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Locating *Pinocchio* Before 1940:

The Italian Allegory Gone Awry in English Translation

“As has been said, translation is always a shift, not between two languages, but between two cultures – or two encyclopaedias” (Eco 82)

### **I. Introduction**

In 1941, a year after the Walt Disney version of *Pinocchio* successfully debuted, the Italian Ministry of Popular Culture was asked to sue Walt Disney for libel, “on charge of distorting the Italian character Pinocchio in a film and portraying the long-nosed fellow ‘so he could easily be mistaken for an American’” (*New Republic* 211). Carlo Collodi was the original author of *Pinocchio* and some months before the suit, his son “served legal notice on Disney... for alleged infringement of ‘moral copyright’”: namely, the mis-portrayal of the Pinocchio character himself (Forgacs, 367-368). Ultimately, the legal trouble was fuelled by the accusation that the Disney version of Pinocchio was “very different from what [Carlo] Collodi had envisioned” (French 28). What processes influenced such dramatic change between the source text and the target language? Such a misrepresentation testifies to the very essence of translation. Specifically, “the transfer of ‘meaning’ contained in one set of language signs into another set of language signs through competent use of the dictionary and grammar” this “process involves a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria also” (Bassnett 21). Indeed, it is the former clause that translation theorists find most controversial and the most difficult for translators themselves to overcome.

Collodi's original was a critical allegory of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Italy. The specific extra-linguistic manifestations such as its metaphorical critique are overlooked and unpreserved in the original English translations of the children's story. This paper will discuss *Pinocchio*'s first two translations into English and Disney's eventual adaptation. The children's story was first published in Florence, Italy in 1883. Mary Alice Murray published the first English translation entitled *Pinocchio: The Story of a Puppet* in London in 1892, and the tale was picked up the next year in New York. Walter Cramp published this translation entitled *Pinocchio: The Adventures of a Marionette* in 1904. Walt Disney produced an animated film adaptation in 1940 entitled, simply: *Pinocchio*.

If we consider that the very basic element of a children's story is its appeal to world literature (Lerer 11), then a text like *Pinocchio* exists for and in translation. However, how the extra-linguistic material functions and how it is dealt with in translation is the concern of this paper. Because *Pinocchio* has become an item of world literature by way of its translations, the allegory created by Carlo Collodi about the reality of the Italian situation post-Unification has been lost in English translation and replaced in the target culture by a pedagogical set of moral codes in order to replenish the story's meaning. Consequently, the value of reading texts comparatively manifests in reconciling what is lost with what is gained. Reading the English translations in light of the original Italian story reveals respective intricacies of both cultures and validates the process of translation as a privileged mediator.

The original text itself appears to present itself as "stateless." However, a close reading<sup>1</sup> of the original text is valuable because it reveals very specific allusions to post-Unification Italy. In

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<sup>1</sup> All translations of Collodi's original are my own. This extends also to my secondary sources written in Italian. All have been verified by Ms. Chohre Rassekh, Professor of Italian, Simon Fraser University.

1861, twenty-two years before *Pinocchio* was originally published, Italy was founded as a constitutional monarchy. On the brink of modernity, Italy was fraught with revolutionary ideas which threatened traditional life. The “distinct break from the past” (Woolf 1) that modernization brought revealed that not all Italians agreed on the terms and conditions of a modernized Italy (2). A period “virtually unknown to English-speaking audiences” (1), the specific culture from which *Pinocchio* emerged was anxious and highly fragmented. Fearing the onslaught of modernity, a population of which three quarters were illiterate and only “eight out of a thousand... spoke the national language” (2) was outright conflicted at the prospect of building a national culture<sup>2</sup>. Certainly, the possible means by which to do so was controversial but the underlying rhetoric of progress involved “the education of children”.<sup>3</sup> The education system was built on the premise that it would remove revolutionary ideals from its pupils by ensuring an Italian identity was built and preserved. Such a concept could be applied by rendering Italy itself a child in need of an education. In order to instill national unity in a country constituted by a myriad of what were once nation states, Italy had to be brought up and educated like a child, in a system dedicated to fueling national ideals. *Pinocchio*, then, is “a cultural icon,” (3) and his story reveals crucial elements of Italy’s coming of age.

As a *Bildungsroman*, *Pinocchio*’s coming of age represents something far more political than its English translations suggest. My comparative close reading incorporates observations and

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<sup>2</sup> The Italian nation-states used different dialects and, in some cases, different languages. After Unification, the Italian government tried to impose a standard Italian language to be taught in schools and to be used for official documentation.

<sup>3</sup> Responding to a lack of solid basic education fueled by non-interference on the part of the government, the Unification brought about a “projected national system of elementary schools” (King, Bolton 70). Though all boys were expected to attend, it was many years before the elementary schools began to police the situation and therefore see a rise in attendance numbers. The elementary schools were conceptualized as a method of counteracting the reality pre-Unification that “nearly all professors in the universities corrupt the young and the students have always been the first to come out against the sovereigns” (Woolf 42).

analyses from my three respective translations into my analysis of Collodi's original 'coming of age' story. The way that the four texts, in conjunction with one another, address the idea of linguistic structure; standardizing education; and the structure of the family reveals a disconnect between the source and target cultures. While Walter Cramp says "in order to preserve the unique flavour of the story as much as possible the translator has followed the original rather closely," his translation has a distinct pedagogical agenda. Cramp projects his own reading of the story when he states that "Pinocchio's waywardness and love of mischief are fully set forth, and the moral, though sufficiently obvious, is not allowed to detract from the enjoyment of the adventures" (2). In essence, Cramp concludes that the pedagogical constituent of the story is intrinsically opposed to the entertainment value of *Pinocchio*. By thus revealing his own mediation techniques between source and target culture, Cramp exposes the disconnect in terms of the moral of the story. The value of the translations is that they reveal a cultural mediation between the source and target culture which ultimately posits *Pinocchio* in the scope of world literature.

In order to demonstrate the importance of *Pinocchio*'s national allegory to a world literature context, I will review the intensive *Pinocchio* scholarship available. This review will aid in outlining those conversations which this project seeks to join and to present the work that this project seeks to build on. Sources on *Pinocchio* offer a variety of readings but I outline them here with the intention of breaking down the tendency to read *Pinocchio* only one way. I will then continue to read *Pinocchio* closely, with the assistance of translation theory, under three headings: linguistic structure, the standardization of education and the structure of the family. My conclusions will involve presenting these close readings as an analysis which reveals that the differences between the original and the translations manifest a particular cultural dynamic

which is worth studying under the lens of world literature. More specifically, my close reading analysis will reveal a contrast between two legitimate yet ultimately different national cultural artifacts: a pedagogical *Pinocchio* for American children and an allegorical *Pinocchio* for Italian citizens. Both are directed towards fueling nationhood but are geared towards different audiences.

## II. Literature Review

The primary task of this paper is to highlight the intricate specificities of the culture within which Carlo Collodi published *Pinocchio* in order to argue that the culture into which it was translated afforded no avenue of equivalence. This is not to say that the original is more valuable than the translation. To the contrary, I propose to respond to the body of criticism which, as Richard Wunderlich states, “argu[es] that the original is a better book than its many collateral decedents” (2). The value of reading comparatively lies in the recognition of impossible equivalence and in validating the process of translation rather than perpetuating the tendency to use an insubstantial label such as “better”. *Pinocchio* “was composed during a time when the task of creating an Italian national identity was being passionately discussed by politicians, writers, and socially engaged citizens.” Indeed, its cultural specificity gives it value because *Pinocchio* becomes a stage upon which Collodi could respond to a changing Italy the way he saw fit. Because the Italian people were “in search of a national culture that would authenticate and legitimize” them (Stewart-Steinberg 1), the versatility of a fictional children’s text allows room for Collodi to maneuver his political ideas.

The biographical relevance of Collodi’s life, in conjunction with the historical Italy out of which *Pinocchio* was written, offers insight into a “campaign necessary to the strengthening of Italian feelings of nationhood” (Beales 14). Politically, Carlo Collodi – whose real name was

Carlo Lorenzini – was steeped in a political environment that was seeing the rise of a democratic nationalism that was threatening “fragmented Italy’s status quo” (Wunderlich and Morrissey 3). While he worked in a variety of different genres, Collodi was consistently interested in political satires. He might have been encouraged to change the publication style of his political criticism when the daily newspaper he had been working for was forced to shut down due to Italian censorship. In an effort to standardize the Italian language, Florence became home to the publication effort for a new Italian dictionary to which Collodi contributed. Collodi’s critique of post-Unification Italy simultaneously draws attention to challenges and downfalls of the period and offers Italians a way of collectively identifying with their situation by means of a children’s story. Literarily-speaking, “Italy’s... tradition in the nineteenth (and twentieth) century is haunted by a recurrent inability to depict the successful – or for that matter, even failed – insertion of young people in a structured, multilayered society” (Testa 53). An attempt at critically drawing attention to this, *Pinocchio* represents a reconciliation of childhood with the changing tides of Italian national identity. That is, the children’s story not only allowed sufficient room for Collodi to express his political criticism but also functioned as a way to involve the newly important population of Italy: its children. From this perspective, *Pinocchio* is a very ambitious project of great potential. The scholarship focusing on English translations of the tale must, then, be concerned with global iterations of the two fold project of *Pinocchio*.

That said, the territory of children’s literature is tread heavily upon by political and social agendas which can be dangerous when communicated subtly. Children’s literature is significant in that it is constituted of a very versatile set of codes. This quality allows it to simultaneously bear great importance locally and globally. The general trend of children’s literary criticism is that it is “not the parents, the teachers, the preachers, not even the authors, but the children

themselves who determine what their literature is to be” (Vigeurs et al. vii). The main appeal is aimed at children. Children’s literature is “a body of literature into which the dominant social, cultural and educational norms are inscribed” (13). In terms of Italy, Terri Frongia says that, during the late nineteenth century, “Italian children’s literature was heavily influenced by two social institutions, the Church and the State” (51) and that the literary industry of which it was a part contained “a give-and-take (or lack thereof) of international exchange” (51-52). Therefore, we must consider that the canon for which *Pinocchio* was being groomed contained many specific codes to which constituents were expected to comply. Collodi’s text then was a project aimed not only at using children’s literature to criticize contemporary Italy culture and appeal to children, but also to effectively breakdown the expectations of the Italian literary repertoire.

The project of *Pinocchio* would have been a difficult one to translate, considering that *Pinocchio* is a text about Italian identity and that Collodi makes “an archetypal Italian” out of nothing (Testa 53). The loss of the political allegory has implications as broad as format, audience, character agency, pedagogical lessons and linguistic creativity. Where these issues manifest is in the three main facets of my argument: the linguistic structure, the standardization of education, and the structure of the family. In terms of target culture, *Pinocchio* was taken up in 1904 and translated by Walter Cramp for pedagogical purposes. Specifically, his translation of *Pinocchio* was “dictated by educators at the primary school level,” (Wunderlich “Tribulations” 199) and then “serv[ed] the [American] classrooms through the 1950s” (201). Since post-Unification Italy is relatively unfamiliar in the English-speaking sphere (Stewart-Steinberg 1), a reconceptualization of the text’s movement between source and target language must be examined. Further, it is more than likely that English-language “translator(s) had no inkling about the cultural context that coloured Collodi’s language” (Testa, personal communication).

Because children's literature plays a crucial role in the development of literature in general and more specifically, in the way we introduce culture to children, the global picture must be examined.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, "translated tales have enriched children's reading since the medieval period and shaped English-language children's literature since its inception" (Lathey 2). If we take into consideration the fact that, "as a result of the peripheral position of children's books within the literary system, the resulting lack of status for translators," then "translators for children seem to be the most transparent of all" (5). Therefore, a review of *Pinocchio* scholarship in light of translation theory is well over due. Translators, says Lathey, seek "to compensate for the child's inevitable lack of life experience, or to strike a balance between filling gaps in children's knowledge and the need to stimulate curiosity and enhance a tolerance of the unfamiliar" (7). Therefore, the task of the children's translator assumes much more responsibility when it comes to moving a text from source to target culture. Likewise, the translation itself is fraught with more social implications than a translation of an adult text. Therefore, the process of translation is only further highlighted as a task of mediation, and the translators for *Pinocchio* must consider both target and source audiences. In this way, the translation method gives comparative value to *Pinocchio* in translation because it highlights the intricacies with which the children's story is concerned.

Translations of children's literature should be treated with the same effort as translations of other forms of literature. However, there are certain additional elements which must be considered. Elena Paruola offers some interesting insight into specific translation criteria for texts such as *Pinocchio*, stating that "adaptations are active linguistic, social and political choices that often conform to the censorship agenda of the country that controls the material, and

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<sup>4</sup> Gillian Lathey says that "children's curiosity is unbounded," and it "will seize upon any book containing compelling stories" (2).



nowhere is this conformity more relevant than in the education of children” (127). Though her article focuses on adaptations from the late twentieth century and therefore outside the scope of this paper, the main tenet of her articles remains relevant. That is, in Italy, “when reading or staging *Pinocchio*... adults present children with unabridged versions,” where in England, “Collodi’s book is considered suitable for children on one condition: that cuts and omissions be made” (126). To this end, the original text does not seem to satisfy the target language and whether or not we substitute all English-speaking countries for England, the argument remains upheld: *Pinocchio*’s integrity is a target in translation.

There is a distance between the original and the English translations which is all too often reduced or ignored. Much *Pinocchio* criticism in English today reflects a tendency to treat the translations as the original tale. Responding to an article which asks “Is there any other Italian children’s literature besides *Pinocchio*?”, Terri Frongia suggests that it is a dynamic for which the translation market is responsible which dictates the status of Italian children’s literature in English. The authors of *A Critical History of Children’s Literature* reduce *Pinocchio* to “a triumphant landmark in the long line of tales which personify inanimate objects,” (374) thus denationalizing the narrative. Further, if *Pinocchio* is indeed the only Italian children’s literature thanks to an inadequate translation market, it raises questions about the reality of Italian literature on a global scale and this becomes a further issue under the jurisdiction of world literature.

A remarkably glaring example of the distance between the original and the English translations, is manifest in the Disney adaptation of *Pinocchio*. To consider that Disney took on the project of adapting *Pinocchio* for animation on the screen is to invite analysis of the “degree of agency that masks the larger cultural forces at play in the production” (Sammond 29).

Effectively, Disney centralizes the entire route upon which Pinocchio must prove himself worthy of becoming a real boy as the “path that every child must follow” between “his front door and school” (29). ). Not only does the film imply a way for American children to be in the world, and a way for their parents to parent them, it also, “held up [Disney], the company, and its products as paradigmatic of what was best for children” (30). Piero Zanatto speaks of the Disney writers not as translators but solely as adaptors, pointing to the distance between the original and the translation. In this respect, media for children seems to be considered universally generic and effectively, loses its identity as being just as specific as any other form of literature.

Such a trend is not true only for the filmic adaptation of Pinocchio. Other critics tend to miss the fact that translation theory must necessarily be involved in *Pinocchio* studies. For all his panoptic intentions, Seth Lerer’s analysis of children’s literature falls short. Though he makes the claim that “children’s literature, in short, is world literature,” (11) in his discussion of *Pinocchio*, he makes no distinction between translations, nor does he ever cite the original. Therefore, his view of world literature is either altogether skewed or the limitations placed on him by way of studying only in translation restrict his readings. Glauco Cambon also does not differentiate between the original language and the one he is reading and criticising on. For Cambon, *Pinocchio* is written specifically for children, “from a child’s point of view” (53). In light of this, “the book has to do with the education of a child, both through traditional humanist instrument of classroom and books (which he rather resents) and through the school of hard knocks” (54, parenthesis his). Such an oversimplified analysis of Pinocchio overlooks not only the political and social context of its source culture but the consequences translation has on the meaning of the story. O’Sullivan recites the main problem with the traditional reading of children’s literature. That is, “foreign texts are often read in their translations into German,

English, etc., and then discussed as if they had originally been written in those languages” (O’Sullivan 11). While it is clear that children’s literature is considered world literature, the idea that is often ignored is that children’s literature carries the same degree of cultural specificities and ramifications as other forms of literature. I propose to develop the culturally defining intricacies of *Pinocchio* in order to better justify its placement on the scale of world literature.

Such a structural misinterpretation of the *Pinocchio* story does not go unnoticed by all critics. The Modern Languages Association’s insightful text entitled *Approaches to Teaching Collodi’s Pinocchio* offers contextual perspectives on the children’s tale, and strengthens my argument about children’s literature being just as culturally specific as other forms of literature. Michael Sherberg, the editor, says that the book is response to two overarching issues: first, that “a certain amount of background material is required” when studying *Pinocchio* (12); and second that “instructors often have to struggle against students’ preconceptions of *Pinocchio*, thanks mostly to the Disney version that is all too familiar to young American audiences” (13). To this end, *Approaches* attempts to reconcile a genuine Pinocchio with the translations and adaptations that cloud it. A significant number of chapters in the text provide an outlet for literary critics to offer interesting approaches, and provide the translation critic new avenues. For Amy Boylan, *Pinocchio* was written in response to a growing demand for reading materials for children, and though also concerned with the issues of national identity and the success of the new Italy (it emphasized the importance of education and promotes such a values of post-Unification government as the primacy of family and work ethic that helped Italians achieve a middle-class mentality and standard of living), was also an outlet for Collodi’s ambivalence about late nineteenth century Italy. (15)

Such analyses of *Pinocchio* bring us closer to identifying the essence of that which cannot be effectively translated into English and, when read next to our North American perception of *Pinocchio*, offers a comparative cultural analysis.

My project builds on the work of Richard Wunderlich and Thomas Morrissey, whose *Pinocchio* scholarship sheds the most light on the specificity of *Pinocchio* in regards to translation. They set standards for *Pinocchio* scholarship where none had existed previously. The two scholars focus on *Pinocchio* as changing significantly in translation only after 1920 and not immediately. My two points of dispute here are: first, that *Pinocchio* and Pinocchio must necessarily have changed immediately in translation in order to be successful in the American context; and second, that the significant changes in *Pinocchio* attributed to the changes in media newly available must have been based on, or at least influenced by, the previous translations of *Pinocchio* into English, underlining the fact that the translations must have already been significantly different from the original.

Importantly, Wunderlich and Morrissey offer an important North American analysis of *Pinocchio*. Wunderlich begins by quoting himself, stating that “Pinocchio in English rendition tells us about North American society, its change over time, and the change in its perception of children” (xv). Such an analysis is how the cultural value of *Pinocchio* exists in translation. However, such a change (clearly, the Italian original does not tell the story of American society and its children), must have occurred immediately in translation or it would not have been so successful in the United States and most definitely would not have entered the pedagogical paradigm. Also, later adaptations must have looked to this original change in their creation. Therefore, it is apparent that Disney’s adaptation of *Pinocchio* is a contemporary culmination of

all that came before it. Studying it reveals both the tendency of source culture translation processes and also a progression of conscious decisions made from within it.

If we concede that children's literature is world literature, then how can we justify neglecting those conditions which facilitated its development? O'Sullivan asks that if "social, economic and cultural conditions [have] to prevail in order for a children's literature to develop," then why aren't scholars more concerned at the comparative implications of it (12)? Though recognizing the individuality of *Pinocchio*'s source culture, scholars like Angela Jeannet disregard the consequences changes to the text incur in translation by reducing the translation process to a few deft changes: namely, "subtle and not so subtle modifications to suit the pedagogical intentions of school and home: greater emphasis [placed] on children's obedience, the need for school attendance, respect for authority, and the importance of order and toil" (104). A progression in the form of crediting the translation process in the first place, such a reduction as Jeannet's effectively dismisses the cultural value of translation and opens up the conversation for my project to join.

This project does not propose that the English translations are to be collectively dismissed because they are unfaithful to the original. Doing so would have disastrous literary consequences because it would disavow the process of translation. After all, *Pinocchio* in English translation was and is successful. Herbert Kohl validates *Pinocchio* as a children's story capable of teaching children, from a very young age, how to read critically and pick up issues of sexism, racism and classism (92). Instead, what this project does propose is the giving of credit to children's literature – and specifically *Pinocchio* – as culturally important, thereby valuing translation as a very important form of cultural mediation. Indeed, especially in regard to the pedagogical tradition, what is lost in the English translations of *Pinocchio* offers a new way of

understanding a crucial, yet at present obscure, point in world history by way of cultural study. By comparing what it was that was contemporaneously important in Italy with what is present in immediate English translations, we can see that *Pinocchio* highlights translation as capable of mediating between two cultures and infusing a children's story with meaning in two very different cultural frames of reference. Like stripping *Animal Farm* of its Russian allegory would produce, we are left with an enchantingly legitimate story and American cultural artifact. What we can gain from studying comparatively however, is the lost Italian cultural allegory and how the translation process reconciles what is lost with something gained.

### **III. Close Reading**

#### **i. Linguistic Structure**

In terms of language and social structure, the direct relationship between language choice and connotative meaning must be explored because it reveals different tones in different languages. In short, an appeal to equivalence is at the root of translation and has many possible ramifications in light of close reading. By performing a close reading, differences between the original and the translations are laid out plainly and the cultural analysis demands that such ramifications acquire significance. Susan Bassnett says that “the translator has to resort to a combination of units in order to find an approximate equivalent” (23) However, at best, “the translation is only an adequate *interpretation* of an alien code unit and equivalence is impossible” (23, emphasis hers). If we consider that absolute equivalence is not a realistic aim for the translator and that the translator's interpretation is directly affected by his or her own respective culture, then a close reading reveals a very feasible analysis of the process in play by which the text is rendered for the target culture. In addition, it must be considered that the language utilized in the original and in the studied translations is admittedly from a different

time. If we understand that linguistic structure itself changes in time, then trying to achieve the frame of mind necessary to interpret both the Italian and English word choices is difficult. However, from the perspective of translation theory, a blaring change in structure or word choice is still analytically applicable and a difference in the tone of the story is still significant in light of reading the whole story in context.

*Pinocchio* is immediately set up as a frame narrative, a strategic literary technique, which only lasts three lines. An adult narrator evokes the participation of an audience of children. The narrator begins by letting the children guess the beginning of the story according to their traditional understanding of fairy tales. When they automatically guess: “A king!,” he then proceeds to tell them that they are mistaken. Literally, the narrator says: “No, kids, you are wrong” (3). Collodi is alluding to the traditional structure of fairy tales being broken, an indirect response to the breakdown of traditional Italian society under a new form of government: that is, the centralized constitutional monarchy as replacing the nation states. A new kind of story must be created in order to address a new Italy and the fact that the frame narrative occurs for only three lines is Collodi’s way of prefacing his parody of the Unification-fueled modernization process. As Umberto Eco states in regard to the frame narrative, “the strategy of Collodi is very subtle, because it is doubtful whether he really conceived of his story as a simple tale for kids” (*Mouse or Rat* 166). Evidently, Collodi’s intention in framing the narrative as he did was vaguely construed enough as to potentially exclude equivalence in a literal translation. *Pinocchio* is a new type of text – one that not only does not conform to nationalistic tendencies, but in fact criticizes them – critical to the movement away from tradition<sup>5</sup>. *Pinocchio* offers an allegory that contradicts the location literature is meant traditionally to fill and mocks the national purpose for

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Sherberg points out, that though Collodi’s novel was immensely successful, it “does not suffice for entry into a canon predicated on seriousness and a sense of national purpose” (43).

which it is conceived<sup>6</sup>. Playing with the structural frame narrative is one of the ways that Collodi introduces his allegory and his critique of structured society. It's the first nod to deconstructive methods present in his story.

The translations reveal a different purpose for the frame narrative. Murray translates the first lines almost precisely, but she makes one change, importantly, in affecting the agency of the narrator. The original literally states "I don't know how it happened, but the fact remains..." (3). Murray translates this line as "I cannot say how it came about..." (1). The English translation seems to place the focus on the adult having more information than he is willing to admit or add to the story, thereby deeming his position as adult narrator more omniscient than that of his Italian counterpart. Cramp's translation seems to veer back into the territory of the original. The narrator states "I do not know how it happened, but one beautiful day" (3) seeming to effectively taking the omniscience out of the narrator's hands. However, the significance rests in the missing qualifier: "the fact remains". In overlooking these critical words, the narrator negates his recorder status. The narrator does indeed know more than the "facts" that anyone could recite or string together, whereas his Italian counterpart does not. Importantly, this complicates the narrative further than Murray by seeming to resemble the original more closely while in actuality pleading ignorance to it. The frame narrative still exists in the Disney adaptation insofar as Jiminy Cricket is telling the story. He is much more present than the narrator of the original, revealing a guided telling rather than a stand-alone story or stories. Such a presence raises the question of credibility. Specifically, does the third person narrator make the story more credible and therefore, is credibility lost in its filmic adaptation? Umberto Eco comes close to solving the

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Gordon states, in *An Introduction to Twentieth-Century Italian Literature*, that in the nineteenth century, "literature continued to be used in patriotic and pedagogical ways... to maintain its official position within the natural culture" (22).



dilemma when he states that in the filmic version, “there is no more metafictional strategy and a tale that was narrated in the third person by an uncommitted Voice becomes a tale narrated in the first person by one of the [characters themselves],” effectively losing “any wink to its possible adult spectators” (167). Through translation, *Pinocchio* has become a friendly tale of childhood, rather than the production of the strategic allegory critical of Italy’s status. Whether or not the translators were aware of the original allegory, its absence in translation initially is significant of the different nature of the cultural values of the target culture. It highlights the function of translation as capable of giving or removing voice and renders projects of translation – even and especially of children’s stories – critically significant on the scale of comparative study.

The nickname of Geppetto, Pinocchio’s father figure, is fraught with cultural significance in the original and its lack of equivalence in the target language denotes a reading of children’s literature which concedes to absurdity. In the original, Geppetto is known disrespectfully as Polendina – a word play on the corn bread polenta, a typical delicacy in the northern regions of Italy. This suggests a regionally defined rather than unified Italy. The piece of wood (uncrafted Pinocchio) calls Geppetto “Polendina” directly after Geppetto explains his need for a piece of wood. Considering that the nickname stands in for the traditional set of nation states, Collodi is complicating the parody of Italy’s modernization. By having Geppetto be offended at something he should traditionally be proud of – a regional delicacy – Collodi is pointing to the irony in modernization calling him to be offended by regional culture. After the first instance of name calling, Geppetto and Ciliega, the man who first came upon the piece of wood, get into an argument over the offensive misunderstanding. Immediately, the clashing of viewpoints between the traditional regionality of Italy and its new reality as a unified nation are revealed. The argument is very verbal and repetitive (“Yes!” “No!” “Yes!” “No!” (7)), also signifying a certain

adamant state and stubborn behaviour on the part of both. For Collodi, satire exists in the unwillingness to compromise for both parties. Also, significantly, such an argument comments on the agency of children – and representative of a developing Italy – upon which the top down control acts. Before Pinocchio has even been created or conceived of, his fate has been debated out of his hands and therefore controlled. Collodi is commenting on the control of childhood, by way of a debate over tradition and modernization.

In translation, the debate over tradition and modernization is dissolved in favour of resorting to a foreignized absurdity typical of children's story. In Murray's translation, an awkward explanation of the name Polendina is supplied. Namely, "they called him by the nickname Polendina because his yellow wig resembled a pudding made of Indian corn" (5-6). This definition does not give any emphasis to the significance of the word "Polendina," and thereby remains an obscure moment because it does not draw any conclusive explanation or enlighten the English reader. In this way, the name Polendina has become an unexplained absurdity in the story, legitimized by children's fictional literature not the requiring an explanation – especially when posited as something foreign. Whether or not Murray was aware of the context behind "Polendina", her decision to keep it in translation reveals a conscious decision to maintain a portion of the Italian foreign flavour of the tale. One of the most obvious changes in Cramp's translation, is the complete removal of the fight scene between Geppetto and Maestro Antonio (Cramp's translation of "Ciliega"). There are no allusions to Geppetto's nickname nor is there any physical or verbal argumentation. Such a removal is telling of the target audience for whom Cramp was translating and in the context of the entirety of the translation, keeps with the trend of rounding and smoothing all the jagged points of possible pedagogical controversy. Specifically, the change reveals a change in the perception of what is

appropriate for an educational children's tale in the target culture. Anything that could not be explained fully and suitably was not appropriate for the American pedagogical paradigm. The Disney adaptation makes no allusions to a nickname for Geppetto, nor does Geppetto have yellow hair. Instead, he is portrayed as an elderly man. This is a further progression of the nature of reception on the part of the target culture and suggests a changing attitude concerning what is appropriate for children. In this way, studying the progression of translations in light of the Italian original proves fruitful in assessing comparatively the source and target cultures.

A similar issue about names arises when we consider the protagonist's name itself because it reveals something about both source and target culture simultaneously. When deciding on a name for his puppet, Geppetto decides upon Pinocchio given the following justification: "I knew a family called Pinocchio: Pinocchio the father, Pinocchia the mother and Pinocchi the children, and everyone fared well." Such a statement is significant as a parody on two levels: first, it mocks the Italian tradition of naming; and second, it parodies the tradition of naming based on success. Traditionally, naming in Italy is significant to carrying the family name down through generations and the last suffix of a noun, in this case a name, denotes its gender and number ('a' for a singular female, 'o' for a singular male, 'i' for men or a group of mixed gender, 'e' for females). Geppetto never considers Pinocchio's surname and resolves only to administering a first name. Collodi parodies first the seriousness of the arbitrary associations of names. In this case, Geppetto believes that a name associated with positive social attributes will persuade his puppet in the same direction. More fundamentally, Collodi parodies the way by which ones comes by wealth and health in a post-Unification Italy. He juxtaposes a tradition with a social position of importance to a modernized Italy, thereby pointing to the failing structure of the system. Such a parody is made manifest in the blatant fact that Geppetto doesn't name

Pinocchio after himself. This mocks the arbitrary way by which names have anything to do with social structure.

In translation, this scene provides the opportunity for the translators to give importance to the naming process for the target culture. This section is translated literally in Murray's translation, which maintains the variations on the name Pinocchio. Like the situation with Polendina, these passages leave much unexplained to an audience unfamiliar with Italian naming traditions. The Cramp translation is much the same except it changes the name of the children to "little Pinocchios" (10) making plural in the English language what is plural in the Italian. The Disney adaptation makes no reference to how Pinocchio is named. He is addressed as Pinocchio from the very introduction of the story. All translations seem to miss the significance of naming in the source context, either by way of keeping it obscure – and without explanation in the target language – or by omission. An ideal translation would otherwise preserve the function if not "the words themselves" and "replace [or] substitute linguistic elements in the [target language]" (Bassnett 27). Therefore, by doing neither and either keeping the same linguistic set up or by omitting it altogether, the translations neither honour the source culture's tradition of naming nor find a similar way of adapting it for the target culture audience. However, what the translations do is deem the name Pinocchio a foreign element in the story and in doing so, conform to literary traditions which say that absurdity in children's literature by way of an innocently arbitrary name – in both cultures – would be received in the target culture. Therefore, reading in translation reveals something about both the source culture and about the traditions of the target culture.

The final scenes of all versions of *Pinocchio* comparatively offer another opportunity for consistency or equivalence because they wrap up the story in a particular way. Pinocchio is made into a real boy (154), ultimately signifying his movement into adulthood and – if we consider the

metaphor of Pinocchio *as* Italy – Italy moving into an independent Unified nation. Collodi’s parody here exists in the fact that the puppet figure is still present, only now it is lifeless. Pinocchio has become a real boy but not insofar as he has changed, but rather he has moved from one body to another. Pinocchio’s double existence now stands in for a binary relationship between tradition and modernity, and Collodi points directly at what is left behind post-Unification.

The first two English translations dissolve the binary between modernity and tradition, instead honing in on rewards for good behaviour. These two translations do maintain the significance of the separated puppet body. Murray’s translation leaves the real-boy Pinocchio separate from his puppet body at the end of the story. In the last line in the original Pinocchio states “How funny I was when I was a puppet! And how now I am happy to have become a real little boy...” (155) where in Murray’s translation he states “How ridiculous I was when I was a puppet! And how glad I am that I have become a well-behaved little boy...” (232). The main difference rests in the adjectives, or lack thereof. “Funny” carries a much less critical tone than that of “ridiculous”, signifying a sense of condescension on the part of Pinocchio looking at his past self where the original Pinocchio views himself more jovially in retrospect, alluding to an understanding of the natural progression from the foolishness of childhood to adulthood. More significant perhaps is Murray’s addition of the word “well-behaved” which does not exist in the Italian original. This addition represents a qualification on the part of the translator which puts the word “ridiculous” into more perspective. Murray creates an opposition between the words “ridiculous” and “well-behaved” which serves to moralize the story for the target culture, thereby enforcing a meaning where the original allusion is lost. Cramp’s translation maintains the image of Pinocchio’s puppet body existing even after Pinocchio becomes a real boy. The adjectives are

further changed however in this edition when Pinocchio says “How naughty I was when I was a marionette! and how happy I am now that I have become a real live boy!” (212). “Naughty” carries even more of a critical tone than “ridiculous” or “funny” and the addition of “live” in reference to “boy” testifies to the opposition between being dead and alive. Such a difference here signifies a harsher contrast between child and adult and the (in)ability to control free will in a productive and effective manner. This exemplifies domestication on the part of Murray and Cramp who see fit to assign to the lifeless puppet body a sense of memory or opposition to what it means to be a good, real boy – rather than opposition between tradition and modernity.

The glaring change that occurs in the filmic adaptation reveals a progression of the perception of childhood in the North American context. That is, the growing popularity of commercial childhood and the education of children. The Disney version finds Pinocchio at home, waking up after his adventure inside the whale. Because he has been “brave, truthful and unselfish,” Pinocchio is granted his wish of becoming a real boy. However, in this version, his whole being undergoes a metamorphosis and his puppet body is not left behind. Specific changes in the English translations of the story imply a different type of reading. Rather than Pinocchio being an allegory for Italy rendering his metamorphosis into a real boy a metaphor for modernization and unified nationhood, Pinocchio’s transformation becomes about acquiring and internalizing the values of a good American child. In light of these implications, the changes that Pinocchio undergoes in translation reveal a missing parody about contemporary Italy replaced by a progression of the target culture’s nature of reception. In this way, studying the original comparatively with the translations reveals an important set of changing cultural attitudes about the target culture. By understanding what the original has to offer in terms of a cultural allegory in comparison with the translation, we can see that Pinocchio gradually becomes more critical of

his own past. Eventually his own past is effectively deleted. Such a reading allows us to see the myriad of advantages when we concede to both study comparatively and give children's literature its deserved space in world literature.

## **ii. Standardization of education**

The standardization of education is an issue in the *Pinocchio* story. Though it functions in different ways between source and target culture, the indirect commentary about the unnatural disposition of the standardized education system has been transformed into a cautionary tale about how every child must, of course, attend school. For the original, the educational paradigm is significant as recently centralized and institutionalized<sup>7</sup> but also as part of the parodied allegory. Pinocchio's encounter with the educational system treats structured education as an unconventional means of teaching, showing the difference between traditional and modern forms of education. Where the puppet's coming of age and subsequent encounters with education denote a much more complex political commentary, the translations tend to a more simplified transmission. That is, Pinocchio's attendance at school in the original is about conforming to a modernized Italy and dispelling rebellious ideals which stem from the desire to retreat back into regional loyalty. In the translation, attending school becomes a way for Pinocchio to model appropriate behaviour in the North American context. In the translations, the educational system has been maintained as a cultural value. Specifically, when Geppetto tells Pinocchio that he should go to school in the original, Pinocchio somehow already has a list of items he will need in order to do that. He tells Geppetto that he will need appropriate clothing and an "abecedario" or alphabet book (27). Such knowledge can be interpreted as a mocking of the idea of standardized

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<sup>7</sup> As stated in the introduction, the educational system as part of Unified Italy sought to require all boys to attend elementary school. This was an attempt to centralize and standardize a curriculum which encourages the dissolution of rebellious ideals, which tended to manifest from the loyalty to regional traditionalism (Woolf 42).

education. By giving Pinocchio the ingrained knowledge of what is required for a standard education from birth, the narrator is pointing to the flaws of the standardized educational system being implemented in Italy and the arbitrary nature by which it was conceived. The shift from traditional forms of (regional) education does not account for the social upbringing or personal needs of the child, but rather reduces every student to the same kind of learner of a very limited sort of knowledge. The fact that school items are not really a point of discussion testifies to the idea that the original *Pinocchio* was not really about *going* to school or what it takes to get there but rather, a parody about what the institutionalized system and centralized curriculum meant.

The translations, by reverting to the traditional meaning of attending school, find significance in Pinocchio's story as a tale depicting what could happen if you do not conform to structured education in the North American context. In Murray's translation, Pinocchio tells Geppetto that he will go to school to "learn a trade" and that afterward he will be "the consolation and staff of [Geppetto's] old age" (12). In the target context here, Pinocchio is alluding to the fact that school produces a useful set of guidelines for how to be successful in the world rather than commenting on its new mandatory status in the source culture. In Murray's translation, the emphasis is placed on the outcome of an education, specifically, getting a job and being Geppetto's caretaker. Further still, in Cramp's translation, the emphasis is put on the shorter term outcomes of education: namely, "to learn immediately to read... to learn to write...[and] learn to make numbers" (28). Taking the focus away from the metaphoric activity of going to school and emphasizing instead the activities within the classroom changes the dynamics of the story's purpose. In the Disney adaptation, Geppetto is the one who prepares Pinocchio for school, and Pinocchio willingly engages in the preparation. Just as Pinocchio is ready to depart, Geppetto hands him "an apple for the teacher" and Figaro, the pet cat, brings



him an unspecified book, almost as an afterthought (29:10). In this way, the importance of school becomes primarily about getting there, rather than what will be involved once classes begin, a marked difference from the original. The apple for the teacher alludes to respect for teachers and the service they provide, something not touched upon by Collodi's original. While the original is critical of the Italian education system, the translations are fixed on encouraging school attendance. A change like this "discloses interpretive choices determined by a wide range of social institutions and cultural movements" (Venuti 28) but does not demand that we blame the translators for the change. Instead, the translators, in mediating between the source culture and their target frame of reference, provide a story applicable and meaningful to the target audience. By reading both the original and the translations together, we can learn about the specific dynamics between both cultures and about how the critical allegory can be made meaningful for the target culture.

Similarly, Pinocchio's encounters with school and reading expand the empty space of the missing allegory in the translations, and effectively delete the satiric commentary. On his way to his first day of school (to a communal school, rather than a private school<sup>8</sup>), Pinocchio is told to read the sign for the puppet show. Sheepishly, he says "I would read it obligingly, but at this point, today I cannot read" (29). A tension is created when contrasted with the point later on when he reads the gravestone of the Turquoise Fairy (75) without having attended school in the interim. Even if we attribute this inconsistency to an error on the part of Collodi, it still denotes and challenging of the logical deduction in terms of going to school equating to learning to read.

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<sup>8</sup> Communal schools were those schools designed by the constitutional monarchy post-Unification aimed at increasing national school attendance by boys. Private schools did not necessarily conform to the centralized curriculum.

The translations address the inconsistency in a way that connotes a stronger logic rather than a critical one when it comes to learning to read as a fact clearly deduced from going to school. In Murray's translation, the tension between the first day of school when he cannot read and the moment at the Fairy's tombstone when he miraculously can is maintained. However, Murray must have been aware of the inconsistency and qualifies in her translation that Pinocchio could only read it "with difficulty" (113). Such a qualification removes the critical tone of the challenging and inserts an explanation appropriate for the pedagogical paradigm. Further, Cramp picked up on the inconsistency as well but his translation deals with it particularly awkwardly. When Pinocchio sees the tombstone, the narrator says "as [Pinocchio] could not read he did not know what to do. The Talking Cricket happened to be near and read it for him" (105). Here, the translation provides even stronger reasoning for the original challenging of the concept of learning to read. The Disney version rectifies this inconsistency by having Jiminy do the reading. (1:08) Interestingly, however, it is not the tombstone of the Fairy that he must read but rather a letter from her. This substitution of plot represents the change with regard to appropriateness for the target culture. For the American contemporary audience, the death of the mother was not something for a children's story, and therefore, the plot of Disney's adaptation was changed to reflect this. Where Murray and Cramp mistranslate, deeming the audience too conscious to overlook or look past the inconsistency, the Disney adaptation translates incorrectly and blatantly domesticates *Pinocchio*. Consequently, such "translating for 'prose-meaning and interpretation' [of the American target audience]... rewrites the foreign text according to such English-language values as transparent" (Venuti 6). It is certainly valid to say that in making *Pinocchio* transparent in such a way as to delete plot points ultimately erases the complexity of meanings associated with it both in the English interpretation and in the Italian original. However, such a progressive

change is also telling of the difference of values between the two systems. In the Italian original, as an allegory, Collodi's inconsistency is made to challenge the logical reasoning that demands that going to school must necessarily mean learning how to read. That is, the inconsistency matters relatively less – and what does matter only furthers the satire by pointing to the success of experiential over structured classroom learning – so as not to impede the allegory of the original. In the English translations however, the inconsistency has been changed – or, as with Disney's adaptation, removed – in order to account for the fact that it would be in no way possible for Pinocchio to have learnt how to read without attending school, fully and committedly. For the American English target culture, Pinocchio must have conformed to the established education system in order to participate in such a literate activity. The removal of the Italian allegory, by way of a comparative reading, allows the reader to justify this.

Symbols that represent the standardized education system are utilized in different ways in the source and target languages and show a difference in the way the concept of education is utilized in each respective cultural meaning. Texts such as “i Sillabari, le Grammatiche, i Giannettini, i Minuzzoli, i Racconti del Thouar” and “il Pulcino della Baccini” (94) (or, “The Syllabaries, the Grammars, the Giannettini, the Minuscules, the Tales of Thouar” and “the Chick of Baccini”) are representative of standardized education being implemented in Italy. They represent the introduction of uniform texts in the centralized educational paradigm. Together, they add to Collodi's critique because they seem like arbitrary selections. The texts, especially the last two sets of stories, are arbitrary selections based on the intention of showcasing an overarching patriotic sense of cultural history. Collodi's critical take is manifest in that these texts are fictional accounts of Unification literary history and their arbitrary selection earns them no place in the centralized curriculum.

The translations offer insight into how the Italian critique of the educational system becomes transformed as a strategy based on the already established system of incorporating texts into the standardized educational system. Murray translates the set of texts as “grammars, dictionaries, spelling books, geography books and other scholastic works” (94) greatly reducing the list and making the texts seem less structured and rigid than their Italian counterparts. What’s more, Cramp’s translation reduces further the list of texts to “spelling books, geographies, histories and arithmetics” (130). Leaving the list of texts closed reduces the importance of the texts. No longer are the texts important in and of themselves like they are in the Italian original. Rather, they are reduced to weapons in a fight between boys. This lessening of the significance in the translation represents a weaker sense of critical importance on the part of the text books and focuses on the act of throwing the books rather than the significance of the books themselves. A comparative reading shows that the texts are no longer about a critical analysis of an educational system which arbitrarily assigns texts to the curriculum but rather about a system already established with a set of centralized texts. The Disney adaptation makes no reference to this list of texts, thereby insinuating further the insignificance of arbitrarily selected children’s texts. If we consider the degree of domestication in the case of the names and use of the school books here, we are left wondering what the implications of specific rather than generic texts are and how they function in both respective cultures. Namely, if the translated stories have been domesticated in such a way as to remove the specificity of texts then it implies that the education system in the target culture has become so standardized as to depict a generic code of texts, unlike in Italy, where specific names of texts are used and are being challenged.

### **iii. The structure of the family**

The family structure in the original *Pinocchio* alludes to not only a childlike Italy, but also to a new conception of the Italian family: one which promotes patriotic national ideals and encourages children to attend school. Many aspects of the family structure commentary are not maintained in translation, resorting instead to a relatively moralistic exercise in how to treat your parents. In the original, immediately after creation, Geppetto begins to address Pinocchio as his little son, or “figliuolo” (11) which carries a more affectionate undertone than “son” or “figlio”. This addresses three issues: first, if we consider that Pinocchio is a metaphor for Italy, it underlines the idea of the father-son relationship between citizen and nation; second, it criticizes the expectations of the father-son relationship in terms of family structure being implemented at the time of unification; and third, it strikes a chord with the language, challenging the concept of “son”. Connected with this is the telling incident that occurs at the very beginning of the story. When Pinocchio escapes from Geppetto’s home, Geppetto runs after him only to be accused by onlookers of beating his son. Collodi is criticizing the expectations of the father-son relationship from the public perspective. Geppetto then spends time in prison under these false accusations denoting the seriousness of the implemented social morals (12-14). Collodi is criticizing the nation’s control on the citizens and is calling attention to the justice system as not being justified in certain decisions. Governmental control, according to Collodi, should be transparent to all citizens and the unified nation should be held accountable. Pinocchio reciprocates the recognition of the father-son relationship, calling Geppetto, “il mio babbo” (17) – a more affectionate term than “padre” or even “papa”. “Babbo” is also a more child-like way of addressing one’s father, solidifying Pinocchio’s role as child. The father-son relationship in the original *Pinocchio* is fraught with all sorts of cultural significance that reveal a critical take on Italy’s post-Unification situation.

The translations reconceptualize the father-son relationship present in *Pinocchio* in order to show how the target audience should treat their parents. In Murray's translation, Geppetto first demands the father title, stating: "You are beginning to show want of respect to your father!" (12) and "it is only fathers who are capable of making such sacrifices" (37). Before referring to his son in affectionate terms, Geppetto in the English translation demands the respect and authority of the title "father" – not "papa" or "daddy." Cramp's translation further problematizes the disconnect between paternal titles. Like in Murray's translation, the first allusion to the father is when Geppetto scolds Pinocchio for misbehaving while he is constructing him. He says "You are not yet finished and already lack respect to your father" (12). More direct than Murray, Cramp grants Pinocchio the agency of possessing lack rather than showing it objectively. Cramp's translation preserves Murray's translation of the address of "father" in place of the different titles present in Collodi's text, testifying to the singular vision of the father rather than as a stand in for multiple metaphors as in the original. In the Disney adaptation, Pinocchio always addresses Geppetto as "Father". A simplified address, "Father" also signifies a more formal approach to family ties and Pinocchio's sense of childhood. Because Pinocchio is portrayed as such an innocent figure, the use of "Father" seems out of place and oddly institutional. Such an informed change in address testifies to the rigid structure by which the target culture has named its family order. During their escape from the belly of the whale in the Disney version, Geppetto anxiously says to Pinocchio, "Don't Father me now!" using the address as a verb. In so doing, Geppetto is acknowledging the importance of the word and providing it with even more of a structured meaning. The translators and their textual products are confined by specific cultural restrictions, thereby inhibiting the linguistic options they bring

to the table<sup>9</sup>. Such a discourse could be useful in outlining why the address of “Father” is used in many different forms in the Italian original – an unstable ideal of father who stands in for many different metaphors – and how it is used uniformly in the English translations – as a strict representation of authority of which children must be respectful. Reading the original in terms of familiarity with the translations, the metaphor present in the former reveals a more flexible set of critical meanings than that of the more rigid address in the latter.

A similar issue is outlined in Pinocchio’s relationship with a mother figure. Interestingly, there is no mother in the novel, problematizing the idea of nuclear family values which were being implemented in post-Unification Italy. Specifically, Pinocchio says “my mother I have never known,” (33) revealing a break down of the conventional role of the mother. There are, however, allusions to the role of the mother. During Pinocchio’s first encounter the Fairy with the Turquoise Hair, she “is with all the patience of a good mother” (55). Such a statement puts a value judgement on the mother figure and evaluates her according to a set of standards. This is representative of the family roles and the standards associated with them that were being implemented in Italy at the time. Not only does this statement speak to a changing Italian reality, but it solidifies the roles of the parent by way of a children’s text. Collodi’s employment of value in recognizing the roles of the nuclear family points to the arbitrary nature by which they have been conceived. For a “good mother” to have patience is neither intrinsic nor necessary in terms of her biological role and Collodi’s subtle exploration of this is an additional facet of his parody. Pinocchio expressly calls the Fairy his mother soon after he finds out that she is not in fact dead. He says, “the teacher has said to me!... and my mother has repeated it: watch out for bad

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<sup>9</sup> Venuti says that “both foreign text and translation are derivative: both consist of diverse linguistic and cultural materials that neither the foreign writer nor the translator originates, and that destabilize the work of signification, inevitably exceeding and possibly conflicting with their intention” (18).

companions!” (95). Collodi is referencing the fact that Pinocchio attaching the title of mother to the fairy as undermining the concept of the traditional nuclear family. Not only do the Fairy and Geppetto never meet, but they do not conceive a child by way of traditional means. That the Fairy and Geppetto respectively fill the roles of the mother and father points to the arbitrary nature of parenting and family roles and how they may not come as rigidly structured as Unified Italian society was constructed to accommodate. Collodi’s parody is strengthened by the very fact that Pinocchio is neither a real child and that the Fairy and Geppetto are in no way biologically restrained by the role of the father and mother. Not only is the concept family in post-Unification Italy being toyed with here but Collodi criticizes the arbitrary nature of family values in constructing a nation.

The translations rigidly structure the role of the mother in that they present the mother as an established role rather than as an arbitrary marker. In Murray’s translation, the scene remains the same but Pinocchio says: “the master has told me and my mother has repeated it often: ‘Beware of bad companions!’” (143). The sentence is flawlessly joined rather than divided with an ellipse. In this way, the advice becomes the most prominent piece of information rather than those who are giving it, as with the Italian original. “The teacher has told me!” followed with a separate clause “and my mother has repeated it” much more effectively gives agency to the master than its English counterpart. In English, the act of telling is qualified, not only with the combined clauses but also with the use of the word “often” making it seem routine and therefore much less striking. Such a choice on the part of the translator represents a shift in the cultural paradigm in terms of what part of advice giving – the subject or the object – is more deserving of highlighting. Cramp’s translation seems to miss the point altogether. When it comes to the Turquoise Fairy however, Cramp’s translation says something quite different about her presence.



It is said that she has “the patience of an indulgent mother” (75) substituting the “good” value judgement with a culturally specific one. That is, in the target culture, being “indulgent” contains the trait of patience. Such a change illuminates in Cramp’s translation a tendency towards domestication. In this version, Pinocchio says “And to think that the teacher and also my mamma warned me, ‘Beware of bad companions!’” (133). The statement is passive, almost insignificant in terms of agency. Pinocchio himself acquires authority because he consciously calls upon himself to remember what has been told to him. Thus, this is another example of reiterating the idea that the moral is more about Pinocchio’s own struggle with his free will, rather than the making of a critique of the nuclear family or the associated authority figures.

The filmic version of *Pinocchio* is a progression that sees fit to delete the Fairy as the mother figure. The Disney adaptation invites the role of the fairy after only sixteen minutes of the film, giving her a prominent role. In the Disney version, the Fairy gives Pinocchio life, as she grants Geppetto’s wish. However, Pinocchio never refers to the Fairy as his mother, signifying the idea of a much more rigid family system in the target culture – one that doesn’t allow for the acceptance of a Fairy, without any biological connection, as a mother figure. That Pinocchio eventually does have a “mother” can be interpreted as the story eventually conforming to American cultural norms, thereby disclosing its domestication. For Collodi, the mother figure is one fraught with cultural parody, which when viewed in light of the English translation, only strengthens the point: namely, the making of the mother figure conforms to the American standard which requires the presence of nuclear family, where Pinocchio’s original childhood was one without the presence of a legitimate mother. Instead, reading both the original and the translations reveals a cultural disconnect that can teach us both about the metaphor of a mother in

terms of Italian source culture and about appropriating the illegitimate mother figure in the North American context.

### III. Conclusions

The consequences of rereading *Pinocchio* under the microscope of translation theory are remarkable. After all, if “authors [always] work in relation to their predecessors in the literary canon” (Gordon 58) then what does this say about all English translations published after Murray, Cramp, and especially Disney? The discourses surrounding *Pinocchio* which have been constructed on the abstract notion of some original fidelity must be challenged. Wunderlich and Morrissey’s own conclusions - “We hope that readers will be prompted to reconsider *Pinocchio*” (Wunderlich & Morrissey 204) – are a start but won’t cut it. Perhaps turning to Emer O’Sullivan’s suggested solution –

a future, major task for the study of translations of children’s literature would be for each culture to set translations into their language in context, constructing a systematic and historical survey of the various strategies, tendencies, criteria of selection and methods employed (24) -

is the most rectifying route. Still, that “the original *Pinocchio* invites readers to think critically” making “Collodi’s tale... exactly the sort of book that children and adults should be reading today” (Nel 21) signifies a transformation of thought, and requires us to postulate that the translations should also achieve this. Specifically, in a globalizing literary world, thinking critically would insinuate an ability to point to and be reflective of other cultures, thereby enlisting value in studying what *Pinocchio* is from a global perspective.

According to some translation theory, my study would seem to exaggerate points which do not affect meaning of a text. However, my analysis does provide deeper meaning to the text and

what it means for children's literature to join the canon of world literature. Specifically, Popovic, in the words of Bassnett, points to an "invariant core" which essentially is something unmodified by "transformations or variants" (33). This invariant "is that which exists in common between all existing translations of a single work" (33). Structurally speaking, the core is the underlying structure upon which all versions – translations, adaptations – are founded upon. In essence, such a theory mirrors the essence of Walter Benjamin's idea of "pure language" or "an intention... which no single language can attain by itself but which is realized only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other" (129). After all, all versions of *Pinocchio* must have in common a specific set of elements beyond linguistic boundaries which tie it to the original story. Certainly, it would be possible to locate a structural invariant core between the four texts in my study and such an essence might appeal to Benjamin's pure language. One invariant core, as Carlo Marini suggests, could be that the "nose" comes to represent all that is "collodiane", and all that is constructed as such (63). The consequences of looking solely for an "invariant core" in one language are not such that we lose a connection with the underlying structure or essence of the story – that clearly is not the case – but rather that we lose allegorical meaning and all the complexities associated with it. The ramifications of reading *Pinocchio* in a single language include an unparalleled sense of validation in the literary target culture, and a missed opportunity to gain something from translation. From the perspective of world literature, *Pinocchio* has plenty of teaching to do, and this teaching involves both the invariant core and the extra linguistic manifestation.

I am not recommending that we reduce the original Italian story to just an Italian story, proceed to "accept the untranslatability" of *Pinocchio* and move on (Bassnett 29). Or, that we try to answer Eco's overarching question, "should a translation lead the reader to understand the

linguistic and cultural universe of the source text, or transform the original by adapting it to the reader's cultural and linguistic universe?" (89) which would prove laboriously unfruitful.

Rather, I suggest that we integrate a form of dynamic equivalence translation theory (33) and grant the source culture credit where credit is due. Reconsidering *Pinocchio* comparatively opens up the possibilities of validating children's literature as truly world literature. By giving credit to the cultural specificity of children's literature, we not only learn about the multiple folds of each respective culture and their literary projects, but we also learn about how the mediation between the two functions and therefore, about the method of cultural communication beyond structured literature. Because *Pinocchio* has become an item of world literature, it is only natural that we should, in a globalizing world, embrace the Italianess of *Pinocchio* insofar as it can teach us something about both Italian history and the changing dynamics of translation. But, we must also consider *Pinocchio* as a *product* of world literature and embrace what it is about *Pinocchio* that can give us a deeper understanding of both source *and* target culture and the dynamics which exist between the two.

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My family: my father who tirelessly went through this with me, my mother who constantly  
encouraged me, and my brothers who put up it all.