



## Cultural Migrations in France and Italy: Travel Literature from Translation to Genre

### Les migrations culturelles en France et en Italie : la littérature de voyage devenue genre par le biais de la traduction

Paola Daniela Smecca

Volume 16, numéro 2, 2003

Traduction et (im)migration  
Translation and (im)migration

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/010715ar>  
DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/010715ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Association canadienne de traductologie

ISSN

0835-8443 (imprimé)  
1708-2188 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Smecca, P. D. (2003). Cultural Migrations in France and Italy: Travel Literature from Translation to Genre. *TTR*, 16(2), 45–72. <https://doi.org/10.7202/010715ar>

Résumé de l'article

Cet article approfondit le rôle joué par les traductions dans la reconnaissance de l'écriture de voyage comme un véritable genre littéraire en Italie et, en partie, en France. En effet, c'est grâce aux traductions que cette production variée a défini ses propres caractéristiques et normes. Aux XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles, la plupart des oeuvres étaient connues en Italie à travers leurs traductions françaises qui avaient souvent subi des modifications transformant le point de vue des auteurs. Il en résulte un écart tant des contenus que des perceptions des écrivains de voyage entraînant une modification de l'interprétation par les lecteurs sur le pays visité.

# Cultural Migrations in France and Italy: Travel Literature from Translation to Genre

**Paola Daniela Smecca**

As Lambert has often pointed out (Lambert, 1989, p. 169) and as is also inferred by Even-Zohar's polysystem theory (with reference to minor or recently born literatures), the birth of a genre is fostered by translations and its integration is connected with local production in that specific genre. This is exactly the case with travel writing, which began to develop as an independent literary genre, or rather a sub-genre, endowed with its own characteristics and norms.

One of the first constitutive elements of the genre, separating literary travel books from simply informative texts (reports of itineraries or descriptions of monuments), is the predominance of subjectivity, the description of a real or fictitious, but easily believable, personal adventure in an unexplored or already well-known country, where the individual point of view constitutes the main basis of authenticity. While Kalb (Kalb 1981) dates the birth of this new genre back to 1705, when Addison published his *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy*, Griep (Griep 1991) is more cautious and considers Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768) as the prototype of the literary travel book, different from contemporary, "non-literary", travel books, whose main aim was to provide objective information about a particular country. An Italian scholar, Papa (Papa 1991), also identifies the acknowledgement of travel writing as a literary genre with the appearance of the traveller's subjectivity, when travel books, apart from listing monuments and attractions, started to express the author's personality and his/her ethnological curiosity towards the "other". Thus the focus was on the traveller's self, his/her

emotions when faced with a beautiful landscape, his/her reactions towards the customs of the people, and his/her growing interests in anthropology and sociology rather than mere antiquarianism.

Jauss (Jauss 1982) has also stressed the point that genres are often identified through the readers' expectations, those "horizons of expectations" which give rise to different interpretations of a text. As a consequence of these "changes of horizons", taking place on both a diachronic and a synchronic level, innovation is introduced through the disappearance of what are perceived as familiar elements and the introduction of new features.<sup>1</sup> Travel books are therefore usually characterized by autobiographical data, a factual tone, some kind of exotic quality (both in far-off countries and in unknown territories such as Sicily, full of legends and mysteries), a picaresque narrative structure, possibly a first-person narration, and a certain amount of intertextuality (due to the introduction of quotations from and references to previous travellers and writers). While, in the course of the centuries — with the progressive affirmation of travel literature as a separate genre — there was a shift from a predominance of factual information to a prevalence of individuality, a change also occurred in the main intentions which led to the writing of travel books: from the desire to provide readers with useful information about a country or a population and its history, to disinterested self-expression and the attempt to achieve the highest literary results.

Translations helped in the affirmation of the genre because they established the constant narrative features of travel literature on an international level, though with all the relative differences in content and viewpoints. If we analyse the huge number of original publications and the number of respective translations in European travel books about Italy, for example, we realise that the vast production of French translations, with all their differences and adaptations to the target culture, helped the genre to become affirmed in France more easily and sooner than in Italy, where the limited number of translations shows a different situation. The lack of interest in travel literature and the second-rate consideration of this genre by the Italian reading public is testified by the small production of Italian translations. Consider, for

---

<sup>1</sup> As a result of his analysis, Jauss does not aim to identify "pure", absolute genres, but to find out "historically determined groups": those genres whose works are perceived by readers as belonging to the same category. His historical approach, thus, mingles with reception theory.

instance, the number of Italian translations of English and French works by travellers who visited Sicily, which are part of my bibliography of 182 English and 135 French travellers in Sicily between 1500 and 1900 (Smecca, forthcoming):

| Century | English works | Italian translations | Percentage |
|---------|---------------|----------------------|------------|
| 1500    | 6             | 3                    | 50 %       |
| 1600    | 15            | 1                    | 6.6 %      |
| 1700    | 31            | 7                    | 22.5 %     |
| 1800    | 130           | 22                   | 16.9 %     |

| Century | French works | Italian translations | Percentage |
|---------|--------------|----------------------|------------|
| 1500    | 2            | 1                    | 50 %       |
| 1600    | 6            | 2                    | 33.3 %     |
| 1700    | 16           | 5                    | 31.2 %     |
| 1800    | 111          | 28                   | 25.2 %     |

As we can see from this table, 28 out of 111 French travel books published in the nineteenth century were translated into Italian, compared to only 22 out of 130 English ones printed in the same period. Moreover, there are few translations of sixteenth-, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts (though, in comparison, the percentage is much higher), whereas the situation changes in the nineteenth century, when the increase in travellers and travel books is not proportionally followed by a rise in the number of translations. Obviously, these are not merely statistics: they are proof of the importance these works had for a certain target audience. If there was not a massive output of translations of travel writing in Italy, there were certainly some reasons for this and the selection of texts for translation must have been based on some specific criteria.

As a matter of fact, the first travel books to be translated were those endowed with a scientific value because of their innovative geographical and geological discoveries or historical and anthropological interest. These works were usually translated immediately after their publication, such as, for example:

- Thomas Salmon, *Modern History* (published in three volumes between 1725 and 1739 and translated into Italian in 1731-1766);
- William Hamilton, *Account of the Earthquakes Which Happened in Calabria and Sicily* (sent to the Royal Society of London in 1783 and translated into Italian in the same year);
- Antoine Quatremère de Quincy, *Sur la restitution du temple de Jupiter Olympien à Agrigente* (an archaeological essay on ancient Greek art published in 1805 and translated in 1817);
- Pierre Nougaret, *Beautés de l'Histoire de Sicile et de Naples* (a complete description of the history, geography and customs of Sicily and Naples printed in 1818 and translated in 1821);
- Samuel Angell, *Sculptured Metopes* (an archaeological report on the ruins of Selinus, published in 1826 and translated in an Italian review in 1827);
- Denis Farjasse, *Sicile et Malte. Sites, monuments, scènes et costumes* (which appeared in 1835 and was translated the following year);
- Quatrefages de Bréau, *Souvenirs d'un naturaliste* (published in 1854 and partially translated in 1857);
- Marc Monnier, *Garibaldi. Histoire de la conquête des Deux Siciles* (a historical essay describing the events of Garibaldi's expedition, which he personally witnessed, translated the same year as it was published, 1861);
- Élisée Reclus, *Le Mont Etna et l'éruption de 1865* (a geological account, first published in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" in 1865, and translated into Italian soon after in 1873).

Another group of translations concerns the most renowned authors, whose whole production was translated, such as:

- Charles Didier, *La Sicile* (1834) and *Question sicilienne* (1849), respectively translated in 1989 and 1991;
- Alexandre Dumas père, *Le Spéronare* (1842) and *Les Garibaldiens. Révolution de Sicile et de Naples* (1861), which were both translated several times from 1844 onwards;
- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Extraits du voyage en Sicile* (published within the posthumous collection of his complete works in 1860 and first translated in 1984);
- Cardinal Newman, *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1865), *Letters and Correspondence* (1891) and *My Illness in Sicily* (1874) which is included in his *Autobiographical writings* (1956), all of them repeatedly translated throughout the twentieth century;

– Guy de Maupassant, *La Sicile* (an article on his experiences in Sicily first appeared in some reviews in 1886) and *La Vie errante* (1890), translated several times since 1910.

Nonetheless, since the Eighties a new interest in travel literature and translations has been promoted in Italy, thanks to the contribution of several scholars, of some publishing companies and of some research centres, such as CIRVI (Centro Interuniversitario di Ricerche sul Viaggio in Italia)<sup>2</sup> and “Centro studi e ricerche di storia e problemi eoliani”.<sup>3</sup> Their main aims are the re-discovery of regional characteristics for tourist purposes, a literary confrontation between local features and travellers’ views, an understanding of the social relationships affecting a specific historic period, the search for a cultural identity through the images created and interpreted by foreign travellers, a documentary interest in the recovery of precious materials which run the risk of being lost.

The promotion of local tourism has led each region and its institutions (both state and academic) to translate the works of those writers describing the territory and giving charm to the country while also providing a certain degree of prestige. But the result of all these translations is not always – and not only – commercial, because of the great value many of these travel books have for their literary style and learned references. They are also an inestimable source of information, indispensable to trace back the relationships between foreigners and residents over a certain period of time and to complete the picture of an age in all its social facets as seen through the eyes of a contemporary foreign observer. This “archaeological recovery”, however, is also indicative of the attempt to create an Italian literary travel tradition.

Furthermore, the fact that there were more Italian versions translated from the French than from the English, even though the English travellers outnumbered the French, shows how French literature was held in higher consideration by the Italians than the literature produced in Great Britain, at least until the end of the nineteenth century. This trend did not concern only travel writing, but all the literary genres. While during the Renaissance, in fact, Italian literature spread over the continent and greatly influenced European

---

<sup>2</sup> A University research centre studying travellers in Italy.

<sup>3</sup> A Centre specialised in research of a historical nature on the Lipari islands.

literary production, in the eighteenth century Italy entered a period of crisis and creative decay and started to turn for inspiration to other national outputs, above all to France, Spain, England, and subsequently Germany. This drawing from foreign models was also fostered by the cosmopolitan atmosphere dominating the Enlightenment.

France was considered to be the best model to follow as it was the producer of the highest achievements in literature and art, it held the reins of European history and dictated the rules in customs, manners and fashion. Even England fell under the influence of French allure for a stretch of time in the eighteenth century, as testified by Lord Chesterfield and Horace Walpole. France was idolized during the Revolution and Napoleon's rise to power, while it started to be disregarded in favour of England when the Italians were disillusioned by the emperor. The passion for everything French (Gallomania), thus, was inversely proportional to Anglomania, and swung high and low in the different historic and political moments.

What is remarkable is that even the vogue for England, its works and way of life, was imported into Italy through the French intermediary. Before the eighteenth century, English literature had been thoroughly neglected in Italy. The French "discovered" that country through the fugitive Huguenots and Voltaire, who settled in London during his exile and exalted the English civilization in his *Lettres sur les Anglais* (1726-29), later entitled *Lettres Philosophiques* (1734). He was later followed by Montesquieu, who re-assessed the English system in his *Esprit des Lois* (1748), after visiting the country in 1729. By the middle of the century, many translations from English were made in France and the Italians learned about the English civilization, literary production and socio-political organization thanks to Voltaire and the French translations of English authors. As a matter of fact, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries French books penetrated into Italy more easily than the English editions, not only because French was more widely spoken in the peninsula, but also because of the ecclesiastical and political censorship.

At the same time, many Italian publishers, especially in Venice and Padua, began to produce translations from both languages. According to Graf (Graf 1911), Italians translated above all novels, tragedies and comedies from the French (and the most renowned authors were thus playwrights, *philosophes* and encyclopædists), whereas from English they introduced mostly essays and magazines,

and writers such as Milton, Addison, Pope, Young and Thomson. Knowledge, of course, was followed by imitation, and in these foreign works Italian writers found an invigorating stimulus, a lively source of new themes and styles, from which they drew, among other things, the feeling for nature in poetry and the journalistic prose style.

Besides these genres, a large number of travel books were produced by wealthy, well-educated tourists travelling through Europe on their "Grand Tour", keeping a record of their impressions and thus making their mark on contemporary writing. These aristocratic or rich middle-class visitors, who travelled around Italy and other countries, alone or in the company of friends and tutors, for the most varied reasons (commercial, political, cultural, educational, archaeological, recreational, and so on), produced a bulk of descriptive texts in which the personal note and the literary quality were more or less evident, according to their individual writing skills. This considerable output gave rise to a thick network of translations and re-translations among all the European languages; indeed versions were often not derived directly from the original texts but from other translations. The French publishing market was rich in translations from English, much more so than the Italian one, which started to be attracted by this genre only in the twentieth century. This phenomenon could be due to the attitude of Italian readers, who were not particularly interested in reading about their own country or foreigners' impressions of it; but this is not a completely sound explanation, because in France, also a common destination for travellers, the genre was widespread. A considerable amount of Italians is, however, likely to have read these travel books in their French versions, as is certainly the case with Brydone's *Tour through Sicily and Malta* (1773), which was well-known long before its first complete Italian translation dated 1901. Its popularity is testified by three main factors: the numerous references to Brydone's book and the several comments on his assertions made by subsequent Italian and foreign travellers; the reaction of many Sicilians to other English travellers, whom they associated with Brydone himself and which proves that the local inhabitants also knew what Brydone had written; and the publication of a short translation of Brydone's letter XI, dealing with electric experiments on Mount Etna, which appeared in 1775 for the Collection of scientific studies *Scelta di opuscoli interessanti*. This collection includes original and translated works by a group of Italian



and foreign scientists, and shows how the book was considered important in the scientific domain.<sup>4</sup>

*A Tour through Sicily and Malta* by the Scottish traveller Patrick Brydone<sup>5</sup> is a milestone in the history of travel literature, because while it follows the path already marked by previous travellers in its epistolary form and day-by-day reports, it also introduces some new elements, such as the setting in the as-yet unexplored island of Sicily — geographically very close to Europe but very little known in the mid-eighteenth century —, the myth of Etna and the sublime note, which appears here for the first time in the work of a typical Enlightenment, rationalistic *voyageur* — *philosophe*.

For centuries Italy was — and indeed still is — the destination of a large number of travellers and the subject of a well-defined tradition of travel literature, mostly produced by English, French and German writers. Its landscapes, people and manners were thus filtered through other European cultures and gave rise to a huge number of stereotypes and commonplaces: among these, the picturesque descriptions of nature (derived from the Romantic taste for the spontaneous and wild), the fascination for archaeological remains (of Neoclassical origin), the Machiavellian type (which dates back to the sixteenth century and which was often identified with the common Italian man), the hospitality of the Italian people (especially the

---

<sup>4</sup> This collection, aimed at scientists, was first printed in Milan by Giuseppe Marelli, and then it was reprinted in the same year, in Turin by Giammichele Briolo. Cf. “Osservazioni su l’elettricità del sig. Brydone. Membro della Soc. R. di Londra. Tratte dalla Lettera XI del suo *Viaggio in Sicilia, e a Malta*”, in *Scelta di opuscoli interessanti tradotti da varie lingue*, vol. X, Milano, Nella Stamperia di Giuseppe Marelli. *Con licenza de’ Superiori*, 1775, pp. 71-86; and id., in *Scelta di opuscoli interessanti tradotti da varie lingue*, vol. X, *Edizione Torinese coll’aggiunta d’un nuovo opuscolo ad ogni volume*. Torino, presso Giammichele Briolo nella contrada de’ guardinfanti. *Con permissione*, 1775, pp. 45-54. This latest edition was reprinted with the addition of an essay in each volume, as we read in the frontispiece.

<sup>5</sup> Patrick Brydone (1736-1818) accomplished this tour in 1770 as a tutor of William Fullarton and with a certain Glover. He was especially interested in geology, vulcanology and electricity. His travel account produced 38 letters addressed to his friend William Beckford of Somerly.

<sup>6</sup> In the *Encyclopédie* edited by Diderot, for example, at the voice “Panormus”, the capital of Sicily was described as an ancient town that no longer existed.

Southerners), the contrast between past glory (during the Roman Empire and the Renaissance) and present decay or crisis (which led the traveller to legitimise his higher position as judge and critic), the superstitious tendencies of the Catholic faith (often ridiculed by Protestants and *philosophes*).

These clichés were sometimes contradicted by travellers, who were originally induced to visit the country by one of their predecessors' travel-books, but then discovered a quite different reality from the one they had perceived through their readings. When these travellers became writers in turn, they tried to describe their own impressions in their productions. Sometimes even contemporary writers perceived very different realities visiting the same places: for example, Brydone considered the inhabitants of the villages on the slopes of Mount Etna savage and suspicious (Brydone 1773), while in the same years the German Baron Von Riedesel had a positive impression of them and said they were very kind and friendly (Riedesel 1771).<sup>7</sup>

The perception of reality evidently changed according to cultural and ideological background, and writers had to satisfy their readers' demands if they wanted to be successful. The English Protestants, for example, could not but criticise the ostentatious Catholic rituals and the excessive cult for the saints which contained some traces of ancient paganism and inspired a faith in miracles bordering on superstition. On the contrary, the Catholic French were denied the right to express any criticism of the Clergy by their education but also by the strong power of the Church in their motherland, which would have censored their works.

During a trip to the island of Malta in the course of his tour of Sicily, for example, Brydone strongly blames the Clergy for its hypocrisy in preaching humility while at the same time organising magnificent ceremonies, and for forgetting the simplicity of the first Christians. In fact, he states:

We went this day to see the celebration of their church service. It seems to be more overcharged with parade and ceremony than what I have ever observed even in any other catholic country. The number of genuflections before the altar, the kissing of the prior's

---

<sup>7</sup> Brydone himself, in the Preface to his travel book, declared that an English translation of Riedesel's book on the same subject had just appeared, while his *Tour* was being printed.

hand, the holding up of his robes by the subaltern priests, the ceremony of throwing incense upon all the knights of the great cross, and neglecting the poorer knights, with many other articles, appeared to us highly ridiculous; and most essentially different indeed from that purity and simplicity of worship that constitutes the very essence of true christianity [*sic*]; and of which the great pattern they pretend to copy, set so very noble an example. (Brydone, 1773, vol. I, pp. 319-320)

As regards the exaggerated veneration for relics of the saints on the part of the faithful, Brydone thinks this would lead any reasonable person to atheism, when he recognized the superstitious beliefs on which this cult is founded. Among others, he asserts:

Now I think it is more than probable that these bones, that are now so much revered, and about which this great city [Palermo] is at present in such a bustle, belong to some poor wretch that perhaps was murdered, or died for want in the mountains. The holy man probably could have given a very good account of them. It is really astonishing, what animals superstition makes of mankind. (Brydone, 1773, vol. II, p. 131)

In the same years, on the contrary, the Catholic De Borch praises these manifestations of religiousness and thus comments on one of the processions he saw:

La procession de St. François de Paula a cela au dessus des autres, que les femmes dépouillées de leurs mantes orment tous les balcons, et présentent le coup d'oeil le plus ravissant. Un Mahométan l'eut comparé à celui de l'assemblée des houris, un payen au séjour des âmes heureuses; moi, comme chrétien, je le comparerai à celui du Paradis... (Borch, 1782, pp. 123-124)

Another French traveller, Delaporte, describes in enthusiastic terms the procession of St. Rosalia, which is, in his view, an expression of the people's devotion, and thus concludes:

[...] cette fête, une des plus brillantes et des plus remarquables qu'il y ait en Europe. Il est aisé d'imaginer quelle impression elle doit faire sur un peuple animé, sensible, et passionné pour les spectacles. (Delaporte, 1787, p. 191)

The same contrasting views between English and French travellers are related to political opinions, because obviously the English were far more free to express their views than French travellers and also, for

historical reasons, held a standpoint quite opposite to the French with regard to the Bourbons' policy.<sup>8</sup> We cannot forget that all Southern Italy was ruled by the Bourbons, who were related to the Spanish and French rulers. Therefore it was inconceivable for a Frenchman to criticise them, as this would automatically have implied a criticism of his own form of government. On the contrary, the English were more liberal and radical in expressing their opinions. Therefore Brydone could easily maintain:

The superstitious tyranny of Spain has not only blasted the national spirit of its own inhabitants, but likewise that of every other people, who have come within reach of its contagious and pestilential breath. (Brydone, 1773, vol. I, p. 86)

However, many alterations were made in these travel texts (ranging from the classic journal to the epistolary form, from the fictionalised account to the scientific report), when translations intervened. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in fact, French was still the literary language, the language internationally spoken by intellectuals and the vast majority of the reading public in Europe. Many of these travel books, therefore, though mostly produced by English writers, were known in their French versions, with all the changes associated with this. In order to reach a wider reading public, French translators interpolated their own views and common opinions and concealed any references which could offend the French political or religious hierarchies. The original concepts and standpoints of the authors were thus altered, often without any acknowledgement of the translator's intrusion.

An emblematic case is that of Dêmeunier's translation of Brydone's *Tour — Voyage en Sicile et à Malthe* (1775)—<sup>9</sup> whose

---

<sup>8</sup> An outstanding example of the alliance between France and the Spanish dynasty ruling over Southern Italy and of the contrasting interests of French and English governments is given by the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), which saw Prussia and Great Britain fighting against and defeating Austria, France, Russia and later Spain, which had taken part only from 1762 on, to support the French Bourbons. This war, which had broken out over the Prussian invasion of Saxony, allowed England to affirm its supremacy over France in the North-American and Indian colonies.

<sup>9</sup> Dêmeunier's *Voyage en Sicile et à Malthe, traduit de l'Anglois de M. Brydone* is the first French translation of Brydone's *Tour through Sicily and*

Preface claims absolute fidelity to the original and even accuses those translators who think they have the right to mutilate the text. But, in practice, he himself alters not only the style (originally rich in humour and nuances), but also the textual content, eliminating whole pages describing the libertine adventures of a Capuchin friar, the superstitious devotion to the saints (sometimes venerated more than God Himself), the oppressive Spanish government which imposed heavy taxes upon Sicilian agricultural produce. With reference to the passages quoted above, Dèmeunier deems Brydone's assertions as too severe and, in order not to provoke the Clergy, he prefers to omit the most outrageous English sentences, such as those enumerating the single parts of the ceremony in a mocking tone, and simply indicates the distinction between the Maltese customs and those prevalent in all the other Catholic countries:

Nous sommes allés voir aujourd'hui la célébration du Service Divin. Il m'a paru plus chargé d'ostentation et de cérémonies que celui d'aucun autre pays Catholique. (Dèmeunier, 1775, vol. I, p. 384)

As regards the second quotation relative to the cult for saints, the French translator eliminates whole pages which could undermine devotion, such as those in which Brydone told the story of a certain St. Viar, whose relics were believed to work miracles but were later discovered to be simply the bones of a *praefectus viarum*. Instead, he adds a footnote in which he explains the actual standpoint of the Catholic Church on the matter:

Jamais les Catholiques n'ont prétendu adorer les Saints. Il est surprenant que l'Auteur qui est d'ailleurs si judicieux, feigne d'ignorer quels sont sur le culte des Saints les vrais principes de l'Eglise Romaine. (Dèmeunier, 1775, vol. II, p. 167)

When Brydone defines the Spanish monarchy as a "superstitious tyranny", Dèmeunier feels obliged to omit the "dangerous" words and soften Brydone's strong accusation with a personal comment in brackets:

---

*Malta* ever made. Its author, Jean-Nicolas Dèmeunier (1751-1814), was not a professional translator. He just earned his living with translations from English soon after his move to Paris in 1771. Probably, due to the success of his translation of Brydone's work, he was appointed secretary of Monsieur, the Earl of Provence (the would-be Louis XVIII) and later royal censor. After the French Revolution, he actively took part in the contemporary political life.

La forme du gouvernement d'Espagne (Il n'y a guère de gouvernement étranger qui, aux yeux d'un Anglois, n'ait quelque vice essentiel) a non-seulement étouffé l'esprit national de ses habitans, mais encore celui de quiconque s'est trouvé à la portée de son influence. (Déméunier, 1775, vol. I, pp. 103-104)

There is also another case in which the travel writer's and the translator's viewpoints are at odds, i.e. when Brydone wishes Sicilian nobles to rebel and get rid of the heavy duties imposed by the Neapolitan government. The traveller's expectations are confirmed by the translator, who, however, only hints at the revolt and sides with the king of Naples, thus showing he considers the repressive attitude of the government as rightful and wise:

There is a probability that they will soon be obliged to relinquish their privileges. – The complaint is very universal, and if the ministry persevere in these rigorous measures, there must either be a revolt, or they must soon be reduced to a state of poverty as well as servitude. I believe indeed most of them would readily embrace any plausible scheme, to shake off their *yoke*; as in general *they appear to be people of great sensibility, with high notions of honour and liberty* [my italics]. (Brydone, 1773, vol. II, p. 224)

Il est probable qu'ils seront bientôt forcés à renoncer à leurs privilèges, *ou qu'ils se révolteront*\*

\*Ce que M. Brydone avoit prédit est arrivé; mais la *sagesse* du Gouvernement a su réprimer cette fermentation passagère qui n'a pas eu de suite [my italics]. (Déméunier, 1775, vol. II, p. 269)

As a consequence, the situation and cultural interpretation of a country run the risk of being falsely represented, when the European reading public comes into contact with second-hand re-interpretations in which the author's views are altered by the translator's ideas, in their turn influenced by the general opinion in vogue in his own country, by the prescriptions of national censorship or by personal ideology.

In order to show their broad education and to heighten the quality and target market for their books, travellers often enriched them with passages from the classics (usually authors whose works were set in the places they were visiting). These quotations often constitute an example of translation within the original travel accounts (i.e. in the source texts themselves), because travel writers almost always used a well-known version in their mother-tongue, only rarely including the

Latin original or translating personally from Latin (even if they had a good knowledge of the language). For instance, in *A Tour through Sicily and Malta*, Brydone inserts some lines from Pope's version of the *Odyssey* (1725-1726)<sup>10</sup> and some verses by Pindar taken from Mr. West's English rendering,<sup>11</sup> describing the legendary presence of some giants inside the volcano Etna.

In the further translations of these source texts, quotations from classical poems are customarily supplanted by an equivalent in the target language; alternatively, when the translator lacks an official, prestigious version, he prefers to omit the passage, instead of translating it himself. Cases of synchronic non-translation from a previous diachronic translation (as such is the rendering of a classical work into a modern language) are rare. Usually the adoption of an appropriate alternative is preferred. An example of this is provided by Dèmeunier's translation of Brydone's *Tour*, which substitutes Pope's verses with Mme Dacier's prose<sup>12</sup> and Brydone's quotation from Mr. West with M. de Chabanon's prose version<sup>13</sup>. In compliance with

---

<sup>10</sup> Brydone quotes 12 lines on the myth of Scylla and Cariddi from the 12<sup>th</sup> book of Pope's *Odyssey* (Brydone, 1773, lett. III, vol. I, p. 51). Pope had also translated the *Iliad* (1715-1720). Fifty years later, William Cowper made another translation of Homer's works, based on completely different principles. In the preface of his *Iliad* (1791), he asserted that it was not possible to use couplets for a good translation from the classics, because no translator could ever render the rhyme and the exact meaning at the same time. Therefore, Cowper proposed to adopt blank verse.

<sup>11</sup> Gilbert West (1703-1756), a friend of Pitt (Earl of Chatham), George Lyttelton and Pope, was both a prolific author and a translator. He published *A Canto of the Fairy Queen* (1739), where he imitates Spenser, *Institution of the Order of the Garter, a Dramatical Poem* (1742), *Observations on the Resurrection* (1747) and a verse translation of *Odes of Pindar, with several other pieces translated* (1749), which enjoyed a great success and was reissued many times (1751, 1753, 1810, 1824).

<sup>12</sup> Anne Dacier (1645-1720), daughter of the philologist Tanneguy Lefèvre and wife of André Dacier, secretary to the Académie Française, was famous for her translations from Latin and Greek, published for the collection *ad usum Delphini*, and took part in the "Querelles des anciens et des modernes", where she maintained the need for absolute fidelity to Homer.

<sup>13</sup> Michel Paul Guy de Chabanon (1730-1792) was a writer and a playwright, but his tragedies, *Eponine* (1762) and *Eudoxie* (1769) were far less successful

eighteenth-century French tradition —according to which translators had to adapt to contemporary standards of decency and taste (*bon goût*)—these prose renderings had to create the illusion that they had been written directly in the target language, so as to conceal any marks of time and of the source language or culture (Mounin 1994). For this reason, in her versions of the *Iliad* (1699) and the *Odyssey* (1708), Mme Dacier omitted any vulgar or “low” terms which did not suit a “high” genre like the epic. But these changes were not interpreted as unfaithfulness to or betrayals of the source text, because the taste of the time required “Belles infidèles”, i.e. free renderings of the source texts whose content was adapted to the expectations of specific readers. The differences, both in style and in content, between the two English and French quotations from Pope’s and Mme Dacier’s *Odyssey* can be seen below:

Dire Scylla there a scene of horror forms,  
 And here Charybdis fills the deep with storms:  
 When the tide rushes from her rumbling caves,  
 The rough rock roars; tumultuous boil the waves;  
 They toss, they foam, a wild confusion raise,  
 Like waters bubbling o’er the fiery blaze;  
 Eternal mists obscure th’ aerial plain,  
 And high above the rock she spouts the main.  
 When in her gulphs the rushing sea subsides,  
 She drains the ocean with her refluent tides.  
 The rock re-bellows with a thundering found;  
 Deep, wondrous deep, below appears the ground.  
 (From Pope’s *Odyssey* in Brydone 1773, vol. I, p. 51)

De ces deux écueils dont je vous parle, l’un porte sa cime jusqu’aux cieux; il est environné de nuage [sic] obscurs qui ne l’abandonnent en aucun tem[p]s: jamais la sérénité ne dévoile son sommet ni en été ni en automne; et il n’y a point de mortel qui y pût monter ni en descendre, quand il auroit 20 mains et 20 pieds; car c’est une roche unie et lisse, comme si elle étoit taillée et polie. Au milieu, il y a une caverne obscure dont l’ouverture est tournée vers le couchant et vers l’Erebe; et cette caverne est si haute, que le plus habile archer, passant près de là sur un vaisseau, ne pourroit pousser sa flèche jusqu’à son sommet. Passez le plus vite qu’il vous sera possible; car c’est la demeure de la pernicieuse Scylla qui pousse des hurlemens horribles: sa voix est semblable au rugissement d’un jeune lion; c’est un monstre affreux dont les hommes et les dieux ne peuvent souffrir

---

than his treaty *De la musique* (1785) and his prose translations of Pindar (1771) and Theocritus (1775).



la vue. Elle a douze griffes qui font horreur, six cols d'une longueur énorme, et sur chacun une tête épouvantable avec une gueule béante, garnie de trois rangs de dents, qu'habite la mort. Elle a la moitié du corps étendu dans sa caverne; elle avance dehors ses six têtes monstrueuses; et en allongeant ses cols, elle sonde toutes les cachettes de sa caverne, et pêche habilement les dauphins, les chiens marins, les baleines même, et les autres monstres qu'Amphitrite nourrit dans son sein. Jamais pilote n'a pu se flatter d'avoir passé impunément près de cette roche; car ce monstre ne manque jamais de chacune de ses six gueules, toujours ouvertes; d'enlever un homme de son vaisseau.

(From Dacier's *Odyssée* in Démeunier 1775, vol. I, pp. 61-63)

The soil untill'd a ready harvest yields,  
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields;  
Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour,  
And Jove descends in each prolific shower.

(From Pope's *Odyssey* in Brydone 1773, vol. II, p. 20)

Les Cyclopes, gens superbes, qui ne reconnoissent point de loix, et qui se confiant à la Providence des Dieux, ne plantent ni ne sement, mais se nourrissent des fruits que la terre produit sans être cultivée. Le froment, l'orge et le vin croissent chez eux en abondance: les pluies de Jupiter grossissent ces fruits qui mûrissent dans leur saison.

(From Dacier's *Odyssée* in Démeunier 1775, vol. II, p. 57)

The two versions from Pindar are not quite identical, also because the prose rendering includes two references to the region of Celia<sup>14</sup> and to the mythological giant Typhon<sup>15</sup>:

Now under smoking Cuma's sulph'rous coast  
And vast Sicilia, lies his tortur'd breast.  
By snowy Aetna, nurse of endless frost,  
The mighty prop of heaven for ever prest,  
Forth from whose flaming caverns issuing rise  
Tremendous fountains of pure liquid fire,  
Which veil in ruddy mists the noon-day skies  
While wrapt in smoke the edging flames aspire,  
Or gleaming thro' the night with hideous roar,

---

<sup>14</sup> The Celia is a region in Asia Minor to the south of Cappadocia.

<sup>15</sup> According to one legend, Typhon was a hundred-headed giant, who contended with Jove for the earth's Lordship. After defeating almost all the gods, who had thus been obliged to flee to Egypt disguised as animals, he was finally buried alive under mount Aetna by Jove.

Far o'er the red'ning main huge rocky fragments pour.  
(From West's *Pindar* in Brydone 1773, vol. I, p. 250)

La Cilicie l'a nourri dans un antre fameux: aujourd'hui le rivage de Cumes (bornes des mers) et la Sicile oppressent sa poitrine hérissée; l'Etna l'écrase, le blanc Etna, colonne du ciel, éternel nourricier des neiges et des frimats, dont l'abyme vomit des sources sacrées d'un feu inaccessible.

Ces fleuves brûlans ne semblent, dans l'éclat du jour, que des torrens de fumée, rougis par la flamme; dans l'obscurité, c'est la flamme elle-même roulant des rochers qu'elle fait tomber avec fracas sur la profonde étendue des mers. Typhée, ce reptile énorme, vomit ces sources embrasées.

(From De Chabanon's *Pindar* in Démeunier 1775, vol. I, pp. 302-303)

Some other quotations, from Pope's *Essay on Man* (Epistle I, IX, vv. 269-274, 279-280) and from Milton, are instead eliminated in the French translation:

[...] in the sublime language of our poet,  
"Tho' chang'd thro' all, is yet in all the same,  
"Great in the earth, as in th' aethereal frame:  
"Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
"Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;  
"Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent;  
"Spreads undivided, operates unspent.  
"To him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
"He fills, he bounds, connects and equals all."

(From Pope's *Essay on Man* in Brydone 1773, vol. I, pp. 150-151)

– Nor that fair field  
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,  
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis  
Was gather'd.  
(From Milton in Brydone 1773, vol. II, p. 189)

With this quotation from Milton, Brydone shows he supports Cicero's and Diodorus' idea that Persephone was abducted near Enna, and not on the slopes of Mount Etna as other classical authors maintained. Milton's verses—which seem to compare the beautiful countryside around Enna to an earthly paradise—were not translated into French by Démeunier, probably because the translator lacked a well-known French source from which he could draw, and he did not dare to translate poetry personally.

The two Italian translations of Brydone's *Tour*, instead—published respectively in 1901 and in 1968 with the title *Viaggio in Sicilia e a Malta*—show two different methodologies. The first translator, Giorgio Pignatorre (1901), always renders these passages in the Italian language, without revealing whether he is dealing with an already published version of those works or translating them himself. However, from the style and poetic diction, it is fairly evident that he is drawing from some well-known versions, even though he does not acknowledge their authorship:

[*Scilla da un lato,*  
Dall'altra era l'orribile Cariddi  
Che del mar inghiottia l'onde spumose  
Sembra che rigettavale, siccome  
Caldaja in molto rilucente foco  
Mormorava bollendo; e i larghi sprazzi,  
Che andavano sino al cielo in vetta d'ambo,  
Gli scogli ricadevano. Ma quando  
I salsi flutti ringhiottivan, tutta  
[*Commoveasi di dentro, ed alla rupe  
terribilmente rimbombava intorno*]<sup>16</sup>  
(From Pindemonte's *Odissea* in Pignatorre, 1901, p. 29)

Except for one mistake in the transcription of “sembra” in place of “sempre”, these verses are drawn from Pindemonte's famous version of the *Odyssey*<sup>17</sup>. Nonetheless, the Italian lines do not completely match the English ones, because the first and the last two lines (here written in square brackets in italics) are missing. Due to Pindemonte's wide fame, readers may wonder why Pignatorre did not confer the right authorship of these lines to the Italian poet. Moreover, as the translator knew Pindemonte's edition, it is even odder that he did not draw from it when he had to translate the second quotation from the *Odyssey* in letter XX:

---

<sup>16</sup> These lines are actually taken from *Odissea di Omero tradotta da Ippolito Pindemonte, veronese*, Livorno, Dai Torchj di Glauco Masi, 1822, pp. 311-312, Book XII, ll. pp. 299-306.

<sup>17</sup> Ippolito Pindemonte (1753-1828) was both an author and a translator, especially of poetry. He wrote some neo-classical and pre-romantic poems, such as *La Fata Morgana* (1782) and *Poesie campestri* (1788) and some tragedies, and devoted his last years to the translation of the *Odyssey*, published in 1822.

Crescon le messi sui campi incolti,  
Il grano e l'orzo vi sfoggian dorati,  
Il vino li sgorga dagli acini folti  
E Giove irrorà e orti e prati.

(From Pope's *Odyssey* in Brydone by Pignatorre, 1901, p. 196)

This quotation is not drawn from Pindemonte's version, whose corresponding lines (later transcribed in Frosini's 1968 edition) are instead:

Non seminato, non piantato, o arato,  
L'orzo, il frumento, e la gioconda vite,  
che si carica di grosse uve, a cui Giove  
con pioggia tempestiva edùca, e cresce.<sup>18</sup>

(From Pindemonte's *Odisea* in Frosini, 1968, p. 174)

Pignatorre is therefore likely to have translated these lines personally. Whereas Pindemonte's lines from the *Odyssey* were directly translated from Homer's original Greek, it is in fact clear that Pignatorre's version is modelled on the English lines.

The fragment from Pindar's first Pythian Ode, which Brydone reported in the English version as given by Mr. West, is as usual anonymously rendered by Pignatorre. Despite scrupulous research, in this case it has been impossible to find out which source text the Italian translator used. Yet, because of the stylistic perfection and poetical mastery of these lines, it is very unlikely that Pignatorre translated these lines himself:

“Dal sulfureo lido dell'arcaica Cuma  
Sulla Sicula terra che divampa e fuma,  
O in nivea Etna, nutrice di gelo  
Sostegno perenne del volto del cielo.  
Da Spelonche in fiamme, sgorgan torrenti  
Di liquido fuoco di sassi roventi  
D'un velo oscuro s'infosca il giorno  
E le fiamme dal fumo guizzan intorno,  
O lucenti la notte, con fragore maligno  
Ruinando si scagliano nel mare sanguigno.”

---

<sup>18</sup> *Odisea di Omero tradotta da Ippolito Pindemonte*, cit., p. 218, Book IX, ll. pp. 139-142.

(From *Pindar* in Pignatorre, 1901, p. 127)

The verses from Pope's *Essay on Man* show instead an interesting case of overlapping of the identities of the author and the translator, because Brydone's words "in the sublime language of *our* poet" (my italics) are literally translated into Italian by Pignatorre, whose version "nel linguaggio sublime del *nostro* poeta" proves efficacious, as he was actually citing some lines from some Italian poet though he does not trace which:

Nel linguaggio sublime del nostro poeta:  
Ovunque mutato, pur resta lo stesso  
E' grande in terra, e nell'etere nesso,  
Nell'aura frescura, nel sole calore  
Alle stelle dà luce, agli alberi fiori  
Sempiterno in vita, sconfinato in spazio  
Ovunque diffuso, lavorante in sazio  
Per lui non v'è vil o grande che vaglia  
Colma, balza, connette, e tutto uguaglia.  
(From Pope's *Essay on Man* in Pignatorre, 1901, p. 78)

Unlike all the previous quotations, Milton's verses are the only ones kept by Pignatorre in English, probably because Milton had been one of the first English poets to be known in Italy in the eighteenth century.

The two most recent translators, Flavia Marengo and Maria Eugenia Zuppelli, whose book is edited by Vittorio Frosini (1968), provide an abridged version and synthesize several letters. In this edition, most classical quotations are omitted and, where they are left, they are always kept in English, with Italian translations by Marengo and Zuppelli provided in the notes at the end of the volume. Only once is a rendering in Italian introduced in the text, where a short passage from Pope's *Odyssey* is replaced by the corresponding version by the renowned Pindemonte. Here follows the Italian quotation which corresponds to the second passage mentioned above:

Né ramo o seme por, né soglion gleba  
col vomero spezzar; ma il tutto viene  
non seminato, non piantato o arato;  
l'orzo, il frumento e la gioconda vite,  
che si carca di grosse uve, a cui Giove  
con pioggia tempestiva edùca e cresce.  
(From Pindemonte's *Odissea* in Frosini, 1968, p. 174)

On the other hand, when Ettore Sanfelice translated another travel-book, William Agnew Paton's *Picturesque Sicily* (1898), into Italian in 1902, he was easily able to adapt the text to his contemporaries, because the English author mainly quoted from modern travel books, such as Goethe's *Italianische Reise* (1816-29), Henry Knight's *The Normans in Sicily* (1838), Maupassant's *La vie errante* (1890) and John Addington Symonds' *Italian Sketches* (1884). These passages, always rendered in English in Paton's edition, could be translated into Italian without the deferential awe inspired by the classics, and the translator was not obliged to look for an extant translation, which in most cases did not exist. A singular case of return to the ancient original version is to be found where a couple of verses from Virgil, which Paton quoted in English, were introduced in Latin by Sanfelice, as the translator was sure they could be understood by his readers without any difficulty<sup>19</sup>.

Another example is when the traveller reports some expressions in the original language of the country visited, in order to give a touch of local colour. Here, the translator can either leave them in the local language, so as to reproduce the same exotic effect as they had for the traveller's audience, or translate them into his own language, if he considers this necessary for his readers to understand the meaning. Some examples of synchronic non-translations are the innumerable "Eccellenza" or "Signori", which fill both the English and French texts. An interesting case is further provided by puns and metaphors, which are strongly culture-bound, so that, for example, a witty English expression is difficult to render with the same wealth of meaning in another language. Consequently, the translator can opt between two choices: either translate them literally, aware that half of their meaning is lost, or omit them. We quote here, as an instance, a conversation between a clergyman and his table companion, described by Brydone in his travel book. As its humour is based on the homophony of "Pontio" (Pilate) and the mispronunciation of the drink "punch", in the French translation the pun is lost because of the different spelling of "pontio" (the English "punch") and the clarification of the identity of the Roman *Pontius Pilate*:

- "Ah, Signor Capitano, sapeva sempre che Pontio era un grande traditore".

---

<sup>19</sup> These verses from Virgil's *Aeneid* are to be found in Sanfelice's translation, letter XIII, p. 160.

- “Aspettatevi Signor Canonico... Niente al pregiudizio di Signor Pontio, vi prego. Recordate, che Pontio v’ha fatto un canonico; Pontio ha fatto sua eccellenza uno Vescovo. Non scordatevi mai di vostri amici”. (Brydone, 1773, vol. II, p. 6)

- “Ah! Seigneur Capitaine, je savois bien que Pontio étoit un grand traître”.

- “Un moment, Seigneur Chanoine, ne dites rien contre Ponce Pilate; souvenez-vous que sans lui, vous ne seriez pas chanoine et son Excellence ne seroit pas évêque: n’oubliez pas ainsi vos amis”. (Démeunier, 1775, vol. II, p. 46)

In the Italian editions, this humour is again partially lost because of the different ways of writing the previously mentioned drink “ponch” and “Ponzio Pilato”; yet, in the oral conversation, it might still be conveyed by the similar pronunciation of the two words. Throughout this dialogue, obviously kept in Italian (the language in which it was spoken), the translators only intervene to correct some misspellings. However, the two later translators show much more care in orthography and punctuation than Pignatorre, as we can see below:

- “A Signor Capitano, sapeva sempre che Ponzio era un gran traditore”.

- “Aspettate, Signor Canonico, non correte così presto, mio buon canonico, niente al pregiudizio del Signor Ponzio, ve ne prego. Ricordatevi che Ponzio vi ha fatto canonico, e Ponzio ha fatto di Sua Eccellenza un Vescovo. Non scordatevi mai dei vostri amici”. (Pignatorre, 1901, p. 189)

- “Ah! Signor capitano, sapevo che Ponzio era un grande traditore!”.

- “Aspettate, signor canonico; niente al pregiudizio del signor Ponzio, vi prego. Ricordatevi che Ponzio vi ha fatto canonico, e Ponzio ha fatto di sua eccellenza un vescovo. Non scordatevi mai dei vostri amici”. (Frosini, 1968, p. 168)

Evidently, all the original sentences in Italian transcribed in foreign travel accounts, are also kept in the same language in their Italian translations, but, in this case, the estranging effect those expressions had on foreign readership is lost in the more homogeneous Italian versions.

In order to enliven his prose narration, Brydone even chose not to translate the foreign expressions uttered by the French people he met on his tour, because he believed his English public could understand

their meaning and underlying humour well. To provide the same exotic effect as the one created for the source audience, these sentences are not translated into Italian either. Pignatorre, like Brydone, was sure his readers would appreciate the estranging effect of the French intrusion and would easily understand it. Thus, the dialogue between Brydone and a French inn-keeper in Palermo (Mme Montaigne) is scrupulously kept by the Italian translator, who would have ruined the witty French remarks if he had translated them into Italian. The humour is, in fact, here all based on the pun “souris” (meaning in French both “smile” and “mouse”) and on the euphemistic “de l’en bon point” to mean the actual “grasse” (the French word for “fat”):

Madame is painted with an immense bouquet in her breast, and an orange in her right-hand, emblematic of her sweetness and purity; and has the prettiest little smirk on her face you can imagine. She told me that she insisted on the painter drawing her *avec le souris sur le visage*, but as he had not *esprit* enough to make her smile naturally, she was obliged to force one, “qui n’*étoit pas tout à fait si jolie que le naturel, mais qui vaudroit toujours mieux que de paroître sombre*”. I agreed with her perfectly; and assured her it became her very much, “*parce que les dames grasses sont toujours de bonne humour*”. – I found, however, that she would willingly have excused me the latter part of the compliment, which more than lost all that I had gained by the former. “*Il est vrai*” (said she, a good deal piqued) “*j’ai un peu de l’en bon point, mais pas tant grasse pourtant*”. I pretended to excuse myself, from not understanding all the  *finesse* of the language; and assured her, that *de l’en bon point* was the very phrase I meant to make use of. [...] She made me a curtsy, and repeated, “*Oui, Monsieur, pour parler comme il faut, il faut dire de l’en bon point. On ne dit pas grasse*”.

(Brydone, 1773, pp. 68-70)

Madama è dipinta con un enorme mazzo di fiori al seno ed un’arancia nella mano destra, emblemici della sua dolcezza e purezza; e sfoggia una delle più perfette smorfiette che vi potete immaginare. Mi disse che aveva insistito perché il pittore la dipingesse “*avec le souris sur le visage*” ma non avendo questa abbastanza spirito per farla sorridere naturalmente, fu obbligata di sforzarne uno “*qui n’*étoit pas tout à fait si jolie que le naturel, mais qui vaudroit toujours mieux que de paroître sombre*”.*

Restammo pienamente d’accordo su questo punto, assicurandola poi che le stava bene assai “*parce que les dames grasses sont toujours de bonne humour*”. Mi accorsi subito, che mi avrebbe volentieri dispensato di quest’ultima parte del complimento, il quale mi fece perdere tutto il terreno che mi era acquistato colla prima. “*Il est vrai (mi disse non poco piccata) j’ai un peu de l’en bon*



point, mais pas tant grasse pourtant”. Pretesi allora scusarmene, non comprendo tutte le finezze della lingua ; e l’assicurai che il *de l’en bon point* era appunto il termine che aveva inteso scrivermi. [...] Mi strisciò una riverenza, ripetendo: “Oui Monsieur, pour parler comme il faut, il faut dire *de l’en bon point*. On ne dit pas *grasse*”. (Pignatorre, 1901, pp. 202-203)

In tune with this aim to recreate the same foreignizing effect, Pignatorre also keeps the English metaphor “half seas over” (Pignatorre 1901, p. 189) to indicate a drunk man, as he wanted to keep the cultural specificity of the English original text and he knew the expression had not an appropriate rendition in the Italian language patrimony. In this respect, it is interesting to remark how already at the beginning of the twentieth century some examples of synchronic non-translations from English into Italian can be found. The effect of these is to re-create the atmosphere of the original text and remind readers that they are faced with a foreign work. An example is given by the use of the word “comfort”, which entails that the term was already entering the Italian common language.

This comparative analysis of one amongst many English travel-books about Italy and of its French and Italian translations, therefore, shows the voluntary strategies adopted by the different translators, who rewrote the foreign text according to their own domestic cultural values. As should be evident by now, their tasks have never been “transparent”, and each translator added his own filter and contributed to create a partially new work. This is in accordance with what Venuti maintained about the impossibility of the translator’s invisibility, because, in the scholar’s view, “a translated text should be the site where a different culture emerges, where a reader gets a glimpse of a cultural other, and resistancy, a translation strategy based on an aesthetic of discontinuity, can best preserve that difference, that otherness, by reminding the reader of the gains and losses in the translation process and the unbridgeable gaps between cultures” (Venuti, 1995, p. 306).

**University of Catania**

## **References**

BALLARD, Michel (1992). *De Cicéron à Benjamin : Traducteurs, traductions, réflexions*. Lille, Presses Universitaires de Lille.

BORCH, Michal Jan (1782). *Lettres sur la Sicile et sur l'Ile de Malthe, de Monsieur le Comte de Borch, de plusieurs Académies à M. le C. de N. Écrites pour servir de supplément au Voyage de Monsieur Brydone...* Turin, Frères Reycends, 2 vols.

BRYDONE, Patrick (1773). *A Tour through Sicily and Malta, in a Series of Letters to William Beckford, Esq. of Somerly in Suffolk.* London, W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 2 vols.

CAMPBELL, Mary B. (1988). *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writin. 400-1600.* Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press.

COCKER, Mark (1992). *Loneliness and Time: British Travel Writing in the Twentieth Century.* London, Secker & Warburg.

DELAPORTE, Abbé (1787). *Le Voyageur françois, ou La connaissance de l'ancien et du nouveau monde.* Tome XXVIII. Paris, Moutard.

DÉMEUNIER, Jean-Nicolas, trans. (1775). *Voyage en Sicile et à Malthe, traduit de l'Anglois de M. Brydone.* Amsterdam – Paris, Pissot-Panckoucke, 2 vols.

EVEN-ZOHAR, Itamar (1978). *Papers in Historical Poetics.* Tel Aviv, The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics.

EVEN-ZOHAR, Itamar (1990). «Polysystem Studies». *Poetics Today*, vol. 11, n°1 (special issue).

FROSINI, Vittorio, ed. (1968). *Viaggio in Sicilia e a Malta (1770).* Milano, Longanesi.

GRAF, Arturo (1911). *L'Anglomania e l'influsso inglese in Italia nel secolo XVIII.* Torino, Ermanno Loescher.

GRIEP, Wolfgang (1991). *Sehen und Beschreiben, europäische Reisen im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert.* Heidelberg, Westholsteinische Verlagsanstalt Boyens.

JAUSS, Hans Robert (1982). *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception.* Brighton, The Harvester Press.

KALB, Gertrud (1981). *Bildungsreise und literarischer Reisebericht. Studien zur englischen Reiseliteratur. 1700-1850*. Nürnberg, Carl.

KOWALEWSKI, Michael (1992). *Temperamental Journeys: Essays on the Modern Literature of Travel*. Athens and London, University of Georgia Press.

LAMBERT, José (1989). « L'époque romantique en France : les genres, la traduction et l'évolution littéraire ». *Revue de littérature comparée*. n° 2, pp. 165-169.

LAMBERT, José (1995). « Le discours implicite sur la traduction dans l'*Encyclopédie* ». *TTR*, vol. 8, n°1, pp. 101-119.

LECLERC, André (1988). « Le problème de la traduction au siècle des Lumières : obstacles pratiques et limites théoriques ». *TTR*, vol.1, n°1, pp. 41-62.

MOUNIN, Georges (1994). *Les Belles Infidèles*. Lille, Presses Universitaires de Lille.

PAPA, Enzo (1991). « La letteratura odepórica e i problemi del tradurre ». E. Kanceff, ed., *Viaggiatori stranieri in Sicilia*. Geneve, Slatkine, pp. 581-586.

PATON, William Agnew (1898). *Picturesque Sicily*. New York and London, Harper and Brothers.

PEMBLE, John (1987). *The Mediterranean Passion: Victorians and Edwardians in the South*. Oxford, Clarendon Press.

PIGNATORRE, Giorgio, trans. (1901). *Viaggio in Sicilia e Malta*. Messina, Fratelli Oliva.

POLEZZI, Loredana (2001). *Translating Travel — Contemporary Italian Travel Writing in English Translation*. Aldershot, Ashgate.

PORTER, Dennis (1991). *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

PRATT, Mary Louise (1992). *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London and New York, Routledge.

RIEDESEL, Johann Hermann von (1771). *Reise durch Sizilien und Grossgriechenland*. Zürich, Orell, Gessner, Füssli Comp.

SANFELICE, Ettore, trans. (1902). *Sicilia Pittoresca*. Milano – Palermo – Napoli, Remo Sandron.

SMECCA, Paola Daniela (forthcoming). *Viaggiatori britannici e francesi (1500-1915) – Bibliografia*. La Spezia, Agorà Edizioni.

STEWART, Susan (1991). *Crimes of Writing: Problems in the Containment of Representation*. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press.

THUBRON, Colin (1986). « Travel Writing Today: Its Rise and Its Dilemma ». A. N. Wilson, ed., *Essays by Divers Hands, Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*. n.s. 44, pp. 167-181.

VENUTI, Lawrence (1995). *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London and New York, Routledge.

**ABSTRACT: Cultural Migrations in France and Italy: Travel Literature from Translation to Genre** — This is a study on the role played by translations in the establishment of travel writing as a literary genre in Italy and partly in France. In fact, through translations, this heterogeneous production eventually defined its own characteristics and norms. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries most works were known to the Italian public through their French versions, often full of interpolations altering the original standpoints of the authors. As a consequence, the content of the texts and the cultural perceptions of travel writers ran the risk of being deeply modified and detached from the reality of the country visited.

**RÉSUMÉ : Les migrations culturelles en France et en Italie : la littérature de voyage devenue genre par le biais de la traduction** — Cet article approfondit le rôle joué par les traductions dans la reconnaissance de l'écriture de voyage comme un véritable genre littéraire en Italie et, en partie, en France. En effet, c'est grâce aux traductions que cette production variée a défini ses propres caractéristiques et normes. Aux XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles, la plupart des

œuvres étaient connues en Italie à travers leurs traductions françaises qui avaient souvent subi des modifications transformant le point de vue des auteurs. Il en résulte un écart tant des contenus que des perceptions des écrivains de voyage entraînant une modification de l'interprétation par les lecteurs sur le pays visité.

**Keywords :** Translation, travel literature, Italy, France, England.

**Mots-clés :** Traduction, littérature de voyage, Italie, France, Angleterre.

**Paola Daniela Smecca: Università di Catania, Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere, Dipartimento di Filologia Moderna, Piazza Dante, 32, 95124 Catania (Italy)**

**E-mail: [pasmecca@tin.it](mailto:pasmecca@tin.it)**