Robert Crawford recently delivered an impassioned address on the monolingual assumptions that underpin ‘English’ literature. ‘English’, as a concept and as a discipline, has been historically constructed to appropriate within its canon other literatures written in English but not produced in England or even in Great Britain. At the same time, this ‘English’ excludes the literature produced in England or Great Britain in other languages: Anglo-Norman writings in French, early modern Latin poetry, Scottish and Welsh writing. Today’s pluralism does not extend to the past of English literature, from which ‘plurilingualism’ is erased in what Crawford called ‘English’s Alzheimer disease’. And this, Crawford argued, is symptomatic of a persistent imperialist construction of ‘English’.1

Crawford’s contention might well put us in mind of Lawrence Venuti’s argument on the translator’s invisibility. For Venuti, the historical privileging of a scientific, transparent version of the English language has worked to discourage ‘foreignness’: the best kind of translation is ‘fluent’, and reads as if we were experiencing the work in the original, without any mediation. The translation is expected to be transparent, the translator invisible, and English, implicitly, to remain solidly monolithic and easily recognizable.2

Crawford’s and Venuti’s concerns enable us to return to a question frequently discussed by commentators on modernism: its claimed elitism. The accusation ultimately stems from a traditional, and indeed canonical, requirement of ‘accessibility’ predicated on the use of transparent, plain, recognizable language and forms. This demand can be traced back to the ideal of linguistic simplicity and anti-metaphorical

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bias of the Royal Society in the seventeenth century, but also, I would
argue, further back, to the medieval description of the vernacular as
the simple, natural, common language of the people. However, this
requirement of transparency is the symptom of a much more complex
problem, one that cannot be reduced to the question of whether or not
modernism is elitist and inaccessible. Indeed, if we follow Crawford's
argument on the determinately monolingual nature of English and its
canon, the requirement of simplicity and linguistic accessibility
becomes the uncomfortable ally of an exclusionary tradition that
silences the voices that disturb its homogeneity. It will be useful,
therefore, to review the modernist construction of a 'common
language' and its relationships with other languages.

The international dimension of modernism, with its thematicatization
of exile, displacement, and unsettling linguistic or cultural encounter,
has received much attention. Equally well known is the attention that
modernism's three canonical authors, Eliot, Pound, and Joyce, have
paid to the Middle Ages.5 Translation, a central and much studied
feature of Pound's activity, has also been the focus of a considerable
body of Joyce criticism.6 Less work has been done on the extent to
which past, and in particular medieval, theories of translation and
linguistic difference are explored and transposed into a specifically modernist
aesthetics. It is therefore at the intersection of medievalism and
translation (broadly understood as a way of conceptualizing relation-
ships between languages, crossing and defining linguistic borders, and
assessing the possibility of crossing them) that I situate my enquiry.

In the Middle Ages, as modern European languages developed
and emerged as 'national' tongues, linguistic choices always required

5 See for example Dominic Manciarno, T. S. Eliot and Dante (London, 1989); Stuart
Y. McDougall, Ezra Pound and the Troubadour Tradition (Princeton, 1972); James J.
Wilhelm, Dante and Pound: The Epic of Judgement (Orono, Maine, 1974); Georg M.
Gugelberger, Ezra Pound's Medievalism (Frankfurt, 1978); Dante e Pound, edited by Maria
Luisa Ardizzone and Marlo Lelli (Ravenna, 1998); William T. Noon, Joyce and Apisnas
(New Haven, 1963); Mary T. Reynolds, Joyce and Dante: The Shaping Inagination
(Princeton, 1981); Umberto Ecco, The Middle Ages of James Joyce: The Aesthetic of
Guadalupe (London, 1989); Lucia Boldrini, Joyce, Dante and the Poetics of Literary
Relational Language and Meaning in Finnegan's Wake (Cambridge, 2001); Jennifer M.
Fraser, Rate of Passage in the Narratives of Dante and Joyce (Falmouth, 2002); Medieval
Joyce, edited by Lucia Boldrini (Amsterdam, 2002).

6 For Pound the bibliography is large; as well as books listed in the previous footnote,
and the well-known studies by commentators such as Michael Alexander and J. F.
Sullivan, see also the many articles published on the subject in Paideuma: A Journal
Dedicated to Ezra Pound Scholarship. For Joyce see such commentators as Fritz Senn, Roza
Maria Bolletieri Bosinelli, Lauren Miles, and the many relevant articles in the James
Joyce Quarterly, including the special section 'Joyce and Translation' in Vol. 27, Part 3
(Spring 1990).

selections between different possibilities, all of them charged with social
and political as well as poetic and literary value. Latin was the language
of theology, philosophy, science, and international politics, but as
vernaculars developed, its dominance was increasingly challenged.
Even then, the alternative was rarely a simple one of Latin vs.
vernacular: in Italy, for example, writers could generally choose
between vernacular forms of Italian and Latin, but some turned to the
more polished French, while in England the choice was between Latin,
Anglo-Norman French, and Anglo-Saxon English. The majority of
writers were, to some extent at least, bilingual or polyglot, and much
medieval writing was concerned with questions of multi- or inter-
lingualism. Indeed, it would not be much of an exaggeration to say that
in the Middle Ages every linguistic act involved a choice, and this choice
in turn implied a political, social, or more broadly cultural statement.
This constituted an extremely rich but also fraught panorama for the
writer, who often felt the need to justify the choice of writing in the
vernacular, especially when his subject had traditionally been dealt
with in a different language. Such explanations were often intriguingly
ambivalent, and justifications could turn into a bold statement of the
validity, if not the downright superiority, of the vernacular,7 while the
availability of different ranges of linguistic and literary forms stimulated
writers who were unconcerned about hybridization and neologism.

In the Middle Ages, when the literary tradition was predominantly
Latin, writing in the vernacular was in effect an inter- or trans-linguistic
practice based on programmatic translation and 'invention'. Vernaculars
were both established languages and languages 'in progress', open
to various influences and able to appropriate materials for their own
expansion. This gave a new impetus to the classical concept of inventio,
not only in the sense of 'finding' materials in the appropriate loci of the
tradition, but also of inventing them through the 'turning' (vertere) and
'trapping' of the range of available languages. If literary experimental-
ism means doing something that has not been done before (at least
in one's own literary tradition), then the condition of the medieval
vernacular writer is 'experimental' almost by definition, and we should
not find it surprising that modernism turned to this period for
inspiration in its desire to 'make it new'.

It would be difficult, however, to recognize such a heterogeneity of
forces in the often monolithic descriptions of the Middle Ages that we

7 Dante's championing of the vernacular in the De vulgari eloquentia, written in Latin,
and his almost contemporaneous assertion of the superiority of Latin in the Comenio,
written in Italian, are perhaps the most striking examples of such tightrope-walking.
encounter from the Renaissance onwards. 'The medieval', constructed as a homogenous, organic period, has become a political, social, cultural, and literary category that later epochs have used as a yardstick to measure either their modernity or their failure to match up to its more exalted (or at least more stable) values. Whether it is used negatively or positively, medievalism thus represents a language that can 'translate' the Middle Ages into any current idiom of political, social, or cultural self-definition. This undifferentiated construction – not unlike Crawford's monolingual canon or Venuti's invisible translator – has consistently prevented the great variety of medieval interlingual theories and practices from being acknowledged, and has thus contributed to stifling the later periods' own linguistic self-awareness. As Brian Stock puts it, 'the Renaissance invented the Middle Ages in order to define itself; the enlightenment perpetuated them in order to admire itself; and the Romantics revived them in order to escape from themselves'.

To a notable extent, modernism also shared in this cultural monolingualism; indeed, much of its programme of renovation is informed by an ideal of linguistic, literary, cultural, and social translatability (as direct appropriation and bearing over) of the past, and of the medieval past in particular.

Eliot's writing on Dante is a case in point. Eliot's 1929 essay 'Dante' starts from the innocent enough claim that knowledge about Dante is not necessary for an appreciation of his poetry; but it is worth following more closely how Eliot structures this strand of the argument, because his oscillation between 'scholarship' (or 'knowledge') and 'language' underpins a conception of the medieval as an organic set of conditions that can point the way towards healing the wounds of a split modernity. For Eliot, no previous knowledge of biographical or critical scholarship is necessary to appreciate great poetry; scholarship in fact interferes with such appreciation. Eliot concedes that writers belonging to a very distant language and culture (such as Greek and Latin) may require some mediation, but 'with authors of one's own speech and even with some of those of other modern languages' (SE, p. 237), such as Dante, this is not necessary. This is so because Dante's poetry can speak to us with the directness of a 'common language' (SE, p. 252). With the focus redirected towards language and linguistic accessibility, 'scholarship' becomes implicitly equated with interpretative translation. Eliot brings language and (critical) knowledge together even as his words appear to offer a disclaimer:

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Linguistic instruction is acceptable only insofar as it is purely technical (grammatical), and uncontaminated by any more broadly cultural-linguistic awareness. What is sought for is 'some direct shock of poetic intensity' (SE, p. 258). Scholarship and broader linguistic awareness, which are seen as mediators of (and therefore obstacles to) the immediacy of 'objective poetic emotion' (SE, p. 238), would dilute such intensity, whereas great poetry, and specifically the great poetry of the medieval master, should require no translation in so far as it operates at an emotional and intuitive rather than at an intellectual level: 'genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood' (SE, p. 238).

Dante's alleged easiness ('What is surprising about the poetry of Dante is that it is, in one sense, extremely easy to read', SE, p. 238) is owing to his being 'the most universal of poets in the modern languages' (p. 238). This universality is again made to rest on linguistic factors: Dante's medieval Italian vernacular is the immediate product of Latin, a 'fine language' that 'had the quality of a highly developed and literary Esperanto', and which allowed the medieval European mind to 'think together' in an unbroken continuum no longer available in the divided modern Europe:

When you read modern philosophy, in English, French, German, and Italian, you must be struck by rational or racial differences of thought: modern languages tend to separate abstract thought ... but medieval Latin tended to concentrate on what men of various races and lands could think together.

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When you read modern philosophy, in English, French, German, and Italian, you must be struck by national or racial differences of thought: modern languages tend to separate abstract thought ... but medieval Latin tended to concentrate on what men of various races and lands could think together.

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Several issues are raised, and several clouded, by Eliot's argument. Although medieval Italian is of course in many ways very close to medieval Latin, Eliot sidesteps the point that was central for most medieval writers, and in particular for Dante (especially in the treatises *De vulgari eloquentia* and *Convivio*): that the relationship between Latin and vernacular is almost always one of tension, competition, and desire for vernacular self-assertion, and that much vernacular production often starts from such inter-linguistic reflection. Dante's project is one of deliberate competition with Latin, and his language is therefore always defined in opposition to Latin. Even when Dante describes his
vulgare illustre in terms of similarity to or analogy with Latin, he never forgets the competition between the two, or his claim to be the poet and forger of the new language. Eliot needs to ignore Dante’s political and cultural positioning in order to promote his own ideological and cultural stance, which requires universality and homogeneity at the expense of cultural individuation and self-definition. In short, Eliot’s agenda is to enlist Dante to support his theory of the ‘dissociation of sensibility’ that took place in the seventeenth century; in the Middle Ages this sensibility was still unified, and Dante is the proof.8

Eliot’s construction of his case also tends to cloud the issue of the relationship of Dante’s language with the medieval world, and on the other hand its universality, by apportioning value on the basis of two related but somewhat contradictory criteria. One is the ability of the medieval mind to ‘think together’ beyond its ethnic and geographic differences; the other is the proximity of the vernacular to Latin and to its universalising effect. Thus, although all medievals belong to a unified sensibility (Eliot quotes Chaucer and Villon as examples), Dante is the closest to Latin through his Italian language, and he is consequently more universal than Chaucer or Villon — somehow, Dante ‘thinks’ more ‘together’ than the others. But the real point of fracture is elsewhere. By Dante’s time, vernacular languages are already well advanced on the road of linguistic and intellectual differentiation, and have already undermined the universality that Eliot ascribes to the Middle Ages. But Eliot does not address the question why what is in his view the greatest medieval poetry was written precisely when vernaculars emerged as major new autonomous languages, different from and independent of Latin. It is as part of this context that Eliot needs to assert (and he does so repeatedly) the greater similarity of medieval Italian to Latin than to modern Italian, a proposition that may have some broad intellectual purchase, but that linguistically makes very little sense.9

In his presentation of Dante’s similarity to Latin, Eliot needs to elide other important features of Dante’s central place in Italian literature. One of these is the sheer magnitude of Dante’s linguistic creativity, and his unprecedented expansion of the linguistic range of Italian; another is Dante’s claim to individuality as a poet of and a thinker on the

language — indeed, what Eliot needs to downplay is Dante’s radically innovative use of the conventions, forms, and vocabulary of his time: ‘He not only thought in a way in which every man of his culture in the whole of Europe then thought, but he employed a method which was common and commonly understood throughout Europe’ (SE, p. 242). Eliot’s pre-Renaissance ‘Europe’ represents the geographical embodiment of an ideal cultural universalism in which Dante’s Italianness needs to dissolve.

The dubious assertion that ‘more is lost in translating Shakespeare into Italian than in translating Dante into English’ (SE, p. 241) supports the poetic argument that ‘Most great English poets are inimitable in a way in which Dante was not ... The language of each great English poet is his own language; the language of Dante is the perfection of a common language’ (p. 252). Paradoxically, it would seem that Dante requires almost no translative effort and can therefore be literally translated, ‘borne over’ into one’s modern language unchanged and unaffected, as organically whole as the period from which it emerged — whereas the more individual and modern, and therefore more difficult, Shakespeare requires translation but is almost impossible to translate (‘How can a foreigner find words to convey in his own language just that combination of intelligibility and remoteness that we get in many phrases of Shakespeare?’, p. 241). Yet we know that our modern divided sensibility will require a major effort to understand the medieval unified Dante (see, for instance, p. 277); the obvious question passed over by Eliot is, how can Dante’s organic language be translated unproblematically into the divided language of modernity?

To sum up, Eliot’s argument is based less on a direct and unmediated reading of Dante than on an imposition onto Dante of Eliot’s (Victorian, Ruskinian) understanding of ‘the medieval’ — an understanding that in turn feeds, as I have argued, into the theory of the dissociation of sensibility, which requires the construction of a pre-modern, unbroken ‘European’ commonality of culture and language that cuts across horizontal (contemporary) linguistic barriers. This in turn has two further contradictory corollaries: on the one hand it interrupts the vertical temporal continuity between medieval and modern language (as in the emphasis on Dante’s Italian being more similar to Latin than to modern Italian); on the other it requires Dante’s Italian to possess a universality and a transparency that enables it to be immediately translatable, transhistorically, into the language of the modern reader.

This ‘translation’ (in the literal sense of transporting, bearing over) of the medieval into modernity is for the Anglo-Catholic Eliot what modernity needs to restore to itself: the universality that bypasses
the need for linguistic translation offers a Pentecostal solution to the divided, Babylonian condition of modernity. But this desired ‘bearing over’ of the medieval becomes an overbearing writing that denies the linguistic specificity of the Middle Ages, and the internal tensions and differences that produced much of its best and most interesting writing.

Whereas Eliot praises above all else in medieval literature the proximity to Latin that enables him to establish a hierarchy of linguistic, poetic, and philosophical values, Ezra Pound’s interest in the new Romance languages rests on their departure from Latin, and their challenge to its monolingual authority. Pound’s lifelong engagement with the Middle Ages finds its first consistent expression in his earliest work of criticism, *The Spirit of Romance* (1910), a book that pursues the interests he developed as a student of romance philology, and which announces many of his future themes. One instance of Pound’s continuing and constantly revisited interest in medieval poetry is his work on Cavalcanti, extending from a dedicated chapter in *The Spirit of Romance*, to the essays and the many translations over several decades, to the opera *Cavalcanti* (1981-3), and two critical editions of the poet in Italian in 1981 and 1949. The parallel interests of poetry and philology lead him to expand, through a direct poetic response to the rhythms and forms of medieval poetry, the otherwise rather conventional philological framework through which he studies Romance literature. At the same time, his philologist’s training directs him to check the precise meanings and resonance of words against their uses in the works of medieval philosophers, or to collate different manuscripts in order to decide on the best reading of difficult words or lines, contributing to Pound’s insistence on clarity of expression and precision of meaning in poetic writing. Poetry and philology thus combine in Pound’s sense of tradition, and it is in this context that it is useful to re-examine Pound’s theory and practice of translation, elaborated as a way of conceptualizing the relationship between medievality and modernity, as an instrument of linguistic exploration, and as a tool in the definition of poetry.

Paolo Cerchi has suggested that Pound’s use of the word ‘Spirit’ in *The Spirit of Romance* reflects a widespread usage of the concept in turn-of-the-century philology, and is especially resonant in the German, post-Hegelian context, where it corresponds to a search for the *Geist* of a literature or culture. Other associations add to its complexity. In the ‘Prefatio Ad Lectorem Electum’, Pound claims to be examining ‘certain forces, elements or qualities which were potent in the mediæval literature of the Latin tongues, and are, I believe, still potent in our own’. After distinguishing the scientific study of literature from Art, Pound declares: ‘Art is a fluid moving above or over the minds of men. The emphasis on a commonality of tongues even in difference, and the definition of (capitalized) Art as a force moving across temporal, spatial, and linguistic differences that speaks through diverse peoples and poets, suggest a desire for the xenoglossia of a redemptive language, a Pentecost whose potency can still ‘save’ modernity. This ‘Spirit’ first manifests itself in the *Provençal* *Alba*, a type of short poem dating from the tenth century which alternates Latin stanzas and a refrain written ‘in the tongue of the people’ (SR, p. 11). Wishing both to dissociate himself from the philologists of his time, and to dissociate poetry from other forms of linguistic expression, Pound mentions the first known vernacular written text, the Oath of Strasburg, but denies it any particular relevance for his purposes, dismissing the document as ‘some treaty oath signed at Strasburg in A.D. 841’ (p. 11). In the light of Pound’s later career, such severance of politics from literature is all the more intriguing; after all, the political ability of a people to use its language as expression of its ‘spirit’ and identity also substantiates Pound’s value judgement on Provençal poetry, and Pound himself links it, briefly but significantly, to the Albignaian repression of the Troubadours (p. 90). But at this point Pound is interested in distilling a specificity of poetic language, and the *Alba* is of greater interest to him as a literary expression and as a suitably metaphorical image for the rise of the polyglot ‘spirit’ of Romance. The ‘dawn’ also has the additional advantage of echoing the salvific advent of Dante’s vernacular language in *Convivio*. This shall be the new light, the new sun, which shall rise where the old shall set, and shall give light to those who are in

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darkness and in obscurity for the old sun that does not shine for them. What captivates Pound is the bilingualism of this short poem, the coexistence in it of different traditions, the eclectic and foreign nature of its cross-linguistic gesture, the challenge that the language of the people poses to the dominant Latin culture. This, of course, is what Pound’s modernist project of linguistic and cultural renewal also urges, similarly relying on bilingual or multilingual language within his poetry and within his critical works, where translations are not substantive of the original texts or simple relocations of meaning from source to target, but ‘accompaniments’ that locate meaning in the interrelations between the original and the translations.

Pound only translates the Romance lines, not the Latin; then he launches into a digression that abandons the Alba and fails to return to it, trying instead to highlight a contrast between different modes of poetic expression that cut across horizontal historical lines and undermine the claim to a medieval specificity for this literature. The difference that one may have expected to lie in the historical emergence of vernacular literatures is now relocated in the opposition between the two forms of popular and scholarly poetry, already present in classical times, and perpetuating themselves through literary history. We find a paradoxical situation in which the Alba, the literal and metaphorical dawn of Romance poetry, is also not a beginning at all (not unlike modernist writing, required to be both new and inscribed in a continuing, reassessed tradition). Pound’s argument seems to be pulling in two directions: one is the medievalist version that locates the split in a geographical-linguistic area (Romance vs. Latin, Mediterranean vs. rest of Europe), temporarily delimited by a historical conjuncture (the emergence of vernaculars); the other divides along parallel historical lines that coincide not with languages but with modes of expression, and which signal continuity between antiquity, medievality, and modernity. This latter split, though it bypasses the historical question of beginnings, can however be shown to be coextensive with the other, geographical-linguistic one, if we consider that its main cipher remains ‘the language of the people’: an inventive idiom, creative and unrestrained to the point of polyglotism, ‘barbaric’ (SR, p. 18; I take this to mean, etymologically, ‘foreign’) and posing a challenge to the stable, scholarly language of classicism. Thus it would seem that, at this historical juncture, the diachronic cultural continuity of the two parallel but opposed traditions coincides with the synchronic division between popular Romance and scholarly Latin. This ambiguous split that valorizes the new language while authorizing itself through a continued tradition also brings together the medieval and the modernist projects of making it new. Translation has a fundamental role in such renovatio, and it is to this practice, as it was theorized in the Middle Ages and as it appears in Pound’s writing, that I now turn.

The practice of translation in the Middle Ages has been largely disregarded by literary criticism and literary history, or dismissed as an unsophisticated prescription of fidelity to sense or word. But, as several recent studies have shown, it produced a large body of writing, and was a major contributing factor in the shaping of vernacular poetics. Rith Copeland’s work in this field, in particular, has shown that medieval translation, as practice and as theory, was an activity of both continuity and rupture. The terminology of medieval translation theory derives from Roman theoretical statements, where translation was seen as part of both rhetoric and grammar. Insofar as it belonged to grammar, translation’s role was to contribute to the enarratio poetarum, the glossing and interpreting of poetic texts. Insofar as it belonged to rhetoric, it was an activity of textual production, with invention as its core procedure. The dual function of translation contributed to its fluid status and its different uses, and to making it one of the most productive textual activities. Translation also partakes of rhetoric’s agonistic model of eloquence, heightening the sense of rivalry between source- and target-texts or languages: for the Romans, ‘translation can scarcely be theorized without reference to conquest as a component of rivalry, or aggressive supremacy in the challenge to Greek hegemony. Translation ... is figured ... as a paradigmatic pattern of transference, substitution, and ultimately displacement of the source.’ Translated” to the Middle Ages, translation contributed to the assertion of vernacular autonomy from Latin while still recognizing Latin’s cultural hegemony. However, the contest was now played out between a multiplicity of new languages and states emerging from the decline of the one language that had belonged to a unified political body. Medieval translation, underpinned by the Roman model, oscillated between its acknowledgement of the spiritual and cultural superiority of Latin on the one hand, and the

17 Copeland, ‘The Fortunes of “non verbum pro verbo”’, p. 17.
assertive expression of vernacular and national identity on the other. Compounded within the concept is a wide range of activities and associations, reflected in the variety of terms used to describe it. Among them, emphasizing the etymological sense of ‘carrying across’, are *translatio* (in Latin also ‘metaphor’, from the Greek *metapherein*, ‘to transfer, carry across’) and *traductio* (as ‘leading over’, a term that came into usage in the later medieval period and which was adopted by most romance languages), ‘version’, from *vertere*, associates translation with the concepts of turning and troping, while *interpretatio* (from which the modern sense of ‘interpreter’ as ‘translator’) relates it to ‘hermeneutics’, on whose Greek root the word is modelled.\(^{18}\) Within the range of meanings we also find the idea of ‘transferral’, as in the concept of *translatio studi et imperii*.

Commenting on a late medieval English description of the activity of translation as ‘ouyberyncge et expositio sententie’, Roger Ellis has pointed out that ‘overbearing’, in its early usage in the Wycliffite Bible, described the physical removal of something from one place to another, or the destruction of a physical or moral state, as in the overthrowing of an empire or the forgiveness of sin: ‘translation, that is, changes an existing boundary, turns one thing into another, refashions an original as totally as God’s forgiveness annihilates sin’. In other words, the role of the medieval translator is not to be transparent or invisible; on the contrary, translation confers the status of *auctor*: ‘translation, an act not of continuity but of rupture, confers a status akin to that of authorship to the translator’.\(^{19}\) ‘Translation’ was in fact only one activity within a continuum that includes *editing*, writing, compiling, interpreting, exposing, and emulating, and which extended from word-for-word rendering to the (re)creation of a new text with sources functioning simply as prompts.\(^{20}\) These activities overlap, often within the same work, and there is no clear-cut line to define and distinguish them.

Given the multilingual context of medieval writing, where the exchange is often between languages that can hardly be described as ‘foreign’ (e.g. Italian and Latin; English and Anglo-Norman), translation unsurprisingly acquires a central and productive role, turning all known texts in all known languages into a repository of knowledge and forms that can, through *invenzione*, be found, used, adapted, departed from, in the invention/creation of a new literature and in the expansion and increase of the new vernacular languages. None of this should sound unfamiliar to those used to modernism’s active plundering and recycling of ‘the tradition’ in order to ‘make it new’. For both the Middle Ages and modernism, writing and translation identify the site of meaning so much in a text that the new version tries to match as closely and invisibly as possible, but in the encounter of the texts. This allows the *invention* (as discovery and creation) of one’s own language through the encounter, imitation, and replacement of and by another. As Copeland writes, by challenging the Latin hegemony, medieval vernacular translation represents a ‘preliminary discovery of literary language’ that ‘enables future texts’.

This is what Pound’s translations – exercised, of course, on a much wider range than medieval Romance literature alone – also seek to achieve. The critical debate has moved on from the merits or demerits of Pound’s translations, and the preceding discussion should confirm that, in the light of medieval practices, assessing Pound’s faithfulness to his source or the level of linguistic competence is beside the point. The way he departs from the original to turn (*vertere*) the text to his own creative or interpretative agenda should also be considered within the context of the medieval theory. Pound’s translations appear to function as ways of finding/founding (*inventing*) a new language for the cultural renovation of modernity while shedding the evaluative bias based on ‘fluency’ and ‘transparency’ that Venuti denounces in traditional translation criticism. Here I am not claiming that Pound was consciously or intentionally following medieval practice; but the analogy of methods and scopes remains illuminating.

In *The Spirit of Romance*, translation is largely presented as functional, and its main function is to give readers a flavour of the language, forms, and range of materials included in Romance literature. Pound describes the ‘atrocities’ of his translation of Cavalcanti’s canzone ‘Donna me pregga’ as being ‘for the most part intentional’, and committed with the aim of driving the reader’s perception further into the original than it would without them have penetrated. With his translations, Pound explains, he has ‘provided the reader, unfamiliar with old Italian, an instrument that may assist him in gauging some of the qualities of the original’ (*LE*, p. 172). And the introduction to the ‘Cavalcanti Poems’ describes the translations as being ‘of “accompaniment”’ – that is, aimed at making the modern audience in some measure aware of ‘the mental content of the older audience, and of


\(^{21}\) ‘Rhetoric and Vernacular Translation’, p. 62.
what these others drew from certain fashions of thought and speech.' In 1994, Pound dismisses the translations dating to the 1910s on the grounds that his vision of the poems had been obfuscated by the language of the Victorians: 'My perception was not obfuscated by Guido's Italian, difficult as it then was for me to read. I was obfuscated by the Victorian language. What obfuscated me was not the Italian but the crust of dead English, the sediment present in my own available vocabulary - which I, let us hope, got rid of a few years later' (LE, p. 198). At the end of the same essay, Pound makes a distinction between the 'interpretative translation' that he has offered and 'the other sort': the case where 'the "translator" is definitely making a new poem' and which 'falls simply in the domain of original writing' (p. 200).

Pound's descriptions thus tend to represent his translations as hermeneutic moves facilitating better comprehension of the originals for readers who do not have a knowledge of Italian. In this sense translation is 'a tool' - a tool, however, that always remains partial and inadequate. Apart from the emphasis on the italicized 'some' in the quotation just given ('an instrument that may assist him in gauging some of the qualities of the original'), the very fact that Pound returned to his translations time and time again for over two decades, each time retranslating the same poems with different rhythmic, lexical, semantic, and poetic emphases, suggests that for him translation can only be provisional, is never fully sufficient. Translation is a dynamic process constantly in progress, never completed. Each version (in all senses of the word) is an opportunity for revisiting language - one's own as well as the other's. In this context, the suggestion that translations function as 'accompaniments' to the original indicates that translation is more than just a useful tool, and that meaning resides in neither source nor target text alone, but in their interaction, even in the distance between the texts and in the gap between the languages. Translation is an exploration of such space, and its most literal representation is the blank area of the page between the parallel printed texts. Both the 'interpretative' and the 'other sort' of translation are in fact constantly at work in Pound's writing, and his practice is as variously distributed along the line that stretches from original writing through to compiling, interpreting, illustrating, and emulating, as that of his medieval precursors was.

Although, as already indicated, I do not believe that Pound is intentionally adopting medieval translating practices, he is certainly looking to medieval literature and language as models of linguistic renewal. Thanks to the historical fluidity of languages in the making, the Middle Ages offer an attractive parallel, sloughing off the weight of Latin as they acquire cultural autonomy, just as Pound believes that he had to slough off the 'obfuscation' of the 'dead crust of English' to find a new language adequate to modernity. Translation offers itself as one of the forms through which modernity can mediate the medieval, and the three things - modernity, medievality, and translation - are brought together in the strikingly similar images that Pound uses to describe them. In 'Cavalcanti' Pound regrets modernity's loss of the medieval 'radiant world where one thought cuts through another with clean edge' (LE p. 154), and attributes to Guido's poetry the neatness of 'scalpel-cut' (p. 159); he then describes his translation as 'driving the reader's perception further into the original than it would without them have penetrated' (p. 172). This is the language of Imagism and of Vorticism, the clear, hard-edged, precise poetic language that is called for in order to renew the tradition and shed the dead crust of the past.23

Given the premises of Pound's discussion of the Spirit of Romance (the bilingualism of the Alba and the advent of the new Romance literatures), it is surprising that he should not do more with, for instance, Marie de France's preface to her twelfth-century Lai, which he quotes (SR p. 80), where Marie explains why she chose not to translate 'histories' from Latin into French, deciding instead to collect popular stories and retell them in rhyme. After all, this would have been a perfect story to highlight Romance self-assertion against the linguistic and cultural hegemony of Latin, and to value the more spontaneous stories of the people over official histories. Equally surprising - given that Pound follows Dante's precepts on the merit of Provençal and other medieval poets quite closely, using Dante's canon and hierarchies to contradict the accepted wisdom of contemporary Romance philology24 - is that he neglects to give more emphasis to Dante's statements on vernacular vs. Latin, or to refer to Dante's comments on his own poetry, his choice of the vernacular, and its

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political significance. To recur to an earlier point, Pound seems to be concerned here with dissociating the poetic from the politics of interlingualism, and he does not respond to the hints of the strong link between the two in the Middle Ages.

So, if Pound’s reading of medieval literature suggested the coexistence of diverse poetic and linguistic forms that find in their linguistic heterogeneity a powerful means of self-assertion, there yet remains in his writing an unresolved tension between a richly transitional, inherently unstable language, and the desire for universality and linguistic stability that would in turn enable modernity to stabilize itself. Ultimately, his following of Dante’s canon; his simultaneous failure fully to exploit Dante’s thinking on the relationship between politics and language; his faithful, Victorian reverence towards his medieval heroes (and, we may add, his failure to take critical advantage of the striking analogy between the medieval practice of translation and his own) – all this suggests that Pound, not unlike Eliot, was invoking an idealized Middle Ages according to a predetermined agenda that ultimately homogenizes the multiplicity of medieval voices. With all their differences, Eliot’s and Pound’s essays appear to converge on a key point: the desire for a unifying universality and a Pentecostal linguistic and historical transferral. The ideal universality of Eliot’s ‘common language’, based on its proximity to Latin, is recuperated by Pound through the clarity and radiance of medieval vernacular thought and poetry, the qualities that make it transferrable through a process that ‘permeates’ into the original and searches for an equivalent clear, clean-edged image for modernity. Pound’s investment remains in a desired Pentecostal ‘spirit’ that would coagulate around the universality of Romance vernacular poetry and be able to transcend its linguistic differences. But in the implicit coextensiveness of the medieval world, medieval poetry, a mediating translative practice, and the desired modern poetic language, the term that is missing is an integral, coherent modern world. Translation is entrusted with the restorative function of finding (inventing) ways to bring it about through the transferral of the medieval into the modern, yet the fragmentation of modernity ultimately frustrates the feasibility of such translation. This tension remains unresolved.

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56 ‘Praefatio’ of The Spirit of Romance is more than reminiscent of Carlyle: ‘The history of an art is the history of masterwork, not of failures, or mediocrity ... The study of literature is hero-worship’ (SR, p. 7).

relation between Latin and vernacular language, in which for the first time the latter claims superiority. 27

The seat of learning has thus come to England, in the French language, and the challenge to the dominant tongue places the question of language alongside that of political imperium, opening the door for the frequent later association of linguistics and politics. The theme of translatio studii et imperii 28 would, in fact, go on to frame much of the discourse of linguistic/political power and legitimacy in the following centuries, and it may also help us outline a context for the many instances of eastward and westward travel in Joyce's fiction, from 'The Dead' to Finnegans Wake.

In the final story of Dubliners, Gabriel Conroy, who plans to take his annual cycling holiday on the Continent to 'keep in touch with the languages', is reproached by Miss Ivors for neglecting his language ('And haven't you your own language to keep in touch with – Irish?') and his country ('And haven't you your own land to visit ... that you know nothing of, your own people, and your own country?') 29 Gabriel retorts with increasing irritation, first denying that Irish is his language, then declaring himself sick of his country, and thus anticipating Stephen's similarly impatient remarks about home and tongue: 'You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets' (Portrait, p. 203).

Gabriel and Stephen may eventually choose opposite geographical directions, Gabriel acknowledging the need to 'go westward', Stephen deciding to go east to Paris. For both, however, the question is not to accept or reject one of two linguistic/cultural/political alternatives, but to negotiate a form of linguistic and cultural plurality. Gabriel's decision – 'The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward' ('The Dead', p. 223) – is neither an acceptance of Miss Ivors' Irish nationalist creed, nor a simple acknowledgement of the need to confront his own Irish roots, and it goes beyond a recognition of the common humanity and mortality that lies beyond political, linguistic, social, or cultural differences. I take it, rather, as the implicit recognition of the untenability of his earlier lame denial that literature, politics, and identity have anything to do with each other (p. 188), and of the necessity of facing up to this relationship and its implications. The topos of journeying thus 'translates' the meaning of translatio studii et imperii, but for Gabriel, Stephen, and Joyce the myth of a vernacular Gaelic that would replace English and thus give a cultural, spiritual, and political form of imperium to Ireland was just that: a myth. Only by working within the imperial language, by contaminating it from the inside, by breaking down its boundaries, can a political and cultural renovatio take place. The most compact expression of this idea comes from the inventive, translative language of Finnegans Wake, where Shem the Penman, waging his war on English, claims that 'he would wipe the face of English speaker, mullaphonologically spiking, off the face of the erse'; 30 that is, wipe, among other scatological things, all English spoken, or any English speaker/spook off the face of the earth; wipe it all out of Anglo-Irish language (Erse). What is especially important for our context is Shem's manner of achieving such a goal: 'mullaphonologically spiking' may suggest that this is just a metaphorical manner of speaking, but the metaphoricity of this operation is founded on a multisensory, multilingual speech that requires a continuous activity of translation. (Roland McGough helpfully points out that -si is the Finnish translative suffix.) 31

Without this translative, multivocal, multilingual, internally perversion and pervasive practice, languages would remain frozen into static borders, divided into two mutually exclusive tongues (and therefore cultures and political communities) requiring a form of interpretative translation that risks being an 'overbearing' solution in which one is obliterated by the other – just what occurs to the old Irish-speaking peasant accused of murder in 'Ireland at the Bar', who requires an interpreter to mediate between him and the law, but whose extravagant, bewildered voice is systematically reduced to a dry monosyllable, effectively silenced by the interpreter and repressed by the system in which he has no linguistic – let alone civic or political – status. 32 The desire for a universal language would appear to be the logical outcome of this predicament. Yet in Finnegans Wake the thematizing of Babel and of Pentecost, or other forms of 'remedial' languages, never resolves in the promotion of such universality. 33 Joyce


is equally wary of any claims made in the name of a vernacular constructed as natural but exclusive; and it is useful, before returning to Finnegans Wake, to examine some of the thoughts that lead up to Stephen's meeting with the Dean of Studies, when he acknowledges his dispossessment from the 'acquired speech'.

As Stephen walks to his physics class, his route offers many reminders of the English domination of Ireland:

The grey block of Trinity on his left, set heavily in the city's ignorance like a great dull stone set in a cumbersome ring, pulled his mind downward; and while he was striving this way and that to free his feet from the fetters of the reformed conscience he came upon the droll statue of the national poet of Ireland.

(Portrait, p. 180)

Stephen's thoughts may be tinged with irony here, as Thomas Moore, the 'national poet', spent most of his life in England. A few pages later, Stephen's encounter with a girl selling flowers concludes with his walking away quickly from her, 'wishing to be out of the way before she offered her ware to another, a tourist from England or a student of Trinity' (Portrait, p. 184). Between these two episodes, Stephen thinks of his friend Davin, the candid nationalist peasant student who 'worshipped the sorrowful legend of Ireland' (p. 181):

His nurse had taught him Irish and shaped his rude imagination by the broken lights of Irish myth. He stood towards this myth upon which no individual mind had ever drawn out a line of beauty and to its unwieldy tales that divided themselves as they moved down the cycles in the same attitude as towards the Roman catholic religion, the attitude of a dull-witted loyal serf. Whosoever of thought or of feeling came to him from England or by way of English culture his mind stood armed against in obedience to a password: and of the world that lay beyond England he knew only the foreign legion of France in which he spoke of serving.

(Portrait, p. 181)

The question of the Irish language, imbibi by Davin from his nurse's breast, is set squarely within the two twin faiths of nationalism and Catholicism, imbibi just as unquestioningly. The nurse teaching him Irish can of course be simply a realistic detail, but it also belongs to a long tradition of theorizing the vernacular language as natural and nourishing.

I shall give two examples of this, one couched in positive terms, the other in implicitly negative ones. Dante employs the topos of the vernacular as milk at the start of the De vulgari eloquentia, highlighting the affectionate character of the natural relationship between an individual and his language. Dante's treatise, whose aim is to establish a history and poetics of the vernacular, is immediately charged with intense emotional tones that transform the theoretical aim into an equally personal one. My second example comes from a very different context: the association between vernacular language and the doctrine of the Incarnation, framed in terms of mother's/supernatural milk. Nicholas Watson has argued that in certain medieval contexts, and often as a consequence of the debate sparked by Lollardism and the Wycliffite Bible, 'language politics and incarnational theology became coterminous', and 'the very act of writing in the vernacular had theological implications, while the symbol of the 'mother tongue' could be linked to quite specific theological positions and controversies'. Watson shows that Christ's humanity was increasingly considered to be a more suitable topic for reflection and emotive identification by the less educated than the theological subtleties of discussions on his divinity, and was thus almost a fortiori expressed in English. Nicholas Love's Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ (c. 1409) addresses this specific audience with the intention of providing 'symple creatures the whiche as childryn havyn neade to be fedde with mylke of lyghte doctrine and not with sadde [serious] mete of grete clargye [learning] and of hye contemplacion'. As Watson remarks, Love's language generates two parallel but contrasting chains of meanings, in which theological complexity, spiritual maturity, and Latin are set in opposition to limited education, intellectual simplicity, spiritual childishness, and English. 'Love presents his Mirror not only as a means of spiritual and intellectual education but as a bastion against such education. To learn its lesson, the reader must emulate the passivity of the infant, receiving nourishment from a clerical writer who retains full control over what he dispenses and how he dispenses it.'

I am not suggesting that Joyce's Portrait of the Artist refers, explicitly or implicitly, to Nicholas Love's treatise or to this specific debate, and I only use this passage as an example of the ideology that can underpin rhetorical claims about the vernacular. It is, however, intriguing to find
old woman pouring the milk for the Englishman Haines and the Irish
mocking Buck Mulligan is for stephen ‘serving her conqueror and her
gay betrayer’. Ireland, idealized into a sorrowful legend by Davin
and symbolized for Stephen by the old milkwoman, futilely seeks its
renaissance in the recovery of old myths and a language that have dried
up, lost their nourishing power, and – shrunken to nothing – are ready
to be distracted and seduced by the empty mocking rhetoric of the Irish’
gay betrayer’ and the British ‘conqueror’.

So, if Joyce remains sceptical of the facile myth of linguistic
universalism, he also remains alert to the dangers of claims made in
the name of the ‘language of the people’. Such vernacular ‘common
language’ is exposed in Joyce’s work as a comforting but shallow myth
that can in fact repress, deceive, and betray as much as it comforts. At
the same time, translation, as a vehicle of ‘transferral’ of knowledge, is
shown to be an instrument that can be used to control and limit access
to knowledge. This is explored in a bilingual passage in Finnegans Wake
(if the word ‘bilingual’ makes any sense in the context of Joyce’s final
novel), where the artist figure Shem the Penman wishes to create an
indelible ink to write eternal poetry. Shem’s actions are also those of
the alchemist seeking to produce precious gold from base materials
through a transformation that, traditionally, also carries spiritual
meanings, and his activity in Finnegans Wake must be seen both as a
continuation of Stephen’s desire to transsubstantiate the everyday and
the vulgar into the eternity of art, and as an extension of his theory of
the epiphany, whereby revelation resides in ‘vulgarly’.

Shem, said to have ‘wings away on a wildgoose’s chase across the
katharic ocean’ (a flight that allies him with Gabriel’s and Stephen’s
translative journeys), is shown in the process of making ‘synthetic
ink and sensitive paper for his own end out of his wit’s waste’ (FW
185.05-08). The procedure, described in Latin with English inter-
polations, involves putting his excrement in a funereal urn, pissing in
it while chanting invocations and a psalm, mixing the materials, then
baking andcooling them so as to produce ‘encousium ... indelible’ (FW
185.25). While Shem’s alchemical transsubstantiation enacts, even
under its scatological theme, the spiritual dimension of art and the
transformation of matter into word/Word, the bilingualism of this
episode suggests a further reflection on the question of language and
translation, now also compared to an alchemical reaction capable

35 The Italian text, first published in Al Pleco della Sua in 1907, can be read in a
translation by Conor Deane in Joyce, Occasional, Critical and Political Writing: edited by
36 Ulysses (London, 1937), pp. 18, 12.
37 Portrait, p. 221; Stephen Hero, edited by Theodore Spencer, revised edition (London,
of transforming the (linguistic, cultural) matter on which it operates. The episode contains several references to Thomas Norton’s fifteenth-century *Ordinal of Alchemy*, a manual purporting to describe in detail and lay out the correct sequence of alchemical procedures, as an ordinal would do for the Church’s liturgical year.40 Norton comments extensively on his choice of writing in plain English, and Joyce’s references to the treatise thus inscribe Shem’s distillation of indelible ink in the medieval debate on Latin and vernacular as alternative languages, each with its own audience, subject-matter, nature, and hierarchic values. I have discussed elsewhere how Joyce alludes in this episode to Dante’s project of elevating his *vulgare* to a standard of perfection.41 One could reasonably assume that Shem’s adoption of Norton’s homology between his language and the alchemical processes he describes signifies—for both writers—that the poet can transcend linguistic and artistic limitations by transforming his language into the ‘gold’ of eternal art. But there is a sting in both tales.

In the *Prohemiun* Norton addresses his book to ‘laymen’ and ‘clerks also’ (ll. 2–3), saying that it ‘shuld al commyn peple telle’ (ll. 57), and that it is therefore written in ‘playne & comon speche’ (ll. 58). At the end of the treatise Norton reiterates these concepts, asking his readers not to be surprised that this book is written in plain English, as his purpose is ‘to telle a multitude / Of rude peple’ (ll. 3690–1) the truth of alchemy, and prevent its unwise practice.

Norton invites readers to be diffident towards ancient books, as they are written in an obscure language that will confuse and deceive many (or simply bore them) (ll. 61–84). This is a radical claim: Latin and Greek authorities are derided, and the traditional topos of *translatio studii* undermined; yet the sources Norton condescends are also the ones from which he is drawing his knowledge. A curious dynamic is established in the opposition between his ‘comon speche’ (ll. 58) and the writing of the ‘many auctours’ (ll. 69) of the past, whereby Latin is tagged as deceitful, while the vernacular offers truths of a material and spiritual kind. Norton qualifies English both as the common, base metal that his own alchemical/linguistic practice can turn into gold, and as the best language that can describe such process. But there is a larger


discipline's hermeneutics). It also evokes the custom of leaving risqué passages 'cloaked up' in a foreign or difficult language, so as to make them inaccessible to the less educated, who are just like children that can only be addressed in the vernacular; at the same time, the sycophantic English interpolations within the Latin passage reverse precisely this custom. Examples of it can be found in Gibbon's Autobiography ('My English text is chaste, and all licentious passages are left in the obscurity of a learned language'), and in J. M. Rigg's 1906 translation of Boccaccio's Decameron, which leaves the most risqué passages in the original Italian, but collects their translations, together with explicit illustrations of the sexiest tales, in a separate folder that can be safely locked away.

In Gibbon's case, untranslated or difficult language is used to control access to knowledge, the assumption being that the educated will have the ability to understand, discriminate, and therefore not be corrupted, while the more vulnerable will be 'protected' by their ignorance. Rigg's 'bilingual' translation of Boccaccio has different implications: it divides its readership not according to competence but through the use of a 'crib' for those who have bought, or control access to, the book (presumably largely male purchasers) - the English translation of the sensitive passages is available, though it can be kept hidden. Knowledge is transferred selectively through access to the different versions. Translation here is a means of empowerment, but it is the key to the right lockers, rather than to the right language, that grants access and makes all the difference. The irony is that Boccaccio's declared intention was to entertain women with tales written in a vernacular they could understand and enjoy, while men were occupied in other pursuits, such as war or commerce. Rigg's Edwaridan translation betrays the medieval author's intention by denying access to those for whom (if we may believe his claims) it had originally been written.

The issue of 'accessibility' vs. 'elitism' is thus complex, and cannot be reduced to a simple opposition of 'easy' vs. 'difficult' language, or the ability to understand erudite references. Eliot's presentation of Dante's medieval idiom as a universal common tongue of easy imitability and translatibility, on account of its proximity to Latin, ignores the lively and widespread medieval debates on the nature of language and linguistic relationships, and reverses the more traditional association of 'common speech' with the vernacular. The view of medieval language as a homogeneous, coherent whole that can be carried over into modernity with little or no adaptation is one of the foundations on which Eliot's overbearing desire for a transcendent universality rests. Despite his championing of the energy and originality of vernaculars, Pound's aim is broadly the same: a renovatio of modernity's language, in which the study of new medieval languages and literatures can play an effective part. In his greater awareness of linguistic alternatives, Pound acknowledges the impossibility of stabilizing a language so as to effect a satisfactory translation, and the relationship between the present and the past remains one of dynamic and continued rewriting and linguistic investigation. Although, as I have tried to show, Pound's translations place him much closer to medieval practice than he may have realized, his idea of a Romance literature unified by a common spirit that transcends linguistic and intellectual differences still leads to a distorted view of the Middle Ages and its possible relation to modernity. Ultimately, neither Eliot nor Pound can detach himself from the (Victorian) vision of the medieval as a coherent and undivided intellectual unity.

In exposing the ambiguity frequently implicit in the rhetoric of renovatio and of 'natural' languages, Joyce not only dismisses the myth of universality, but also - through his exploration of the origins of such rhetoric and its contemporary use - shows the dangers inherent in the myth of the vernacular, and the ultimately exclusionary nature of a linguistic politics that claims to empower the 'common people' through an ideal of linguistic purity: so how does one mediate between familiar and foreign language, between the affective relationship to one's tongue and the need to avoid the pitfalls of linguistic mythification? Stephen's solution to 'fly' to Paris carries ambivalent implications, as the artist's leaving Ireland may align him with the figure of the 'national poet of Ireland' that had chosen the imperial capital as his home - or does this choice after all bring him closer to Davin's vague desire to serve in the foreign legion of France, a legion in this case peopled by the bohemian, anti-conformist circle of artists (such as Wilde)? The only way to negotiate between the emotive regard for the language and its ideological use rests for Joyce in turning all 'familiar' language into a 'foreign' one that surprises, does not become habitual, and therefore asks its speaker to listen, 'multaphonically', to the multiplicity of its voices. Stephen's artistic mission to 'forge ... the uncreated conscience of [his] race' at the end of A Portrait is a direct result of his realization of the necessity of this permanent, subverting, 'intra-linguistic' translation that can negotiate between his language and that of the English Dean of Studies, where the same words become the symptoms of
linguistic, cultural, social, and political dispossession. (The dispossession is of course that of the conquered, but there is a touch of compassion in Stephen’s reluctant recognition that the English Dean too is ‘a poor Englishman in Ireland’, p. 189, denied a comfortable linguistic identity by the colonial asymmetry.) Does this emphasis solve the problem of the old Irish peasant at the bar? Certainly not. Although the tension between alternative languages remains yet again ultimately unresolved, Joyce’s response differs from Eliot’s or Pound’s because it refrains from searching for a cure in the artificial (and impossible) transposition of an idealized medieval homogeneity into the modern. Instead, it chooses to focus on the historical conditions that are the cause of the modern situation, and acknowledges that the discourse about linguistic difference has always constituted a theatre for cultural, political, and ideological battles. Stephen’s forging of the new conscience of his race is thus indeed equivalent to a form of translation, as linguistic practice and as transferral or reclaiming of power; but Joyce warns of the dangers inherent in uncritical investment in such activity, since its result can turn out to be nothing more than an ‘epical forged cheque’ (FW181.16) that can bounce at any time.

Goldsmiths College, University of London