'The Italian Color': Race, Crime Iconography and Dubbing Conventions in the Italian-language Versions of Scarface *(1932)*

by Carla Mereu Keating[1]

Scarface was produced in the Metropolitan Sound Studios by Howard Hughes' Caddo Company between June and October 1931. Production followed the US release of other popular gangster films, such as *Little Caesar* (first released in January 1931) and *The Public Enemy* (released in May 1931). This notorious trio, alongside other titles that are perhaps less known today, such as *A Doorway to Hell* (October 1930), *The Last Parade* (February 1931) and *Bad Company* (October 1931), went under the lens of local and national organisations and raised heated censorship disputes in many North American States because of the films' portrayal of criminality, racketeering, gang wars, armed violence, explicit sexuality, and so on. Hughes's production, under the direction of Howard Hawks, suffered various hiccups because the team had to cut and rework many sequences, scenes and lines of dialogue, insert a propaganda foreword and even shoot an alternative ending to the story to comply with the recommendations of Hays

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Production Code officials and the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA), including the film's distribution company United Artists. *Scarface*'s theatrical exhibition was in fact delayed for several months. The film was preventively shown in Los Angeles and New York to selected audiences of police officials, politicians and other leaders among the citizenry, such as members of women's associations and the clergy. It was also given a successful press preview on 2 March 1932 at the Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. Notwithstanding a certain disagreement with the Hays Office, the film premiered in New Orleans on 31 March 1932 and was then released in those US states which did not have state censorship boards. While the film gradually travelled nationwide, Hughes also obtained, in May 1932, the powerful New York State censors to approve the film. However, even if the film was successfully exhibited in 1932, it did not obtain the Production Code Administration (PCA) seal of approval for its re-issue in 1935 because it fell into the category of gangster pictures which the Association agreed to discontinue as it was not in conformity with the Code.[2]

Scarface was not the only film featuring villain characters of Italian and Irish origins, nor was the only film that the US distributors did not venture to submit to the fascist film censorship office in Rome during the early 1930s. Just to refer to the few titles mentioned above, *Piccolo Cesare*, the Italian edition of *Little Caesar*, was not granted the *nulla osta*—the authorisation for theatrical distribution—in Italy until 29 July 1963; the Italian edition of *The Public Enemy, Nemico pubblico*, also obtained the censors' authorisation in 1963, the day after *Piccolo Cesare*.[3] However, amongst the crime pictures that circulated in Italy at a later stage, *Scarface lo sfregiato* is perhaps the most paradigmatic example (and also one of the best documented) to showcase the level of agency and influence of the State and of other pressure groups in matters of foreign-language film content.

1. OPPOSING *SCARFACE*

It might perhaps be obvious to the present reader that *Scarface*, had it been sent for consideration to the Italian fascist censors, would have not been approved because the story, based on the novel *Scarface* by Armitage Trail (1930) and clearly inspired by the life events of the Brooklyn-born gangster of Italian descent Al Capone (1899-1947), made explicit reference to criminal organisations of adult men of Italian origins living in the US. One can see now and then how this was already quite a hot potato to handle for the MPPDA and for the various North American State censorship boards (especially those which included large urban areas such as New York City, Chicago,

[2] Hughes's long battle against powerful censorship groups and boards is largely documented in the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA)/PCA Collection at the Margaret Herrick Library (MHL), Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).

[3] MiBAC, *Italia Taglia*, *Little Caesar*, Ref. No. 40865. MiBAC, *Italia Taglia*, *Nemico pubblico*, Ref. No. 40876. The *Italia Taglia* database does not hold a censorship record for any of the other three titles mentioned before.

Atlantic City, Boston, Philadelphia etc.); this especially if we consider that the real Capone had just been found guilty of tax evasion and sentenced to eleven years in federal prison.[4]

The Italian-Americans' reaction that I will first try to highlight here should be seen in the light of this controversial climate surrounding crime motion pictures and this one in particular. A series of archival documents will help us first clarify briefly the reactions of the Italian-American communities opposing the screening of *Scarface* in the US, and, secondly, provide a logical background for the negative ideological stance against Italian-American crime films in Italy during and after the fascist regime.[5]

According to the wealthy correspondence exchanged between the Italian Royal Embassy in Washington, the Italian Consulate General in Boston, the Italian Consulate General in New York, and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, some local organisations of Italians and of people of Italian descent (such as *The Sons of Italy*) had raised a large debate in the national and local press, indignant at the tendency of many film producers to label cinematic bootleggers and gangsters as Italian. Italian(-American) journalists and other commentators also urged their communities to boycott cinemas who projected this and similar pictures. They also urged the US government and the film boards of censors to act against what was considered a denigratory cinematic campaign against the Italian race.[6]

Just to give a few indicative examples, on 26 April 1932, the Consul-General in Boston addressed the Royal Italian Ambassador in the US reporting the Italian communities' protests in reaction to the film's screening at the Majestic Theatre, Providence, Rhode Island, between 15 and 22 April 1932. The Consul attached a very eloquent testimony of the Italian-Americans' position, an article written by Alexander Bevilaqua and entitled "These Underworld Films", which appeared on 22 April 1932 in *The Italian Echo* (a local newspaper also published in Italian as *L'eco del Rhode Island*). A passage from this article clipping (no page indicated) reads as follow:

> Many of us are continually protesting against the Hollywoodian [*sic.*] depiction of the Underworld in which most of the gangsters are made to appear as Italians who speak broken English, but there has been no show of regret on the part of those responsible, much less any curtailment of the production of such films.
> […] Merely because one or two with Italian or Irish names have been shrewd enough to outmaneuver the rest of the pack doesn't prove that all of the

[4] <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/history/famous-cases/al-capone> (30 April 2015).

[5] Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE), Archivio storico-diplomatico (Asd), Serie Affari Politici, USA, 1931-45, b.12 (1932) f. 11.

[6] Some titles documenting the Italian-American press responses are: anonymous, 22 April 1932, "Il film reca offesa alla razza italiana", *The Italian Echo*, Rhode Island [no page indicated]; anonymous, 2 May 1932, "Gli Italiani del Rhode Island contro un film offensivo", *Il Progresso Italo-americano*, New York; Eugenio Spina, May 1932, "Un vecchio ed odioso sistema", *L'Azione*, New Jersey City, p. 20; S.M. LoPresti, May 1932, "Scarface", *Cleveland News*, Ohio [no page indicated]; anonymous, 4 June 1932, "I combattenti ottengono sollecita soddisfazione per un calunnioso film", *Gazzetta del Massachussetts*, Boston [no page indicated]; anonymous, 19 August 1932, "Italians protest gangland films: city council tells board to take action", *The Morning Oregonian*, Oregon [no page indicated].

> gangsters are of the same breed. There seems to be an abnormal enthusiasm on the part of film directors to wield a heavy brush when daubing on 'Italian' color in their underworld pictures. The Italian family depicted in *Scarface* was as absurd a representation as ever seen, the costumes worn, particularly, being of the vintage of the 18th century. Moreover the alleged Italian characters spoke a jargon as far removed from Italian-American dialect as would be the Eskimo dialect. Add to this the fact that Scarface spoke broken English although he was supposed to represent 'Al' Capone, who was born in Brooklyn – still part of the U. S. according to last reports – and one has a slight idea of how far removed from true realism was this film advertised as a 'masterpiece'. […]
> The crime problem is not a racial problem, it is a phenomenon of American life, resulting from peculiarly American conditions, and it should be treated as such.

On 6 June 1932, the Italian Consul-General in Boston wrote again to the Ambassador in Washington suggesting that if pictures of this kind were ever to come to Italy (and he gave the example of *Little Caesar* and *The Last Parade*) they should be banned altogether. Also, he suggested, in order for "the economic weapon" to be effective and not easily neutralized, the picture should be forbidden even:

> if in the edition for Italy the names were replaced with foreign names […] I am sure that the huge financial damage experienced by the producers, whom should be appropriately informed of the reasons why the film has been banned, would be the most effective and safe corrective action for the future.[7]

In fact, during the 1930s, the Italian fascist government through its various offices at home and abroad acted firmly and in a variety of ways (boycotts, preventive censorship, visual and verbal cuts, manipulative dubbing, and the like) against those cinematic works depicting not only derogatory, racial or political portrayals of Italy and Italians, but also any comical or buffoonish stereotypes often associated with Italianness (Mereu Keating 2015). But this will not come as a surprise. Archival research in both Film History and AVT scholarship has often revealed how film versions have frequently been cut and dialogue exchanges ideologically manipulated to suit political agendas, commercial interests and dominant sexual and religious moralities. As far as the practice of dubbing foreign-language films in Italy is concerned, it often served too many masters, suffering direct or indirect censorship intervention and manipulation whenever a cinematic work defied existing taboos, be it under liberal, fascist or democratic regimes (Mereu 2012, 2013).

The situation stayed unchanged until May 1939, when another exchange of correspondence concerning the rights to import the film in Italy took place between Publio Alliata,[8] writing from London to the Ente Nazionale Industrie Cinematografiche

[7] MAE, Asd, Serie Affari Politici, USA, 1931-45, b.12 (1932) f. 11.

[8] Publio Alliata's identity and his role in relation to the potential distribution of *Scarface* are still not clear. Internet archival sources indicate that he died in July 1940 on board of the Arandora Star, a British steam passenger ship sunk by the Germans during WWII <http://bargarchivio.altervista.org/

(ENIC)[9] and the London branch of Guaranteed Pictures Co., a US film distributor based in New York City.[10] The ENIC representative in Rome, expressing some doubts about the film's "serious censorship risks", requested an examination copy of the film, two copies of the script and four illustrative publicity leaflets to run a preliminary control in Rome.

After an exchange of correspondence which lasted circa two months, where both parties ultimately tried to get the best deal, the American right owners finally accepted to provide the Italians' with the requested examination material, only as far as ENIC was willing to pay all the costs of borrowing and returning the film. Guaranteed Pictures also suggested that because *Scarface* was originally banned for its portrayal of Italian criminality, they believed that "we could use gangsters of Mexican origins or any other nationality to replace the Italian names."[11] The case, unfortunately, is not documented further and unless all these materials have gone lost, one can only assume that the deal was not achieved at the end.

2. MANIPULATING *SCARFACE*

Seven years later, in October 1946, profiting from the more relaxed political and economic relations between the US and Italy, the Italian film production and distribution company Titanus imported *Scarface* to submit it to the Italian film office for approval. As results from a note dated 7 October 1946, Titanus consulted the film commissions about a preventive authorisation to translate the film, but the film commission denied it (seemingly after viewing a copy of the original-language film) for its portrayal of "ruthless brutality" which can be seen as glorifying crime. Surprisingly at this stage, not a single reference to the Italian origins of the gangsters was made, nor will any be made in the subsequent official correspondence to the distributors sent a few days after, which confirmed the same negative decision.[12]

The provisional rejection was mainly justified by the newly established democratic government in order to *protect* the already distressed post-war Italian audiences from a detailed depiction of crime and violence. The main problems for the post-war Italian censors appear to be the illegal activities and the several acts of violence and brutality represented in the film rather than the Italian origins of the protagonists: bootlegging, physical aggression, armed robbery, killings, and

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category/archivio-storico>; and <http://uboat.net/allies/merchants/crews/person/68751.html> (13 July 2015).

[9] ENIC was an Italian production and distribution national company born under the Istituto LUCE umbrella in 1935 (and active until 1959), which in May 1939 had the monopoly on foreign film distribution in Italy (as provided by the royal decree No. 1389 in September 1938).

[10] Central State Archive (ACS), Ente Nazionale Acquisti Importazione Pellicole Estere (ENAIPE), b.7, f.112, sf. 19.

[11] ACS, ENAIPE, b.7, f.112, sf. 19.

[12] MiBAC, *Italia Taglia*, *Scarface*, Ref. No. 1326.

executions. As the report read, "in the light of Italy's particular present contingencies […] we do not consider appropriate to authorize the screening of the film."[13]

Titanus, however, insisted, and in a letter dated 22 November 1946 presented the film's success abroad and described it as "one of the most solid and constructive motion pictures ever produced overseas". The letter underlined the moral contents of the film, e.g. the story could be crude but has a positive outcome, in that the villain is eventually killed by the police. Titanus played its cards well by blaming the difficult economic situation of the Italian market, which made it necessary to import foreign box-office hits to help Italian film producers from recovering the costs of domestic productions. Commercial considerations were surely taken into account by the state film office, which finally supported capitalist initiatives such as Titanus's which aimed to play a part in the re-building of a domestic film industry (production, distribution and exhibition) still distressed by the legacy of war.

On 31 December 1946, the Italian film commission authorised the preventive dubbing of the film. Titanus then submitted a translated script (dated September 1947), possibly together with the first dubbed copy of the film. On 22 September 1947, the film was authorised with more cuts to apply to scenes of gunfights and other crimes.[14]

To my knowledge, the 35mm print of this first Italian dubbed version of *Scarface* is not available for study and research in any major Italian film archive. It is very likely that this print is irremediably lost, and even in the optimistic eventuality that prints of this version still physically exist, they might be overly damaged to be restored. For this reason, my discussion of this first Italian-language version of the film can only be based on the written translated script dated September 1947. I am fully aware that further changes to the final dialogue track might have been implemented at a later stage, for example for reasons of lip synchrony and for final post-synchronisation sound editing. This is true unless the surviving script is the final transcript of the film's Italian dialogue, and I would like to propend for this second option because the script I am working on does not contain any subsequent handwritten alteration (see in this regard Zanotti 2014: 107-132). In any case, the paralinguistic non-lexical elements of the human voice (pitch, tone, intonation of the Italian actors' speech), which are of fundamental importance in dubbing, are completely lost and cannot be accounted for in my analysis of this first Italian-language version.

The one aspect that first becomes evident when reading the 1947 script is that several cuts and manipulative changes to the dialogue were performed in order to alter the semantics of the English-language version. The most striking example is the rewriting of the Italian names to make them sound American or foreign (Tony Camonte **>** *Tony Kermont*; Johnny Lovo **>** *Johnny Love*; Guino Rinaldo **>** *Guido Reynold*; Berdini **>** *Berdink*) or their replacement with more general phrases (Guarino > *sergente* [sergeant]; Spinelli's barber shop > *dal barbiere* [at the barber's]).

[13] MiBAC, *Italia Taglia*, *Scarface*, Ref. No. 1326.
[14] MiBAC, *Italia Taglia*, *Scarface*, Ref. No. 3148.

If it is not difficult to understand the reasons why the Italian film board asked Titanus to edit out all the violence and law defiance portrayed more or less directly in Hawks's direction, not so straightforward are the reasons why Titanus considered the Italianness of *Scarface* to be too delicate a subject. Moreover, a closer look at this translation reveals that the disappearance of Italian proper names and surnames in the script is only the most preposterous example of what is, in fact, a meticulously arranged operation which skillfully neutralised, either by deletion or by a more general rephrasing, any cultural, locative, criminal and racial reference to Italians.

A first small example is largely indicative of the level of attention dedicated to the subject by the film adapters. The unmannered Tony (Paul Muni) storms in and out a restaurant where his boss Johnny Lovo (Osgood Perkins) is dining, and orders to the waiter, partly in English and partly in Italian, what looks like a big pasta dish. His comical lines were rewritten as follows (1947: 26):

Original version	**1947 Italian script**	**Back translation**
Tony: Hi, boss! Mmhh, lots of garlic! *Che odore*! Get me some too!	*Salve, capo! Hm! ... Che profumo! Fegato d'oca! Portalo anche a me. Sono affamato.*	Hi boss! Hm! … It smells nice! *Duck liver paté*! Get me some too. I'm starving.

Table 1

A more sophisticated example is found at page 43 of the script. In this scene, Garston, a press publisher interpreted by Purnell Pratt, defends himself from a pro-censorship committee consisting of a representative of the Italian-American community, a mother and a representative of private citizens (plus other non-identified characters), because the press allegedly placed too much emphasis on gangsters. Garston advocates freedom of press while handing responsibility for organised crime to the government.

Original version	**1947 Italian script**	**Back translation**
Garston: These gangsters don't belong in this Country. Half of them are not even citizens.	*Capi e gragari [sic] al confino perpetuo. È gente mille volte recidiva. Gente da estirpare senza pietà.*	Bosses and henchmen should be confined. These are repeat offenders. People to eradicate mercilessly.
Italian-American representative: They bring nothing but disgrace to my people.	*Ed ha seminato la sventura ovunque.*	And they spread misfortune everywhere.
Garston: Surely gang rule and law defiance are more of a menace to the nation than the regulation of oil or a bullfight.	*Allora si ricorra all'esercito se la polizia non risulta efficiente. In una parola si compiano riforme e si trovino i mezzi adeguati.*	Then we should resort to the Army if the police is not efficient. In one word, make some reforms and find the right means.
Garston: We're fighting organized murder!	*È questione di vita o di morte.*	It's a matter of life or death.

Table 2

This example shows that references to gangsters as undocumented immigrants ('they don't belong in this Country'; 'half of them are not even citizens') and to their relation to the Italian-American community ('my people') were rewritten by means of generalisation which neutralises the origins of the criminals into 'these are repeat offenders. People to eradicate mercilessly'. Other adjustments were made to the Italian version in order to tone down the negative expressions referring to crime organised structure. Thus, expressions like 'we're fighting organized murder, gang rule, law defiance' were reformulated with more generic exclamations such as 'it's a matter of life or death' or replaced by stressing the role of the army and of the state in the fight against crime, 'Then we should resort to the Army if the police is not efficient. In one word, make some reforms and find the right means' (1947: 43).

I will try to provide an explanation of why these manipulative changes were performed on the 1947 edition of the film. First of all, one must consider that the official papers exchanged between the Italian office and Titanus do not record any formal explicit request on the part of the censors asking Titanus to manipulate the Italian names, the film board being apparently more concerned about the Italian public's reactions to the scenes of underworld crime and violence. However, I have shown that a hint to this manipulative practice was made twice before, once by the Italian Consul-General in 1932, who criticised it, and a few years later, in 1939, by the US distributor, who proposed the 'Mexican or foreign' angle. In fact, this practice of modifying politically-uncomfortable contents through translation to meet the requests or perceived needs of other language markets was indeed routine practice in Hollywood: whenever a film offended foreign nations and customs, scenes were cut and dialogues changed accordingly in order to avoid losing foreign box-office revenues or cause any international tension (Vasey 1997).

Here we are also observing the same preventive political manipulation at play, performed by an anonymous film adapter under Titanus's recommendation, who presumably did not have any interest in worsening their case before the Italian film office, at the time working under the direct control of the *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri* [Prime Minister's office]. If Titanus successfully avoided any further problem with the politicised censors, it was also thanks to the opportunistic collaboration of the film's translator, dialogue adapter and dubbing director (presumably the same people who worked under fascism until only a few years earlier).

But we should not dismiss the manipulative rewriting that affects this first Italian edition of *Scarface* as exclusively determined by the overly-sensitive political ideologies of the Italian film office. Although this is above all a case of socio-political censorship, a more scrupulous look at the Italian dialogue reveals that sex and moral issues were also preys to preventive rewriting. However, this time the manipulation seems to respond to another familiar logic, that of a sexist, male-dominated, Italian film industry.

Let us take the case of Tony's mistress Poppy, interpreted by US actress Karen Morley. In the 1932 version, Poppy, similarly to Tony's sister Cesca (Ann Dvorak), is portrayed as a strong-minded woman who smokes, drinks, wears make-up, jewellery and revealing clothes. She is totally unapologetic and acts as confidently as the

powerful mobsters around her. This dissolute lifestyle can only drive her to rich men, and specifically to Tony's boss, Johnny Lovo, with whom we see her first, and then to Tony primarily because of his increasing wealth, ambition and power.

During the second half of the film, Poppy finally visits Tony's sumptuous house. The audience have previously seen the two characters meeting at Lovo's apartment and Tony trying to seduce her, only with little results. In this scene, however, Poppy decides to give in to his attentions: she is astute, and understands that he is now the best companion to have. She stands close to Tony, and caressing his silk dressing gown realises with satisfaction: 'That's pretty hot! Expensive, right?' The passage is taken from the dialogue during which Camonte points at the neon light sign outside his window that reads 'The World is Yours'. The Italian script reads instead: '*Questa è troppo vistosa. Non mi piace*!' [This is too flashy. I don't like it!] (1947: 33)

A sexist moralism is at work to tone down the woman's exclamation, which would make her carnal and spiritual corruption even more explicit. Surely, this non-dogmatic portrayal of a sexually-emancipated, ambitious woman who chooses and uses men for her own material benefit could not just disappear or be completely neutralised with some visual editing on the film's prints before they went into circulation. Where cutting was not possible, further small adjustments to the dialogue were performed during translation and dubbing, as in this case.

3. REDUBBING *SCARFACE*

Almost thirty years later, on 15 January 1976, the film *Scarface, lo sfregiato* was re-submitted to the film office (now found under the Ministry of Tourism and Performing Arts) by the state-owned broadcasting company *Radio Televisione Italiana* (RAI). RAI was also requesting the removal of the 16-years age limit, something which prevented them to programme the film on the national television channels.[15] Alongside the official request form, RAI submitted a newly translated and revoiced version of the film. This new edition, 2,480 metres long, was duly approved on 5 February.[16]

A new script was prepared by Franco Dal Cer, the new dubbing was directed by Giulio Panicali, and the Italian voice dubbers included Pino Locchi (Tony Camonte, Paul Muni), Pino Colizzi (Guino Rinaldo, George Raft), Fiorella Betti (Cesca Camonte, Ann Dvorak), Wanda Tettoni (Inez Palange, Mrs. Camonte), Gianfranco Bellini (Johnny Lovo, Osgood Perkins), Rita Savagnone (Poppy, Karen Morley), Giorgio Piazza (Inspector Guarino, C. Henry Gordon), and Carlo Romano (Big Louis, Harry J. Vejas).

When comparing this dubbed version with the 1947 script, one cannot fail to notice immediately that all the references to the Italian origins of Capone, the other Italian names and surnames, as well as culinary references have been reinstated.

[15] Both the film office and RAI were administered, controlled and operated by the government's majority party.

[16] MiBAC, *Italia Taglia*, *Scarface*, Ref. No. 67871. The exclusive rights for television broadcasting in the Italian territory were acquired by RAI in October 1973 from the French *Compagnie de distribution international des films La Garenne Colombes.*

Additionally, and this is perhaps the most interesting aspect of this version, this new dubbing attempts to render that colourful Italian background which particularly irritated the Italian-American communities, the press and government officials in the 1930s.

The 1970s dubbing accepts the Italianness of Camonte and his gang by characterising Tony's and Tony's mother's linguistic diversity with a Neapolitan identity. Throughout the film, the regional connotation is only limited to these two major characters, as none of the other Italian mobsters (Big Louis, Lovo, Rinaldo) are dubbed with any noticeable dialectal variation. Surprisingly, Tony's illiterate *secretary* Angelo (a comedy relief character interpreted by Vince Barnett) is dubbed with a light Sicilian accent, as is the Italian-American middle-class representative who intervenes at the publisher's meeting discussed later in the analysis.

Let us take first the case of Tony's mother, an Italian immigrant interpreted by the Neapolitan-born actress Inez Palange. In the version shot in 1931, the elderly woman warns her more Americanised daughter Cesca against her brother's ambiguous attentions:

Original version
"Listen to me. *Tony no love you lika* make you believe. *All of the time he smile on top* but what he thinks… he's *gotta lots* of tricks. He *don't* give money to *nobody for nothing*".

Table 3

Her lines of dialogue can be seen as carrying here two conflicting elements of the character's personality: on the one hand, the elderly woman/mother's speech communicates her intelligence and wisdom (and the values of the Old World); on the other, her use of non-standard traits of English (omission of the third person tense, use of double negation and of non-idiomatic expressions) underlines the woman's socio-cultural status in the New World as an unassimilated and uneducated immigrant. This twofold otherness signifies the Italian woman's inability to relate effectively with her American-born daughter and, to a larger extent, the Italians' lack of sophisticated integration into US cultural norms.

These socio-cultural subtleties have been variously conveyed in the first two Italian-language versions. From what one can grasp from the 1940s script, the Italian character's linguistically-connoted otherness seems to be lexically neutralised into a grammatically correct standard Italian (1947: 18):

1947 Italian script	**Back translation**
Mrs Camonte: *Insomma, ascolta! Tony ti vuole bene soltanto in apparenza. Non è sincero. È un gran furbo. Ha il suo scopo, te lo dice tua madre. Non ti darebbe il denaro per niente*.	For once, listen! Tony's affection is only apparent. He isn't sincere. He's very sly. He's aiming at something; let your mother tell you. He wouldn't give you money for no return.

Table 4

While attempting a word-for-word translation, this version does not appear to acknowledge the complexities inherent in the Italian mother's speech. In 1976, instead, we can hear Tony's mother talking in Neapolitan:

1970s dubbing	Back translation
Mrs Camonte: *Sienteme a' buono. Tony non te vo' bene comm' te fa credere*. Sì, *co' te i* sempre gentile, sorridente, *ma in capa a iss'*, certo trama qualche cosa! Quello *nun da soldi a nisciuno* per senza niente.	Listen to me good. Tony doesn't love you like it makes you believe. Yes, with you he's always kind, smiling, but in his head, for sure he is plotting something. He don't give money to nobody for nothing.

Table 5

Although the deployment of the dialect is sporadic, superficial and often philologically inaccurate, the actress's strong accent and the lexical choices succeed in this later version in portraying the Italian woman's linguistic diversity and in conveying her socio-cultural otherness. On another note, it is also interesting to observe that in the RAI edition, both opening and closing credit titles and some other frames which contained newspaper inserts and other written notes of diegetic relevance were completely recreated and translated into Italian. This is another translational convention commonly in use in Italy at least until the late 1980s (these translated frames will not be found in the 1990s edition). Unfortunately, as it is especially evident in the newspaper example, these translated inserts were not always prepared with the necessary aesthetic care:


THE POST

UN'ALTRA SPARATORIA FRA GANGSTER

Meehan crivellato di pallottole scampa miracolosamente alla morte.

Le autorità sul luogo.

NEW RELEASES

Bob Dylan explains it all in 'Blood on the Tracks'

Picture 1 and Picture 2: Opening credit card/newspaper insert, *Scarface lo sfregiato*, c1970s-1990s, RAI/Hermitage Cinema edition. *Scarface*, 1932 @ The Caddo Company, The Hughes Tool Company and Universal Pictures. All Rights Reserved.

Also, at least from what appears from the 1947 script and from the digitised copy of the RAI edition in my possession (sold by Hermitage Cinema and now seemingly discontinued), none of the editions includes or translates the two propagandistic foreword cards which Hughes was explicitly asked to include in the 1932 version and which follow the film's opening credits. In the Universal's Italian DVD edition, the written foreword is left in English without Italian translation.

4. THE 1990S: REVOICING AND REMIXING *SCARFACE*

Presumably around the late 1990s, Universal distributed a restored digital edition of *Scarface* under the *Cinema Classics* series. The exact date of the commercial release of this DVD edition is not available. I presume that the Universal's digital edition was prepared and circulated during the late 1990s when DVDs started being made available in Europe. This DVD edition, which features several foreign-language dialogue tracks, has presented some challenges for the researcher, as no reliable information is currently available with regard to the exact date the Italian-language version was prepared and to the Italian personnel who prepared it.

The translation which has served as a script for this digital edition is the same as that of 1976. In comparison with the 1970s version, what we can find in this 1990s edition are tiny textual variations, both lexical and in intonation, which can be related to the re-acting phase performed by different actors, but the same marked dialectal intonation in the way Tony and Tony's mother communicate their Italian identity. Perhaps one could also say that the 1970s voices sound more vintage, but this might be a consequence of the poorer quality of this version's audio. One can either assume that the Italian track might be a newly revoiced version of the 1970s dialogue or just a remixed edition of the previous version. Advice from scholars and professionals

working in the field led me to believe that this Italian-language version is most probably a combination of the 1970s dubbing and some partial revoicing done at a later stage, remixed together for the digital edition.[17]

But if we were instead to consider this as a completely new revoicing, why then did Universal need to revoice *Scarface lo sfregiato*? It is clear that RAI had to redub the film in the 1970s because the 1940s version was heavily cut and manipulated: deleted scenes in the 1940s film footage meant not only lost images and dialogue exchanges, but also the removal of a whole aural atmosphere made of music, sounds and noises coming from various diegetic sources (all narrative aspects of great importance in *Scarface*) that ought to be reinstated when preparing a new edition. In past research case studies, I have come across some digital reeditions of films which were prepared by reinserting visual cuts and the original soundtrack, and patch up any missing dialogue with short addition of similarly-sounding dubbing voices (Mereu Keating 2014: 127-154). This revoicing and remixing operation appears to be mainly implemented on films which had not suffered severe manipulation. Universal's motives for the 1990s revoicing may have been more strictly commercial, i.e. they may not only have to do with technological conversion, but with the decision to attract contemporary audiences with a newer soundtrack.

To get a better understanding of how the whole redubbing process works, it is particularly helpful to look at recent research on the practice of retranslation of audiovisual products in Italy. Film retranslation practices have been disregarded until recently by Italian cinema scholars, but this does not come as a surprise if one considers that both practices of dubbing and subtitling share the same treatment in film scholarship. However, some scholars of translation and dubbing, such as Zanotti (2015) in Italy, and Chaume (2007: 49-63) in Spain, have paid attention to this widespread complex cultural and commercial phenomenon. Zanotti, in particular, has addressed the audiovisual retranslation practice in Italy by investigating the effects and the relations between first and subsequent dubbings, categorising redubs according to the level of intervention on a film's dialogue-track and analysing the translational norms at work. As she aptly points out, AVT practices add complexities to and challenge the retranslation hypothesis, according to which retranslations of old texts, often canonical ones, are linguistically more accurate than their previous versions. As Zanotti (2015) explains, if the practice of retranslating written texts is generally regarded positively among literary scholars, indeed the AVT field poses more complex variables, either due to the specificity of the audiovisual medium or to the greater variety of audiovisual translation practices (e.g. dubbing, voiceover, subtitling, audio description).

As far as film is specifically concerned, the ageing of the physical support (and corresponding damaged soundtracks) and the impossibility to find prints of previous dubbed versions are to be considered decisive factors that lead film distributors and copyright owners to redub. As far as video and digital supports are concerned, it is

[17] I wish to thank the article's reviewers for supporting the possibility of a partially revoiced dialogue track and the subsequent remixing.

often nearly an impossible task to pinpoint the exact date of circulation, nor the cast who performed the dubbing or the sound studio where the redubbing, voicing or mixing took place. It is also problematic to understand from the copyright owners/distributors, in this case Universal, if they had encountered any specific problem with the previous versions that motivated further dubbings or remixing jobs.

Finally, my contribution cannot deal with the Italian subtitled version, also available in the Universal DVD reedition, for reasons of space constraints. However, I will offer a short textual extract from Garston's speech, the same passage discussed earlier and which was extensively manipulated in the 1940s version. I also include here the 1970s dubbing for comparison:

Garston: These gangsters don't belong in this Country. Half of them are not even citizens. Italian-American representative: They bring nothing but disgrace to my people. Garston: Surely gang rule and law defiance are more of a menace to the nation than the regulation of oil or a bullfight. Garston: We're fighting organized murder!	
1970s dubbing	**Back translation**
Questi gangsters non sono americani. Metà non hanno la cittadinanza. *Essi costituiscono una vera vergogna per la nostra gente.* *Senza dubbio la guerra delle gang e la continua sfida alla legge sono più pericolose per il paese che non la produzione petrolifera o le corride.* *Si tratta di combattere la criminalità organizzata.*	These gangsters are not American. Half don't have the citizenship. They represent a real shame for our people. Without doubt, gangs' war and the continuous law defiance are more dangerous to the country than oil production or bullfights. It is about fighting organized criminality.
Subtitles (1990s)	**Back translation**
I gangster non sono dei nostri. *Molti non sono cittadini.* *Portano soltanto obbrobrio* *alla mia gente.* *Non c'è dubbio che la mafia sia* *una maggiore minaccia per la nazione* *che regolare la produzione di petrolio* *o una corrida.* *Stiamo combattendo* *la criminalità organizzata.*	Gangsters are not with us. Many are not citizens. They bring only abomination to my people. There is no doubt that the mafia is a bigger menace to our nation than regulating the production of oil or a bullfight. We are fighting organized criminality.

Table 7

This last example is meant to highlight how translations of the same source text will always differ according to the historical context in which they were produced, to the people who prepared them and, in the AVT field in particular, to the medium

constraints and the technological tools used to prepare them. This example is also mentioned to underline how behind each Italian-language version, whether it is a surviving script covered in dust, a digitised dubbed television version or a revoiced, remixed and subtitled multitrack digital edition, there is a rich linguistic, cultural, commercial and technological history of AVT waiting to be unearthed.

5. FINAL REMARKS

In this contribution I have looked at several documents which I have researched in various film and state archives and libraries in Italy and in the United States. I have discussed how *Scarface* daringly exposed social, moral and race issues and how these issues were confronted in the US and in Italy with rejection, censorship and manipulative practices which intervened at different levels of the film's production and distribution, the film taking various titles and forms in its long journey to the public. I have also offered some translation examples resulting from a comparative textual analysis of the English and Italian-language versions of *Scarface* (script, redubbing, revoicing, subtitling). The Italian dialogue exchanges show that manipulation was performed preventively at the stage of translation and dubbing and that it was principally driven by nationalistic sensibilities and by commercial interests.

The film showcases the level of political agency that cinema, as a powerful 20th century mass medium, was able to call into play. It also reveals once more how the translation and the dubbing of films entangled with evolving censorship requirements. Historical research shed light on shifting political attitudes, unscrupulous commercial strategies and the gradual acceptance of Italian-American gangster iconography in Italy. I initially documented the local and diplomatic protests against the supposed discriminatory racialisation of Camonte and his mob and the premature attempts to sell the film as a Mexican crime story notwithstanding its "serious censorship risks".[18] I then focused on the heavy visual and verbal manipulation of the 1947 version, performed under the same moralist ideologies which characterised the fascist political agenda and were further exacerbated by the negative legacy of the war. Examples show how the film was mutilated of its more explicit images of violence and death, and its Italianness carefully dismissed by means of foreignisation and generalisation. In the RAI reedition, cuts were reinstated and dialogues given a more accurate linguistic rendition. The 1970s also finally mark the acceptance of *the Italian color*.[19] Its domestic endorsement and popularisation, in both the 1970s and 1990s reedition, were vocalised by the Italian dubbers through the Neapolitanness of Camonte/Capone and his mother. It is ultimately a regionalised dialectal identity which sounds as stereotyped and exposed as the Italianness of Paul Muni and Inez Palange in the 1930s version; but it is also enjoyable, at last, for its

[18] ACS, ENAIPE, b.7, f.112, sf. 19.

[19] The American spelling 'color' recalls the complaints by the Italian-American journalists against the racialisation of the gangsters.

attempt to interpret, for the Italian-speaking public, an unhappy ending story of Italian immigration and assimilation.

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Carla Mereu Keating received her PhD in Italian Studies from the University of Reading, UK. She is visiting research fellow at the Centre for the Study of Cultural Memory of the Institute of Modern Languages Research (IMLR), University of London. Her monograph, *The Politics of Dubbing: Film Censorship and State Intervention in the Translation of Foreign Cinema in Italy*, will appear under Peter Lang's *New Trends in Translation Studies* (Oxford, 2016). She co-organises *Migrating Texts*, a series of interdisciplinary colloquia on subtitling, translation and adaptation hosted by the IMLR <https://migratingtexts.wordpress.com>.

carlamereu@hotmail.com