Russell in Italian

by Carl Spadoni

Bruno Maiorca. "Quattrocento schede italiane su Bertrand Russell, 1911-78", *Rivista di filosofia,* vol. 70, n.s. no. 14 (June 1979), pp. 312-40.

BERTRAND RUSSELL OFTEN travelled to Italy: on an extended honeymoon in 1895 visiting Alys's sister, Mary, and Bernard Berenson; on walking tours with Charles Sanger during which he practised the language; at various conferences, as late as 1955 for example, when coincidentally he stayed at the same hotel in Rome where he had lodged on his first trip in 1894. Although Russell's command of Italian was not as extensive as his fluency in German and French, the references to Italy in his writings reveal a love for that country, its cities and towns, its culture and people. The recent appearance of this checklist of translations and secondary literature tends to confirm that the admiration was mutual.

To my knowledge, this is only the second time in which a comprehensive checklist in terms of language or national origin has been compiled and published. The first was A. Tokarczyk's "Bertrand Russell's Works in Poland", *Polish Weekly,* 24 (20 June 1962), 11-14. Readers who have facility in Italian will welcome Maiorca's "Four Hundred Italian Listings on Bertrand Russell, 1911-78". It is divided into eight sections: I, translations of Russell's books; II, translations of Russell's other writings (not necessarily published elsewhere)—anthologies, articles, introductions, prefaces, etc.; III, major studies on Russell by Italians; IV, foreign works on Russell translated into Italian; V, notes, profiles, short articles from journals and newspapers, entries in dictionaries and encyclopedias, and interviews; VI, reviews and notices; VII, publishers and the series in which translations of Russell have occurred; VIII, periodicals cited. Maiorca has handled this division of material intelligently without distortion or unnecessary compartmentalization.

With the exceptions of VII and VIII, which are in alphabetical order, items in each section are chronologically arranged. Maiorca has provided each item with a number. What is especially useful in locating related material is the presence of a "see-reference" structure operating by item number. At times, see-references only go one way and the reader must take several steps to find related material, but this is hardly a complaint against such a labour-saving device.

How complete and accurate is Maiorca's checklist? In order to answer

this question, I concentrated my efforts on sections I and II (Russell's translated writings) and did some homework of my own using the Italian translations available in the Russell Archives and various bibliographical tools (*CUBI Catalogo Cumulativo 1886-1957, Index Translationum,* etc.). My findings have turned up the following. There are a few inaccuracies and minor omissions, especially in the case of section I. The date of publication for I.2 is 1955, not 1925; the titles of individual volumes are missing for I.8; the name of the translator, Raffaella Lotteri, is not given for I.19; "di Bertrand Russell" is not part of the title of I.23; the full name of the translator for I.24 is Elena Spagnol Vaccari; I.25 was published in 1960, not 1959, and should include the words, "con appendice di Paul Edwards"; the surname of the translator of I.43 is Ciprandi, not Aliprandi; I.48 is not just a translation of *Sceptical Essays* but also includes "The Essence of Religion" and *Principles of Social Reconstruction*—it was first published in 1967, not 1968, and is vol. XLVI of *I Premi Nobel per la letteratura* with introductory essays by Kjall Strömberg, Anders Österling and E. W. F. Tomlin; the full Italian titles for each volume of Russell's *Autobiography* are not supplied; I.58 lacks "Esposizione critica della" in the title. Two of Russell's books missing from I also came to my attention: *Misticismo e logica e altri saggi* [*Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays,* 1918], trad. di Jean Sanders e Leonardo Breccia (Roma: Newton Compton Italiana, 1970); *Educazione e sviluppo sociale* [*Education and the Social Order,* 1932], trad. di Lamberto Borghi (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1971).

Writings by Russell which should be included in section II of the checklist are: "[Reason and Passion]", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia,* 8, no. 2 (March 1953), 105-7; "Educazione per un mondo difficile", *Il politico,* 18, no. 1 (April 1953), 5-10; "Segreti del domani", *Corriere della sera,* 79, no. 147 (22 June 1954), 3; "Democrazia e liberta", *Corriere della sera,* 79, no. 173 (22 July 1954), 3; [Croce, oriental vs. occidental civilizations, science, Communism], *Corriere della sera,* 79, no. 195 (17 Aug. 1954) 3; "[The Last Survivor of a Dead Epoch]" with omissions in *Corriere della sera,* 79, no. 195 (17 Aug. 1954), 3; "Sguardi nel futuro", *Corriere della sera* 79, no. 20 (15 Sept. 1954), 3; "L'uomo in pericolo per la bomba a idrogeno", *Belfagor,* 2 (1955), 219-22; "L'analisi filosofica", *Rivista di filosofia,* 48 (1957), 243-56; "Introduzione al volume I", "La filosofia dell'atomismo logico", "L'atomismo logico", "I paradossi della logica" and "Logica matematica basata sulla teori di tipi", all with omissions in Francesca Rivetti Barbò, *L'Antinomia del mentore nel pensiero contemporaneo da Peirce a Tarski* (Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 1961, 1964); "Perchè credo nel disarmo", *Rinascita,* 19, no. 10 (7 July 1962), 9-11; "[Message]", *L'Incontro,* 15, no. 2 (Feb. 1963), 1; "Allarmante l'ostilita di Washington con Cuba: Lord Bertrand Russell scrive a "Paese Sera". Appello perchè si ponga fine

voli di recognizione; sollecitato il ripristino delle relazione diplomatiche", *Paesa sera,* 16, no. 129 (10 May 1964), 10; "Basta col massacro!", *Rinascita,* 22, no. 33 (21 Aug. 1965), 28; "Il Saluto di Russell", *La Sinistra,* 1, no. 1 (Oct. 1966), 12.

Despite certain omissions and inaccuracies, Maiorca's checklist, at least for sections I and II, is reasonably faithful and comprehensive. Russell's writings are often hidden in ephemeral publications, and even a thoroughly trained bibliographer will sometimes fail to locate them. There are other areas of this checklist where one might find fault—for example, the absence of pagination and multiple edition citations in the descriptions of Russell's translated books—but these are matters of taste rather than doctrine. A more serious complaint is that the criteria for inclusion in the checklist have not been made explicit. Item VI.a.38, for example, is a review by Nicholas Griffin in *Scientia* of Klemke's *Essays on Bertrand Russell,* but the review is not written in Italian. Does this mean that the checklist includes all Italian material by and about Russell even when the item has appeared in an Italian publication but is not written in that language? Apparently not. Otherwise, Russell's French articles in Peano's *Revue de mathématiques/Revista di matematica* would not have been omitted. Criteria for inclusion need to be spelled out in any bibliographical enterprise. Nonetheless, Maiorca's checklist has unearthed certain translations previously not recorded—for example, Russell's 1920 article in *L'Ordine nuovo* entitled "Democrazia e revoluzione" which first appeared in *The English Review,* 30 (May–June 1920), 449-55, 499-508, under the title, "Socialism and Liberal Ideals". Maiorca's good work here and in Russell's philosophy of education has not gone unnoticed. His checklist shows that most of Russell's books have been translated into Italian. Some exceptions are *Justice in War-Time* (1916), *The Amberley Papers* with Patricia Spence (1937), and those books by Russell published by the Philosophical Library. *Catalogo dei libri in commercio* reveals that a healthy majority of the translations are still in print. Italians have contributed extensively to Russell studies on almost every aspect of his personal and intellectual life. Indeed if quantity of commentary on an author is any indication of his importance and impact, then Russell's legacy is flourishing in Italian scholarship.

The Bertrand Russell Archives