NEW GLOBAL CUISINE
Tourism, authenticity and sense of place
in postmodern gastronomy

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What's the future of global gastronomy tourism? Reports from the industry around the world indicate that, no longer accessory or marginal as in the past, the food and wine experience is now increasingly the principal – if not the only - motivation in the selection of a tourist destination (BITEG 2001). At the same time, however, we are warned that "we are facing the grim perspective of having the heart taken out of gourmet travel" due to "the emerging dining-out sector within the global food industry" (Symons 1999:336). In particular, it has been argued that 'when menus become the same the world over, gastronomic tourism becomes redundant'. Gastronomy scholar Michael Symons has blamed the *new global cuisine* for this situation arguing that this new approach to cooking "leads to increased sameness" (Symons 1999:336).

Other authors have gone even further with their criticism. According to Barbara Santich, the coordinator of the first Graduate Program in Gastronomy at the University of Adelaide in Australia, the buzzword today is globalisation, "an intermingling of various cuisines and multiple reciprocal influences" (Santich 2000). She attacks such culinary hybridisations by noting that "when several culinary cultures are put together on the one plate (as, for example, in spaghetti with black bean sauce) the result is 'fusion' - or perhaps confusion: in company with others, each culture loses something of itself and its impact is reduced". (Santich 2000). Thus for this author

> (…) global cuisine might be interpreted as the foods and dishes which can be found anywhere in the world. By extrapolation, it means the same food and dishes throughout the whole world. And this is precisely the reproach, that globalisation results in homogenisation (Santich 2000).

Globalisation last hurrahs?
These positions are not too dissimilar from those of critics who –according to the Peruvian-born writer Mario Vargas Llosa - condemn globalisation as "a nightmare or negative utopia" in which the world "is losing its linguistic and cultural diversity" (Vargas Llosa 2001). Food and cuisine globalisation are not spared by the condemnation since they are analogous to languages, as Lévi Strauss (1978:471) pointed: "Cooking… is with language a truly universal form of human activity"

In general terms anti-globalisation's views gained momentum in the aftermath of the 9-11 events, with some scholars going as far as proclaiming that the era

of globalisation is at its last hurrah (Anonymous 2002). An intrepid statement, in truth, considering that the decade ending in 2000 has seen the most remarkable growth in global activities, including tourism:

> Worldwide, travellers made an additional 50 million trips across national borders in 2000 to reach 698.8 million international arrivals, up from 457.2 million a decade before. (…) Cross-border telephone traffic, (…) saw a steady growth of roughly 10 billion minutes. (…) Internet hosts (computers that allow users to communicate with one another along the Internet) continued to climb, growing by 44 percent (Anonymous 2002).

In the aftermath of 9-11 events tourist numbers went in fact down for the first time since 1982 but the prevailing consensus amongst experts is that global tourism is poised to achieve "tremendous growth" in the foreseeable future (Foroohar 2002:36). The World Tourism Organization predicts an increase in the number of tourist arrivals to more than 1 billion by 2010 (Foroohar 2002:36). In other words, as far as for tourism, globalisation is far from being dead. Other aspects of globalisation, however, "are likely to sustain their forward momentum" (Anonymous 2002) according to the *Kearney Globalization Index*, which ranks the 20 most global nations. Call rates will keep falling 20 percent per year and the international telephone traffic will grow at the same pace it had since 1997. Internet traffic, finally, will continue its expansion, particularly in developing countries like China and India (Anonymous 2002).

On the other hand, at a cultural level, too, more balanced analyses rejecting radical anti-globalisation allegations are gaining grounds. For Vargas Llosa the inflexible defence "of cultural identity reveal a static conception of culture that has no historical basis". As he puts it, no cultures have ever remained identical and unchanged over time. For this reason, he argues, "globalisation must be welcomed because it notably expands the horizons of individual liberty". Accordingly, he suggests that "the fear of Americanisation of the planet is more ideological paranoia than reality". The reality is, instead, that "the vanishing of borders and an increasingly interdependent world has created incentives for new generations to learn and assimilate to other cultures". "Globalisation will not make local cultures disappear" on the contrary, in a framework of worldwide openness; "all that is valuable and worthy of survival in local cultures will find fertile ground in which to bloom" (Vargas Llosa 2001).

In some ways, Vargas Llosa is on the same side of those thinkers who first saw an *euphoric* dimension of globalisation, a concept evoking:

> (…) a cybernetic dance of cultures, 'one planet under a groove', the transcendence of rigid ideological and political divisions, and the worldwide availability of cultural products and information... (Shohat and Stam 1996:146)

It is against this backdrop that food globalisation and gastronomy tourism are analysed in this chapter that is articulated in three parts. The first part is an introduction to the issues of authenticity and sense of place in postmodern gastronomy tourism. The focus of the second part is New Global Cuisine as a paradigm for Gastronomy Tourist Products (GTP), which are not only the traditional 'bricks and mortar' gastronomic poles, as restaurants, wineries or food outlets, but also a new breed of gastro-attractions within established tourist destinations, including food and wine events and festivals based on virtual clustering. Lastly, remarks on the possible evolution of gastronomy globalisation and its implications for tourism are contained in the conclusion.

The topics of this chapter are approached with the tools of tourism research but also seen through the trans-disciplinary perspective of Gastronomy Studies (Scarpato 2002a). Within this emerging theoretical framework gastronomy is the pursuit of the best possible eating and drinking but in a *reflective* mood. A pledge implying, for example, an awareness of underlining *eatimologies,* a neologism borrowed by Rushdie (1999: 61) referring "to the analysis of the origin and the development of specific products, their spreading through commerce, cultural expansion, colonization, tourism, and their hybridisation" (Parasecoli, 2002). However, it implies a paramount work towards how communities can evolve socially and economically, keeping an eco-nutritional commitment to environmental sustainability and community's members optimal health (Scarpato, 2000:186)

Gastronomy authenticity and modern tourists
Within this approach, concepts as *authenticity* and *sense of place* have to be reworked and the huge changes occurred in cuisines taken into account, as well as the evolution of gourmet travel around the world. Our analysis pertains mainly to the cuisine provided by quality independent restaurants. Their culinary globalism is an example of the complexity of globalisation and cosmopolitanism (Thompson and Tambyah 1999) in opposition to the uniform industrial global cuisine of either fast-food chains or that staged by large hotels, in "restaurants resembling Chianti cellars, ancient Chinese pagodas, and so on" (Symons 1999:336), whcih do represent a widespread homogenisation or society's *macdonaldisation* as Ritzer (1996) has argued.

It has been suggested that, in gastronomic terms, the sense of place is the "respect for local climate" and that, to be authentic, meals "have to be true to place" (Symons 1999:336). Only climatically sensitive cooking favours the sense of place and the quest for authenticity of gastronomic tourists, "who have long sought local cooking and so avoid international hotel fare and the increasingly inevitable McDonald's'. According to Symons even air conditioning is untrue to the places because "adds distance of another kind, by taking restaurant customers out of local environment" as it does sound-

conditioning with Vivaldi, which restores "the calm of a far-off age" (Symons 1999:336).

The gastronomic tourists described here are clearly those identified as "modern tourists", for whom reality and authenticity "are thought to be elsewhere; in other historical periods and cultures, in purer, simpler lifestyles" (MacCannell 1989:3). Symons' gastronomic tourists, too, are motivated by "the paradoxical and seemingly inexhaustible hope that they can discover authentic cultures", and therefore cuisines, "uncontaminated by the very market forces" that by using air and sound conditioning in restaurants enabled them to experience the authentic (Thompson and Tambyah 1999).

Several authors have pointed out that "the tourist industry frequently deploys this stereotypical image through promotional narratives that promise a world of adventure, personal enrichment, and unique cultural experiences not available to conventional tourists or at conventional tourist sites (Craik 1997; Urry 1995).

The media, too, particularly in the New World countries, have deployed similar modern stereotypes of culinary authenticity through a fascination with the *good old food* and the traditional local cuisines and their supposed simplicity and authenticity, in opposition to *modern bad food and eclectic cuisines*. In doing so media have joined and driven the modern tourists in their "nostalgia rush" (Urry 1990:109), generating powerful romantic culinary myths that, like most myths, have little historical basis. Most *old food*, for example, is not very old at all. In a plea for culinary modernism, Rachel Laudan (2001) has noted that "for every prized dish that goes back two thousand years, a dozen have been invented in the last two hundred". Scarpato (1999) had previously argued, that authentic old food implied often "lack of choice, affordability of other foods, awareness of health issues".

> Romantic food writers forget that *authenticity* of the past came as a package including lack of the right to choose, affordability of other foods, awareness of health issues and many other pitfalls. Ox carcasses slaughtered in a village two kilometres away from Paris, reached the French capital after 3 or 4 days and before selling them, the butcher had to cut away 3 or 4 inches of rotten meat infested by worms.

Sense of place and post-tourists
Enter the scene the post-tourist (Urry 1990:109) and its gastronomic correspondent, with his/her intellectually detached approach to leisure travel, and authenticity no longer carries the "quasi sacred meaning that had for modern tourists". "The post-tourist embodies the reflexive, ironising, playful spirit of post modernity" and is aware that the authentic "could not survive without the income from tourism" (Urry 1990:100).

> Whereas the modernist is a pilgrim who wants to return home to a mythologized, sacralized site, the masculinized postmodernist is portrayed as an enthusiastic nomad whose only real home is the open expanse of the road and whose raison d'etre is mobility and the pursuit of excitement and novelty (Thompson and Tambyah 1999).

Of course, the post-tourist is far from being ubiquitous and his/her condition is permanently shifting. "Some tourists may be post-tourists most of the time, and most tourists may be post-tourists some of the time" (Thompson and Tambyah 1999) In any case, for the post-tourist, in full, part or casual time, the hybridisation of cuisines generated by the globalisation is not perceived as a frightening homogenisation. It is seen instead as a challenge, another game to play, an enhancement of individual freedom, the "construction" of personal authenticity.

It is undeniable that the 'sense of place' has a fundamental relevance for the gastronomic tourist experience. However, as suggested by Parasecoli (2002) in the postmodern turn, the eatimology of place as "a foundation for identities - individual and cultural, local and national" has lost the energy of the past. As argued by Jameson (1984:83), for instance, a "postmodern hyperspace has finally succeeded in transcending the capacity of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize immediate surroundings, perceptually and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world".

Thus it is highly questionable to evaluate the gastronomic authenticity in the postmodern world only against the geographical, climatic or historical sense of place. With the borders between local, national and global cuisine increasingly blurred, neat distinctions are possible only on paper, because each single regional cuisine is undergoing endless changes and transformation. In regional contexts, today or in the future, any possible cuisines will never again be limited to local ingredients, as in the past.

The relationship among food, places and cultural identity, in the current era, has a totally new significance as in the case of the global sushisation:

> Just because sushi is available, in some form or another, in exclusive Fifth Avenue restaurants, in baseball stadiums in Los Angeles, at airport snack carts in Amsterdam, at an apartment in Madrid (delivered by motorcycle), or in Buenos Aires, Tel Aviv, or Moscow, doesn't mean that sushi has lost its status as Japanese cultural property. Globalisation doesn't necessarily homogenize cultural differences nor erase the salience of cultural labels. Quite the contrary, it grows the franchise. In the global economy of consumption, the brand equity of sushi as Japanese cultural property adds to the cachet of both the country and the cuisine (Bestor 2000).

The sense of place has completely been reshaped in a global village that is no longer only a geographic dimension but instead the result of a new cartography

drawn according to the characteristics of different lifestyles. 'Cultural' factors have paralleled and often ousted the traditional territorial aggregations of people. 'The village is an immense consumer zone, transversally criss-crossing idioms, local traditions, religious affiliations, political ideologies, folk and traditional sexual roles (Scarpato 2000:88). What has been labelled as New Global Cuisine is catering for this village precisely as the *International cuisine* of the French chef Auguste Escoffier's (1957) catered for the army of well-off tourists, at the beginning of the twentieth century. Escoffier appealed those tourists dazzled by the travelling wonders of the first automobiles and trains that crowded the European Grand Hotels, welcoming a cuisine that recreated the grandeur of their aristocratic houses (Smith 1990:31):

> "His (Escoffier) medium was the grand hotel. Their customer were his… The Savoy and the Carlton gave him space, investments, huge brigades and rich customers. Here was a scale similar to that of the grand aristocratic houses. The wells off were moving. They needed places to travel by boat, train, car; and places to stay when they arrived… The tyre company Michelin launched its guide to hotels and restaurants in 1900. The railways invested heavily in resorts to persuade people to travel... The whole of the cookery bent to the iron will of the codification…. The (Escoffier) Guide's 5000 recipes became as functional ad a medical textbook. If it was not in the book, it was not cuisine. The rigidity of the codification meant the cooking could travel. It was international. And it not depends overly on the individual skills of a single man. It was team cooking. The real boundary was only one of climate. Too far south, and the batteries of stockpots and sauce became dangerous in the heat. To the north, it was a tradable commodity.

The importance that New Global Cuisine has for global tourism today is similar to that International cuisine had for the tourism of one hundred years ago, though the two styles are totally different. More than from trains and cars, New Global Cuisine has benefited from the "lionization of travel" as a key to self-enhancement and the attainment of a sophisticated, worldly outlook (Belk 1997). These are common features of contemporary cosmopolitanism, which is fuelled by a "travelling trope" with a state of intellectual freedom and independence, based on nomadic travels (both literal and metaphoric) that do not follow conventional paths (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). Cosmopolitanism is a "proteanism", a permanent desire "to explore and experience the panoply of transcultural diversity" (Hannerz 1990:240).

New Global Cuisine
It is widely acknowledged that *modern* cooking began after the French revolution, with the famous chef Carême, at the beginning of the nineteen-century (Smith 1990:9). Its latest update, instead, stemmed from France's *cuisine nouvelle* spreading all over the world in the Seventies (Courtine 1996: 868) and then, with the early American movement of *East-meets-West* in the

Eighties. These were times when existing definitions still made some sense and the history of cuisine was following the pattern of Western history, a unified stream stemming from the West, which the rest of the world had inevitably to flow into.

Today instead Western models of modernity and progress are no longer universal (Vattimo 1988). Pre-existing classifications are worthless. In cuisine, as in other arts, cultural syncretism and democratisation have led us towards the unified undirectional history or a plurality of histories of the 21st Century. In New Global Cuisine *anything is possible* and at the same time, contingent, often incoherent and ambivalent, like the post-modern era in which it has developed. In this sense, New Global Cuisine is cooking at the end of history, as Vattimo (1988) deemed the end of the universality of the Western modernity model.

The definition of New Global Cuisine was firstly adopted at the end of the Nineties (Scarpato 1998) to portray an already well-established worldwide culinary trend, thriving in our days. In 1996 the US magazine *Bon Appetit* had already described it in the following terms:

> Call it multicultural, cross-cultural, intercontinental, fusion or world cuisine - it's what's happening in food today. Creative cooks are combining styles, techniques, ingredients and flavours from every corner of the globe, often in a single dish {Anon. 1996).

At about the same time, restaurants begun to state their global philosophy on the frontispiece of menus, as *Pangaea*, in the Hotel Nikko (La Cienega, Los Angeles) does in 1997:

> Before there was Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia, then there was Pangaea. Over times continents were created as cultures evolved and melded, our dining experience has growth into a diverse medley of staples and cuisines.

At about the same time a menu of *China Grill*, in New York City, explains to the customers that the restaurant

> gathers ingredients from around the globe to compose its signature world cuisine. To best enjoy a dinner here, consider it a journey to be taken together.

New Global Cuisine chef's philosophy is a pledge in favour of a basic rule, which is really an anti-rule, since it advocates that cuisine has "no rules" or, as Ephraim Kadish, former chef at China Grill, says: "rules are meant to be broken" (Scarpato 2000:126). Whilst in traditional cuisines chefs were highly regarded as guardians of traditions, in the new cuisine the appreciation goes to both the creative chef and diner. It is a huge shift from the comfort of cooking

and eating traditional tandoori chicken, *spaghetti alla bolognese*, a *pot au feu* or a *Big Mac*. In these dishes there is an intense pleasure in anticipating, morsel after morsel, the expected taste perhaps emerging with individuals' pleasant memories. It's a completely different story to cook or eat dishes as a "Steamed bouillabaisse custard in saffron fish consommé with fennel puree " or "Lobster nachos with Boursin cheese, Asian tomato relish and guacamole", or "Chicken ravioli with wild mushrooms and Australian macadamia nuts pesto" or "Sake-kasu seared scallops on a butternut squash risotto with a pomegranate reduction": every morsel in these dishes is an exploration, the diner cannot anticipate the flavour, must question his/herself because all is new and stimulating.

As Scarpato pointed out:

> New Global Cuisine is in gastronomic terms what jazz has been for classic music. Like jazz, New Global Cuisine stands and falls on being alive, and whatever lives, changes. As soon as a style starts to gain popularity, new chefs turn in a brave or sometimes opposite direction (Scarpato 2000:137).

And like jazz, New Global Cuisine represents liberation from the chains of traditional culinary codes and in particular the supremacy of International-French cuisine. The "culinary mish-mash", the frightening hybridisation, match up with the anti-grammatical, anti-syntactical tendencies of writers in modern literature, including James Joyce.

Cheong Liew, a Malaysian-born Australian chef, is credited to giving birth to a global cuisine, in Adelaide, in 1975, five years before Ken Hom and Jeremiah Tower launched their *East-meets-West* Cuisine in California (Ripe 1996:15). What happens with Liew represents one of the many similarities between New Global Cuisine and jazz. The music played in New Orleans at the beginning of the 20 century was jazz but it was not dissimilar from that played by the blues composer W.C. Handy since 1905. However, it was only in 1917 that Handy become aware of it. Similarly, when Liew began the culinary experiments at his restaurant *Neddy's*, other chefs around the world were adopting or close to adopt a style of cooking similar to his. Cheong's style, however, remains exemplary because it was generated by a genuine although unconscious globalist approach.

By the end of the Nineties, New Global Cuisine, was "an obvious and demonstrable style of cuisine", to use the words that in 1972 the French writers Gault and Millau wrote in regards to *Cuisine nouvelle* (Courtine 1996: 868). The *global culinary equation* begins to be evident when American media write that Australian chefs are like Californian ones and at the same time Australian (and New Zealander) cooks are requested to shape the *Modern British* or *Modern European* style in London restaurants.

New Global Cuisine is a consequence of the spreading global culture which reflects "the sense of heaps, congeries, and aggregate of cultural particularities juxtaposed together on the same field" (Featherstone 1996:70). Therefore its definition is inherently complex and the phenomenon may be better understood by describing what it is not.

New Global Cuisine has nothing to do with *International Cuisine*, which internationalised a strictly codified number of *haute cuisine* dishes. No cooking books have today the importance that Auguste Escoffier's *Guide to modern cookery* had for the cooks of his time. No chefs today would rely on one single book - without photos - as their work-reference. In fact, chefs practising New Global Cuisine, and particularly young chefs, are accused of reading too many cookbooks and food magazines and copying too much, according to the Australian chef Stephanie Alexander (Scarpato 2000).

New Global Cuisine has also little to do with *East meets West,* although the latter was its immediate antecedent. In the new style of cooking, serving and eating, not only does *East meets West* but both meet North and South, and South meets South East and so on, often simultaneously. Any traditional, geographic divisions have been overcome. Ingredients, techniques, equipment and cooking philosophies come from every corner of the world and are melted by global cooks - everywhere - with those from around the corner, in one dish. New Global Cuisine is much more than a phase of *fusion cuisine*, which was chiefly a spontaneous movement of the late Eighties. Today, cooks join New Global Cuisine willingly, knowing that the adjective global is used in its larger meaning of comprehensive, all embracing.

The argument that transnational cuisine is just an ultimate point of progressive culinary exoticisms (Montanari 1994:161) is contradicted by the global consciousness of chefs from around the world participating in a research on the new Cuisine (Scarpato 2000:118), including experienced practitioners such as Gray Kunz, former chef at Lespinasse (New York City), Cheong Liew, Nobuyuki Matsuhisa, chef and owner of fourteen Nobu's restaurant around the world and Hugh Carpenter, chef and cookbook author. Exoticism had always a geographic dimension, meaning in the culinary instance the adoption of "foreign", not native ingredients coming from abroad, neither acclimatised nor naturalised. With chefs and diners seeing the world as one and without borders, concepts such as "abroad" have lost a large part of their traditional significance. In fact, increasingly geographic factors are only residually influencing cultural behaviours and/or consumer choices.

In reality, the translational chefs working in London, the United States, Australia, London, Hong Kong, Singapore, São Paulo, Tokyo have established a culinary global "third culture", one of the many generated by globalisation. Mike Featherstone (1996:60) argues that third cultures are sets of practices, bodies of knowledge, conventions and lifestyle, which have developed in ways

increasingly independent of nation-states. Television productions, modern music, advertising and fashion have all set their third cultures. Hundreds of television mini-series can be viewed in opposite corners of the globe without fear of cultural rejection. Advertising agencies plan global television campaigns; film producers, advertisers, actors, fashion designers and musicians no longer share the culture of a specific nation, alongside corporate tax accountants, financial planners and management consultants who deal with the problems of cultural communications in the global village.

A "transnational imaginary" (Wilson and Dissanayake 1996) created by the spread of electronic media and mass-tourist experiences have integrated the individual capacity of personal memories with collective memories. An illiterate of the 21st century, exposed to media, would have been an erudite of 19th century. Sushi doesn't belong to the background of a Spanish youth, but the first time s/he eats it, his/her mind is likely to recall either natural or artificial memories: a transcontinental trip, a movie or a television documentary. Furthermore we continuously "reconstruct" our "perceptions" (Ewen 1988:41) and as a consequence, the new meanings of old feelings influence new ways of thinking about food, both from the point of view of those cooking and those eating it. The new dimension of desire, for example, has greatly contributed to the formation of non-geographic New Global Cuisine. In contemporary life, we are able to remember not only images of events that we did not witness (Leavy 1999), but thanks to the effects of "global motions of people (and therefore culture)" (Dirlik 1996:32) we become aware of flavours not belonging to the geographic space we inhabit. New Global Cuisine has been built upon desires no longer generated exclusively "within given historical time and geographic location". Indeed, not the strictly private memories coming to the mind of the French writer Marcel Proust (1981), when he dipped the famous *madeleine* in his tea.

New Global Cuisine is another *ethnic* way of cooking, being the local cuisine of the Global Village, as French cuisine was for France or Chinese for China. However today's Global Village is no longer made of only geographic places like France or China. A new cartography of the world has been drawn according to the characteristics of lifestyles and *cultural* factors, both often ousting the traditional territorial aggregations of people. Thus consumption patterns, television ratings, musical tastes, fashion, motion picture and concert attendances, home video rentals, magazines' readership, home computer software selection and shopping mail participation, Internet navigation, all have an increasingly greater impact on the kitchen of the future.

The *consumer zones* have dominated the non-geographical mapping of the world for the purposes of marketing and communications strategies since the end of the 1980's. New Global Cuisine is catering for consumer zones composed by diners that have been exposed for more than 40 years to television, are computer and telephone addicted, post-tourists who fly regularly

to every destination in the world and live side by side with the offspring of 150 different ethnic groups, like in Australia or in the United States.

The new "localism"

 In the new culinary global landscape cuisines and food preparation procedures can no longer be read as within the theoretical schemes of the past, to which tourism referred too. Divisions of cuisines in *paysanne*, *bourgeoisie* and *haute*, as devised by (Revel 1982) and to which Symons' reading of New Global Cuisine is inspired, are obsolete. Food, cuisines and foodways have to be assessed in the real context of our days in which globalisation thrives and signifies technological advance, progress in communications, modern versus past. Globalisation, for instance, has increased the speed of kitchens modernization. All over the world, kitchen spaces have quickly adapted to the new environmental influences and provoked changes. And in doing so, they have followed the patterns of their history.

The romantic defence of localism, too, which in the world of cooking, is vested as a resistance to the new cuisine, is obsolete. This is not to say that that local produce and ingredients don't have importance in New Global Cuisine. It's exactly the opposite. This cuisine has a strong local vocation: creative global chefs, in their pursuit of quality and "competitive advantage", encourage and commonly use fresh, local, non-industrialised and organic ingredients. But they don't feel bound to the area where they work because "local has been redefined in the jet age", as alleged by Thomas Keller, chef and owner of *The French Laundry*, in the Napa Valley (California):

> I mean, local to me is anything I can get here by jet... in a few hours. … I mean, our scallops come from Maine… We get lobsters from Maine every day… they are local to me because they're coming in my back door every day, fresh, live, vibrant. (As) The hearts of palm from Hawaii that we just started getting, for example… (Bryant 2001).

Accordingly, the regional appeal for gastronomy tourists, particularly in metropolitan contexts, is no longer just the climatic or productive vocation of the area, but also, and often mostly, the presence of one or more particular chefs on that specific territory. It is the original combination of ingredients in the chef's dishes that shape the new culinary *local* dimension. Thus, although a result of globalisation, the hybridisation inherent to New Global Cuisine does not represent homogenisation but in its place supports biological and cultural diversity. In fact, it also represents "the expansion of consumer and life-style choices" (Kellner 1999) and promotes a cosmopolitan aesthetic, which:

> prominently stands in a mutually supportive relation to the dynamics of cultural globalisation, which, contrary to the still popular homogenizing thesis, have precipitated an increasing heterogeneity

of cultural forms in music, food, fashion, and art (Joy and Wallendorf 1996; Wilk 1995 in Thompson and Tambyah 1999).

In terms of gastronomy tourism as well, New Global Cuisine belongs to the euphoric globalisation. And this dimension has contributed to the fulfilment of the old global dream of cooks and diners of any time, that is, respectively to cook and eat dishes with ingredients coming from different seasons and all over the world freely combined (Scarpato 2000). On the other hand, it cannot be denied that within the neo-global culinary "third culture" stemmed from the latest transformation of capitalism and its further development toward de-territorialisation and abstraction, some negative aspects of globalisation also flourish. In food terms, for instance, homogenised and often unhealthy fast and industrial cuisine (Schlosser 2001) belongs to a "melancholic" globalisation, insensitive to the warnings of "ecological catastrophe", which translates into unsustainable gastronomy.

Global gastronomy and tourism
A few years ago Beardsworth and Keil (1997:257) asked the following questions:

> Are we about to witness (or indeed, are we now witnessing) the emergence of what might loosely be termed a 'postmodern' food system and 'postmodern' eating patterns? Can we say that the monolith of the modern food system, with its emphasis on large scale, intensive production and standardised manufacturing, on mass marketing and retailing, is in the process of giving ground to a more diversified and fragmented situation in which idiosyncratic, even 'playful', combinations of aesthetic, ethical, culinary and gustatory preferences can be assembled by individual consumers or group of consumers?

Today we can give a positive answer to these questions. New Global Cuisine is a postmodern cuisine with characteristics of mixed codes, fragmentation, incoherence, disjunction and syncretism. At the same time, it signals the emergence of a generalised postmodern culinary taste because the phenomenon is not limited to up-market restaurants, in which neo-global chefs work, and their customers. These figures have been only the avant-garde of the attack against "the monolith of modern food", as well as instrumental to the diffusion of the process at grassroots level.

The neo-global style of cooking has entered the mainstream of cafes, bistros, brasseries and even pizzerias. The American chef and food writer Hugh Carpenter noted that even manufacturers of frozen pre-cooked food, sold widely in supermarkets, resort usually to "fusion" cuisine recipes. In Buenos Aires' *Tenedor libre*, multi-ethnic all you can eat restaurants, people freely assemble

their dishes picking bits and pieces from the vast and affordable multiculinary buffet (Scarpato 2000).

New Global Cuisine is also a medium to be "a tourist everyday and everywhere" (Bauman 1996:55), one of the many ways that postmodem consumers have to live as "tourist citizens" who delight in traversing the world, via travel, media consumption, and immersion in hyperrealist simulations, gladly paying for the "right to spin webs of meaning all their own" (Bauman 1996:53). Not by chance, by deconstructing the cuisine of a neo-global chef like Cheong Liew we find the dream of a log trip.

> When we were designing a new menu the courtyard at Neddy's often gave us inspiration. We could have been anywhere. We dreamed in the Land of the Dreaming as my good friend John Ho said, and the courtyard led us to the Middle East along the spice routes, to the Greek Islands, to Tuscany, Provence, Singapore, Sichuan and last but not least to the Australian back garden (Liew, 1996:45).

Of course, as Bauman (1996:54) noted, this form of tourist citizenship "is reserved for those having the requisite degree of class privilege in the global economy" and Liew again seem particularly aware of it:

> People are travelling more to expand their business, that means they will be experiencing more... their palates will demand more and more. We actually have a group of people that have been travelling around the world, whether they're musicians, entertainers, lawyers, corporate businessman or educators (and their travelling) develop an influence of their palate instinct. (Scarpato 2000:127)

Chefs as gastronomy tourism designers
Food and recipes of chefs practising New Global Cuisine contribute to a culture and lifestyle that does not belong to one nation but to the world, exactly like a suit tailored by Giorgio Armani, a film directed by Steven Spielberg, a poster drawn by Neville Broadie or software packaged by Bill Gates. In comparison to the traditional cuisines, the cooking style of global chefs is what a traditional Lappish dress is to an Armani model or what a silent movie of the Twenties is to Titanic (the movie) or what an old handwritten account-book is to the most up-to-date office organisation software.

Similar to those working in the film, television, music, advertising, fashion and consumer industries, global chefs are "design professionals" (Featherstone 1996:61). They play a key role in the future of human nourishment but also in the orientation of gastronomy tourism flows. The significance of their work is amplified by the often-aggressive marketing of their innovative restaurants that feeds the collective imaginary. Historically, restaurants' marketing have been a major instrument "for smashing old eating habits" (Zeldin,1980:147). Its

influence, as noted by Kivela (1998:66), has been postulated by a number of scholars, including Finkelstein (1989) and Wood (1995).

The role of chefs in New Global Cuisine however is decisive and cannot be seen as limited to their indispensable, but just technical, abilities in successfully combining ingredients like *garam masala* and Italian Parmigiano, or Thai fish-sauces and New Zealand truffles. New Global cooks are cultural specialists and as such, reflect values, philosophies and aesthetics of their common culture, as do architects when designing a building or a painter when painting a picture. With them the restaurant is increasingly belonging to the realm of cultural industries (Scarpato and Daniele 2000)

As argued by Scarpato (2000:176) the aesthetic of New Global Cuisine prompts chefs to have a clear conscience of their "designing" role towards the various dimensions of their activity, from the public taste to the environment in which they work. These chefs are "change agents"(Rogers, 1995) and are influencing work practices, socio-cultural changes including tourism motivations. The neo-global chefs are set to replace the role of peasants and fishermen once had in the past in the formation of new cuisines. An example is given by the phenomenon of New Asia Cuisine (NAC), which also is a case of how new cuisines develop in the contemporary extra geographic situation. NAC, in particular, has stemmed from the marketing needs of both the hospitality industry and the agencies promoting tourist destinations, in this case the Singapore Tourism Board (STB).

A quick look to the history of NAC may be useful. The first public discussions on the "concept" of NAC happened at the end of 1995. However the birth of this cuisine

> took place many years ago when chefs (professionals and home cooks alike) ventured into the realm of combining flavours and techniques, coupled with the right ingredients, into a different entity that had one important objective in mind: variety, the so-called spice of life. Human beings cannot happily function without a variety of any number of things, especially when it comes to their dietary intake (Knipp 1998)

Fresh ingredients available in Singapore, coming from *localities* all around Asia (agriculture in Singapore is a very limited industry) imparted some degree of distinctive flavour to NAC, which enjoyed wide publicity and the support of a magazine carrying the same name, published by Peter Knipp, himself a former chef.

The name NAC became official in 1996, in a meeting in St. Moritz attended by the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board chief executive officer (Mosley 1996). A neo-global Gastronomy Tourist Product (GTP) was born. Soon after the St.Moritz meeting, the STB began to promote Singapore as New *Asia*, a brand name still used today to market the city-state. NAC reinforces the image of

Singapore as a food and wine destination, but at the same time reflects its liminal postmodern spirit: "A truly inspiring city where East meets West, Asian heritage blends with modernity and sophistication happily co-exists with nature".

In 1997, by organising the Singapore Food Festival and the World Gourmet Summit specifically to launch NAC (Mosley, 1997), STB set a historical precedent. It was perhaps the first national tourism body in the world promoting a form of transnational New Global Cuisine as part of its destination offer. Likely, in the near future, any real or fictitious cuisine *distinctiveness* will also depend on the amount of money injected in its promotion by Tourism Promotion Bodies.

Since then, NAC has been practiced in many restaurants, mainly in five-star hotels and promoted as an "authentic" tourist attraction of the city. The Singapore Tourism Board's Official Guide to the city lists *New Asia - Singapore Cuisine* among the array of traditional ethnic cuisines, from the Chinese to the Indian, from the peculiar *Peranakan* to the Arab.

> The latest entrant to our food paradise is New Asia-Singapore cuisine. An attempt to marry the best of both Asian and Western, New Asia - Singapore cuisine is for more adventurous palates. Let your adventures begin in Doc Cheng's at the Raffles Hotel and Club Chinois at Orchard Parade Hotel (Singapore 2001: 82).

What is the future?
What is the future of global gastronomy cuisine, then? The rise of New Global Cuisine shows that in contemporary GTP's, the overlapping local and global dimensions tend to prevail. Thus, for example, in the GTP's *glocal* model there is little room for the national identity in the classical terms of nation-state. A meal no longer reflects only the history of nation-based aggregation of people. Whilst its prosody in the past "permitted a person to partake each day of the national past", (Barthes, 1979:170) in the current phase of global capitalism may permit individuals to chip into the transnational consumer zones, which are more relevant than state-nations.

This situation is leading to new forms of "localisations" within new global cuisine that should further investigate by future research in global gastronomic tourism. It appears that to provide with competitive advantage a neo-global GTP, such as either a restaurant, a gourmet resort or a festival, will increasingly mean to specialise in the catering to one or more "global nations": aggregations of people sharing cultural and consumption similarities but not belonging to the same country (Scarpato 2001).

Worldwide spa users represent one of these global nations and spa cuisine caterers to them. The boom of this style has been impressive: spa restaurants have sprung all over the world inside and outsides spas, with specialised chefs.

A corpus of thousands of spa recipes has become readily available in dozen of books, websites and videos. These recipes can be prepared regardless the location of the spa, because have been built only with the aim of gratifying the "desire for full-scale pampering".

> Unlike traditional spas, which have long been in the business of "cures" … today's vacation spas focus simply on pampering both body and spirit (Thomas 2002: 58)

The desire for pampering is not to be underestimated since is a unifying cultural and social motivator:

> Spa cuisine can work on the inside while the other healers at spas work on the external body for total healing and pampering. …we are going to make the world a better place, step by step, making each individual we touch healthier in body and mind (Hartsough 1999)

The trend in the past few years has been that spa no longer are true to their natural places such spring waters and volcanic areas. Yoga, hydrotherapy, aquacranial massages, grape seeds frictions, new spas are built "on the hippest new treatment" (Thomas 2002, 58). Spa cuisine is following the evolution and gastronomic tourists will move accordingly, even if their favourite spa restaurant is in a day spa, in the heart of a cosmopolitan city centre, like the *banya* in Moscow.

Cyber social aggregations are playing an important function in the building of global nations as imagined communities. Websites are being invested with collective memories and have such emotional power to generate a sense of community, exactly like the role that according to Featherstone (1996:53) played by national monuments in the nation-states. Websites like *gay.com,* which features over one million individual profiles around the world, with its editorial on food preferences and wines, may prompt the establishment of a *pink neo-global cuisine*: a corpus of recipes and an authentically gay culinary philosophy both created and realised by gays but not only for gay customers.

It's with these possible scenarios that gastronomic tourism planners, researchers and operators have to deal in the near future. For this reason a good knowledge of the case New Global Cuisine, with its inherent issues of authenticity and sense of place in the current postmodern turn, may prove very helpful for future research.

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A global cuisine is a cuisine that is practiced around the world. A cuisine is a characteristic style of cooking practices and traditions, often associated with a specific region, country or culture. To become a global cuisine, a local, regional or national cuisine must spread around the world, its food served worldwide. There have been significant improvements and advances during the last century in food preservation, storage, shipping and production, and today many countries, cities and regions have