

**Le Grand Culinary Tour: Adaptation and Retranslation of a gastronomic
Journey across Languages and Food Cultures**

Linda Rossato, Department of Interpretation and Translation, University of
Bologna, at Forlì, Italy

linda.rossato2@unibo.it

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ABSTRACT

Through an examination of British celebrity chef Jamie Oliver's cookery TV series *Jamie's Great Italian Escape* (Channel 4, 2005), and comparing the original version to the Italian subtitled version of the show the present paper sets out to investigate a case of cultural translation in which Italian cuisine is adapted for a UK TV audience and then retranslated for the Italian audience whose dishes were originally the source of inspiration for the programme. To provide control parameters, the paper also considers a few key passages from the original cookbook accompanying the TV series and contrasts them to the Italian translation. The present contribution will address in particular the topic of how culture-specific contents of the Italian culinary tradition are adapted for UK audiences and readership and how they are then conveyed back via subtitles and written translation to the Italian speaking viewers/readers, who do not share the cultural and the linguistic background of the source text recipients, yet are very familiar with the cultural contents presented in the show. The paper argues that power structures between a centre and a periphery of the media industry are relevant for the success and reception of cookery programmes and of their translations. As Italian food culture is presented to the world via a UK perspective, one further line of argument of the paper is that this might influence how Italian culinary tradition is perceived by the rest of the world. The paper argues that unveiling the power dynamics involved in what is usually considered material for Television Studies or Cultural Studies may have important implications for Translation Studies as well.

Key-words: TV cookery shows, screen translation, cultural adaptation, food and cookery specialty channels, Jamie Oliver, Italian food culture.

1. Introduction

Discourse on food has gained momentum over the last two decades and today it is particularly vital and fashionable in almost every domain of society. Food is also increasingly productive in terms of television output. A plethora of cookery shows are launched every month on the transnational TV market and accompanying books have invaded the bestsellers shelves of international bookshops. The profits made through translated cooking programmes and cookbooks undeniably multiply television industry's returns, but more importantly, the launch on a global scale of TV cookery series and cookbooks clearly has a significant impact on the translation market as well. Not only does it increase the volume of both published and broadcast translation, but it also affects the recipient audiences and their TV viewing habits (cf. Rossato 2014).

Once an ancillary component of television programming, TV cookery can no longer be considered a niche television genre, particularly since the introduction of cable and satellite TV, not to mention digital terrestrial TV (henceforth DTT) where cookery is one of the undisputed protagonists of lifestyle channels. Such is the impact of TV cookery that Inness has claimed that in order to understand more about modern cooking culture, scholars should increasingly turn to food television:

The Food Network's popularity has created a new venue for the culinary arts. Although popular televised cooking shows, including Julia Child's *The French Chef*, existed in previous decades, they never had the societal influence of a television network that features nothing but food shows, 24 hours a day (Inness 2006:13).

Drawing on a descriptive, comparative analysis between the British travelogue cookery TV series *Jamie's Italian Escape* (Channel 4, UK, 2005) and its subtitled version for the Italian audience, the present study sets out to shed light on the translation and adaptation strategies implemented in what could be considered the result of a two-way translation of food-related cultural contents and values. The original cookbook accompanying the series will also be examined and contrasted to its Italian translated version, with the aim of further exploring the possible implications of this case study for Translation Studies at large. More precisely, this study pays special attention to power structures and dynamics that exist between the foreign television chef and the locals, in other words between the 'viewing subject' and the 'consumable objects' (Taylor 2001: 9 in Leer and Kjaer

2015: 320), as well as between the translator and the translated, in a postcolonial perspective.

1.1 The Boom of Food Television

The first food-dedicated channel, the Food Network, was launched in 1993 in the US and was followed by the BBC Food Channel, inaugurated in the UK in 2002 (Collins 2009: 164-179). Since then, countries such as Italy, with well-established cooking traditions but a less established history of autochthonous TV cookery, have imported numerous cooking shows from abroad in order to cover the round the clock schedule of their food-related factual programming. In Italy, the satellite cookery channel *Raisat Gambero Rosso* (literally the 'Red Shrimp' channel) was set up in 2003, but since the digital switch-over, between 2011 and 2012,¹ cookery has increasingly populated a plethora of DDT factual channels, thus providing a virtual meeting place for international chefs and foodies. Along with the transformations that have taken place both in television technology and industry, audience behaviour and their media consumption have significantly changed as well. Food television has become one of the most successful components of transnational lifestyle show schedules and the focus of many food bloggers and on-line forums (cf. Rossato 2014).

Thanks to the power of an extremely globalized television system, and to the fact that the international coverage of UK TV food productions is much larger than any other national television production, British chefs are at present also the promoters and interpreters of foreign national cuisines on a global scale. According to Ian Burrell, Media editor of *The Independent* (2014), although US television is stronger for scripted series, UK television excels and has little competitors for factual and lifestyle series. The BBC format *The British Bake-off*, for example, has been sold to France, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Poland, and many more countries outside Europe.

In the past three years, the UK has exported more than 600 TV shows, around six times as many as Germany. Only the American TV industry can compare. As a vast middle class begins to take shape in China and other emerging economies such as India and

¹ The switchover from analogue to digital terrestrial broadcasting took place in Germany between 2002 and 2008, in the Netherlands in 2007, in the UK between 2008 and 2012 and in Italy between 2011 and 2012.

Brazil, there is a clamour for programmes that provide a road map for these newly affluent lifestyles. And nobody makes factual entertainment – cookery shows, home improvement formats, travel series – like us. [...] Although the BBC doesn't release income figures, UK television exports were worth £1.224bn in 2012 (up from £1.178bn in 2011), with sales to America up 11 per cent to £475m and sales to the fledgling Chinese market up 90 per cent to £12m. [...] *Africa*, presented by Sir David Attenborough and made by the BBC with international partners, has been bought by more than 100 countries (Burrell 2014).

Speaking about emerging economies, John McVay, the chief executive of an organization that represents Britain's independent television production sector, asserted that:

In these previously under-performing economies, you now have people who can choose what type of cuisine that they eat, the freshness of their food. There's a middle class. It has become striking that when we talk to international buyers in so-called emerging economies, they are asking for lifestyle programming. And we are brilliant at lifestyle programming. We were the nation that invented *Changing Rooms*, *Masterchef*, *Wife Swap* (*ibidem*).

This influential position of UK television in the sphere of lifestyle and cooking programming clearly affects the international television market, particularly with reference to emerging economies, and could be seen as a form of cultural colonialism, or as Heldke argues about certain types of exotic food adventures, a form of appropriation of the "exotic other" (2003: xvi). Heldke compares what she calls Cultural Food Colonialism to the notion of Cultural Imperialism:

In the most extreme forms of cultural imperialism, the imperial power may, as a matter of explicit policy, root out indigenous practices and replace them with its own in order to subdue and control a people. A notorious example of this in the United States was the system of boarding schools (often missionary schools run by the Catholic Church) for Native American Children. At school the boys' long hair was cut (a direct assault on the sacred traditions of many Native nations), and boys and girls were forbidden to speak their languages, eat their own foods, or engage in their own spiritual practices [...]. In other cases the imposition of the imperial culture may appear (even to the inhabitants of the indigenous culture) less a systematic attempt to destroy the indigenous culture and more of a supposedly "benign" or even "welcome" side effect achieved in the process of pursuing other goals. Consider the "creation of a demand"[...] for U.S. fast foods, U.S. movies and U.S. clothing in many contemporary third world nations (Heldke 2003: xvii-xviii).

Heldke lists languages, food and religious practices as markers of a people's identity, and in thus doing she refers to a parallelism between language and food that has also been explored by semioticians and Translation Studies scholars, as we will see more in depth in paragraph 2.1.

2. Review of the Literature on Food Culture and Translation

Food is so culture-bound and so closely intertwined with identity, religious, social and cultural meanings, that it is quite surprising that food TV sells so well trans-nationally. Broadcasting foreign cooking shows requires a considerable amount of translation as well as complex trans-cultural adaptation practices that TV industries need to apply to overcome significant linguistic and cultural barriers that are inherent to the very nature of food ‘translocation’ (Cronin 2007 in Chiaro 2008: 3). This makes TV cookery a fertile ground for research in the domain of screen translation. However, despite the existence of some scholarly literature on food translation, particularly in the sphere of literary translation (Masiola Rosini 2004), restaurant menu and cookbook translation (Fallada-Pouget 1999; Dejardins 2011; Lanská and Kolářová 2015), and in spite of food being mentioned as a culture-specific reference as well as a translation bump in many scholarly works focussing on the translation of films and TV fictional series (Chiaro 2009; Cronin 2014 just to name a few), the implications of a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic adaptation of factual TV cookery shows have not yet received the attention they deserve in either the field of Translation Studies or Television Studies.

A number of Television and Cultural Studies scholars have written on food on TV; Hollows (2003a; 2003b) conducted research on the cultural and gender related aspects of eminent TV programmes such as *The Naked Chef* (Channel 4, UK, 2001) and *Nigella Bites* (Channel 4, UK, 2000), Leer and Kjaer (2015) have examined the adaptation of cultural aspects in Jamie Oliver’s and Gordon Ramsay’s travelogue cookery shows; while Piper (2015) has focused on the audience’s construction of meaning from Jamie Oliver’s programmes and of his role as a cultural intermediary of class and gender values. However, Translation Studies have not yet devoted much attention to cross-cultural adaptations and translational aspects of food related TV shows, nor have they tackled the issues of the transposition of these programmes for international TV audiences. There are a few exceptions, especially in the sphere of the English-Italian translation pair. Chiaro (2004; 2007) examined food and the media by looking at the cultural, as well as textual adaptation strategies of Italian agro-food products for advertising

campaigns in print and on the World Wide Web targeting global audiences. In subsequent contributions Chiaro (2008; 2013), looked at UK cookery books and magazines dealing with Italian recipes and at the food-talk of superstar chefs Nigella Lawson and Jamie Oliver; while Rossato (2014) conducted an empirical study of Italian audience perception of foreign cookery programmes through their translated versions into Italian. The present study attempts to contribute to fill the remaining gap in the literature by tackling cross-cultural and translational aspects of a UK TV cookery show for Italian audiences, while also investigating the adaptation strategies adopted to mould Italian culinary traditions into a TV cookery version that could be palatable for a UK (and international) audience. In this light, this study does not concentrate solely on linguistic and cultural aspects but on the power dynamics beyond them.

Some of the research questions that have inspired the present study are: Why is Italian cooking so appealing to UK audiences and, vice versa, why are UK TV cooking series appealing to Italian audiences? Why should Italian TV viewers bother watching a British chef cooking a fish-pie on a Sicilian island? Why should Italians purchase translated cookbooks accompanying a British cookery series? One answer to the first question might be that UK audiences are so accustomed to watching cookery on TV and so keen on this type of programmes that they would watch any new TV series about cookery. An answer to the second might be that Italians are so keen on food that they would watch any food programme as it has such a powerful symbolic and evocative meaning to them. But why is it then that the TV cookery genre was not popular in Italy until very recently? It could be that UK food programmes are simply very good shows that are more entertaining and appealing than their Italian counterparts, at least so far. However, the present study argues that reasons which are inherent to the very nature of food and food television make the importation of cookery programmes worth attempting and their resistance to translation worth challenging.

2.1 Food as a Language, Chefs as Translators

Food, like music and popular culture in general, is inevitably culture-specific, yet it is also permeable to external influences and cross-cultural contaminations. Not only is food related to everyday routines and the repetition of ancestral gestures,

but it also implies creativity, innovation, and cultural interference. Food tends to serve the purpose of retaining community traditions and yet it is flexible enough to absorb new trends and exotic influences. A single recipe can combine traditional local produce with spices, flavours and unfamiliar ingredients from remote locations. Drawing on Barthes' ([1961], 2013) famous concept that food is above all a system of communication, it follows that translating food and food culture also means translating an entire world of meanings, which include traditions, social practices, food knowledge, social differentiation, class, gender, and a wealth of other significations:

For what is food? It is not only a collection of products that can be used for statistical or nutritional studies. It is also, and at the same time a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations and behaviours (Barthes [1961], 2013:24).

Chiaro (2008:196) compares food to language and argues that the interpretation of foreign recipes, that is to say their trans-location, is very close to an act of translation. She goes as far as to describe chefs who draw their inspiration from foreign cuisines as actual translators of different culinary cultures, facing the same transposition problems as translators do and using similar, if not identical, translation strategies.

In its translocation from source to target culture, changes will inevitably occur in the cook's (translator's) quest for equivalence. Whether we are considering pizza or curry, the trans-creator has choices to make. She must find equivalent or near-equivalent ingredients and thus consider substitution strategies. In the case of the non-existence of an ingredient in the target culture, therefore when faced with un-translatability, omission or compensation with another similar component come into play as viable solutions. [...] Significantly, in the case of food, the accommodation of a recipe from culture to culture often appears to involve a process of gross simplification. Thus the concepts of 'quick', 'easy' and 'trouble-free' appear in the Anglicization of otherwise elaborate and lengthy culinary procedures of other cultures (Chiaro 2008: 197).

The present essay sets out to shed light on some of the contradictory ingredients of the international success of *Jamie's Great Italian Escape* (Channel 4, UK, 2005) through its translation. In particular, this essay will explore how this TV cookery series ties into a more general debate on the appropriation of the culinary cultures of 'the other' (Inglis and Gimlin 2009; Heldke 2001; 2013; Leer & Kjaer 2015). It would appear that Jamie Oliver not only acts as an intercultural mediator, but that the popular TV superstar chef may also be seen as a sort of "translator" (Chiaro 2008:197) of the Italian food culture, which he interprets after he has pre-digested

it for his target audience. Furthermore, Oliver might also be seen in terms of an ambassador who spreads the word of Italian gastronomy to international TV markets in the same way as the travelers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries disseminated the artistic/natural beauties of Italy and spread the word of classicism among their contemporaries. As mentioned previously, UK factual programmes are so successful on the global TV market, that BBC chefs can be counted among the mediators and interpreters of those national cuisines that have comparably less power on the international television scenario.

What follows is a discussion of the appeal of exoticism to TV audiences and the fascination for foreign cuisines, as well as the tradition of the cooking travelogue TV genre in the UK.

2.2 The Exotic Other

The very notions of novelty and tradition are central in the food discourse of western societies. According to Warde (1997), novelty is appealing because it promises excitement and adventure, whereas tradition guarantees the comforts of the familiar, the known and the secure. Despite cultural modernization, food habits are difficult to alter because people are attached to food that reminds them of their childhood. There is a risk in exaggerating the extent and degree of change when dealing with food habits, as constant innovation and perpetual change can cause discomfort and disruption (*ibidem.*: 57-58). Yet, the appeal of foreign cuisines is undisputed and reflected in recipe columns of women's magazines, in TV cookery programmes and in food blogs. 'New' is used to indicate a break with routine, a change (59). This 'newness' could account for some of the paradoxes that are to be observed in food discourse on TV, where a constant movement between innovation and return to tradition, as well as between authenticity and reinterpretation is to be observed. Superstar chefs such as Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsey present their culinary travels as quests for a pre-industrial authenticity which they perceive has been lost at home, and to achieve their goal they immerse themselves into the exotic culinary culture of the 'other' (Leer & Kjaer 2015:313). British superstar chefs bring home the excitement of the exotic new by engaging with some of the most traditional cuisines of the planet.

Resorting to a post-colonial studies framework, Heldke describes the western tendency to go culture hopping in the kitchen as ‘cultural food colonialism’ (2013: 395) and compares the eagerness of modern cooks to experience exotic adventurous cooking to the approach of various nineteenth- and twentieth-century European writers, painters, anthropologists and explorers who set out in search of remote cultures as a source of inspiration for their work. Heldke maintains that the quest of modern western societies for the ‘new’ is guided by a colonizing attitude that has much in common with the longing for new territories, new goods, new trade routes that sent out European colonizers to control the rest of the world (397). According to Heldke, in the same way as the desire for fresh, untainted inspiration prompted European artists to move to places far from home, today the desire for new flavours and new styles of cooking sends groups of adventurous chefs to seek out exotic cuisines (398).

A quick look at the range of ethnicities shown on BBC channels and food TV, confirms that UK audiences’ appetite for foreign food and culinary traditions is quite remarkable. A large variety of cuisines from all over the world are represented on BBC lifestyle channels and, to use a culinary metaphor, they blend into the same large media ‘melting pot’, where exotic flavours simmer together with traditional British food . This richness aptly reflects the UK’s contemporary multi-cultural society as well as its imperial past. TV chefs such as Madhur Jaffrey, Anjum Anand and Tony Singh disseminate the foundations of Indian food; Ching-He Huang stands for Chinese food; Antonio Carluccio, Gennaro Contaldo and Giorgio Locatelli advocate the Italian cuisine; Delia Smith is a living institution for British style cooking; whereas superstar chefs like Jamie Oliver, Ainsley Harriott and Gordon Ramsay tend to mix tradition with xenophile inspirations, sharing a taste for internationalism and fusion cuisine.

The globalizing popularization of foreign culinary traditions via UK transnational television also influences the way these cuisines are perceived worldwide. British chefs inevitably look at foreign food cultures from a British perspective and interpret them in their own way.

3. Travelogue cooking shows

One of the most intriguing cases of TV cooking, where the fascination of the ‘exotic other’ is clearly observable, and where the ‘translation’ of alien food culture always takes place, is the sub-genre termed ‘travelogue cooking show’, which combines cookery and travelling. It first became popular on UK TV in the 1980s through celebrity chef Keith Floyd who is appropriately regarded as one of the pioneers of food TV as he took cooking out of television studios. Floyd became well-known for his eccentric style of cooking in unusual settings.² His first TV cooking series *Floyd on Fish* (BBC, 1984) was followed by sixteen different series typically beginning with “Floyd on ...”, followed by a destination: *Floyd on Italy*, *Floyd on France*, *Floyd on Spain*, *Floyd on Africa*, *Floyd’s India*, *Floyd’s China* etc., which foreshadowed the template format of many modern food travelogues. The chef presented his cookery shows from exotic locations around the world, cooking in his unique chaotic style (Allen & Albala, 2007: 368). He was clearly a source of inspiration to more recent celebrity chefs such as Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsay, because of the structure of his series and also because of his unpredictable and eccentric style in approaching cooking and TV audiences.³

As Leer and Kjaer (2015:310) aptly point out, a travelogue series allows more freedom of movement to the television chef, who can actually encounter ‘the others’ and their cuisine rather than simply talk about them in abstract terms. A significant example of a travelogue series embodying this close relationship with the ‘other’ and revealing contradictory dynamics between the foreign ‘translator’ (Chiaro 2008:197) and the ‘translated’ locals is *Jamie’s Great Italian Escape* (Chanel 4, UK, 2005).

4. Jamie’s Great Italian Escape: a quest for creative inspiration

Jamie’s Great Italian Escape is a six part travelogue series, first broadcast in the UK in October 2005 by Channel 4. The series follows superstar chef Jamie Oliver as he travels around Italy in a blue Volkswagen van in search of authentic Italian cuisine. Jamie is about to turn 30, he is overwhelmed with his work responsibilities, while the burden of being a famous personality has become

² “The 10 most influential British cookery shows.” *Telegraph.co.uk* Available at: <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/10394111/The-10-most-influential-British-cookery-shows.html?mobile=basic>>. Last accessed March 16th 2015.

³ *Ibidem*.

unbearable to him. In an interview at the beginning of the series, he admits that he has decided to go on this adventurous, boy-dream journey to Italy, to rediscover the roots of his passion for cooking and to regain enthusiasm.

The adjective ‘great’ in the title of the series and the overall formula of the show are reminiscent of the ‘Grand Tour’ that intellectuals of the 18th and 19th century took to Italy and France. Italy has inspired generations of Northern European artists in their quest for stimuli and motivation for renewed creativity and Jamie’s driving impulse for this on-the-road series has many elements in common with these past journeys to the South of Europe. Goethe’s *Italienische Reise*, for example, published in 1816-17, was a report based on his diary, covering two years wandering around Italy between 1786 and 1788. Goethe’s voyage had the characteristics of a ‘*Flucht*’ (Goethe 2001:10), an escape from his duties as Prime Minister of the Duchy of Weimar and a release from the pain of a complex love affair as well as from the consequences of his celebrity status as the author of the very popular novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, first published in 1774.

The way Goethe started his journey is reminiscent of an escape because none of his friends and acquaintances knew his actual purposes. Before leaving for Italy, Goethe was suffering from a lack of creative inspiration and in a letter to Herder he expressed his hope to return happier and revived (Schmidt 1986 in Sliwa 2006: 3). He also wanted to come back: “reicher, gereifter, selbstsicherer” (Goethe 1982 in Sliwa 2006: 3) that is to say richer, more mature and more self-confident. Following in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessors, Jamie Oliver heads to Italy to find new inspiration for his cooking. The parallel between gastronomy and more-traditional forms of art as writing and painting is self-evident. Like Goethe, Jamie’s wish for himself is to return home happier and more motivated:

[This project to go to Italy] is totally and utterly selfish. It’s about me and no one else. [...] This restaurant and the school dinner project have totally overwhelmed my life.[...] I think it’s going to make me a better cook, I think it’s going to make me a better husband, a better boss, I think it’s going to make me happier. I’m gonna be travelling all over Italy for the summer of my thirtieth birthday, trying to get re-inspired and cook for some of the toughest food experts in the world. (*Jamie’s Great Italian Escape*, Channel 4, 2005).

During his journey, Jamie often repeats that in order to get new ideas and enthusiasm for his cooking he needs to experience authentic Italian food and learn from the Italians, but he also wants to cook for them, i.e. native Italians and please them, which takes him a step further. In a way, Jamie wants to immerse himself in

the classics of Italian food, encountering the real thing, to gain new energy and to improve both his cooking competence and his approach to cooking.

The show is a close-up on Italian (Southern) popular cuisine, on everyday family life, as well as on the most remote peripheries of Italian society. At times Jamie's programme seems to dispel Italian stereotypes and at others it strongly reinforces them. Oliver spends time with ordinary people, learns how to cook very traditional tomato and wild boar sauces from elderly women, has fun cooking with and for Italians, and has difficulties in accepting their criticism of his dishes.

The journey begins in a popular food market in Palermo where he grills fish for the locals, after which he then heads to the Isle of Marettimo (Sicily) and cooks with the owner of the *La Scaletta* restaurant. After Sicily, Oliver visits a Benedictine abbey in Farfa (Lazio), then he goes hunting and takes part in a home-made pasta competition at a *sagra*⁴ in Mercatello (Marche). He learns how to make *orecchiette* on a street in Altamura (Puglia), he bakes lemons in a brick-oven in the hills above Amalfi for the father of his mentor Gennaro Contaldo and finally celebrates his thirtieth birthday in a former paper plant turned farmhouse, on the Amalfi coast, away from the main tourist attractions.

4.1 The Translation of Jamie's Great Italian Escape into Italian

In Italy *Jamie's Great Italian Escape* was first broadcast with Italian subtitles on the Sky pay TV platform in 2007, two years after the programme had been launched in the UK. The book accompanying the series, *Jamie's Italy* (2005), a cookbook as well as a travel diary, was translated into Italian and published by TEA in October 2007 with the title *Il mio Giro d'Italia*, a few months after the series was broadcast. The book was an immediate success in Italy, despite the fact that at the time Jamie's series were only accessible to Sky subscribers. A few weeks after the book was published in Italy Jamie Oliver wrote on his website:

Hi guys! Just wanted to share some great news with you about the Italian launch of my book *Jamie's Italy*. I'm thrilled that the first book that I have published in Italian has launched and gone straight into the top 10 bestsellers list in the first week!! Who'd have thought me, an Essex boy, would be selling a book about Italian cooking to the Italians! I hope that everyone enjoys it. I'm inspired by Italy, Italians, and of course the way in which they cook. As you know Gennaro Contaldo is my mentor and to this day he still continues to teach me wonderful things about Italian cooking. To all Italians that may be

⁴ Italian term for local food festival.

reading this – Vi ringrazio per il vostro supporto. Vi voglio tanto bene. Quello che mi piace dell'Italia è il paese, la cucina, ma soprattutto la gente. Spero di venire presto in Italia! Affezionatissimo Jamie XXX⁵

The successful reception of Jamie's translated book in Italy is indeed surprising, given the fact that Italians do not especially respect or think very highly of UK culinary traditions. Following the success of this first business operation, more of Jamie's cookery books were translated into Italian. Furthermore, encouraged by Oliver's pioneering undertaking, other British chefs⁶ have since targeted the Italian publishing market with cookbooks that were not originally tailored specifically for the Italian public. These books were extremely successful as they apparently filled a gap in the Italian publishing market (cf. Rossato 2010:129).

Jamie's Great Italian Escape was broadcast once more on Italian DDT factual channel *Cielo* in 2011 and although the TV series was already six years old (four in Italy), it was still regarded as appealing to Italian audiences.⁷ However, a DVD version of the cookery show has never been released in Italy, and its only accessible version in Italian is the above mentioned Sky Raisat *Gambero Rosso* Channel subtitled version, broadcast in 2007. Oliver's Italian success is also evident through the successful launch, in 2014, of an Italian version of *Jamie Magazine*, a food and lifestyle magazine containing recipes by the popular chef and suggestions for tourism based on wine and food tasting.⁸

The TV series has also been very successful in Germany and Austria under the title *Genial Italienisch*. The cookery show was first broadcast in 2006 in Germany on RTL II, a commercial, privately owned, general-interest channel, and in Austria on ORF, a national public service broadcaster. More recently, the series was broadcast on the digital lifestyle channel RTL Living. The cookbook accompanying the series was published in 2006 also under the title *Genial Italienisch*, one year before it was launched in Italy. It immediately joined the bestsellers list, while another six of Oliver's previous books sold around 12 million copies in Austria alone. Jamie Oliver is also very popular in the

⁵ Retrieved from <<http://www.jamieoliver.com/>> last accessed November 13th 2007.

⁶ For example some cookbooks by Nigella Lawson and Gordon Ramsay were translated into Italian.

⁷ At time of writing, a rerun of the six part travelogue is being scheduled by *laeffe* an Italian lifestyle DDT channel.

⁸ The magazine is available in paper version at the newsagents' and is on-line at: <<http://www.jamiemagazine.it/it>>- Retrieved July 4th, 2015.

Netherlands, Sweden and Belgium as testified by his intention to open one of his Italian restaurants in these countries.⁹

Jamie Oliver's twenty TV series are broadcast in more than sixty different countries around the world. The impact of Jamie's media persona and the influence of his cooking and lifestyle programmes, inspired by Italian regional cuisine, is undeniable.

5. Discussion

The Italian subtitled version of the six part travelogue *Jamie's Great Italian Escape* as it was first broadcast on the Sky channel *Raisat Gambero Rosso* in 2007 was analysed and compared to the English original version, as it appeared on the English DVD version (only available since November 2010) containing all 6 episodes from the Channel 4 series, first broadcast in the UK in 2005. While the general themes as well as the semiotic and linguistic features exemplified below are taken from the entire series, the detailed analysis will focus only on examples from episode 1 and episode 2 set in Sicily and episode 5 based in Puglia.

The original cookbook *Jamie's Italy*, published by Penguin Books in 2007 and its translated version *Il mio Giro d'Italia*, published by TEA in 2007 were also taken into consideration for their translational strategies and related approach to cultural adaptation. Differences between the translation of the TV series and that of the cookbook are also included in the analysis.

5.1 *The Chef as Intercultural Mediator: Interpretations, Additions, Explicitations, Omissions*

Jamie's Great Italian Escape can be considered a case of (culinary) cultural translation. In the examples provided Jamie Oliver moves back and forth between two cultures. He constantly mediates the cultural as well as the culinary contents with which he comes into contact. He explains, interprets and simplifies as much as he can for the benefit of his prospective viewers (UK audiences), but despite his best intentions there is no such thing as an objective interpreter and mediator. As Lefevere aptly stated 'translation is of course a rewriting of an original text'

⁹ Available at: <http://deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/News/1.2217049>. Retrieved August 20th, 2015.

and ‘all rewritings, whatever their intentions, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics’ (1992: 4). Rewritings can also have different effects:

Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices, and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another. But rewriting can also repress innovation, distort and contain, and in an age of ever increasing manipulation of all kinds, the study of the manipulative processes of literature as exemplified by translation can help us toward a greater awareness of the world we live in (Lefevere 1992:4).

If we consider Jamie’s cooking travelogue series as a cultural translation of the Italian culinary culture and assume that ‘no translation is neutral’ as it always ‘involves making choices and taking decisions’ (Diaz-Cintas and Remael [2007], 2014: 229), we need to become aware of the specific perspective from which this ‘rewriting’ of the original culinary culture is produced in order to trace the shaping power, the innovative and the repressive factors involved in this cultural encounter. Jamie cannot but speak from his perspective as a British superchef, a global media phenomenon. His view is clearly connoted by his origin, his class, and the culinary tradition to which he belongs, but also by the aims of the TV programme. The portrait of Italy that emerges is necessarily marked and that also serves the purpose of appealing to large audiences worldwide, once the programme is launched on the international TV market. Additionally, the programme cannot be representative of the whole of the Italian culinary tradition as (although the book also includes recipes from Tuscany) all six episodes are based in the southern regions of the peninsula. Furthermore they are mainly set in what could be described as rural peripheries: a street market, a farmhouse, a monastery, a country cottage, etc. Jamie’s attempt to discover real, authentic Italian cuisine, is biased and influenced by his interpretation of what is authentic. In *Jamie’s Great Italian Escape* stereotyping seems inevitable yet Oliver’s approach to typical stereotypes attached to Italy is at times contradictory. In the first episode, after a 36-hour drive through Europe, Jamie catches a ferry to Sicily. Palermo is the first stop of Jamie’s adventurous journey, and on the ferry, he explains a few basic concepts about Sicilian food traditions. His approach is didactic, but Jamie does not fail to convey passion and excitement, both for the food and for the country: ‘Sicilian food is probably the most multicultural of the whole of Italy, because the spice trade from Africa used to come via Sicily. They

have couscous here, which is totally Moroccan'. Jamie's introduction is gastronomic as well as cultural and although he is not free from the most predictable stereotypes, he seems willing to get rid of them. He would like to be adventurous and look at what lies beneath the surface of what guide books and foreign travellers normally report: 'Palermo, the capital, to me is famous for two things: fantastic street food and the mafia. They said to me, "you can go to these places by day, but don't go there at night", and I said: "actually I'd like to go there at night because I want to find out what I should be scared about."' With this statement, right at the beginning of the series, Jamie suggests that his endeavour will not just scratch the surface of Italian culture; rather, his intention is to delve into the real thing, and 'totally' experience what Italy is really like.

Once Jamie lands in Palermo, the semiotic features of the episode drastically change. The way the episode is edited records both visually and acoustically the chaotic anarchy of the city's streets. Bird's eye views of traffic jams and close-ups of local people's faces are presented in hectic sequences, so as to convey the impression of strangeness and insecurity someone foreign may experience in the city. Jamie adds that he really feels like an alien.

The first Italian person Jamie encounters in the Sicilian town (who is also the first Italian the audience is introduced to in the series) is the owner of a petrol station who has just run out of stock, thus reinforcing the stereotype of Italian lack of efficiency. As soon as Jamie arrives in town, he dives into the narrow, twisted streets of a Palermo street market, full of colourful edible goods. The soundtrack bellows hard rock music that underlines a fairly stereotypical portrait of tough local people and the hard life they lead. Jamie's comment is: 'all the guides say you've got to watch your wallet here', which can only reinforce this impression.

In the second episode of the series, set on the remote island of Marettimo, a few kilometres to the west of Trapani (Sicily), Giovanni, the owner of the restaurant Jamie collaborates with, as a joke provocatively threatens Jamie with a knife, to prevent him from 'messing' with his daughter. Again, this episode reinforces the stereotypical impressions of Italian society still being very traditional and patriarchal.

5.2 Cultural Translation Strategies

The *Great Italian Escape* allows Jamie to engage with Italian food culture – which has been the key source of inspiration to his cooking since his early beginnings as a TV chef – in a more extensive and sophisticated way than he had ever done in his previous TV series. In each episode, Jamie’s close encounters with the locals offer him the chance to reflect on Italian lifestyle, culture and society. He often speaks of Italians’ proverbial passion for food and his journey to Italy is also an opportunity to compare the Italian way of life to scenarios back home. In doing so, Jamie often acts as an ‘intercultural mediator’ who interprets what he sees and experiences ‘live’ for his fellow country people. He is a sort of ambassador of Italian food culture for non-Italian audiences, a facilitator, as well as a cultural ‘translator’ for the target audiences of Italian cuisine and its context. As Leer and Kjaer point out, Jamie’s Volkswagen van ‘serves as a space of confession where Jamie discloses his personal thoughts to the camera’ (2015: 316). In the first episode of the series for example, when Jamie is driving all the way from London to Sicily, he expresses some of his opinions on Italian eating habits compared to those in the UK, promising his audience that throughout the series he will be able to find out more about these differences:

I want to find out why Italian families are so passionate about food. I also want to find out why the average Italian family eats so well, while millions of British families eat such socrat. (*Jamie’s Great Italian Escape*, Channel 4, 2005, episode 1)

While driving, Jamie also meditates on the differences between the class system in Italy and in the UK and how they are reflected in the consumption of food and eating habits. He explains that in Britain the working class is generally the class who eats the worst while in Italy the working class eats extremely well; and he illustrates his point by telling his audience that some of the most delicious long-established Italian dishes originated from the traditional cooking of the poor:

I will be learning from the people who count, the working class, the builders, the ‘cucina povera’, the poor men’s cooking, it is like you know it will be like going to college again. I am so excited, I can’t possibly tell you (*Jamie’s Great Italian Escape*, Channel 4, 2005, episode 1)

In the fifth episode filmed in Puglia, Jamie compares the British and the Italian lunch and underlines that the lack of time for cooking in England is often just an excuse: as he points out, the Italian woman on the show has just finished working

and in half an hour she prepares a salmon risotto and a wild asparagus omelette. In Italy, a healthy delicious lunch is ready very quickly and the children can sit around the table.

In the cookbook related to the TV series, *Jamie's Italy* (2005), Jamie's role as an intercultural mediator is even more evident, as he has the chance to express his opinions more extensively. After the on-the road experience is concluded and he can recollect it in tranquillity, family values, the retention of religious traditions, and lack of choice are listed among the causes of Italy's 'incredible' food culture. The introduction to the cookery manual reads as follows:

One of the reasons I went to Italy on this trip was to learn, but I also wanted to try to get a feel for why the country has retained its amazing food culture. I have my opinion – I think it's partly because it has great weather and resources for making great food; it's also down to traditions and family values and I think, in some shape or form religion and Catholic Church, as any excuse for a festival or a gathering has an impact. But I think the main reason comes down to lack of choice. In the countryside especially, the working class definitely don't have the same kind of choices that people in many other parts of the world have. I've witnessed so many young people and teenagers in Italy living a 'modern-day life' which we would have seen in Britain seventy years ago – yes, they have mobile phones and computers but they're not seen as an essential part of everyday life and not as many people have them as here. [...] sometimes when you have too much choice you can lose sight of the things that really matter – your family, your kids, and your health. (Oliver 2005: xiii-xvi)

Jamie's romanticised view of Italy and of the Italian food culture is influenced by his choice of visiting southern Italy and to restrict himself to off-the-beaten-tracks locations. Those, it is true, form an important, and considerable part of the Italian world, yet his vision cannot but be a partial one. Jamie's cooking series focuses precisely on the remotest places in Italy because he is clearly looking for the ultimate exotic, authentic and unusual experience. He is focusing on a way of life that is rustic, pre-industrial and different from the mainstream, modern one that he can also experience at home.

5.2.1 A paradox: authentic and traditional and yet open-minded and adventurous

The paradox of Jamie's cultural translational operation lies in the not-so-well-resolved contradiction between his quest for the authentic, untainted traditional, and ultimately 'real' thing and his constant willingness to persuade the locals, the legitimate representatives of authentic Italian cuisine, to be open-minded and to

approve his cooking and appreciate innovative versions of traditional Italian dishes.

During the first episode of the series, when Jamie volunteers to grill some fish together with local street food vendors at the Borgo night market in Palermo, Jamie's pro-active and open-minded attitude is immediately tested. He is faced with local hostility to try his cooking. None of the sellers are willing to take the apparent risk of him grilling their fish as they are convinced their customers will not like it. Jamie decides to buy, cook and sell his own fish, but as soon as he tries to sell the fish he has cooked with some herbs (with basil, oil, lemon and fennel on top), the reluctant reactions of the locals frustrate him. 'When you ask: "would you like to try something new", it is like asking them would you like to open a new mortgage?' One Italian customer comments on Jamie's 'fish with herbs': '*Gli ingredienti possono danneggiare il sapore del pesce*' – subtitled with: 'Your ingredients could ruin the flavour of the fish.' Only when Jamie decides to give the food away for free is a group of young people brave enough to try it – and then they do appreciate his non-traditional-style grilled fish. This is a turning point in the episode; Jamie finally succeeds in winning the approval of the Italians. They are pleased with his British interpretation of Italian street food and Jamie receives the authoritative consent for his cooking that he was looking for.

The *trope* of Jamie's food being first rejected by the locals because it is deemed too innovative and then eventually appreciated by them, is present in almost every episode of the series. Jamie has to conquer the very demanding Italian taste buds little by little. In an episode filmed in the Marche region, a grandmother does not like his roast lamb and complains that it smells horrible. In Altamura, Puglia, a town that is famous for its bread, Jamie undergoes yet another disappointing incident when he cooks what he calls a classic '*Tuscan panzanella*' salad, made out of leftover bread and fresh vegetables. Jamie's style *panzanella* includes red tomatoes, basil, celery, but also peppers, onion, garlic and anchovies, which are not required by the original, classic Tuscan recipe. First, the local elderly people passing by say that they call this salad differently in Puglia, namely '*cialda fredda*', then they add that Jamie's salad is a more powerful version of their dish, as it contains too many ingredients. As soon as Jamie serves the salad to his host family one of the tablemates says: 'It's very good, but for us it is too rich in ingredients' and a second adds that he shouldn't use anchovies or peppers while

another person comments: *‘È buono quello che fai tu, ma è migliore quello di mamma’* (subtitled with: ‘your food is good... but mamma’s is better.’). At this point, Jamie’s is unable to hide his disappointment and his comment to the camera shows his dissatisfaction: ‘No matter what you do in life, it’s never quite as good as mamma’s, mamma’s is always the best, you know!’ Later on, Jamie further reflects on this incident in the isolation of his camper van. This regional, even parochial aspect of Italian cuisine is really at the core of Italian identity. Even ingredients that are almost exactly the same are acceptable in one region and unacceptable in another: each person desires a dish made exactly according to his or her own tradition. And although Jamie can see why this attitude helps retain traditions, it also ‘pisses me [him] off, at the same time!’ Then Jamie lets himself go, with a gut reaction which is very revealing of the cultural clash he is experiencing and has tried fruitlessly to bridge, keeping his feelings hidden up to this moment:

Just fucking try it, try it! It’s so bloody good! No, no, no my mum doesn’t do it like that. I don’t care about your mum. Try it. I’ll tell you one thing about the Italians, and I mean it in the nicest way, because I wish I had been born Italian, I’d love to live here. They can be damn stubborn, stubborn people sometimes. In England we should be angry at ourselves about quite a few things we do with food, but I’ll tell you what is really cool about English people, they are reasonably open-minded! They will have a go at a bit of Moroccan, and a bit of Italian, and a bit of Thai and a bit of Chinese. And you know what? I really like that and appreciate that about British people.

The Italian subtitles of the scene are pretty straightforward and do not deserve specific comments, what is interesting though, as illustrated above, is the cultural adaptation of the convivial conversation that takes place during lunch and the subsequent interpretation that Jamie provides for his target audience.

At the end of the same episode, Jamie cooks for the birthday party of a member of a baker’s family. Forty people are gathering in a countryside cottage and Jamie decides not to try any ‘twist or trick, or other regions’ cooking, because that is not working’. He resolves that he will pick up local ingredients and do a ‘sympathetic and intelligent’ version of what is most traditional in the area. He then attends a local ‘lesson’ on pasta making, joining a group of women making and selling homemade *orecchiette* on their doorstep. He asks the knowledgeable women there, what sauce he should add to this pasta shape and diligently decides to follow the very eloquent reply he gets from a boy who can speak a little bit of English: ‘the simplest thing is the best.’ A woman suggests preparing a sauce with fresh tomatoes, that he should boil and press into a puree, then he should add some

grated salted ricotta on top ‘and that’s it’. The woman also explains that *orecchiette* do not go with any sauce. Jamie follows all the suggestions, but decides to turn *orecchiette* with tomato sauce into a ‘*pasta al forno*’, baked pasta, improvising an oven on a barbecue grill. He also serves *burrata* cheese with boiled greens and a very simple anchovy sauce as an appetizer, then he grills some pork with fennel seeds on top as a main course. This time the feedback Jamie receives from his tablemates is very positive. People appreciate his cooking, and their enthusiastic comments range from: ‘*profumo italiano*’, - ‘It smells Italian’, to ‘*è molto rustico, come cento anni fa, si cucinava in queste zone in questa maniera*’ - ‘this is very rustic, this is how we would have cooked here 100 years ago’, a woman says: ‘*la verdura a me piace, sinceramente, buona, ottima*’ - ‘I really love the greens, delicious’, and finally he gets the most important comment of all: ‘*la pasta al forno è uguale alla nostra*’ - ‘the baked pasta is just like ours’. Jamie is satisfied with this result and comments that he has finally worked out how to keep Italians happy: you just need to give them what they are used to. What he thinks he has learnt from this experience is the heart and soul of Italian cooking. Jamie is persuaded that when he goes back to the UK he will think of the time he has spent in Italy and this experience will turn every dish into a more authentic and brilliant one. He has understood that cooking Italian food is one thing, cooking for Italian people, and getting them to like it, is completely different and can be hard. Therefore, at the end of the series he admits that he is quite proud of his endeavour. This episode provides evidence that his quest for authentic Italian cuisine is genuine. He has finally managed to cook authentic Italian food, that is to say the food that Italians like as if it were made by their mamas.

5.3 Food Adaptations

As mentioned in the introduction, *Jamie’s Great Italian Escape* is an interesting case of two-way cultural translation. Both in Jamie’s TV series and in the related cookbook there are plenty of adaptations of Italian recipes for UK audiences. These are then modified and conveyed back to Italian audiences and readers via further translation. For example, in his cookbook, Jamie provides the recipe for ‘Italian style greens,’ one of the dishes he cooked in Puglia to meet the locals’ dictum of ‘the simpler, the better’. In his English translation, he includes some

vegetables that are typically used in the UK, while in the Italian version some of those vegetables are simply omitted. Interestingly, the Italian translator seems to have encountered some difficulties in recognizing several unusual vegetables listed by Jamie, which led her to make very basic mistakes.

[Insert table 1 here]

Watercress, small cabbage, yellow celery, sorrel are not typical examples of what an Italian chef would use to prepare Italian style greens, nor can Italians find spinach, watercress and rocket in the same big bag at the supermarket. Jamie Oliver is clearly ‘domesticating’ the recipe, hence translating it, for the benefit of his target audience, and the Italian translator, in turn, produces an adaptation of the original by referring to the lack of vegetable gardens in Milan city centre (which is clearly an addition to the original), in order to smooth Jamie’s stereotyped description of Italy. This expansion, contained only in the Italian version, also serves the purpose to include prospective target readers from the northern, more urbanized part of Italy which Jamie Oliver tends to ignore and exclude from his portrait of the Italian bucolic way of life. Both Jamie and the Italian translator of the book are in fact translating cultural contents, mediating and exporting values and ideas attached to food and culinary traditions. They are keeping their prospective readers in mind and, for their benefit, they feel entitled to modify and expand the contents of their respective ‘original’.

5.4 Jamie’s Talk

The Italian subtitled version of the TV show is not always accurate and faithful to the original programme. Some mistranslations and some stylistic glitches were spotted (see table 2 below). Some of the most distinctive features of Jamie’s way of speaking, his informal style, his use of colloquial expressions and the abundance of swear words are generally under-translated, toned-down or censored in the Italian subtitles. Swear words are also censored and covered by a beep in the original English (DVD and TV Channel 4 version), while the Italian subtitled version displays the initials of the swearwords followed by three asterisks. In addition, Jamie’s inclination to use figurative language, his use of hyperboles and

colloquial, extravagant expressions, as well as his use of idiomatic expressions is either reduced to standard Italian or upgraded to a more formal register.

[Insert table 2a here]

The excerpts listed in table 2 include just a few sentences taken from episode two of the series. Although the selected extract lasts just a couple of minutes, it is sufficient to illustrate the overall approach of the translator/subtitler. Example one illustrates a case of mistranslation due to miscomprehension of the original; examples two, six and seven show that the Italian subtitler preferred to tone down Jamie's hyperboles and exaggerations and to use more standardized language instead of orally connoted expressions. In examples three, four and the second part of example eight, the subtitler upgraded Jamie's talk and opted for more formal expressions, while example five illustrates how swearwords are treated in the original and in the subtitled version of the text. Examples five, seven and eight also contain the most interesting omissions and other manipulations, exemplifying cultural adaptation and retranslation.

In excerpt five the information 'a fisherman come chef' is omitted in the Italian translation, while in example seven Jamie has not come a long way just 'for a fish lesson' but to 'learn how to cook fish', as if in this area he had to start to learn from scratch. In example eight Jamie is not asked to cook 'a classic English dish', but an 'English delicacy'. These very small changes nevertheless modify the position of the British chef, turning him from an adventurous professional cook who wants to discover authentic Italian recipes, to the position of a learner. If a fish pie is considered a delicacy then the whole of British cooking is somehow downgraded in the eyes of an Italian audience, thereby confirming typical stereotypes about British cuisine. Giovanni is not 'a fisherman come chef', but simply a cook; this innocent omission deprives the Italian audience of the background of this restaurateur and also upgrades him to the position of a real expert. These impressions can only be reinforced by the comments of the Italian customers who later on in the episode try Jamie's fish pie. They like the look of it but when they taste it they say it doesn't come together as well as they thought.

Apart from the fact that mistakes were not spotted in the printed version, the translation of the cookbook follows similar lines. Although for obvious reasons

the original cookbook is already a more refined, polished and toned-down version of the TV series in terms of swearwords and colloquial expressions, any remaining coarse language has been omitted and colloquial or figurative expressions have been reduced or flattened out. Omissions and additions are also to be found to mediate cultural content as exemplified in Table 2b.

[Insert table 2b here]

Example one highlights a significant addition in the translated version which is aimed on the one hand at adapting the content of the original for the target reader, who is supposed to be more familiar with what might be pasted on walls in Palermo, and on the other hand at justifying why an Italian reader should chuckle or smile (according to the Italian translation) at the sight of these walls. The Italian translation of the passage adds a faithful description of a wall in Palermo, based on the picture which is printed on the inside cover of the cookbook. Example two shows the deletion of the word ‘damn’ from the Italian cookbook which is replaced by a standard Italian expression. Excerpt three shows an example of ‘charged’ (meaning not neutral) cultural adaptation. As the intended target readers of the cookbook are not British, it is interesting that the translator decides to include the paragraph about British fishmongers selling sub-standard quality products in the Italian version. It is also worth noticing that the use of the sentence ‘*cercate di imparare dagli italiani, imparate a dire la vostra*’, is not a literal translation of ‘be a bit more Italian and have your say on a regular basis’ of the original version, which was formulated in a softer and more politically correct way. Again, this is an example of the agency of the translator, who reinforces stereotypes towards British culinary culture in order to appeal to the Italian reader. Moreover, it could be easily argued, this is an attempt by the translator to question and undermine power structures (whether consciously or unconsciously it is hard to say) between the observer and the local observed through slightly connoted language and small changes.

5.5. Deictic Forms

The most striking difference between the translation of the programme and the book translation into Italian is the use of deictic forms. In the TV show’s subtitles

Jamie speaks about Italians in the third person plural, as in the original, generalizing about their culture and habits, while the translator of the cookbook has adopted a more direct approach to the recipients, addressing the target reader directly: ‘*Voi Italiani*’ - ‘you Italians’. This choice allows for larger possibilities in terms of adaptation, as illustrated by the following example:

[Insert table 3 here]

The translation of the cookbook accompanying the TV series manages to build a closer relationship to the Italian addressees than the TV subtitles. By speaking directly to Italian readers, the Italian translator produces a similar effect to the one created by the original book which addresses directly the UK readers. In the Italian version, sentences specifically targeting the original readership have been omitted, while expansions aimed at sympathizing with or reproaching the Italian readership have been added. This is yet another example of the agency the translator exercise with the aim of making the book more appealing to the target recipients.

5.6 *Multilingualism*

Jamie Oliver’s attempt to bridge the gap between two distant cultures involves a lot of adaptation, clarification and explanation strategies. Although Jamie admittedly cannot speak fluent Italian, he seems to understand almost everything that is said and very often he even translates for his target audience what people say to him either in Italian or in a regional dialect. This is clearly a fictional expedient to bridge the linguistic gap, but also to convey the immediacy and authenticity of Jamie’s experience of Italian popular culture. Sometimes local people who can speak English are involved in the exchanges, and they function as interpreters, but the main message that comes across, through this linguistic policy is that the superchef does not need intermediaries, he does not even need sound competence in Italian to communicate with Italians, because food is a universal language, comprehensible to everybody. This is also stated in the cookbook, *Jamie’s Italy*:

‘The truth is, when I’m in Italy I feel Italian – even with my very basic grasp of the language I manage to get by, and you know why? Because like all Italians, I love my

family for better or for worse, and because food has been something I've grown up around.' (Oliver 2005:x)

5.7 Humour

Jamie's poor command of Italian is also a convenient device to produce humour. As soon as Jamie meets Giovanni, the owner of the *La Scaletta* restaurant in Marettimo, a gag originates when Jamie mispronounces the word *bambino* to refer to himself as a young chef and uses the female variant *bambina* instead. Giovanni immediately takes advantage of this and teases Jamie about his sexuality by asking whether he is a girl or a boy. This exchange can be appreciated both by Italian and UK viewers who are provided with subtitles for the bits in Italian.

On other occasions, there is asymmetry in the appreciation of humour by different target audiences, often due to misunderstandings between the participants on screen and to the different levels of comprehension of the Italian audience and the original UK audience. At the Palermo street market a fishmonger shows Jamie how to skewer some prawns. Jamie ironically comments: 'He thinks I don't know how to skewer a fish, thank you very much for being so kind anyway' and to his target audience Jamie continues: 'He can obviously sense that I feel rather vulnerable right now' while the Italian fishmonger replies in Sicilian dialect. '*Iu nun te capisciu*', meaning I do not understand you, to which Jamie replies. 'Thank you, Grazie mille.' This misunderstanding is indeed funny, but the Italian and the UK audiences probably smile at different things. The UK audience is likely to be amused by Jamie's superior attitude towards the fishmonger and laughs *with* Jamie, while Italians are likely to identify with the fishmonger and therefore laugh *at* Jamie. Later on, Jamie asks a potential customer in Italian if he likes '*finocchio*', fennel, but because of the double meaning of the word *finocchio* in Italian (a word used both for the vegetable and as an offensive expression for the term 'homosexual') the customer, who is not tempted by the food replies '*sì è un pesce gay*', - 'yes it's a gay fish'. However, Jamie Oliver does not seem to understand the humour, nor can UK audiences access the joke here, while Italian audiences can understand the pun based on the double meaning of the word *finocchio*, and they could possibly laugh *at* Jamie rather than *with* him. These are only a few examples of the instances of humour generated by multilingualism and miscomprehension, however, they hint at the fact that the real challenge for the

programme, and for Jamie as well, is overcoming cultural barriers rather than linguistic ones, as shown above.

6. Conclusions

The discussion conducted in the above sections proves that cookery is no trivial subject and supports Inness' invitation to pay more critical attention to cooking culture in general, whether it be books, television shows, Internet sites, or magazine articles, to unveil the concealed messages that are carried along with recipes and other culinary texts:

Although our society is replete with culinary information, we rarely stop to analyze what messages are being distributed along with how to prepare a casserole. Culinary culture not only *conveys* recipes, but it is also equally intent on passing on implicit and explicit messages to people confirming or challenging our roles in society (Inness 2006:15).

Bassnett points out that in periods of great social change – and the present certainly is one of those – signs of change are difficult to detect by the people who are living them, however:

With hindsight, (...), patterns can be discerned, connections can be made and the invisible threads of the cultural tapestry can be traced. (...) In the future, students who look back on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries will be able to read sets of signs that we struggle to recognize or to read clearly, enmeshed as we are in them. (...) What it means to be a citizen of a global world is a question yet to be answered. One thing we can begin to recognize though, is that a prime mover in this global world is translation between languages, media, cultures and ideologies. (Bassnett 2014: xv-xvi)

The present study has set out to trace how the translation market related to cookery on television and in books, which has been recently booming especially since the introduction of satellite and DTT factual channels, could be a useful tool to monitor more general social and cultural transformations in modern global societies across trans-national boundaries. I have argued that travelogue cookery programmes and related cookbooks are interesting case studies in this respect, as they are cultural translations of culinary culture in themselves, whereby television chefs act as intercultural mediators and as facilitators for their audiences' interpretation of the (gastronomic) culture of the exotic other. This kind of programme and the accompanying cookbooks often disclose power relations and dynamics between a centre and a periphery, between the 'viewing subject' and

‘consumable objects’, (Taylor 2001:9 in Leer and Kjaer 2015: 320), as well as between the translator and the translated. Furthermore, as no translation is neutral, closer attention should be paid to the perspective from which these programmes, and hence their operations of cultural translation, are carried out and spread around the world.

Jamie’s Italian Escape is one possible (connoted) translation of original Italian culinary culture. As argued, the programme cannot be representative of the whole of Italy as the series is mainly restricted to remote villages and small islands in southern regions of the country. Jamie Oliver is primarily interested in the opinions of elderly people and working class Italians, he only cooks with and speaks to fishermen, bakers, hunters. The programme is hence ignoring a large part of Italian society. Jamie is not cooking for city dwellers, factory workers, teachers, businessmen, intellectuals or professionals, however he tends to over-generalize and always speaks of ‘Italians’, as a homogeneous category, whenever he offers cultural readings and interpretations of their behaviour (though he is also prone to stating that they are divided and parochial). This connoted representation of Italian gastronomy (and culture) is conveyed not only to the UK audience and readership, but also to the international market of English speaking audiences via a globalized television system.

Although Jamie Oliver’s admiration and passion for Italian cuisine is genuine and he is motivated by a *bona fide* research for gastronomic authenticity and exoticism, as Heldke interestingly points out, the exotic always needs a term of comparison, which in our society is beyond question Euro-American:

There is something suspicious and troubling about a white person who valorizes all ‘ethnic’ cuisines while simultaneously denigrating her own. Like the Euroamerican who idolizes the noble savage of North America and bemoans the loss of innocence in one’s own culture, the food colonizer who has no time for her own food heritage creates a false image of both her own culture and the other’s. (2003: 16)

As argued by Leer & Kjaer (2015) despite all noble intentions, Jamie Oliver’s Italian programme is not free of postcolonial rhetoric. Power dynamics progressively surface in the series, weighing in favour of the chef at the expense of the locals. Jamie turns Italians, the ‘strangers’, into bearers of authenticities and himself into the subject who can evaluate what is ‘too authentic’ and what is ‘not authentic enough’, and although he wants to learn how to cook authentic Italian

food he does not want to be criticized or limited by Italian traditionalism (*ibidem.*: 324). In fact he goes as far as to blame Italians for being too stubborn and narrow-minded. Maybe he does not fail to grasp that these are among the features that enabled Italians to retain their wonderful food tradition, but he certainly does not explain to his audience(s) that, as a direct consequence of his choice to locate the programme in remote settings in order to experience the most authentic cuisine of the *Bel Paese*, he is dealing with the hard core representatives of Italian attachment to local food traditions.

Jamie Oliver is looking for untainted indigenous ‘culinary others’, yet cannot refrain from complaining about their resistance to external contamination. He praises the Brits as open-minded and the Italians as narrow-minded as well as low risk-takers. If this were really the case, how could the success in Italy of *Jamie’s Great Italian Escape*, and of many other British cookery shows, be justified? Why would Jamie’s book be on the bestsellers list in Italy?

As Heldke points out:

Some cultures place such value on the traditional preparation of their cuisine that their members tend to systematically reject new ways of preparing foods. (...) when an outsider suggests a variation in a recipe, the outsider is likely to be met with incredulity, scorn or laughter. Such aversion to new food preparation techniques or new foods sometimes has considerable political and social significance, as it does when colonizing culture rejects the foods of the people it has colonized—or vice versa (Heldke 2003:10).

Due to historical reasons, regional and local diversity in Italy has been undermined after the country's reunification. Local culinary traditions still lie at the core of the Italians’ resilience against national homogenization, particularly in the southern regions. Food is one of the few (accepted and appreciated) markers of this regional identity, and it lies at the heart of people's attachment to their territories. Even today regional gastronomy is a key issue with which Italians identify. Jamie’s character is indeed playing the role of an intercultural mediator, but one that is of course subjective and cannot but make subjective choices about what to show of the immense regional culinary tradition of Italy and how to translate it for his target audience(s). In order to appeal to the international public Jamie Oliver needs to generalize and simplify some of Italy's complexities.

In the same way, the translators who worked on the Italian version of the TV series and the cookbook do not provide a neutral translation; rather, through their choices, they exercise agency. They modify and reshape the original text into a

different language, address misrepresentations and render the text more appealing to the target recipients through the use of stereotypes. They address the lack of representativeness of northern urban areas, for instance, through omissions, reformulations and expansions (cf. Section 5.3). To an attentive and informed reader, translation always betrays the point of view of the translator. Translation can be used to address asymmetries and to reshape power structures. It can simply question them or even subvert them. Translation, be it in the form of cultural adaptation as Jamie Oliver's endeavour, or in the form of textual translation, as the one produced by subtitlers and translators of Jamie Oliver, should be treasured precisely because it gives voice to a plurality of perspectives and in thus doing it undermines trends of monolingual, mono-cultural, mono-culinary temptations which are so present in periods of 'great social change'.

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