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„Consuming and Performing Italy: The Form and Function of Stereotypes in the Autobiographical Travel Narratives *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love*"

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1. Introduction

Travelling abroad and experiencing different cultures has been part of the human experience for decades. So has the art of sharing stories about foreign places and cultures. This thesis primarily focuses on two autobiographical travel memoirs: *Under the Tuscan Sun*, written by Frances Mayes, and *Eat Pray Love*, penned by Elizabeth Gilbert. Mayes' memoir was published in 1996 and quickly became a bestseller. Gilbert's autobiographical travel narrative was released in 2006 and became a 'New York Times' bestseller, with even more significant global resonance due to its commercial success (Williams R. 613). A decade separates the release dates of these two travel narratives. From the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, three key developments occurred that made these books representative of the idea of immersing oneself in foreign cultures and the Americanized consumption of European culture.

First, from the late 1990s onwards, a third wave of globalisation occurred, characterised by the increased integration and use of fibre-optic networks for communication (Poppi & Cheng x). As part of this phase of global exchange, transatlantic air travel routes became increasingly commonplace, especially in the Western world. Due to the affordability of travelling, there was a rise in demand for tourist accommodation and attractions and a following increase in supply. Other cultures became easier to consume and travel more accessible.

Second, due to the growing affordability and availability of travel, there was a rise in the production of travel guides and narratives. New media formats emerged, such as travel blogs or social media sites. Modern travellers needed to know what was worth experiencing during their time abroad to achieve the desired outcome of "[…] happiness as their sole responsibility […] [and that] the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment via consumption is akin to exercising empowerment" (Williams R. 616). Consequently, travel destinations, sites, and experiences were commercialised to make them marketable and consumable (Williams R. 616).

From the 1980s onwards, the travel genre began to receive more attention in academic research. Scholars became interested in the genre of travel literature, seeing its potential for interdisciplinarity (Pettinger and Tim 1-2). There was a surge in the production of travel literature and an increase in the academic analysis of these genres. This analysis compared and examined different genres, destinations, and types of travel. This project is built on the assumption that *Under the Tuscan Sun* serves as one of the autobiographical travel narratives that laid the foundation for the story of a traveller seeking the unknown abroad to foster cultural and personal growth. Authored by Frances Mayes, the text chronicles her endeavour to renovate a Tuscan villa with her partner after years of exploring Italy, particularly Tuscany. In 2006, the book was adapted into a film. The story features Frances Mayes, a single and divorced writer

(played by Diane Lane) who happens to travel to Italy, buys a Tuscan villa, restores it, and eventually finds a new partner in Italy. The theme of an American writer opting for an expat life in Italy remains a central focus in the adaptation.

The second primary text of this thesis project, *Eat Pray Love*, can be considered a comprehensive exploration of an American writer's decision to live abroad for an extended period. Gilbert's book is also autobiographical, like Mayes' travelogue, but unlike Mayes, Gilbert emphasizes the concept of the female American solo traveller and writer. Gilbert seeks truth and spirituality through her travels, but she also pursues pure pleasure in Italy through the consumption and appreciation of its culture. She intentionally selects Italy as her travel destination to "learn the art of pleasure" (Gilbert 31), resulting in iconic scenes from the film adaptation with Julia Roberts (2010), where she is seen indulging in pizza, buying larger clothes, and enjoying laughter over glasses of wine, encompassing the Eat-part of her narratives' title *Eat Pray Love*.

The project compares both texts due to their similar stories, modes of narration, their setting in Italy, the adaptations of the stories into successful movies, the setting in the mid-1990s and mid-2000s and their success both as texts and films. However, the analysis will also zoom in on decisive differences between the texts to outline the travel genre's development in the decade under discussion.

The theoretical framework of this Master thesis consists of three parts that form the conceptual basis for the close readings of *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love*. The first theoretical building block uses Stuart Hall's definition of and research on culture and the function of codes and language. This discussion is linked to Michael Pickering's research on stereotypes, which enables deciphering processes of stereotypes and stereotyping. The concept of authenticity will then be considered to understand the experiences of traveller and writer. Lastly, a historical overview of existing stereotypes in literary texts regarding Italy and America will be given that also considers the notion of auto- and hetero-stereotyping to make it possible to view the primary literature and their own auto- and hetero-stereotyping processes. Second, I will focus on the historical tradition of travelling and travel writing concerning the Old World, i.e., Europe, and the tradition of the Grand Tour and travel writing to contextualise my analysis of the contemporary uses of autobiographical travel narratives as a genre. Part of this subchapter focuses on the traditional Grand Tour, as it was fashionable in the 18th and 19th centuries, its social implications and the identity-building effects it had on the Grand Tourists, societal and educational goals, and prospects it carried. This context links historical and contemporary ideas of travelling to Europe with the goal and achievement of the self-healing

journey and its origins in travel. I will then explore the idea of a contemporary Grand Tour, where the main traditions of Grand Touring through Europe, along with experiencing the European lifestyle, art and culture, have shaped the expectations of the journey with a new focus point of experiencing authentic moments in order to achieve the effect of feeling something deeply (Knudsen and Waade 5) and connecting to as well as constructing the self (William in Schwarz & William 2).

In the third theoretical subchapter, I will discuss the issue of genre by focusing on defining the forms and functions of autobiographical travel narratives. The primary pieces of literature lie between travel literature and autobiography. This allows the writers to connect stereotypes of regions and people to the practice of travelling in Europe, an experience tailored toward expanding the travelling self and assessing its own culture while reflecting and reporting on the traveller's travels and experiences. In this subchapter, I will give a brief historical overview of what writers learned in their travel literature written in and about Italy.

After the theory chapter, I will use the established theoretical framework to analyse the form and content of the two texts. Stereotypes, cultural understandings, and the idea of travel presented within the travelogues will be examined. These aspects are divided into three distinct issues: representing environments and landscapes, the role of social relations, and culinary experiences. The authors' relationships with the environment, established by representing their surroundings, such as Italian landscapes, architecture, art, or other artefacts considered Italian or American, will be the focus here. The second issue focuses on social relationships built or deepened in Italy. This also includes thought processes about the exchange of cultural experiences and expectations. The third issue analysed includes the effect of nourishment in the form of food and drink and how social behaviour is connected to culinary items and experiences.

In the conclusion, I will summarise my findings on stereotypes, expectations, and culture and how these feed into narratives that may or may not have the effect of consuming culture with the goal or outcome of self-healing.

Elizabeth Gilbert's *Eat Pray Love,* 2007 paperback edition printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) in Croyden and published by Bloomsbury, will be used in the close reading analysis. For *Under the Tuscan Sun: At Home in Italy*, the 1997 paperback version printed and bound by Broadway Books and published in New York will be used.

2. Culture, Stereotyping and Authenticity – A Foundation

The primary literature travel stories are written by including observations of the foreign and comparing the situation of the reporting traveller with the observed. In Mayes' and Gilberts' books, the narration also invites the reader to join the reflection process of situations and characters, with the simultaneous description of what the traveller sees. It is a foreign culture, language, and exterior that gets described and wondered about in relation to the narrator. However, to understand what the writer is examining and what can be deemed as culture, how something can be stereotyped in a description and what kind of stereotypes can be found, as well as what the basis of travelling nowadays is, as it has been examined by tourist studies, this next chapter will view in regards of the concepts of culture, stereotyping and authenticity.

2.1. Culture and its Defining Elements

The first concept examined is the term culture and its implications. When talking about culture, a variation of practices comes to mind. One way to look at culture is through the way leisure time is spent, which can be culturally influenced by the way it is structured through national holidays and specific practices that signpost cultural influence; culture can be seen through when and what is consumed as a festive or everyday meal; or how a group of people in countries or whole continents of the world behave during the seasons, or on certain days, such as 24th or 25th December of the Gregorian calendar. However, understanding the concept of culture includes considering what constitutes culture and what concepts enable culture to exist and be created. Alternatively, what is implied when everyday practitioners are talking about the term culture and what has to be considered when viewing it as a concept.

When Stuart Hall looks at culture, he considers what the term includes in people's understanding of it when referring to culture, how it is created and can be used to build identity (Du Gay and Hall 2). Hall concludes that culture consists of "the 'high culture' of an age" (2), which he defines to be "the sum of great ideas, as represented in the classic works of literature, painting, music and philosophy […] [and]' mass culture' or 'popular culture' of an age" (Hall 2). This type consists of "widely distributed forms of popular music, publishing art, design and literature, or the activities of leisure-time and entertainment, which make up the everyday lives of the majority of 'ordinary people'" (Hall 2). It includes, and this is also the preferred meaning of culture, when viewed from a social scientist perspective (Hall 2), "the 'way of life' of a people, community, nation or social group" (Hall 2). This "way of life" is one significant observation a traveller can notice, when going abroad and visiting foreign countries, entering new communities or social groups.

However, all these forms of culture include shared practices, moments, or artefacts and, as a result, a group of people that does something with them. As Stuart Hall continues to contextualise culture, as he initially explains, "culture is about 'shared meanings'" (1); it is something that is created, produced, and represented by a group of people (Hall 1). As a result, culture does not just stand on its own; it is a good created and contributing to the sense of our identity (Pickering 80). Here, identity is "a sense of self [built] along different social and personal dimensions such as gender, age, race, occupation, gangs, socio-economic status, ethnicity, class, nation states, or regional territory" (Bamber 242). It includes "[o]ur cultural properties [that] are constitutive to who we are – they contribute to our growing identity and our sense of self" (Pickering 80). As a result, culture and identity are connected and can feed into each other's building process.

Hall adds to his definition of culture by explaining that it comprises the "cycle of culture" (1). The circuit encompasses identity, production, consumption, regulation, and representation (Hall 1). These cornerstones interrelate and have culture reflected in its realisation. These cornerstones, however, must be realised by participants to create and share something meaningful in and for the cultural context and to create culture. The process of meaning-making is part of understanding a range of practices that may be culturally shaped; however, the process of meaning-making needs the function of language to make meaning intelligible and shareable between participants in a discourse (Hall 1). To share meaning, which can also be culturally shaped, language conveys what, for example, one party wants from another or negotiates the significance and meaning inherent in phenomena (Hall 1). Hall concludes that "language is central to meaning and culture" (1), and it is key to understanding processes and creating shared spaces (Hall 1). However, culture does not only mean exchanging ideas through language or meaning-making processes; it also includes "feelings, attachments and emotions as well as concepts and ideas "(Hall 2). As "[c]ulture is something we belong to" (Pickering 79), being able to empathise, reflect, reproduce, and participate is essential to be able to partake in the creation and sharing of culture and make it possible to understand our cultural world. Culture emerges in a group setting; therefore, a group of people is needed to interpret and understand those shared sets of meaning and involve each other via a shared language that allows culture creation through reproduction (Hall 1). Those "cultural meanings" are then organising and regulating "social practices, influence our conduct and consequently have real, practical effects" (Hall 3). In turn, practices are given meaning through how a specific item or thing is used by a person (Hall 3). In turn, those objects endow meaning through "how we use them […] [but also] by how we represent them – the words we use about them, the stories we tell

about them […]" (Hall 3). Objects, what they signify, and the language used about them are part of the meaning-making process and the creation of culture. There are "cultural codes" (Hal 4) that must be spoken by members of a specific culture, and they must use "the same linguistic codes" (Hall 4) in order to be recognised as meaning-making artefacts of the same shared spaces. These codes and the items, as well as their use and interpretation, must be known by a member or participant to get recognised as part of a given culture in a given space, which then culminates into a system of a culture of a given space if they are reproduced and shared (Hall 3). However, those linguistic codes do not necessarily have to be in the same language, in the narrow sense of languages spoken or written realisations such as English or Italian, but rather in "systems of representation'" (Hall 4). Those can be symbolic, through mimics or verbalised messages (Hall 4). What binds linguistic codes together and makes them like language is that they function like a language, as "they all use some element to stand for or represent what we want to say, to express or communicate a thought, concept, idea or feeling" (Hall 4). Meaning is created and circulated through this manufacturing and the distribution of culture and its language and vice versa (Hall 5). This is significant as "meaning is thought to be produced – constructed – rather than simply 'found'" (Hall 5). Following the meaning-making process and its connection to culture, culture is neither simply found. It is shared, represented, and part of an identity. Culture can become an item that represents certain values that can be valued or rejected by the viewer or, in the case of travelling, by the traveller. Culture is, however, also something that can be created and made for consumption, which is an idea found in Lash and Lury. They are viewing culture through the economic lens as they study cultural and consumer relations (Knudsen and Waade 4). Bourdieu argues that culture is a non-economic capital that can be acquired (4). The accumulation creates meaning, e.g. in terms of what cultural product a member of a society owns, receives through transmission or understands as part of a culture (Bourdieu 15-16). Possession or understanding contributes to identity formation, for example, by reinforcing a social image a group has of itself or a perceived image (Bourdieu 17). For example, if a cultural asset, be it a physical piece or a part of knowledge, is possessed by someone, it can show socio-economic status and add to concepts of identity and even ideas of power the possessing party has or the reading party attributes to it. The cultural asset must be used and understood as such by others, and the social image produced must be reproduced, mirrored or acknowledged in turn. Participants within shared spaces can become users of cultural assets and use cultural codes as part of their meaning-making processes. If something can be used to create and signify meaning, it can also be misused or create new meanings as a side product of the meaning-making process. The relationship between this idea of power, the

creation of believed power, and power relations play a role in representations of cultures, as an academic study of colonial powers and stereotyping, as done by Michael Pickering, has shown. Besides using cultural assets as a way of showing to be part of cultural knowledge, meaning and power creation, some ideas others have on different cultures can grow into fixed ideas. Michael Pickering henceforth viewed stereotypes and categories of power relations.
Consequently, stereotyping as an act must be defined as the next step, and the interplay between culture and stereotyping must be viewed. Besides the use of cultural assets as a way of showing to be part of cultural knowledge, meaning and power creation, stereotyping as an act must be defined as the next step, and the interplay between culture and stereotyping must be viewed.

2.2. Stereotyping and its Effects

One particular observation Gilman makes is that "[e]veryone creates stereotypes" (16); therefore, stereotypes seem to be part of human meaning-making processes. However, what exactly stereotyping is and what is involved in creating stereotypes requires a more complex definition than this simple statement.

As a first landmark of the concept of stereotyping, Hall says that "[s]tereotyping reduces people to a few simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature" (257). Stereotypes are a rudimental view based upon a few attributes and character traits made to be innate or thought to be part of an identity. However, Hall also considers the concept of typing when viewing the idea of stereotypes and quotes Richard Dyer's essay on stereotyping. Hall argues that typing, "a type is any simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognised characterisation" (Dyer qt. in Hall 257), is necessary to decode phenomena (Hall 257). Types are used to "understand 'the particular' in terms of its 'type' […] [and]' typing' is essential to the production of meaning" (Hall 257). An example of typing would be to use attributes of an item, such as the round, red fruit that grows on perennials, and then type it as a tomato. However, the exact mental representative type of the tomato, e.g. cherry or beef tomato, might change over time and depend on surroundings, whilst other typifications or specifications can be added. The critical distinction between the stereotype and the type in Hall's viewpoint is that the type has a "few traits [that] are foregrounded and change or "development" is kept to a minimum'" (Dyer qt. in Hall 257). Types concentrate on graspable and memorable characteristics nonetheless, or even though change does not happen on a grand scale, it is a possibility, and preserving a type is not bound to the "maintenance of social and symbolic order" (Hall 258). A distinction that gives the type, stereotype, and the stereotyping process another layer as social and symbolic order are introduced as a distinguishing feature.

Michael Pickering differentiates between stereotyping and categorising, as opposed to Hall's distinction between stereotyping and typing. In his work, the category is similar to Stuart Hall's type. Categories are used to "classify and arrange phenomena into units containing similar attributes or characteristics" (Pickering 28). They are elastic and, therefore, not rigid in their structure, and they do not separate themselves from other categories; however, categories can lose their elasticity and "harden into stereotypes" (Pickering 29). They also allow for connecting and linking to the individual knowledge already existing on categories (Pickering 29). There is room for a round, yellow fruit that grows on perennials and can be categorised as a tomato, even though it lacks the colour red or might not need it to signify ripeness. As Michael Billig is cited in Pickering's approach, he says that "[a] category is always distinguished from what is specific or singular" (qt. in Pickering 29). Hall and Pickering agree in the definition of the stereotype, as Pickering defines the stereotype as "[a] major discursive device in the ideological construction of social groups and categories" (Pickering 1). Both see the occurrence of social connotations in the stereotype and stereotyping as a process. A stereotype has categories; however, the function of stereotypes in, for example, imperialist discourse is that of organising "social class and gender as well as race […] [with a correspondence to] self/group/national esteem […] [where] there exists an act or process of evaluation" (Pickering 30). Understanding this function is crucial when looking at stereotypes and how they were used to frame historical events by groups or in-groups, as they coined specific stereotypes. This notion was used in imperialist discourse, where the in-group not only defined the out-group through stereotyping, they also auto-stereotyped themselves in contrast to the out-group (Pickering 30). The in-group, or the stereotypers, were marking themselves as part of the in-group by underlining attributes they would associate with their cultural background or upbringing and making them "favourably constituted and given positive identity" (Pickering 30). If the stereotype is widely known and is created about another group, it is a hetero-stereotype (Metzler 626). If the idea or stereotype is created around the self, it is an auto-stereotype (Metzler 262). Considering the colonialist discourse, which has been looked upon intensely in the scientific discourse of understanding stereotyping processes (Hall; Pickering; Horatschek), stereotyping has to do with power and power-shifting relations and how a group can show its power over another (Hall 259). The power of representation, the way phenomena are shown, discussed, or contrasted and what kind of "representational practices" (Hall 259) such as stereotyping are used to make a whole culture representable, and it is always done from the perspective of the in-group or the one person exerting power through representing (Hall 259).

To continue with what a stereotype is and how the stereotyping process happens, Pickering defines the concept of the stereotype as having the rhetorical force of being "able to bind contrary features together and banish from view the ambivalent relations which nevertheless underpin them" (Pickering 45). Pickering argues that the use of stereotypes is always done as a rhetorical strategy that aims to naturalise order and to provide control in phenomena that are "culturally ambivalent and thematically contrary within everyday life" (Pickering 45). Stereotypes are, therefore, built through themes of day-to-day culture, with a distinct and "contingent historical basis" that they depend on (Pickering 45). Stereotypes are used to justify specific world views and simplify matters, and they mask themselves as categorisation processes helping in arranging and creating structure. As Pickering argues, it allows stereotypes to stand often unquestioned and with the ability to circulate and reappear (45). If a stereotype exists regarding a specific cultural group, it is usually used to "[create] the illusion of precision in defining and evaluating other people" (Pickering 4). Stereotypes have, as a result, the "problem of resilience" (Pickering 45), which means that they are harder to contradict, harder to terminate, and they have "the tendency to break out again after appearing to have died away" (Pickering 45). It is another characteristic that makes them quite resilient and prone to blossom into existence.

Even though stereotypes transmit and carry ideological meaning, they are not necessary for shaping world views or social lives even if "[r]apid and continual social and cultural change may generate the conditions that lead to stereotyping" (Pickering 45). They do, however, have the characteristic of prohibiting flexible thought and categorisation processes and are "a part of ongoing cultural processes and shifting symbolic relations" (Pickering 45). This is something that Hall agrees with when he says that "stereotyping reduces, essentialises, naturalises and fixes' difference'" (Hall 258). Hall summarises that within stereotyping, there is "a connection between representation, difference and power" (Hall 259). Therefore, representation can be directed toward a cultural group, enhancing differences between groups and underlining relations, as one places ideas above the other, especially in creating power relations. Stereotyping can be part of these processes.

However, Pickering regards "stereotyping as a process of symbolic confinement and risk, tied up with self-identity but always within a historical basis" (46), which does not exclude the function of the self in its idea and also considers the growth or recurrence of stereotyping in historical influence. It is a concept I will consider when viewing stereotyping processes of auto- and hetero-stereotyping within *Eat Pray Love* and *Under the Tuscan Sun*. Pickering, furthermore, goes on to couple the process of self-identity with the concept of the other, where

he says that othering and stereotyping have the same stem process of "evaluatively placing, and attempting to fix in place, other people or cultures from a particular and privileged perspective" (Pickering 47). Pickering argues that understanding stereotypes means understanding the historical footing of current stereotypes and realising how a stereotype is showing social containment (Pickering 49). This means it is impossible to understand a stereotype without understanding its historical lineage (Pickering 50). Stereotyping has a historical layer to the stereotype, as they root in previous assumptions or representations, and as Pickering argues, they do so in the idea of the "primary Other" or "primitivised Otherness" (51).

The stereotyping process can be part of the negotiation between the self and the other. It can drift into a pejorative outcome towards the opposing entity if the stereotype becomes the leading view of a foreign situation, which may be culturally loaded. However, the start of the negotiation between the known and the unknown, the familiar and the strange or foreign, is usually the need to look beyond the known and to add to one's reality. It is a search for something real, a phenomenon in tourism studies, namely the search for the authentic. After viewing travelling and the concept of stereotyping and culture, I will consider a third important concept: authenticity. In the following paragraphs, I concentrate on defining and understanding authenticity and its representation in the scholarly discourse before bridging authenticity to the concept of stereotyping and culture. As a last step, I will summarise significant stereotypes regarding Italy and the Italians.

2.3. The Real in the Foreign – Authenticity and Tourism

The term authenticity "requires both elaboration and specification" (Schwarz and Williams 1) due to its use in various areas of the social sciences. One field that defines authenticity, its occurrence and handling is tourism studies. In tourism studies, the tourist or the action of tourism is discussed, which includes mobility and the act of travel, as well as leisure activities, including business and pleasure trips or movements away from home (Lew et al. 4-5). As travelling and tourism are interrelated through their connection to the traveller, a focus on this relationship will be further addressed in the next chapter. Nonetheless, I will focus on authenticity as conceptualised in tourism studies due to the association of travel and tourism and the social sciences. These are significant topics in both primary texts.

In his article *Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings*, Dean MacCannell defines authenticity as something that is lacking in the industrial age and searched for in order to fill "the shallowness of their lives and inauthenticity of their experience" (590). Their, in this case, stands for the moderns, or the people living in "our society" (MacCannell

589). MacCannell reasons that the search for the authentic, often connected to the experience of authenticity, is predominantly done in and through tourism (589). He feels that "tourism absorbs some of the social functions of religion in the modern world" (MacCannell 589). A thought that is interesting in hindsight is the way *Eat Pray Love* has risen in its effects and works as a catalyst for Gilbert's life with the spirituality she sells through her story, as William Ruth explores in her article *Eat Pray Love: Producing the Female Neoliberal Spirit*. However, MacCannell sees the craving for authenticity as a social obsession, which he also links to the craving for consumption as behaviour in tourism (589). He argues it is a "search for authenticity of experience" manifested within society (MacCannell 589). Everything must be lived or seen to be considered truth, and precisely, the feeling of truthfulness is rendered as an authentic experience (MacCannell 589). This truth is searched within the experience and in consumption. MacCannell refers to "life behind the scene" that is sought to be entered in the search; by doing so, he guides his explanation of staged authenticity through Ervin Goffman's structure of social space in application to the search for something being genuine (590). This feeling of something being true, however, also means that besides someone who is the audience that consumes, there is the need for a performer who creates and who must conceal their creation and mystify the process of production in the background in order to construct a distinct reality that can be consumed (MacCannell 590-591). The mystification process is created in order to make something more attractive for consumption, such as the authentic dinner served in a restaurant, where the visitor is allowed to be part of a foreign group sharing a front region or being able to glance the "back region" of a social space such as the show kitchen in a cultural space like a restaurant, however, not being aware that the back region is a purposefully created one and not the one where the true secrets lie as it has not been created but merely been opened (MacCannell 591). Searching for the authentic experience is, as he sees it, similar to entering the backstage area or the "back region" of social spaces, where the backstage life happens, and can also be termed as entering this "life behind the scene" (MacCannell 592). He then claims that tourists desire to "share in the real life of the places visited, or at least to see that life as it is really lived" (MacCannell 594) to share the feeling of having seen something authentic and truthful. However, he also argues that it is not as easy as it might seem to truly enter a foreign cultural setting as "[w]hat is taken to be real might, in fact, be a show that is based on the structure of reality" (MacCannell 593).

The deceptive aspect of staged authenticity, however, is that it can be precisely staged or set up to look as if something is authentic while simultaneously leaving its reality to the process of being produced authenticity and hidden through the mystification process. It is done to imitate

"the felt value of these [backstage glimpses and] experiences" (Mac Cannell 595). However, an essential aspect of this thesis and the understanding of authenticity as a concept in travelling is what MacCannell describes as the following phenomenon.

> In our society, intimacy and closeness are accorded much importance: they are seen as the core of social solidarity, and they are also thought by some to be morally superior to rationality and distance in social relationships, and more "real." Being "one of them" or at one with "them" means, in part, being permitted to share back regions with "them." (MacCannell 591-592)

Wanting to be connected to a cultural other and understanding the other through sharing their cultural space is something explicitly sought out in order to feel something: the authentic experience. Knudsen and Waade recognise this as one crucial characteristic of authenticity when they define it as "something which people can do and a feeling which is experienced" (1). They argue that the "real", which is in many definitions synonymously used with the authentic, as advertised, shown, or created as a constructed reality, cannot be possessed or touched and instead must be felt (Knudsen and Waade 1). Still, authenticity as a concept includes the search for the real and the desire to be connected to others.

The idea of feeling the authentic and relating the process to the performative is what Knudsen and Waade generate to be performative authenticity. Knudsen and Waade investigated this by conceptualising Wang's view of the authentic. In tourism study, Wang categorises authenticity into object-related and subject-related authenticity (qt. in Knudsen and Waade 1). The object-related authenticity focuses on "museum-linked usage of the […] toured objects to be perceived" (Wang 351). As a result, the experience of authenticity is felt by the viewer recognising the authenticity of the object (Wang 351). However, if a person is to encounter an object such as nature, which Wang attributes as one of the most authentic experiences in tourism, it is termed "existential authenticity" (351). This existential authenticity is part of subject-related authenticity, which involves "feelings, emotional ties, identity construction, narration related to place" (Knudsen and Waade 1). It also involves "the personal quest" (Knudsen and Waade 11). It can be termed existential authenticity if the urge to connect while simultaneously considering the subjective need and perspective of the traveller or the viewer is considered. Knudsen and Waade, however, argue that performative authenticity bridges object-related and subject-related modes of authenticity (1-2). Performative authenticity is based on feeling the authentic and manifests in two forms. The first form is "empathetic understanding of the other through the body" (Knudsen and Waade 14). The body is seen as the thinking medium, whereas empathy is the expression "of longing for greater intimacy, for homeliness,

and for historical and cultural truth and ethics" (Knudsen and Waade 15). Authenticity, especially performative authenticity, is about living in the moment while experiencing specific living conditions or live re-enactments to relate to and understand the cultural other (Knudsen and Waade 15). As a second form, performative authenticity is the feeling of "connecting to the world through the affected body as an instrument "(Knudsen and Waade 15), which is like art theory's "relational aesthetics". Through this theory, art is not only looked at; an interactive contribution of the viewer is induced, which involves and physically engages the viewer, much like feelings "in extreme sport and adventure tourism" (Knudsen and Waade 16).

Whenever these effects are felt, performative authenticity is at play. It shows itself in "time-consuming labour affects […] [such as] sweat and tears, together with arousal, shock, fear […] [e]motions and feelings" (Knudsen and Waade 16) of any kind, that then again signify which change takes place through the affected body (Knudsen and Waade 16). These moments where something, such as performative authenticity, is experienced and therefore, the theory of the effect it has is finalised by the idea that "[t]he moved body has changed and can eventually influence others to change" (Knudsen and Waade 16).

Applying the idea of performative authenticity as the antithesis to stereotyping is one of the criteria this thesis employs. When performative authenticity is used, it is operated as a tool for reshaping stereotypes and the process of stereotyping. Those are moments where emotive or physical work is involved, and the ability is forged to understand another culture through performative authenticity. As a result, a change in perception is gained, and former stereotypes can be reshaped. However, this can only occur if the performer does not use the stereotype to distance themselves from the Other or to create an order with the self as the highest-ranking item or type. The ability to live through the situation or moment without rationalisation and explanation cannot be accomplished and is finalised in justification of auto or hetero-stereotypes. However, if these manual or cognitive labours involve cultural techniques or finding an authentic front with glimpses into backspaces that allow one to find cultural beings, work or accomplishments without employing stereotyping in its description or as an explanation for situations, a new perception is the result. This new perception can then be used to integrate and reproduce culture and join the circuit of culture. Alternatively, there are moments where the traveller (re-)creates authentic moments and integrates them into the travelling identity by creating memorable situations, evoking change in the traveller by creating identity through participation in culture and cultural knowledge with the goal of authentic identities. Authentic identities in this context are "a fluid set of cultural ideals that people in different situations and groups construct through interaction" (Williams P. qt. in Schwarz and Williams 2).

The protagonist's application of authenticity allows them to be closer to the foreign if they want to be part of the newfound social group. The occurrence of performative authenticity also allows the integration of aspects of the Other and softens the borders of the self vs them. Being able to adapt more to something new or strange then gives the option of broadening one's own identity, and then again even allows change in perception and performance of the self.

Looking at identity as summarised by Schwarz and Williams, namely as "identity as discursive constructs embedded in modes of power, as popularised by Michael Foucault (Hall 1996)" (2), a change in identity can scarcely be attained by recreating stereotypes, as it involves rigid structures. Stereotypes are the tough core of thinking patterns, especially if they are a starting point and function as a mask for simplification and explanation. It is, however, possible to lose stereotypes or to dissolve stereotyping if one is aware of the process of stereotyping and can reflect upon the right and wrong of ideological ideas and consequently change them through the awareness of their existence in the own perception of the world (Gadamer qt. in Horatschek 68). Change in the self can be attained, or growth in identity construction can be achieved by combining the knowledge of the stereotyping process and the background of the stereotype, confronting the self with the own constructed ideas, and seeking the authentic moment. If an image is created that involves constructing or recreating a set picture of a culture, a person, a country, or even an interaction or a cultural practice, it always involves inbuilt literary socio-historical aspects (Horatschek 37). This can be used to recreate a stereotype and help the process of strengthening a stereotype. These literary socio-historical aspects can correlate with stereotypical depictions, or "stereotypisierte Überschreibungen" (Horatschek 32). This idea is similar to Pickering's theory that stereotypes tend to have a historical basis from which they grew and rise, as mentioned previously (45). Restoring the historical basis then results in no change. Based on the argument of Edward Said, who argues that the construction of identity involves the establishment of opposing subjects that make it possible to differentiate between the "us" and "them", Horatschek argues that the Western identity-building process involves opposing pairs, "Oppositionspaare" (Horatschek 64). These are structured dichotically, such as light and dark, male and female, or body and soul, showing the Western tendency to build hierarchical models (Horatschek 64). As a result, this also means they are relatively binary, as they can only exist if the other does not, or one is a dominant form. Therefore, it is essential to be aware of literary constructed stereotypes, which involve auto- and hetero-stereotyping on both ends, namely American/New World and Italian/Old World. However, if performative authenticity is at play, the identity-building process might be driven towards integration rather than opposition. Nonetheless, knowledge of stereotypes about the ingroup, outgroup, or the

Italian and American relation is necessary to understand the primary literature's underlying processes. The next section focuses on giving an overview of various stereotypes as they were found in secondary literature concerning Italy and America to give insights into the historicity of possible recreated actions with underlying stereotyping processes.

2.4. American and Italian Stereotypes

Looking at the historical American development of auto- and hetero-stereotyping, as Zacharasiewicz has done in his review of research, it becomes clear that throughout the early records of American literary writings, which concerns the period before the secession of America from the colonial power England, the New World tended to adopt the already prefabricated stereotypes of literary discourses from the mother country England (98). Alternatively, as he formulates it "statements concerning European peoples were necessarily dependent on the heritage of the colonist or citizen of the new Republic […] [and also dependent on where the] forebearers had come from" (Zacharasiewicz 98). Another reason America tended to auto-stereotype more than hetero-stereotype when it came to European citizens and countries was an emerging feeling of solidarity "between the majority of the population" (Zacharasiewicz 99) after the separation process from the mother country. American literary works tended to emphasise "American virtues and ideals of conduct" (Zacharasiewicz 101) to help in creating a "specific and independent national identity" (Zacharasiewicz 101), which was contrasted by the use of villains that had general European vices such as "European corruption, luxury and dissipation" (Zacharasiewicz 99). After the mass immigration of the 19th century to America, a similar notion of auto and hetero–stereotyping might have been realistic, along with an easy adherence to British clichés regarding popular British travel countries or routes, such as the Grand Tour. Especially with the knowledge that travellers tend to have a set of ideas or notions they bring with them when visiting another place, which tend to be "derived from literary sources, ethnographic or historical studies, travelogues, novels and plays, and more recently also from film" (Stanzel 2) and not only from experience (Stanzel 2). As Stanzel argues, entering the stereotype in literary texts helps them achieve longevity, as the historical analysis of national stereotypes shows in its derivational path (Stanzel 2). For example, foreign characters historically started as types and not as individual characters, like familiar or home characters (Stanzel 2). Moreover, "[f]or the novelist foreign characters often serve as a foil to his home characters" (Stanzel 2). Typologies then "underwent a process of nationalisations" (Stanzel 2), where these clichés often served as a stem source for a stereotype (Stanzel 2). As an example, one American writer and Italy enthusiast, Henry James, saw Italy predominantly

as female (“nymph”, “prima donna”, “tousled bonne fille”) (James qt. in Perosa 119). This idea correlates with notions of 19th century writings of female travellers that described “Italy as feminine, liberated and sensual” (Ouditt and Polezzi 100). It also reflects the Austrian depiction of Italy throughout 1840-60, where Italy was often represented as a woman, “feminine, subjugated, disempowered” (Ouditt and Polezzi 100). Italy was primarily sought as a destination as it offered “ease, naturalness and abundance of life” (Ouditt and Polezzi 101) and “a simpler way of seeing” (Ouditt and Polezzi 101) when visited through travelling or by living as an expat. Italy was artistic, treated as Europe’s Garden, cultivating beauty and art, preserving and holding links to the past, and including awareness of history (Perosa 119). Another aspect important to the view of Italy is the portrayal of the naturalness of character, sensuality, and sexuality and how they were expressed in Italy. Italy had the connotation of serving as the traveller’s stage for an adventure, where the romantic traveller is in search of the “stimulus of vivid experience [or] […] the search for life” (Churchill 179). One of Italy’s hetero-stereotypes was that of the hot-blooded lover, “heißblütiger Liebhaber” (Horatschek 113). Horatschek argues that the Italians are seen as innately, securely instinctive as well as emotionally spontaneous (114), “Instinktsicherheit und emotionale Spontanität als naturgegebene Charakteristika” (Horatschek 114), especially in comparison to the English auto-stereotyping.

The next step of the process of stereotyping regarding the primary literature involves looking at the way Italy was historically stereotyped throughout travel literature, focusing on the European and English traditions of Italian travel writing. The basis for stereotyping Italy and images of Italy will be addressed in the following subchapter. However, in the first step, only the raw stereotypes from research literature on travel literature about Italy will be collected. One process of viewing Italy and stereotyping it is done through the contrasting of life or cultural realisations of one party with the other, as noticed by English literary criticism in Horatschek through the England-Italy dichotomy, which Horatschek views as a function of alterity with which the self and otherness is used as a reflective angle (Horatschek 10, 87-99). Kenneth Churchill describes Forster’s Italy as based on the theme of the Northerner contrasted against the Southerner, the Italian, who battles “the confrontation of the civilised, sophisticated [...] and the enduring presence in more elemental ways of life […] of deep and passionate forces which are an essential part of the total experience of life” (176).

A Grand Tourist’s point of view is the romanticised picture of Italy with “green earth and transparent seas and the mighty ruins of ancient times and radiant atmosphere which is interfused through all things” (Ouditt and Polezzi 99). It is an Italy that sparks a reminiscence of a golden age that is still lingering in present-day Italian, and that needs to be visited, viewed,

and felt (Ouditt and Polezzi 100; Horatschek 90) to achieve cultural authority through travel that shows itself as education (Horatschek 89). Churchill argues that only the classical view of Italy was created in British literary works, which was determined during the classical period and in this classical view, a disregard for present-day Italy is noticeable, and a refusal to see anything except the antique Rome happens (Churchill Italy 1 qt. in Horatschek 87).

The second dominant point of view on Italy would be that of "a land inhabited by the "Italians of the present day […] degraded disgusting and odious" (Ouditt and Polezzi 99). It is a picture of a highly corruptive land that American writers such as Cooper use to forewarn the New World by observing the ways of the Old World when writing for American audiences (Churchill 148-149).

Another important aspect of viewing stereotypes is that of auto-stereotyping by Italians. In this context, words such as Italianitá, Italia, italico, italo, italiota, and italionico (Italian-ness) signify Italian identity up to the present day, as shown by a research study of action-theoretic semantics developed by George Meggle and applied by Rainer (97). Rainer viewed these terms with their collocations and contextual use in texts that thematically point toward Italy. The study gave insights into the auto-stereotyping of Italians, primarily through the eyes of Italian journalists, as articles were the largest database searched (Rainer 98). According to the study, Italians auto-stereotyped themselves through the unmistakable and typical beauty of Italian women, "typische, unverwechselbare Schönheit der Italienerinnen" (Rainer 105), the "belezza italica" (Rainer 105). They think of themselves as well-balanced, with human benevolence, a capacity for love, fantasy, creativity, genius, life-affirming humour, and being cautious, or in Rainers words: "Ausgeglichenheit, Menschlichkeit, Liebesfähigkeit, Phantasie, Kreativität, Genie, lebensbejahender Humor, Vorsicht" (Rainer 105). Concerning the negative auto-stereotypes, which were generally more dominant than positive ones (Rainer 106), the private sphere is more respected within the media than Italian life's public or political sphere (Rainer 107). The area with the most discontentment is the political one, attributed to polemics, immobilism, lack of seriousness, campanilism and corruption (Rainer 107).

The auto-stereotypes of the Italians, which were made explicitly and implicitly in the primary literature, will be used in the analysis to view the reporting of auto-stereotyping instances of Italians within the text.

After considering stereotyping, culture, and the definition of culture, as well as the function and forms of authenticity in tourism studies, the connection of all three areas regarding the close reading of the books becomes clearer. As Zacharasiewicz summarises, three essential things happen when viewing ethnic stereotyping in literary texts and trying to relate them to and

sometimes transforming them into social facts. First, there is a “common tendency to generalize from isolated incident” (Zacharasiewicz 75); second, there is the notion to “draw influences from information long since outdated” (Zacharasiewicz 75); and third, there is the tendency to “structure vague impressions by falling back on pre-conceived notions and firm expectations” (Zacharasiewicz 75). These undesirable characteristics and phenomena, or summarised as stereotypes, can be projected onto members of minority groups and especially onto foreign people (Zacharasiewicz 75). Having stereotypes in place can create a distance between the stereotyper and the stereotyped viewing of cultural or social belonging, which can also add to the use of power in viewing the other (Pickering; Hall). The creation of a symbolic boundary allows the use of otherness to deny true belonging (Pickering 79). In doing so, it makes using stereotypes a way of distancing one's identity and heritage from the viewed culture. It allows for preserving one's identity, built through cultural belonging. Considering all these tendencies, one conclusion is that, depending on where one wants to belong and what seems essential to the individual, it seems to be a way out of belonging or becoming part of something new by comparing oneself with the ideas that the self has about the other or the foreign, to preserve the secure or even tested self. If this strategy is used, its counterpoint would be to endure the social or cultural moment in its authenticity and be aware of the possibility of acceptance or the risk of rejection through open-faced authentic discrepancy.

After viewing the stereotyping process and its implications in regard to culture, identity and the relation to the authentic, the following chapter focuses on the concept of travel, writers who travelled, and the tradition of travelling for certain groups, the Grand Tour and the idea of self-healing by moving through the world. Within travelling lies one root of finding the authentic and the craving of the real and with it the cornerstone of negotiating self and other, as well as the possibility of building, finding reinforced stereotypes, or tapping into performative authenticity, as well as merely staged authenticity and the auto- and hetero-stereotyping. A focus on Italy as a travel destination is hereby employed, as it is the destination in both primary texts.

3. The Tradition of Travel, the Grand Tour and Contemporary Self-healing

Churchill states that each writer, such as Henry James, who stayed in Italy, went there knowing former writers’ insights and descriptions of Italy (157-61). Henry James was one of the most influential American writers who followed the tradition of the Italian years - a period of staying

abroad and gathering knowledge on and in Italy and its culture - so many before him experienced, such as Beecher Stowe, Cooper, Wetmore and many more (Churchill 147-162). There also developed the notion of travellers bringing back "access to knowledge" and it being a "marker of social, cultural, or intellectual prestige" was established in the late Middle Ages (Doherty 74). Due to this influence of building on what other writers have already created on Italy and the overall historical influence in the development of stereotypes, I will approach this chapter with a similar angle on travel. I will give a historical overview of travelling and its byproducts, such as travelogues or cultural artefacts, and goals. I will link this development to the travels of the Grand Tour, focusing on Italy as a travel destination and building a connection to the Italy tours of the modern traveller with their intentions and possible social goals.

The first step is an in-depth look at Italian travel literature.

Most Italian travel literature has been written by non-Italians, especially because "travel writing is traditionally considered a low-status genre in Italy" (Ouditt and Polezzi 98). Not only is it undesirable for Italian writers to write about their own country, but Italy's identity and the image created around it have been chiefly shaped by "travel and to its narration, to journeys and the stories told about them" (Ouditt and Polezzi 97). The focus was on making Italy the object of the traveller. The Italian Journey has been one of the critical moves for European travellers for centuries (Ouditt and Polezzi 97). This gave the Grand Tourist a dominating image as the traveller in Italy. However, the country's internal perspective was disregarded due to the "substantial group of authors of international origins living in Italy and writing in Italian" (Ouditt and Polezzi 98). Italians portrayed Italy in their travel writings primarily through sponsored stories published in magazines or newspapers (Ouditt and Polezzi 102). These articles portrayed satirical and realistic images focusing on social, as well as politically and economically motivated transformations, revelling in memorable places, viewing isolated communities, and skilfully mixing facts with fiction while trying to consider new angles that allowed a rediscovering of established geographical or social features of Italy (Ouditt and Polezzi 98).

However, one observation regarding the nations initially portraying Italy in their travel writing must be mentioned. Even before American writers chose Italy as their travel destination with a narrative as the derivative, Italy was sought as a destination. Italy "has played the symbolic role of the ideal travel destination […] from the Renaissance onwards" (Ouditt and Polezzi 97). Before the discovery, the colonisation and inhabitation of North America by Europeans, travelling as such played an important role in profiling one's status, persona and stance in one's cultural setting and world (O'Doherty 74-76). One relatively early idea of journeying developed

around the early Middle Ages and was fundamental when viewing pilgrimages was to consider "the journey as a period of hardship, faith testing and spiritual learning and growth" (O'Doherty 68). The pilgrimage in this context is quite significant, as it was usually taken towards a place of spirituality like the Holy Land or Italy, or more precisely, Rome, which was an influential centre of faith due to the papal seat (O'Doherty 70). A pilgrimage, or a journey, was undertaken to endure temporary suffering to reach a particular goal, such as the receiving of a new spirituality, as the journey was allegorically linked to the suffering of Christ's path or seen as a hardship to be endured to go on towards the promised land (O'Doherty 69). These journeys then would be described and written down, and they created "shared cultural property" (O'Doherty 70), so much so that the journeys would not even have to be done by the writers themselves (O'Doherty 70). Following this development was the concept of the "journey of life as the real pilgrimage" (O'Doherty 70) that allowed for the feeling of fellowship between the travellers (O'Doherty 70). The start of the journey was birth; it continued with suffering through sickness, or pain, that fulminated in the ultimate endpoint of life and in the Christian allegorical sense, the reaching of heaven (Erb 11). The journey of life in this sense, was seen as the journey towards the eternal home, "Reise zur ewigen Heimat"; (Erb 11). The second basic idea of journeys that also evoked in the Middle Ages was that of danger, as travel was considered a risk to "one's physical or spiritual safety" (O'Doherty 71). The typical figure of the "attractive and untrustworthy stranger" (O'Doherty 72) had its origin in the idea of the (cultural) danger that contact with others and their cultural understanding could provoke (O'Doherty 73).

Moreover, travelling was also a way to spread ideas or new concepts observed in other countries. Through stories told about novelties which lead to a "Europeanization" of cultures, which would show itself in "cultural expression […], iconography, to religious cult, to coinage […], all facilitated through increased mobility" (O'Doherty 73). It was, however, an aristocratic diaspora that "spread shared stories, world views, ideals, and knowledge along with Latin" (O'Doherty 74), which also enhanced the traveller's status reputation, or as Legassie is quoted in O'Doherty, there was "prestige economy of long distance knowledge" (74). If attained, it allowed for a claim of virtue and higher status at home (O'Doherty 74). Having acquired this prestigious good enabled the traveller to share adventures and ideas and allowed for meeting others in social settings they otherwise would not have been able to access due to differences in social belonging; a setting which also allowed them to demonstrate particular abilities and skills, such as language acquisition social understanding and cultural knowledge, and as a result gave way for curation of the own story in a text or novel (O'Doherty 74). At first, artefacts were deemed prestigious and showed a certain worldliness; however, over time, knowledge built on

artefacts or cultural customs was reputable, and it was the generosity of the stranger, or the traveller, to share this with the elite, which in turn made the traveller part of this social group and that made the exchange socially valuable (O'Doherty 75).

One major event in the travelling of the Middle Ages, and in respect of travellers getting together and sharing their knowledge and insights, was the 15th century Council of Florence, held in the Tuscan region in Italy, in which the council invited European delegates and travellers and "helped foster the development of shared international, humanist, geographical culture, with interest in both classical geography and medieval long-distance travellers accounts of their discoveries" (Doherty 76). In Italy and especially in Florence, the trading region of Europe, it was common to share knowledge and exchange ideas, as it was the region where many travellers, and those whose profession it was to travel and trade, were bound to deal with other cultures to achieve their livelihood (Fischer 48). This council and the visibility of the Renaissance gave Florence, and in particular Tuscany, the vibrant characteristic of "the region commonly recognised, […] as the birthplace of the Renaissance" (Ross 47). Florence and Tuscany became traditional places for finding new perspectives on established worldviews and traditions, signifying the possibility of rebirth or new beginnings for the traveller (Ross 47). In the later Middle Ages, "the idea [was established] that [through] travelling, in body and mind, one can truly know one's own country, society, or self [which then] becomes a trope that is revisited with increasing sophistication" (O'Doherty 76), also in later concepts of travelling and stories about the foreign experience. Therefore, Italy, and specifically Rome and the Tuscan region, were historically characterised as the places where growth, cultural learning, the establishment of knowledge and worldliness, and to some extent also spirituality, which was long rooted in Christianity and its beliefs, was localised. Alternatively, as Leibetseder points out that "[t]he historical roots of the Grand tour reach back to the Middle Ages, when knights travelled to visit courts, to fight heathens, or to make pilgrimages to holy sites" (365).

However, the way Grand Tourists visited Italy as a practised space was affected. In the beginning, the idea of the Grand Tour was to "collect (or purloin) artefacts, commission flattering portraits, and generally set about acquiring a range of social, cultural and sexual experiences of the kind that might be seen to equip them [, the Grand Tourist,] to join the governing class" (Ouditt and Polezzi 99). The Grand Tour was a popular form of travel to the considered most important places Italy had to offer in the 17th and 18th century, done mainly by the "landed gentry" of Great Britain (Pieper 4). The original notion that travelling can enhance the travellers' social standing was not lost after the Middle Ages; however, going to and studying in Italy had its core in classical art history, which had to be studied by artists to

understand the concepts needed for furthering the arts into the age of the Renaissance and Baroque (Pieper 3). Italy had a coalition of buildings, topography and nature that offered perfect models and templates for a-land-of-longing as it was then portrayed in drawings and arts, "[Italien steht für die] Durchdringung von Baukunst, Topographie und Natur […] die [als] Vorlage für alle Sehnsuchtslandschaften der Malerei [dienten]" (Pieper 3). The Romanian architecture, topography, and nature were significant for any representation of yearning landscapes shown throughout the arts, especially in drawings, which needed to be understood and studied onsite (Pieper 3). The Grand Tour profiled itself as a way of viewing Italy. The fascination of travelling to Italy was seen as it was "one of the most poignantly fragile places on earth, a permanent reminder of how the ravages of time are likely to affect us all […], a focus for imagination, for nostalgia and for the display of classical learning" (Ouditt and Polezzi 99). Travel literature began to evolve around the cities and places of the Grand Tour. As such, this travel literature was soon used by the following Grand Tourist with an English background to instrumentalise the travel literature's descriptions for political matters (Müllenbrock 114). Italy soon became a source of contrast for the English in their educational journeys along the cities of the Grand Tour, as it was used as a comparison point to England (Müllenbrock 115). In the early 18th century, Italy was split into various republics and other political ruling systems besides the ecclesiastical state, whereas England had its own established church and was ruled as a monarchy (Müllenbrock 115). During that time, comparing antique Italy with modern Italy established itself as a mode of description to highlight structural discrepancies between Italy and England (Müllenbrock 116-117). This construct was used by the British Grand Tourists to influence British cultural identity over Italian identity and to emphasise superiority in their perception to increase England's worldly importance and political development (Agorni 106). It was almost anti-Italianism that the British traveller seemed to find when following the roads of the Grand Tour, even though Italy attracted interest with the historical and cultural prestige of the antique Roman Empire (Müllenbrock 115). Nonetheless, the travel reports saw a different picture when viewing modern-day Italy. "Poverty, corruption and an extremely underdeveloped intellectual life appeared to be the reality by British travellers in their Italian journeys" (Agorni 105-106). However, this mode of propagandistic use of Italy became less crucial during the late 18th century, when England reached its goal of teaching themselves "that England is possessed of more freedom, justice, and happiness, than any other nation under heaven" (Earl of Corke and Orrery in a letter about Florence qt. in Müllenbrock 121). Travel literature kept its interest in political development and spheres; however, there was a stop to reporting of "abandonment as well as of little material prosperity" (Müllenbrock 116), and a noticeable shift toward a

mutually enriching exchange of experience was recognisable, “wechselseitigen bereichernden Erfahrungsaustausch [war] zu erkennen” (Müllenbrock 122).

Regarding behaviour in contact with a foreign culture, most noblemen who could afford these educational trips were subject to strict instructions on travel and socialising (Leibetseder 366). There was, for example, a societal fear of the nobleman abandoning their religion regardless of how important the contact with others and other cultures was; the social contacts were mainly governed through “guardians” that also managed the travellers’ social cycle (Leibetseder 366). Especially interesting about these governing forces during the time spent abroad was that “[t]he host societies, too, knew how to prevent the multiyear travels from turning into an immigration. They drew boundaries on the efforts of the young travelers to fit in, boundaries they were not allowed to cross” (Leibetseder 366). Immigration, or becoming a genuine part of the society visited, was not seen as something that should be achieved.

Nonetheless, as Ujma highlights when citing and contextualizing Hermann Wetzel, the Grand Tour was seldom done to understand the Italian culture as Italian, which would have meant that the foreign would have been met as something foreign that needs to be understood and become aware of (qt. in Ujma 65). Instead, it was done to accumulate classical understandings and education found in Italian history and knowledge, which then could be integrated into one's identity and be made something of one’s own (Wetzel qt. in Ujma 65).

Another group of travellers, albeit a rarer one, were female travellers of the Grand Tour, as women travelling independently and, more importantly, writing about their experiences only emerged later during the 19th century (Blanton 44). Being able to travel alone was augmented through the “gradual democratization” of travel and the role women played in society (Blanton 45). It was only done by “well-educated, upper-class single women to journey to remote places” (Blanton 45). However, females among the Grand Tourists described a different perspective on Italy and the Italians, although it was not as widely known as the male perspective, as their descriptions were mainly spread through letters to their friends and acquaintances, such as was the case with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu with her ‘Embassy Letters’ (Dolan 2). The former viewpoint of the female was constricted to the domestic sphere; however, it shifted to a foreign place that functioned as a pathway for new ideas in other spheres (Dolan 3). However, this still needed to be legitimised, and female single travellers usually claimed their places by being raised as the “scholarly one”, which meant they were not destined for marriage or were married off unhappily (Blanton 45). Many of these women spent their youth dutifully caring for their husbands or ailing parents; however, “when the gates of the enclosed garden are [sic!] thrown open”, a desire for “wild travel” commanded the rest of their lives (Blanton 45). Victorian

women, perhaps still feeling that duty to "home", often required a scientific or artistic mission to frame their travels" (Blanton 45). However, their claim for relevancy changed due to two reasons. First, "[a]s the [18th] century progressed, so [sic!] the political climate was changing – potentially, it seemed to some, offering women a more equitable place in society" (Dolan 3). Second, when it came to travelling to Italy, and as such, taking the Grand Tour, what made the travelling and writing justifiable for the predominantly male gaze Victorian Era that was highly patriarchal was the concept of "feminine subjectivity" (Agorni 22). The idea of the feminine–beautiful - relation was explored in Burke's *Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, in which the sublime was attributed to the male energy, whereas the aesthetic and beautiful were related to the female energy (Agorni 24). This idea of female aesthetics and beauty helped the female writer to "legitimize their appropriation of aesthetic discourses" (Agorni 24). As women were an implemented part of the aesthetic discourse, they were given a sense of belonging and, through that, could employ superiority, as they were the ones to understand aesthetics and beauty the best, owed to them being equal to it, or them being the essence of the beauty and aesthetic relation (Agorni 24). It furthermore allowed for "adopting the culturally accepted language of emotions, [through which] women reduced the distance between the position of the viewer and that of the objects of her gaze" (Agorni 24), which means that the idea of females making concepts more relatable and graspable was employed, as they were the ones writing about their world view. It allowed women to "enter the discourse of art or landscape in a position of authority, albeit a marginal one" (Agorni 24). Through this, female writers established their narrating voices in British society and British literacy (Agorni 25). They could also apply this stance and superiority to their writing of travel stories about places such as Italy, deemed "feminine, liberated and sensual" (Ouditt and Polezzi 100). The idea that no one might understand Italy better than the female, who resides in the feminine and can explain its presence and virtues, was applied. This connection and the start of the movement away from the domestic and home-base idea for women was not only the opportunity to negotiate their stance in the eyes of society; it also gave them the sense to explore their cultural standing as well as define different behaviours for the feminine role, as overall, "travel enabled women to develop a dialogic sense of the self, as a relational identity defined against contact with the foreign" (Agorni 100). This development and the presence of the female writer in Italy also allowed for a new look on Italy and, consequently, a more inhabitant-centred look, as applied by Madame de Stael's Corinne Ou Italie in the 19th century (Ujma 66; Capancioni 110). Within the writing of the 19th century, especially by female writers residing in Italy, there was a noticeable shift toward reporting and writing about the rural culture and peasantry set against

the Romantic or Renaissance scenery, which overall held the "space of artistic freedom, the place for a possible paradise" (Capancioni 110). These rural portraits were used to demonstrate Italian brotherhood (Risorgimente, as coined by Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-72) (Capancioni 111)). Unification and focus on the Italians themselves as the ones fighting for their progress, and the view upon the romanticised Italy was redirected onto "the authentic reality of Italians as well as concepts of italianitá (Italian-ness)" (Capancioni 111). The female writers could deeply relate to the Italian's fight for change and recognition as a united nation since its borders were replaced after the 1815 Congress of Vienna (Capancioni 110). The system in which the rural communities were organised, and that only was destroyed after the Second World War, was called mezzadria, had a strict patriarchal stem and was led through a landlord peasant tenure (Cullen 37-38). Living there, however, allowed the female writers unmediated contact with the people (Capancioni 110). An "informed, researched representation of the local and regional sociocultural context in which they reside[d]" (Capancioni 121) was the result of the female writers' Ross and Collier's expat life in Italy, which stood in contrast to the stereotypical depiction of Italy, as their writing was done with the "center stage" position of the Italian (Capancioni 121). It was not the self-developed through travelling in the artistic Italy, which was hoped to rub off its grandeur onto the traveller.

After considering this historical development of the Italian traveller, this next section looks at the aspect of the American nation and its (female) travellers. This is done to understand influences and developments that Meyes and Gilbert have in their viewpoint that further help distinguish stereotyping into hetero- and auto-stereotypes or the absence of such. First, looking at the American perspective on travelling to Europe, and in a sense following the path of the Grand Tour, there was a notion of travelling to Europe and experiencing countries, especially Italy, that presented itself as the opportunity of exposing oneself "to educate and manage the emergent energies of democratic society at home" (Bailey 3). It was an idea not too far from what the British traveller and Grand Tourist aimed to do in the mid-1700s. For the Americans drawn to Italy in the 19th century, a possibility, due to the accessibility of travel and an improvement of conditions, it was a chance "to evaluate their own experience of national identity" (Hawthorne 1). However, looking at female American travellers and their history with the Italy trip, it was 19th century American women artists, who were primarily sculptors, according to Nancy Proctor, who travelled to Italy (Proctor 47). She argues that female artists who came to Rome, "a feminine space in the gendered dialectics of tourism" (Proctor 49), were predominantly treated as tourists in the sense of masculine subjects (Proctor 49). Proctor continues to describe that the female expatriate woman had the possibility to be a "masculine

hero-tourist, journeying to prove themselves […] the "flight" to Rome by the women […] [indicated] a rejection of the feminine positioning they lived in their own country" (Proctor 50). It was the possibility of recreating the self by occupying "the position of masculine subject with respect to the feminized landscape and population […] and to construct themselves as the masculine subjects they would have to be in order to be taken seriously as artists and as merchants of their works" (Proctor 50-51). However, there was still a deep-rooted identification with the landscape, being viewed as feminine, and the social constitution of women as female subjects and feminine (Proctor 51). Identity negotiation, therefore, was a dominant theme (Proctor 51). Journeying as such, with its side quest of transformation and identifying the self, which seems to be innate to the travelling artist in Italy, was part of the quest. Something also detectable in Goethe's Italian journey, which bared a "yearning for change and emotional transformation" (Hawthorne 1). However, that was just the root of the American yearning for Italy. Italy also held the promise of a holiday in its characteristic build-up over the centuries of Italian travel (Hawthorne 1-2). Particularly, Tuscany was turned from its rural image towards a "coastal resort and a site of the mass leisure culture of the 1960's" (Cullen 44), something the American soldiers and the modern mass culture, with its Americanised ads and the fashion drive, brought with them after the Second World War (Cullen 43-44). For those who could not fully embrace Italy's offering of "[thow[ing] off the restraints and responsibilities of life at home" (Paul Baker qt. in Hawthorne 1), there was still the prospect of travelling to Rome that offered its own freedom. However, one that also called for a re-examination of the self and the identity built (Hawthorne 2). "Religious, political, and sexual assumptions were challenged for those writers who explored the Italy of another reality. The Italy they saw (for they rarely read Italian) was finally a part of their own moral landscape" (Hawthorne 2). All these qualities that Italy had presumably developed as a destination, as a cultural haven for artists and as a place where profound reflections on a resurrection, a revival, with the help of historically attested ancient structures, are possible, made it almost impossible not to consider it as the destination holding the promise of a self-healing, life-changing effect. Or, as Kendra Marston described it when talking about the contemporary Hollywood travel romance movie starring "a fair-skinned star with a warm, infectious giggle" (3).

> The appeal of these films, however, lies not merely in the postcard-perfect images of carefully selected international locations and artfully constructed sets designed to evoke romance and excitement, mystery and glamour, but rather in the transformative potential they offer their white, middle-class tourists who frequently initiate their journeys while suffering from a form of urban bourgeois malaise. (Marston 3)

A notion she also detects in the movie adaptations of *Eat Pray Love* (2010) and *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003), when she argues that these movies are "manifestations of cultural discomfort with the heightened focus on female aspiration and achievement under neoliberal governance" (Marston 3).

However, as this thesis focuses on the primary texts, the books *Eat Pray Love* and *Under the Tuscan Sun,* there is more than just a focus on using the journey/stay as a transformative stage, where authentic moments help the character in reflection. There is also a use of auto- and hetero-stereotyping to control the longed-for transformation and self-healing of being confronted with the feelings that the authentic might evoke. In choosing the region of Tuscany, *Under the Tuscan Sun* follows the idea of the romantic Grand Tourist drawn to it by the landscape and history. It even deploys the notion of 19th century female writers and artists when focusing on the Italian people and reporting on the sceneries of building and renovating the house. However, it fails to generate the pure anthropologist view of "an observer moving off stage, or into the "setting"" (MacCannell 592), as the viewpoint of the story is dominant in the presentation of the self instead of the life of Italians. The quest of finding the self in Italy is coupled with the renovation of the villa and describing perceived Italy with the goal of adding a layer of Italianness to the own culture or character.

The idea of the Grand Tour as a possibility to trod along the path of many other famous artists and gentry, however, with a different focus on the self and self-healing/identity building, is employed by both novels. One is achieving this effect by applying rules of the Grand Tour, such as befriending other expats and being part of the artistic group in Tuscany (Mayes 76-79) or revelling together in the way Italy/Rome used to be (Mayes 77-78), like the British Grand Tourist, who revelled in the memory and imagination of old Italy. However, the focus lies in using Italy for "the balance it restores to my [Frances Mayes] life in America" (Mayes 77). Italy and the sojourn are portrayed as a healing patch that slows down the pulse and makes the busy life in America possible; it is a guard of self that falls in Italy and is needed to sustain America's "violence" (Mayes 78). In Gilbert's case, it is following the Grand Tourists' path by learning Italian and accomplishing the skill of speaking the language (Gilbert 40), so long sought and trained by noblemen to secure their social status and prove their worldliness. It is the writings that employ the reader to be a fellow Grand Tour traveller and the way the stories are written that take the fellow traveller with the writer "through foreign streets and […] into the homes of local Society" (Dolan 2). Gilbert is an expert in this, taking her readership on her travels through Italy. Gilbert describes and collocates thoughts, feelings, and sights onto typical starting points of her descriptions and uses lesser-known places as contrasting points, which she finds in Rome,

which then she carefully corresponds with, for example, other artists' poems (Gilbert 41). Both primary literature texts follow the tradition of the Grand Tour when following the definition of Mathis Leibetseder, which means it includes "a description for the tour through Europe [in this case the Italian section of the Tour] […] a collective term for specific study and educational trips by early modern elites" (Leibetseder 365), even though travelling groups have shifted from Western and Middle Europe to the whole Western world. Alternatively, as Perissinotto describes in her analysis of the tradition of the Grand Tour and *Under the Tuscan Sun*.

> Under the Tuscan Sun and other similar memoirs bear many resemblances to the Grand Tour. Firstly, the memoirs describe an extended stay, in modern times it may be sabbatical or early retirement. Secondly, they display a need to commune with the landscape, attained through the purchase of a house. Thirdly, large resources are invested in this endeavour, although rather than in long journey, they are invested in an extended stay in a new place. And finally, there is sometimes the production of a memoir. Beautifully crafted, published in millions of copies, it is a testimonial of the journey, as well as a sure way to keep connected to the motherland. (Perissinotto 247)

It was part of travelling and part of the Grand Tour to produce writings and letters about the travel; it was almost seen as a central element of the Grand Tour, as it showed well-born education and a connection to the travellers' heritage (Dolan 3). Both books follow this tradition when they document their travel during the time of travelling, as Mayes explains in her introduction by mentioning her blue book in which she collected thoughts and occurrences. Gilbert acknowledges her note-taking and reworking in *Eat Pray Love* when explaining that she wrote and structured her book two years after she started her journey in Italy (Gilbert 9-10) and within their claim of autobiographical travel narrative. The urge to stay connected to themselves and their heritage shows itself through the writing of the testimonial and the use of auto- and hetero-stereotyping, as will be analysed in the close reading.

As this chapter shows, the idea of travelling to Italy as the ideal travel destination, writing about the experience and negotiating one's identity, culture and self against the Italian background, as well as the participation of building on the idea of Italy through published reports has its roots further back than the height of the Grand Tourist's age. However, both primary books also bind together the particular style of writing. This writing style of *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love* is examined in the next chapter, where I also aim to assign the two primary texts more precisely to the genre of travel literature. Following the debate on genre, which is based on the characteristics of the primary literature, I will give a brief overview of the classification of the individual areas, such as the narrative found in the works.

4. A Question of Genre – Autobiographical Travel Narrative

When looking at travel literature, the overall theme of the journey, as well as the motivation behind enduring it, should be taken into consideration. Thompson believes what makes travelling interesting is that "there are no foreign people with whom we do not share a common humanity, and probably no environment on the planet for which we do not have some sort of prior reference point […] [. A]ll travel requires us to negotiate a complex and sometimes unsettling interplay between alterity and identity, difference and similarity" (Thompson 9). Negotiating between the familiar and unfamiliar and finding similarities in the seemingly different is an idea that resonates greatly with how Blanton defines the travel genre in Travel Writing. Blanton argues that the travel narrative uses the strategy of "a literal journey to a psychological or symbolic one […] of what Joseph Campell calls the existence of the "monomyth", where the hero is seen as one who travels along a path of self-improvement and integration, doing battle with the "others" who are the unresolved parts of himself or herself" (Blanton 3). This battle with the other is also mentioned in Horatschek, as previously discussed. Overall, travel literature varies greatly through "its practitioners, its fashion, its contents, and its types" (Adams 161), as there are many forms the travel narrative can have, such as "journals, diaries, memoirs, and ships' logs, as well as narratives of exploration, adventure, and escape" (Blanton Travel Writing Introduction). The travel writer needs "to reconcile the expectations of realism and truthfulness attached to a factual genre […] and the ultimate goal of the journey [is]: discovery" (Ouditt and Polezzi 102). Even though all these possible forms centre around the theme of travelling, pinning down travel literature is almost easier done through the notion of what it is rather than what it cannot be, as long as it involves the motion of travel. As a starting point, I will give a brief (diachronic) overview of travel literature's styles and development, emphasising similarities to the primary literature. Two major distinctive forms of travel literature need to be mentioned as the starting point of travel literature. First, there is fictional travel writing, or the "literature de voyage", which are narrations that focus on the general theme of travelling with fictional aspects (Mee 7). Second, there is the actual travel book or the "recit de voyage", which is the non-fiction genre of travelling books (Mee 7). Literature de voyage includes fictional places, fictional characters, and fictional goals; however, most of the time, the character still has realisations about life or displays character- and self-development throughout his or her travels (Mee 7). It includes works like Homer's The Odyssey or Gulliver's Travels by Swift (Mee 7). The recit de voyage, however, describes "the journey to have taken place in reality […] deliberately cultivate[ing] the impression that they are

strongly rooted in real experiences" (Mee 7). In the recit de voyage tradition, another distinctive form of travel book developed, namely the Guidebook. It gives the reader an overview of travelling or the travelled place (Adams 37). It peaked in the 18th century and can be described as an extensive compilation of recommendations leading to one or multiple destinations, all bound within one travel book (Adams 37). However, early realisations of these travel-aiding books can be found as far back as the "Polemo of Ilium, who covered Athens and its environs thoroughly but even produced a Guidebook to Troy" (Adams 39). Its popularity rose simultaneously with the attainability of travelling, which increased over time, making it natural to look for fool-proof instructions on the how, where, and what given by experienced travellers (Adams 39-41). Exploring Europe and writing about the various sights, cultures, and languages this section of the world held is part of the history of travel books, as are descriptions and guides of land and sea routes, as well as local guides, as they were written throughout the second century up to the Middle Ages and continuing throughout the Renaissance (Adams 39). However, in the "eighteenth-century tradition of the travel book, where it established its popularity through the Guidebook", specific conventions needed to be followed in the Western writing style (Agorni 102). It was throughout this period that a new style was adapted, allowing descriptions of the experience and the reflection upon it by the traveller and writer (Agorni 102). The point of these reflective passages was to be "philosophical, aesthetic, or [of] moral kind" (Agorni 102). In this tradition, travel literature written in the modern era – more precisely, the travel books of the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century, developed the feeling of a "dominant mood of discontent and self-examination" (Blanton 59). "In particular, the theme of self-discovery or, more accurately, the search for a shattered and scattered self" (Blanton 59) was part of this generation of travel books that found expression through travelling and the travel metaphor. Reflective passages within the writings of Gilbert and Mayes are important. They are often used for connecting and reflecting, as these books "[…] are about lives that are being transformed" (Trachtenberg qt. in Williams 614). They open space for "messages of liberation and self-rescue" and let the particular audience, namely the female reader, ask developmental questions (Williams 615). An idea that traces back to one of the oldest travel accounts, namely the idea of the experience of self and other with the hope of being renewed and revived, if not even reborn, through the moments of experience, "das Moment der Selbst- und Fremderfahrung […], die Hoffnung auf Wandel und Erneuerung, auf >> Wiedergeburt<< (Erb 2017:20) ". A theme dominant in the story of King Gilgamesh, established in the 2nd century BC (Erb 14). Gilgamesh goes through a spiritual change because of his travels, which

let him understand and realise his actual needs and what he already had at his disposal and through that, rebirth his achieved (Erb 14).

After looking at this thesis's primary texts, the question arises as to whether they can be considered travel literature. *Under the Tuscan Sun* focuses on how to start life as an expat. It is about how Mayes finds, buys, and renovates a house in Tuscany, which she uses as a vacation home. The Italy section in *Eat Pray Love* is not about adopting Rome as a second home; however, the travelling is kept within the Italian premises, and the main character mainly stays in Rome for approximately three months. Gilbert claims in the first few pages of *Eat Pray Love*, "So now I am a resident of Rome" (Gilbert 36), at least temporarily. Even though there are a few trips in both texts, both writers move about in the proximity of their chosen living quarters. Silvia Ross calls this type of text a "particular strain" (45) of travel literature as the writer of the stories comes back to "his/her adoptive home" (45). She argues for seeing it as an innate characteristic of travel literature, which Blanton defines as "vehicles whose main purpose is to introduce us to the other" (Blanton qt. in Ross 46). Blanton claims that the mediation process between experience and narrative plays into the natural curiosity of humanity, for it is where attempts are made to understand the world, and she adds that this is the narrative power of the travel narratives (Blanton 2). The tension of the tale is naturally bound to the path of the journey of leaving and experiencing uncertainty, as well as the happy end of the returning point and at its core is the "traveler's encounter with the other [as] its chief attraction" (Blanton 2). This precise tension resonates with the way *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love* are superficially built as travel narratives, where, at the start, the character goes to a new continent to meet others and experience another culture. The tale of change is initiated through the foreign setting, and its progression is how the character deals with the unfamiliar and fulminates at the point of new realisations. There is a need to either move into a new, more comprehending self or to return and move on with a new understanding where the outer experience influences the inner world. Rutkowska points out the similarity between the pilgrimage and Gilbert's journey as follows.

> Similarly to a rite of passage, a pilgrimage begins with a stage of separation, leaving one's ordinary life and daily occupations, followed by the liminal stage, when the pilgrim experiences difficulties and eventually undergoes spiritual transformation. Finally, a pilgrim returns home and is reintegrated into the community. (Rutkowska 101)

The overcoming of difficulties in Gilbert's as well as Mayes' case, as Gilmore's observation is reported in Rutkowska, is that "the account of suffering in neoconfessional narratives sometimes seems exaggerated" (qt. in Rutkowksa 101), simply because the "previously held

ambitions and current success" (Marston 8) allow for the use of resources usually not available to anyone else except for the authors in their positions. The filter of the story is that of a privileged reporting position, which does not mean it is undeservedly achieved, but the narrative has a particular focus point.

Both narratives, even though not entirely focusing on the mere travelling or the moving aspect of travelling, employ the realm of the foreign and that of a foreigner in discourse with their own identity. However, another critical aspect of travel literature is Borm's definition, which Mee uses when examining travel books: They are "any narrative characterized by a non-fiction dominant that relates (almost always) in the first person a journey or journeys that the reader supposes to have taken place in reality while assuming or presupposing that author, narrator and principal character are but one or identical" (Borm qt. in Mee 7). It is the reality of the places visited, and the paratexts used to underline the basis of the journey in reality, as well as the fact that through these devices "authorial authority" (Mee 7) is created, that furthermore adds to the factuality of the travel narrative (Mee 7). *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love* are autobiographical, as Mayes and Gilbert tell their own stories, making the writer, narrator, and main protagonist coincide by using identical names. The first-person perspective, which comes into play in both books, especially draws attention to the narrative voice. And that raises the question of an in-depth look at another genre, or a genre mix, namely that of the memoir or the autobiography.

4.1. Autobiography or Memoir in the Travel Narrative

When defining forms of travel narratives, most historical travel literature, be it British or American, is written in the third person (Adams 162). Mayes and Gilbert use the first-person I, which sets these books apart from their historical predecessors. Whether these books are still travel literature in the traditional sense or should be treated as autobiographies or memoirs is a critical question. To make matters more complicated: *Under the Tuscan Sun* is called a memoir on its front cover, and in Elizabeth Gilbert's case, *Eat Pray Love* is referred to as a "mid-thirties memoir" by GQ (Gilbert preview) and an autobiography by Toni Colette (Gilbert preview). Memoirs and autobiographies can be a form of travel literature, in the case of this thesis, primary texts; however, adding these styles to the travel narrative requires an in-depth look at the particular strand of literary text and its form of the autobiography and memoir. The definition of a memoir in the Oxford Dictionary is "a book or other piece of writing based on the writer's personal knowledge of famous people, places, or events" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary). This definition is quite fitting regarding *Eat Pray Love* and *Under the*

Tuscan Sun; however, the question remains: What of the three realizations can the books be regarded? When reading the Acclaim section of both books, the dominant resonance within the readership is not that of a travel narrative. In Mayes' case, it is a "transformation", "[a book for] [t]hose who want to find parts of themselves they didn't know existed […] [they] will find in Mayes a kindly, eager, tough spirited guide" besides "A report from our dream Italy, still rural, still devoted to beauties that are not artificial" (Mayes Acclaim). In Gilbert's case, it is "[a] true account for her search of happiness and sense of self", "we are rooting for her to find the peace and happiness she seeks", "[a] tender and funny account of a woman's search for happiness" and if referring to her travelling it is seen as a byproduct as "Elizabeth Gilbert is everything you would love in a tour guide" (Gilbert Praise). Regarding the German term and genre memoir and its implications, Carsten Rohde claims that "[a] central feature of the genre is linking autobiographical narrative and identity with political-social themes and viewpoints. The term is also occasionally used in literary criticism and general literary discourse merely as a modernist synonym for ‚autobiographical narrative'" (Rohde Abstract). Thomas Couser agrees when he says that autobiography was nowadays eclipsed by the term memoir when telling "a certain kind of life narrative" (3). What can be said about the memoir as such is that "[t]oday, memoirs often incorporate invented or enhanced material […] and their artifactuality – the sometimes uneasy relation between the artfulness and their presumed factuality – sometimes gets their authors into trouble" (Couser 15). Couser argues that the memoir uses novelistic techniques when being written (15); however, as Thompson says, "travel writers do not have the same licence as novelists simply to make things up; to do so is the risk one's narrative being classed as fiction, or worse, as fraudulent" (16). Travel literature has its own way of creating authorial authority and claiming factuality and truth, or as close to truth as possible; memoirs have the same claim on their author, especially when it can be counted as travel literature. Both Gilbert and Mayes are bound by the inherent characteristics described above that travel literature, autobiographies, and memoirs have, and thus, an even stronger proximity to (believed) truth, knowledge and reality as an automatic assumption is inherent.

In the Anglo-American context, the term memoir is used as a synonym for autobiography, even though within the German tradition of poeticism, there is a distinction between autobiography and, as the Anglo-American term it, the New Memoir, which is a mixture between an autobiography, non-fiction and narrative which has the "lived experience" at its core (Rohde 291). "[E]ine spezifische Form autobiographischen Schreibens im Spannungsfeld von Autobiographie, Sachbuch und Erzählung, die zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts im literarischen Diskurs Verbreitung und Betrachtung gefunden hat. In ihr wird biographische 'gelebte

Erfahrung' ('lived experience') zum zentralen Kriterium der modernen Identität" (Rohde 291). The New Memoir, at first glance, is an exciting term regarding *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love*; however, as these texts are also part of the travel genre and already cover aspects of the lived experience, the focus will be on the proximity of memoir and autobiography and the tradition of travel literature.

Bearing in mind that the memoir can be viewed as a modern synonym for the autobiography, as shown above in the interrelatedness of memoir and autobiography in its narrative perspective, there is the possibility to view the (auto-)biography as part of travel literature, as Adams defines it, with its specific characteristics. Within the genre of travel literature, especially when the traveller claims an autobiographical position such as Gilbert and Mayes do, there are usually the following features.

> [A] concentration on a protagonist; the concern with a set of ideas and themes; an exemplar of theory of history (vice and virtue must both be shown in the protagonist and other characters); the use of a chronological order to give a life story, with the narrator's selection, suppression, ordering, and digressions; and the picture of a society. (Adams 163)

Each primary piece of literature centres around the author as protagonist and concerns itself with the mentioned set of ideas and themes such as the Italian cuisine, the Italian way of life, as well as their surroundings, namely Italy, Italian people, and overall, the search for Italianità, the Italianness of things. Concerning the chronological order, both primary texts are overall chronologically structured; however, in *Eat Pray Love* and *Under the Tuscan Sun*, elements of back flashes are used to explain current storylines or thoughts toward specific experiences.

However, since the two primary texts are situated between the travel and autobiographical spheres and are written in the first person, it should be mentioned that within the narrative tradition of the recit de voyage, the first-person narrator is widely accepted as an archetype (Adams 164). It is another feature that places both works in line with the tradition of travel narratives. However, Adams also acknowledges the claim that travel literature written in the first person tends more towards the autobiography category, primarily if it is written in journal or memoir style (Adams 165). Both primary texts could be regarded as first-person travel literature since the travel journal, which has the first-person perspective as a signifying trait, is rarely considered when studying autobiographies (Adams 165). Thus, this thesis's primary pieces of literature lie between the genre's aspects, making their classification difficult. However, after considering all the different genre aspects of travel literature, autobiographies and memoirs, the primary literature will be viewed as an autobiographical travel narrative.

Nevertheless, I will elaborate briefly on how the primary literature asserts its narrative voice. Especially the first-person perspective, which comes into play in both books, draws attention to the narrative voice. Looking at defining forms of travel narratives, most historical travel literature, be it British or American, is written in the third person (Adams 162). Within the memoir, the *I* underlines its authenticity by not disappearing behind the events of the narrative (Rohde 290), and, as already mentioned in the first part of the theory, authenticity holds the relation and connection to the real in people's minds (MacCannell 1973). Therefore, a claim of the authentic coincides with how the *I* is presented in the memoir. That feature adds a layer of the real to the story being told. In the autobiography, the first-person perspective features a narrating I and a narrated *I*, which usually indicates "a distance between the experience and the narrating subject" (Schwalm 15). The narrating *I* is the featuring voice of the protagonist, and the narrated *I* is the story's narrator and "personifies the agent of focalization, the overall position from which a story is rendered" (Schwalm 15). However, it has to be acknowledged that the autobiographical narrator "may temporarily step back to adopt an earlier perspective" (Schwalm 15). The distinction between the narrated *I* and the narrating *I* concerning identity formation in narratives is interesting as Bamberg concludes that the I in narratives (especially self-narration) "manages three processes of differentiation and integration: (a) it can posit a "me" (as distinct from "I"); (b) it can posit and balance this "I-me" distinction with "we"; and (c) it can differentiate this "we" as "us" from "them" as "other" (244). In narratives that centre around depicting lives, such as the interrelated autobiography/memoir, usually "lives are told by depicting characters and how they develop" (Bamberg 245) when following the life-story model that "employs the narrative [as] metaphor for life" (Bamberg 245). Within this model, and as McAdams defines it, the idea of identity lies in the building of characters "into a life-story model of identity […] "our narrative identities are the stories we live by" (McAdams qt. in Bamberg 246). This feature adds to the general process of stereotyping, where the differentiation is used to show power relations and signify in-groups versus out-groups. However, this assumption will be viewed in the light of simplifying what a life in a narrative is. As Sartwell is quoted to content in Bamberg, "that the lived moment, the way it is "sensed" and experienced, is said to gain its life-worthy quality only in light of its surrounding moments" (qt. in Bamberg 247), which might have been omitted in the primary literature and given way to another view of the situation. Expressly omitting parts of the story or ordering and suppressing information can also add to certain portrayals of others, leading back to stereotyping if actions to unravel a stereotype are not employed, as explained in the first chapter.

Part of the storytelling process is interpersonal encounters, or the character-meets-character as already briefly mentioned above, as "[e]ncounters form the backbone of many travel narratives, which become collections of portraits and interactions" (Mee 2). These encounters do not always have to involve language and a conversation. However, even if no significant exchange might have been made, it is still of significance as "it constitutes an event, as indicated by the writer's choice to include the encounter in travel narrative […] as they shape and define journeys" (Mee 3). The perspective through which the reader can understand or view the world presented in the travel narrative is that of the traveller and the filter of the narrative I, which also plays into the picture presented (Mee 4). However, one crucial aspect of this meeting is, as Mee describes, that "[w]hen the encounter is rendered into a written narrative some aspects will be emphasized, others exaggerated, some will be forgotten, others edited out, many will be fictionalized, so the reader will also have an incomplete picture of the encounter" (Mee 5). Considering the function of missing aspects of narrated encounters and identity building, it is essential to note that the identity process, as viewed in the previous section, will only be examined regarding stereotyping processes and functions. The use of the narrated *I* and the narrating *I*, as well as reflective passages in the primary literature, is considered from the perspective of how identity is used in stereotyping processes and how authenticity, as defined in tourism studies, is used to help navigate the narrative. However, the notion of using the "I-me"-"we"-"us"-"them"-"other" distinction as managing processes of integration and distinction will be considered concerning processes of stereotyping.

As this thesis is not primarily interested in analysing the primary texts through narratology, a consideration of the narrative structuralist consideration of order, duration and frequency as coined by Gérard Genette will not be applied in depth. However, as these form the basis of narratology, the adherence to the chronology of events in the primary texts will be briefly viewed about the effect of the beginning of the texts and making it part of the autobiographical travel narrative as defined by Adams at the beginning of this subchapter. *Under the Tuscan Sun* starts with a mixture of a flash forward or a proleptical start, meaning "at the end, the arrival at a destination" (Culbert 155), as it is often done within travel narratives (Culbert 155). However, at the same time, it starts in medias res as it works backwards and forwards in contextualizing how this memoir came about. Mayes does so while drawing on picturesque scenes coupled with symbolisms when describing the farming/harvesting of the potatoes and their lives in their Tuscan abode ("The way we have potatoes is the way most everything has come about, as we've transformed this abandoned Tuscan house and land over the past four years" (Mayes Preface)). She furthermore gives insight into how and why this memoir was written.

Something similar is done in *Eat Pray Love*, as the lead-in to Gilbert's story is that of an "Introduction", where the reading and coming about of her book is connected to the symbolism of japa malas, which can be read in "INTRODUCTION or How this book works or The 109th Bead" (Gilbert 1). Both travel narratives thus start their stories with an introductory setting before the reader is taken through the rest of the story, giving background insight and using one of the primary forms of authenticity, as described in the first theoretical chapter, when letting the reader in. During both travel narratives, there are gaps between certain events; however, the stories are generally "shaped along the two poles of order and selection', the basic binary matrix out of which time, history, and experience are made meaningful through narrative form" (Culbert on Seymour Chatman qt. in Culbert 154).

The notion of the autobiography being written as "an autonomous act of self-reflection" (Schwalm 17) will not be viewed as a narrative strategy; however, the way the autobiography relates the self to the others will be considered as a way of "culturally specific, diverse and subject to historical change" (Schwalm 17).

This thesis' main interest regarding the autobiographical narrative is what is chosen and not chosen to be reported, which perspective is considered, what collocational occurrences - such as words, ideas, and specific scenes - are used to set the scene and what thought patterns are commented on or used as continuous occurrence of ideas, metaphors, and comparisons. However, the connection between those reported scenes and language will be also viewed in regard of action theoretic semantics, that links the implication and meaning with verbalization and contextualization.

4.2. Action Theoretic Semantics

Combining collocational occurrences and implying actions in verbal realisation is crucial when viewing stereotypes and their realization, be it implicit or explicit. The following paragraphs will briefly consider George Meggle's action theoretic semantics to make reading and examination of specific passages as accurate as possible. In the centre of Meggle's action theoretic semantics (Handlungstheoretische Semantik), which he bases on Wittgenstein and consequently Grice, lies the communicative action that leads to instrumental, or intentional, action (60). "Unser kommunikatives Handeln ist ein spezieller Fall instrumentellen (bzw. Intentionalen) Handelns" (Meggle 60). He sets actions as the basis of significant practices (Meggle 64) and says that actions are the basis and origin of any communication, since communication without verbal expressions is possible (Meggle 65). He continues to argue that expressive acts are types of action realisation, and to understand them one must know the

meaning of the action first (Meggle 68). As an example, if the receiver of a communicative (expressive) act knows that in the morning, people greet each other with a verbal "Good morning" and then meets a person who merely nods their head at them, instead of saying the words, and the receiver still knows what is implied, the underlying action is known by the receiver without the need for an expressive (Meggle 62). This makes the general action stand before a concrete action, or a form of action, leading to the action product, which can be the expressive act (Meggle 60-61). Meggle continues to explain that the only way one can truly understand communication is when the receiver has the basic knowledge of the signifying action realisation, "kommunikative Handlungen hat man nur dann verstanden, wenn man die Absichten kennt, die sie zu eben solchen machen" (Meggle 73). That means that each communicative action implies the speaker's intention, which he calls the "kommunikative Sprecherbedeutung" (Meggle 73). If the receiver understands the underlying meaning, and it is the same as the intended meaning of the speaker, it results in the interrelated subjective communicative understanding of meaning, the "intersubjektiven kommunikativen Bedeutung" (Meggle 74). The idea of action theoretic semantics places the action and intention of meaning as the starting point of any interaction. That means if someone utters the words "Good morning" or nods their head, it is the intended action of greeting someone in the morning as the basic need of the speaker. This idea makes it compelling when viewing concepts such as stereotyping as it allows the viewpoint, as Fritz Rainer applied it when viewing stereotyping in his discussion Italico und italienische Autostereotype. Rainer used it in terms of first what the context of usage of the action realisation is, second what collocates with the action taken (if the action presents itself as a verbal realisation, what specific words collocate with each other), third the relation the action stands in with other actions, realisations, or expressions and meanings and fourth what kind of actions result from the primary action and finally if there are any coinciding thematic areas and text types that bare these actions (Rainer 98). He then related the respective action to the intended action to decipher if both point towards the same intentional action. As Meggle phrases it, "[W]as Ausdrücke eigentlich sind: Typen von Handlungs-Produkten, zu deren Erklärung die Bedeutsamkeit der entsprechenden Handlungsweisen bereits vorausgesetzt werden müssen" (Meggle 68). This means that an expression's meaning has its basis in the meaning of an action (Meggle 64). An idea, that works rather well, when applied to the action of stereotyping and verbalising possible observations that are transformed into written statements of a country, a person or an experience.

Overall, the primary literature consists of many characteristics found within autobiographies, memoirs, and travel literature. However, all these characteristics function in a certain way to

transmit the author's ideas on incidents reported with the discovery of self, language, others, and a foreign culture in mind. Through that, they shape how the reader might understand aspects of Italy and give way to take-home messages the author created. Some aspects, such as descriptions of the immediate vicinity of the characters, are viewed through the lens of stereotyping and authenticity is sought behind the scenes to validate what is experienced and thereby pave the way for consumable culture. Stereotyping acts as a reinforcement of the stage of the process of self-discovery that is inherent in the journey to Italy as a historically grown side product of the Grand Tour of various travellers and artists, and thus becomes an innate quest of these journeys. However, the exact use, function and occurrence of stereotypes will be analysed in the next chapter by a close reading of the primary literature. The analysis of the primary texts will be characterised through commonalities rather than by the diachrony of the events in the books.

Analysis

5. Environment

The first section of the analysis examines the environments of both primary literature pieces. In this, sights, living areas, and Italy's country are considered part of the environment, the landscapes, and the immediate surroundings. The first section will focus on the Grand Tourist perspective and landmarks and stereo typification in that respect. The second section continues with the distinguishing idea of Italy and the feminine, as it has been attributed throughout various literary and historical accounts. The third point, the Italian language, will be considered, as well as how it is the tool the narrated *I* and Italians use to convey implicit and explicit meaning. Language acquisition, how the Italian language is used to fulfil functions, and possible stereotypes are considered.

5.1. The Grand Tour

In *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love*, the sights and roads taken are less Grand Tourist than during the peak of the 18th century since both protagonists tend to employ more of an Off-The-Beaten-Track approach. The beaten track, as James Buzard termed it regarding the Grand Tour, is that of the traveller being in "the space of the 'touristic' as a region in which all experience is predictable and repetitive, all cultures and objects mere 'touristy' self parodies" (4), which is something that both narrated *I*'s try to avoid by reporting on looking for backstage areas, for example by asking locals for recommendations. Within *Eat Pray*

Love, the typical prestigious sights are visited; however, Gilbert explicitly negotiates her stance towards them as curious about their background stories, almost treating them like people. Within the section about her sister's visit, the approach toward them is explained through a historical interest of the sister (Gilbert 93). However, the areas around the historical sights are what the narrated *I* in *Eat Pray Love* mainly focuses on when telling stories about them, as is analysed in detail in the dedicated section of the Grand Tour sights. *In Under the Tuscan Sun*, significant or typical historical sights – such as Santa Maria del Fiore – are avoided or not particularly mentioned in detail or lengthy descriptions; however, Mayes employs a Grand Tourist approach. For one, that of the female solo traveller of the late 18th and 19th century who travelled in the tradition of the dialogic approach towards the sense of the self and the negotiation of the self in reflection with the immediate (foreign) cultural surrounding (Agorni 100). As soon as the main renovations of the house are told, the narrated *I* starts to shift the focus of her autobiographical travel book toward the tradition of a travel book, where sights and history are described. One chapter is on the narrated *I*'s chosen town of "Cortona, noble city". In *Under the Tuscan Sun*, Mayes shows her fascination with the Etruscan and the traditional approach of antique and artistic Italy; however, it is done so by placing herself in the centre stage of backstage areas such as, "We both have an insatiable curiosity about each jagged castle ruin on the hillsides. My idea of heaven still is to drive the gravel farm roads of Umbria and Tuscany, very pleasantly lost" (Mayes 8).
However, all these notions are examined in detail in the next section.

5.2. Under The Tuscan Sun: Grand Tour Sights

In the book's second half, starting on page 139, the narrated *I* of *Under the Tuscan Sun* turns towards a detailed description of the town Cortina and its immediate surroundings. She acquired her house in this town, described in the first section. However, her adoptive hometown descriptions get cross-referenced to Italian Grand Tourists such as George Dennis (Mayes 149), Henry James (Mayes 158), or D.H. Lawrence (Mayes 173), whose views she cites and compares to her perspective on the landmark or place. These allusions add a comparative component of wording and literariness to the places and, once again, a layer of the historicity of place and value of knowledge.
When describing the places visited, the narrated *I* tends to fall back onto the idea of showing Italy as a picturesque splendour of its past. Even though Mayes describes her present-time views, she refers to the past and past cultural habits, recreating a stereotype. She uses the adverb always, adding to the rule of things about all Italians, not just those with a career in trade owning

a shop in the marketplace. “Italians always have lived over the store” (Mayes 138). She then continues to lead her reader into a picturesque scene. “The *palazzi* of some of the grandest families have bricked-in arches at ground level, with remains of waist high-stone counters where someone used to ladle out preserved briny fish from a vat to customers” (Mayes 138). She refers to the palazzi still owned by the same grandest families using the present simple; however, she switches to past activities when implying the original use of the architectural structure. She then contextualises past and present use in the next section. “The medieval fish market is a restaurant, the Renaissance private theater is an exhibition space, the stone clothes-washing sinks still just await the flow of water, the women with their baskets” (Mayes 139). An idea Mayes continues and explicitly relates to how the marketplace and the palazzi evoke the picture of old Italy in the present. She is drawing on the image of women washing clothes in the sinks, which relates to the organization of Italy as a patriarchal, rural place. Mayes constantly transfers the reader into the past in her section on the market and does this implicitly and explicitly, as the next section shows. “All along the streets, artisans open their shop doors to the front light. As I glimpse the work inside, I think medieval guilds might still be practicing their crafts” (Mayes 141). The narrated *I* relates what she sees on what it has been and does not restrict it to what it is now; she uses the adjective medieval or the noun guilds, primarily founded in the Middle Ages (Oxford Reference Dictionary), when describing the artisan shops. The past in Mayes’ description presents itself in rather specific timelines. When described as it is today, the people, things, or landscapes shine in a light of Medieval or Renaissance history.

The narrated *I* gives insight into her learnings of how to travel and what she learned throughout her trips, such as: “On later trips, I began to carry a travel journal because I realised how much I forgot over time” (Mayes 144). It relates to the Grand Tourists’ idea of keeping a travel journal that helped to remember sections of the trip on the one hand and could be transformed into published pieces later on the other hand (Dolan 2). The narrated *I* describes herself as having followed guidebooks to the dot and reading about “Cortona [which] merits almost seven pages in the excellent *Blue Guide: Northern Italy*” (Mayes 143). After giving that insight, Mayes writes her section on how to approach Cortina, which simultaneously slightly discredits the Blue Guide’s approach as she attributes it as the ideal and not “my” or “I think, the ideal…” approach. Mayes says ad verbatim: “The ideal approach to my new hometown is first to see the Etruscan tombs down in the flatland below the town” (Mayes 146). The Etruscan history in Mayes’ Italy is a theme that the narrated *I* topicalizes through a tourist and landmark viewpoint. The importance of the Etruscan history for Mayes becomes underlined and pressed when she

combines the ideal approach to hometown, which connotates it as something she knows very well and is close to her heart, as it holds the noun home and is not just simplz called the town. Her overall description and approach follow the idea of writing for a journey beside the beaten track, similar to the tradition of Charles Dickens, where Italian cities are described without the revelling of detailed descriptive passages on sculptures and monumental sights (Ujma 67). Overall, Mayes adopts the style of Fanny Lewald. Lewald makes room for famous sights and impressive landmarks within her guide; however, there are detailed descriptions of how life in those cities presents itself to the traveller (Umja 67). Most sights described in Mayes' travelogue section of *Under the Tuscan Sun* are either referenced to a historical person or another traveller's ideas about them, with additional associations Mayes has or tips on the subject or the connection to life in the city. In this next section, she connects Dardano and his importance through his founding of Troy and her recommendation of a trattoria, which rubs off in significance due to its proximity of textual reference to history.

> If I come by car, I walk in on Via Dardano, a name from deep in time, Dardano, believed to have been born here, was the legendary founder of Troy. Right away on the left, I pass a four -table trattoria, open only at midday. No menu, the usual choices. I love their thinly pounded grilled steak served on a bed of arugula. And love to watch the two women at the wood-fired stove in the kitchen. (Mayes 148-149)

A tendency that can also be seen in the following passage. "I walk through the short connecting leg of street to Piazza Signorelli, named for one of Cortona's hometown boys. Slightly larger, this piazza swarms on Saturday, market day, year around "(Mayes 150). Here the reference is to Signorelli.

However, the narrated *I* also levels her concept of Italy and when she says: "In these stony old Tuscan towns, I get no sense of stepping back in time that I've had in Yugoslavia, Mexico, or Peru. Tuscans are of this time; they simply have had the good instinct to bring the past along with them" (Mayes 150). However, all the places she reports on get dragged back in time constantly by reference to when they were built, such as the medieval hospital, with a side connotation through the second statement of the sentence. "I pass the medieval hospital, with its long portico, saying a little prayer that I never have to have my appendix out in there" (Mayes 153). By connecting the idea of medieval and the fear of not wanting to be treated in it, medieval becomes a secondary bearer for the standards of practice in the hospital. Being transported back into ancient practices becomes underlined by the report "of a woman, long black dress, black scarf, hunched in a little cane chair. It could have been 1700" (Mayes 153). There are contradictions to the statement of Tuscans being wise in bringing the past with them. For the

narrated *I*, Italy is simultaneously a museum that allows her to see history and time; however, the present-day Italians and the whole culture are separated from it and only appear as a way of reinforcing Italian cultural stereotypes.

In the next section, the Màrquez novel influences the reporting of the scene.

> "Inside is an opera house straight out of a Márquez novel: oval, tiered, little boxes and seats upholstered in red, with a small stage […]. It serves now as the movie theatre in winter. Midway through the movie, the reel winds down. Intermission. Everyone gets up for coffee and fifteen minutes of talk. It's hard, when you love to talk, to shut up for an entire two hours" (Mayes 152-153).

Here, Mayes uses the phrase shut-up, a slang phrase, that gives the statement a scolding almost angry and out of control connotation, more than it would have had when Mayes had said be quiet. It simultaneously lets the Italian culture of taking a break in between and enjoying company seem unappreciative and raw towards the art presented. This theme, namely the classical parodistic view, is also employed through the character Harriet in *Where Angels Fear to tread* by E.M. Forster, as analyzed by Horatschek (87).

Overall, when viewing the town through the eyes of the traveller and guidebook, the narrated *I* tends to employ the stereotypical view of Italy's Italians to that of the, as Churchill coined it, "classical" view of Italy (1). However, Mayes' central anchor point is that of the Etruscans, or general Italy's grand history, not just the Romans and the classical period. In passages like the following, the Etruscans always function as the basis for any landmark Mayes deems most critical to her. "The church of San Cristoforo, almost at the top, is my favourite in town. It's ancient, ancient, begun around 1192 on Etruscan foundations" (Mayes 154). She continues to describe the church; however, how this place is used does not seem to agree with Mayes' adoration. "The door to the church is always open. Actually, it's always half open, just ajar, so that I pause and consider before I go in. Basically a Romanesque plan, inside the organ balcony of curlicued painted wood is touching a country interpretation of Baroque" (Mayes 154). The narrated *I* continues to describe the church and even attributes it as "homey" (Mayes 154) and the interplay between it being historical and still being a room used decorated with "droopy garden flowers on the altar, the stacks of Catholic magazines under another fresco of the Annunciation" (Mayes 154). That whole scene, however, is also described by the interpretation of the Mary sculpture, who "has a you've-got-to-be-kidding-look on her face. The back of the church is dark. I hear a soft honking noise. In the privacy of the last pew, a man is having a nap" (Mayes 154). The immediate placement of the interpretation to the fact that a

man is sleeping in the back gives the scene a feel of Italy's beauty and the importance of the place being disrupted by the humanity of men.

As Horatschek summarises it, the Italians, or the contemporary inhabitants, are slightly despised (87), which will also be revisited in the auto- and hetero-stereotyping section of the analysis. Nevertheless, Mayes' description – simply because of the amount of historical linking she displays in her descriptions, the reference to historical figures and the importance of each sight as a reflection of time – as well as the constant reference to time and history, reveal parallels to the ideas of the Grand Tour as an educational journey and the legitimisation of visiting Italy as an educational treasure holding its importance in its rich history.

5.3. Eat Pray Love: Grand Tour Sights

The first introduction to the locality of Liz Gilbert's Roman apartment is done through an introduction to the surroundings. She refers to the "Spanish Steps" (Gilbert 36) underneath the "Borghese Gardens" (Gilbert 36), close to "Piazza del Popolo" (Gilbert 36). Later in the book, her "district" (Gilbert 76) is referenced as the ""The English Ghetto" where all the posh aristocrats rested on their European grand tours" (Gilbert 76). The first introduction is tinted with irony as she refers to the history of the place by setting the scene of ancient Romans racing their chariots on Piazza del Popolo, which is followed by: "Of course, this district doesn't quite have the sprawling grandeur of my old New York City neighbourhood, which overlooked the entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel, but sill… It will do" (Gilbert 36-37). The narrated *I* emphasises Rome's past and history by using irony and the phrase "It will do" (Gilbert 37). She contrasts her Rome quarters against her former historically younger place, which has a contemporary, however similar use, where people might race through too; however, due to its recent build with no historical background and the goal of going from A to B with an contemporary every day and not a racing vehicle, is less impressive. It enhances the Roman apartment's grandeur, followed by her setting it as "an upscale district" (Gilbert 76).

Liz explains that, unlike her sister Catherine, she is more interested in stories about places than facts. When Catherine visits, she takes Liz on a Roman historical and architectural fact tour guided by the "Michelin Green Guide" (Gilbert 94). She slightly humours the view of "aesthetic details" (Gilbert 94), stating: "So my sister comes to visit me in Rome – in my new city – and then shows it to me" (Gilbert 94). She simultaneously satirises her sister and singles herself out as a different traveller, even though the narrated *I* has reported on the aesthetics of Rome and has been referring to landmarks such as the Pantheon or the Augusteum. The way the narrated *I* uses the places in the description is endorsed with self-reflecting undertones. That

points towards one function of the Grand Tour landmarks – it is a way of marking them off. An example is the section on the Pantheon, which the narrated *I* describes as: "I try to look at the Pantheon every chance I get […] and an old proverb says that anyone who goes to Rome without seeing the Pantheon "goes and comes back an ass"" (Gilbert 78). Thus, the visit is connotated as self-improving and adding virtue to the self. Viewing specific sights, it seems, for Liz, is not done to gain knowledge and pure information; instead, it is a way to create the contemporary Grand Tour with the goal of self-healing through reflection, contemplation, and comparison. It was, after all, "[t]he Grand Tourist, the Classical and the Romantic traveller […] [who] render Italy one of the most poignantly fragile places on earth, a permanent reminder of how the ravages of time are likely to affect us all" (Ouditt and Polezzi 99) that birthed the idea of self-reflection in comparison with those sights. An example, is the scene in which the narrated *I* relates her life's story to viewing the Augusteum:

> I look at the Augusteum, and I think that perhaps my life has not actually been *so* chaotic, after all. […] The Augusteum warns me not to get attached to any obsolete ideas about who I am, what I represent, whom I belong to, or what function I may once have intended to serve. […] Even in the Eternal City, says the silent Augusteum, one must always be prepared for riotous and endless waves of transformation. (Gilbert 79)

Traits of the sights and buildings are used as mirror points of the self, and historical situations are used as the other, allowing the ability to link and draw conclusions as a distancing tool of time. In the events of the Italian section, when the narrated *I's* sister Catherine is already gone, Liz decides to travel "to Bologna, to Florence, to Venice, to Sicily, to Sardinia, once more down to Naples, then over to Calabria" (Gilbert 101). Within the tradition of the Grand Tour, the traveller usually spent most of their time in Rome, the eternal city, then Venice and Naples, as these were the second most important cities to see (Naddeo 183). Part of the Grand Tour was also the Tuscan region. "Bologna – a city so beautiful that I couldn't stop singing "(Gilbert 103). The narrated "I instantly love[s] Naples" (Gilbert 82); however, the praise for Italian cities, after Lucca, which is "wealthy, ample" (Gilbert 102), and Florence, which has the "Duomo, always such an impressive sight" (Gilbert102), stops at Venice. "Venice seems like a wonderful city in which to die a slow and alcoholic death […] Seeing Venice I am grateful that I chose to live in Rome instead […] Venice is beautiful, but like a Bergman movie is beautiful; you can admire it, but you don't really want to live it" (Gilbert 105). Liz attributes some of Venice's gloom to the time of year she visited, namely November, and views this city

regarding herself and her growth, saying: "Somewhere in me I recognize that this is not *my* melancholy; this is the city's own indigenous melancholy, and I am healthy enough these days to be able to feel the difference between me and it. This is a sign […] of healing" (Gilbert 107). Once again, Italy serves as a whole-part relationship comparative, which Liz uses for her own moods and character.

The last step in the narrated *I's* journey through Italy is Sicily, and the narrated *I's* conclusion to seeing it is that "this is what Goethe meant by saying that you have to come here, to Sicily in order to understand Italy. And I suppose this is what I instinctively felt when I decided that I needed to come here, to Italy, in order to understand myself" (Gilbert 121). Next to the open comparison of travelling to Italy and understanding the self, the passage also shows that Gilbert is aware of Goethe's Italian travels and that she must have read his accounts. Sicily is described as "the most third world section of Italy" (Gilbert 117). The narrated *I* perceives Sicily "with its dreadful poverty, real life is never far from anyone's mind" (Gilbert 119), implying that the rest of Italy is sensed as dreamlike or evokes the unreal. It finally concludes that Sicily's answer to "hold[ing] a sense of your individual human dignity […] [is] nothing. Maybe nothing except, perhaps, to pride yourself on the fact that you always fillet your fish with perfection" (Gilbert 121). However, the narrated *I* slightly disclaims her comparison of self and Italy, as well as her hardship as a mirror of hardship in Sicily through the following sequence. "I had a crisis of identity, but I also had the resources (financial, artistic and emotional) with which to try and work it out" (Gilbert 121). The romanticising Grand Tourist stereotype fits into how *Eat Pray Love* writes about the Italian environment. Especially under the assumption of the new trajectory of a Grand Tour to gain personal insights and self-healing. The self uses Italy's history and view to self-correct by projecting into the monuments. The hetero-stereotype is transformed into an auto-stereotype that adapts the new Italianised self and allows it to be part of the backstage and the creating and participating part of the sought-after authentic. Like the 15th century aim for a "new framework and tools for self-examination and reflection and for critical consideration of one's home culture and society" (O'Doherty 76), the narrated *I* uses Italy "as a training ground for this female tourist seeking her enlightenment" (Marston 5).

5.4. Under The Tuscan Sun: Feminine Italy

The imaginative nonna plays a vital role in Mayes' Tuscany and her house manifesting feminine energy. *T*he narrated *I* envisions her as the soul of the house, the previous owner, the planter and the arranger of the fruit trees and vegetables in the garden. Mayes creates little anecdotes about this feminine spirit she feels.

One of the first incidents the nonna is mentioned is during Mayes' discovery of the properties' pine trees. Signor Martini brings them to her attention in her second summer. He connects the nuts to the torta de la nonna to clarify the nuts and plants in Mayes's driveway. Mayes then determines the idea of the nonna and begins to create her by imagining food items and recipes. "One of the *nonnas* who make all those heavy *pinolo* studded tarts must have lived here. She must have made delectable ravioli with ground *noccioli*, hazelnut, stuffing, and macaroons and other *torte*, too, because there are twenty almonds and a shady hazelnut tree that droops with its crop of nuts" (Mayes 64). The connection to the nonna, the feminine energy that Mayes feels as a presence and constantly envisions, allows her to connect to the Italian realtor Signor Martini and see another side of the businessman against whom she holds a grudge, as this passage shows. "Perhaps Signor Martini should be back at the office, prepared to show more foreign clients houses without roofs or water, but he joins me picking up *pinoli*. Like most Italians I've met, he seems to have time to give" (Mayes 64). At this moment, he gives an insight into the Italian way of helping. He tells a story from the village's past and how the Germans came and bought up the formerly occupied houses; however, they did not receive any help from the Italians on how the land worked or insight into the culture of helping each other (Mayes 65). He then tells her how his mother died and, with her, her torta de la nonna (Mayes 65). After the incident and the cake preparation, she invites him back for a slice of her cake, which counts as a gesture of reciprocation (Mayes 66).

After this first connection, helped along by Signor Martini, the vision of the nonna and the ability to connect to the Italians through food preparation frequently returns. It seems to have opened the door to the Italian culture as Mayes states: "Besides the nuts, the original *nonna* planned more of an Eden here" (Mayes 67). She aso says: "Nonna's most essential, elemental ingredient surely was olive oil" (Mayes 68). The narrated *I* then creates a story about the daily use of the olive, the oil, the fire made from the sections and how the nonna's husband, not the nonno, "Her husband" (Mayes 68), took care of the olive terrace. The husband is not called by the usual Italian term for grandfather, as the nonna is the grandmother. She continues to imagine the owner as female, as visible through this passage. "This long-lost owner who placed the fruit trees on a terrace do they sweetly dangle over a grassy walk, she, I'm sure, had a shelf under the stairs for her confitures, and no qualms about breaking open her spicy plums on a January morning" (Mayes 73). Mayes only knows that the house's previous owners were five sisters who had inherited their childhood home (Mayes 12). It is, however, the spirit of the nonna that connects Mayes to the skill of preservation on multiple occasions, which also happens directly after the quoted sentence of page 73, as she

continues: “Here, I think, I’ll master the art my mother should have passed to me easily as she passed her taste for hand-painted china and expensive shoes” (Mayes 73). The nonna has a nurturing connotation as she is Mayes’ preserver, producer and kindred soul. The nonna also opens the door towards the Italian language for food items, and Mayes continuously uses the lingo, the mixture of Italian words and English explanations.

Even though she later questions the spirit of the nonna, the narrated *I* also connects this energy to the self and what Italy/Tuscany and the house make her feel in a longer reflective sequence.

> The pure surge of pleasure, flash flood of joy – to find the electric jolt of the outside place to corresponds to the inside – that’s it. […] Was there really a *nonna*, a presiding spirit who centered this house? […] Here, I am restored to the basic pleasure of connection to the outdoors. The windows are open to butterflies, horseflies, bees […] We eat outside almost every meal. I’m restored to my mother’s sense of preserving the seasons and to *time*, even time to polishing a pane of glass to shine. (Mayes 87-89)

Later in the book, the nonna does not appear as frequently as before; however, Mayes still channels feminine energy around and, in her house, as she imagines “[t]he *signora* who lived here a hundred years ago could walk in now and start to cook. […] I imagine her with a pointed chin and shiny black eyes, her hair swept up and twisted in a comb. She’s in sturdy shoes that tie and a black dress with the sleeves pushed up, ready to roll out the ravioli” (Mayes113). Not only on this occasion, Frances Mayes deploys the common description of how Italy is usually portrayed in American commercials, as Girardelli explains the authenticity appeal of Italian food (317). There is a “constant reference to the reality of the country in the form of re-presentation of an ancestral history and peasant society crystallized in a past with no real historical dimension, made up of a woman dressed in black, extended families gathered around a table and romance landscape” (Girardelli 317). The historical dimension Mayes uses is insofar as it is not real, as she generally tends to mix ideas on Italy with the present, Renaissance, Etruscan, or Medieval influence, as shown above. That visualisation plays into the general assumption that Italy is still inhabited by this type of woman whenever an idea around Italian food products needs to be sold and continues to be a spirit that Mayes uses even though the pinoles and how they are harvested were taught to Mayes through a man, Signor Martini.

Another instance of feminine energy is connected to the idea of water and its preciousness in Tuscany. Mayes titles one chapter as “Sister Water, Brother Fire” (Mayes 41) in reference to “St. Francis of Assisi […]. In his poem “The Canticle of the Creatures”, he wrote: “Be praised, O Lord, for Sister Water, the which is so useful, humble, precious and chaste” (Mayes 50). In this chapter, the narrated *I* and her partner discover a lot of water on their property, as well as

old wells and cisterns. She later learns that "[f]igs reveal water" (Mayes 71) and "[i[n Italian, *il fico*, fig has a slangy turn into *la fica*, meaning vulva" (Mayes 71).

The feminine in *Under the Tuscan Sun* correlates with the general idea of Italy as a country being feminine. As Horatschek argued in her view upon imperialist narrative perspective, femineity, before Rousseaus' *Emil,* was often correlated with Nature and/or Earth, as shown through Weigel (qt. in Horatschek 57). As shown in later analysis of auto- and hetero-stereotyping, the idea of the American being water-obsessed for building pools will also be established, which could point towards the feeling of exploitation of the Italian feminine.

5.5. Eat Pray Love: Feminine Italy

The idea of Italy as the feminine, in its landscape and inhabitants and overall, as a feminine space (Proctor 1995; Ouditt and Polezzi 2012), is strongly indicated by how Gilbert lets her narrated *I* relate Italian spaces. Within *Eat Pray Love*, these concentrate upon human-made objects such as streets, cities, sculptures and buildings. Whenever confronted with a landmark or sight, the narrated *I* drafts an imaginative person, who tends to be female, representing the place or having a storyline closely connected to the object. These personifications underline the idea of Italy as the feminine.

Rome is the first city that gets attributed with pronouns, a she, as the narrated *I* describes how "Rome doesn't compete" (Gilbert 76) in the "struggle going on across Europe […] to see who shall emerge as the great twenty-first-century European metropolis" (Gilbert 76). Rome is described as "unfazed" and "regal self-assurance, so grounded and rounded, so amused and monumental, knowing that she is held securely in the palm of history" (Gilbert 76). That idea is extracted as something the narrated *I* wants for herself when "I am an old lady" (Gilbert 76). Gilbert describes the Augusteum as she thinks it "is like a person" (Gilbert 79). The idea is once again that the place was female, when the narrated *I* describes the role through "housewife" (Gilbert 79), "widow" (Gilbert 79), "first female-dentist" (Gilbert 79), and "then tried her hand at national politics" (Gilbert 79). The femineity of surroundings and places is continued with an in-depth personification of Rome and a Roman woman. When asked why Liz would not like to be living permanently in Rome, she answers that the city had something that did not agree with her character alignment (Gilbert 108). She then sees a "helpful visual aid" (Gilbert 108) walking past her and Giulio, one of the Italian friends. She equalises Rome being like the woman, namely "a fantastically maintained, jewellery sodden forty-something dame wearing four-inch heels, a tight skirt […] exuding an unbelievably glamorous air of: "You will look at me, but I will refuse to look at you" (Gilbert 108). Articulating this comparison to Giulio, she

gets corrected in her assumption portraying the idea of femineity of Rome as a city. Giulio continues to explain that "every city has a single word that defines it", and in the case of Rome it would be "sex" (Gilbert 109), playing into another stereotype of Italy and Rome. This idea, however, is separated from the Vatican with its word being "power" (Gilbert 109), that separates it from Rome as being an entity of its own (Gilbert 109). The comparison of places and cities to female personifications is not used anymore after this scene. However, Giulio uses nouns in both cases; the narrated *I* gives Bologna its word through the adjective "pretty" (Gilbert 103). The Cambridge Dictionary describes the meaning as "pleasant to look at, or (especially of girls or women or things relating to them) attractive or pleasant in a delicate way" (Cambridge Online Dictionary). It creates a passive approach towards the city and connotates it again as female.

The narrated *I* in *Eat Pray Love* uses the stereo-typification of Italy and female if her Italian friend does not correct her and she reports the incident of correction.

5.6. *Under The Tuscan Sun*: The Language

The Italian language in *Under the Tuscan Sun*, or the Italian as it is used, fulfils various needs for the narrated *I*. Italian words are usually used to substitute English words. One particular function can be seen when the narrated *I* goes to the market and buys eggplants, then decides that eggplants or aubergines do not sound like the real name. However, "*melanzane* sounds like the real name" (Mayes 112). The Italian expression is felt to be more natural than the first language expression, with which the narrated *I* grew up.

The second way Italian is used is when the narrated *I* wants to refer to things in Italian for a presumable Italian item, such as ragù and not sauce, or faraona instead of guinea hen (Mayes 116). This shows presumed knowledge of differentiation and experience, implying that a ragù is not simply a sauce. Italian is also used when describing the profession of the Italians, such as the geometra (Mayes 28, 37) or the notaio (Mayes 21).

In general, the narrated *I* sees the Italian language as "endless – two lifetimes wouldn't be enough" (Mayes 15-16) to grasp the whole of it. The narrated *I* thinks of the Italian language as something beautiful, as the scene at the notaio's office displays – "I thought Italian is mellifluous;" (Mayes 6) – and she also shows awareness of her learning Italian when saying: "Will I ever ever learn Italian? Still so many basic errors" (Mayes 177). She stresses the difficulty of Italian and the use of it through a repetition of the adverb ever.

The narrated *I* uses Italian in her stories to take her readers along her learning path, lowering the distance between the reader and the narrated *I* through that particular move. For example,

when Ed or the narrated *I* explain specific words such as "Sage is *salvia* in Italian" (Mayes 17) in their conversations or as parentheses.

However, the language also functions as a parameter of "Turning Italian" (Mayes 180), as one chapter is titled, in which "The Italian Ed" (Mayes 180), along with his adaptations of what Mayes sees as Italian attributes, is being reviewed. Ed, therefore, writes lists of things in Italy, something he does not do in the United States. "They're in mixed English and Italian, whichever word is shorter. Sometimes he only knows the Italian word if it's a special tool [for gardening and farming]" (Mayes 180) that Ed learned as part of his Italian development and house restoration. However, the use of random Italian words within everyday speech is also done by another expat when agreeing with Mayes through the word "*Esatto*" (Mayes 78) instead of exactly.

Overall, the Italian language lets the narrated *I* signify that she is becoming part of the culture and is spending a significant amount of time in Italy. Adopting it into their language use is part of the Grand Tourist's urge to show specialised knowledge of areas and, as a result, having experienced Italy and through that, a way to be recognised as a fellow Italian traveller and being cultivated.

5.7. *Eat Pray Love*: The Language

Looking at the Italian, its description and use, in *Eat Pray Love,* language is almost depicted as an environmental theme or as an item of clothing that can be put on and sometimes even as a substitution for a feeling or a person. Language is, however mostly portrayed as an object, and the beauty and style it inherits is inaugurated upon the speaker. Liz, or the narrated *I*, almost detaches the language from the country and its history when she says: "It's like the whole society is conspiring to teach me Italian" (Gilbert 40). The society, however, is Italian and does not just merely switch to the language as soon as Liz arrived. Alternatively, this can be seen when she mentions that "[t]here are spontaneous conversation classes everywhere" (Gilbert 40). She enters what she calls "a fairyland of language for me […] what could be better than Rome? It's like somebody invented a city just to suit my specifications" (Gilbert 39).

She symbolically has the language in bed in the opening scene, as she is not with Giovanni and instead has "nothing in my bed except a pile of Italian phrasebooks and dictionaries" (Gilbert 9). The narrated *I* explicitly studies Italian by consuming books and newspaper articles (Gilbert 40-41) and going to a language school. The reason why Liz is in love with Italian, a "seductively beautiful language" (Gilbert 47), is given through its historical development and modern Italian being chosen for its beauty instead of being historically grown. She says that "this gathering of

intellectuals […] handpicked the most beautiful of all the local dialects and crowned it *Italian"* (Gilbert 47). In Gilbert's comparison, Italian as a language is treated similarly to competitors in a beauty contest. She further sees speaking Italian as seductive and as if one would speak like Dante Alighieri, as the Divine Comedy is the basis of modern Italian, which still has the "cascading rhythm" (Gilbert 48). Italian adds to the narrated *I's* view of being an artist, and it permits her to be part of a particular artistic group, in one line with the Grand Tourists that used to inhabit her neighbourhood of "The English Ghetto" (Gilbert 76). Liz explains there is a contrast as it has become an upscale shopping neighbourhood. She continues to relate: "I mean, if it is a neighborhood, then my neighbors are those just-plain-regular-folk with names like the Valentinos, the Guccis and the Armanis.) This has always been an upscale district. Rubens, Tennyson, Stendhal, Balzac, Liszt, Wagner, Thackeray, Byron, Keats – they all stayed here" (Gilbert 76). The language has in itself "an artistic pedigree" (Gilbert 48).

She continues to use Italian words and phrases to explain concepts or to set the tone for explanations and give insights into cultural notions such as: "By the way, the word for "fan" in Italian is *tifoso*. Derived from the word for typhus. In other words – one who is mightily fevered" (Gilbert 72). This is followed by a "banquet of Italian language" (Gilbert 72) as she attends a football match. The language becomes something that can be consumed as it is a banquet. The scene sets football as something predominantly for men, as they are brothers and not siblings, when the narrated I explains: "Luca has a group of about ten close friends who all love each other like brothers. Except that half of them are Lazio fans and half of them are Roma fans" (Gilbert 71). In this setting, she uses the touristic voyeurism that allows an outsider perspective and lets her gain insight into swearing, men and the match. Liz reports an elderly Italian commenting on the game behind her and tints the scene with a child-like grandfather image. "I wanted to lean back into his old lap and let him pour his eloquent curses into my ears forever" (Gilbert 73). The narrated *I* believes that by becoming fluent, she will consequently become more Italian when she says: "One day I will open my mouth and be magically fluent. Then I will be a real Italian girl, instead of a total American" (Gilbert 74). Once again, the language is connotated as something that makes a person younger and female, as it is not merely the or an Italian, which would be a neutral expression putting the focus on the.

Generally speaking, the Italian language and its usage in both books, both narrated Is utilize Italian to become part of a subgroup of fellow Italian travellers that shows they have lived an extended time in Italy by speaking Italian fluently. Not only can they converse in Italian, their language production centers are inclined to substitute words from the second language. They

also use the language to become part of the Italian culture and to mark them as one of the Italians, as Elizabeth Gilbert states (Gilbert 74).

Due to this observation the next section focuses on social relations and stereotypes in regard to social encounters as well as the way groups of friends are organised and built within the pieces of primary literature.

6. Social Relations

Taking a closer look at the way Gilbert and Mayes perceive the Italians also includes a focus on their general approach towards building a social cycle and whom they chose as centring parts of their newly built groups and friendships.

Overall, when it comes to how Elizabeth Gilbert and Frances Mayes met people, Gilbert refers to "the grand old system of the "letter of introduction" […] presenting ourselves formally to the acquaintance of an acquaintance" (Gilbert 44).

The narrated *I* in *Eat Pray Love* "asked everyone I knew in America if *they* had friends in Rome" (Gilbert 44). In *Under the Tuscan Sun*, Mayes is introduced to other writers through her neighbours (Mayes 76-77). Similarly, the Grand Tourists were introduced into the circles of Italian society, as they tended to associate themselves with people from similar societal backgrounds (Leibetseder 365). Consequently, this meant that one was very likely to meet people from similar socio-economic backgrounds, which opened and furthered one's access to the homes of Italians or "local society" (Dolan 2). Depending on the group, it also facilitated the connection to other expats living in Italy, who find themselves gathered, for example, in "Chiantishire, [in Tuscany, which] is no longer an ironical designation for the Chianti valley, as it is being populated by English and Americans" (Perissinotto 248).

However, since the general goal, as of becoming partly Italian by being fluent in Italian, was detectable in both primary works the first section of social relations will focus on the way the Italian people are portrayed in regards of general relations and appearance. After this the friendships and social cycle of the narrated *I* Gilbert and Mayes will be viewed. As a final step of the social relations, I will view the interplay of auto- and hetero-stereotypes as can be found throughout the texts, or in Gilbert's case, the Italian section.

6.1. *Under The Tuscan Sun*: Italian Beauty

The first time the narrated *I* refers the Italian people's appearance, she connects it to their surroundings, posture, air, and manner of walking, when calling them beautiful (Mayes 10). The narrated *I* uses brief descriptions and scene settings by employing the idea of the idealised

dimension, depicting Italian culture through recurring images of the past and specific values such as the family and the romantic and picturesque country – Girardelli attributes them to sell the authenticity of Italianness in food advertisements (317). The narrated *I* formulates her vision of the beauty of the place through the idea of an artistic stage where an opera might occur at any minute. "The rest of the piazza is lined with perfectly intact medieval or Renaissance palazzi. Easily, someone might step out any second and break into La Traviata" (Mayes 10). She then continues to explain how Cortona is "upright" (Mayes 10); "I feel the abrupt, angular shadows fall with Euclidean purity. I want to stand up straight – the upright posture of the buildings seems to carry over to the inhabitants. They walk slowly, with very fine, I want to say *carriage*. I keep saying, "Isn't she beautiful?" "Isn't he gorgeous?" "Look at *that* face – pure Raphael" (Mayes 10). In this case, Raphael points to the Italian Renaissance architect and painter, whom Britannica explains is famous for his depictions of Madonnas and "for its clarity of form and ease of composition and for its visual achievement of the Neoplatonic ideal of human grandeur" (Britannica). The narrated *I* also reports: "A woman of about sixty with her daughter and the teenage granddaughter pass by us, strolling, their arms linked, sun on their vibrant faces" (Mayes 11). As the sixty-year-old woman is the subject of the sentence and is not called a grandmother, it marks how the narrated *I* centers on her as the main subject of the scene. All of them are attributed as vibrant, or as the Oxford Learner's Dictionary explains full of life and energy, and an adjective which can be used synonymously to bright (Oxford Learner's Dictionary), giving them a mirroring attribute of the sun's power.

On another visit to town, the narrated *I* focuses on the idea of female, food, and rusticity, or "green, white and red color combination" often used to represent an Italian theme (Girardelli 316). This strategy is also detected by Girardelli when selling authenticity and Italian meals, which play with Italian imagery (Girardelli 311). The narrated *I* describes this scene through the following section. "A woman with an elaborate swirl of hair shakes out a cloth. She is laying plates for lunch. Her rich ragù smells like an open invitation, and I look longingly at her green checked tablecloth and the capped bottle of farm wine she plunks down in the center of the table" (Mayes 154). The woman's hair and actions are portrayed as put together, and the scene and the smell of her food are inviting, almost luring guests in with her Italiannesse.

One character in which Mayes sees the Italian beauty is Signora Raguzzi. The bank clerk is described as "Signora Raguzzi in tight skirt, tight T-shirt, has lips that are perpetually wet and pouting. Her skin glistens. She is astonishingly gorgeous" (Mayes 20). Once again, it is the female beauty the narrated *I* is fascinated by.

There are only a few instances when the narrated *I* focuses on sexuality as a central point of the sensuality of Italians as portrayed through their beauty. The first instance is that of the fig and the fig wasp (Mayes 71). The second mention happens in Maria Rita's description, which falls into the picture of the "rural-preindustrial reality" (Girarldi 321), who plants, harvests and sells her produce in Cortona in a store. Maria Rita is described as having a "clean hand so often in the earth" (Mayes 140) and being open "six and a half days a week, plus she cares for her garden" (Mayes 140). The narrated *I* and her partner shop at the store every day, and Maria Rita not only has an infectious laugh, she interacts with them frequently. "Every day she says, "Guardi signori," and holds up a misshapen carrot that looks obscene to her, a luscious basket of tomatoes, or a cunning little bunch of radishes" (Mayes 140). In the case of Maria Rita, the produce and the associations the narrated *I* has show the Italian's sensuality. It is, however, not Maria Rita that says something; it is the narrated I that places adjectives, such as obscene, luscious or cunning, that immediately connotate the scene as flirtatious and sensual. In *Under the Tuscan Sun*, female sensuality often goes hand in hand with surroundings, with food, and consequently with eating and nurturing. That idea is employed in a scene where the narrated *I* describes a whole restaurant as infatuated by an Italian couple.

> Everyone in the small restaurant had noticed the young couple at the table in the middle from the moment they were seated. They look like twins. Both have that curly, magnificent black hair and hers has jasmine flowers caught in its ripples. Both have the sultry eyes my mother used to refer to as "bed-room eyes" and lips like those on archaic Greek statues. They're dressed out of Milan or Rome boutiques. (Mayes 172)

The couple and the description of the scene resonate with the idea of the "romantic and expressive theme" Girardelli (317) uncovers in his analysis, employing the Italian themes connotating ""openness" (an outside party), "romanticism" (a newlywed couple; a woman kissing a sailor), "togetherness", and "expressiveness" (people cheering at a table) […] [of] love and romance" (Girardelli 317). The food the narrated *I* describes echoes ruralness into the scene. "Our salads look as if someone picked them from the field this afternoon, and perhaps they did" (Mayes 172). Moreover, as a final statement to the scene she says:

> We're riveted again by the beautiful couple. I see the other diners discreetly staring, too. He has moved from his chair across from her to the one next to her and has taken her hand. I see him reach into his pocket and take out a small box. […] The lustrous girl is now holding out her hand, admiring a square emerald […] They both smile at everyone, they suddenly realize, who has followed the engagement. Spontaneously we all lift our glasses in a toast. (Mayes 172)

However, the scene is also flooded with sensuality through the placement of the memory of the mother's saying. The lingering of the motherly observation, plus the diversion of eyes, turns to voyeurism and then open admittance of having watched an intimate scene. The descriptions or comparisons that the narrated *I* draws to art and timeless beauty also add to the artisticity and beauty of the moment.

Only in one instance is the beauty of a man described; however, it is not specified whether he is Italian or not. "Absolutely everyone stares when a tall and gorgeous man in riding boots and a tight T-shirt strides by. But he's aloof, takes no notice. I see him check out his image in the shop windows as he passes" (Mayes 167). The male beauty is seen as a self-marvelling act, as the man checks his own image and is portrayed not as natural as the female beauty, through not being self-aware.

6.2. *Eat Pray Love*: Italian Beauty

The first chapter of *Eat Pray Love* starts with the sentence "I wish Giovanni would kiss me" (Mayes 7), followed by a brief identity description of Elizabeth Gilbert in terms of a dichotic relation, as the narrated *I* defines herself in comparison to the first Italian character of the story. He is described as "ten years younger than I am" (Gilbert 7), "lovely" (Gilbert (7), "unsullied" (Gilbert 7), "handsome" (Gilbert 7), and "like most Italian guys in their twenties he – still lives with his mother" (Gilbert 7), which adds to the boyish picture. The first idea on Giovanni is commented on by the narrated *I's* conclusion of not being able to be romantically involved with Giovanni, as she was "a professional American woman in my mid-thirties" (Gilbert 7) with a "failed marriage" (Gilbert 7) and having lived through a "devastating, interminable divorce" (Gilbert 7) and a love affair that ended in "sickening heartbreak" (Gilbert 7). Through this move, the narrated *I* contrasts herself against Giovanni, making them seemingly incompatible, as she is using the idea of young man – older female. A structure she frowns upon as it had not worked for her before and left her "sad and brittle and about seven thousand years old" (Gilbert 7). Gaining this insight adds to the dichotomy between the young and the old depicted in the book. This contrast continues, as he, in her opinion, stands for pure innocence and she for a broken woman with nothing to offer. This representation opens up the juxtaposition of the two, making it impossible for the narrated *I* to overcome what is dallied. This notion gets deepened when the narrated *I* claims her choice of celibacy for her stay (Gilbert 7). However, the – no – towards the romantic relationship is not made firmly and without further ado. The narrated *I* leads through an inner monologue operating itself into the stereotypical Italian romance to be then able to reject it. The Italian beauty of Giovanni tempts her, and that pushes the debate between

staying virtuous or following the opportunity to discover what Italian Rome promises: A new sensuality where other cultural standards are questioned.

The chapter starts with detrimental words as the narrated *I* immediately ascribes the association in a physical connection and does not let the relation unravel through the described actions of the language learning partner. It is marked by adding irony to the words "Tandem Exchange Partner. That sounds like an innuendo, but unfortunately, it is not" (Gilbert 7). The idea of romance and physical encounters and the relation to Italy and Italians continues as the following question is posed to the "observer" (Gilbert 7) after the announcement of the celibacy: "To which the savvy observer might inquire: "Then why did you come to *Italy*?" (Gilbert 7). Italy is emphasised through italics, and the narrated *I* thus alludes to the generality of knowledge from Italy to physical love. This idea helps the stereotyping of the acquaintance as erotically charged. It is reinforced when the narrated *I* also marks herself as the discoverer of Giovanni by claiming: "I discovered Giovanni a few weeks after I'd arrived in Rome" (Gilbert 7). The idea is highlighted through the place of discovery by mentioning "the sculpture of that sexy merman" (Gilbert 7) in "Piazza Barbarini [sic!]" (Gilbert 7). The recorded sculpture – described as "sexy merman" (Gilbert 7) – is a depiction of Triton, the God of the sea, placed upon the horn of Triton, symbolically giving water to the citizens of Rome, as it was formally used to distribute drinking water, which is seen as one of the most important works of the artist Bernini (Fischer 280). Piazza Barberini, named after the Palazzo Barberini, additionally is historically known as the square where, up until the 18th century, unidentified dead were barred in the hopes of being identified, as explained by a Rome website (Rome info). The narrated *I* continues to explain how she came to meet Giovanni and his twin brother, classifying his reply to her question of their relation as a "very provocative message: "Even better. Twins!" (Gilbert 8). The inner monologic narrated *I* comments on that with "Yes-much better" (Gilbert 8), only to continue by describing the Italian twins as "[t]all, dark and handsome identical twenty-five-year-old twins […] with those giant brown liquid–center Italian eyes that just unstitch me" (Gilbert 8). She continues to debate whether to break the celibacy in "keeping a pair of handsome twenty-five-year-old Italian twin brothers as lovers" (Gilbert 8). The use of the word *discovering* and *keeping* the Italians, with the collocating idea of "unsullied Giovanni" (Gilbert 7) and her being "seven thousand years old" (Gilbert 7), and additionally the Piazza Barberini's historical role, almost gives the narrated *I* a certain power over the relation and decision process. The whole ordeal further gets compared to the consumption of food, when the narrated *I* debates exception, rule and temptation when she says: "Which was slightly reminiscent of a friend of mine who is vegetarian except for bacon" (Gilbert 8)) and "I was

already composing my letter to *Penthouse*" (Gilbert 8), and "giant brown liquid-center Italian eyes" (Gilbert 8), slightly reminding of a molten lava cake. The narrated *I* then describes their relations as "lovely evenings" (Gilbert 9) that have similarities in dating as the narrated *I* tints the descriptions with wishful thinking. "He gives me a warm hug […] he might actually get up the juice to kiss me […] such a wonderful possibility that he might actually do it right now" (Gilbert 9). She ends the sequence by being grateful for this not happening and states: "Another long night's sleep ahead of me, with nobody and nothing in my bed except a pile of Italian phrasebooks and dictionaries" (Gilbert 9). Something Italian is being put in the bed next to her, nonetheless. The first section introducing the narrated I Liz in Rome is influenced by the stereotype of Rome and its inhabitants as the place where assumptions are challenged and a landscape where one's morals can be questioned and explored (see section 2.2.). Sensuality, which is fighting for its liberation, takes over the narrated *I's* description that gets coined by the words attributed to the Italians and the narrated *I*. The possibility of being swept into a swirling romance, if not being prohibited by the own self, is even more underlined when the narrated *I* provides room for a confirmation of the stereotype. Here, being open to "*provocativo*" (Gilbert 8) and spending time with "the more razzle-dazzle swinger brother of the two" (Gilbert 8), Dario, leads to "their [, Liz' Swedish friend Sofie and Dario,] evenings in Rome [, which] is another kind of Tandem Exchange altogether" (Gilbert 8). The sequencing of events and thought processes regarding the social relation of the pairs Dario – Sofie and Liz – Giovanni adds to the power of the discoverer and decision maker, the narrated *I*, and the tourist versus native idea. The narrated *I's* sensuality-liberation fight, however, gets redirected onto the narrated *I's* bed where the "pile of Italian phrasebooks and dictionaries" (Gilbert 9) lies as a language source, contrary to the human Italian language source Giovanni, that left the narrated *I* at her doorstep without leaving the path of a platonic relationship. The redirection towards learning Italian and becoming the agent, as the narrated *I* wants to learn the language, gives the means of choosing Italian to fulfil the lover and negotiated sensual need. This notion gets furthered when the next scene in Italy is led in with the words, "Oh, how I want Italian to open up to me!" (Gilbert 41).

Furthermore, the narrated *I* confronts itself with being alone and facing its reality, open for opportunities similar to the female British Grand Tourist of giving herself the option of stepping away from the known ascribed and defining her feminine role anew. The stereotype is used as a reflective point. However, it is created to enable identity building in a Western style of confronting the self with the concept of the other, as manifested through the stereotypical Italian.

However, this stereotype also gets reformed and unfrozen when the narrated *I* goes through the awareness of the stereotype as her viewpoint enhances the stereotype when she is "overcome with lust" (Gilbert 70). She continues to conclude that "[t]o my taste, the men in Rome are ridiculously, hurtfully, stupidly beautiful. More beautiful even than Roman women, to be honest" (Gilbert 70). However, she also admits that "[t]he men here, in their beauty, force me to call upon romance novel rhapsodies to describe them. They are "devilishly attractive" or "cruelly handsome," or "surprisingly muscular" (Gilbert 70). These descriptions and collocating words trigger the stereotype as much as the internal debate the narrated *I* leads, as they play into the sin versus virtue (devilishly, cruelly) connotation. She, however, is also aware that she enhances their beauty, or what she deems to fit the category of beauty, by describing them like this.

Furthermore, putting the typical Italian man into an object position is underlined when compared with a dog show. Dog shows generally fall into the entertainment section. The meaning of entertainment the Americans seek is discussed in greater detail in this chapter's auto- and hetero-stereotyping section. Liz, or the narrated *I*, explains: "They're like show poodles. Sometimes they look so good I want to applaud" (Gilbert 70). This move of using the subject gaze and objectification of men also plays into the female Grand Tourist scheme, as Rome and Italy are connotated as female, allowing the female tourist the masculine hero-tourist view, which in the case of *Eat Pray Love* almost gets turned into objectifying gaze upon the male in Italy. This resonates with the attribution of Triton's sculpture as a "sexy merman" (Gilbert 7).

The "prevalent American stereotype of Italian men as domineering and traditionally masculine" (Tager and Good 267) or the "macho" and "paterfamilias" (Taurino in Tager and Good 267) gets challenged by the narrated *I* as Liz is not on the receiving end of the Italian stereotype of men being the pursuer. However, this irritates the narrated *I's* "feminine pride" (Gilbert 70), which allows her to reposition herself and rethink her expectations and the general stereotype, which she summarises as: "In conclusion – it seems Italian men have earned themselves the Most Improved Award" (Gilbert 71). However, it also shows, as hinted in the section before, that it was not her that changed, but it was general behaviour in Italian men, as she says:

> So I ask around, and everybody agrees that yes, there's been a true shift in Italy in the last ten to fifteen years. Maybe it's victory of feminism, or an evolution of culture, or the inevitable modernizing effects of having joined the European Union. Or maybe it's just simple embarrassment on the part of young men about the infamous lewdness of their fathers and grandfathers. (Gilbert 70-71)

She does not, however, immediately change her mind as she still uses the hetero-stereotype to answer an Italian man's hetero-stereotype. However, the narrated *I* does not persist in repeating and reframes it instead, to either save face or not turn the conversation in another direction. "He's hitting on me, this kid! […] "You're not too fat for an American woman." I reply in English, "And you're not too greasy for an Italian man." *"Come?"* I repeat myself, in slightly modified Italian: "And you're so gracious, just like all Italian men" (Gilbert 104).

Another incident appears when Deborah, an American friend who is a "feminist psychologist" (Gilbert 115), evaluates the social event of Lucca Spaghetti's birthday. She evaluates the Italian men like this: "Look around at these good Italian men. See how open they are to their feelings and how lovingly they participate in their families. See the regard and respect they hold for the women and children in their lives. Don't believe what you read in the papers, Liz. This country is doing very well" (Gilbert 115).

Overall, the dominant stereotypical view of Italian men, romance and beauty is challenged throughout *Eat Pray Love*, and although extensively employed, the stereotype gets redirected. A shift in view is noticeable after a close reading of these sections. Other sections in which this stereotype is redefined and refuted include the scenes where Giovanni picks up the narrated *I* and Liz reports a view on the reality of their relationship, even though she tinted their relationship as dating and physically attracted previously. "We have never once had a personal conversation, me, and Giovanni. All these months, all these dinners together, all we have talked about is philosophy and art and culture and politics and food. We know nothing of each other's private lives" (Gilbert 91). With that, she reframes him as the perfect source for the aims of a Grand Tourist's source of knowledge upon Italy and Italian views; however, he is not apt for a deeper interpersonal romantic relationship. An act that also frames him as something that can be objectified, fulfilling her need for a Rome-romantic relationship.

However, after taking a closer look at the way Gilbert and Mayes perceive the Italians, the next section will focus on their general approach towards building a social cycle and whom they chose as centring parts of their groups.

6.3. *Under The Tuscan Sun*: Social Cycle

In *Under the Tuscan Sun,* the first steps into the established social cycle of expats are differently acquired from how Gilbert is introduced as Mayes reports being invited to their neighbour's house for lunch and socializing without reference. The neighbours' approach and the following lunch scene fit into the notion of the area being bought up and inhabited by foreigners, presumably expats, for the second time. The first time Mayes mentions the tendency of the area

to be bought up by non-Italians is relatively early in the story. In the statement, Mayes simultaneously achieves to accuse the Italian realtor Signor Martini of being dishonest and reveals the motive of selling to non-Italians by asking how his business is going and following up with the question: "Sell many houses to unsuspecting foreigners?" (Mayes 46). The second time is that the neighbours are expats themselves. "A French woman and her English husband […] both are writers and are restoring their farmhouse, we fall into instant camaraderie" (Mayes 76). This camaraderie is described by an enumeration of similar difficulties as to the preservation of historical properties upheld by "the *commune"* (Mayes 76). Through that, the narrated *I* enters her first social cycle and connection in Italy, mainly consisting of foreigners – especially artists and writers – living in her region in Tuscany (Mayes 77). However, wanting to be part of the group is also determined by a little desperation of belonging, as the group tends to fall into the habit of trouble comparison and down talking the Italy they are in at the present time, with Mayes chiming in (Mayes 77).

This first introduction happens organically even though Mayes, as one learns later, would have had the opportunity to introduce herself via her sisters' recommendation to an American writer based in Tuscany. The friendship with this particular Elizabeth is noteworthy, as it is built through the American friends Mayes has in America and the by chance introduced expat circle, as Elizabeth is part of both groups. She is also a writer who is highly admired by the narrated *I*. However, when Mayes first brings up a connection to both their homeland – "I knew she lived here and even had been given her telephone number by mutual acquaintance in Georgia, where she now spends a part of every year" (Mayes 78) – and notices a "trace of a Southern accent" (Mayes 79), Elizabeth reacts snappy and cuts the first conversation short. However, the fellow American writer evolves to be welcoming and even reproachfully apologetic in her later retort when she says: "You were supposed to call me. […] In fact, I met your sister at dinner in Rome – Georgia, that is" (79). A retort that playfully links American immigration and the founding of the American Rome, a city named after the seven hills it is built on, similar to Rome in Italy (Britannica). Their relationship deepens over their shared experiences of living in their Italian house and navigating the Tuscan region. "Quickly, it becomes clear that she knows everything about Italy. Ed and I begin what is to become the ten thousand questions" (Mayes 80) that enables them to bond and "[s]uddenly we have a friend" (Mayes 80). Friendships with other expats in *Under the Tuscan Sun* are usually formed by sharing things they have in common and exchanging similarities, such as buying or renovating a house or living in Italy as a foreigner (Gilbert 121-122). Another couple of new friends are described with the same comparison of experience and Italy-as-it-once-was reminiscent actions; however, there is also an Italian couple

and a baby present within this section. When it comes to "[t]heir stories [they] weave an Italy around us that we know only through books and films. In the sixties…In the seventies…A true paradise" (Mayes 122). This is a particularly peculiar observation, as Mayes describes Italy similarly in a later section, where she even notices how she sees Italy or how tinted her view might be, as she says: "I have begun to idealize his life [an Italian neighbour]. It is easy for foreigners to idealize, romanticize, stereotype, and oversimplify local people" (Mayes 189). She also compares her view of Italy as if "we've wandered into a Fellini film" (Mayes 120). As a result of these meetings, the participants also tend to compare stories and, as such, world views and cultural discrepancies, which reveal auto- and hetero-stereotypes that will be discussed in the next section.

6.4. *Eat Pray Love*: Social Cycle

In Gilbert's case, at first, she was acquainted through her connection to two Americans, Elizabeth, "a novelist" (Gilbert 58), and Elizabeth, "a food writer" (Gilbert 58), as well as Maria, an American who works "for an international agricultural policy organization" (Gilbert 60) and Giulio, her husband, "a filmmaker" (Gilbert 60). She gets introduced to Luca Spaghetti, "a tax accountant" (Gilbert 62) or "in his own description "an artist", because there are several hundred tax laws on the book in Italy" (Gilbert 62), a reference to an auto-stereotype Italians have on themselves as examined by Rainer (2003). The other relation she has are with Giovanni, who was already described in the previous section, and Sofie, the Swedish girl of whom the narrated *I* says: "At the beginning, I liked to think that Sofie and I looked like sisters" (Gilbert 60), that however gets changes after one Roman cab driver asks the pair whether "Sofie was my [, Liz',] daughter" (Gilbert 60). That is something that the narrated *I* takes, and to make herself feel better, or understood, self relates it to a Texas' country song (Gilbert 60). It comforts the narrated I with a touch of home and American spirit.

However, the friendship with the two Elizabeths are not deeply elaborated on, except for a brief scene of ice cream eating with the food writer (Gilbert 58).

The relationship with the social circle around Luca Spaghetti and his friendship is described in more detail and length. Similarly to Giovanni, the narrated *I* meets Luca to go for meals; the relation is, however, more spontaneous and based upon visiting social backstage areas described as "dirty little dives in the back streets of Rome" (Gilbert 61). Liz gets to experience Luca's point of view upon Rome and food as he, for example, auto-stereotypes the servers as "little Julius Caesers"- proud, pushy, local guys with hair on the backs of their hands and passionately tended pompadours" (Gilbert 61). Liz tries to sort the behaviour of these typed servers into

national pride (61), only to be corrected by Luca Spaghetti's view when he says: "No - they are Romans first, Romans second and Romans third. And every one of them is an Emporer" (Gilbert 61). Lucca Spaghetti explains with his repetition the importance of being Roman to this particular Roman character that Liz tries to grasp. Generally, the servers see themselves as part of the capital, as important enough not to associate themselves with anything but Roman. Liz is drawn to Luca as he operates not only as her guide in Italianness, he is also as her exemplary character for Roman behaviour, feelings, thoughts and general being. "Luca has traveled a fair amount, though he claims he could never live anywhere but in Rome, near his mother, since he is an Italian man, after all" (Gilbert 62). How he has, in her eyes, mastered the art of working hard and living a passionate life, or as she quotes him when he notices that instead of doing it the way New Yorkers do as in working hard and enjoying it: "Romans work hard and resent it massively" (Gilbert 62). She follows his character description with a story of how Luca loves the Roman "coarse traditional fare like guts and tongues" (Gilbert 63), which the narrated *I* explains as "all the parts of the animal the rich people up north throw away" (Gilbert 63). However, it is not specified who the rich people up north are. This could either point toward Northern Italy, which was connotated as quite rural before being turned into coastal resorts and "a site of the mass leisure culture of the 1960's" (Cullen 44) and coming into money, or towards Central Europe. This would recreate the idea of the Grand Tourist and how Italy was portrayed within the period before its unification by other European nations and used as a travel destination (Leibetseder 365).

Nonetheless, by not letting Luca point out this stereotype, which could fall under the aspect of auto-stereotyping, the narrated *I* shows her use of the Italian auto-stereotype and the attempt to say it almost like an indirect quote idea. She uses it as something that is part of her cultural knowledge and ability to judge, as part of her own identity. She makes it seem like a common truth known by anyone, which means she uses the stereotype to make herself part of Rome, Italy, and the locality of the South.

The whole ordeal of eating the intestines, however, is also told after the revelation of Luca not liking "American food, which he says can be described in two words: "Amtrak Pizza" (Gilbert 62). Liz decides that she cannot enjoy the intestines from newborn lambs, which again excludes her from genuinely being Roman, and she compares her dislike to being of a higher spirituality as she says: "I bet Gandhi never ate lamb intestines in his life" (Gilbert 63). Luca counterfeits that by saying that even though he was a vegetarian, lamb intestines can be eaten by vegetarians: "Because intestines aren't even meat, Liz. They're just shit" (Gilbert 63). He marks himself as a shit-eater and Roman, entirely playing the Italian auto-stereotype of Northerners versus

Southerners and being self-ironic. The use of stereotypes in this context, and especially the auto-stereotyping of the Italians, as reported through the narrated *I* and then adopted and reflected through the hetero-stereotyping done through the narrated *I* is explicable through Riehl's (2003) examination of national identity and minorities. In order to feel connected to and as part of a specific ethnic group, the same language, as well as culture, is necessary, which also means that specific behaviour and ways of thought structuring are essential to be similar or adopted, as those characteristics are assigned to stereotypes that the participator is aware of (Riehl 115-116). The next section therefor concentrates on auto- and hetero-stereotyping.

6.5. *Under The Tuscan Sun*: Hetero- and Auto-Stereotyping – Italian/Italy - Americans/America

The Italians Mayes describes are first portrayed through Mayes and her partner Ed's business relationship with them. In the book's first section, they nearly never enter an explicit friendship status, like Elizabeth, the writer, does. In later sections, the Italian people are not explicitly called friends.

The first Italian person Mayes introduces after describing Italy and her house in the warmest light by using colours and drawing on the visual senses is the "*notaio*" (Mayes 6). "A house with the beautiful name Bramasole. It is tall, square, and apricot-colored […] when the light changes, the facade of the house turns gold, sienna, ocher;[…] The house rises above […] Bramasole: from *bramare*, to yearn for, and sole, sun: something that yearns for the sun, and yes, I do" (Mayes 5). Mayes attributes the woman after that as "a small, fierce Sicilian woman" (Mayes 6), speaking the fastest Italian when reading the laws and contracts aloud and not "mellifluous; she makes it sound like rocks crashing down a chute" (Mayes 6). The notaio is not willing to pause as "she will not be interrupted by anyone except for Giuseppe from the bar downstairs [...] [h]e brings the *signora* her midmorning thimble of espresso" (Mayes 6). The narrated *I* then continues to depict the scene in which the house is bought, describing the other people involved in the transaction. None of them is portrayed in flattering tones, which stands in contrast to the just-described house.

The original owner, Dr. Carta, is accused of realising that he had asked too little for the house, while Mayes and Ed "know his price is exorbitant" (Mayes 6). This also points toward the system of evasion in transactions in Italy, where the original owner declares one price and also receives an additional amount not officially declared. A feature that elicits both an indifferent reaction from "Anselmo Martini, our agent, [who] shrugs. Ian, the English estate agent we hired to help with translations, shrugs too" (Mayes 6), and an explicit hetero-stereotyping by Dr.

Carta, an Italian, who follows the scene with: "You Americans! You take things so seriously" (Mayes 6). However, Frances Mayes confirms her hetero-stereotype immediately afterwards, as the narrated *I* questions the bank transaction and the issuing of the cheques by the "sloe-eyed teller [who] languidly conducts transaction every fifteen minutes, between smokes and calls?" (Mayes 7). The stereotype interplay is deepened when Mayes tries to interpret Dr Carta's words and behaviour when he shows them the house again. "He manages to be at once enthusiastic and a little bored, friendly and slightly condescending. […] Or maybe he has interpreted our law-abiding American expectations about the transaction as incredibly naive" (Mayes 12). That incident could also mean that he might want to show them the worth of the property sold to them again instead of being an Italian homeowner that, in Mayes' description, "had scooped a bargain from the ladies in their nineties and now is making a bundle, possibly buying coast property with our money?" (Mayes 12). The idea of sleazy Italian business people who are not honest in transactions is constantly reinforced. The tendency of the system, bank and notaio, being baroque, which is also an auto-stereotype the Italians have on themselves, as can be found in Rainer (2003) (108), is mirrored by the narrated *I*.

The other hetero-stereotype the Italians hold over the Americans mentioned concerns swimming pools. "The swimming pool had become a leitmotif while we were looking for houses" (Mayes 38). It is something that gets reported by "the *pozzoaiolo*, the well driller, assures us […] "Acqua, acqua," he says, gesturing over the entire property. "Enough water for a swimming pool" (Mayes 51). This need for a pool is especially associated, as Mayes sees it, with Mayes' current place of residency in the US, namely California (Mayes 38). Having abundant water on a property is, however, also used as a unique selling point by the Italians as water on properties is precious in the Tuscan area (Mayes 12). Dr Carta, however, uses this idea of Americans being won over by water and associating it with swimming pools when he shows Mayes and Ed the hidden gems of the villa they had agreed to buy. At the same time, he knows about the foreign tendency of being highly intrigued by historical monuments and the created stereotype of Italy being a treasure map of history, as the following section shows. "Enough water for a swimming pool," he insists, "which would be perfect out on the point where you can see the lake, overlooking right where Hannibal defeated the Romans" (Mayes 12-13). That gets appreciated by Mayes and at the same she assumes, "Italians take such remains casually. That one is allowed to own such ancient things seems impossible to me" (Mayes 13), when Dr. Carta shows them that they own part of an ancient Roman road (Mayes 12-13). A hetero-stereotype Mayes has upon the Italians that gets reflected in another scene, where she assumes

that Signora Raguzzi, their bank clerk, "is bored with Arezzo's tombs and piazzas. California sounds good to her. She brightens every time she sees us" (Mayes 21).

However, whenever something slightly American happens, culturally speaking, the expats, as well as Mayes, reject it and question it, as if Italian culture in general needs to be preserved from America and Americans. One such instance is the appearance of a gospel choir in the communal space on the Piazza Signorella, where, according to the narrated *I*, concerts are often organised by the "commune" (Mayes 150). Even though it is a professional choir, the narrated *I* is disturbed by the sound as she describes it as belting instead of singing and the sound warping. "They belt out "Amazing Grace" and "Mary Don't You Weep." The acoustics are weird and the sound warps around the eleventh- and twelfth-century buildings surrounding this piazza" (Mayes 151). She then continues to portray how the piazza is usually used religiously, only to wonder whether Cortona has seen so many Americans and foreigners gathered there since the Liberation in 1944 (Mayes 151). By mentioning that "almost all the Cortonese are crushed in Piazza Signorelli" (Mayes 151), it seems the Italians enjoy this display. A choir member invites an Italian girl on stage, whom the narrated *I* describes. "She has a mighty voice that easily matches any of theirs, and her small body seems all song. What are they thinking, this ancient race of Cortonese? Are they remembering the tanks rolling in, oh happy, happy day, the soldiers throwing oranges to the children? […] Or are they simply swaying with the crude American Jesus" (Mayes 151). The narrated *I* seems to feel displacement, although the scene as it is described is still a crowd pleaser, as the listeners respond to the choirs' invitations to sing along (Mayes 151).

Another instance of the disrupted narrated *I* confronted with her culture in the foreign is the following section. "A friend says Italy is getting to be just like everywhere else – homogenized and Americanized, she says disparagingly" (Mayes 110). Mayes rejects this, as she thinks that the Italians do still look Italian, and attributes their Italiannesse to the way they appear and look, especially focusing on the rurality of them, as she uses words such as hard work, serviceable, or their faces and bodies being firm and lean.

> I want to drag her here and stand her in this doorway. The men have the look of their lives – perhaps we all do. Hard work, their faces and bodies affirm. All are lean, not a pound of extra fat anywhere. They look cured by the sun, so deeply tan they probably never go pale in winter. Their country clothes are serviceable, rough – they don't "dress", they just get dressed. They wear, as well, a natural dignity. Surely some are canny, crusty, cruel, but they look totally present, unhidden, and alive. (Mayes 110)

Through that, the narrated *I* confirms the general conception of Italians that the foreigner has as rural, peasantry and looking like workers, for whom the consumption of products or the externalisation is less critical, thus appearing alive.

In contrast to what foreigners or tourists do when being there. After sightseeing and eating, they go shopping. The guests Mayes hosts for the wedding also apply this kind of vacationing. "Everyone is running off in different directions sightseeing and shopping" (Mayes 103). A notion that also reveals itself in Mayes' obsession with Italian shoes (Mayes 11) and the general tendency to, whenever describing a town scene, coupling her visits to town with buying, even if it is justified as something for the house (Mayes 102, 108-109, 141). The narrated *I* confirms the stereotype of Americans going shopping and sightseeing, as well as rushing everywhere when she says: "It's tempting to mock that impulse but to me it's extremely interesting when one chooses to power through that many miles. First of all, it's very American" (Mayes 145).

The idea that Italian culture, however, also sometimes needs to be preserved from the Italians themselves is also exhibited. One explicit instance in which the narrated *I* gets disturbed is during a visit to a church, listening to five Augustinian monks chanting. "Usually, the habit of regarding the church as an extension of the living room or piazza charms me, but today I turn and stare at them" (Mayes 162). The referred to them means "women fanning themselves and chatting just behind us" (Mayes 162). Mayes does not explicitly say whom she is offended for, be it the monks, the religious act and or the singing art; however, she knows that the cultural habit of chatting is a disturbing catalyst for her and needs correcting behaviour.

Another instance of knowing better and putting herself in a position of having more wisdom is the implicit rejection of the Italian take on the renovation. The feeling of incompetency towards Italians when it comes to doing their labour during the rebuilding process is portrayed through Mayes and others.

The first instance of doing so is when Mayes and Ed start their renovation and hire a geometra, a coordinator who advises them on the renovations. "The *geometra* is full of opinions. He thinks the apartment's back staircase should come out. We love it, a secret escape. He thinks we should replaster the cracked and crumbling stuccado facade, paint it ocher. No way. [...] He thinks our first priority should be the roof" (Mayes 31). During this sequence, the phrase - He thinks - is repeated about three times. Using this repetitive style with an immediate explanation of why his suggestions are not seen as fitting enhances the feeling of a condescending Italian coordinator, as his sentences are not actively spoken but a passive report of opinion. It furthermore is not explained why he thinks these changes need to be undertaken; however, the narrated *I* does give reasons why she thinks they are not an option. The sequence ends with a

comment on how the contractor speaks to them, which makes it seem as if the coordinator sees it as a language fault instead of a general disagreement. “He speaks to us kindly, as if through precise enunciation we will understand him” (Mayes 31). Mayes and Ed disagree with it, as they think it is still intact and therefore does not need their immediate attention, disregarding the intention of the coordinator. “Listen, the roof must be consolidated. They will preserve the tiles, number them, place them again in the same order, but you will have insulation; the roof will be strengthened” (Mayes 31). After they tell him that they do not have much money left and “Americans, I try to explain, sometimes are “do it yourself” people […], the *geometra* shakes his head as though all is hopeless if he has to explain things as basic as these” (Mayes 31). However, what is not explained is that Italian houses like these are not exactly like American houses due to their age, and their geometra has worked on Italian houses. In contrast, Mayes and Ed worked on American houses. They decide on renovating the heating system. However, the geometra also applies to the roof permit (Mayes 32). Mayes and Ed decided to hand over the work they could not do themselves to a contractor that was recommended by their geometra. An agreement is reached overall.

The first chosen contractor falls into the picture of the peasantry. “He holds his cap in his hand in a way I recognize from my father’s mill workers in the South; he’s used to being the “peasant” speaking to the “*padrone*”” (Mayes 35). He advises against the renovation of the central heating, saying: “Keep the fire going, dress warmly, signora, the cost is formidable” (Mayes 36), which is then finally taken as acceptable advice, even though the geometra had already given his opinion. Due to illness, however, they switched to another contractor who did what they originally intended and what they asked him to do: repair the heating and knock down a wall (Mayes 31 and 93-95). However, as soon as it is done and “the whole house creaked and all the workers ran out” (Mayes 94), the narrated *I* starts questioning the methods. “Had Benito used steel? Why hadn’t they known what to do? How could this happen? Ian said stone houses were unpredictable and couldn’t be expected to react the way American houses react […] I vacillated between thinking that the workers were incompetent and fearing that they might have been crushed by an unstable house” (Mayes 94). Even though Mayes and her partner were made aware that Italian houses, especially old stone houses, were built differently in terms of stacking stones over each other with a declining thickness of the wall the further up the house went, by the geometra (Mayes 30), Mayes and Ed insisted on modernising the ground floor room, by opening it up. Through asking the questions, the narrated *I* pushes the responsibility away as grammatically the agent is Benito, they, and the situation (this), even though Mayes and Ed had been warned previously and gave the order.

However, there are other instances where workers, some from different nationalities, express their opinions on Italian work. The Polish workers do so with phrases like: "*Italia cemento*." He crumbles too dry cement between his fingers. "*Polonia cemento*." He kicks a rockhard section of the retaining wall. This has become a nationalistic issue" (Mayes 56). Another instance is when one of Benito's workers gestures to Mayes. "As he gestures, I catch the worker looking at me. Behind Benito's back he makes a strange gesture; he nods to Benito, then pulls down his eyelid. […] As we start to go, I remember the strange gesture. "What does this mean?" I ask, pulling down my eyelid. "*Furbo*," cunning, watch out, he answers" (Mayes 96).

Not only the contractor himself other workers are dismissed as well. "Alfiero becomes a problem. He lights like a butterfly on one project after another, starting something, doing a sloppy job, then taking off" (Mayes 55). Another instance of this behaviour is portrayed when Mayes is invited to the dinner party of the Italian expats, where they start to tell stories about Italy as they perceived it during previous visits. The expats describe their Italy by reminiscing about the former Italy as they sense it. In doing so, two stereotypes are employed. The first stereotype is to see Italy in the light of the glorious past. The Italy of the dinner guests is characterised by the proximity to slow progress and the possibility for Americans to get a lot for what they think of as little money.

> You can't imagine what Rome was like in the fifties. Magic. I fell in love – like you fall in love with a person – and schemed to find a way to stay there. […] Look at the old movies and you'll see there were almost no cars. This was not long after the war and Italy was devastated, but the *life*! It was unbelievably cheap, too. Of course we didn't have much money but we lived in enormous flats in grand palazzi for nothing. (Mayes 77)

The magic of the place is attributed to it being inexpensive, which adds to the idea of the Americans arriving and being able to afford things they would usually, depending on their socio-economic status in America, not have. Alternatively, as Perissinotto phrases it: "[T]hey have developed a sense of agency that affords them the dream to not just travel, but to make a home in a new country […] but also, like the young Grand Tourists of the 18th Century, leisure time to plan an extended stay" (248). Mayes, as the narrative *I*, takes the idea of former Italy and its magic and initially agrees with them. "We feel the same way" (Mayes 77). However, the narrative *I* also dismisses the guests' general feeling by attributing the charm to another aspect of Italy and its effect on her. She does not think of America as a place to leave behind easily, as she says: "Spending time here [Italy] lets me escape the craziness and violence and downright surreal aspects of America, and my own overscheduled life" (Mayes 78). The effect

of Italy - “Literally my pulse slows down” (Mayes 78) - is accepted by the expat group as they answer, leading in with an Italian phrase “*Esatto*, my daughter feels the same. You didn’t come along in time to know Rome back then. It’s terrible now. But then it was irresistible” (Mayes 78). All expats agree with the second idea of the statement. “They all agree, Italy is not what it used to be” (Mayes 78). The narrated *I* uses this to give herself moral superiority over the other expats whom she almost paints as outdated when she continues to reason. “What is [what it used to be]? […] All true, but what can you do but live now?” (Mayes 78). However, Mayes, as the narrated *I*, as well as the other expats, view Italy through dwelling with “enough resources to purchase property in Italy” (Perissinotto 248), making them a part of an upper class to be found within the first world travellers (Perissinotto 248). Mayes compares America and the American way of life with Italy as she perceives it as the eyes of the expat views it. The narrated *I* comes here without having to work and not being part of the social system, in that sense, as they have the role of the foreigner, the consumer and the rebuilder of their own Italian idea. Making Italy something that is “not exclusively Italian” (Wetzel 174) and also falls into the aspect of the Grand Tour, where Italy was not visited to be viewed as culture of its own, but as something that could be adapted into the own identity (Wetzel 174).

The idea of Italians being stuck in another time and stereotyping the Italians and their general socio-economic status into former times is, however, employed throughout *Under the Tuscan Sun*. For example, the language is described as “[t]he baroque legal terms leave us way behind” (Mayes 21) when an Italian expression of measurement is used to outline the land of the property acquired. She also addresses the, in the American sense, seemingly slower progress of checks. “What is the big deal with checks? I get boxes of them at home” (Mayes 20). The way the Italian banks are run is also wonderous and described on the next page. “Only these pale green checks that look as though they were printed in the twenties” (Mayes 21). The circumstances of Italian life are described as slower, and therefore, the American auto-stereotype of being more advanced is employed. The people are described as being stuck in a different historical time. The Italian iron smith is depicted as “The man who unfolds from Guiseppe’s *cinque cento* could have stepped from behind a time shield of the Middle Ages. He is tall and gaunt like Abraham Lincoln;” (Mayes 58).

Another example is the idea of Italy adhering to the order of the mezzandria, shown when Mayes describes their search for a property as either being guided by farmhouses or mansions owned by contessas or peasantry. “The saw-toothed peasant we met in a bar tried to sell us his childhood home […] We fell hard for a farm outside Montisi; the *contessa* who owned it led us on for days, then decided she needed a sign from God” (Mayes 9). Another instance of gentry

owning land is found on page 13. “One had a tower built by the Crusaders, but the *contessa* who owned it cried and doubled the price on the spot when she saw that we really were interested. Another was attached to other farmhouses where chickens were truly free range” (Mayes 13). Mayes’ narrated *I* sees the Italians as people with much time on their hands. “Qualities those of us with northern blood envy – that Italian insouciance and ability to live in the moment with gusto – I now see came down straight from the Etruscans” (Mayes 178). At this moment, Mayes furthermore attributes herself to someone with Northerner’s blood. However, she grew up in the South of North America, which is similar to the Italian climate (Köppen-Geiger climate classification, vetmedunivienna). The narrated *I* also attributes it as something innate to the Italians, in her eyes, descendants of the Etruscans. Italians are presented as the ultimate masters of being able to live in any time predicament they want to when she imagines them as Medieval or Renaissance, shown here through the description of her neighbour. “I have the feeling that he could have lived in any era; he is independent of time” (Mayes 189). She continues with: “This sport [falconary] certainly does nothing to subtract from my impression that Placido lives across time” (Mayes 190).

Within *Under the Tuscan Sun,* the stereotyping process is used to place the self in the negotiation of cultural identity. It is even made explicit when Mayes muses about the reason for the trip or for living as an expat and buying a house. In the same section as the American way of travelling is reflected upon, the narrated *I* states:

> Just *drive,* please. And far and quickly. There’s the strong “get me out of here” impetius behind such trips even when they’re disguised as “seeing the lay of the land, so I’ll know the places I want to come back to.” It’s not the destination; it’s the ability to be on the road, happy trails, out where no one knows or understands or cares about all the deviling things that have been weighing you down, keeping you frantic as a lizard with a rock on its tail. (Mayes 145)

The narrated *I* establishes what the journey evokes as a need or effect: “Once *in* a place, that journey to the far interior of the psyche begins or it doesn’t” (Mayes 145). She explains that this particular journey allows change for her, “[b]ecause I had ended a long marriage that was not supposed to end and was establishing a new relationship, this house quest felt tied to whatever identity I would manage to forge” (Mayes 15). The narrated *I* is well aware of the American notion of fast and quick travel. It is also aware of the tendency to create a new identity and self through travelling. This analysis, however, also shows that the narrated *I* uses the act of stereotyping as a way of placing the self by either adopting, rejecting, negotiating and adapting into specific ideas Italy brings about or are observed and titled by the narrated *I*. She

is making Italy the ideal playground for justifying the tendency to attribute auto- and hetero-stereotypes as a way of self-reflective negotiation and character development.

6.6. *Eat Pray Love*: Hetero- and Auto-Stereotyping – Italians/Italy – Americans/America

An instance of stereotyping that involves hetero- and auto-stereotyping within *Eat Pray Love* is done when the narrated *I* seeks to order and even to naturalise the ambivalence the narrated *I* feels toward herself, her own culture and the Italian culture in terms of her search for pleasure. The narrated *I* starts section 21 with the following sequence. "Frankly, pure pleasure is not my cultural paradigm" (Gilbert 63). She attributes the "Americans [as having] […] an inability to relax into sheer pleasure [even though that] […] [o]urs is an entertainment-seeking nation" (Gilbert 64). She claims they "work harder and longer and more stressful hours than anyone in the world today" (Gilbert 64). According to the narrated *I,* the Americans do not know how to do nothing (Gilbert 64), which she then concludes "is the cause of that great sad American stereotype – the overstressed executive who goes on vacation, but who cannot relax" (Gilbert 64). The Italians, however, in *Eat Pray Love*, serve as a contradicting example to the American way of behaviour. The narrated *I* uses them to negotiate a way to show that both are possible, working hard and doing nothing. One particular section that indicates this attempt is led in with Luca Spaghetti, the narrated *I's* Roman prime example, who speaks for the whole nation using the collective pronoun "we" when he reports: "Oh, no!" he said. "We are the masters of *bel far niente*." […] Bel far niente means "the beauty of doing nothing." (Gilbert 64).

The next auto-stereotype of Americans contrasted against the Italians is then having "Puritan guilt […] the insecurity about whether we have earned our happiness […] [that culminates in] the reactionary binge. Followed by the remorse" (Gilbert 64). This notion is used to explain "insecure consumer" (Gilbert 64) behaviour that gets targeted by "advertising companies" (Gilbert 65) as a way to explain overconsumption and depression in America. The Italians, however, are shown as not being as affected by this as "Italians have traditionally always been hard workers, especially those long-suffering laborers" (Gilbert 64) and "Italian culture, where people already know that they are entitled to enjoyment in this life" (Gilbert 64). There is the idea of all Americans as Puritans, which might be based on the fact that the narrated *I*'s father's side of the family was Puritan (Gilbert 63).

The undertaking of stereotypisations then leads to the narrated *I's* reminiscence of how her "Protestant synapses were zinging in distress" (Gilbert 65) when she explored the concept of pleasure while portraying Italy as the place of "manifestations of pleasure" (Gilbert 65). Even

though the narrated *I* claims that "[y]ou don't necessarily need to be rich in order to experience this [nothing], either" (Gilbert 64), she summarizes her pleasure in the ability to consume. The narrated *I* points out the obvious pleasures of Italy as "fashion, or opera, or cinema, or fancy automobiles, or skiing in the Alps" (Gilbert 66) that correlate with being able to afford these types of activities and that point toward the connection of pleasure as consumption. The narrated *I* determines not to "sample" (Gilbert 66) all of them. Using the verb sample, this also draws on the connotation of the concept of sample and supermarket, where the sampling leads up to buying, consuming and – if believed in the American stereotype – bingeing. The narrated *I* decides on learning Italian and eating, as her pleasure points. "So I declared a double major, really – in speaking and in eating" (Gilbert 66). There is a reversion to the idea of the Grand Tour as a way of studying and broadening the knowledge and earning the degree of having done prestigious travel by being able to show off the gathered insights. The whole section on comparing Italian and American ways of living is an accumulation of one auto-stereotype contrasted against the next hetero-stereotype. Something that is done as a way of negotiating the own personality, reasoning and stance; also notable by the way the narrated *I* starts the section of comparison. "Sometimes I wonder what I am doing here." (Gilbert 63).

However, even before this instance, the Italian character Giulio, married to the American Maria, attributed the Americans in the following section. "He says all Americans are like this: repressed. Which makes them dangerous and potentially deadly when they blow up" (Gilbert 61). This idea gets reflected in various instances when measured against the Italian approach to emotion as being able to be "overcome by anger" (Gilbert 61) and expressing it, as Giulio would have felt it to be authentic as a proper reaction to the quarrel he and his wife had. The idea of the hetero-stereotype of the American as repressing their emotions and the stereotype of the emotion-driven Italian can also be seen in another instance. "The tears begin when Mario – our host – weeps in open gratitude […] Simona – our hostess – cries even more openly than her husband had, as she expresses her gratitude" (Gilbert 114-115). As the round of expressing gratitude ends, it leads to collective crying of the party guests, including the narrated *I*, celebrating the birthday of Luca Spaghetti and Thanksgiving (Gilbert 115). As there is this contradiction of Americans not being able to express what they truly feel and Liz and her friend crying and being emotional, there is also a show of repression in admittance, as Liv does not honestly say what she feels at that moment (Gilbert 115).

In these instances, *Eat Pray Love* uses auto- and hetero-stereotyping of the American that sees itself reflected in the identity of the narrated *I*, when the character is falling into the mode of self-explaining and reasoning, which tend to be followed by instances of performative

authenticity. In occasions of these authentic moments, such as the scene in chapter 21 that follows the auto- and hetero-stereotyping, the bare minimum of descriptive adjectives and role moulding is detectable, even though there is an implicit characterisation that leads to falling into a general stereotype Americans have upon Italian food; however, this will be discussed in greater length in the section of senses. Liz experiences a backstage area that she stumbles upon, contrary to the ones she gets recommended when asking Italians for their advocacy. In the said backstage area, a market, she approaches a vegetable stall in which she converses with the Italian owners, buys products, and has an interaction without grand explanation, with a balanced focus on surrounding description, language use, and a very brief characterisation that would not have been noticeably lacking to convey the scenery around the son of the vegetable stall. "Then her son, *who was very cute*, gave me a sly look and said, "Well, she tries to be here at seven…" (Mayes 67).

Another instance of explicit categorisation and stereotyping happens in Naples. Even though Liz only goes to Naples once, she describes "Neapolitan women in particular are such a gang of tough-voiced, loud -mouthed, generous, nosy dames, all bossy and annoyed right up in your face and just trying to friggin' help you for chrissake" (Gilbert 81), which then leads to another backstage area authentic experience, this time due to the recommendation of Giovanni, the language partner (Gilbert 83).

When it comes to Italian auto-stereotyping, it is usually done through a direct verbatim of the Italian character, such as described above when Luca speaks about the Italian servers. Part of Italian auto-stereotypes is that Italians see their politicians as corrupt and are not very impressed by political performance (Rainer 107). Liz is confronted with the opinion of Luca's friend group upon their politician "(more commonly referred to around these parts as *l'idiota*)" (Gilbert 112) and continues to describe the current prime minister as this:

> This intellect-free, soccer-club-owning businessman, with his oily film of corruption and sleaze, who regularly embarrasses his fellow citizens by making lew gestures in the European parliament, who has mastered the art of speaking *l'aria fritta* ("fried air"), who expertly manipulates the media (not difficult when you own it), and who generally behaves not at all like a proper world leader but rather like a Waterbury mayor (that's an inside joke for Connecticut residents only – sorry)" (Gilbert 112).

These attributions have two significant characteristics. The narrated *I* uses the Italian words l'idiota and l'aria fritta to underline her being informed and part of the Italian in-group and to express that her opinion falls in line with the group's opinion concerning the Italian prime minister. She then reproduces the Italian opinion on the prime minister, mixing in culture-

and region-specific knowledge by inserting the Connecticut-only reference. She uses the stereotyping notion to adapt to the emotive of the Italian passion toward politicians, which – according to Rainer (2003) – is the area where most auto-stereotypes get reinforced by Italian journalists (107). The narrated *I* brings her own experience into the description; however, she is also surprised that the general opinion of Italian/Roman's disliking of their leading politician and his sympathising with the American president does not fall negatively on her being American. She reports the following. "Indeed, when I came to Italy, I expected to encounter a certain amount of resentment, but have received instead empathy from most Italians" (Gilbert 113). This means that the Italian auto-stereotype is turned into the attempt to place the self as part of the in-group and use the auto-stereotype as a general act of stereotyping.

After considering social relations and their impact on auto- and hetero-stereotyping, the following section focuses on the cultural practice of food preparation and the role of food in representation and appropriation.

7. Senses

Cooking, eating and produce play a vital role in *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love*, as both works use the gastronomic sphere to relate to Italians and their way of eating. To understand the cravings of Mayes and Gilbert a brief history of the culinary evolution of Italy allows further insight in the Italian culture of food.

Massimo Montanar states in the beginning of his book "Italian Identity in the Kitchen, on Food and the Nation" that "[a]limentary and gastronomic models – always a decisive element of collective identities – were an integral part of this [Italian] culture" (xvi). The majority of people in Italy's food history were less experienced and modern than other cities already were during the Middle Ages (Montarino 35). "Like the Italy of travelers, the Italy of markets was the privilege of few" (Montarino 29). Italy was divided into two regions that stood out for their cookbooks, "one southern in origin, the other Tuscan" (Montarino 11), and overall, it was for a long time centred around cities that stood out as especially culinary rich due to "the high bourgeoisie (which produced the Tuscan cookbook) - urban centers, in any case, such as Palermo, Naples, Siena, and later Bologna, Florence, and Venice" (Montarino 12). It was only after the last great famine in 1815/16, when Italian peasants were forced to grow non-native crops, such as maize, due to agrarian capitalism and its development driven by the Italian landowners, that Italy established agrarian agreements to prevent hunger and famines, and Italy developed into a country rich in culinary products and produce, as farmers found other ways to utilize the products, they were initially prohibited from using (Montarino 35-37).

However, Italy was still divided in quite regional ways of eating, where each region was known for specific styles and products, such as the Neapolitan macaroni, later standing for the whole south of Italy (Montarino 44). This was significantly changed through emigration, which made it possible to mix regional styles and created a general way of eating like an Italian style built in overseas communities (Montarino 45). Only with the creation of the Italian cookbook "La Scienza in Cucina" a unification of the Italian style of eating was created in Italy (Montarino 49-50). "Pellegrino Artusi certified the birth of a modern Italian cuisine that established itself not only among the urban middle class, […] but with time among the popular class as well" (Montarino 51). However, one of the most dominant ideas about Italian cuisine is that of pasta, which was also created during this time. "What is most significant is the space he devotes to pasta, both industrial and homemade. In this, Artusi's manual [the original author] is completely original and assists in the birth of the Italian stereotype" (Montarino 50).

However, within the primary literature, the connection to food, land, and produce is quite essential, and the various stereotypes, ideas, and functions of food will be examined in the last section of the analysis.

7.1. *Under The Tuscan Sun*: Food

The notion of Italy "depicted as a place inhabited by huge and fertile families, a country that is "frozen" in a rural preindustrial reality, where the produce is still handpicked and delivered to the closest market" (Girarldi 321), as previously mentioned, finds resonance in *Under the Tuscan Sun*, especially in terms of food and produce. The topics of food, family, entertainment, a deep-rooted connection of the narrated *I* to her previous life, and a (re-)connection to domestic skills get targeted throughout the book, as well as the classic ideas of Italian food and produce. However, that does not happen without reasoning of the narrated *I* in later chapters by pushing interpretations and ideas on foreign things (Mayes 166) or authentic moments, as will be analysed when viewing scenes such as portrayed on page 167.

Before going in-depth into the stereotypes of Italy, its food, Italian culture, and its cuisine, one particular section has to be mentioned, as food and produce become dominant themes of *Under the Tuscan* Sun. The narrated *I* explains, "[b]ecause I had ended a long marriage that was not supposed to end and was establishing a new relationship, this house quest felt tied to whatever new identity I would manage to forge" (Mayes 15). The deep connection the narrated *I* feels toward Italian cuisine and Italian products and food items is a vital motive; however, it changes throughout the book through different viewing points and diversity in the Tuscan cuisine.

In *Under the Tuscan Sun*, the narrated *I* not only chooses her purchased property due to its value and status or location. The narrated *I* and her partner scout the surroundings in terms of food and imaginative entertaining (as well as food preparation, which the narrated *I* describes as an "intense focus" (Mayes 8). "We visit weekly markets not just with the purchase of picnic peaches in mind; we looked carefully at all the produce's quality and variety, mentally forecasting birthday dinners, new holidays, and breakfasts for weekend guests" (Mayes 8). Italy, as a food and produce-providing country, gets elicited by the focus Mayes lies upon the kitchen and everything close to it. The housing and renting revolve around the gallery as much as they do around the place and the house.

> Volterra, Florence, Montisi, Rignano, Vicchio, Quercegrossa, all those fascinating, quirky houses. One had a kitchen two people could not pass in […]. Another kitchen had no hot water and no knives […]. One had several sets of china for forty, countless glasses and silverware, but the refrigerator iced over every day and by four the door swung open, revealing a new igloo (Mayes 7).

This food- and kitchen-centred approach clarifies itself throughout the various sections, in which the narrated *I* starts to reveal more background story. Having such an intense focus on this area of the house also opens the kitchen as the most dominant backstage area for performative authenticity, where the Italian culture with the stereotypical idea of eating and having people over has its roots as the preparing and forging of the evening.

The narrated *I* sees cooking as her female family trait; to her, it is closely connected to heritage, as seen on page 116. She associates the skill of cooking with her mother and their chef, Willie Bell (Mayes 114) and continues to use words such as "legacy" (Mayes 115) or "inexorable inheritance" (Mayes 115), when explaining about Mayes' daughters cooking skills. "Without meaning to, she seemed to have absorbed certain knowledge. […] These familial connections give me a helpless feeling: Cooking is destiny" (Mayes 115).

Cooking adds to Mayes' identity and helps her feel connected to her American life and heritage, even though she also reports keeping cooking to a bare minimum in San Francisco due to her work-life schedule (Mayes 115). The narrated *I* certainly sees it as essential that her food is as qualitative as possible; however, statements like "I buy enough "gourmet takeout" for two days" (Mayes 92) still show her change in approach when being back home, even though she already has acquired knowledge in cooking with a few ingredients and with limited time during their restoration phase (Mayes 26). The approach to feeding the self is bound toward the immediate surroundings of Italy or America.

The freshness of produce in Italy and acquiring food at a market is treated on multiple occasions, for instance: “Fruit does not come with stickers; vegetables are not waxed or irradiated, and the taste is truly different” (Mayes 116).

Another instance is the learning curve that produce in Italy always is at its height when she reports of instances such as the following. “At first I was miffed when tomatoes or peas had spoiled when I got around to cooking them a few days later. Finally I caught on that what you buys today I ready – picked or dug this morning at its peak” (Mayes 110). In another scene, American watermelons are compared to Italian watermelons. “I must admit that the Tuscan melons rival in flavor those Sugar Babies we picked hot out of the fields in South Georgia […] I never mastered the art of the thump. Whether the melon is ripe or not the thump sounds the same to me. Each one I cut, however, seems to be at pinnacle – toothy crispness, audacious sweetness” (Mayes 63). It is perfection that Mayes describes when she revels in her eating habits in Italy, when using adverbs such as “toothy crispness” and “audacious sweetness”. Toothy as such standing for a broad and happy smile, crispness, that again goes over into audacious, a term usually used for something that is actively done instead of achieved by an inanimate object. Through this is already teased what Mayes feels, that she fulminates with her statement of being pulled back into childhood. “I am seven again” (Mayes 63). It is a transportation back, where things are sweeter and more careless, that allow her to feel what all Italians seem to portray for her, timelessness.

The first thing the narrated *I* continuously does is building on the connection to the idea of the female, of the domestic and cooking as well as gathering food, when describing the way, she approaches food in Italy and drawing on the constant of the nonna, the female energy of the house she feels through this statement. “I’m hunting and gathering food for a dinner” (Mayes 105). Earlier in the book, she states that “[t]he idea of cooking here inspires me – […] An abandoned slab of marble from a dresser top serves as pastry table when I decided to make my own crust for a plum tart” (Mayes 27). In contrast to that, her partner Ed is usually described as the one gardening and farming, also in later accounts throughout the book.

> He has come to know every ilex, boulder, stump, and oak. […] His father was a farmer until the age of forty […] His ancestors must have come out of the polish fields. They, I’m certain, would recognize him across a field. Although he never remembers to water the houseplants in San Francisco, he hauls buckets up to the new fruit trees in dry spells, babies a special lavender with scented foliage, reads into the night about compost and pruning. (Mayes 185)

The second idea the narrated *I* continuously builds around the food is placing food, Italians, and Etruscans, which are quite important to Mayes, in the present and now and as an everlasting connection of the interplay of high culture. One specific scene showing that is at the end of a market haul, when the narrated *I* stumbles upon grapes.

> The trunk of his minuscule Fiat is piled with black grapes that have warmed all morning in the sun. I'm stopped by the winy, musty, violet scents. He offers me one. The hot sweetness breaks open in my mouth. I have never tasted anything so essential in my life as this grape on this morning. They even smell purple. The flavor older than the Etruscans and deeply fresh and pleasing, just leaves me stunned. (Mayes 112)

At the beginning of her book, the narrated *I* even states that within her writing, she reveals what she has achieved in her first years in Italy, namely "transforming an overgrown jungle into its proper function as a farm for olives and grapes; exploring the layers and layers of Tuscany and Umbria; cooking in a foreign kitchen and discovering the many links between the food and the culture – these intense joys frame the deeper pleasure of learning to live another kind of life" (Mayes 2). The ideas of being Italian, adopting Italian practices and deciding on what Italian features suit the new self are also connected to the way Mayes regards the food and its heritage. Each item is either a connection to the past, her Americanness, or a way of incorporating another culture. However, in the first section, stereotypical Italian food is shown, as well as the drawings of the idea of how Italians acquire food, not incorporating the fact that the narrated *I* is acting through another stance, namely that of a foreigner and an expat living the life of a tourist with leisure time and money to spend as the narrated *I* pleases. She reports in the following section. "As I unload my cloth sack, the kitchen fills with the scents of sunny fruits and vegetables warmed in the car. Everyone coming home from market must feel compelled to arrange the tomatoes, eggplants […], zucchini, and enormous peppers into a still life in the nearest basket" (Mayes 112). However, if one believes the rural approach of Italy and where Mayes has bought her house, then most of these vegetables are, in fact, garden vegetables that the Italians would, especially if they are farmers, grow themselves.

The notions of food, food preparation, harvesting and the area of the kitchen are also used by the narrated *I* to negotiate the role she has and to connect to a femininity she ascribes to Italy as well as the domestic sphere. Previous female travellers achieved something similar when adopting the tourist, heroic, and male gaze, such as the female American women artists described in the section above (Proctor 50-51). Italy is where the narrated *I* can freely, as in circumstance of time and monetarily, connect to the feminine through the formerly coined female space, the domestic and the feminine spirit the narrated *I* feels. She explains it in the

following section. “And, ah, the foreign self. The new life might shape itself to the contours of the house, which already is at home in the landscape, and to the rhythms around it” (Mayes 16). This, as already mentioned, can come down to the idea that in Italy, large groups of people and extended family inhabit the land and gather at the table (Girardelli 317), which Mayes also adopts when viewing food and food preparation. As one sees in her descriptions, it is essential for her to have people around in Italy, as she constantly invites people over and also builds her house to be inhabited by large groups.

> The long stretch of summer lunches calls for a long *tavola*. Now that the kitchen is finished, we need a table outdoors, the longer the better, because inevitably the abundance at the weekly market incites me to buy too much and because inevitably guests gather – friends from home, a relative’s friends from somewhere who thought they say hello since they were in the area, and new friends, sometimes with friends of theirs. Add another handful of pasta to the boiling pot, add a plate, a tumbler, find another chair. The table and the kitchen can oblige. (Mayes 117).

Another instance that Mayes attributes to food, food intake and Italy itself are the components of time and people. Her American working self differs from that. “In our normal life in San Francisco, everyday cooking becomes a chore” (Mayes 115). With life being busy, the Italian lifestyle can only be achieved on weekends. “On weekends we try to roast two chickens or make minestrone a big pasta sauce” (Mayes 115). However, in Italy, Mayes reports something different. “Here I have that prime ingredient, time. Guests really do want to pit the cherries or run into town for another wedge of *parmigiano*. Also, cooking seems to take less time because the quality of the food is so fine that only the simplest preparations are called for” (Mayes115 - 116). She also connects the land with specific food items. “Of all herbs, basil holds the essence of Tuscan summer” (Mayes 117). She also says that “I planted a hedge of sage, more than I ever could use, and let most flower for the butterflies. Sage flowers, along with lavender, look pretty in wildflower bouquets. The rest I dry or use fresh, usually for white beans with chopped sage and olive oil, a favourite of Tuscans, who are known as “bean eaters.”” (Mayes 117). After the first section, in which food plays a vital role, however, the food centring is then hereby not as dominating in the narrated *I*’s storytelling process, as Mayes includes a collection of recipes, or rather her own little cookbook section titled “Summer Kitchen Notes” (Mayes 124). It contains her take on Italian food. She advises her readers on how Italians would cook and how we signified through the us do it. “Italians wouldn’t consider risotto or pasta a main course, but for us, often it is. The oil of choice is, of course, olive oil, unless otherwise specified. All herbs in these recipes are fresh” (Mayes 125). The cookbook is sectioned into the Italian sub-

sectioning of "Antipasti", "Primi Piatti", "Secondi", "Contorni", and "Dolci", which Girardelli calls "communicating Italianicity" (314) and part of the verbal strategy as it is employed by the American franchise restaurant Fazoli's (Girardelli 314). This, he says, is "adding an additional Italian "flavor" to the products, which would be otherwise absent if the original English word was used" (Girardelli 315). Each recipe is led in with a personal note or story to the ingredients such as the peppers, which Mayes calls "immense, convoluted, lustrous" (Mayes 125) or "*Hazelnut Gelato* Super rich, this gelato makes me want to give up my citizenship and decamp permanently" (Mayes 136). Overall, the language used when entering the realm of culinary is that of sensuousness. The feeling of sinful pleasure is implied, for instance: "When this is good it's very, very good and when it's limp it's disaster" (Mayes 134). This stands in contrast to if it is soggy, oily, or non-crisp, which would describe a state of preparation.

The narrated *I* also does not stop at trying to delve into the Italian past; at the Christmas dinner she throws, she adds a Tuscan cake beside her family cake.

> For dessert, a family cake I know by heart and castagnaccio, the classic Tuscan chestnut flour cake. My neighbour says not to try it. Her grandmother used to make it when they were very poor. […] As my neighbour indicates, it must be one of those acquired tastes. […] My neighbour just shakes her head. I'm intrigued. This cake will send us back to the roots of Tuscan cooking. (Mayes 213)

Here, the narrated *I* is once again overcome with the urge to connect to the Italian, Tuscan, and Etruscan way of living and to connect to this old culture by cooking and incorporating traditional food that was part of Italy's historical past of poverty.

One of the last chapters is devoted to "Winter Kitchen Notes" (Mayes 220) that are again organised in the Italian order of eating ("Antipasti", "Primi Piatti", …). The recipes are accompanied by little stories of present-day Italy and past reminiscence of American dishes similar to the Italian, however, striving from restricting the dishes to pasta and pizza.

Overall, the food and food-themed passages in *Under the Tuscan Sun* incorporate the need to connect to the Italian culture as it is portrayed through its dishes and foods; however, different needs and open-mindedness are noticeable toward general Italian behaviour outside the culinary realm. Not to forget to mention the need to connect to the feminine and the pride of pleasing the female Italian energy Mayes erected, that falls into the stereotype as Girardelli has defined it.

> The *signora* who lived here a hundred years ago could walk in now and start to cook. She'd like the porcelain sink, big enough to bathe a baby in, its drain board and the curved chrome faucet. I imagine her with a pointed chin and shiny black eyes, her hair

swept up and twisted in a comb. She's in sturdy shoes that tie and a black dress with the sleeves pushed up, ready to roll out the ravioli. (Mayes 113)

7.2. *Eat Pray Love:* Food

The idea of the importance of food in *Eat Pray Love* is first created through its title, namely the word Eat. The connection to the fact that Italy is interwoven with food (Eat) gets specified through the idea of pleasure and Italy and declaring her major in eating (Gilbert 31, 66). However, the narrated *I* describes her first contact with Italian food, creating the expectation of a small or unimpressive meal. "The first meal I ate in Rome was nothing much" (Gilbert 37). The narrated *I* then continues to explain what she had and starts with "*just* some *home-made* pasta" (Gilbert 37), which means that the pasta is not store-bought; it is freshly prepared in the restaurant. The word home-made draws on Italian cuisine and its authenticity appeal (Tricarico 2007). She furthermore has a "*side order* of sautéed spinach and garlic" (Gilbert 37). She then quotes Shelley about the garlic in her food as the poet wrote to a friend: "Young woman of rank actually eat – you will never guess what – GARLIC!" (Gilbert 37). This quotation, as it is not explained more closely, gives the first meal a female, romanticised Grand Tourist air, as Shelley is strongly connected with the romantic Grand Tourist through her work "Rambles in Germany and Italy" (1840, 1842, 1843). She also puts herself in line with being an Italian young woman of rank, as she is guiltlessly enjoying her garlic having ordered it on purpose. The rest of the food is then introduced by adding, almost as if the narrated *I* forgot and only remembered during the writing process, that "there was a pop-surprise bonus side order brought over by the waitress for free" (Gilbert 37). The side of an artichoke is commented on with, "I had one artichoke, just to try it; the Romans are awfully proud of their artichokes" (Gilbert 37). This gives this part of her meal the feeling of having been very informed, which the narrated *I* disclaims throughout the book through statements such as the following. "By this, my fourth day in Rome […] nor have I even looked at a guidebook" (Gilbert 38). She also says that, "I am bad (or rather lazy) at researching a place before I travel, tending to just show up and see what happens" (Gilbert 42)). The meal then continues, and it is revealed that it is a several-course evening. "After the spaghetti, I tried the veal. Oh, and I also drank a bottle of house red, just for me. And ate some warm bread, with olive oil and salt. Tiramisu for dessert" (Gilbert 37). It generally follows the Italian way of primi, secondi, cotorni, and dolci. This whole sequence contradicts the "nothing much" (Gilbert 37) with which I initially started the description and shows how the narrated *I* used irony and that the meal must have been quite something and a luxurious treat.

However, the idea of good food and plenty of it is a theme often utilised throughout *Eat Pray Love*, not only for the main character, it is generally used for the Italians. The Italian that loves to eat is displayed through the connection the narrated *I* has to Giovanni, Giulio, and Luca Spaghetti. Giovanni and Giulio meet with Liz to practice their English and Liz's Italian. However, the meals consumed with them are not described in detail, contrary to the ones eaten with Luca Spaghetti. This might be linked to the fact that "Luca also speaks perfect English and is a good eater (in Italian, una buona forchetta – a good fork), so he's terrific company for the hungry likes of me." (Gilbert 61). Luca Spaghetti becomes Liz' close friend.

The general relationship to food is interesting in *Eat Pray Love*, as the connection of wanting to eat a lot and trying everything, sometimes even overindulging, is connected to healing. Liz reports in one section the following. "I tried a combination of the honey and the hazelnut [gelato]. I came back later that same day for the grapefruit and the melon. Then, after dinner that same night, I walked all the way back over there one last time" (Gilbert 39). A few chapters later, however, she lets the reader peek behind the curtain and simultaneously gives insight into the general fear of gaining versus losing or healing. "A word about my body. I am gaining weight every day […], when I look at myself in the mirror of the best pizzeria in Naples, I see a bright-eyed, clear-skinned, happy and healthy face" (Gilbert 84-85). "About fifteen pounds of that I actually needed to gain because I had become skeletal during these last hard years of divorce and depression." (Gilbert 116)). Food has this nurturing effect, and eating a lot has become the narrated *I's* solution to eradicate her bodily signs of divorce and depression. Food gives the narrated *I* the visual possibility to counterbalance her past.

However, the food search is also connected to finding backstage areas that allow for glimpses of authenticity in the Italian culture. Finding those backstage areas through food is either done by recommendation, for instance, by a policeman in Sicily, who "gives me one of the greatest things anyone can ever give me in life – a tiny piece of paper with the name of an obscure restaurant written on it, a hand-drawn map of how to find the place" (Gilbert 118). As the section shows, gaining authentic insight is the most outstanding achievement Liz feels in life. This piece of paper must lead to a specific set-up, namely that of an outstanding meal. "I am busily eating the hands-down most amazing meal I've eaten yet in all of Italy" (Gilbert 118). Gilbert enters the backstage area by connecting to the Italians and gathering information on what they presume to be great places. She also achieves these authentic life-changing moments through experiencing performative authenticity related to food preparation. A place often stereotyped in the portrayal of Italian produce has to be found "where the produce is still handpicked and delivered to the closest market" (Girardelli 320-321). The narrated *I* finds such

a market near her apartment, where she buys products. “I found a market” (Gilbert 66). One of the booths is described as “a tiny vegetable stall with one Italian woman and her son selling a choice assortment of their produce – such as rich algae-green leaves of spinach, tomatoes so red and bloody, they looked like a cow’s organs, and champagne-colored grapes with skins as tight as a showgirl’s leotard” (Gilbert 66). Food in this section is described with a surplus of adjectives and comparisons (like, as a). The spinach leaves are not just spinach green; they are algae-green, which draws on the association of the nutrient-dense algae. The tomatoes are red, bloody, and outstanding as they are seemingly meat-like and not just any meat, as they are part of the body that is the most protected and supplied: the organs. They also are the size of the cow’s organs, which lets the reader imagine the size. The things she buys are then prepared as a cold platter and described. “For the longest time I couldn’t even touch this food because it was such a masterpiece of lunch, a true expression of the art of something out of nothing” (Gilbert 67). This scene adapts into feeling an authentic Italian moment due to buying the produce, where the general American idea of Italian food distribution could be reflected and the already marvelled art of Italians to “l’arte *d’arrangiarsi* – the art of making something out of nothing: Anyone with talent for happiness can do this, not only the rich” (Gilbert 65). The narrated *I* is so awe of her capability and creation that she feels the authenticity of the now. Her nothing, however, consists of asparagus, salmon, goat cheese, a peach, eggs, and olives. These products, however, did not just appear and grow overnight, as all of these food items need real-time to be planted, grown and harvested. Assembling them into a meal is the last step. The narrated *I*, however, dismisses the work process beforehand through her “something out of nothing” (Gibert 67). The “*l’arte d’arrangiarsi*” (Gilbert 65) can also be translated as the art of arranging things and enhancing wonderous existing material to its final display.

Overall, food and the idea of food in Eat Pray Love draws on the interplay between authenticity and fulfilling the stereotypical food heaven, rural perfection Italy has achieved. It is something that can even be found in the capital city.

8. Conclusion

In his opening sequence to *The Beaten Track*, James Buzard explains that the difference between a traveller and a tourist – even though both words are often used synonymously – lies within the fact that the tourist has become a less sophisticated version of the traveller, connotating less worldly knowledge and class than the traveller (Buzard 1). In this thesis, I aspire to show that the traveller, the tourist, the expat, the foreigner, and the writer, in this specific case with an American background, portrayed in *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray*

Love, strive to claim the position of the traveller and these implications through employing various strategies with the help of stereotyping.

First, the idea of going to Italy in this thesis' primary pieces of literature is congruent with the ideas and traditions the Grand Tour evokes in people's minds as these travellers employ strategies a very distinct group of travellers used when travelling, viewing and living in Italy. Over time, this particular group and the products of their travels employed stereotypes of this specific travel destination, generating a specific picture of the destination and the travellers themselves. One product and part of the Grand Tour tradition for female writers was to connect to their nation of origin by writing letters to someone at home. These letters, notebooks, or general notes on the journey were often used later, after returning to the homeland and reflecting, to be turned into published works. An essential aspect for female writers was to portray the visited country after observing it through an anthropological lens, with the specific viewpoint of the feminine and beautiful approach established in the 19th century. This viewpoint also justified the stance and the ability to have a considerable opinion on, for example, Italy, as this space was developed over time to be coined feminine. However, the two contemporary writers, Frances Mayes and Elizabeth Gilbert, not only had similar strategies as a selling point for a broader public, they wrote their autobiographical works for publishing and selling their stance on Italy. The achievement of their writing, documenting their travels, was, however, also subsided by the effect of probing the self against the foreign that manifested in their texts as their writing process became part of their self-healing and reflection process. It is an effect that the former Grand Tourists pathed and established throughout the writing tradition of travel guides, letters, and travel accounts, as travel literature over time became increasingly and overtly an instrument for self-reflective stages of life. The protagonists in the novels *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love* make their way through Italy, which, accompanied by stereotyping, became a contemporary re-creation of the Grand Tour tradition to fit the culture visited and viewed under Mayes' and Gilbert's own criteria into their self-healing journey.

Certain stereotypes were (re-)produced, probed and functionalized within these works. The stereotypes fulfilled three specific functions.

One function and use of the stereotypes was to create their own version of Italy. In order to view Italy, stereotyping was used to create a contrasting effect for the protagonist to consider the self and the foreign safely. The Italian way of life is then partially or wholly integrated into one's own identity; however, it is still marked as Italian initially and used to relate to the base idea of one's cultural identity, such as the way a specific style of driving is adopted, or the Italian language use, which again is used as a reference point to show knowledge of specific

Italian items. In this case, one primary literature items often revolve around the kitchen and food, or house, courtyard and farming. In contrast, the other uses it to show experienced concepts and refer to food items.

Second, stereotypes are used to create spaces where it is possible to use the other as an opposing and friction point and the own, auto-stereotype, or cultural identity as a contrasting point. In some cases, the Italian hetero-stereotype is seen as the superior relation, such as Gibert sees it when it comes to family and social aspects or the creation of connection through meals and food. For Mayes', the auto-stereotype of self-sufficiency, which she attributes to Americans in general, is highly valuable. What she implicitly describes over and over again is the Italian kind of community that opens the doors to being Italian through a sense of community, accepting help and being willing to outsource certain things, such as pressing olive oil (Mayes 194-204). She only had this realisation in her fourth year of living in Tuscany, as she could not reciprocate with a safe distance, through recognition beforehand, or only partially through accessing female Italian energy. Her account of adopting this behaviour, which is part of maintaining and participating in this kind of Italian culture, is recorded through the narrative event. It is, however, not explicitly acknowledged that a shared cultural space has been entered by renouncing the auto-stereotype. This instance is also notable in the two penultimate chapters, where the house is finally finished by the Italian contractor Mayes initially employed, and this time, the renovation process is running smoothly and without significant disturbances.

The third function is using the stereotype to validate the cultural and travel experience as true and, therefore, authentic, as the stereotype, or the prediction of the stereotype, is recreated. A layer of truth is added to the realness of Italy itself, which in turn adds to the staged authenticity, which has its roots in the recreation of the stereotype by holding on to the view of the Grand Tourists' point of view upon Italy as a picture of its past. The auto- and hetero-stereotypes are thereby used to grasp and categorise. Stereotypes that fall into the recreation of the image the Grand Tour has erected play into romanticising the Italian culture and confirming the image of Italy circulated through travel literature.

The ideas transported within travel literature are the general hetero-stereotype Italy is built upon; however, the auto-stereotypes are built through a binary representation of the self and the own culture and identity achieved through cultural processes. *Eat Pray Love* resonates with the goal of the Grand Tourist to find in-depth reflection and truth, as well as knowledge in Rome, that helps in developing the own style of writing or self, or even cultural being, onward in its development. However, this transformation and self-healing process loses its meaning and validity as *Eat Pray Love* falls into the pit of branding places "becoming objects of consumption

both symbolically as objects for hungry tourist and concretely as they are reconstructed as consumption sites" (Knudsen and Waade 6). The hetero-stereotypes used are, therefore, not actively diffused. However, they are instead reinforced and probed to accurately depict a nation with the idea of it being similar or almost frozen throughout its centuries. The search for change is so drastic that the goal of looking for intensity in order to feel the authentic Rome has to offer is turned into a search for indulgence "that strengthen the phenomenological relation to the world through devices that involve the body as flesh and sense" (Knudsen and Waade 9) and point toward performative authenticity. The Grand Tour seems to emerge as the "live, enact, re-enact the experience and living conditions of others are, potentially at least, offering the possibility to understand the other through the body" (Knudsen and Waade 15). However, the stereotyping sets the enactment as one that is still the same for the Grand Tourist, or any artist, coming to Italy. Italy merely has to offer the beauty of language and a particular lifestyle that stands in contrast to the perception of the American way, even though the portrayal of the American stereotype originates from a specific type of person similar in socio-economic background and goals as the writers have.

Within *Under the Tuscan Sun,* the character development of wanting to be Italian is initially seemingly rejected, and most Italians or moments portrayed with Italians, and instances of cultivating the American in Italy, are friction-filled. The accommodation to Italy and the house's renovation are depicted as obstacle-rich, with troubles that seem to route in language barriers and cultural discrepancies.

This comparison and the constant affiliation of the old and the antique is one of the major subjects Mayes employs within her novel, as one can notice when she describes scenes of leisure time or travelling descriptions that are held similar to a guidebook of travelling to Tuscany, and especially her adoptive Italian town, Cortona. It is a comparison of old vs new Italy with sticking to the grandeur of the old. Even when American culture is brought into the Italian and a sort of globalisation is taking place, Mayes does not particularly like it, as it tints Italy in its glory as she perceives it, as can be especially seen in the appearance of the American gospel choir.

In contrast, within *Eat Pray Love* Gilbert does conform herself to the idea of the Grand Tourist with its privileges and Italy as a wonderous place where the old grandeur is present. However, the generalisation and stereotypes of the Italians and Italy is not as closely attached to the past. I assume that the use of the stereotype occurred because both authors, as is evident from their cross-references to other authors who travelled to Italy, read the works on Italy and were thus confronted with some of the stereotypes they implicitly adopted within their texts, as

Horatschek, for example, shows. However, the use and function of the stereotype within *Under the Tuscan Sun* and *Eat Pray Love* do hint at what McAndrew et al. hypothesised in their study of the use and function of the stereotype which Judd and Park (1993) suggested. Namely, "that it may be useful to think of stereotypes as hypotheses about the nature of social categories that may be tested to accuracy" (McAndrew 488). This, however, does not diminish the overall effect and impact the stereotype has, as Hall and Pickering connotated, namely that of power relations and historicity of growth.

After these findings, one way to further the studies within this particular area would be to view and regard even more modern types of literature or works of a young American female travelling to Europe and broaden the study by adopting other media such as films, series or short movies. One piece that would fall into the same category having a relatively recent upheaval would be *Emily in Paris*, a Netflix series that first aired in 2020. After the global financial crisis of 2008, global tourism significantly changed, which in turn allowed for poetry as a way for cultural regeneration, which is "an approach to urban development" (Kennell 317). This means that through poetry about places, cultural production is increased (Kennel 319-320). In a way, stereotypes and stereotyping can be used to further this development through staged authenticity application by performers and audiences. This strategy might have been applied again after the Covid crisis that stopped travelling throughout the pandemic. However, these particular texts also attract a specific crowd of consumers, as *Eat Pray Love* did, as shown by Williams, namely the female audience (613). Selling the European idea in chick flicks correlates with the idea of the female consumer and their consumerist power and financial influence on the global market. The female crowd as a consuming power can be influential; however, it is also vulnerable due to "the triad of financial market manipulation, rationality and emotions", as Sharma, Hewege and Perera showed in their study about Australian women and their decision-making power in the market (1465). These recreations of stereotypes and promises of self-development represented by contemporary adaptations of travel to Europe could be further developed and given new features to attract new audiences with high consumer power, and as a result, dictate Europe's cultural regeneration after the global crisis following the Covid pandemic.

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Abstract

The travelling industry has been growing over the last three decades due to our modern lifestyle options and the affordability of travelling abroad. Simultaneously, travel books have increasingly become not only travel advisors; instead, they have developed into lifestyle advisors. My thesis is that the books *Under the Tuscan Sun* by Frances Mayes and *Eat Pray Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert use travelling to Italy not only as a self-healing escape from American society. However, they inadvertently shape their cultural experiences along the lines of stereotypes of Italy and Italians based upon formerly created stereotypes, appropriating Italian culture for their recreation of an American view of Italy. As a result, they are recreating a contemporary Grand Tour, aiming at performative authenticity and accessing the backstage of Italian culture. However, they genuinely fail to become part of Italian culture and instead add to the sub-society of Italian expats and tourists.

This master thesis is based on a theoretical approach towards stereotyping as coined by Michael Pickering and Stuart Hall, as well as culture and how culture is created, and authenticity as a concept, as it is used in travel studies with staged authenticity, as it was examined by MacCanell and furthered into performative authenticity by Knudsen and Waade. A brief overview of existing stereotypes follows the definition. How the Grand Tour, its development and contemporary self-healing became part of the travelling accounts is looked at after that. Based on this, the specific travel genre of the two primary authors, Elizabeth Gilbert and Frances Mayes, is defined to understand how the recreation of stereotypes and creating culture and performative authenticity is transmitted. After the theoretical overview, I apply a close reading analysis of various stereotypes and their function to the two primary literature works. Overall, the primary literature succeeded in creating Italy in the tradition of its stereotypes, especially in the first sections of writing and travelling in Italy. However, the plotlines of both primary books also make it possible to portray authenticity in becoming part of a foreign culture. This research is interesting as it can be used as a basis for more recent travel accounts with a modernised take on telling travel stories and the recreation of stereotypes.

Die Reiseindustrie ist in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten aufgrund der globalen Lebensweise und der Erschwinglichkeit von Reisen gewachsen. Gleichzeitig hat sich Reiseliteratur zunehmend nicht nur zu Reiseplanern, sondern auch zu Lebensstil-Ratgebern entwickelt. Die These dieser Arbeit ist, dass die Bücher "Unter der Sonne der Toskana" von Frances Mayes und "Eat Pray Love" von Elizabeth Gilbert das Reisen nach Italien nicht nur als selbstheilende Flucht aus der amerikanischen Gesellschaft nutzen, sondern sie formen unbeabsichtigt ihre kulturellen Erfahrungen entlang von Stereotypen über Italien und Italiener:innen, welche auf bereits existierenden Stereotypen beruhen. Infolgedessen stellen sie eine zeitgenössische Grand Tour nach, die auf performative Authentizität abzielt und sich Zugang zu den Kulissen der italienischen Kultur verschafft. Es gelingt jedoch nicht wirklich Teil der italienischen Kultur zu werden, sondern sie fügen sich in die Subgesellschaft der italienischen Auswanderer:innen und Tourist:innen ein. Diese Masterarbeit stützt sich auf einen theoretischen Ansatz zur Stereotypisierung sowie auf die Begriffe der Kultur und die Art und Weise, wie Kultur geschaffen wird, wie sie von Michael Pickering und Stuart Hall erforscht wurden. Weiters auf das Konzept der Authentizität, wie es in der Reisestudie mit inszenierter Authentizität von MacCanell untersucht und von Knudsen und Waade zur performativen Authentizität weiterentwickelt wurde. Danach folgt ein kurzer Überblick über bestehende Stereotypen. Im Anschluss wird untersucht, wie die Grand Tour, ihre Entwicklung und zeitgenössische Selbstheilung, Teil der Reiseberichte wurden. Darauf aufbauend wird das Genre der beiden Hauptautorinnen Elizabeth Gilbert und Frances Mayes definiert, um zu verstehen, wie die Wiederherstellung von Stereotypen und die Schaffung von Kultur und performativer Authentizität darin vermittelt wird. Nach dem theoretischen Überblick wird eine Close-Reading-Analyse der verschiedenen Stereotypen und ihrer Funktion auf die beiden Werke der Primärliteratur angewendet. Insgesamt ist es der Primärliteratur gelungen, Italien in der Tradition ihrer Stereotypen zu gestalten, vor allem in den ersten Abschnitten des Schreibens und Reisens in Italien. Die Handlungsstränge der beiden Primärliteraturwerke ermöglichen ebenso die Darstellung von Authentizität beim Eintauchen in eine fremde Kultur. Diese Untersuchung ist insofern interessant, als das sie als Grundlage für neuere Reiseliteratur mit einer modernisierten Sichtweise auf das Erzählen von Reisegeschichten und die Wiederherstellung von Stereotypen dienen kann.