling their capital and selling the catch in one block. Fishing in that area had begun as early as 1830, when the first settlers had practised the industry, but this group now sold its fish by a very primitive haggling arrangement[3] on the beach at Fremantle. They then settled themselves at the larger port where they constituted more than 50 per cent of the licensed fishing community and were divided into two communities, Sicilians and Apulians,[4] between which there was a slight animosity, with, there is said, a sense of superiority in the Sicilians towards the Apulians.'

Climatic factors have influenced the general racial structure of the Australian population. Apart from the concentration of aborigines in the north, and the understandable presence of Pacific Islanders in the far north, it is for example of interest to note in electoral rolls, telephone books and other lists of personal names for northern Queensland the much greater proportion of those of south European origin as opposed to British or northern European names than occur even in the southern part of that same state.

* * *

At the beginning of this century, between 1901 and 1913, Italian emigration to Australia amounted to 12,000 persons, or 0.3 per cent of Italian overseas emigration. Between 1919 and 1925 Australian participation in overseas emigration rose to almost 1.5 per cent and between 1925 and 1939 to almost 5 per cent. Between 1946 and 1957 the Australian share of the exodus was 12.5 per cent, and from 1957 to 1963, almost 17 per cent. Before World War I the average annual Italian overseas emigration was 363,500 per-

[2]This period of waiting often lasted more than ten years, although that has not been the case since 1946.

[3]Charles Gamba, *A Report on The Italian Fisherman of Fremantle,* A Preliminary Study in Sociology and Economics (1952), p. 3.

[4]*Op. cit.* p. 5.

sons, between the wars – mainly due to the internal and colonial Italian population policy – it dropped to 92,000 persons, and in the eleven post-war years rose to 113,000 persons per annum. Between 1946 and 1957, 1,356,000 Italians emigrated overseas, and between 1901 and 1939, there were 6,948,107 emigrants.

Some idea of this Italian influence on Australia in more recent years may be gained from the following census figures.

Table 1

YEAR OF CENSUS	ITALIAN-BORN IN[5] AUSTRALIA	INCREASE OVER PREVIOUS CENSUS
1871	960	
1881	1,359	399
1891	3,890	2,531
1901	5,678	1,788
1911	6,719	1,041
1921	8,135	1,416
1933	26,693	18,558
1947	33,623	6,930
1954	119,643	86,020
1961	228,296	108,653
1966	267,325[6]	39,029

During the peak immigration years (1949-52) the Italians, with a total net immigration of 65,990 constituted the largest group of new Australian settlers from any single nation, apart from the British.

Thus the Italians may now be said to have invaded Australia, at least as much as the Welsh have England, by elbowing aside

[5] These figures do not, of course, include those of Italian extraction born in Australia.

[6] In the period 1961-1966, there was an actual drop from 154,009 to 153,413 in the number of Italian nationals in Australia (see *Official Yearbook of the Commonwealth of Australia*, No. 55, (1969), p. 136), but this is adequately explained by naturalization after five years of domicile in the new country. For Italians have one of the lowest percentages for any migrants of permanent return to homeland.

other groups. Yet the very recentness of this major influx is indicated in the distinctiveness of domestic customs, of habits of mind, and of their very names.

Some conception of the possible proportions of Italians in a similar stock is indicated by the U.S.A., where the 1930 census figure for Italians born was 1,790,424, it being backed by 2,306,015 persons of Italian stock born there, and 450,438 born there of part Italian parentage. Thus the original figure becomes 4,546,877 in all, of whom 1,808,289 reported that Italian was their mother tongue.

While Italians, outside Europe, like the Germans, have settled in immigrant pockets for periods of a generation or more, the relations between the immigrant minorities[7] and the Australians have not been of the type that would facilitate linguistic exchange. The settlements were isolated and often rural in the nineteenth century, while in the (mid) twentieth they have tended to be ghettoes in the decaying inner suburbs, particularly of Sydney and of Melbourne.

In Australia, alien communities have either dissipated rapidly, as did the Scandinavian,[8] or retained their own cultural and linguistic identity, as did the Italian (for the first generation at least), the German and the Chinese. This was certainly true of New Italy, the Italian settlement near Woodburn in the Richmond River district of northern New South Wales. The Italians who came from Treviso in the province of Venetia had been introduced by an agent of the Marquis de Rays to join his ill-fated scheme for forming a colony in New Ireland in the Bismark Archipelago to the north-east of the mainland of New Guinea, and they had sailed from Barcelona in July 1880. After the collapse of the settlement at Port Breton in New Ireland, the group[9] was conveyed to Sydney,

[7] A survey of the Italian immigration between the wars is to be found in W.D. Borrie's *Italians and Germans in Australia,* (1954), F.W. Cheshire, Melbourne.

[8] 'Scandinavian immigration to Australia reached a peak in 1891, when there were 16,500 Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes in Australia, most of them in Queensland', W.S. Ramson, *Australian English: An Historical Study of the Vocabulary,* 1788-1898 (1966), p. 158. Their place names are listed in this book.

[9] In 1881, the group was estimated at about 200 souls. (see *Australian Encyclopedia* (1958 edition), Vol. 5, p. 113).

via Noumea. After various dispersals in Australia, the group reformed on the Richmond and remained intact for about ten years, but gradually the second generation of Italians found employment elsewhere, and by the 1930s only a few families remained there. The clusters of the colonists' descendants have remained in places like Pomona (in Queensland) and Dorrigo and Kyogle (in New South Wales), and intermarriage amongst these clans is still common and approved of in the third generation.

A further factor which greatly assisted the second generation assimilation was that, unlike certain other national groups (notably the Germans), poorer Italians have been fortunate in finding a religious organization, the Roman Catholic Church, established and ready to welcome them in Australia. And for at least a century a number of the high officials of the Vatican who have resided temporarily in Australia have been Italians.[10] Vicars-general and papal nuncios were often Italian, as was the suffragan Bishop of Armidale, Torregiani, at the end of the nineteenth century.

Overall the Italian influence in Australia, at least in the earlier periods, has been similar in pattern to that of the United States of America where in 1914, for example, the largest number of migrants had come from Italy. It had been generally felt there that immigrants from Southern Europe were harder to assimilate than those from the West, so that the number of Italians admitted under the act reduced drastically from 1921 to 1924.

The influx of Southern Europeans generally received a setback between 1921 and 1925 when, owing to the fact that they arrived in greater numbers than could readily be absorbed, the Government found itself constrained to rule that a foreign immigrant should be in possession of £40 on landing in Australia. Yet the total group in the census of 1933 showed an increase of these people of about 28,000. The Italians accounted for c. 18,600, the Greeks for 4,600 the Yugoslavs for 3,100, and the Maltese[11] for 1,500.

[10] Although the reasons for his case are much more complex than the Italian element, it is the argument of John N. Molony, in his *The Roman Mould of the Australian Catholic Church* (1969) that Rome and not Ireland established and maintains the spirit of the Catholic Church in Australia.

[11] See appendix for a note on Maltese migrant numbers.

While the census of 1921 shows that, in that year, the far greater proportion of Italians lived in towns, in Queensland 85 per cent lived on the land,[12] showing a preference for the northern districts and the sugar industry.

Racially, Italians fall into two main groups, viz., the Mediterraneans in Southern Italy and Sicily (with considerable influxes for Australia from the regions of Calabria and Apulia) and the Alpines in Northern Italy (with large numbers of Piedmontesi and Lombardians from Veneto-Friuli, Trieste, Fiume, Liguria and Emilia). It is and has been generally true that there is more Australian immigration interest in the northern districts which are well cultivated and whose economic progress is good, whereas the southern districts are backward and the living standard of the people low.

If we ignore Queensland for the moment, it may be said that most of the early Italians to reach Australia probably hailed from the city population of Italy, and may be assumed to have been of the Mediterranean stock. While the post 1946 migrant has largely been a city dweller in Australia, those arriving in earlier periods were mainly involved in heavy seasonal work in the sugar cane industry of Queensland, in road construction, in timber squaring, in maize picking and potato digging, apart from the still earlier gold mining and the well-nigh universal toil to grow grapes, however unsuitable the environment.[13]

The Italians of such early communities as the Fremantle one or early New Italy represent the differing generation pattern found also amongst later settlers, although there are many profound differences. The first type was unsophisticated, religious, content to live at an almost subsistence level, with sacred pictures in the

[12]This situation continued, as is indicated by the following special interim report (of limited circulation), viz: J.A. Hempel, *Italians in Queensland:* Some aspects of post-war settlement of Italian migrants, with a foreword by W.D. Borrie. Canberra, Australian National University, 1959. Similarly, H.L. Mencken *The American Language,* (edition cited) p. 214 shows that the concentration of more than 80% of the Italians occurred in relatively few cities in the United States of America also.

[13]New Italy was an example of a group of settlers concerned to produce vineyards at various places where there were not the requisite conditions.

house, older furniture, the horseshoe and glove to avert the *mal occhio,* or bad luck, few toys and in extreme cleanliness and simplicity. The family group was/is composed of father, mother and three to six children. Where Southern Italians were/are involved, the father, who came to Australia as a young man, can hardly read or write in Italian, preferring to talk in his own dialect as his English is very poor and his Austral-Italian, not much better.[14] He is skilled at his craft, and not really interested in Australian affairs, although his modern counterpart may read an Italian newspaper printed in Australia.[15]

The second generation, the sons and daughters of the first, would seem to have smaller families than their parents – or else to tend to acquire the type of family nucleus prevalent in the adopted country. To marry an outsider – someone not belonging to the community was/is not unusual, as long as he was/is an Italian.[16] This group is often in the interpreter role for parents, in dealing with taxation or school authorities, one necessitated by the fact that it was not until c. 1950 that the Federal programme of prosecuting the teaching of English reached any real intensity. As Gamba observed of the second generation Fremantle Italians –

> Even when born here they were never up to the standard of their Australian fellows because the only language spoken at home was either dialect or Italian (*op. cit.* p. 58).

The Australian-born Italians live in a better class of home and have more comforts than their parents, having acquired many of the Australian ways of living, without, however, entirely abandoning their own culture. Thus conflict can be brought about by these individuals trying to repudiate their own cultural ties, yet finding that they are not accepted by the Australians whose companionship

[14] For a later study see G. Rando, 'The influence of Australian English on Italian spoken by Sicilian migrants in Perth', *Quademi Dell'Instituto italiano di Cultura* 4 (1971), pp. 171-76.

[15] Various periodicals have been published for the settlers in Italian, those between the wars including *Italiano* and *Italo Australia.* While these died soon after 1939, their place was taken by the prestigious *Italian News Weekly (La Fiamma)*

[16] Similar extra-clan marriage is to be found between those of Greek extraction or of Greek-Cypriot family.

they would like to obtain as they become 'ungrouped'.

After 1945, optimism about the economic future of the country, coupled with a general feeling that the war had shown the danger of Asian attack, to which an underpopulated continent was exposed, stimulated a determined national effort to develop a large Australian immigration programme. In addition to the assisted passages for British migrants, and the bringing of some 170,000 refugees from the displaced persons camps of central and eastern Europe during the years 1947-1952, Australia in 1952-53 negotiated agreements with Italy, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, involving joint assistance towards the cost of passages by the governments concerned and the selection of migrants according to employment opportunities in Australia.

Some idea of the pattern of Italian background of more recent migrants is given by J.A. Hempel in his survey[17] of those leaving Italy by ship between 1952 and 1956.

Over this same period, there was a marked preference for Australia among migrants from Veneto, Abruzzi and Molise, and particularly from Calabria and Sicily. Far more from Veneto chose Australia than any other country, the largest number from Calabria did likewise, while Venezuala and Australia were the next choice for Sicilians after the United States of America.

Over this period there was a relative drop in emigration from Veneto and Friuli, while in southern Italy the three main regions of Abruzzi and Molise, Campania and Calabria show a steady and considerable increase as migrant-sending areas. As the contribution of Sicily might seem to be stationary, it is quite evident that southern Italy is not only the main source of Italian overseas emigration, but that it has been also increasing its share in that movement, a trend more marked as Northern Italy[18] has contributed

[17] This material is extrapolated from the tables in his *Italians in Queensland* (1959), p. 2, the ultimate source being the statistical Yearbooks for Italy. See also appendix tables to James Jupp, *Arrivals and Departures*, Melbourne, Cheshire – Lansdowne, 1966.

[18] It is of interest to note than Australia received almost 80 per cent of the emigrants from the city of Trieste, although this group could be classed as refugees.

Table 2

	CANADA	UNITED STATES	VENEZUALA	AUSTRALIA	TOTAL OVERSEAS
Piedmont	511	1533	1335	1265	9922
Lombardy	546	1649	1360	2490	12869
Trento	756	424	163	566	3827
Veneto	8759	1623	3790	11344	35579
Friuli	9220	1390	3508	6057	23830
Trieste	150	853	294	7301	9227
Liguria	454	2429	1096	616	8588
Emilia	805	1971	3601	1369	12841
Tuscany	1140	3735	1028	2793	13490
Umbria	275	276	305	230	2265
The Marches	2830	968	1323	1974	10784
Latium	11065	10483	7992	3209	43512
Abruzzi and Molise	23824	13989	23017	14038	98206
Campania	7472	18664	28414	8180	96000
Apulia	6270	7209	13525	3507	37507
Basilicata	1425	1427	3413	1628	17784
Calabria	22217	12273	3310	23284	110372
Sicily	8778	23826	18738	18559	88236
Sardinia	150	166	171	606	1902
Not Indicated	384	401	466	260	2725
TOTAL	107033	105389	116849	109276	645194
Departures to Italy	4280	16940	43600	8875	136548
Percentage of departures: arrivals	4.00	16.07	37.31	8.12	21.16

more to the Italian immigration to other countries in Europe. The figures for Italian departures from Australia indicate a very considerable degree of contentment of the migrants, and this is particularly so amongst farmers and rural workers. A considerable proportion of the returnees come from the group of single men amongst the white collar workers.

It is difficult to say whether the Northern Italian migrant is 'better' or 'worse' than the southern one. Yet there are considerable differences between them which are due not only to ethnic, social and economic reasons but also to the historical fact that the division of Italy into a number of kingdoms and principalities lasted until 1870. It is still felt that the Italian, and particularly the Southern Italian and the Sicilian, shows more local patriotism to his town or province than to his country, Italy, as a whole, and this fact has considerable impact on the economic and social behaviour of the Italian in the country of his adoption. As is pointed out by Hempel (*op. cit.*, p. 39) 'it is estimated, that the Italian is the youngest immigrant to Australia', and this fact, coupled with the relative freedom from sense of nationality has, like his Catholic religion, assisted the Italian migrant in Australia.

While Queensland has not retained its high proportion of all Italian migrants in the post-war years, the recruitment to Queensland cane-fields has frequently been the first placement of the young Italian male immigrant, 'sweating it out' there to begin a career and then with his savings to establish a home and family in the softer climate and easier conditions of the southern states.[19] Still others there have turned to such other agricultural employment as tobacco and fruit growing.

Whether they are northern or southern, the tendency for cells and larger groups to persist is to be found in various spheres where occupational isolation is a factor. Thus in the 1950s the Italian fishermen of Fremantle were still distinctively patterned.

> 'The Italian fishermen of this community..... are clearly divided into two large groups: those from Sicily and those from

[19] In similar fashion many Greeks and Cypriots began their Australian careers in the Snowy Mountain hydro-electric labour camps, both in life and in literature, and then withdrew to the cities.

Apulia. The Sicilians are almost all natives of Capo d'Orlando (province of Messina)..... While the Apulians are natives of Molfetta – a fishing town in the province of Bari – placed on the eastern coast of the Italian boot below the spur.....
The family inter-relationship between the various groups is not pronounced..... the tendency is, however, for the individuals to gravitate – in all their intercourses – towards their own native group.'[20]

This occupative cluster then had a distinctive pattern for education, the larger proportion of Italian children attending the Christian Brothers' College and the Convent school.[21] Their doctor was an Italian, a native of Sicily and thus a speaker of the dialect of the island and so these spheres and others were free from the normal mixing which is a part of migrant assimilation. A concern with education was a feature of many pockets of early settlers and considerable efforts were made to learn English.

Yet the ideas of the older generation seldom changed with the change of physical scene. Travel seldom broadened the mind. If the first generation father is asked for an opinion on Italian affairs he shrugs, commenting on blood relatives in Italy that 'Il popolo fa sempre la fame' – 'The people (i.e. poor people) is always hungry', his general attitude and expectation being related to a demand for fair earnings and a quiet life.[22] Gamba however reported that private life, if lived in a narrow social environment, would be honestly lived, and in contrast with the public concept of the 'dago' as carrying a knife (*op. cit.*, pp. 50-51).

Of course, the withdrawal of Italians is not just because of

[20] C. Gamba, *op. cit.* p. 45.
[21] *op. cit.* p. 46.
[22] A somewhat more sophisticated view from later migrants is that of J. Jupp's 'Migrant Opinion Survey 1965-1966' (*op. cit.* p. 186) where in Question 19, 58 per cent of Italian migrants would have encouraged fellow-countrymen to emigrate to Australia, while in Question 20, if given a completely free choice as to where they would prefer to live, the same Italian sampling had 79 per cent voting in favour of the homeland. See also *Cambridge History of the British Empire* Vol. VII, (1933), pp. 501-2, and Table C. p. 96 of W.D. Borrie, *Immigration: Australia's Problems and Prospects*, (1949).

work or language problems, but as a reaction to certain aspects of the Australian way of life, particularly the lack of interest in relatives and the aged, in short the looseness of the family unit. The newcomers continue today to live in close-knit family groups, shielding and sharing. The family circle stretches out to include aunts and uncles, cousins, godfathers and godmothers. Italian shipping lines and loan companies regularly lend money on easy terms for the purpose of bringing more relatives out from Italy and thus there is both reinforcement of the existing clan and semi-official recognition of it as a way of life.

This withdrawal takes the form of a ghetto in the larger case, and this has been a feature of the 1950's particularly in the capital cities of the various Australian states. In his *Arrivals and Departures* (1966) James Jupp shows that there were discernible from the 1961 Census a number of municipal and other areas with high migrant populations, as the following percentages of Italian born would indicate:

Table 3*

STATE	AREA	NAME	PERCENTAGE
Victoria	Melbourne	Fitzroy	42.91
Victoria	Melbourne	Melbourne	31.46
Victoria	Melbourne	Brunswick	31.71
Victoria	Country	Myrtleford	25.64
South Australia	Adelaide	Thebarton	31.29
" "	"	St. Peters	29.21
" "	"	Campbelltown	28.65
" "	"	Kensington	29.40
Western Australia	Perth	Fremantle	27.21
" "	Country	Tableland	47.50
New South Wales	Country	Queanbeyan	30.63
Queensland	Country	Minchinbrook	28.29

*(Items taken from Jupp's table on p. 181)

Of all migrants to Australia the Italians have been the youngest upon arrival. The following figures as percentages are given by Jupp[23] as representative of the migrant opinion survey he conducted in 1965-66.

Table 4

MAJOR NATIONALITIES	AGES					
	UNDER 21	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	OVER 60
British	6	6	43	39	–	6
Dutch	–	3	46	24	24	3
Greek	5	40	34	16	5	–
Italian	12	56	24	3	5	–

* * *

Religion may be held to fill a qualified place in the life of labourers like the Fremantle fisherman, and there were cases there some forty years ago, of the Catholic Church feeling the need for a religious revival. Yet that group of Apulians considered the 8th of September as a holiday, the Feast Day of the Madonna dei Martiri, the patron saint of Molfetta and a day for ceasing work and attending Mass. Perhaps the modern pattern for worship amongst Italians and Australians was set in the 1950s and 1960s when the rising numbers, at least in the eastern cities, made it possible for the Italians to avoid ordinary Roman Catholic churches and to concentrate on the parishes with (American-) Italian clergy.

'Most Italians want a church unaesthetically crammed with trinkets and statues. They want a paternal priest who will give

[23] In *Arrivals and Departures*, (1966), p. 182.

[24] This compares closely with North America, as is indicated by C.F. Westoff and others, in *Family Growth in Metropolitan America* (1961), which reports (pp. 202-211) that in one analysis of Catholic women it was found that, in the better groups, 92 per cent of the Irish regular Roman Catholic church goers had been to schools of their denomination whereas the same was true of only 43 per cent of Italian women.

them plenty of attention and tell them kindly but firmly exactly what they should do. They want stirring sermons, liberally laced with hell fire, and the recurring consolation of confession .... It is essential for most newcomers to live in or near the parish of an Italian church.' (Quoted in *The Sydney Morning Herald,* June 30, 1961 p. 2).

As is common amongst the earlier *Southern* Italians – (and similar observations have been made of Sydney migrants some fifteen years later) – church-schooling is a matter of relative indifference to parents, because of a reluctance to pay the Roman Catholic School's fees.[24] Another obvious feature of such families is the considerable sums spent on weddings, funerals and christenings, as well as the dress of the daughters, something contrasting markedly with the modesty of dress of married women, particularly the older ones. Yet this pattern is made more complex when, because of the shortage of Italian women, the migrants marry Irish Catholic Australian women whose social allegiances and life styles are more publicly conformist and less flamboyant.

By their very nature, (Australian) Italians are very sociable people who do not like solitude. Unlike many other migrant groups, e.g. the Greeks, Yugoslavs, or the Baltic groups, they do not form national associations, because they are nationally apolitical and have no premeditated tendency to preserve their language and traditions as is the case with practically all the other national groups. Their desire to get together is of a purely social and personal character and a substitute for the highly developed *piazza* social life in Italian towns and villages. Although its possible presence is taken as something of a hoax by the general populace, there is evidence to suggest that the *mafia*[25] does exist, particularly in Sydney. But the English argot of roguery,[26] one always rich in Australia, seems to have borrowed little from Italian sources, and that distinctive Italian or Sicilian institution is not a visible part of the migrants' life style.

* * *

[25] For the possible influence of the Mafia, see W.D. Borrie, *Italians and Germans in Australia,* A study of Assimilation (1954), pp. 115, 145, 230.
[26] See *The Memoirs of James Hardy Vaux,* including his Vocabulary of the Flash Language, edited by Noel McLachlan (1964).

Such is, in brief, the general pattern of Italian population and occupation in Australia over the last century or so. The linguistic situation must now be described, even though any attempt to do this is fraught with many problems.[27] Lexis is the most obvious starting point, and from it consideration will then be given to semantics and syntax.

Any meaningful study of Australian Italian vocabulary and construction is almost impossible at this point in time, because it would need to be based on a wide range of taped records and such sources as the detailed analyses of the letters and sporting articles in the metropolitan Italian language newspapers. Steps in this direction are the two articles in *Lingua Nostra* by Gaetano Rando:

(1) 'Alcuni Anglicismi nel dialetto di Filioudi Percorini', *op. cit.*, March 1967;

and

(2) 'Influenze dell'inglise sull'italiano di Sydney', *ibid.*, June 1967.

Other sources available to the dialectologist are the advertisements and commercial correspondence in Real Estate Agencies, corner shop notices about bargains, closing, etc., as well as the colloquial street chatter of the Italian quarters of Sydney and Melbourne.

In the sphere of Australian English and its vocabulary and ideas, the general borrowing pattern is, understandably much nearer the American than that to be found in England, a country with a very small Italian population, entrenched dietary habits, and a much colder climate than the Mediterranean equivalent style of the continent of Australia.

While the ghetto or settlement group has always persisted with the Italians, Slavs, and Jews, and since 1945, amongst the Greeks, the Italians in Australia, if poor in earlier decades, have become prosperous in the last fifteen years and so have come out from the ghetto to impose a distinctive style in the metropolitan areas. In that zone of confrontation linguistic commerce has been at its most busy.

[27] A recent account is to be found in G. Rando, 'L'italiano parlato d'Australia'. *La Fiamma* 25, p. 11 (11 February, 1971), pp. 10-14.

Social change has brought the Italian newcomer to the general public attention, particularly with the tolerance of second and third generation settlers. Another source too, for Australian acceptance of Italian, is literature, both the novels in which Italian characters appear and the short stories of E.O. Schlunke, a farmer of German stock, who was more than an amateur sociologist in tracing the course of assimilation of German migrants, as well as his affectionate depiction of the theme[28] of Italian prisoners of war.

Some idea of the toleration of Italian terms in literate Australian English may be gleaned from the following terminology used quite naturally by short story writer Desmond O'Grady[29] in a set of tales where few situations are deliberately evocative of Italian atmosphere. Thus, the following may be found in a quick inspection:

– in loose social banter; *chow* (p. 40), *Conquista* (p. 40), *bambino* (p. 41); *marde* (p. 43); *siesta; gnocchi* (p. 88); *signora; 'scusi* (p. 136); *Italia è bella; corni* (sexual); *conformisti* (p. 161);
– in architecture and local description: *piazza, Piazza del Populo* (p. 84); *the Porta Portese* (p. 87); *trattoria; Friulan words* (p. 125); *pensione; Via Ripetta* (p. 127); *Porta Maggiore; gretto; palazzo* (p. 143).
– in trade names: *Fiat, Lambretta, Vespa, L'Unita;*
– in song titles etc., 'Oi Mari', 'Santa Lucia' (p. 40); 'Ostia d'amor' (p. 43); 'Bella Italia' (p. 139); 'Poveri ma Belli' (p. 157);
– in reference to (Roman Catholic) religion: *Gesù* (p. 41), *Dio, Natale, Pace*; *tutto* (fine) (p. 44); *Propaganda Fide College* (p. 83);
– in racial brawling: *no vendetta* (p. 43); *brutto* (p. 43);
– in nicknames – *Vesuvio* (for a man with reddish hair), (p. 45); *Giulio Cesare,*
– and in general vocabulary: *bicchieri* (tumbler) (p. 46); *sei* (six); *lire; permesso di soggiorno* (p. 133); *carbiniere; magnifico; pasta.*

[28]See, for example, 'The Enthusiastic Prisoner', 'Cheap Labour', and 'The Man Who Liked Music' in *Stories of the Riverina,* by E.O. Schlunke (1965), Selected with an Introduction by Clement Semmler.
[29]In his collection, *A Long Way from Home,* Melbourne, F.W. Cheshire, 1966.

Comparable terms to these from O'Grady are used in the novels of Australian Philip Jones (b. 1919), many of which have Italian or Adriatic settings – e.g. *La Bora* (1961), *The Month of the Pearl* (1964) or *The Fifth Defector* (1967).

Since in the period 1945-1950 most immigrants of non-British stock were from eastern Europe, all were called indiscriminately: *Balt, New Australian – Naussie, Wog,*[30] or even *reffo (reff, reff – raff),* technically a Jewish refugee from Europe who had settled in Australia just before or just after World War II, but applied to all nationalities, particularly by the Australian of little education.[31] The use of *dago* in Australia has never been very common. It is perhaps important to consider this item, since the Americanization of Australian life, which began in the period 1942-45, has resulted in the transference into Australian colloquial speech of a very considerable amount of American slang, although it is still probably the case that this influence is resisted in rural areas. In all matters affecting popular lexis American influence must be allowed for.

The growth toward nationhood (and it has to be said), towards some racial intolerance (particularly towards southern Europeans) may be seen in the rise of clusters of Australian words for new groups in the community. While the Englishman could be called *pommy, pom, pom wog, homey, chum* and *choom,* the Italian was called *sky, eyeto, steak, ding,* and *dingbat.*[32] Of the last list, the first may come from the slang boxing phrase, *to sky the rag,* meaning 'to admit defeat' or 'to throw in the towel'. The second is a fairly obvious corruption of Italian, and is used in a vaguely derogatory way, while *steak* or *stake* comes from [steaka-da-oyst], an alleged pronunciation by an Italian restaurant owner of 'steak and oysters'. *Ding* and *dingbat,* the former a shortened form of the latter, are both from the phrase *to have the dingbats,* meaning 'to be in a temper' and presumably they mean someone whose mood

[30] The European migrant was sometimes called *wog wog,* the English *pom wog,* the American *yank wog.*

[31] The more educated term was *displaced person.*

[32] This particular list is given in Sidney J. Baker's *The Australian Language,* Second edition (1966), p. 262.

invokes dislike in the Australian or who acts in an apparently eccentric fashion.

The postwar migrant influence has been very diverse – the yearbook currently lists a considerable number of countries of origin for its citizens – and so the influence of European New Australians has been fragmented and as a result, Australianism has begun to reassert itself, so that non-Australian elements are tending to cancel each other out, as the emphasis on the central stock continues afresh.

City terms for Italy (largely encountered in Australia and America between the wars) included: *Land of da Spaghette, Macaroniland, Mussolini land,*[33] *Tally, Wopland.* In the United States, the 1930s were the years associated with the phrase *the Italy of America* for Arizona.

The vocabulary of American English has been greatly enriched with borrowings from the languages of European settlers of Romance extraction. Thus, for example, Spanish words are not uncommon and the borrowed words reflect the nature of the contact, as in the clusters concerned with ranch life, such as *corral, lariat, lasso, rodeo, ranch, bucharoo* and *stampede.* The Italian contribution there is seen by most scholars as a foreign language[34] become more or less Anglicized through the incorporation of American words, like Pennsylvania German, or Polish and Yiddish, especially as they are spoken in crowded city communities. As most of these later migrant groups are directly engaged in manual occupations like

> 'laborers, janitors, truckmen, through all stages to that of the skilled artisan' – (*loc. cit.*),

it is very natural that they should take over many of the concrete terms of their trades and surroundings. While the more literary offerings here are slight, being mainly confined to national language newspapers printed in America, Italian, as modified by American

[33] Often associated with the Abyssinian campaign – 'There's a war in Abysinnia, /Won't ya come?/ All ya need is ammunition and a gun,' etc.
[34] See G.P. Krapp, *The English Language in America* (1925) (reprint 1960) I, pp. 55-56.

English appears in some interesting literary performances, reviewed by Arthur Livingston.[35]

Much of the underworld and food terminology is indistinguishable between the two countries and the items best described as international Italian-English will be readily identified in the following pages.

There is not yet (and it is too early for) any research on the analogies between idiom and lexis of Australian-Italian and the Americanisms in Italian slang

e.g. *bomma* 'bum', encountered in Naples.
or *briccoliere* 'bricklayer', encountered in Sicily.

Not all the American slang terms[36] for an Italian are common to both countries, although there are in common: *dago, gin* (rare), *gingo, guines, duke* (rare), *wop, Eytalian, macaroni, spaghette bender, Tally, Tony.* The term *Italian football* for 'bomb' is said to occur in Sydney's Mafia circle, as is (Italian) *pineapple* for 'a dynamite bomb'. The American equivalents *egg, love apple* and *guinea* are rare, although *torpedo* is used in both countries for a home-made bomb.

Slang (and often insulting) terms for Southern Europeans tend to be used indiscriminately in Australia for Italian, Spanish or the rare Portuguese. Thus these occur: *dago, dino, duke, greaser, greaseball* (more American), *spic, spig, spike, wop,* (any one of Italian stock, loosely applied to any foreigner of dark complexion, especially of the labouring class); *dago, gin, ghin, ginney, guinea, wop* (especially an Italian), etc.

Italian food was less tolerated at an earlier period and in the 1930s-1940s, spaghetti was called *Italian* or *wop special,* or *worms,* while *Italian storm* was used for spaghetti with garlic and *worms in blood* for spaghetti with tomato sauce. Garlic was called

[35] *loc. cit* p. 156. A Levingston, 'La Mercia Sanemagogna' *Romanic Review,* IX (1918), pp. 206-226.

[36] See Lester V. Berrey and Melvin Van Den Bark, *The American Thesaurus of Slang,* A complete Reference Book of Colloquial Speech. New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1943. There is also a section on the Italians of New York City in Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot,* (1963).

Italian perfume, but the American *Haliatosis* for the same is not recorded. Macaroni was variously styled: *Italian special, straws* and *wop food,* while other terms overlapped with those for spaghetti. *Squirrel dumplings* and other phrases *in mal sens* were used for 'noodles'. The most popular word is *salami* which can be said to have become a part of the Australian diet.

The (Australian) language of this group is marked by various clusters of borrowings, – on the food side, *macaroni, ragou* or *umido* (savoury tomato stew), *cena* (the evening meal), *pranzo* (the midday meal/social dinner), *colazione* (the breakfast meal), *ravioli, tagliatelle* (home-made macaroni), *cannoli alla Siciliana* (a Sicilian speciality cake with whipped cream and sugars) and *cassata* (an ice-cream cake),[37] *minestrone.* As their chaplains have stressed the migrant cannot tolerate[38] the Australian (institutionalized) pattern of meals and the dishes associated with them. He set out to alter the prevailing situation. Consequently, so the story runs, when one Italian imported an espresso machine, the following years caused all Sydney to drink espresso coffee, publically at least. Amongst wines, *chianti* (once known as 'dago red' and thus confused with *red Ned,*) has become much more widely drunk and chianti bottles and their straw bags have become a standardized item in popular (or youthful) decor.

A form of pseudo-Italian had already been widespread in Australia, before the post-war influx and there were very many nicknames with hypocoristic forms employing the *-o* suffix, such as *Jimmo, Tommo, Johno, Sallo, Daiso, Freddo* or *Betto.*[39] In the early 1950s, a Federal law was passed curbing haphazard changes of name by New Australians. Until then, many migrants, displaced persons and others had been able to blend into the background as apparent Australians. Baker quotes one case[39] of the Latin name Nazzareno Vincent Antonio Xuareb becoming the unpretentious

[37] This item became relatively popular in restaurants and milk-bars in the eastern states in the 1960s.

[38] A Capuchin Franciscan father tells the story of a migrant who regarded a Sydney migrant hostel as a concentration camp concerned to poison him, because of the Australian diet. *(The Sydney Morning Herald, loc. cit.)*

[39] *The Australian Language,* Second Edition, p. 276.

Morrie Wilson. This is in marked contrast with the Italianate suffix, *-etta*, which has made little progress (unlike the United States).

There is a group of slang words often thought to have some link with the migrant (Italian) stock, *beauto!* a term of approval; *bombo*, cheap wine; *Cappo*, a Capstan cigarette; *cazo*, someone injured in war or in an accident; *immigranto*, the broken English often spoken by a non-British migrant to Australia in his early days in the country (from *immigrant* and *Esperanto*); *migro*, an immigrant; *receppo*, reception; *topo* a topographical map. The source is the *-o* suffix fairly common in Australia since the end of the first World War, possibly as the result of soldier experience in France where it was a popular ending in the speech of those low in society. It is widely found in familiarly abbreviated forms[40] of place names, as in *Darlo*, Darlinghurst; *Kenso*, Kensington; *Paddo*, Paddington, as well as in given names such as *Daiso*, *Jim(m)o*, and *Tommo*. There is little extended written support for these usages. The *macchietta* (or '(Neapolitan) character sketch') seems to be known only to small clusters in Melbourne and as a now historic literary form.

Yet the problem with the loans is that they must differ from the 'learned' or trade Italian terms which entered Standard English after the Renaissance. Relatively few of the Italians who have come to Australia at any period have brought any genuine command of Standard Italian with them, and even those few, who had such a competence, spoke at home their local dialects, many of which were naturally unintelligible. As G. Andreoni observes,[41] there is an obvious consequence –

> 'In Australia, migrants from Lombardy and Venetia live with those from Calabria and Apulia, and, in order to communicate, as an old immigrant pointed out to me, they use this lingua franca which is a mixture of Australian English and Italian.'

The fate of this separate lingua franca can be predicted, – as the amalgam of Standard Italian, the various Italian dialects and

[40]See S.J. Baker, *The Australian Language*, second edition. pp. 366-69.
[41]p. 115 of his 'Australitalian' (pp. 114-119), *University Studies in History*, Volume V. No. 1, (1967).

common Australian, with the latter gradually prevailing.[42] It is probably the case that Australian loan-words now comprise as much as one third of the spoken language of these communities.

The vocabulary of Australitalian can be divided into three broad categories, as follows:

(a) Words for which a true Italian equivalent is lacking, because of the absence of absolute identity between the Australian thing or act and its Italian counterpart, e.g.:

gliardi, (yard); *visco,* (whiskey); *pichinicco,* (picnic).

(b) Words whose Italian equivalents were generally unknown or unfamiliar to the migrant in his previous environment. e.g.:

morgico, mortgage; *bosso,* boss; *lista,* lease.

(c) Words that enter Australitalian by sheer force of their repetition by Australians and thus retain their 'basic' status, despite the fact that Italian may offer adequate and familiar alternatives.

e.g.: *carro,* car; *trampo,* tramp; *gambolo,* gambler; *cotto,* coat; *checca,* cake; *loncio,* lunch; *storo,* store.

The loans are many and Anglicization is the most common along traditional morphemic patterns:

abbordato	boarder
abricotto	apricot
adresso	address
baga	bag
barrista	bartender
beca	baker
becherista	baker
biccia	beach
billo	bill
besinisso	business
blocco	block
bordo	board
bosso	boss

[42]This situation also occurred in America, where the ensuing jargon is called American-Italian by A.M. Turano in 'The Speech of Little Italy', *American Mercury.* July, 1932, p. 357.

boto	boat
canna, canno	can
carpentieri	carpenter
chemista	chemist
cianza	chance
colle	coal
costume	customer
dicce	ditch
enveloppo	envelope
faitatore	boxer
farma	farm
farmista	farmer
fattoria	factory
forma	shape
fornitura	furniture
galone/gallone	gallon
geologista	geologist
giobba	job
gliarda, jarda	yard
globbo	club
grossiere	grocer
guardiano	keeper, watch
gum, gumma	chewing-gum
licenza	license
lotta	lot
meccio	match
marchetto,-a	market
mascina	machine
moni	money
morgico, morgheggio	mortgage
ovrecoto	overcoat
penta	pint
pepa	paper
petrolio	oil
piccio	moving picture
pipa	pipe
pondo	pound
psicologista	psychologist

pulizzimmo	policeman
quarto	quart
raida	ride
rivolvaro	revolver
sciabola	sabre
scio	show
scioppo, scioppa	shop
scolaro	pupil
sista	sister
sparagrassi[43]	asparagus
sprini, springi	springs
stic, stico	stick
stimbotto	steamboat
stocco	stock
sueta	sweater
tacsa	taxes
tichetta,-o	ticket
ticchettaio	ticket collector
ticia	teacher
tomato,-a	tomato
trocco	truck
uilbarro	wheelbarrow

Some borrowings are doublets, with the meaning twice, as in *canabuldogga,* from Italian *cane*(dog) and English 'bulldog.' A half-time banker is a *mezzo-barbiere,* with elements from both languages. Not infrequently words fall together, at least in spelling.[44] Thus, *cecca* (cheque) is to be contrasted with *cecca* (magpie) of Italian, while *rendita* (rent) at home meant 'income', and *libreria* means 'library' in Australitalian but 'bookstore' in Italian. The confusion between *fragrant* in English and Italian is played on, when the word is misplaced in Italian English and applied to wines.[45]

[43] This compares with Italian *asparago, sparagio,* as opposed to the Cockney *sparrow-grass,* common in Broad Australian.

[44] For similar phonetic reasons there is a similar collision of spellings in the Maori language, as it handles English concepts.

[45] Desmond O'Grady, *op. cit.,* p. 164. See also, for general problems, G. Rando, 'The semantic influence of English on Italian', *Italica* 48 (1971), 2, pp. 246-52.

There is less borrowing amongst adjectives, although many of the following are extremely common:

basso	low, short (cp. Italian use as noun 'bottom')
isi	easy
ruffo, roffo	rough
sciur	sure
sechenze	second-hand
smarto, smatto	smart
stinge	mean
stretta	narrow (cp. Italian *strada* 'street')

One of the places where the dialects of the Italian mainland reassert themselves is in personal pronouns, particularly in the attempted phonetic renditions of the second person pronoun as *tu, ti, te, voi, vi, du, di, de,* as well as *foi* and *fi.*

Italian given-names are on the increase. The following made names occurred in an inspection of one work from contemporary Australian fiction:[46]

Angelo; Aurelio; Emanuele; Francesco; Frederico; Gennaro; Giovanni; Giulio; Leo; Matteoti; Niccolo; Pietro; Salvatore; Sandoro; Sergio; Vittorio; Wladimiro.

Other common names include: *Antonio, Andrea, Carlo, Bartolomeo, Uberto, Tomaso* or *Vincenzo.* As in the United States of America,[47] *Giuseppe* and *Giacomo* are harder for the general speech community and are commonly changed to *Joseph* and *Jack* and *Olivieri* to *Oliver.* On the whole the influence of the priests keeps the Italians from going beyond Anglo-Saxon names, and well away from the more gaudy Jewish.

Female names are less common, as fits the pattern of fewer migrant women, and the removal from public life of most married women. Yet the charming Italian names for women have persisted, often with anglicization in 'mixed' (i.e. Italian-Irish) marriages, as in *Angela, Anita, Antonietta, Bianca, Carlotta, Claretta,*

[46] O'Grady, Desmond, *A Long Way from Home* (1966).
[47] Mencken, H.L. *The American Language,* Fourth edition (1936) p. 509.

Giuliana, Lucia, Marina, Rosa and *Scilla.*

While surnames in the early days of immigration were changed with some frequency, the tendency was arrested and there is not the same social pressure to 'assimilate' as was the case in the 1950s. Translations of names are found in some (more rural) families – as in: *Little* for *Piccolo; White* for *Bianco; Pope* for *Pape; Miller* for *Molinari.* Transliterations blurred and clipped forms also occur: *Rondy* for *Rondinone; Martinhussey* for *Martinuzzi; Lou(e)ry* for *Lauria; Kelly*[48] for *Vaccarelli; Matzola* for *Mazzola; Kennedy* for *Canadeo.* Generally speaking this is related to the propensity of Italians to identify with their co-religionists, the Irish, amongst whom they frequently intermarried, particularly in the second generation phase. There is little tolerance for longer names and dissyllables of various types often replace them. In many cases the pronunciation of Italian names has been altered, particularly in the loss of the *-e, -o, -io.* Yet the refusal to modify is now making itself felt, particularly in the sugar-cane towns of North Queensland, where a degree of reversion is noticeable in such official lists as electoral rolls. Such Italian surnames are counter-balanced by the given names, since those of Italian-Australian stock do not observe the church's lists for permitted given-names, as is the case with Italians in Europe and the Americas.

Quite apart from the language influence and wartime contact with Italians, Australians may be said to have been influenced in various ways by Italy, – from Terrazzo floors to Neapolitan ice cream, from pilasters in domestic architecture to espresso coffee, from currently flamboyant male dress which can out-do Carnaby Street to the drinking of table wines in a way still largely uncommon in the British Isles, and for the source of a certain verve to be found in such Bohemian quarters as the largely Italian Newtown, adjacent to the University of Sydney.

As was stressed in a leading article[49] on Sydney's Italian Community some ten years ago –

'Of all the migrant groups in Sydney, the Italians are the most

[48] See, for comparison, Joseph G. Fucilla, 'The Anglicization of Italian Surnames in the United States', *American Speech,* Feb. 1943, pp. 26-32.

[49] 'Their Test for Living has influenced our Habits', by a Special Correspondent, *The Sydney Morning Herald,* June 30, 1961, p. 2.

dominant – temperamentally as well as numerically. They throw themselves into life as consumately in Wooloomooloo and Leichhardt as they do in Naples or New York's Little Italy. It is almost certainly true to say they they have changed Sydney more than Sydney has changed them.'

The precise extent to which post-war immigration has influenced the Australian way of life is not easy to assess, as the changes in this area come from greater travel, increasing internationalism and the information and media explosions and have affected very deeply the intellectual and social life of Australian society and its culture.

One of the difficulties in commenting on the fate of Italian language in Australia, and on the way in which, by eye transference or 'the etymological trap', senses flow from one language to the other, lies in the problems of language, dialect and necessary lingua franca. As F. Palazzi points out in his 'Nouissima grammatica italiana',[50] both language and dialect are a means of expressing one's thoughts and feelings, the language perhaps more for the culture, comprising history, poetry, science, law and religion, while the dialect tends to express the simple and personal needs of everyday life. Thus, social situations made the problem of language and dialect an issue before the migrants ever left Italy. It was complicated by the varying dialects used in the homeland, – quite apart from the Australian-Italian dialect used among the other settlers here, and the peculiar occupative problems and idioms necessitated by new work situations. Indeed it may be estimated that at the present time the number of persons of Italian stock in Australia (i.e. an admitted eighth or quarter in their ancestry) probably exceeds 400,000, while the number of persons in close (linguistic) contact with these may well number in excess of one million, or 7-8% of the total Australian population.

Although Italians generally 'assimilate' more easily than most ethnic groups for a variety of reasons, it is of great interest that each main regional group accepts the use of the English language without first reverting from the dialect to the Italian literary lan-

[50] Principato Editore, Milano, (1962), p. 5.

guage.[51] From the cultural point of view, any hopes that Italian migrants will be able to foster in Australia the knowledge of the Italian language, literature or art, will not be fulfilled.

An average Italian migrant in Australia has comparatively a greater difficulty in learning English than a north European migrant. The difference between the structure and phonetics of his own language and the English language as used in Australia is so great that it is doubtful whether an average adult Italian migrant can be fully assimilated linguistically.

Professor Borrie has some illuminating (and representative) points to make about various samplings of linguistic usage made in 1951 of Italians in Queensland. These may be summarized as follows.

> 'The children of Italian parents..... attended either State schools or Roman Catholic Church schools in which instruction was given only in English and in which Australian-born children were usually a large majority. The children thus rapidly became bilingual, and tended to use their native language extensively only in the home. From the questionnaire it was possible to analyse the language facility of 396 children. Of these some 13 declared that they could read and write only Italian, 294 that they could read and write only English, and 89 that they had facilities in both languages. None of the 63 children of Australian-Italian marriages could read and write only Italian, 18 were bilingual and 55 could read and write only English. In regard to the spoken language, a large proportion of the children were of necessity bilingual because of the inability of at least one parent to speak English. Fifty-five declared that they could not speak English, and 116 that they were bilingual. But in response to the question which asked children to state which language was usually spoken in the home, only 42 listed English and 258 Italian, while 96 declared that both languages were spoken. In about half the 63 cases of Italian-Australian marriages English was the language usually spoken at home: in 23 both Italian and English were used and Italian was the rule in 10.'

[51] See J.A. Hempel, *op. cit* pp. 117, ff. He quotes the example of a group in Brisbane in 1956, more than 90 per cent of whom could write in dialect.

The general conclusion reached from the questionnaire analysis relating to language was the very simple one that English is the normal language of Australian-Italian parents and that Italian remains the normal language of first generation Italian settlers, even after twenty years' residence in Australia, and that this situation usually requires the children to have some knowledge of Italian and the parents to have some knowledge of English.[52]

The individual belonging to the second generation speaks the dialect of his father, but not entirely correctly, words being introduced which do not belong to it. It is fairly well agreed, both for Australia and for America,[53] that the vocabulary of the second generation becomes more of a local variant of English rather than staying a form of Italian.

In some cases there is a need for coinages/borrowings in Australitalian since the concepts are foreign. Thus may be explained *ringo barcare* (ring barking), the process of incising a cut around the trunk of a forest tree to kill it ultimately and so clear the land for agriculture.

Australitalian would seem to be widely spoken and seldom written, yet there is some epistolary currency for various phrases:

bigu, be good; *dezzo,* that's all; *gudbai,* good-bye; *m'amusai* (I amused myself); *oche,* (O.K.); *rongue,* wrong way; *che peccato, un suono morto,* what a shame, ('a dead swan'); *uatsius,* (what's the use?); *è un bel bissenisse,* it is a nasty business.

Confusions of idiom and a form of barbaric colloquialism are features of Australitalian. Thus consider the following epistolary phrase:

Australitalian *è longo tempo che* – (It's a long time since...)
v. Italian *è da molto tempo che* – (It's a long time since...)

Molto should be used in connection with time, while *lungo* is used mainly for distance and length.

But as far as auxiliary verbs, numbers pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections are concerned, these are usually used correctly in Australitalian.

[52] *Italians and Germans in Australia,* (1954) pp. 87-88.

[53] See respectively C. Gamba, *op. cit.* p. 60 and E.T. Miller, *Principles of Sociology* (1933), p. 123.

Anglicisms are to be found in Australitalian and these then find their way into Australian English.

Table 5

AUSTRALITALIAN	AUSTRALIAN	V. ITALIAN
arvesto	harvest	raccolto
moneta	money	denaro
cana	(sugar-) cane	canna
nido	I need	ho bisogno
landa	land	terra
barra	bar	taverna
contri	country	campagna
fait	fight	(combattimento (battaglia
pulizio	police	polizia, gendarmeria
giorge	judge	giudice, magistrato
dollari	dollars	dollaro
loffari	loafer	perdigiorno
carro	motor car	auto
toccho	talk	conversazione
oaré	hurray	arrivederci
laste	last	ultimo
tenne	ten	dieci
naite	night	notte

Most of the Australitalian verbs have senses other than those of Australian English, as the table indicates:

Some of the most difficult back formations occur in areas where the Italian population is slow in assimilation and its halting attempts at Australian lexis then cross from Australitalian to Broad Australian (i.e. working class speech), thence to more cultured or Educated Australian, especially in the literary depiction of direct speech in the situation of linguistic confrontation, where semantic confusion is a common feature.

Table 6

AUSTRALITALIAN	ITALIAN MEANING OF AUSTRALITALIAN	AUSTRALIAN MEANING OF AUSTRALITALIAN
abbordare	–	board
abusare	to make bad use of	to insult
applicare	to do the best one can	to put in order, formulate
draivare	to drive	to force, push
fissare	to establish/stare at	to make someone pay
fixare, fichisare	fix	to arrange
giocare	to play a game	to play (musically)
giumpare	jump	to move quickly
lodare	to praise	to load
parcare	to park (car)	to sit, stay

It has been suggested that the old fashioned (and more American) *sez you* may be a translation of *si dice,* but the source is almost certainly via the United States in the first instance.

Australitalian tends to have most of the normal difficulties in structure of the Italian speaking English, although they are not all encountered in an individual and then only under tension situations in the earlier period of domicile here. Yet Italian adults in Australian have to contend with the strong inhibitory influence which their mother tongue exercises in their successful learning of the new tongue. Faced with new words their tendency, until they are drilled out of it, is to pronounce the new words as if they were native to their own language. Similarly, in the situations in which they have to respond by using the new tongue, the tendency is to cast the new words into the structural patterns of their native tongue.[54]

[54] The Italian student and his problems are discussed in *English, A New Language:* A bulletin for teachers of new Australians in continuation classes, Vol. 3, No. 4. January 1953, pp. 2-16, which material is largely reproduced in a later issue of the same journal, Vol. 13, No. 2. November, 1971. pp. 23-42.

The recurrent mistakes in pronunciation may be generally grouped as follows:

(1) the introduction of vowel sounds between consonants or after single or grouped consonants. e.g.

Scusa me. I losta the money.

(2) the stressing of vowels which are normally weakened in English.

(3) the pronunciation of diphthongs as pure vowels.

(4) the pronunciation of [θ] and [ð] as [S] and [Z]

(5) the pronunciation of [W] as [V]

(6) the dropping of the letter [h] and the trilling of the consonantal 'r'.

More specific points are listed below.

(a) The letters k, y, and w do not occur in the Italian alphabet, and j and x occur very rarely. When j does occur, it is pronounced 'y'.

(b) While English spelling is, generally, an unsafe guide to English pronunciation, Italian is much more phonetic and thus the intelligent learner will ask for *pronuncia figurata* (phonetic spelling).

(c) Since almost all Italian words end in vowels there is the usual learner's tendency to introduce a redundant vowel after the final consonant in English –

e.g. He's got a pick and *shovala.*

(d) Dissyllables and polysyllables in Italian usually have their stress on the second last syllable e.g. fratello, padre, which can be carried across.

(e) The nature of Italian stress is such that it does not lead to weakening of preceding/following syllables. Thus for 'attention' [tenʃn], the Italian will want to pronounce all the syllables, as in his 'attenzione'

(f) As all Italian vowels are pure, there are problems with combinations of vowel sounds, as in English diphthongs, since even such Italian words as *mai, naufragio* and *poi* do not merge their clusters of vowel sounds.

The vowels and diphthongs of English which do not occur in Italian may be presented by the following sounds:

[ɔe], *bag;* [ə] *the;* [ə:] *her;* [ɛə], *air;* [ɪə], *dear;* [uə], *cure;* [ɔə] *or;* [ɔ:], *four;* [ʌ] *much;* [ɔuə], *hour;* [ɔə], *fire;* [ɔ:] *all.* Strictly speaking the following sounds do not occur either; [ɔɪ], *bite;* [ɔi], *boy;* or [ɔu] round.

(g) Similarly, the following consonantal sounds do not exist in Italian:

[θ], as in *think;* [ð] in *they;*

[w], *west;* [z], *pleasure;*

[h], *hat;* [r], *red.*

Another problem is the Italian dialectal variant whereby among Neapolitans *d* and *t* in loan-words sometimes change to *r,* as in *siri, suri* or *zuri* for 'city'.

The difficulties of structure for Italians learning English in Australia are those encountered in the United States of America, on NATO bases, and elsewhere. They are given briefly here, for the sake of completeness, with some typical local examples.

1. The omission of subject pronouns comes about since the endings of Italian verbs ordinarily indicate person and number, and the subject pronouns, being seldom necessary for clearness are, therefore, frequently omitted.

   English: I am Miss A.

   Italian: Am the Miss A. (Sono la Signorina A.)

2. In Italian there are only two genders, masculine and feminine, and the absence of any neuter in their own language presents some initial difficulty to Italians.

   Thus the typical error is the Australitalian 'The house is white, she is, white' (*Casa* is feminine). or 'My job – he is very hard'.

3. There is a difference between the Italian and English possessive adjectives and there is the temptation to include the definite article, as is correct in Italian, but not in (Australian) English:

   English: This is my hand

   Italian: This is the my hand (Questa è la mia mano).

4. The interrogative and negative in Italian and English cause certain problems:

   (a) In English, inversion is the normal method for the question.

(He is here. Is he here? – He will go. Will he go?) Given the regular omission of the subject pronoun, this is frequently impossible in Italian, and so we have questions with the same word order as the affirmative.

E Vecchio. 'Is old' for 'He is old'.

E vecchio? Is old? for 'Is he old?'

(b) The regular English substitution of 'no' for 'not a' has no Italian parallel and so both 'she hasn't a husband' and 'she has no husband' are both expressed by the one sentence: 'Non ha marito'.

5. The Italian in Australia is reluctant to include 'it' in weather phrases. Thus 'it is raining today' becomes 'rains today', from 'Piove oggi', and there frequently occur Australian-Italian phrases like 'In summer is hot'.
6. Cardinal numerals in Italian cause various confusions in Australian situations, particularly with money matters. e.g. 'This costs hundred dollars/hundred five dollars'.
7. Since Italian uses *avere* (to have) to express age, the recurrent error is to give sentences like 'I *have* thirty five', or 'She has two and a half.'
8. While *the* is used for the Italian equivalents of *this, that, these, those,* the awkwardness in English does not come from this aspect of the definite articles but from the fact that, contrary to English usage, the definite article is required in Italian before nouns taken in a general sense.

   Thus, English: Eyes are green

   Italian: The eyes are green (Gli occhi sono verdi)
9. In Italian, cardinals are used for days of the month and the connective 'of' does not occur. Thus *Il ventiquattro dicembre* leads to an English 'The twenty-four December', in place of the idiomatic 'The twenty-fourth of December'.
10. Time when is relatively easy for Italians to express in English, but certain contrasts between the languages cause the following types of imgrammatical idioms –

    (i) 'I go to school Monday', since Italian has no preposition 'on' before days of the week.

    (ii) 'I came to Australia in the 1959', since the Italian definite

article is used in addition to the preposition *(nel 1959).*

(iii) 'I came here at six o'clock/at ten to six' of ordinary English, since Italian uses the definite article in addition to the preposition *(alle sei, alle sei meno dieci)* is matched by Italian English 'I came here at the six/at the six less ten.'

11. Australian Italians want to say 'Listen! I talk to you now', since Italian has no present continuous distinct in form from the present of habit. They will use 'I drink' where 'I'm drinking' would be better, since Italian has only *bero.*
12. Since Italian has no present continuous, it follows that it has no short answer forms like those in English. Thus, 'Are you reading?' is replied to by the unidiomatic 'I read.'
13. Adverbial particles cause difficulty since they are not differentiated from prepositional ones. Thus the common error is to insert both uses when only one is required. Thus:

    He is putting *on* his hat *on* his head.

    He is taking *off* the hammer *off* the shelf.

    The confusion would seem to arise partly from the double functions of the words, partly from the fact that in Italian a single verb normally expresses what is conveyed in English by a verb and adverbial particle. For *mettese* means 'to put on' and *togliere* means 'to take off'.
14. The comparative and superlative in Italian, is based on 'more/most' (as opposed to suffixes – 'er/est') – *bella, più bella, la più bella,* and this causes little confusion. But comparisons when translated lead to sentences like 'He is taller of me', as 'than' = 'di' in Italian, and as 'di' is commonly equivalent to the English 'of'. Other confusions are associated with the following idioms:

    (a) The 'one' – which (one)? is a pronominal usage which has no parallel in Italian, where the reference is made clear through the inflection of the word used. Thus 'the black one' would be either 'il nero' or 'la nera', according as a masculine or feminine object were meant.

    (b) The formation and normal use of the future affirmative do not present any particular difficulty to Italian speakers, but problems may arise with the interrogative and negative forms of the English future. Thus two common forms of Australitalian

English are –

Will come Mary tomorrow? and

Won't come Mary tomorrow?

(c) The tenses in subordinate clauses and 'when' do not cause difficulty if 'when' = 'whenever', as the use of the present after 'when' is common to both English and Latin.

Yet when the sentence pattern is principal clause in the future tense, and adverbial clause in the present tense, there is likely to be the influence of Italian, where both clauses are future. Thus, common type sentences are:

I'll buy some shoes when I'll go to town, or, I'll have a cup of tea when I'll be thirsty.

As opposed to the situation with Italians of adult years and amongst those engaged in heavy manual work in rural areas, there is a relatively rapid linguistic assimilation of younger people both amongst those born in Australia and those born in Italy. This is accelerated in the school situation where English is the language used both during and after school hours. The young retain a knowledge of the original dialect only so far as it is necessary to converse with their parents, or, as is more often the case, with their grandparents.[55] This language which was often almost a familial private one is/was a curious mixture of the Italian dialect and the English language. But, as the census table at the beginning of the article indicated, the Italian immigration fell off during the mid-60s, and it may well be that Australian English has assimilated Australitalian, even as Australia has absorbed its speakers.

Perhaps the future linguistic work on the inter-relation between Italian and Australian English will depend on a detailed knowledge of the original dialects of the immigrants, since it may well be that the impetus towards inventing anglicisms came in those areas of language where the dialects most diverge. It is certain that the Italian newspapers of Melbourne and Sydney will merit

[55] There was a considerable problem from 1946 to 1960 to get the married immigrant women to attempt to learn English, particularly in the older age groups. The ratio of men to women in all learners classes was very high.

detailed study in the future for many types of coinage and semantic change. It is even possible that dialect dictionaries of the future will record the currency of various loans from Italian, such as the (obsolete) West Australian *raisi,* for 'skipper', a Sicilian form originally.

Other investigations may well study Australitalian regionally in Australia to find out whether there are marked regional variations and whether these are directly related to local needs. Thus, J.A. Sharwood's 'The speech of the Italian community of Northern Queensland'[56] (1965) is an analytical study of the Italian language spoken by Italian migrants and their families in the districts of Innisfail and Ingham, to discover whether there are particular phonological, syntactical or lexical features in the English conversational speech of local residents, both of Italian and of Australian descent, which might be attributed to the influence of the large Italian-speaking population there.

So far as the spoken language is concerned, there are indications that the children of migrant descent are now being encouraged to acquire the language which should be part of their European heritage, which has been lost by the all too successful assimilation.[57] As the then leading Australian newspaper reported in 1961 –

> 'All the time it's assimilate, assimilate' one migrant leader told me. 'You are under such pressure here. After a while you get a bit irritated. They're overdoing it.' 'Assimilation – that silly word'. 'another said 'Integration. That's the word.' (*Sydney Morning Herald,* June 30, 1961, p. 2.)

The young are either growing away from their parents, or the parents themselves want their children to have the language which they have lost, to retain some measure of *italianità.*

[56]M.A. Thesis, University of Queensland. The same scholar is working at present on the vocabulary of the dried fruits industry along the Murray River valley in an area from Swan Hill in Victoria to Cadell in South Australia.

[57]See C.A. McCormick, 'Italian and Assimilation', *Babel,* No. 26, July, 1964, pp. 2-4; and Elisabeth Wynhausen, 'Teaching Australians how to be Greeks', *The Bulletin,* October 9, 1971, pp. 41-42.

There has never been an annual quota for migrants to Australia, so much as a series of targets based essentially upon economic absorptive capacity as assessed by the national departments of immigration and labour in consultation with their advisory bodies. Although the numbers have varied greatly in accordance with economic conditions, the policy was always administered to preserve some of the features of the United States 'national origins' system. Nevertheless, during the decade ending 1954, the fact that Italians had the largest flow of any one nationality revealed how extensive had been the change in public opinion since pre-war days.

On the whole, the Italians have broken the original 'group settlement' of the cane fields and the inner Melbourne suburbs, although there are notable exceptions to this, as with the Piedmontesi and Sicilians in North Queensland and the Calabrian group settlement at Griffith, New South Wales, which built up by the chain migration processes started by the Italian consul in the early nineteen-twenties. And while many earlier illiterate northern and southern Italian peasants could barely speak, let alone read or write Florentine Italian, and had only the vaguest notions of Italian culture and history, this situation changed with the second generation and the disintegrating group settlements gradually became assimilated into the lost society, through the phases of clubs and then concern for cultural survival. Language has moved through a like series of stages, from local dialect, to Australitalian to Australian English with vestigial survivals, to a final stage where the traditional language is learned afresh by those of migrant descent as a means of enriching themselves as people.

APPENDIX

Malta's impact on Australia has been relatively slight and the increase in numbers has been so recent as to make it scarcely possible for them to have been any linguistic[58] influence. Thus, at the Census taken on June 30, 1933, there were in residence 2,782 of Maltese birth, beside 26,693 of Italian. The number of Maltese has always been much smaller than the Italian and concentrated in the states of New South Wales and Victoria, as the following table indicates.

Table 7

Census at June 30, 1966.	
Population by States.	
STATE	NUMBER
New South Wales	23,779
Victoria	26,452
Queensland	2,146
South Australia	2,258
Western Australia	760
Tasmania	79
Northern Territory	25
Australian Capital Territory	305
Australia (total).	55,104*

*This constituted a sharp increase on the total of 39,337 in the Census of June 30, 1961.

There are concentrations of Maltese in certain farming communities, notably at Mackay in North Queensland.

[58] The slang term, 'Maltese holiday' is obsolescent in Australian English and it is held to have the root meaning 'Heavy air-raid' from the air attacks on Malta during the Second World War.

PHENOMENOLOGY OF TIME

by JOHN MICALLEF

(*Note:* In this exposition of the *Phenomenology of Time*, I use some of the material presented in my book *Philosophy of Existence* published by Philosophical Library in 1969, but I add the comparison of my views with those of other existentialist writers in Philosophy and Literature).

1. TIME AS SEQUENCE

The existent as an individual specimen of matter-in-extension goes through a process in a space-time context, manifesting itself in space through its extension, and in time through its duration. Such duration through process manifests itself as a sequence of events in such a way that the interval between events can be observed and measured.

Duration, however, should not be understood as extension in time, nor as a series of events followed by time intervals, each interval lasting a certain number of units of duration, or as a succession of fragments which shatter time into as many bits as there are seconds or fractions of a second, for such an explanation reduces time to a multitude of separate discrete fragments.

Time as such is, therefore, not the total aggregate of all the fragments of time to which we refer, however long they might be; it is not even the totality of past, as the time that no longer exists, the future as the time that does not yet exist, and the present as the only time that exists. Time does not consist in these three segments which succeed each other, in such a way that the present seems to become past, and the future becomes present.

Matter-in-process manifests itself through a series of events in such a way that it does not come about totally or all at once at any one given moment, but through the sequence of events itself. The individual which goes through the process is never fully the existent that it is going to be, but is becoming that existent because it never stops becoming whatever it is becoming. As the process unfolds through the continuity of development, the existent makes

itself present in time through the sequence. The sequence is not a series of moments that follow each other, for the sequence is not manifested in the moments as moments, but insofar as they are in series, or as they follow each other.

Kierkegaard explains that we see time as a succession of distinct and discrete 'nows', 'because we *spatialize* a moment, but thereby the infinite succession is brought to a standstill, and that is because one introduces a visual representation, visualizing time instead of thinking it.'[1]

Sartre too rejects the explanation of time as a collection of 'nows': 'Temporality is obviously an organized structure, and these three so-called elements of time: past, present, future, must not be envisaged as a collection of 'data' to be added together – for instance, as an infinite series of 'nows' some of which are not yet, some of which are no more – but as the structured moments of an original synthesis. Otherwise we shall immediately meet with this paradox: the past is no longer, the future is not yet, as for the instantaneous present, everyone knows that it is not at all; it is the limit of infinite division, like the dimensionless point.'[2]

Commenting on this mistaken view of time, Schrag writes: 'By defining time as a general process or continuing infinite succession, we already separate time into discrete units of past, present and future. These discrete units are then understood as constituting an infinite succession of 'nows' which succeed each other in a definite order of coming to be and passing away ... 'Nows' become transformed into things. Those that have gone by we call the past. Those which are coming we call the future. And then there is always the present 'now' which is forever slipping into the past. ... 'Nows' are viewed as things which in their order of succession constitute an unending flowing stream.'[3]

I become aware that I do not exist totally at any one time, but rather I go through the process as I persist in my existence. Such a process is manifest to my self-awareness as sequence. Luijpen re-

[1] Kierkegaard: Concept of Dread, 2d ed. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey. 1957. – p. 77.

[2] Sartre: Being and Nothingness, Philosophical Library, N.Y., 1956. – p. 150.

[3] Schrag: Existence and Freedom, Towards an Ontology of Human Finitude, Northwestern University Press, 1961, p. 124-5.

fers to the sequence through the image of the stream and stresses the underlying unity: 'Temporality is the never-completed unfolding of my subjectivity-in-the-world, the stream of my present. ... In this one-streaming phenomenon, my actual presence lets itself be discovered as the present, and my past and future as *absent* presences. Temporality, then, is not a simple being no longer and a simple being not yet, but a coming within my reach of nearby meanings and escaping my grasp as faraway meanings.'[4]

Sequence as sequence can only exist in my self-awareness, for sequence is the manifestation of process as a series of events. Sequence is not the finished result of such a process, but the awareness of the unfolding of the process which brings about the finished result through a series of stages within that event. I experience sequence as my life unfolds in me and within my environment; so it manifests itself as a process when I view it in its continuous development.

Time is, therefore, constituted as a sequence in my self-awareness, for as an observer, I look at the movement of the sequence converging from the future on to the present as the point of observation, and flowing away from it as past. The past and the future, however, share in the feature of time as sequence, for I do not consider them disjointed from each other and from my vantage point as the observer in the present. In fact, neither the past nor the future exist as such apart from my self-awareness of the sequence.

Barrett illustrates the mutual interaction of past, present and future: ... The *future* reveals itself as that toward which existence is projected; the past as that which our experience perpetually transcends – i.e. goes beyond, or rises above – and toward which also we may turn back in choosing to affirm this or that part of the past; the *present* is that in which we make-present, realize, a future in this transcending of the past. Future, past and present are thus given to us together as defining an inescapably temporal existence ... Future, present, past are three aspects into which our existence is horizontally displaced, and here again man's existence appears essentially incomplete, perpetually displaced or spread out into these three phases.[5]

[4] Luijpen: Existential Phenomenology, Duquesne University Press, Rev. Ed., 1969, p. 242.
[5] Barrett: What is Existentialism, Grove Press, 1964, p. 69.

Erich Frank is equally insistent on the interdependence of the three dimensions of time: 'Our subjective existence is essentially that process through which the memory of the past and the anticipation of the future are fused into the sense of the present.'[6]

Eliot is equally aware of the three 'dimensions' of time:

'Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.
What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.'[7]

In my awareness of the sequence, however, I can distinguish the before and after in relation to my point of observation, in such a way that the *before* relates to the past, and the *after* to the future; but I can see a *before* and an *after* in any section of time, whenever I choose a vantage point for my observation. In such a situation any section of time on which I choose to focus my self-awareness represents not just a section of time but a sequence. In fact, within any section of time, however small, I see the future moving on into the present and out into the past as the sequence anticipated, and foreseen, and to that extent planned and constructed in and through my self-awareness.

Merleau-Ponty follows Husserl in establishing the relation of the past and the future: 'Husserl uses the terms protensions and retensions for the intentionalities which anchor me to an environment. They do not run from a central I, but from my perpetual field itself, so to speak, which draws along in its wake its own horizon of retentions, and bites into the future with its potentions.'[8]

As Luijpen explains: 'In every presence there lies a retention,

[6] Frank Erich: Philosophical Understanding and Religious Truth, London, Oxford University Press, 1945, p.66.
[7] T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, Burnt Norton I, 1-8.
[8] Merleau-Ponty: Phenomenology of Perception, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962, p.416.

'now' present, of a former presence and a 'protention', 'now' present, of a future presence ...

'... My *existence* at this moment is not *real* without a reference to a future but neither without holding fast to a past.'[9]

Sequence, however, is sequence only if I can see it as a totality in my self-awareness, that is, if I do not see just a section of time within the sequence, but the totality of time, insofar as I become aware of matter-in-extension unfolding itself as a process through sequence. So I can see both the beginning and the end of the sequence, even though the beginning was in the past and the end is yet to come. Thus, my relation to the past is through my awareness of time as a lived sequence in my experience; my relation to the future is through my projection of time as a planned sequence of experience.

Kierkegaard, on the other hand, relates the past to necessity and the future to possibility. Schrag in his analysis of 'Time and History' summarizes Kierkegaard's thought: '... The self as consciousness permeated with passion is understood by Kierkegaard as a structural synthesis of possibility and necessity which is rooted respectively in the temporal moments of future and past. The self is concerned about that which it has been (necessity) and that which is yet to become (possibility). Consciousness of being a self involves arriving from a past and moving into a future.'[10]

Heidegger sees the movement of time from the future to the past: 'Temporalization is not a succession of ecstaces. The future is not posterior to the past, or the past anterior to the present. Temporality temporalizes as future-which-lapses-into-the-past-by-coming-into-the-present.'[11]

Such time is the 'time of human concern'. Schrag explains the implications of 'concern' in Heidegger's thought. 'Concern is constituted by the three structural moments of existentiality, facticity, and fallenness. Existentiality defines *Dasein* as protentional, or as existing in advance of himself in his future possibilities. Facticity characterizes *Dasein* as already abandoned in a situation, and thus indicates the temporal mode of the past. Fallenness is the

[9]Luijpen: Existential Phenomenology, p.241-242.
[10]Schrag: Existence and Freedom, p.122.
[11]Heidegger: Being and Time, N.Y. Harper & Row, 1962, p.350.

determinant of *Dasein* made possible through existence as presence. Temporality is thus disclosed as the ontological meaning of the structure of human concern.'[12]

Merleau-Ponty too focuses the course of the future and the past through the present: 'But for there to be an analogy between presents that have elapsed and the actual present, the latter must be given not only as present, it must already announce itself as what will soon be past, we must feel the pressure upon it of a future intent on dispossessing it; in short the course of time must be primarily not only the passing of present to past, but also that of the future to the present.'[13]

Time is, therefore, the mode of existence of a self through the awareness of process as sequence. As I become aware that the existent structures itself as a process, I constitute the sequence. Thus, time is constituted insofar as I see it as a process through sequence moving out of the past into the future as it passes through and is observed from my vantage point of my self-awareness in the present.

Thus, the self in constituting time through self-awareness of the sequence places itself out of the sequence, as Merleau-Ponty points out: 'Time is thought of by us before it parts, and temporal relations make possible the events in time. Correspondingly it is necessary for the subject not to be himself situated in it, in order to be able to be present in intention to the past as to the future. Let us no longer say that time is a 'datum of consciousness'; let us be more precise and say that consciousness unfolds or constitutes time. Through the ideal nature of time, it ceases to be imprisoned in the present.[14]

2. Dialectic of Time and the Timeless

As I view time from the vantage point of my self-awareness, I take the present as the 'point' of distinction that 'separates' the flow of time from the future into the past. If this point of separation referred to as the present were even the smallest section of time, it would still be a time sequence; but the present as the point of observation of the sequence in my self-awareness is timeless, be-

[12]Schrag: Existence and Freedom, p. 122.
[13]Merleau-Ponty: Phenomenology of Perception, p. 414.
[14]Merleau-Ponty: Phenomenology of Perception, p. 414.

cause it participates of the timeless feature of self-awareness.

The moment of time I refer to as the present, is ever 'present' to me, for my awareness of the present confronts my awareness of time as a sequence. In fact, as long as I am aware, I follow the sequence of time from the vantage point of the present; so, as long as I am aware I am always in the present, and the present is 'present' because I am aware of it. Thus, while I am aware of time as a sequence, my self-awareness is not in sequence.

Since Merleau-Ponty admits that consciousness constitutes time, he concludes that subjectivity is out of time: 'We may say that ultimate consciousness is "timeless" (*zeitlose*) in the sense that it is not intra-temporal. "In" my present, if I grasp it while it is still living and with all that it implies, there is an ek-stase towards the future and towards the past which reveals the dimensions of time not as conflicting, but as inseparable: to be at present is to be always and for ever. Subjectivity is not in time because it takes up or lives through time, and merges with the cohesion of a life.'[15]

Friedrich Kummel stresses the fact that the two aspects of time, namely succession and duration, as he calls them, are both incompatible and inseparable, but he attempts to explain them through their correlation: 'Duration arises only from the stream of time and, conversely, only within the background of duration is the emergence and our awareness of succession possible.'[16] To overcome this conflict, therefore, time must be explained through their dialectic: 'Time must, therefore, be understood as correlation of succession *and* of the co-existence of the "three times" which is the basis of vital duration. This cor-relation will allow of no other description than as a continual opposition or conflict between its elements...'[17]

Kummel's use of the term 'duration' is equivalent, I believe, to my explanation of the present as the timeless: 'Vital duration is always concrete, fulfilled duration, so that time from this aspect is always immanent to life ... Vital duration, then, is experienced as an "always" and as an eternal present.'[18]

[15] Merleau-Ponty: Phenomenology of Perception, p. 422.

[16] Kümmel: Time as Succession and the Problem of Duration – in The Voices of Time. A Cooperative Survey of Man's Views of Time as Expressed by the Sciences and by the Humanities. N.Y. Braziller, 1966, p. 35.

[17] Kümmel: Time as Succession and the Problem of Duration, p. 37.

[18] Kümmel: Time as Succession and the Problem of Duration, p. 38.

The use of the term 'eternal' should not mislead us into thinking that the experience of duration as he explains it is outside the experience of this life: 'We have, therefore, spoken of duration not as an exceptional experience "beyond" time but rather as a *sustaining* element of time and as wholly "given" *in* temporal existence, although in its *pure* state it does not appear to be experienced as time at all but rather as eternity.'[19] Unfortunately, since Kummel does not introduce the notion of the timeless in his article, he does not specify that the experience of duration is given *in* temporal experience, but is not *a* temporal experience.

In his own concise way, Wittgenstein accepts the present as timeless: 'If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present.'[20]

I feel that Eliot in *Burnt Norton* was experiencing the present as timeless when he refers to 'the still point':

'As the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshness;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is.
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say where.
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time.'[21]

Even more powerfully, Eliot expresses his awareness of the timeless present through the image of 'pointed light':

'There are hours when there seems to be no past or future,
Only a present moment of pointed light . . .'[22]

and the point of light recalls the 'still point':

'. . . the light is still
At the still point of the turning world.'[23]

[19] Kümmel: Time as Succession and the Problem of Duration, p. 38.
[20] Wittgenstein: Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, N.Y., The Humanities Press, 1922 (1961) – Proposition 6.4311.
[21] T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets, Burnt Norton, II 16-23.
[22] T.S. Eliot: The Family Reunion.

So, as the sequence of time passes through the timeless present, the present becomes:

> 'The point of intersection of the timeless
> With time, ...'[24]

Jorge Guillén is even more persistent in stressing this shrinking of time into the present which he sees as an 'eternal now' as he says in one of his poems:

> '!Oh presente sin fin, ahora eterno ...!'
> O present without end, eternal now![25]

It is to be expected, perhaps, that people who live close to the theatre should experience this awareness of the 'now': R.E. Jones 'This is drama; this is theatre – *to be aware of the Now.*'[26] Similarly, Thorton Wilder writes: 'The action on the stage takes place in a perpetual present time.'[27]

Thus, I am aware of being in time insofar as I am a specimen of matter-in-process; but insofar as I am aware of myself as a self, I face the sequence of time from the vantage point of the present. Insofar as I am self-aware, therefore, I exist outside the process understood as a sequence in time; but I do not cease to be aware of the process that my body is going through. Thus, I am aware of myself both as a self in the timeless present and as a body in process through the sequence of time. Consequently, I am both in and outside time, as I exist both in and out of process. For I exist through my experience of going through the sequence in time, as I am aware of the process which takes place in and through my body. But as I contemplate the process which I am going through and observe it from the vantage point of the present, I am aware of myself as a self out of time. Thus, when I contemplate the past as lived, while I foresee the future as planned, I see myself through the sequence of time, without ceasing to contemplate my permanent self in the

[23] T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, Burnt Norton, IV 9-10.
[24] T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, The Dry Salvages, V 18-19.
[25] Jorge Guillén: Quoted by Erich Kahler: The Tower and the Abyss of the Transformation of Man, Cape, London, 1958, p.134.
[26] R.E. Jones: The Dramatic Imagination: Reflections and Speculations on the Art of the Theatre, N.Y. Duell Sloan & Pearce, 1941, p.40.
[27] Thornton Wilder: The Intent of the Artist, edited by A. Centeno, Princeton University Press, 1941, p.97.

timeless present; yet insofar as I live in the present, I live not in a series of 'nows' but in a continuous endless now, in such a way that the now extends and merges into the endless forever.[28]

Eliot is aware of the simultaneous existence in and out of time, and experience to time:

'Time past and time future
Allow but a little consciousness.
To be conscious is not to be in time
But only in time can the moment in the rose-garden,
The moment in the arbour where the rain beat,
The moment in the draughty church at smoke-fall
Be remembered; involved with past and future.
Only through time time is conquered.'[29]

Again, Eliot feels the conflict of time and the timeless in the act of love, both limitless and limited:

'Desire itself is a movement
Not in itself desirable;
Love in itself unmoving,
Only the cause and end of movement,
Timeless, and undesiring
Except in the aspect of time
Caught in the form of limitation
Between un-being and being.'[30]

I feel Paul Klee in his painting entitled FISH MAGIC tries to show that man lives both in the dimension of time and of the timeless. Canaday describes the painting: 'Clock: suspended in the centre of the picture within lines which suggest at once a tower and a trap. The sun and moon, which circle in time, are represented nearby, while around and about is a luminous pattern of flowers – symbol of transience – and fish – symbol of time backward into primeval

[28] Susanne Langer sees the action in the play both in the 'now' and against the perspective of the sequence moving towards the future: 'It has been said repeatedly that the theater creates a perpetual present moment; but it is only a present filled with its own future that is really dramatic.' Feeling and Form. A Theory of Art, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1953, p. 307.

[29] T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, Burnt Norton, II 37-44.

[30] T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, Burnt Norton, V 25-32.

darkness and, by extension of early Christian iconography, of time forward into eternity. In the lower right a bouquet has been placed in a goblet of water, but the futility of this effort to modify time is apparent when we notice that the very goblet takes on the shape of an hour-glass. Near the goblet stands a little figure whose face exists doubly. Of his two mouths, one is shaped like a heart, symbol of man's emotional and intuitive nature; the other is an arithmetical symbol. These antitheses coexist in man, and man exists in time, which exists doubly as the moment and as eternity, which are indivisible.'[31]

It is true that Canaday in his explanation refers to time and eternity, but since the pertinent symbols are represented as existing simultaneously in man, I feel that eternity should be understood to refer to this world – not to an afterlife – and in this sense it would imply the timeless as the present coexistent with time.

This affirmation, however, that my awareness of the self is timeless seems to be contradicted by two facts:

1. the modification of my own self as my identity unveils itself to myself;
2. the process of memory which presents my self through the sequence of time as a self modified by the process I am going through.

When my identity unveils itself to my self-awareness, and I interpret it both to myself and to others, what is modified is not my awareness of myself as a self, but the way my self relates to others as a self. Thus, I distinguish between my awareness of myself as a self, and my experience of my self insofar as it relates to the other and thus constitute myself as a person through the dialogue with the other.

My self-awareness of my self as a self is also modified through the process of memory, insofar as my memory presents my past as a history; but what is modified is the self of which I am aware, not the awareness which makes me aware of the self. My self-awareness of my self is permanent, because I affirm myself as self-aware, for primarily I know my self as my self, not as this or that self, or as a self with a history. My awareness of myself as a self, however,

[31] Canaday: Seminar in Art: Portfolio L. Actaeon and the Atom, p. 25.

includes also my awareness of my self as a self in history, which I establish through my memory.

So time does not converge from the future through the present into the past; for if the future converged into the present, and the present diverged into the past, the present would be reduced to an instant in time joining the future and the past as two segments of the sequence, but it would not be 'present' to my awareness, since I would not confront the sequence in time from my vantage point outside time.

Such an explanation would in fact reduce the present to a moment of awareness in time as a sequence outside time, rather than to a timeless awareness of a sequence in time. Time as a sequence is constituted by my self-awareness as the observer from the vantage point of the timeless present, for through my self-awareness outside time, I contemplate the sequence in time.

3. Time as History

The past and the future are significant in relation to the present, as the point of separation between them, for the past and the future are not two permanent chunks of time. The past and the future are constructs with reference to a moment of time within the sequence in a life or history, constituted through the choice of a certain event as a 'landmark' in that life or in history.

As I am aware of time through and in my awareness of the sequence, I am both in time through my contemplation of the process as sequence, and out of time through my awareness of the present. As I am out of time, I can make history, which is the control of time manifested in human action; but since I am in time, I am part of the process brought about through my action as a maker of time. Thus, through my self-awareness I make time as I interpret the past and plan my future. Through such an interpretation I can change the meaning of the past, that is, I can re-write my history; while through my planning I can make my future, for I can remake both myself and my world, that is, I can make history.

I can make myself insofar as I see myself out of time controlling myself in time; so as a man who has self-awareness, I am both a maker of history, and that which is made into history by other history-makers, or by myself, as a history-maker. As Heidegger writes: 'The analysis of the historicity of *Dasein* attempts to show that this being is not "temporal" because "he stands in history",

but rather that he exists historically because he is temporal in the ground of his Being.'[32]

This interpretation of the past as history 'lived and understood', and of the future as history 'to be foreseen' before it is lived, expresses itself as care for the world of things and men who are to some extent made or marred through this control of time.

Through his care man manifests his temporality, for care is the structure of *Dasein*, as Vycinas explains in his interpretation of Heidegger: 'The future as revealing the past and disclosing the situation in the present is, according to Heidegger, a unique phenomenon, temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*). The structure of care represents the temporality of *Dasein*. Care is the being-ahead of oneself (future) as being-already-in-the-world (past) and as being with the within-the-world-beings (present)'.[33]

This self-awareness of the past and the future is never separate from the sequence as I see the past shaping the future, and the future interpreting the past, for I make the sequence follow my plan not insofar as I foresee how the process as sequence is going to unfold, but insofar as I direct it while it is unfolding, and gradually keep it under control.

Time establishes the direction of the sequence which the self goes through and imposes on other existents to make the world as he chooses to make it. As a man, I show concern for the world of things and men, for I do not let the world drift without a plan to be unfolded as a process; for I bring my concern to act upon my plan through my foresight, and improve it through my skill because I feel responsible.

Bultmann relates historicity to responsibility: 'Historicity now gains the meaning of responsibility over against the future, which is at the same time the responsibility over against the heritage of the past in the face of the future. Historicity is the nature of man, who can never possess his genuine life in any present moment but is always on the way and yet is not at the mercy of a course of history independent of himself. Every moment is the *now* of responsibility, of decision.'[34]

[32] Heidegger: Being and Time, p. 376.
[33] Vycinas: Earth and Gods. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Martin Heidegger, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1961, p. 63.
[34] Bultmann: The Presence of Eternity, N.Y., Harper, 1957, p. 143.

If man makes time through history, Eliot's interpretation of history seems to contradict my explanation, as he writes:

> 'A people without history
> Is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern
> Of timeless moments.'[35]

As Grover Smith, Jr. explains: 'The lines say that a people with history is redeemed from time, but likewise that in order to be so redeemed a people must live by the detachment beginning in attachment – not by indifference to that from which they sprang.'[36] I think that Eliot is implying that a people must be concerned with its existence and sense of achievement before it undertakes to free itself from time, and in this sense he agrees with Bultmann, for if 'every moment is the *now* of responsibility, of decision', then since history is the choice of destiny, history makes a people face its now, and thus redeems it from time.

This interpretation seems to be confirmed in the line: 'History is now and England'[37] and even more emphatically in:

> 'Here, the intersection of the timeless moment
> Is England and nowhere. Never and always.'[38]

This insistence on the 'timeless moment' is taken up again in his statement in *The Sacred Wood* where he refers to the expression in art: 'The emotion of art is impersonal. And the poet cannot reach this impersonality without surrendering himself wholly to the work to be done. And he is not likely to know what is to be done unless he lives in what is not merely the present, but the present moment of the past, unless he is conscious, not of what is dead, but of what is already living.'[39]

I think Eliot is here referring not to a past which is remembered, or even retained, but to a past which goes on existing as a 'present moment'. Georges Poulet in his analysis of time in Eliot's works seems to be in agreement: 'Each moment is in relation with all

[35] T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, Little Gidding, V 20-22.
[36] Grover Smith, Jr.: T.S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays. A Study in Sources and Meaning, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1956, p. 291.
[37] T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, Little Gidding, I 24.
[38] T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, Little Gidding, I 53-54.
[39] T.S. Eliot: The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism, London, Methuen, 1920 (7th. Ed. 1950), p. 59.

the others, because, contrary to what they are, it itself is fixed and eternal ... Each moment is, therefore, in time, and yet outside of time, animated as it is by a non-temporal power. Horizontally, so to speak, it receives from the past an impulsion which it will transmit to the future; but vertically, shall we say, it still receives its own peculiar efficacy.'[40]

This apparent conflict between time and the timeless is resolved by Eliot in his interpretation of the historical sense: '... the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence ... This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional.'[41]

It seems likely, however, that in Eliot's thought this 'present moment' embraces the totality of the existence both of man and of mankind, as he seems to be saying in *East Coker:*

'Not the intense moment
Isolated, with no before and after,
But a lifetime burning in every moment
And not the lifetime of one man only
But of old stones that cannot be deciphered.'[42]

If such a 'present moment' holds the totality of time, then truly,

'In my beginning is my end' and
'In my end is my beginning.'[43]

Both these lines seem to suggest that in the 'present moment' not only the beginning and the end co-exist, but they are identified as one. Eliot I feel confirms this interpretation:

'We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.'[44]

[40]Poulet: Studies in Human Time, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956, p. 357-8.
[41]T.S. Eliot: The Sacred Wood, p. 49.
[42]T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets, East Coker, V 21-24.
[43]T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, East Coker, I 1 and V 37.
[44]T.S. Eliot: Four Quartets, Little Gidding, V 26-29.

Although Poulet seems to refer the beginning to the past and the end to the future, yet his image of circular motion suggests to me the totality of time in the present: 'From the beginning to the end of time, our actions depend one upon another. They adhere to each other, and so very closely that between the beginning and the end of the series which they constitute, there is no break and, it would seem, very little difference ... When we accept the burden of our past, we also accept our future. They have the same face, the same being, the same time. This time is absolute responsibility, like that of radical irresponsibility, is circular.

'In neither case can one escape the motion of the wheel. There is not a moment of our existence, nor of the history of the world, which does not turn with all the other moments around the same pivot.'[45]

As the world of men and of things is in process, I can direct and move forward this process; so time becomes the direction of the new identity which I want to give to the world as history. When I control time, I make the destiny of all that exists, insofar as they are open to my self-awareness as the beholder, and subject to my control of time through action. I see the world of things and of men in process and direct it towards the path I have chosen. Through my control over it, I begin to bring about the destiny of the world, when through time I turn myself into a 'maker', for as a man, I make time both for me and for the world.

Schrag relates *destiny* to the determinants in the structure of concern as directions of historicity: 'Facticity is historically understood as destiny, and existentially discloses man's historical freedom which calls him to decision. This decision takes place in the moment, the third structural determinant of concern. History is thus understood by Heidegger, as by Kierkegaard, as an arriving from an existential past in which one is already confronted with an existential future, which makes possible man's self-actualization through choice.'[46]

So, since history is the making of time, history begins with the control of time; in fact, it is only recently through the technological organisation of the world that man can control time almost as

[45] Poulet: Studies in Human Time, p. 357.
[46] Schrag: Existence and Freedom, p. 148.

he chooses; so it is only recently that true history begins to be made. This control of time is always and only forward, since it follows the direction of time. Time as the awareness of process as sequence is grounded in a series of structurizations which result in an achievement. Such an achievement is manifested as a completed structure, even if from the point of view of what was expected, such a structure may seem incomplete or deficient.

Thus, the world is in time only to the extent that the world as matter-in-process is seen to develop through the sequence from the vantage point of the observer. Apart from the self-awareness of time the world, even if it persisted in process, would not be in time. Consequently, before man became self-aware of the process as sequence, and even after he was so aware, to the extent that he did not take over the control of time to constitute it as history, neither man nor the world was in time, but only in process.

'In every *time*, man was and is and will be because time temporizes itself only as long as man *is*. There is no time in which man is not there. This does not mean that man exists from eternity to eternity, but only means that time is not eternity, and that time only temporizes with human historical *Dasein*.'[47]

[47]Heidegger: An Introduction to Metaphysics, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1959, p. 64.

Note: The Poetry and Plays of T.S. Eliot are quoted from: The Complete Poems and Plays, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1952.