

# Echoing Voices in Italian Literature:

*Tradition and Translation  
in the 20th Century*

Edited by

Teresa Franco and Cecilia Piantanida

Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations .....	viii
Acknowledgements .....	ix
Introduction .....	x
<b>Part I: Forms of Classical Tradition</b>	
Chapter I.....	2
Classical, Barbarian, Ancient, Archaic: The Changing Perception of the Ancient Past in Twentieth-Century Italy Carlo Caruso	
Chapter II.....	29
La Metamorfosi dell’Eroe Mitico in Macchina da Guerra in Alcuni Racconti di Alberto Savinio Giovanna Caltagirone	
Chapter III .....	55
Pirandello e il Mondo Classico Dusica Todorović	
Chapter IV .....	84
La Lettura Fascista dell’Ultimo Orazio Lirico Concetta Longobardi	
Chapter V .....	100
Classics the “Italian Way:” A Long-Standing Paradox Martina Treu	
Chapter VI.....	120
Myth and Classical Antiquity in Carlo Levi’s <i>Cristo Si è Fermato a Eboli</i> Martina Piperno	

Chapter VII.....	139
L'ammotorato viandante: Il Mito di Enea nella Poesia di Giorgio Caproni Laura Vallortigara	
Chapter VIII .....	159
Italians and the Irrational Fabio Camilletti	
<b>Part II: Forms of Literary Translation</b>	
Chapter IX.....	182
Macbeth as Mussolini in Saba's Secret Shakespeare Alessandro Giammei	
Chapter X .....	202
Salvatore Quasimodo Traduttore di Tudor Arghezi Federico Donatiello	
Chapter XI.....	217
Plauto (in) Volgare. Il <i>Miles Gloriosus</i> di Pier Paolo Pasolini Chiara Trebaiocchi	
Chapter XII.....	236
Sulla Traduzione in Sereni Mattia Coppo	
Chapter XIII .....	251
Giovanni Raboni as a Translator of Baudelaire: "un compito infinito" Maria Belova	
Chapter XIV .....	262
L' <i>onegin</i> di Giovanni Giudici: Trame Poetiche di un <i>Amor de Lonh</i> Sara Cerneaz	
Chapter XV.....	284
Luzi, Giudici and Fenoglio as Translators of Coleridge Laura Organte	

Chapter XVI .....	301
“Un'altra volta, fuori di me.” Anthologisation and English Translation of Saba, Ungaretti and Montale in the Sixties and Nowadays Marta Arnaldi	
Contributors.....	324

CHAPTER IX

MACBETH AS MUSSOLINI IN SABA'S  
SECRET SHAKESPEARE<sup>1</sup>

ALESSANDRO GIAMMEI

Umberto Saba is the only Italian modernist master who was seemingly not interested in literary translation, and never published any version from foreign languages. Scholars and readers have traditionally explained this blank chapter in the poet's creative existence as one of the many aspects of his anomaly. But in fact Saba did work on at least one major translation. It remained a secret for more than half a century and now reveals essential aspects of his interpretation of Fascism as a Jewish, bisexual, Freudian, and peripheral Italian witness of the rise and fall of Mussolini between the Thirties and Forties.

---

<sup>1</sup> This essay – whose completion was supported by a Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Princeton University Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts – is based on research that I have conducted in Trieste and in Pisa with the support of a “*borsa di perfezionamento*” and a travel grant from Scuola Normale Superiore. Besides thanking Teresa Franco and Cecilia Piantanida for accepting the early version of this study at their conference in Oxford, I would like to express my gratitude to Nicola Gardini for his comments and suggestions, and to Lina Bolzoni, Luca D'Onghia, and Arrigo Stara for their guidance during the research that led to the discovery and publication of Saba's translation of *Macbeth*. I also have to thank Jane Tylus and Maria Luisa Ardizzone for their feedback on the study during a “work in progress” seminar at the New York University Department of Italian Studies in 2012, and the librarians at Biblioteca Attilio Hortis (along with Mr. Mario Cerne), who allowed me to explore unpublished Saba's papers in Trieste and authorized my critical edition of his Shakespearian manuscript. All the translations are mine, unless otherwise stated.

## 1. "Poets are untranslatable" (with a few exceptions)

Saba did not write much about translations, but his position on the subject couldn't be clearer. "I poeti," he stated in 1948 within his own self-exegesis, "sono intraducibili:" poets are untranslatable, full stop.<sup>2</sup> Four years later, when the American director of Radio Trieste wrote to him recommending Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*, Saba promised to look for an Italian version of the novel, but also expressed skepticism toward literary translations – which, in post-war Italy, were finally and liberatingly widespread after the fall of Fascism – by asking rhetorically to his correspondent: "cosa resta dei *Promessi Sposi* tradotti in americano, oppure di *Madame Bovary* tradotta in italiano?."<sup>3</sup> It is unfortunate that fate took these blunt verdicts seriously, condemning the majority of Saba's poems to stay intact – and unreadable – in their original Italian form for much longer than Montale's or Ungaretti's ones.<sup>4</sup>

Readers and critics have traditionally considered Saba's extraneousness to the concept of translation as a coherent element of his intellectual profile, and even of his poetics of honesty.<sup>5</sup> After all, we are talking about one of the most anomalous protagonists of the Italian Modernism; a Triestine half-Jewish author who did not take part in any literary group or tendency, and rather founded his own line of influence: the so called *Antinovecento* tradition, recognized and followed, in the second half of the century, by younger masters such as Giudici, Betocchi, Caproni, and even Pier Paolo Pasolini. He himself developed quite soon some awareness – and even a

---

<sup>2</sup> Umberto Saba, "Storia e cronistoria del Canzoniere" in *Tutte le prose*, edited by Arrigo Starà (Milan: Mondadori, 2001), 338.

<sup>3</sup> "What remains of *The Betrothed* after they are translated in American, or of *Madame Bovary* after she is translated in Italian?" The letter to Herbert Jacobson (February the 28<sup>th</sup>, 1952) is stored in the Saba Archive at the "Centro di ricerca sulla tradizione manoscritta di autori moderni e contemporanei" of the University of Pavia in Italy. I am quoting the text from the fac-simile edition published in "Canarini gioia e dolori. Lettere di Umberto Saba a Hebert Jacobson" edited by Bruno Vasari and Lilla Cepak, *Metodi e Ricerche* XXV, 2 (2006): 16.

<sup>4</sup> Especially in English, translations of his poetry are relatively recent. Most of them are quoted in this article. On Saba's reception in Europe see *Per Saba, ancora... Riflessioni e dibattiti*, edited by Elvio Guagnini (Trieste: Circolo della cultura e delle arti, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Expressed in the poet's first and most famous theoretical essay, *Quello che resta da fare ai poeti*, written very early (1911), but published only after the poet's death in 1959. Cf. Umberto Saba, "What Remains for Poets to do" in *Songbook. The Selected Poems of Umberto Saba*, edited by George Hochfield and Leonard Nathan (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2008), 526-31.

sort of melancholic pride – towards his own otherness: “ero fra lor di un'altra spece” he concluded in a famous line about the *vocianti* poets he met in Florence. And precisely “di un'altra spece” (of a different kind or even, as in Hochfield’s version of the poem, “from an alien species”) is the title of the only paper that discusses his uncommonly sporadic approaches to translation.<sup>6</sup>

The study, written by Gianfranca Lavezzi in 1999 as a journal article<sup>7</sup> and then revised and re-published as a book-chapter in 2008,<sup>8</sup> is based on materials stored at the University of Pavia’s *Centro di ricerca sulla tradizione manoscritta di autori moderni e contemporanei*, an archive of modern Italian literary manuscripts established in the Seventies by Maria Corti. The archive is the richest and most important of its kind, and the Saba section contains the vast majority of the author’s writings currently known. The wide inquiries conducted by philologists over the previous fifty years had not revealed any conclusive evidence of an activity as a translator for Saba. Lavezzi actually found two versions from European poets among his papers in Pavia, but could not directly attribute them to his pen. The documents she describes in her study are typed, not handwritten, and the first one consists of a series of translations of Yesenin’s *Letter to Mother*, which almost certainly were composed by multiple hands, using a French version of the poem as a model, at Saba’s house in Trieste during the war. The author himself and a number of friends (among which there were the poet Virgilio Giotti<sup>9</sup> and, probably, one of the most important Italian translators from Russian of the time, Bianca Gallinaro)<sup>10</sup> have tried to render the enchantment of Armand

---

<sup>6</sup> The poem is the tenth sonnet of the *Autobiografia* series, a section of the second part of the *Canzoniere* in which the author tells, almost in a psychotherapeutic fashion, the story of his life in the most classicist of the metric forms. Here is the text of the last two tercets in Hochfield’s translation: “In Versilia I saw and met | Gabriele d’Annunzio, all courtesy | to his guest, but otherwise no help to me. || Giovanni Papini, and the group | around “The Voice,” never liked me much. | Among them I was from an alien species”. Umberto Saba, *Songbook. The Selected Poems of Umberto Saba*, 273.

<sup>7</sup> Gianfranca Lavezzi, “Umberto Saba «traduttore de’ traduttore» di Esenin” *Autografo* 39 (1999): 99-110.

<sup>8</sup> Gianfranca Lavezzi, “«Di un'altra spece». Note su Umberto Saba traduttore” in *Dalla parte dei poeti: da Metastasio a Montale. Dieci saggi di metrica e stilistica tra Settecento e Novecento* (Florence: Società Editrice Fiorentina, 2008), 203-17.

<sup>9</sup> On the episode, from Giotti’s point of view, see Anna Modena, “Virgilio Giotti traduttore e lettore di poesia” *Diverse Lingue* IV, 6 (1989): 63-69.

<sup>10</sup> See Gianfranca Lavezzi, “«Di un'altra spece». Note su Umberto Saba traduttore,” 204-213.

Robin's version of Yesenin's masterpiece in a collective private exercise, almost a game with no particular literary ambition: translations of a translation – and, in the case of Saba's one, quite a literal italianization of the French quatrains.

The second document looks much less incidental. It contains two prose translations from Shakespeare's sonnets, which profoundly influenced Saba's work – as Lavezzi summarizes very clearly with a series of quotations from the author's proses and letters. According to Mario Lavagetto,<sup>11</sup> Shakespeare's sonnets, intended as a kind of cohesive, yet fragmentary love story (or a "romanzetto lirico," a lyric novelette), are the model for the third part of the *Canzoniere*.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, in this collection, a new masculine beloved counterpart, the young Federico Almansi, is added to the usual feminine interlocutor of Saba's poetry. Lavezzi, drawing on philological evidences and on intertextual studies, argues that the prose translations might have been conceived between 1947 and 1948 as a homage to Federico.<sup>13</sup> In that period Saba was composing three poems of his terminal collection, *Epigrafe*, destined to be published posthumously.

Another ghost-document has raised the attention of those scholars in translation-studies who are interested in Saba's anomalous case. Tomàs Garcés, the Catalan poet and lawyer who imported Italian modern poetry in Spain before the Civil War, was an admirer and correspondent of Saba's, and in the preface of his famous anthology *Cinc poetes italians* he declared that the Triestine author had translated one of his poems, but never published it.<sup>14</sup> Victoriano Peña Sanchez reconstructed this rather peculiar international friendship (which was completely unknown to the Italian readers of Saba) in 2007<sup>15</sup> and discussed it again in a 2012 book

---

<sup>11</sup> It may be worthwhile mentioning that Lavagetto wrote the preface of Arrigo Stara's definitive edition of Saba's complete works and was a disciple of the poet's most eminent interpreter and intimate friend, Giacomo Debenedetti.

<sup>12</sup> The phrase is used by Saba, as we will soon see, and Lavagetto quotes it from *Storia e cronistoria del Canzoniere*: cfr. Mario Lavagetto, "Introduzione," in Umberto Saba, *Tutte le poesie*, edited by Arrigo Stara (Milan: Mondadori, 1988), LV.

<sup>13</sup> See in particular Luca Baldoni, "Un vecchio amava un ragazzo. L'omoerotismo nella tarda poesia di Saba (1935-1948)," *Poeti e Poesia* 8 (2006): 190.

<sup>14</sup> *Cinc poetes italians. Saba Cardarelli Ungaretti Montale Quasimodo*, edited and translated by Tomàs Garcés (Quaderns de Poesia: Barcelona, 1961), 6.

<sup>15</sup> Victoriano Peña Sanchez, "Alcune note e riflessioni sulla diffusione e la ricezione di Umberto Saba in Spagna," in *Per Saba, ancora... Riflessioni e dibattiti*, 71-73.



about Italian-Catalan translations.<sup>16</sup> More recently, Gabriella Gavagnin published the letters that Saba wrote to Garcés in the Thirties.<sup>17</sup> Gavagnin's archival findings are really surprising, especially because Saba offers a glimpse into his translation processes: the results of his versions are considered, in the letters, as completely new texts that are, though, clearly different from his own poems: "no one could guess that they have been translated from another language".<sup>18</sup> Anyway, besides giving the lie to Saba's later assertions, the correspondence does not include the actual translations, which remain unknown so far.<sup>19</sup>

Nevertheless, a substantial testimony of Saba's engagement with the practice of translating has actually emerged in the last decade. It had been kept in a private archive for at least fifty years, and appeared almost ten years ago raising no scholarly attention.<sup>20</sup> Since the information about its existence was initially spread by a very local source (i.e. the Triestine newspaper *Il Piccolo*, in name and in deed)<sup>21</sup> one cannot really blame Lavezzi for not including it in her survey. The manuscript has probably been sold, after the war, by Saba himself, who used to trade his own autographs in moments of financial distress – a practice that certainly did

---

<sup>16</sup> Victoriano Peña Sanchez, "«Forse un giorno diranno»: traduzione y recepción de la poesía de Umberto Saba en España," in *La traducción en las relaciones italo-españolas: lengua, literatura y cultura*, edited by Assunta Camps (Barcelona: Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2012), 213-25.

<sup>17</sup> Gabriella Gavagnin, "Da poeta a poeta, da traduttore a traduttore: il carteggio tra Umberto Saba e Tomàs Garcés," *Scripta, Revista internacional de literatura i cultural medieval i moderna* 5 (2015): 253-264.

<sup>18</sup> Saba writes: "Ne sono uscite tre poesie che nessuno potrebbe dire tradotte. Un amico al quale le ho lette ieri a sera, negava infatti che fossero traduzioni, pur comprendendo subito che le poesie non erano mie". I am quoting the text of the letter (Saba to Garcés, Trieste, October the 26<sup>th</sup> 1935) from Gavagnin's article, p. 263.

<sup>19</sup> As part of a larger research on Saba's work in the Thirties, I am looking for the documents in these months. I hope to publish soon the results of this archival investigation, which connects with Stara's findings of 2002 in Trieste reported in Ermanno Krumm, "Saba. Il poeta rinasce in una bolla di sapone" *Corriere della sera*, February the 17<sup>th</sup> 2002: 25. On Stara's discovery, see Arrigo Stara, "Un'opera di aspirazione alla salute. Saba a cinquant'anni dalla morte," in *Per Saba, ancora... Riflessioni e dibattiti*, 22-24.

<sup>20</sup> The very first public document that states its existence is the Bloomsbury Auctions catalogue of a Roman auction held in December 2007. The manuscript was the lost number 57. The description is currently available online: <http://www.dreweatts.com/cms/pages/lot/ROMA-10/57>

<sup>21</sup> Pietro Spirito, "Saba voleva riscrivere Shakespeare. Ritrovato un manoscritto inedito" *Il Piccolo*, April the 28<sup>th</sup> 2008: 15.

not help his editors.<sup>22</sup> The owner then auctioned it in 2007, and the Triestine “Attilio Hortis” Public Library purchased it, cataloguing it under the shelf-mark *Miscellanea/221*. The text consists in an unfinished, yet quite extensive translation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. It covers almost three acts of the Scottish tragedy – from the witches' prophecy to the conspiracy against Banquo –, it is signed, and it is certainly an autograph. I published a critical edition of it in 2012.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. A tragedy (and an opera) for 1938

Attilio Hortis Library keeps the document in its original folder,<sup>24</sup> which offers a good starting point to understand why and how Saba's secret *Macbeth* was born and then discarded. The paper binder dates back to the organization of the sheets in view of their trade, so it gives a *terminus ante quem* for the translation work. Saba himself entitled it “Machbett” (sic!), adding “tentativo incompiuto” (unfinished attempt) as a subtitle. We can deduce a lot from the handwritten note that follows, written in light blue ink on the folder:

Nel 1938 avevo incominciata una versione e semplicificazione<sup>25</sup> del Machbett di Shakespeare. Volevo vedere se era possibile lasciare a Shakespeare la sua grandezza, togliendo al testo l'ampoloso e il barocco che, a me almeno, sono sempre dispiaciuti. L'impresa era disperata, e me ne accorsi a tempo.

Rimangono del mio tentativo queste 15 carte (8 manoscritte, le altre dattiloscritte) che ho ritrovate per caso tra libri e documenti superstiti della mia biblioteca privata. (L'eventuale acquisto del ms.<sup>26</sup> non dà diritto alla

---

<sup>22</sup> As Arrigo Stara admitted when interviewed for the mentioned article in *Il Piccolo* (p. 15)

<sup>23</sup> Alessandro Giammei, “Machbett, Machbeth, Macbeth. Una traduzione inedita di Umberto Saba” *Contemporanea* 10 (2012): 11-33.

<sup>24</sup> Before my edition and description, an archival entry was produced by the library and posted in the online catalogue of the Comune di Trieste, which is still reachable at the page:

[http://www.retecivica.trieste.it/triestecultura/new/archivio\\_diplomatico/pdf/saba%201\\_.pdf](http://www.retecivica.trieste.it/triestecultura/new/archivio_diplomatico/pdf/saba%201_.pdf) (last visited on March 10, 2017).

<sup>25</sup> “*Semplicificazione*” is an incorrect (maybe local or archaic) spelling of the Italian “*semplificazione*” (simplification). Also the spelling of *Macbeth*, in the same line, is incorrect, and follows the author's original use.

<sup>26</sup> The autograph presents only one correction, which is the result of the deletion of “Il suo even[tuale]” here, substituted with “L'eventuale acquisto del ms.”. This line was added later.

sua pubblicazione.)<sup>27</sup>

Trieste, 2/3/1947

Umberto Saba

Il frammento è inedito, e non ne esistono altre copie<sup>28</sup>

The most obvious information revealed in this paragraph is the final date. According to Saba's note – and there is no reason not to give credit to his pen here – the file was prepared by the author himself at the beginning of March in 1947: a moment that looks perfectly acceptable for its sale in Trieste. At that time Saba was in fact in the city, facing his chronic health problems and looking for money in order to rent a room in Milan.<sup>29</sup> But 1947 is not just a year of economic distress, it is also a fundamental moment of self-appraisal: from January, Saba was intensively working on the analysis of his own poetry that I mentioned at the beginning of this essay. Precisely in Milan, at the end of the year, he finished *History and Chronicle of the Songbook*, a critical analysis of his *Canzoniere*, which in turn was being re-published by Einaudi, in the same moment, after an accurate and laborious correction and re-evaluation of all the poems published in the previous forty years. In the first chapter of the *History and Chronicle*, considering the strengths and weaknesses of his *oeuvre*, the author – under the openly fictional *persona* of Giuseppe Carimandrei, a diligent student writing his *laurea* thesis on Saba – compares the *Canzoniere* to Shakespeare's sonnets (which, as we know, he was probably translating in the same year) and uses the exact words written on the folder to describe their main flaw: sounding “ampollosi e barocchi,” pompous and baroque:

---

<sup>27</sup> This last line in brackets is the only one written with a purple pencil, and was probably added late as mentioned before. The handwriting, however, is still Saba's one.

<sup>28</sup> “In 1938, I had started a translation and simplification of Shakespeare's *Machbett*. I wanted to see if it was possible to keep Shakespeare's greatness while removing from the text the pomposity and baroque that, at least to me, have always been disappointing. It was a forlorn hope, and I realized it soon enough. All that remains of my attempt are these fifteen sheets (8 handwritten, the others typed) which I came across by chance in my personal library among other books and documents that survived the war. (Purchase of this manuscript does not come with any publishing right.) Trieste, March the 2<sup>nd</sup> 1947 Umberto Saba. The fragment is unpublished, and there are no other copies of it.”

<sup>29</sup> Cfr. Arrigo Stara, “Cronologia,” in Umberto Saba, *Tutte le poesie*, LXXXVIII.

È chiaro che, da un punto di vista strettamente estetico, i nove decimi di quei versi potrebbero essere gettati via, senza danno apparente del resto. Ma sarebbe (anche astraendo dalla reverenza dovuta a Shakespeare) un grave errore. Senza quei versi ampollosi e barocchi, la parte vitale dell'immortale "romanzetto" lirico, non solo perderebbe molto del suo valore poetico e umano, ma riuscirebbe quasi incomprensibile.<sup>30</sup>

Such a literal self-quotation makes the 1947 *terminus* almost certain, and connects the poet's self-evaluation with the recovery of the old Shakespearian translation and the new prose-versions of the sonnets. I have already discussed extensively the preparation of the sold file, and proposed a reconstruction of its material and textual history through philological evidence in 2012.<sup>31</sup> What remains strongly problematic is the chronological collocation of the *Macbeth* translation itself, which dates, according to the note on the folder, to one of the most tragic years in Saba's (and Italy's) story.

1938 is the year in which the *Manifesto of Race* was published in Italy. In the same year, the fascist party promulgated the Racial Laws, which dramatically (and abruptly) changed the lives of Italian Jews—generally ignored, or even respected as a community by the regime until that moment. Mussolini gave the first national announcement of the laws on September the 18<sup>th</sup>, and the city chosen for the public event—an aggressive speech from the municipal balcony, followed by a reading of the laws themselves—was none other than Trieste. This shocking trauma obviously opened one of the darkest seasons in the already psychologically challenged life of Saba: son of a Jewish woman, he had officially changed his actual Italian surname, Poli, into the much more Jewish-sounding *nom de plume* adopted at the beginning of the century, and—here is the rub—he passed it to his daughter Linuccia and to his commercial activity, the *Libreria antiquaria*. To marry Carolina Wölfler

---

<sup>30</sup> "It is clear that, from a strictly aesthetic point of view, nine-tenths of those verses could be thrown away without any *apparent* damage to the rest. But it would be (even setting aside the due reverence we grant to Shakespeare) a grave mistake. Without those pompous baroque lines, not only would the vital part of that immortal lyric "novelette" lose much of its poetic and human value, it would become almost incomprehensible." I am quoting the Italian version from Umberto Saba, "Storia e cronistoria del Canzoniere," in *Tutte le prose*, 118. The translation is instead from Umberto Saba, *History and Chronicle of The Songbook*, edited by Stephen Sartarelli, (Riverdale-on-Hudson: The Sheep Meadow Press, 1998), 7.

<sup>31</sup> See, in particular, the historical introduction, the description, and the "*apparato*" in my edition: Alessandro Giammei, "Machbett, Machbeth, Macbeth. Una traduzione inedita di Umberto Saba," 11-14, 21-23.

(the Lina of his poems), who was Jewish, he publicly joined the Jewish community in Trieste, within which he had studied as a child. A confirmed paranoid, Saba will never completely overcome the terror triggered by that horrible year, as his late letters show very clearly.

I discussed the plausibility of Saba's *terminus post quem* in the mentioned edition, but the main question (could he really have spent so much time translating Shakespeare in 1938?) remains relatively open. The poet fled right after Mussolini's racial speech, seeking for a possible new life for him and his family in Paris, where he met other Italians. He certainly carried some papers with him, but we know that he was afraid of a fascist *damnatio memoriae* for his literary work, and that therefore, instead of bringing them back with him in Italy, he gave custody of the typed poems that he had in France to his friend Giambattista Angioletti,<sup>32</sup> thanks to whom they reached Gianfranco Contini in Switzerland and got published clandestinely in 1944.<sup>33</sup> It is hard to argue that he could choose, in such a situation, to separate himself from his unpublished verses but to keep instead in his bag a half-done secret translation. After all, a rather not Dannunzian version of a foreign author would have been much more dangerous to transport than a few pages of poetry, and not just because Shakespeare was famously one of the favorite authors of the most eminent anti-fascist intellectual of that time, Benedetto Croce.<sup>34</sup> Precisely in 1938, Ernest Bloch's *Macbeth* premiered in Naples, but due to the French libretto, the British origin of the plot and, most of all, the fact that Bloch was a Jew, the San Carlo theatre had to suspend the production despite the great success, and the opera was banned by the regime.<sup>35</sup>

I believe that this latter, incredibly resonant consequence of the shocking Racial Laws promulgated in the same year could have influenced Saba's memory in 1947, when he was reconsidering his whole creative existence and preparing to sell his own attempt to bring *Macbeth* to Italy. In fact, my hypothesis is that 1938 is not at all the date of the translation,

---

<sup>32</sup> See Sandro Dorna, "Una dedica di Umberto Saba a Giambattista Angioletti" *Carte Vive* 14 (2003): 28-29.

<sup>33</sup> See Andrea Paganini, "Le 'Ultime Cose' svizzere di Umberto Saba" *Rivista di Letteratura Italiana* 26 (2008): 105-108. The Swiss edition, that should have prepared Saba's arrival in Lugano as a refugee (but he stayed, instead, in Florence, hiding with his family) is Umberto Saba, *Ultime Cose (1935-1938)*, edited by Gianfranco Contini, (Lugano: Collana di Lugano, 1944).

<sup>34</sup> See Benedetto Croce, *Ariosto Shakespeare e Corneille* (Bari: Laterza, 1920).

<sup>35</sup> Curiously, it will come back to Italy exactly in the year of Saba's death and in Trieste, after being staged in an Italian translation in 1953 in Rome. See Ernest Chapman, "Ernest Bloch at 75" *Tempo* 35 (1955): 6-9.

but that Saba (who was a merchant of manuscripts, obsessed with the planning of the posthumous publication of some of his writings,<sup>36</sup> and very aware of the way in which philologists value and interpret unpublished papers) decided, more or less arbitrarily, to collocate his *Macbeth* in a symbolic year for symbolic reasons. The strong dedication that shines through the document – which counts two layers (a draft and a typed copy) and an additional overall handwritten editing – suggests that the “unfinished attempt” should not be considered as a meaningless, isolated strain in an artistic path that would otherwise be completely consistent. The intense work of correction and the extensiveness of the text make it incomparable with the *divertissement* on Yesenin, and much more substantial than the other Shakespearean attempt or the lost versions from Garcés.

Nineteen-thirty-eight, in Italy, is the central turning point for the fate of Jews like Saba, a fate that has been famously linked with Macbeth's one by Hegel:

The fate of the Jewish people is the fate of Macbeth, who stepped out of nature itself, relied on alien beings, and then in their service had to trample and kill all that is holy in human nature, had to be finally deserted by his gods (since they were objects, he was the servant) and destroyed by his faith itself.<sup>37</sup>

I will show that Saba is not quite convinced by the typical *corruptio optimi pessima* reading of the tragedy (as it will be clear in the conclusions, his motto could rather have been “*corruptio leves ineffugibile*,” or something like that), and that, when he identifies with the protagonist, he shows compassion. A form of moral compassion that consists in a parallel reading of Fascism itself and of Mussolini, who I argue is the actual criminal that Saba intended to study through what he called a “*semplificazione*” of Shakespeare.

### 3. Shortcuts to Shakespeare, Freud, and brotherhood

The connection between the crucial year and the Scottish drama is clarified by the *Scorciatoie* (literally “shortcuts”), a collection of Nietzschean insights published by Saba in small series during the Thirties

---

<sup>36</sup> On Saba's awareness and tendency to be a “posthumous,” see Giulio Ferroni, *Dopo la fine* (Roma: Donzelli, 2010), 66-68.

<sup>37</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Early Theological Writings*, edited by Thomas Malcolm Knox (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 204-205.

and Forties, and then collected in a book in 1946,<sup>38</sup> a few months before the “*Machbett*” manuscript was assembled and sold. Saba started writing these short prose in 1935 and, since the first draft, he always included Shakespeare’s name in their rhetorical architecture, along with the one of his shortest tragedy. I intend to prove my theory about the poet’s critical connection between fascist Italy and Shakespeare’s Scotland by proposing an itinerary through the progressive textual stages of *Scorciatoie*: manuscripts, partial editions in newspapers and journals, and the definitive book. As a consequence, the analysis will cross the decade inaugurated by the stipulation of the Rome-Berlin axis and ended with the Nuremberg Trials: from a few years before the *Machbett*’s *terminus post quem* to the eve of its sale in 1947.

The first step is at the very beginning of the two initial typescripts of *Scorciatoie*, which can be consulted at the Pavia archive. In them, Shakespeare is one of the few appreciable “entries” for a possible future dictionary of our time; a legacy comparable to “*il bacio*,” the kiss, which we inherited from our cannibal ancestors.

SHAKESPEARE      Anche la civiltà cannibalica ci ha lasciato qualcosa di apprezzabile: il bacio. Quando la nostra sarà, a sua volta, sommersa, propongo questa abbreviazione alla voce Shakespeare: C’era un buon vecchio re, ucciso a tradimento mentre dormiva. Lo uccise un suo soldato, che voleva diventare egli re. Intanto una voce gridava: Macbeth, tu uccidi il sonno.<sup>39</sup>

In the prehistory of the book – so, no later than 1935 – Shakespeare already coincided with *Macbeth* (his “entry” is indeed contracted into a concise synopsis of the tragedy) and *Macbeth* itself coincides with the regicide – which is, by the way, the focus of Saba’s translation, interrupted right after Duncan’s death. Both the versions of the early scorciatoia (which will be slightly longer in *Prmissime scorciatoie*)<sup>40</sup> end with the

---

<sup>38</sup> On the history of the work, see Arrigo Stara, “Notizie sui testi: Scorciatoie e raccontini” in Umberto Saba, *Tutte le prose*, 1191-1202. On the moral value and the rhetoric of the book, see Liana Cellerino, *Sentieri per Capre. Percorsi e scorciatoie della prosa d’invenzione morale* (L’Aquila: Japadre, 1992).

<sup>39</sup> “SHAKESPEARE      Even the cannibal civilization left us something that is appreciable: the kiss. For when our own civilization will also submerge, I propose this abbreviation at the entry ‘Shakespeare’: There was a good old king, betrayed and killed while he was sleeping. He was killed by one of his soldiers, who wanted to become king himself. Meanwhile, a voice was shouting: Macbeth, you do murder sleep.” Umberto Saba, *Tutte le prose*, 852

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, 874.

famous line “Macbeth does murder sleep,” which is the heart of the translation – and I mean exactly the central line of the whole text.

If we get to the version of *Scorciatoie* published at the very end of the war on journals and newspapers, we run into a second clear connection between Shakespeare, his tragic hero, and what Saba calls “*la nostra civiltà*,” our own civilization. This time though, literature gives way to history. The previous reference to Macbeth was surrounded by aphorisms about poets and art in general (Cocteau, Dante, Orpheus, Balzac), whereas this one comes after two *scorciatoie* about Hitler:

SHAKESPEARE (io penso) farebbe dire a un suo personaggio (nello scenario di Piazza Loreto): Qualcuno, in quelli anni e in Italia, doveva recitare la sua parte. Il destino – né poteva altrimenti – l’affidava a lui.<sup>41</sup>

Since the scenery is Piazzale Loreto, it is not hard to guess who is the “him” that “doveva recitare” the tragic role. An additional hint is offered by another text from the same group of proses, one that made it into the final book. In it Saba analyses the popular reactions to Mussolini’s execution through his instinctive Freudian tools. The paragraph, quite long for a *scorciatoia*, describes the people of Rome right after the Piazzale Loreto execution. The citizens are analyzed as psychological subjects experiencing euphoria and regret. The focus, enhanced by the use of italics for the word “*fratelli*,” is on the fact that Mussolini’s death did not remove his younger accomplices or, to say it in a psychoanalytic fashion, that the supposed collective (vertical) homicide of the father did not kill the brothers and had no horizontal effect. It is no coincidence that the *scorciatoia* is entitled *Totem and Tabu*.

TOTEM E TABU. La sera in cui si seppe dell’esecuzione – quando le notizie dei giornali e della radio non promettevano più nessun dubbio – si notava, nei quartieri popolari di Roma, un’inquietante aria di festa. Inquietavano soprattutto le macellerie molto ben fornite (era anche la vigilia del primo Maggio), intorno alle quali i clienti si affollavano più numerosi del solito, e si mostravano più larghi nello spendere. Ma, come queste cose sono fuori dalla politica, fuori del torto e della ragione (seguono antiche traiettorie istintive) già il giorno dopo avvertivo, nell’osteria dove prendo i miei pasti, i primi sintomi del rimorso.

---

<sup>41</sup> “SHAKESPEARE (I think) would make one of his character saying (in the Piazzale Loreto scenery): Someone, in those years and in Italy, had to act his part. Fate – and it couldn’t do otherwise – gave that role to him.” Umberto Saba, “*Quarte Scorciatoie e un Raccontino*” *La Nuova Europa* 27 (1945): 7.



Cercavano, per esprimersi, vie traverse, oblique, coperte; erano interpretabili solo da chi abbia un po' d'orecchio per il linguaggio dell'inconscio. Dicevano: «Hanno fatto bene a fucilarlo. Magari l'avessero fatto prima. Sarebbe stato tanto di guadagnato per lui e per noi. Ma avrebbero dovuto fucilare assieme a lui molti altri (seguivano nomi e cognomi; tutti adesso di persone – relativamente a lui – giovani; piuttosto di fratelli che di padri). Quelli invece sono ancora a piede libero. Vedrai che lo saranno per un pezzo. Chi ti dice che egli sia stato il maggior colpevole? ecc. ecc.»<sup>42</sup>

Brothers are not included in the Freudian myth of *Totem and Taboo*, yet they are in another important text of the philosopher, *Dostoevskij and Parricide*,<sup>43</sup> which consists in a psychoanalysis of the Russian novelist and in a comparison of three literary patricides: Œdipus, Hamlet, and Smerdjakov. Freud concludes that these three criminals have the great merit of taking on the responsibility to commit an atrocious felony instead of a wider community. Analyzing their profiles though, he declares them selfish, destructive and devoid of love. Similarly to the two tragic heroes, Smerdjakov fulfills a wish nursed by all his brothers (and, according to Freud, by Dostoevskij himself) by killing the father. Yet, as a criminal, he cannot really love anyone, so he directs his destructiveness against them

---

<sup>42</sup> “TOTEM AND TABOO. The evening on which it was known—from radio and newspaper announcements—that the executions would take place, there was a restless, festive air in the most crowded sections of Rome. Most of the excitement was centered in the butcher shops, which were very well stocked (it was also just before the first of May). Customers crowded them and seemed more willing than usual to spend money. But as these things go beyond politics, beyond right and wrong, and reason (they follow ancient instinctual patterns), by the following day at the tavern where I usually ate, I could already perceive the first symptoms of remorse. People tried to explain what had happened by twist and hidden turns, in words understandable only to those who might have had some inkling of the language of the unconscious. They said, “It was a good thing to shoot him. In fact they should have done it sooner. It would have been much better *for him* and for us. But there were plenty of others they should have shot with him, even before him [and here followed first and last names of other relatively young people; *brothers* rather than fathers]. But instead they were free. You’ll see for how long. *Where’d you get the idea he was guiltier than anyone else?*” etc. etc.” I am quoting the original from *Ibidem*, but the text is now also in *Tutte le prose*, 49. The English version is from Umberto Saba, *The stories and Recollections of Umberto Saba*, edited by Estelle Gilson (Riverdale-on-Hudson: The Sheep Meadow Press, 1993), 189.

<sup>43</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Dostoevskij and Parricide,” in *Writings on Art and Literature*, with a foreword by Neil Hertz (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 234-55.

too and, eventually, against his own person. Saba's analysis of Macbeth is articulated over this point: Macbeth did kill the king and Banquo – the father and the brother – but he is not a criminal, because he also loved Banquo. The proof of such a fraternal love is the apparition of Banquo's ghost, which is a symptom of the same regret perceived by Saba in the Roman "*osteria*" after Mussolini's execution. Such an insight, based on an elaboration of Freud's essay, is fully expressed in the final version of *Scorciatoie*, which contains the following interpretation of the "Spettro di Banco:"

SPETTRO DI BANCO Macbeth non era un delinquente: era un passionale. Egli odiava Banco, come fratello concorrente; come compagno d'armi anche lo amava. Fatto il colpo, tutta la parte positiva della sua affettività venne a galla; si fece – per mancanza della contropartita – più intensa. L'amore solo è creativo; fu il superstite accresciuto amore di Macbeth per Banco che creò lo spettro. Ma – ahimè! – lo spettro sapeva quello che Macbeth gli aveva fatto; e la sua apparizione era minacciosa.

Il delinquente non ha amore; e non vede spettri.<sup>44</sup>

I am connecting these shortcuts on Macbeth with *Dostoevskij and Parricide* because I believe that, precisely in the Thirties, Saba possessed a copy of Freud's study. In the poet's bookshop in Trieste, as mentioned by Stara<sup>45</sup> and, more recently, by Marina Paino,<sup>46</sup> there is a typed Italian version of the essay, probably transcribed by Saba himself from a copy sent by his therapist Edoardo Weiss – a translator of Freud and renown psychoanalyst. When I worked in the Triestine archive, I found the document among the preparatory materials of *Parole* (which was published in 1934), in a folder that contains poems of the early Thirties typed with the same machine used for the version of the Freudian essay. It

---

<sup>44</sup> "BANQUO'S GHOST Macbeth was not a criminal: he was a passionate man. He hated Banco as a brother and competitor; yet, as a comrade-in-arms, he also loved him. Once the murder was done, the positive side of his feelings came to the surface; it became – in the absence of a compensation – more intense. Only love is creative; it was Macbeth's survived and enhanced love for Banquo that created the ghost. But – alas! – the ghost knew what Macbeth had done to him; and his apparition was frightening. A criminal has no love; and he does not see ghosts." Umberto Saba, *Tutte le prose*, 21.

<sup>45</sup> Arrigo Stara, "Cronistoria delle «Prose sparse»,” in Umberto Saba, *Tutte le prose*, 1359.

<sup>46</sup> Paino also analyzes extensively the theme of parricide in Saba's *Shortcuts*. See Marina Paino, *La tentazione della leggerezza: Studio su Umberto Saba* (Florence: Olschki, 2009), 210-210.

is unlikely that the poet could have access to Freud's 1916 notes about Shakespeare's characters,<sup>47</sup> and the brief analysis of Lord and Lady Macbeth is anyway quite far from Saba's interpretation. On the contrary, the reflections developed in *Totem and Taboo* and in *Dostoevskij and Parricide* about brotherhood and the criminals' inability to love are clearly questioned in it. Just as Freud, Saba finds Macbeth a contradictory character, but he does not need to merge him with his wife to solve the problem. In an original non-binary perspective, he prefers to keep the contradiction open. In fact, I believe that the very admissibility of a sentimental contradiction as a positive psychological and literary position has been discovered by Saba through Shakespeare. In this sense, I propose to take Mario Lavagetto's remarks on the import of the sonnets in Saba's third *Canzoniere* as a starting point to reconsider the author's ethical (and aesthetic) tendency to keep contradictions open.

#### 4. A non-binary perspective on genocide

As I already mentioned, Lavagetto uses the influence of Shakespeare's sonnets to explain the pacification of two opposite muses in Saba's poetry; Federico Almansì, the boy sung in the third part of the *Canzoniere*, and Lina, the beloved wife of *Trieste e una donna*. The rise of a new character, a "you" that does not replace but coexists with the previous interlocutor, comes right after the valediction of *Preludio e Fughe*, a collection of poems in which Saba's identity literally splits in different voices. In the leave-taking of the section, the author states that the two parts of his heart are finally made one, and that such a re-composition is accomplished not by healing a fracture, but by filling it to the brim with roses.

O mio cuore dal nascere in due scisso,  
 quante pene durai per uno farne!  
 Quante rose a nascondere un abisso!<sup>48</sup>

One could insist on the implications that such an epiphany entails for a poet born under the Austrian Empire in an Italian family, half Jewish and half catholic, raised by a Friulian mother and a Slovenian wet nurse, and

---

<sup>47</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-analytic Work," in *Writings on Art and Literature*, 151-175.

<sup>48</sup> "O my heart divided in two at birth, | how much pain I endured to make them one! | How many roses to hide an abyss." I am quoting the original from Umberto Saba, "Preludio e fughe," in *Tutte le poesie*, 401. The English version is in Umberto Saba, *Songbook. The Selected Poems of Umberto Saba*, 355.

destined to close his *oeuvre* with the unfinished novel *Ernesto*, one of the most profound, precocious, and original examples of an explicit and serene bisexual sentimental education. Such a line of investigation deserves its own essay, and I am not going to pursue it here. For now, before reaching the conclusions, I would just like to cite another *scorciatoia* quoted by Lavagetto in order to highlight the role of Shakespeare's model in Saba's acceptance of a non-binary solution of inner contradictions during the decade in question. "Poets" he wrote "are children that sing their mothers (like Petrarch), or mothers that sing their children ([like Sandro Penna]) or (but this case occurs less frequently: Shakespeare in his sonnets?) they are both."<sup>49</sup>

But let's go back to the specific role of *Macbeth* in this complex picture. Since the beginning, the poet compared the Scottish tragedy to a sublimated form of cannibalism, the kiss. One could add that, in *Scorciatoie*, "cannibalismo" is in a relation of forced rhyme ("*rima obbligata*") with "fascismo," "nazismo," and "razzismo."<sup>50</sup> In Saba's opinion, society would have indeed "regressed to cannibalism" if Fascism did not fall. He also gave a Shakespearian interpretation of that fall, devoting the shortcut entitled *Shakespeare* to the immediate aftermath of Mussolini's execution: the Duce played a role that was necessary, inevitable in those years and in that Italy. What is really interesting is that in the final version of the book, this *scorciatoia* is followed by a second one – a sort of appendix – which establishes an even clearer bond between the indefensible corpse in Piazzale Loreto and the contradictory figure of Macbeth.

IL POETA DI MACBETH avrebbe aggiunto volentieri qualcosa come:  
«Salve, re di Scozia!». Ma il grido (io temo) gli sarebbe morto in gola.<sup>51</sup>

Saba does not intend to justify Mussolini, just as he does not justify Macbeth. With all the aphorisms and *moralia* about him, he rather tries to trace an essential profile – and his insight into such a criminal's mind

---

<sup>49</sup> "I POETI (intendo particolarmente i poeti lirici) o sono fanciulli che cantano le loro madri (Petrarca) o madri che cantano i loro fanciulli (ne avete letto un esempio alla SCORCIATOIA 96) o (quest'ultimo caso è meno frequente: Shakespeare nei suoi sonetti?) una cosa e l'altra. [...]" Umberto Saba, *Tutte le prose*, 64.

<sup>50</sup> Umberto Saba, *Tutte le prose*, 39.

<sup>51</sup> "THE AUTHOR OF MACBETH would have gladly added something like "Hail, King of Scotland!". The yell though (I am afraid) would have died on his lips." Ibidem, 49.

clearly aspires (to use again his own keyword) to honesty. Mussolini's original crime – his seizure of power by force – was at the same time atrocious and unavoidable. The only rational defense acceptable for such a crime is formulated in another long and controversial *scorciatoia* about a hypothetical lawyer. In it, even though Mussolini is not absolvable, the “terrible generation of old men” that was in charge in Italy before him would have remained immovable if it wasn't for his disgraceful action.<sup>52</sup> Once again, Saba is dealing with the conflicting evaluation of parricide.

The homicide of Duncan, directly explored through the translation of the first two acts of the tragedy, was a parricide too. Therefore, in a Freudian perspective, it was an unavoidable sin like the one committed by Mussolini. It would have made Macbeth a criminal, but Macbeth is not considerable as a Freudian “delinquente” since the homicide of Banquo, as we read in *Scorciatoie*, clears the way for a paradoxical fraternal love (and criminals do not love). Mussolini is judged in a similar ambivalent way: Saba's epigraph for his story, which apparently was conceived “many years” before *Scorciatoie* (probably during the work on *Macbeth*?) is very clear.

EPIGRAFE (composta molti anni fa, e conservata nel segreto rifugio della memoria): DUE TERZI BOIA E UN TERZO POVER'OMO.<sup>53</sup>

Such a capacity to penetrate immediately the human substance of a horrifying matter with no rhetorical diaphragm, no ideological filter, and even renouncing to the legitimate grudge of a victim: such a terse and, once again, honest meditation conducted in the gap between history and literature is, I believe, to be put along with the most revolutionary answers to the great question of evil given by the highest political and philosophical debate of the second half of the twentieth century (and the main name I am thinking of is, of course, the one of Hannah Arendt).

Saba started thinking about Italian Fascism through Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in the first drafts of *Scorciatoie*, so no later than 1935. He kept on developing his non-binary analysis of the character, for a decade, in parallel with Mussolini's one, and he came to the lucid conclusions that I just cited right after the end of the war. That is why I believe that he attended to the translation in the early Thirties, and that 1938 is—if not only a symbolic date—the year in which he interrupted the work. I don't

---

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem, 34-35.

<sup>53</sup> “EPIGRAPH (composed many years ago, and kept in the secret store of memory): TWO-THIRDS SLAUGHTERER, ONE-THIRD POOR SOD.” Ibidem, 60.

find it puzzling that, according to this chronology, he left his "*Machbett*" unfinished after the war, and that he even chose to give away the manuscript: once his insight on the tragedy were collected in *Scorciatoie e Raccontini* and publicly used as a key to interpret one of the most indecipherable issues of his times, there was no more need to clear "the baroque and pomposity" off of Shakespeare's greatness in order to make it usable in late-modern Italy.

In conclusion, Saba's reading of *Macbeth* is not just the result of a literary diversion. It is instead complex, and surprisingly advanced for fascist Italy. Even the intention of making Shakespeare's language less grandiloquent is not that naive if one takes a look at the Italian translations of the tragedy that were available in the first half of the twentieth century. All of them (thirteen, published between 1900 and 1946) are clearly interested, above all, in the exquisite and even archaic literacy of the target language: in many cases translators just worked on previous Italian versions, adding their personal style to an arbitrary text.<sup>54</sup> Saba is instead interested in the characters: he cuts off the supernatural, he reduces the lyricism, he finds the core of each soliloquy and strips them of all the rest (sometimes going too far and regretting, as his many manuscript corrections prove). The result may have not deprived Shakespeare of his baroque, but it definitely kept his greatness well in the light.

### Cited works

- Aradas, Isabella. *Macbeth in Italia*. Bari: Adriatica, 1989.
- Baldoni, Luca. "Un vecchio amava un ragazzo. L'omoerotismo nella tarda poesia di Saba (1935-1948)." *Poeti e Poesia* 8 (2006): 190.
- Cellerino, Liana. *Sentieri per Capre. Percorsi e scorciatoie della prosa d'invenzione morale*. L'Aquila: Japadre, 1992.
- Chapman, Ernest. "Ernest Bloch at 75." *Tempo* 35 (1955): 6-9.
- Croce, Benedetto. *Ariosto Shakespeare e Corneille*. Bari: Laterza, 1920.
- Dorna, Sandro. "Una dedica di Umberto Saba a Giambattista Angioletti." *Carte Vive* 14 (2003): 28-29.
- Ferroni, Giulio. *Dopo la fine*. Rome: Donzelli, 2010.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Dostevskij and Parricide." In *Writings on Art and Literature*, with a foreword by Neil Hertz. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997, 234-255.
- . "Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-analytic Work." In *Writings on Art and Literature*, 151-175.

---

<sup>54</sup> See Isabella Aradas, *Macbeth in Italia* (Bari: Adriatica, 1989).

- Garcés, Tomàs. ed. and trans., *Cinc poetes italians. Saba Cardarelli Ungaretti Montale Quasimodo*. Barcelona: Quaderns de Poesia, 1961, 6.
- Gavagnin, Gabriella. “Da poeta a poeta, da traduttore a traduttore: il carteggio tra Umberto Saba e Tomàs Garcés.” *Scripta, Revista internacional de literatura i cultural medieval i moderna* 5 (2015): 253-264.
- Giammei, Alessandro. “Machbett, Machbeth, Macbeth. Una traduzione inedita di Umberto Saba.” *Contemporanea* 10 (2012): 11-33.
- . “Pensare col Quore. Pretesa di consentimento, permanenza degli oggetti e visione interna nell’*inventio* di Umberto Saba.” *Studi Novecenteschi* 85 (2013), 87-104.
- Guagnini, Elvio. ed. *Per Saba, ancora... Riflessioni e dibattiti*. Trieste: Circolo della cultura e delle arti, 2007.
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Early Theological Writings*, edited by Thomas Malcolm Knox. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948.
- Krumm, Ermanno. “Saba. Il poeta rinasce in una bolla di sapone.” *Corriere della sera*, February 17<sup>th</sup> 2002: 25.
- Lavezzi, Gianfranca. “«Di un’altra spece». Note su Umberto Saba traduttore.” In *Dalla parte dei poeti: da Metastasio a Montale. Dieci saggi di metrica e stilistica tra Settecento e Novecento*. Florence: Società Editrice Fiorentina, 2008, 203-217.
- . “Umberto Saba «traduttur de’ traduttur» di Esenin.” *Autografo* 39 (1999): 99-110.
- Modena, Anna. “Virgilio Giotti traduttore e lettore di poesia,” *Diverse Lingue* IV, 6 (1989): 63-69.
- Paganini, Andrea. “Le ‘Ultime Cose’ svizzere di Umberto Saba.” *Rivista di Letteratura Italiana* 26 (2008): 105-108.
- Paino, Marina. *La tentazione della leggerezza: Studio su Umberto Saba*. Florence: Olschki, 2009.
- Peña Sanchez, Victoriano. “Alcune note e riflessioni sulla diffusione e la ricezione di Umberto Saba in Spagna.” In *Per Saba, ancora...*, 71-73.
- . “«Forse un giorno diranno»: traducción y recepción de la poesía de Umberto Saba en España,” in *La traducción en las relaciones italo-españolas: lengua, literatura y cultura*, edited by Assunta Camps. Barcelona: Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2012, 213-225.
- Saba, Umberto. *History and Chronicle of The Songbook*, edited by Stephen Sartarelli. Riverdale-on-Hudson: The Sheep Meadow Press, 1998.
- . “Quarte Scorciatoie e un Raccontino.” *La Nuova Europa* 27 (1945): 7.
- . *Songbook. The Selected Poems of Umberto Saba*, edited by George

- Hochfield and Leonard Nathan. New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2008.
- . *The stories and Recollections of Umberto Saba*, edited by Estelle Gilson. Riverdale-on-Hudson: The Sheep Meadow Press, 1993.
- . *Tutte le poesie*, edited by Arrigo Stara. Milan: Mondadori, 1988.
- . *Tutte le prose*, edited by Arrigo Stara. Milan: Mondadori, 2001.
- . *Ultime Cose (1935-1938)*, edited by Gianfranco Contini. Lugano: Collana di Lugano, 1944.
- Spirito, Pietro. "Saba voleva riscrivere Shakespeare. Ritrovato un manoscritto inedito." *Il Piccolo*, April the 28<sup>th</sup> 2008: 15.
- Stara, Arrigo. "Un'opera di aspirazione alla salute. Saba a cinquant'anni dalla morte." In *Per Saba, ancora...*, 22-24.
- Vasari, Bruno and Lilla Cepak. "Canarini gioia e dolori. Lettere di Umberto Saba a Hebert Jacobson." *Metodi e Ricerche XXV*, 2 (2006): 3-21.