edited by
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Transcending Borders

Selected papers in East Asian studies

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PREFACE

Ikuko Sagiyama, Valentina Pedone

Borders (what's up with that?)
M.I.A.

This is the second collection of works by scholars in the fields of Chinese and Japanese Studies selected by the Florientalia editorial board. Unlike for the first volume, on this occasion, we decided to propose a topic that could serve as a *fil rouge* for all the papers included. We chose "transcending borders" as the theme and title of the volume, hinting at the concept of bridging boundaries, in any possible context and domain, metaphorical or concrete.

From the city of Florence, the cradle of the Renaissance and one of the symbols of Italian and European culture, we strive to draw a trajectory that reaches towards East Asia, serving as a two-way channel of communication. For this purpose, we gathered an international editorial board, reached out to international authors, and asked for the help of international referees.

In the history of Italy, the very first university courses in Chinese and Japanese were held right here in Florence, beginning in 1863. Unfortunately, a few decades later, an array of events caused the interruption of what seemed to be a promising future for the Florentine university's research in the field of East Asian Studies. Today, we humbly attempt to revive that season by creating a platform for the exchange of ideas and for research on the cultures of China and Japan. We aim to transcend the borders of space by connecting scholars in different fields and from different cultural backgrounds who are conducting research around the globe, as well as transcend the borders of time by breathing new life into the academic research on China and Japan that finds its roots in Florence at the end of the XIX century.

These days, it seems that many people are concerned with borders, confines, and walls more than ever. By proposing this theme, we want to reflect on the opportunities that are to be gained through the overcoming of borders, on what can be accomplished by calling into question old norms, on the implementations of less familiar norms, and on the renegotiation of individual limits and horizons.

This collection gathers seven articles on the theme of borders. The first four articles deal with Chinese presence in Italy today. Grazia Ting Deng and Al-

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len Hai Xiao, two scholars who are interested in anthropology and geography, focus on Chinese entrepreneurs in Italy, on what motivates their mobility and on how these entrepreneurs create imaginative geographies of the cities where they reside. The article by Lan Tu, who is also a geographer, investigates the spatial division of labor among Chinese businesses in Prato, an industrial town near Florence, and the role played by the so-called "politics of visibility" within the social tensions between the Italians and the Chinese of Prato. Violetta Ravagnoli, a historian, adopts a glocal approach and conducts an interdisciplinary (historical, anthropological, sociological) analysis in order to describe the perceived ethnicity of Italians and Chinese residents in Rome. The article by Zhang Gaoheng, a scholar of Italian and Film Studies, offers insight on the persistent Orientalist discourse in Italy that has contributed to the false idea of the existence of the "Chinese mafia" and to the serial representation of such a criminal organization in Italian cultural texts.

The three articles in the field of Japanese Studies elaborate on the concept of borders in literary terms. In her article, Caterina Mazza applies the idea of untranslatability to the work of four contemporary Japanese authors: Murakami Haruki (b. 1949), Toh EnJoe (b. 1972), Tawada Yōko (b. 1960) and Mizumura Minae (b. 1951). Luca Milasi describes how the Japanese writer Kōda Rohan (1867-1947), an eminent novelist of Modern Japan, used references to Buddhism in his works in order to create an alternative way towards a reform of modern Japanese fictional literature that does not exclusively rely on the imitation of Western works. Mario Talamo presents the work of Jippensha Ikku (1765-1831), a Japanese writer of travel literature, who made roaming across the most remote districts of Japanese cities the core of his literary corpus

Our hope is that readers will appreciate the scholarly contributions to the field of East Asian Studies offered by the authors featured in this volume. We also hope that readers will welcome our suggestion to keep challenging the notion of borders, with the purpose of seeking new ways to increase mutual understanding and to expand the boundaries of one's own creativity.

CHINESE STUDIES

ASPIRING TO MOTILITY: CHINESE PETTY ENTREPRENEURS IN ITALY

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The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Allen Hai Xiao
University of Wisconsin – Madison

Abstract
This paper focuses on the daily mobility of Chinese petty entrepreneurs in Italy, aiming to understand the everyday dynamics of Chinese immigration in a host society. Drawing on the conception of *motility* (Kaufmann et al. 2004; Kaufmann 2011), the authors have elaborated on the specific kinds of access and inaccessibility, as well as the skills and aspirations that characterize Chinese petty entrepreneurs in the Italian context. Drawing from extensive ethnographic evidence, the authors then discuss why the Chinese petty entrepreneurs, who are generally from the Wenzhou area, are able to have such *motility*. The paper argues that ethnicity is sometimes just a discursive representation, but entrepreneurial subjectivities drive *motility* by deploying a system of capitals. In other words, the immigrants acquire mobility not because they are Wenzhouese, but because their subjectivity is embodied through Wenzhouese entrepreneurship. Furthermore, these Chinese immigrants create their own imaginative geographies of the cities they live in, which is crucial to understanding how Chinese capitalism is grounded in nuanced ways.

Keywords
Chinese migrants, ethnicity, motility, petty entrepreneurship.

摘要
本文着眼于意大利华人小企业主的日常移动，旨在理解华人移民在客居地的日常生活。借用“流动力”(motility)这一概念(Kaufmann et al. 2004, Kaufmann 2011)，本文作者详细阐述了华人小企业主在意大利社会的日常移动中的准入性和非准入性，及其特有的技能和对移动性的渴望。基于广泛的民族志素材，本文作者探讨了主要来自温州的华人小企业主如何获得流动力以实现日常移动。本文认为，族群性有时仅仅是一种话语表征，而企业主的主体性则通过对一系列资本的利用真正驾驭着流动力。也就是说，这些华人移民获得流动力并非因为他们是温州人，而是因为他们的主体性通过温州商人的企业主精神体现了出来。再者，这些华人移民在所居住的城市建构了自己的地理学想象，这也是理解华人资本主义如何于细微之处落地扎根的关键。

关键词
中国移民，族群性，移动性，小企业家精神。

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1. Introduction

After immigrating to Italy in 2002, Enlei and his wife worked as factory workers in the Ancona area. In 2012, they moved to Bologna, where they bought and ran a coffee bar in a local neighborhood. From time to time, Enlei has to go to his accountant's office, which is located in the other half of the city. Instead of taking a shorter and more direct route, Enlei always passes the central railway station to avoid getting lost. "I don't know any alternative routes," he said, "I always take the routes that pass by the places I am familiar with. It is easier for me to navigate the city in this way." His narrative reflects a Chinese petty entrepreneur's conceptual geography of the city, which sets the stage for a deeper discussion of the Chinese diaspora in Italy and their daily mobility.

In recent decades, immigration studies have extensively discussed the ways in which and the reasons why immigrant minorities are ethnically networked (Hannerz 1974; Aldrich and Waldinger 1990; Zhou 1992; Waldinger 1993, 1995), socioeconomically embedded (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993; Portes 1995; Kloosterman et al. 1999; Kloosterman and Rath 2001) and spatially assimilated (Allen and Turner 1996; Alba et al. 1999) in various contexts. In this spirit, a significant amount of literature on the Chinese diaspora and Chinese overseas has focused on large-scale mobility (migration) rather than daily mobility (e.g. Ong 1999; Ma and Cartier 2003; Wang 2009). Research on Chinese migrants' daily mobility, which is the focus of this paper, will shed light on everyday dynamics of Chinese immigration in host societies.

The conception of *motility* is useful in exploring daily mobility (Kaufmann et al. 2004; Kaufmann 2009). *Motility* places greater emphasis on economic and social integration. It helps articulate how and why Chinese migrants have (or do not have) the potential to be mobile in their host society. Thus, from a migrant perspective, this research topic is critical in teasing out the nuanced coping strategies against immobilities in host societies.

The Chinese migrants we focus on here are petty entrepreneurs, who are "individuals or households who employ a small number of workers but are themselves actively involved in the labor process" (Smart and Smart 2005, 3). These Chinese petty entrepreneurs in Italy mainly serve as subcontractors in the manufacturing and service industries, such as the restaurant business. They include both retailers and wholesalers. Our principal method of data collection was ethnographic fieldwork. The first author conducted fieldwork in Bologna and surrounding towns from May 2014 to July 2015 that comprised participant observation and open-ended interviews. The key informants include two families, two individual entrepreneurs, and two college students from Chinese immigrant families. In-depth interviews were also conducted with 50 Chinese migrants, including wage laborers and entrepreneurs. The informants range

from 18 to 60 years old and encompass both first (33) and second generation (17) immigrants. Among the first-generation immigrants, seven have spent more than 20 years in Italy, 23 have lived in Italy for 10 to 20 years and the other three fewer than 10 years. The number of male and female informants was the same. The interviewees are from Fujian province (4), Zhejiang province (42) and northeastern China (4). All the informants have given informed consent to disclose the content of both our interviews and interactions. We have changed their names to maintain anonymity.

2. Chinese Petty Entrepreneurs in Italy

A fairly rich literature has documented the historical dynamics of Chinese immigration to Italy and provided a panoramic overview of their presence over the Italian territories (e.g. Campani et al. 1994; Ceccagno 1998; 2003; Cologna 2003; Di Corpo 2008; Pedone 2013a; Dei Ottati and Cologna 2015). The first wave of Chinese immigration to Italy began in the 1920s. Some hundreds of Chinese emigrated from China through France and finally settled down in Milan, Bologna and Tuscany. They worked in the textile and leather industries, while some Chinese street peddlers hawked small commodities in the urban squares of Milan (Carchedi and Ferri 1998; Lan 2014). Right after World War II, hundreds of Chinese were recorded in Italian census registration, but these Chinese were only the prelude of a larger wave of Chinese immigration to Italy that began in the 1980s (Ceccagno 2003). After a long time of stagnation during the Mao era (1949–1976), Chinese migration to Italy experienced rapid growth in the following 30 years. According to the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT 2016a), more than 270,000 Chinese immigrants were living in Italy by 2015, constituting the fourth-largest immigrant community in Italy. However, this number does not include illicit immigrants and those who have obtained Italian citizenship.

In contrast to other European countries such as the U.K., France and the Netherlands, where recent Chinese migrants originate from a wide range of Chinese regions, in Italy the migrants' typically hail from a limited and concentrated number of places (Campani et al. 1994; Benton and Pieke 1998; Pedone 2013a). The first arrivals were Chinese from the rural areas of Wenzhou region in southeastern Zhejiang province, and they still make up the largest portion of the Chinese presence in Italy, dominating the Chinese ethnic economy in Italy. The arrival of the Fujianese since the late 1980s and the *Dongbei* people (Northeasterners) since the 1990s has diversified the Chinese population, but they are still eclipsed by the large number of Wenzhouese (Pieke et al. 2004). The Fujianese and Northeasterners have participated in the Wenzhouese eth-

nic economy, enriched the workforce and embraced the existing working patterns maintained by Wenzhouese entrepreneurs. Some of the Fujianese, after several years of effort, have also started up their own businesses, but they are still much weaker than Wenzhouese in terms of both population and economic volume. Few Northeasterners have become entrepreneurs, except for a limited number who opened restaurants in major cities with large Chinese populations.

A large number of Chinese immigrants, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, arrived in Italy through illicit ways. Due to the ambivalent attitude of Italian government toward illegal immigrants (Ceccagno 2003), Italy has become one of the most popular destinations in Europe for Chinese immigrants in the last three decades. The Italian government enacted a series of amnesties to legalize undocumented immigrants in 1986, 1990, 1995, 1998, 2002, and 2012 respectively (Caritas Migrantes 2005; Ceccagno and Rastrelli 2008; Lan 2014). A large number of Chinese came directly to Italy or through other European countries with the hope of becoming legal residents (Ceccagno 2003). Moreover, the Italian government rarely enforced repatriation of undocumented immigrants themselves, although companies hiring undocumented workers are heavily fined. A Chinese local market trader in Italy, who used to be an illicit immigrant, said: "What we really worried about was being caught in the workplace. But it was also troublesome to be checked by police on the streets." The underground nature of illicit immigration places a major restriction on everyday mobilities of Chinese immigrants in Italy.

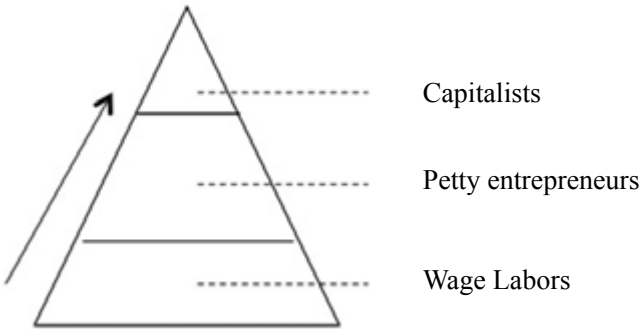
The population of Chinese immigrants in Italy has distributed all over the Italian territory, though a much more intensive concentration is registered in the job markets of Northern and Central Italy (Ceccagno 2003; Lan 2014). Lombardy, Tuscany, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna are the top four regions with the largest number of Chinese immigrants (ISTAT 2016b). Like many other immigrant groups, industrial districts, where small-scale manufacturing businesses are largely concentrated, and large cities, where there is a significant demand for workers in the labor-intensive service industry and small-scale businesses, have become the primary destinations of Chinese settlement (Ambrosini 2001; Ambrosini and Zucchetti 2002; Colombo and Sciortino 2004; Barberis 2008; 2011).

Chinese immigrants in Italy, most of whom are Wenzhouese, typically engage in four business fields: (1) manufacturing subcontracting, which has attracted the largest proportion of the Chinese population, even though manufacturing production has been badly hit by the global economic crisis since 2008; (2) the restaurant business, including Chinese, Japanese and Thai restaurants, as well as the Italian-style coffee bars that have spread all over the country since the 1980s; (3) import and export, such as garment/leather retailing or wholesaling, represented by a fewer number of firms concentrated mainly in the large urban centers of settlement, such as Milan and Rome (Pedone 2008; 2013b; Cecc-

agno 2007); (4) small service industries with targeted clientele, which include local tobacco shops, barber shops, supermarkets and massage parlors that serve mainly Italians, as well as travel agencies, translation agencies and ethnic food stores primarily frequented by Chinese immigrants.

However, these four fields did not emerge concurrently. Chinese migrant entrepreneurship diversified from manufacturing to services over the last three decades (Cologna 2005; Ceccagno 2003). Manufacturing and food services were their initial focus and had a boom in the 1980s. Since the second half of the 1990s, they have gradually stepped out from their historically concentrated "refuge" sectors (Cologna 2006a) to retail and wholesale. In the new millennium, more and more Chinese entrepreneurs have moved into neighborhood-scale small businesses catering to the general public (Dei Ottati and Cologna 2015; Cologna 2006b).

Chinese immigrants in Italy can be roughly categorized into wage labors, self-employed petty entrepreneurs and capitalists as shown in the following pyramid:



The diagram not only demonstrates the socioeconomic structure of Chinese immigrants in Italy, but also represents the possibilities of upward economic and social mobility in the Chinese community.

The petty entrepreneurs in the middle stratum are the subject of this paper, and most of them are unskilled and poorly educated migrant workers from rural Wenzhou. Embracing the desire of economic achievement, they moved to Italy in search of better fortunes. They typically view their destination as a workplace rather than a permanent home and thus tend to adhere to a rigorous work ethic, believing that hard work can lead to greater personal wealth.

Many Wenzhouese fulfill their entrepreneurial aspirations after a period of migration. They have therefore graduated from wage labor to become petty entrepreneurs, while a small number have reached the top of the pyramid. They

often correlate their level of success to the timing of their arrival in Italy. The general belief is that the early arrivals in the 1980s benefited from the favorable economic environment then to accumulate a significant amount of economic capital, whereas the latecomers faced increasing competition and correspondingly limited prospects of socioeconomic movement.

Generally speaking, Chinese immigrants in Italy have demonstrated a much stronger tendency toward entrepreneurship than other immigrant groups. Fondazione Leone Moressa (2016) reported that Chinese migrant entrepreneurs, the majority of which are petty entrepreneurs, account for 10 percent of migrant entrepreneurs in Italy, even though Chinese migrants make up only 5.4 percent of the immigration population in Italy. The number of Chinese migrant entrepreneurs has also jumped 32 percent from 2010 to 2015.

Chinese migrant entrepreneurship has drawn a great deal of scholarly attention. Many studies have elaborated on specific geographic locations where Chinese migrant entrepreneurship is embedded with local economies and societies, such as Prato (Colombi et al. 2003; Johanson et al. 2009; Baldassar 2015), Milano (Farina et al. 1997; Cologna 2003; 2008; Hatziprokopiou and Montagna 2012), Torino (Berzano et al 2010, Camera di Commercio – FIERI 2011), Rome (Berti et al. 2008), Carpi (Bigarelli 2011; Barberis and Dei Ottati 2012), etc. Scholars have debated whether Chinese entrepreneurship should be attributed to ethnicity (Barberis 2011; Cologna 2005; Blanchard and Castagnone 2015) or structural opportunities (Ceccagno 2014; 2016; Lombardi et al. 2015). Various aspects of entrepreneurship have been discussed, such as its generational transitions and dynamics (Cologna 2006a; Cologna et al. 2010) as well as its informality and illegality (Ceccagno and Rastrelli 2008; CNEL 2011).

This paper, instead, focuses on everyday mobility of Chinese petty entrepreneurs. It offers a new perspective in understanding how Chinese subjects accumulate the capitals for spatial mobility in everyday life to achieve entrepreneurial aspirations and social mobility. Scholars have studied the social mobility of Chinese immigrants from the perspective of economic and social integration (Berti et al. 2013; Berti and Valzania 2015). The two types of mobility are in fact interrelated, as Kaufmann et al. articulated with his proposed concept of *motility* as "the link between spatial and social mobility" (Kaufmann et al. 2004, 749). It was defined as "the capacity of entities (e.g. goods, information or persons) to be mobile in social and geographic space, or as the way in which entities access and appropriate the capacity for socio-spatial mobility according to their circumstances" (Kaufmann et al. 2004, 750). Our discussion on the daily mobility of Chinese migrant entrepreneurs is based on this framework of *motility*, which encompasses three interdependent aspects: *access* to mobility, *competence* to use access and *appropriation* of resources (Kaufmann et al. 2004, 750).

3. Access and Inaccessibility

According to Kaufmann (2011, 41), access naturally has a physical component, such as the different types of public transportation. Access is also a primary lens through which scholars have studied marginal groups in Western societies (Rifkin 2000; Kloosterman and Rath 2003; Parks 2004). This paper is not an exception but can still serve as a contrast to existing literature.

Most Wenzhouese migrants enjoy little accessibility in their early days of settlement. Their everyday mobility is subject to both the physical layout of urban settlement and sociocultural arrangement of civic life in the host society. As marginalized ethnic minorities, their powerlessness is manifested economically, socially and culturally. Below, we will elaborate on how obstacles to daily mobility in Italy correspond to the immigrants' inability to achieve *motility*.

First of all, access to public transportation requires rich local knowledge and language competence. Admittedly, Italian public transportation systems are open to everyone, including illicit immigrants. The coverage of railway and bus systems extends beyond the city limits to the suburbs and neighboring cities. But the Wenzhouese are hindered by their lack of familiarity with the urban layout and public transportation maps.

In a middle-sized city like Bologna, many bus routes run infrequently, especially during weekends and holidays. Many of them also lack auto-announce systems. Regular delays are compounded by casual suspensions and frequent strikes.

The Chinese migrants are further hampered by their language incompetence. In their early days after arrival, they can't speak Italian at all. They can't read road signs and bus schedules or ask for directions or understand public announcements. Even after years of assimilation, many immigrants can't read or write in Italian, only being able to manage basic conversation.

Many Chinese immigrants complain about their difficulties navigating public transportation systems. Ping, a woman in her late 30s only five months into her move to Bologna, who was living with her husband's family, said:

> I only know how to take a bus from our coffee bar to downtown. Other places? I don't know how to take a bus there. It is too complicated. But I can pick up my son from school, because it is close to our coffee bar. I can walk there. If I want to go to a new place, I have to take a taxi with my husband or my mother-in-law.

Like Ping, many of the Chinese immigrants stick to one or two familiar routes and regular destinations. They prefer to limit their daily activities to walking range. When it comes to longer trips, they have to seek help from friends and relatives who enjoy greater physical mobility.

Second, although new computer software such as Google Maps and specific mobile phone applications can facilitate free movement in unfamiliar places, they are beyond the grasp of many first-generation Chinese immigrants, who are often unskilled and poorly educated middle-aged workers or even older. Ping once said:

> Life in Italy is more difficult for us. We didn't go to school a lot, so it's hard for us to learn and use these high technologies. We can only remember all the roads and directions in our heads. We can't easily go to a place where we have never been alone.

Third, daily mobility is also regulated by time use (Kaufmann 2011, 42). It is widely acknowledged that the more free time a person has, the more likely the person can be mobile in everyday life. However, among Chinese migrant workers and petty entrepreneurs in Italy, long workdays are the norm.

Due to long working hours, the migrant workers are often stranded in their working places. They are usually instructed by their Chinese employers to work for 10 to 12 hours every day with only one day off each week. They are often too tired after work, so they usually go back to sleep in their dorms, which are usually supplied by their employers. Only on their day off might they hang out with friends, but even then many would rather stay in to sleep, watch TV or play cards.

The self-employed Chinese migrant entrepreneurs are equally diligent. It is common to see these entrepreneurs work and live together with their employees and spend 10 to 12 hours every day in their workshops, restaurants or shops. For the sake of convenience, they often prefer living in a place close to their workplace. For example, coffee bar owners tend to rent an apartment upstairs from their coffee bars, while workshop owners often live and work in the same location.

Apart from a stringent work ethic, Chinese immigrants also tend to be quite frugal. Enlei and his wife used to work as massage therapists at the beach during summers in their early years. "It was hard time for us," his wife said,

> The beach was quite far away from the place where we were living, but we never spent one euro taking buses. We knew it only cost one euro, but we weren't willing to spend it. It would cost two euros per day per person, which means 60 euros per month per person. And then 120 euros would vanish if we both took the bus. It was quite a big amount for us at that time. So every day, we had to walk for one hour to get there, and then another hour to get back.

Enlei's wife's comments show how consumption behavior affects daily mobility. Like many other Chinese migrants in Italy, they had to pay off a considerable amount of debt, which they accrued borrowing from friends and relatives to pay for their underground immigration journeys. At the same time, they also minimized other living expenses so most of their savings can go toward their entrepreneurial aspirations.

Fourth, the illicit migrants are restricted by their lack of Italian citizenship. Citizens can enjoy various discounts for public transportation, such as annual tickets. The Chinese migrants even have to be cautious when walking in public to avoid document checks by Italian police.

Their undocumented classification also limits their job opportunities because employers who hire undocumented workers are subject to severe fines. Most of them end up only working for Chinese entrepreneurs, who are willing to risk hiring undocumented immigrants in exchange for a cheaper payroll.

Lastly, the migrants' mobility is limited by their inability to obtain driver's licenses. Some of the migrants may be able to drive, but their illicit status means they cannot apply for driver's licenses. Their language incompetence also prevents them from doing well in written testing.

In sum, as new arrivals and ethnic minorities, Chinese immigrants have to face many constraints on their daily mobility, including the lack of language competence and local knowledge, the inability to mobilize technology and long working hours, as well as their underground identity, which prevents them from obtaining government benefits and permits. They seem to be extremely immobile and powerless in the first stages of their settlement. However, they developed strategies to cope with these weaknesses. These coping strategies, which are presented below, enable them to expand their mobility in the host society.

4. Skills and Knowledge

Inaccessibility to daily mobility does not mean that Chinese immigrants are totally excluded from physical movements. The immigrants' agency has been continually negotiating with broader structures of mobility networks. And the process of immigration is consistent with accumulation of *capitals*. Indebted to Bourdieu (1986), we use plural here because they accumulate not only economic capital, but also social and cultural capitals. They strategically utilize the system of ethnic economy and social networks to cope with the difficulties they face and intentionally accumulate these capitals that enable them to gradually acquire *motility*.

4.1 Room and Board: Accumulation of Economic Capital

It is an unwritten rule that Chinese employers have the obligation to provide their employees with free room and board. Workers are often found living and eating with their boss's family in the same workshop or residence (Ceccagno 2007; 2015). In other businesses where the living space is separated from the workplace, Chinese employers usually arrange for living places nearby. More often than not, this is the employer's home. According to Ceccagno (2014, 1116), "[s]leeping arrangement is a mode of reconfiguring space where the obliteration of workers' personal and family life and everyday *motility* leads to profit maximization."

Free room and board is welcomed by the Chinese migrant workers because they can then focus on accumulating economic capital. It is also a useful strategy to deal with inaccessibility to daily mobility. First, the newly arrived immigrants can quickly settle down without having to worry about the unfamiliar social and cultural environment of the host society. Second, it is commonly considered by Chinese migrant workers to be more time-efficient. They do not have to waste time looking for accommodation. They can minimize travel time to work and they do not worry about meals. As many informants emphasized: "We came here to earn money, not to enjoy life. It is more convenient if we have a job that comes with meals and living arrangement."

Free room and board is also complemented by a temporary lodging system, or *dapu* in Chinese (Cologna 2007). Some Chinese entrepreneurs offer beds and meals to transient workers at a cheap price. These places are welcomed by migrants who are looking for business opportunities in a new location and laborers who are working for employment in the service sectors where room and board are not available.

From the Chinese immigrants' perspective, the sacrifice of daily mobility is worthwhile in exchange for the broader spatial mobility of job-hunting without territorial constraints. "We go wherever there is a job" is the common rule Chinese migrants follow. They frequently switch jobs in the Chinese economy scattered over the Italian territories. A *dapu* and free room and board system facilitates their long-term spatial mobility. The Chinese immigrants strategically manipulate the residential regime of the Chinese ethnic economy to realize the accumulation of economic capital. It is their subjective choice to confront the lack of *motility* and reduce the negative impact of inaccessibility to daily mobility.

4.2 Relatives and Friends: Accumulation of Social Capital

Kinship and township networks are a strong form of social capital that eases the transition of Chinese migrants and improves their everyday mobility. They work with fellow Chinese nationals and live in Chinese communities. The realm of their daily activities is mainly concentrated in areas where the Chinese congregate. In the two streets dubbed *Zhongguo Jie* (Chinese Streets) by Bologna's Chinese immigrants, the range of businesses covers all aspects of everyday life, from food and clothing to household supplies to translation services. Many Chinese immigrants regularly visit these two streets.

The assistance from their relatives and friends enables them to enlarge their area of mobility in everyday life. Many of them already have made some contacts before they depart from their hometowns. Their social network is not only a source of information about their destination but also an essential facilitator of daily mobility.

The relatives and friends who emigrated earlier often play the role of guide and experienced consultant. For instance, Fen and her husband moved to Bologna because her sister's family had already settled down there and started their own family business. Fen recalled how her sister's family helped them adjust:

> At the beginning, we did not know where to go. It was always my sister's family that helps us out. Our homes were very close to each other. I always followed my sister to buy food and sundries for family use. We also went to lay in a stock of merchandise together, because we did not have a car at that time.

Fen and her husband quickly found their bearings with help from her sister's family. She followed her sister's footsteps to acquire daily physical mobility for family and business needs. She and her husband chose to live close to her sister and enter her line of local market business. In this way, their social networks facilitated their physical movement in everyday life and further contributed to their economic and social mobility.

Moreover, children born or raised in Italy can further boost the daily mobility of their parents who have limited language ability, local knowledge and technological skills. Such intergenerational knowledge is crucial social capital for the Chinese migrant entrepreneurs in dealing with unexpected happenings in daily mobility, such as going to hospitals or new places. In these cases, children often play the role of guide and language interpreter.

4.3 Italian Language and the Driver's License: Accumulation of Cultural Capital

In addition to the accumulation of economic and social capitals, many Wenzhouese immigrants also make the effort to acquire cultural capital to enhance everyday mobility. There are two key types of cultural capital they strive for: language competence and a driver's license.

Language competence has a comprehensive impact on every aspect of daily life, including daily mobility. "*Mei you yu yan, cun bu nan xing*" is a common saying among Chinese immigrants in Italy, which literally means "Without language, you cannot even move one inch." This expression reflects the importance of Italian language in daily mobility. We wrote earlier on how limited Italian affects the migrant's ability to access public transportation.

The driver's license is another form cultural capital that affects immigrants' everyday mobility. Once they obtain legal residency, taking the driving test becomes the top priority of Wenzhouese entrepreneurs. As many of them told us: "Driving by ourselves is a more convenient way for us to move around."

It is worth noting that a driver's license is not synonymous to driving skills. As a form of institutionalized cultural capital, a driver's license embodies two qualities: driving skills and institutional permission. Compared to local Italians, it is not necessarily harder for the Chinese migrants to learn how to drive. But it is more difficult for them to institutionalize that skill set because of the language barrier. Language incompetence is a major stumbling block to passing the driving test. Many Chinese immigrants have difficulty understanding the examiner during both the oral exam and the road test.

A garment workshop owner explained how she learned Italian and obtained her driver's license:

> I learned Italian by myself. I learned it by interacting with Italians. I never learned it at school. In my whole life, I only went to one school. That was driving school. Twice! I could not understand the questions, so I learned by rote all the exam questions in advance. Then I guessed what they asked in the exam.

Her narrative demonstrated the interrelation between the two types of cultural capital and her strong desire to acquire both. Language competence is a determinant factor for acquiring a driver's license, and the license in turn can partly compensate for inaccessibility to daily mobility due to language incompetence.

In summary, the seemingly powerless Chinese immigrants have their own strategies to overcome inaccessibility to daily mobility. They strategically accumulate all kinds of capital by taking jobs that offer room and board, by asking for assistance from their social and kinship networks and learning Italian and

acquiring a driver's license. In this way, they have gradually compiled skills and knowledge, in other words, the *motility* to access to daily mobility. But the cultivation of these abilities cannot be accomplished without strong aspiration to everyday mobility.

5. Desires and Aspirations

According to Kaufmann (2011), the acquisition of *motility* is built on individual aspirations. In this case, the Wenzhouese migrant entrepreneurs' efforts to learn Italian and obtain driver's licenses derive from their desire to acquire *motility* and transform it into daily mobility. And this desire is further driven by their aspirations to achieve socioeconomic mobility.

The Wenzhouese migrants tend to be more entrepreneurial than migrants from other Chinese regions. A Wenzhouese restaurant owner, who has lived in Italy for more than 20 years, discussed his understanding of differences between Wenzhouese and northeastern Chinese immigrants:

> We Wenzhouese are different from those Northeasterners. They work for others, hoping to earn some quick money here and then go back to China as soon as possible. We Wenzhouese come here with family. We stay here to launch our own businesses. We like working for ourselves. We also want to go back to China, but not now. We will go back when we are old.

In contrast to his narrative, a Northeastern migrant worker said:

> We Northeasterners usually do not want to stay in Italy for long. We come to work and then go back home with some money. So we do not have a strong desire to learn Italian. It is too difficult. In this regard, we have to admire the Wenzhouese. Take my boss as an example. He only completed primary school in China and he never went to school in Italy. But his Italian is pretty good. They just learned the language by rote memorization.

This Northeastern worker did not go back to China after a couple of years as he had planned. He ended up working in several workshops and restaurants opened by Wenzhouese migrants for more than 10 years. But during the same period, he witnessed many of his coworkers from Wenzhouese leave to start their own businesses.

The narratives of these two Chinese immigrants reflect very different attitudes toward the acquisition of *motility*. The Wenzhouese migrants who have strong entrepreneurial aspirations only consider being employed as a transitory stage in their long-term migration trajectory. It is a strategy for them to accu-

mulate not only economic but also social and cultural capitals to achieve their entrepreneurial ambitions. Once they accumulate these various capitals, they quit and become entrepreneurs. In contrast, many Northeasterners are content with their jobs that come with room and board and tend to stay in them for a long time. In this sense, they sacrificed daily mobility for the accumulation of economic capital.

The Wenzhouese petty entrepreneurs in Italy also share similar long-term business plans and life trajectories. Fumin, the owner of a coffee bar in Bologna, is a typical case. He arrived in Italy in 1994 and worked for three years illegally. Most of his savings went toward repaying the amount he borrowed to gain illicit passage to Italy. He took advantage of the 1998 amnesty to obtain legal residency. Then he acquired a driver's license and rented a stand in a local market. At the same time, his wife and three children reunited with him in Bologna in 1998 by emigrating legally. He bought a coffee bar and started his own establishment in 2010. Fumin said:

> In the first two years, I switched jobs many times. All the bosses offered meals and beds. I gradually got used to the Italian environment. Then I started looking for chances to work for myself. There is more *freedom* when you work for yourself. I saw people selling trinkets with baskets under their arms. I followed them and learned to do the same thing. At the beginning I did not have a residency permit, so I had to do it secretly. When I got my residency permit, I started having some savings little by little. Soon I bought my own stand in a market.

Fumin's words expressed his subjectivity to become a self-employed entrepreneur. Many Wenzhouese emphasized the "freedom" entrepreneurs enjoy compared to wageworkers. In spite of sharing the same working and living space with their employees, the employers possess more agency to mobilize their time and space. As Fumin said,

> Working for ourselves is more flexible. Time is more flexible. Family members can easily adjust their schedules and change shifts, so they can go anywhere they want without being trapped at work.

According to Fumin and many other Chinese immigrants, entrepreneurs have more access to spatial mobility. And this spatial mobility is also a representation of social mobility. Obtaining a driver's license and buying a car ensures the realization of both spatial and social mobility. Fumin's narrative confirmed this point:

> Without a car, how can we run a business? It is not convenient at all. So, no matter how difficult the driving test is, we have to pass it.

In addition, car ownership also has symbolic value. Buying a car is a display of conspicuous consumption, which is also common among returned Wenzhouese migrants in China (Li 1999a). A car represents the attainment of a kind of European dream and the fulfillment of entrepreneurial aspirations.

6. Motility, Ethnicity, and Entrepreneurial Subjectivity

Chinese petty entrepreneurs in Italy have demonstrated a system of *motility*, the capacity to be mobile in social and geographic space and the ability to access and appropriate that capacity (Kaufmann et al. 2004). In this framework, we have elaborated on the specific kinds of inaccessibility, skills and aspirations that define Chinese petty entrepreneurs in the Italian context of (im)mobilities. The detailed analysis leads us to another question: why do the *Chinese petty entrepreneurs* in particular are able to have such *motility*?

To better answer the question, first of all, we will explain the relationship between ethnicity and *motility*. As we have noted, these Chinese migrants are primarily from the same region in China – Wenzhou. Scholars have outlined the characteristics of emigration from Wenzhou (Kuhn 2011, 48–51) and they are even generalized as an exportable "Wenzhou model" (Tomba 1999, 280–294). The success of Wenzhou emigration to Europe is attributed to structural factors in post-Mao China. The Wenzhou region, along with some other areas of Fujian province, were economically impoverished, but faced less administrative interference from the central government in their day-to-day life compared with other places (Liu 1992; Thunø and Pieke 2005). Therefore, these areas developed private economies much earlier than other parts of China, which is an important reason for large-scale emigration (Xiang 2003). In addition, non-structural factors, such as Christianity (Cao 2010; 2013), might also play out in Wenzhou people's migrant lives. These analyses can explain how and why Wenzhouese migrate but cannot fully articulate why Wenzhouese are able to gain *motility* despite many constraints in the host society. Thus, we suggest that the Wenzhouese ethnicity be considered in relation to *motility*.

Indebted to the cognitive perspective towards ethnicity (Brubaker 2004), we argue that Wenzhouese ethnicity is not constructed as preexisting groupness – although it is expressed in commonalities like dialect (Kuhn 2008, 41) and consumption behavior (Li 1999b, 191–194) – but rather socially formed, reinforced and reshaped in the process of accumulating various capitals. As we have elaborated, on one hand, Wenzhouese migrants utilize their social connections with fellow Wenzhouese, usually relatives and friends, to navigate in the city. On the other hand, the ever-increasing mobility enables them to develop a more cohesive ethnic community. As for mobilizing social capital, the accu-

mulation of all the capitals enhances the mobility of their fellow Wenzhouese and simultaneously facilitates the categorization of ethnicity.

Thus, *motility* has ethnic difference, and that difference is based on the processual categorization of ethnicity. No ethnic group naturally possesses more *motility* than the others. Wenzhouese used to have little access to mobility, but they endeavored to accumulate capitals that can make them mobile. In the process, they were temporarily subject to mobility-restrained jobs before launching their own businesses. Furthermore, they tried to learn Italian in order to pass the driving test. Once they pass, their accumulated capital allowed them to buy their own cars and move freely around the city.

Second, entrepreneurship also affects *motility*. In the Italian migrant economies, entrepreneurs have more capacity to be mobile than workers. According to Ceccagno (2014), Chinese migrant workers are usually living and eating with their Chinese employer's family in the same workshop. The accommodation arrangement highly restrains workers' agency, although they enjoy limited short-term territorial mobility within the Industrial Districts. In contrast, migrant entrepreneurs have more freedom to move around in the city. Due to a higher purchasing power, they can access not only general mobilities but also specific automobility (Urry 2004)

The comparison between migrant entrepreneurs and migrant workers above shows that entrepreneurship provides a system of capitals in which *motility* can be exchanged with other types of capital. Kaufmann et al. (2004) proposed to consider *motility* as a form of capital and that different forms of movement may be interchangeable. In this case, Wenzhouese migrants first sacrificed their mobility for economic capital. After completing early accumulation, they use some of their economic capital to purchase mobility. Thus, entrepreneurship enables Chinese migrants to mobilize *motility*.

It should also be emphasized that these Chinese migrants are petty entrepreneurs. Their socioeconomic status restricts free movement in the city. Suppose they are entrepreneurs with a higher education background and larger investments, then their mobility is more likely to be even more developed. Given their petty entrepreneurship, they have to negotiate their limited economic, social and cultural capitals with *motility* capital. This exchange of capitals can also be found among petty entrepreneurs in the developing world (Haugen 2012; Lan and Xiao 2014).

Third, in addition to ethnicity and entrepreneurship, the deeper driver to *motility* lies in subjectivities that are rooted in their life histories and everyday practices. Subjectivity "provides the ground for subjects to think through their circumstances and to feel through their contradictions, and in doing so, to inwardly endure experiences that would otherwise be outwardly unbearable" (Biehl et al. 2007, 14). In the case of *motility*, the subjectivity of Chinese petty

entrepreneurs provides them with the consciousness of inaccessibility and emboldens them to obtain accessibility. The subjectivity comes through ethnicity and entrepreneurship in some ways.

Ethnicity is one of embodiments of subjectivity, because the experiential basis of subjectivity is consistent with the processual formation of ethnicity. Wenzhouese ethnicity has embodied distinct subjectivity. Two narratives from Wenzhouese and Northeasterners demonstrate the discursive representation of agencies, one to make a fortune and one to earn money. Two divergent agencies decide everyday ethnicities (Brubaker 2006) and different ways of living in the host society. In other words, without the internalization and the externalization of Wenzhouese ethnicity vis-à-vis Wenzhou people themselves, other migrant groups and the Italian host society, *motility* could not be achieved in such strong aspirational ways.

Entrepreneurship is another embodiment of subjectivity. Entrepreneurship not only provides a bundle of capitals for *motility*, but is also fused with motivations to mobilize those capitals. The motivation and aspiration result from the experiential subjectivities, which those Wenzhou migrants obtain over the time. Wenzhouese subjectivity centers on the individuality of Chinese societal transformation (See Yan 2009) and the practice of entrepreneurship in diaspora (See Pieke and Mallee eds. 1999, Part II). In this vein, *motility* is more likely gained by Wenzhouese petty entrepreneurs than others.

7. Conclusion

On one hand, this case study of Chinese petty entrepreneurs in Italy has contributed to the understanding of mobility studies by emphasizing ethnicity and subjectivity. We argue that ethnicity is sometimes just a discursive representation, but entrepreneurial subjectivities drive *motility* by deploying a system of capitals. In other words, the Chinese migrants acquire mobility not because they are Wenzhouese, but because subjectivity is embodied through Wenzhouese entrepreneurship. This argument is rooted in a larger theoretical shift from structure to agency in current mobility studies.

Nevertheless, the socioeconomic status of the subject still matters. Many pieces of evidence in this paper have shown how the subjectivity of petty entrepreneurs is subject to structural constraints. In the meantime, the subjects develop coping strategies against the constraints. The dialectic relationship always exists, but we call for further study of the subjectivity of mobilities.

On the other hand, the study of *motility* in this paper, which differs from general mobility studies, has contributed to the understanding of Chinese immigration to host societies. We argue that beyond the immigrant patterns of ei-

ther exclusion or inclusion, Chinese immigrants create their own imaginative geographies of the cities. Their daily mobilities are part of residents' everyday lives. Thus, their imaginative geographies need to be considered in urban planning and immigrant governance in Italy.

Furthermore, this study of *motility* also contributes to the understanding of Chinese capitalism in the global arena. Some terminology of Chinese going-out practices tends to homogenize the Chinese actors. For instance, *mobility*, a term that conceptualizes movements of (Chinese) migrants, focuses on how the actors are/become mobile, instead of exploring *who* is/becomes mobile. In contrast, indebted to the conceptualization of *motility*, this paper takes the mobile actors' identities and social status into serious consideration. It helps clarify to what extent Chinese capitalism reaches the ground, how Chinese migrants cope with local lives, and how Chinese practices are kept, altered and mixed with local institutions.

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POLITICS OF VISIBILITY IN THE CHINESE COMMUNITY IN PRATO, ITALY

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Abstract
This paper takes a spatial perspective to study the polarization within the Chinese community in Prato, Italy. It shows that the power asymmetry between lead firms and subcontractors within the Chinese apparel industry has led to a spatial division of labor, in which different kinds of the firms specialize in different kinds of work and occupy different parts of the city. Moreover, the spatial division of labor triggered a series of political struggles relating to the urban structure which dates back to the postwar years of Prato's textile industrial district. While naturalized in the 1950s and 1960s, the urban structure was problematized in the 2000s by a particular process of discursive reconstruction. The chapter argues that these political struggles over urban structure, or the "politics of visibility", have become the center of the social tensions between Chinese and Italian communities in Prato.

Keywords
Apparel industry, Chinese migration, spatial division of labor, urban structure, Prato.

摘要
本章通过空间视角来研究普拉托华人社区内部的阶层分化。华人服装产业中领导企业和分包商之间的权利不平等已经在普拉托形成了一种劳动空间分异，即不同类型的企业积聚在城市的不同部分。并且，这种空间分异导致了一系列关于城市结构的政治斗争。普拉托城市结构的形成可以追溯到二战后纺织工业大发展的时期。尽管该城市结构在五六十年代被人们习以为常，从2000年开始，当地一系列的话语重构将其变成了政治问题。笔者认为这些关于城市结构的政治斗争，即"能见度政治"，已经成为普拉托华人与当地人之间社会矛盾的焦点。

关键词
服装产业中国移民，劳动空间分异，城市结构，普拉托。

1. Introduction

The Chinese community in Prato, Italy has been the center of many academic (Smyth and French 2009) and public discussions (Donadio 2010; Pieraccini 2010). Existing researches have covered a wide range of issues, such as the em-

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beddedness of the Chinese industry in the local economy (Barberis 2009; Ceccagno 2009; Ceccagno 2012; Dei Ottati 2009), the transnational entrepreneurship of the Chinese immigrants (Dei Ottati 2014; Lan and Zhu 2014; Lombardi and Sforzi 2016), the local governance of the Chinese community (Barbu, Dunford, and Liu 2013), the racial segregation of Prato (Bressan and Tosi Cambini 2009; Bressan and Tosi Cambini 2011), and child care and gender dynamics within the Chinese family businesses (Ceccagno 2007; Krause 2015). However, despite a few exceptions (Ceccagno 2012; Berti, Pedone, and Valzania 2013; Lan 2015), the socioeconomic polarization within the Chinese community by and large remains unexplored.

In this chapter, drawing upon the literature of global value chains and urban geography, I take a spatial perspective to study the polarization within the Chinese community in Prato. In particular, I focus on the spatial division of labor in Prato, involving a subcontracting practice in which lead firms outsource less profitable and informal labor to stitching workshops. By so doing, the more powerful lead firms can openly claim their legitimacy in the more visible part of the city, while the stitching workshops with substandard working conditions have to hide themselves in the most invisible and dilapidated corners. Furthermore, I argue that this spatial division of labor is not entirely new in Prato, as it triggered a series of political struggles that have been ongoing since the 1950s, before the Chinese arrived *en masse*. Although naturalized in the 1950s and 1960s, the substandard working conditions alongside the flexible use of urban space were discursively problematized in the 2000s, becoming the center of the social tensions between Chinese and Italian communities. Therefore, the "politics of visibility" refer to the political struggles that have been involved in the naturalization and later problematization of the particular spatial division of labor in Prato.

This chapter is based on my field research in Italy and China between 2011 and 2013, during which I conducted 80 semi-structured interviews with 57 interviewees including entrepreneurs, workers, government officials, and social activists. In particular, I interviewed 9 Chinese apparel manufacturers, many of whom were interviewed more than once over the course of three years. These interviews included one dyer-washer (in Chinese *Ranxi Gongsi*, literally the dyer-washer firms), one thread maker (*Fengrenxian Gongsi*), two stitching workshops (*Buyi Gongchang*, firms specialized in stitching), and five cutter-designers (*Caijian Gongsi*, which are also the lead firms of the production teams in Prato). In addition to the interviews, between November and December 2013, I conducted a one-month participant observation by staying in a Chinese stitching workshop in Prato.

Even though the sample size is small, it is still representative for two reasons. First, the sample covers all 4 types of firms in the industry and includes both more established firms older than 10 years and the firms younger than 5 years. By triangulating information among different actors in the industry, I was able

to minimize the potential errors and sampling bias. Second, Chinese businesses have generated strong distrusts against non-Chinese researchers in Prato due to the recent investigations by Italian plainclothes police and journalists. In fact, many scholars have voiced the difficulties of studying Chinese firms in Italy due to these sentiments (Barberis 2009). Conducted by co-ethnic researchers, this research managed to reduce the distrusts from the subjects and thus increase the credibility of the information.

The rest of the chapter is divided into five parts. Section 2 briefly reviews the previous studies about the Chinese community in Prato, in particular its apparel production networks, processes of polarization, and urban structure. Section 3 introduces the economic rationalities based on which lead firms outsource less profitable and informal labor to stitching workshops, resulting in a specific spatial division of labor within the apparel sector. Section 4 investigates the historical roots of the spatial division of labor in Prato and the ways in which the historical heritage was discursively problematized in the 2000s. In Section 5, I focus on an ethnography about the dragon parades for the Chinese New Year which exemplify the politics of visibility in Prato. The last section concludes the chapter.

2. Apparel Production Networks, Polarization, and Urban Structure

The case of Prato has been interesting in mainly three ways. First, as a province, Prato hosts the second largest Chinese community in Italy, after only Milan but ahead of Florence and Rome, based on the data from ISTAT (the Italian National Institute of Statistics, http://dati.istat.it/). Also according to ISTAT, on January 1st, 2015, there were 37,507 Chinese nationals holding residence permits in the province of Prato. Given Prato's total population of 252,987 on the same date, the ratio of Chinese over the total was about 14.8%, the highest across the country. Second, the Chinese apparel industry in Prato has been one of the largest in Italy by the number of firms. Based on the data from Prato Chamber of Commerce (http://www.po.camcom.it/servizi/datistud/index.php), by the first half of 2015, the number of manufacturing firms owned by Chinese nationals reached 4,019, making Prato the center of apparel production networks not only in Italy but also across Europe. Finally, Prato has traditionally been a textile town since the end of World War II, meaning textile, as opposed to apparel, has always been the primary industry.[1] In the past, scholars cited Prato as the prototype for the Italian industrial districts, which in the 1960s and 1970s outcompeted some of

[1] Often conflated in English, in this specific context, textile industry refers to the production of fabrics whereas apparel industry refers to the production of garments.

the mass production plants in Europe and in the US (Becattini 1979; Piore and Sabel 1986). Mostly consisting of small and medium-sized enterprises, Prato has been famous for its endogenous innovation, sharing of tacit knowledge, and mutual financial supports (Becattini 2001).

Existing research also points out the fact that there has been little synergy between Prato's apparel industry, which has been mostly run by the Chinese, and its textile industry, which has been mostly run by the Italians (Dei Ottati 2009; Ceccagno 2015; Lan 2015). While the Chinese apparel industry has been growing steadily since the 1990s, the local textile industry has been declining during the same period of time. These scholars also rightly pointed out that the contrast between the apparel and textile industries has been the fundamental reason for the social tensions between the Chinese and Italian communities. Hereafter, unless specified otherwise, I use the Industry to refer to the Chinese apparel industry in Prato.

Many research interests have focused on explaining the reasons for the success of the Industry, including its specific upgrading strategy (Toccafondi 2009), malfunction of the regulations (Dei Ottati 2009), and undocumented workers (Pieraccini 2010). More recently, a number of scholars realized that no single factor caused the rise of the Industry. For example, Dei Ottati (2014) pointed out that the Chinese *pronto moda* or fast fashion has "a transnational extension" thanks to globalization and modern technology. Lan and Zhu (2014) showed that the Industry has so far focused on the low-end fast fashion markets in Italy and other European countries. In particular, they showed that the success of the Industry was conditioned on both a group of Chinese production teams in Prato and a network of ethnic Chinese traders across Europe. Ceccagno (2015) and Lan (2015) showed that the success of the Industry was historically contingent upon the transformation of fashion production networks at the global scale, the changing immigration regulations, and the local governance (or rather the lack thereof) in Prato. In this chapter, I do not intend to propose another explanation for the success of the Industry, for it has been nicely investigated in these recent works. Instead, I focus on the polarization within the Chinese community.

Indeed, the research on the polarization within the Chinese community is not entirely new, as many have discerned an apparent paradox in Prato. On the one hand, scholars pointed out the degradation of working conditions in the Industry (Ceccagno 2007; Bressan and Tosi Cambini 2011; Lan 2015). They showed that many Chinese workers lived in the dilapidated part of the city. On the other hand, the same scholars repetitively confirmed the success of the Industry compared to the declining textile industry in Prato (Lan and Zhu 2014; Ceccagno 2015). In particular, its prosperity has led to an extravaganza of new fancy buildings and luxury cars, all of which are very much envied by the local people (Pieraccini 2010). In particular, Berti, Pedone, and Valzania (2013)

observed the rising inequality within the Chinese community between a handful of successful business owners in the apparel industry and the majority of the community in terms of their consumption behaviors in retail markets. They argued that this internal polarization within the Chinese community could have important consequences for them to integrate into the Italian society, as different social classes integrate in different dimensions and at different rates. Drawing on these works, this chapter takes a spatial perspective to study the polarization within the Chinese community. In particular, it studies the relationship between the polarization and the spatial division of labor in the Chinese apparel sector, which in turn is conditioned on a specific urban structure in Prato.

There have been fewer researches focusing on the urban structure in Prato. Using the theories of urban sociology, Bressan and Tosi Cambini (2009; 2011) observed that the Chinese immigrants in Prato concentrated in a "zone of transition" with a degrading living environment and chaotic social governance. In particular, they argued that the current urban segregation between Italian and Chinese communities in Prato has its roots in the longer history of Prato's urban structure. Building upon their work, this chapter takes one step further to investigate the ways in which Prato's urban structure affected the spatial division of labor in the Industry. Apparently, the immigrants who enjoyed the wealth of the Industry are not the same immigrants who suffer from the substandard working conditions. Geographically speaking, the wealthier business owners and most of the workers do not live in the same part of the city.

3. Power Asymmetry and the Spatial Division of Labor

Power asymmetry between lead firms and subcontractors is one of the most common characteristics in buyer-driven value chains, for which apparel sector is the best example (Gereffi, Humphrey, and Sturgeon 2005). According to the global value chains literature, a buyer-driven chain means that in a particular sector, buyers have more power and thus capture more value than the manufacturers (Gereffi 1999). In particular, buyers usually outsource less profitable manufacturing phases to the manufacturers, a practice that has been common across the world. Scholars have found that the increasingly flexible demand for consumer goods has contributed to the widespread offshoring from western buyers/retailers to Third-World manufacturers (Gereffi 1994, 105; Gereffi 1999, 45). As a consequence, economic insecurity and informal labor has also been transferred to the Third World. More specifically, since the western retailers constantly chase the cheapest labor across the world, local manufacturers in the developing countries have to squeeze their labor costs as much as possible to meet the requirements. Meanwhile, since the demand now fluctuates

and diversifies more than any time before, the manufacturers have to rely on a more flexible workforce that they can easily manipulate and dispose of whenever necessary. This global trend has led to downgrading working conditions in some countries of the Third World (Hughes 2001; Barrientos et al. 2012; Barrientos 2013).

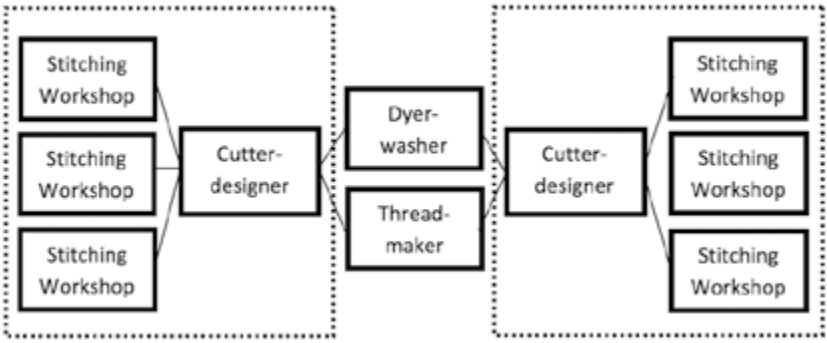

Figure 1: Two Typical Production Teams of the Chinese Apparel Industry in Prato, Each Led by a Cutter-Designer (Lan and Zhu 2014, 163). Note that although dyer-washer and thread-makers are graphically in the center, they are not the organizers of the apparel production.

The relationship between cutter-designers and stitching workshops is thus a local realization of this power asymmetry between retailers and manufacturers in global value chains. In the Industry, each production team is led by one cutter-designer and several stitching workshops (see Figure 1). The cutter-designers usually specialize in designing models and cutting fabrics, both requiring higher capital input, more skills and generating more profits.[2] All of the stitching phase is outsourced to stitching workshops in a captive way – that is, stitching workshops are typically grouped in a team led by one cutter-designer and are usually not allowed to work outside the team even during spare season (Lan and Zhu 2014). My interviews show that five out of five cutter-designers had most of their workshops in the team for over three years (author's interviews on various dates in 11/2013). Through the ways in which contracts are

[2] Although this chapter is not intent on studying the sourcing strategy of the cutter-designers, many of the fabrics were indeed sourced from China. For a detailed analysis of the upstream sourcing strategy, please read Lan and Zhu (2014).

made, this following workshop owner explained the power asymmetry between cutter-designers and workshops:

> "For bigger ones [cutter-designers], workshop [owners] need to go to the company in person when the contracts alongside parts of cloths are released. If one doesn't go, one doesn't get the contract. Although the relationship between these bigger cutter-designer and workshops is generally stable…one workshop basically only works for one cutter-designer no matter how small the contract is, due to intensive competition here in Prato. The workshop is still replaceable for the cutter-designer… All in all, more power is in cutter-designers in this particular value chain."
>
> (Workshop owner, 1/18/2012, in Prato).

Figure 2. A Cutter-Designer in *Macrolotto 1* (taken by author on 11/2/2013).

The asymmetry in the apparel value chain has also resulted in a particular spatial division of labor. While more profits are captured by cutter-designers, the risks of using irregular labor are outsourced to the stitching workshops. On the one hand, these cutter-designers are not typically labor-intensive but have to be open to the public. They usually maintain a smaller workforce which requires higher technical skills, and so labor abuse is much less tolerated. Workers in cutter-designers either rent their own apartments or live in separate dorms

provided by the employer, and their working conditions are usually clean and spacious. Moreover, as the place where external buyers stop by and make orders, the appearance of the cutter-designers (at least part of it) is designed to be appealing to the public. Most of the cutter-designers are located in the better renovated areas of *Macrolotto 1 and 2* to the south the medieval wall, which are also closer to the state highways. All these made cutter-designers the "public face" of the Industry (see Figure 2).

On the other hand, stitching workshops specialize in low-skilled labor-intensive stitching work. There are two factors making this phase of production particularly less favorable to cutter-designers. First, very often the stitching work has to be done overnight during the peak season to meet the flexible orders all over Europe. Extra-long working hours on sewing machines have become the epitome of the stitching workers' lives as reported in the local public media (Pieraccini 2010). Moreover, many workshops choose to stay in the loosely partitioned warehouses and dilapidated factory buildings, where workers and the owner's whole family work, eat, and sleep in the same building. Many scholars have pointed out that living and working in the same place has enhanced flexibility and saved costs for the Industry (Ceccagno 2007; Ceccagno 2015; Lan 2015). To save even more costs, the building is normally overcrowded, lacking standard hygiene facilities, and has no A/C in the summer and no furnace in the winter. All these violate the local zoning policy, the *edilizia obbligatoria* (mandatory of the use of the buildings), and national labor laws. If found out, the company will be fined and closed (LR Toscana n. 1/2005). Second, stitching workshops are where undocumented workers usually concentrate. Because they require little language or technical skills, the stitching workshops are the ideal place for new immigrants.[3]

> "There will be less and less stitching workshops of course. Most of the final firms are legal, whereas stitching workshops have all sorts of problems. I am indeed worried about these workshops, because they are the people who make our business successful. We have no solution for this problem yet."
>
> (Owner of a cutter-designer, 3/23/2012, in Prato).

The above quote shows that owners of the cutter-designers have certainly been aware of the power asymmetry but have no solution for it, resulting in a particular spatial division of labor in the apparel sector. Both the substandard

[3] Ceccagno and Rastrelli (2008, 91) show that after the 2002 amnesty, the ratio of Chinese undocumented workers in Prato declined to 11% of the working population in the Industry. My interviews confirm that after the 2012 amnesty, the percentage of undocumented workers was further reduced to less than 10%.

working conditions and presence of undocumented workers force the stitching workshops to operate in secret. Unlike the cutter-designers who are located in the relatively new industrial areas to the south of the city, usually the stitching workshops are located in *Macrolotto 0* to the west of the medieval city wall. They occupy the more dilapidated corners built in the 1950s and 1960s for Italian textile firms, which have also been known for its substandard working conditions as we discuss below (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. A building shared by multiple stitching workshops in *Macrolotto 0* (taken by author on 11/9/2013).

This spatial division of labor is not unique in Prato. As Begg et al. (2005) show, garage factories are widespread in Bulgaria and the manufacturing in these factories is always "hidden" from the public. A similar situation can also be observed in immigrants' apparel workshops in the American cities (Waldinger 1984; Kwong 1999). However, in none of these places does this particular spatial division of labor reach such a large scale and become the central problem in local society. What is distinct in the Industry is not only the polarization between cutter-designers and stitching workshops, but also the particular ways in which a politics of visibility emerged.

4. Historical Roots and Discursive Reconstruction

It has always been a question why given this many irregularities, the local government in Prato did not completely regularize the Industry, despite their many efforts in the past decade. In 2007, the then central left government started investigating the Chinese firms due to the public pressures (Goldsmith 2007). After the 2009 election of a right-wing coalition, the number of investigation cases substantially rose (Lan 2015). However, none of these efforts completely regularized the Industry. In this chapter, I do not intend to explicate all the complex mechanisms behind the law enforcement in Prato. Instead, I will focus on a process of discursive construction in which the political struggles over urban structure in Prato, or the "politics of visibility" were first naturalized in the 1950s and then problematized in the 2000s. I argue that the importance of this discursive reconstruction is still overlooked in existing research about Prato.

As many scholars have pointed out, one of the reasons why the local government decided not to duly enforce the regulations is the fact that in history, Prato's textile firms were working more or less the same way (Becattini 2001; Ceccagno 2015; Lan 2015). The root of the politics of visibility in Prato dates back to the heyday of the textile industrial district in the 1950s and 1960s, when the urban structure had already become the field for political struggles between the municipal government and local textile industry. There have been three proposals for town planning in Prato since then, ranging from the Nello Baroni Plan in 1954, the Leonardo Savioli Plan in 1955, and the Plinio Marconi Plan in 1961, all turning out unsuccessful (Becattini 2001; Bressan and Tosi Cambini 2011).

The first idea of urban planning, the Nello Baroni Plan emerged in 1954 right after the economic takeoff of the industrial district, and immediately provoked vast rejections from textile producers. The main worry of the producers was that the rigid zoning regulations would impede the nascent industrialization and discourage the burgeoning entrepreneurship in the town. Strong oppositions drove the government to propose the Leonardo Savioli Plan in 1955 which largely removed the regulations and allowed more flexibility for individual textile companies. The Savioli plan "aimed to restore to Prato 'in a broad concept the human scale which, though still alive in the Middle Ages, is now completely lacking (…) in the chaotic post-war building boom' (as Savioli's report puts it) – and aims to make the most of the particular polycentric structure of the settlements in the quarters comprising the territory of the Commune" (Becattini 2001, 73) (originally in (Giovannini and Innocenti 1996, 286)). However, after a four-year debate between the municipality and the textile industry, the Savioli Plan was turned down in 1960 by "the pressure applied by the craftsmen and industrialists who regarded it as an excessive limitation of the

potential development of the industrial areas" (Becattini 2001, 73; originally in Mori 1986, 826).

A completely new proposal, the Plinio Marconi Plan, was commissioned in 1961 and finally approved in 1964. However, the actual implementation of the plan was postponed to 1972 as the struggle between textile producers and the municipal government carried on. In the final plan, the municipal government agreed to make a major compromise by allowing virtually no control over the textile industry. "In order to respond to the fictitious needs of 'inflated' forecasts, an expert remarked, the territory returned to being an uncontrolled blot spreading across the landscape" (Becattini 2001, 75; originally in Mariotti 1988). It was estimated that "by 1995 Prato would have 350,000 inhabitants and 100,000 workers in the textile industry(!)" (Becattini 2001, 75). As of 2015, the province of Prato had 252,987 inhabitants according to ISTAT, and the employment of the textile industry peaked at 61,097 in 1981 but dramatically fell from then on (Dei Ottati 1996, 36). The Plinio Marconi Plan was, as a result, too optimistic. In the regional Florence Inter-Commune Plan in 1965, the Florence government soberly examined the textile industry in all neighboring provinces and deemed the prosperity "a purely temporary phenomenon" (Becattini 2001, 76). The Florence government turned out to be correct as the Plinio Marconi Plan ended up being a plan without real effect.

One of the major disagreements between the Prato municipality and the textile industry was the ways in which firms used their buildings. At that moment, the flexible production by Italian textile firms was similar to the current ways of the Chinese apparel firms. In fact, it was the Italian family firms who built the kind of buildings in which the owner's family could work and live in the same place. These buildings combine the factory, normally the ground floor and backyard, with the living space on the second and third floors. They not only saved potential costs for renting separate factory floors but also allowed for the convenience of overtime work which was the norm between the 1950s and 1970s (Becattini 2001, 143; Bressan and Tosi Cambini 2011). Moreover, most of the roads in the *Macrolotto 0* (the area where Chinese stitching workshops now concentrate) were built by individual family firms with little collective coordination. Sometimes, firms would intentionally build dead-ends to hide themselves away from the outsiders and maintained their production's invisibility (Bressan and Tosi Cambini 2011, 212). Other problems included insufficient sewage system and accumulating garbage (Becattini 2001, 76). All these irregularities were naturalized in Prato's town plan.

Such an urban structure turned out to be ideal for the Industry when the Italian textile gradually declined. These new family firms, now Chinese, nicely fit into the buildings abandoned by the Italians particularly in *Macrolotto 0* and further exploit the buildings in more abusive ways. Alongside the Chinese

takeover, the politics of visibility also changed. Due to the tensions between Chinese and Italian businesses, a historically naturalized urban structure is now problematized partially through discursive reconstruction.

In this chapter, I select a specific case study in which the politics of visibility is discursively reworked in Prato. It is the "Livable Factory" project by a local employer's association, PF (name anonymized). PF is an association of local entrepreneurs which has existed since the 1980s. Among other efforts that it has made to cooperate with the Chinese companies and ameliorate the local hostility against the Chinese, PF proposed an experimental project called the *fabbrica abitata* (livable factory) to help correct the building misuses in the Chinese stitching workshops without incurring too much costs for the owners. The whole idea was to create an architectural model based on which empty factories and warehouses could be lawfully redesigned into buildings integrating both living and productive functions.

> "We definitely think the law must be respected, but we have to find out a right way of legalizing together. Because we think that cooperation provides big opportunities for the local economy. By saying this, we are not only pointing to the interests of Italians. In fact, we do think that by improving the current condition, it would be good for Chinese themselves to have a better life and better working conditions."
>
> (Member of the PF, 2/15/2012, in Prato).

PF was certainly aware that the project had to be articulated with the broader discourse toward Chinese immigration in Prato. In its promotional video, the motive of the project is presented as "Can a symbol of degradation become a righteous project?" ("*Un simbolo del degrado può diventare un progetto virtuoso?*") The legal way of using the factory space is depicted as "the western model" (Figure 4), whereas the fusion of living and productive spaces in the Industry is depicted as "the eastern model" (Figure 5).

The "western" mode of production is thus associated with images of well-planned cities, whereas the "eastern" way is associated with all sorts of irregular labor in the Industry that Pratese people have been quite familiar with through the local media. By so doing, a regime of truth about the correct/preferable mode of production is reconstructed. The irregularities of the Industry become an essence of the eastern culture which can be pinned down to particular (underdeveloped) parts of the world. It needs to be modernized and appropriated in the urban structure of Prato, even though the urban structure itself has in fact been far from the "ideal" since the 1950s.

By no means have I intended to criticize the efforts that PF and many other Italian organizations have made to ameliorate the social tensions in Prato.

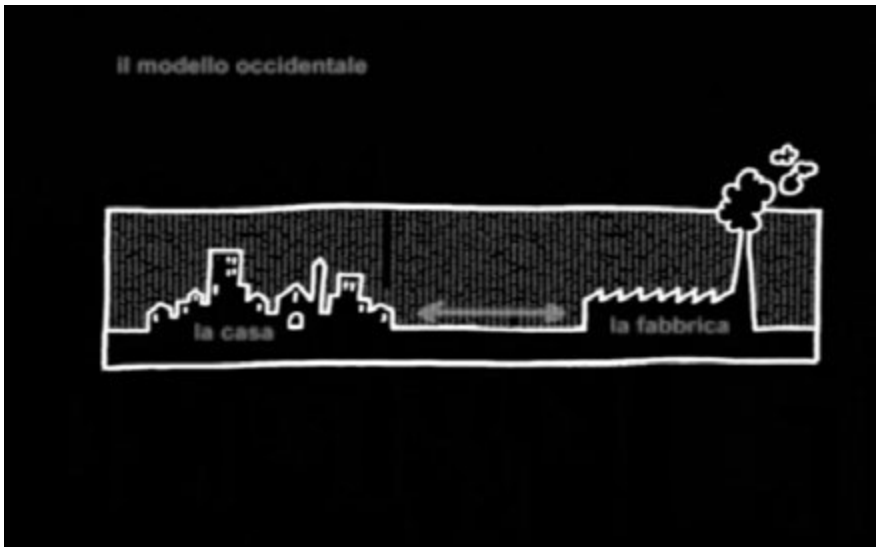

Figure 4. The "Western Mode of Production" depicted by PF (author's screenshot of the promotional video on 1/5/2014).

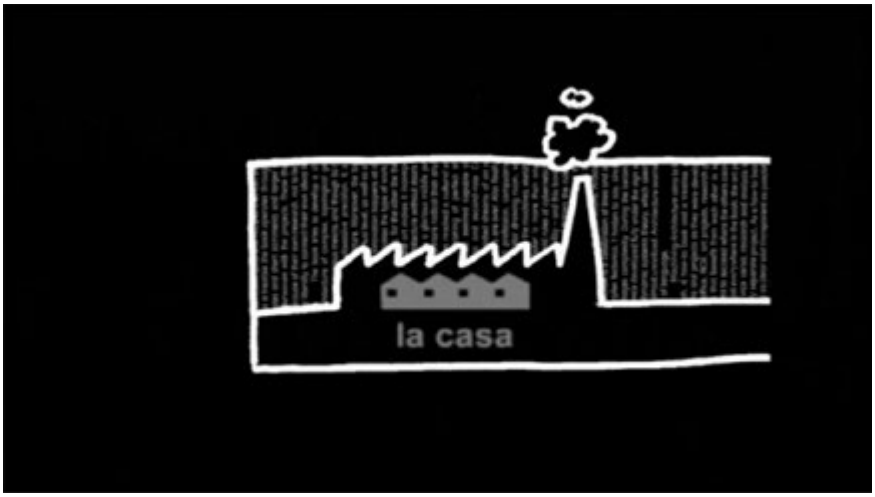

Figure 5. The "Eastern Mode of Production" depicted by PF (author's screenshot of the promotional video on 1/5/2014).

Neither have I intended to paint the working conditions of the stitching workshops in bright colors. Indeed, misuses of the factory buildings have been the main cause of numerous tragic fires throughout the history of textile and apparel industry, from the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City in 1911 to the fire in a Chinese stitching workshop leaving 7 workers dead on December 2nd, 2013. In this chapter, my purpose is to demystify the discursive ways in which the urban structure is first naturalized and then problematized in different historical contexts. I argue that without this historical dimension, we cannot fully understand the tensions over urban space in Prato. In what follows, I show that the whole politics of visibility is most conspicuous in the dragon parades for the Chinese New Year, in which economic, political, and cultural struggles intertwined.

5. Dragon Parade as Struggles over Space

Since the late 2000s, there have been regular dragon parades every year for celebrating the Chinese New Year in Prato. Seen as the ceremonial representation of the Chinese immigration in Prato, the form of the dragon parade evolved alongside the fluctuating relationship between the Chinese and Italian communities. Issues have been generally about which part of the city the parade can go and to what extent the local institutions should get involved. Thus, the dragon parade ritually demarcates the Chinese community into a part of seeable and a part of unseeable. The dragon parade is, thus, an excellent site to study the politics of visibility in Prato.

Although the dragon parade is an important tradition in China and all over the Chinese Diasporas, the dragon parade in Prato is slightly different from those in other places. In Prato, the dragons leading the parade are supposed to march from one business to another and symbolically distribute good luck to the business owners (see Figure 6). In return, the owners have to pay the dragons with real money in red packets to show gratitude. My research shows that in 2010, the gratitude from each company went as high as 500 euros (Interview second generation Chinese, 2/28/2012). Usually, the dragon parades in Prato were organized by the local Buddhist Society, one of the four Chinese associations and the only one without specific hometown affiliation. The money was thus collected for charity purposes. This particular tradition of dragon parade is said to be rooted in the more entrepreneurial Zhejiang and Fujian provinces in China, where the majority of the Chinese immigrants in Prato come from. Therefore, in Prato, the dragon parade does not only work as an exotic symbol to celebrate multiculturalism for locals, but also plays a very practical, philanthropic role within the Chinese community.

The parade went without any problem until 2007 when criticisms against the Chinese community finally burst out for the misuses of the buildings, the lack of transparency of the Chinese businesses, and in general the low degree of social integration of the Chinese immigrants (Di Castro and Vicziany 2009, 180). Discontents accumulated to the point that in 2007, the municipality banned the dragon parade, with the alleged purpose to encourage social integration (Di Castro and Vicziany 2009, 181). With no political voice in the municipality, the Chinese community had to compromise and cancelled the public parade that year. As an alternative, the parade was moved into the Pecci Museum and symbolically performed for 30 minutes. The ban not only physically erased the ceremonial presence of the Chinese community in Prato, but also jeopardized its practical functions within that community. It is because of this very concrete function in the community that the Chinese community wanted the dragons back.

Intermediated successfully by a local activist group DP (name anonymized), the parade was brought back the next year in 2008 with a number of substantial changes. First, it physically changed the route of the parade in the following years. Through the ban and related political debates, how to manage the visibility of the Chinese community became a central issue for the municipality, the Chinese, as well as the Italian communities. For the municipal government, the Chinese presence has to be controlled to a "manageable" degree that is tolerable to its electorate. Therefore, the Buddhist Society agreed to limit the parade mostly outside the wall of the symbolic medieval city. For the Chinese community, the ban has made the stitching workshops manage their visibility more carefully. For example, in the 2012 parade, dragons visited only the more established cutter-designers and restaurants which were supposed to be the "public face" for the Chinese community, whereas all the stitching workshops were carefully avoided on the way. For the Italian community, the parade was intended to be the only chance every year to look into Chinese businesses. Many Italians followed the dragons into the businesses to see the inside that was sometimes closed to them. To cater to their curiosity, the Chinese businesses would arrange a table of various Chinese snacks and fruits for the visitors (see Figure 6).

> "We also want to make sure the parade happens because we think the dragon parade is the only place and time that the Chinese community becomes visible

and transparent to Italians. You know, during the parade, people could walk into the shops, into the *pronto moda* and actually see the inside."
(Activist in DP, 2/13/2012, in Prato).

Moreover, since the initial motive for the ban was to urge the social integration of the Chinese community, organizers of the parade (usually the owners of cutter-designers) modified the content of the parade in the following years to show their willingness to integrate. Multiple Italian elements have been gradually integrated into the parade, including the *Sbandieratori* (a group of players dressing in medieval costume and playing flags, a typical Italian holiday tradition). Finally, in 2012, both of the two dragons were played by Italians (see Figure 6). Bearing the hope of integration, the dragon parade in fact has become a central field for the politics of visibility in Prato, embodying the contingent articulation of economic, political, and cultural struggles in and surrounding the Industry.

Figure 6. A dragon played by Italians in the 2012 Chinese New Year (picture taken by author on 1/22/2012).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I investigate the politics of visibility in Prato with three main findings. First, I show that the politics of visibility are based on a specific spatial division of labor, which in turn is caused by the power asymmetry between lead firms and subcontractors within the Chinese apparel industry. In particular, lead firms outsource the less profitable phase of stitching to the subcontractors, alongside all sorts of irregular labor. Second, I review the history of Prato's urban planning and show that the politics of visibility have existed in Prato before the Chinese arrived. The working conditions and the ways in which Italian firms managed their visibility in the 1950s and 1960s are in fact very similar to the Chinese apparel firms in the 2000s. However, even though the politics of visibility were successfully naturalized for the Italian textile industry, it has become a problem for the social tensions between the Chinese and Italian communities. Finally, using the example of Chinese New Year dragon parades, I examine how all the economic, political, and cultural encounters intertwined around the politics of visibility in Prato.

Drawing upon the literature of economic and urban geographies, this chapter also contributes a specific spatial perspective to the literature of transnational Chinese migration. Even though many of the phenomena in Prato such as substandard working conditions and the politics of visibility exist in other parts of the world, the ways in which these phenomena have been articulated are fairly distinct. In few other places, the politics of visibility have been embedded in the local history of industrialization, de-industrialization (of the textile sector) and re-industrialization (of the apparel sector). Likewise, in few other places, they have become the center of tensions between local and immigrant communities. Moreover, the chapter demystifies the discursive processes in which the Chinese community in Prato is problematized in recent years. It is suggested that perhaps a rethinking of the underlining discourse is necessary for future attempts to regularize the working conditions in Prato.

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TOWARD A GLOCAL ORAL HISTORY OF CHINESE MIGRATION TO ROME

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Abstract
This paper tries to show the benefits of a glocal perspective to discuss the history of Chinese migration to Rome. Traditional histories depict a past that is often perceived as immobile; however, it is constraining and inherently inexact to describe migration histories as static and predictable, as at the core of migration there are encounters, exchange, or lack thereof. This essay discusses consequences of encounters. I examine contradictions between images of Rome in ancient and contemporary records and I show how the perceptions Italians hold toward Chinese migrants have changed over time and how they are often based on partial and selective memories of the past. Perceptions can influence socio-cultural exchange and ethnicization. Hence, I argue for a much-needed interdisciplinary analysis of different sources and approaches (i.e., historical, sociological, anthropological). I examine two samples from my fieldwork among Chinese migrants. I try to clarify how selective memories of shared places, cultural exchange, and collective experiences influence the ethnicity (perceived, imagined or essentialized) of both Italians and Chinese migrants. In this way, I want to stress the significance of individual agency in shaping collective processes and historical change. In sum, the application of a glocal approach to migration studies allows the historian to navigate the tensions between "here" and "there," and "us" versus "them." It ultimately contributes to crafting an exhaustive picture of the migration experience.

Keywords
Glocal history, ethnicization, Chinese migration, memory, identity.

摘要
本文将试图揭示从全球本土化角度去研究罗马华人移民史的好处。传统历史所描绘 的是那些通常被视为静态的过去； 然而，将移民史看作是静态的和可预测的则有其 局限性和内在的不精确性，因为移民其核心是人的经历以及人与人之间交流，或是 二者的缺失。本文主要探讨人的经历在这一过程中的作用。本文通过对古罗马与当 代罗马进行文献对比来揭示意大利人对华人移民的印象是如何随着时间推移而变化 的，以及他们如何经常通过部分的选择性的记忆来对华人移民进行认知。不同的认 知可以影响社会文化交流以及族群的形成，因此我们认为非常有必要根据不同的信 息来源和手段（包括历史学、社会学以及人类学）进行跨学科分析。本文通过实地 调查研究了两个华人移民样本。我们试图弄清楚这几方面因素对意大利人和华人移 民族群的影响（包括感知的、想象中的以及实际

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的), 即选择性的公共场所记忆、 文化交流以及集体经历。我们旨在强调个体在塑造集体机制和历史变迁过程中的重 要作用。总之, 从全球本土化角度研究移民史历史学家得以研究从 “这里”到“那 里”以及从“我们”到“他们”的应力。这最终将有助于构建出一幅完整的移民史图景。

关键词
全球本地历史，族群的形成，华人移民，记忆，特性。

Introduction

This essay is an excerpt of a broader research on the history of Chinese migration to Rome, Italy, and to a particular neighborhood of Rome – the Esquiline. Because of the paucity of historical data regarding the Chinese presence in Rome, it was difficult to write a traditional history on the subject. Also, Chinese migration to Rome is a relatively recent phenomenon; therefore, I could not rely only on archival records. To best capture the complex history of Chinese migration to Italy, I decided to follow the journeys of individual migrants. Thus, oral histories became the major source of information for the project, paired with the analysis of local gazetteers, newspapers, archival records and statistical data, both in Italy and China. I analyzed individual stories through the transnational lenses that they are captured by and ultimately read them in the global context they progress in.

For this research, I followed a *glocal* approach; that is, I examined the lives of ethnic Chinese in both their global and local environments and, inspired by studies on transnationalism, I moved beyond the limits imposed by national borders and followed overseas Chinese in their multi-hopping migration routes. Across their journeys, migrants become anchored to more than one locality; they interact with individuals from both sending and hosting communities, and endure because of the networks they create.[1]

This *glocal* oral history of Chinese migration is grounded on interdisciplinarity (i.e., history and ethnography); in this article, I try to show the potential benefits of a *glocal* perspective to discuss the history of a migrant group. In the first section on methodology, I introduce the notions of *ethnicity* and *memory*, which I picked to frame my research and examine oral sources. In the second section, I briefly introduce the timeframe and the spatial boundaries of the phenomenon of Chinese migration to Rome. Traditional histories depict a past that is often perceived as immobile; however, it is constraining and inherently

[1] Benton and Pieke 1998; Kirby et al. 2006, 80; McKeown 2001.

inexact to describe migration histories as static and predictable as at the core of migration there are encounters, exchange, or lack thereof. The encounters are of great interest for this research. Therefore, in Section 3 I discuss consequences of encounters. I examine contradictions between images of the area in ancient and contemporary records and I show how the perceptions Italians hold toward Chinese migrants in the Esquiline changed over time and are often based on partial and selective memories of the past. Perceptions can influence socio-cultural exchange and ethnicization. Hence, I argue for a much-needed interdisciplinary analysis of different sources and approaches (i.e., historical, sociological, anthropological). In section four, I examine two samples from my fieldwork among Chinese migrants. I try to clarify how selective memories of shared places, cultural exchange, and collective experiences influence the *ethnicity* (perceived, imagined or essentialized) of both Italians and Chinese migrants. In this way, I want to stress the significance of individual agency in shaping collective processes and historical change. In the last section, I give a short account of the application of a *glocal* approach to migration studies. This perspective allows the historian to navigate the tensions between "here" and "there" and "us" versus "them." It ultimately contributes to crafting an exhaustive picture of the migration experience.

1. Methodology

Drawing from social theory, this research uses two key concepts: *ethnicity* (as a function of the formation of identity) and *memory*. These are fairly broad notions employed in different ways by diverse disciplines. For instance, in political science, ethnic identity can be treated in association with nationalism; in migration studies, identity can be incorporated in essentialized ethnic differences; in social studies, identity can be treated in terms of class, race, or citizenship distinctions.[2] As a historian, I wish to find a clarifying synthesis by letting the main actors of my research speak for themselves, mostly by digging into their memories. I argue for an interdisciplinary approach and contend that these concepts are strictly related and co-dependent in studies such as this one where history merges into social development with the help of ethnographic investigations.[3] Below, I explain how I came to pick *ethnicity* and *memory* as the two variables that could best serve the purpose of describing the history of

[2] For example Allen 1995; Skeldon 1995; Louie 2000; Lee 2010; Harrell 2001.

[3] Between 2011 and 2014, I conducted sixty informal interviews (thirty with Chinese informants both in Italy and in Mainland China and thirty with Italian dwellers that

the Chinese ethnic group in Rome. Afterwards, I present a few samples from the pool of interviews I conducted to illustrate the main findings of this project. That is, a *glocal* approach allows for a study that goes beyond models and patterns of migration and empowers the scholar to craft a bottom up history of Chinese migrations to Rome, giving voice and agency to the migrants - the principal actors of the migration experience.

1a. Ethnicity

To discuss the history of Chinese migrants in Rome in terms of *ethnicity* and consequential *ethnicization* is pivotal to this study only if analyzed through *glocal* lenses. I intend the process of *ethnicization* as encapsulating the interactions that migrants entertain at the local level, both in Italy and in China. However, only when placing such relations and exchanges within a global frame are we able to produce a comprehensive historical view of Chinese migration to Italy. What exactly do I mean by *ethnicity*? Why do I consider the process of *ethnicization* significant for this study? I discuss *ethnicity* as a result of the following conversation I witnessed during an informal interview with one of my informants. One fall evening I was sitting in a Chinese restaurant in Rome chatting with the owner – a man in his early fifties, in very distinct attire. The man, to whom I will refer as Mr. Zhu,[4] was wearing a pair of leather Prada shoes, nicely ironed pants, a shirt, and a classic Merino wool pullover. Mr. Zhu stood up several times to greet and say good-byes to customers, while describing to me his life in Rome with a confident aristocratic composure. The clients seemed accustomed to the place and satisfied with the food, hospitality, and price. The restaurant was finely decorated in engraved and lacquered light-colored wood.

The owner offered me a generous meal while he told me his story; he did so without touching a single bit of food or drink. Suddenly, two men in their late sixties entered the restaurant conversing animatedly. At that exact moment, I was chomping on my Chinese dumplings. The owner relieved me from the embarrassment of being watched while eating alone and stood up to salute them. I was so grateful I greeted them as well and became an involuntarily part of the lively conversation the men entertained with Mr. Zhu. One said, "So, not only you, Chinese, are buying us out as a city and as a nation, I hear you also want to buy our team." And the other one asked worriedly: "Is that rumor real? Is

had direct or indirect relations with ethnic Chinese in Rome (e.g., neighbors, business competitors).

[4] Throughout this research I will keep the identity of my interviewees anonymous. For clarity, I will give a fictional name to each one of the participants to this study.

there a Chinese buyer for "La Magica" [the Magical Team], the A.S. Roma,[5] our true and only faith and love?" Mr. Zhu stood there smiling deferentially without engaging in what, after all was a unidirectional conversation. I could not refrain from thinking how inconsiderate and disrespectful such a conversation would have sounded in a public place in the U.S. Nevertheless, I also realized that I would probably not have perceived it as inappropriate, had I not been living in the United States for more than a decade.

This ethnicized conversation, shaped around the defining paradigm of "us" versus "them," is common ground in discussions about migration and migrants in Italy. As I set to investigate the history of the Chinese ethnic group in Rome, I realized that *ethnicity,* and the relative building of an identity, was a controversial as well as a significant concept for my topic. Therefore, my historical inquiry required a deeper understanding of the notion of *ethnicity,* which I borrowed from the social sciences, to exhaustively discuss the formation and development of the Chinese ethnic group in Rome. Hence, by following Cozen et al.'s definition of *ethnicity* as a "cultural construction accomplished over historical time," I decided to pay attention to the formation of Chinese *ethnicity* in Rome to ultimately analyze the development of the presence of this ethnic group in the Eternal City.

Cozen et al. argue that "In inventing its ethnicity, the group sought to determine the terms, modes, and outcomes of its accommodation to 'others'... and ...to define the group in terms of what it was not." At the same time, though, "ethnicization was not necessarily characterized by an easily negotiated unanimity about the identity of the immigrant group."[6] Therefore, it is hard to generalize about the process of ethnic formation. I overcame the predicament of explaining ethnic differences as the absolute truth by exploring instead the different facets of specific localities and individual relationships and by travelling back and forth from the sending location to the host country as a migrant usually does in the span of a lifetime. That is, I used a *glocal* approach to migration, followed migrants around the globe, and recorded their stories.[7]

[5] A.S. Roma is the soccer team of the city of Rome. One of the popular narratives about A.S. Roma fans is that they place the team at the same level or often above religious faith.

[6] Cozen et al. 1999.

[7] I have recorded different migrants' lives mostly orally, but I have also consulted the History of Overseas Qingtianese [青田华侨历史 Qingtian Huaqiao Lishi] published in Hangzhou by the Zhejiang People's Publishing House in 2011.

1b. Memory

Pierre Nora states that history has conquered memory, and that memory and history are linked to identity. Memories of the past are critical to substantiating people's identities, even if history is contingent and can be verifiable through evidence while memory cannot. In the late 1980s, Pierre Nora also explained that memory had gone through a process of democratization; that is, it had entered the modern frenzy of recording-every-possible-event, which became even more real and tangible in the last few years with mass circulation of high tech gadgets and recording devices. The latter attitude toward memory recordings made private, as well as public and collective memory, traceable and collectible. This democratization made "memory sites" - *lieux de memoire,*[8] and the recording of less official and less extraordinary events, important primary sources and useful materials to explore common mindsets and popular ideas. Hence, Nora states that memory has been transformed by history; he actually uses the term "seized" by history almost to become the same thing. Originally history and memory were not synonyms; one meant "reconstruction" and the other one "life."[9] However, "the passage from memory to history has required every social group to redefine identity through the revitalization of its own history. The task of remembering makes everyone his own historian.[10] … "There is a differentiated network to which all of these separate identities belong, an unconscious organization of collective memory that it is our responsibility to bring to consciousness."[11] A key ambition of this research is to bring to consciousness the organization of individual memories of Italians and Chinese as they meet in Rome where they also bring personal knowledge of their past. The sum of such memories gives shape to collective memories, imagined or concrete with actual consequences and in perpetual evolution. In sections 3 and 4, I will bring evidence about how specific collective memories become fundamental in the encounter of two or more cultures in one place.

2. Time and Space Frame

The time frame for this research spans from the early 1900s until today. In reality, the presence of Chinese people in Europe goes back centuries, but the

[8] "[…] lieux de memoire have no referent in reality; or, rather, they are their own referent: pure, exclusively self-referential signs." Nora 1989, 19.

[9] Ibid., 20.

[10] Ibid., 21.

[11] Ibid., 23.

twentieth century is when more consistent migration waves from China actually started. The first wave of Chinese immigrants arrived in Europe in the inter-war period. Those who reached Italy during this first wave had first gone to France, where they worked in factories in lieu of Frenchmen who had been killed in the First World War. In Italy, they were employed in textile production. During the 1920s and early 1930s, the Chinese established themselves in the biggest Italian cities, including Milan, Rome, and Turin, and soon became small entrepreneurs, including peddlers of ties.[12] Their overall number was not great, nor were they conspicuous. Between the two wars, probably just a few hundred resided in Milan and Rome, and many of them later went back to China, so that they could spend their final years and be buried in their home villages.[13]

A second wave of migration to Europe occurred after World War II, when many Chinese from the rural areas of Hong Kong or from the politically troubled areas of Taiwan and Indochina escaped to Great Britain. There, the restaurant business was already saturated; hence, many moved to other northern European countries, such as the Netherlands, Germany, and France.[14] The first Chinese restaurant in Rome, called "Shanghai," was opened in 1949, but it was mostly for immigrants' use.[15] Only in the late seventies and early eighties did Chinese restaurants establish more stable businesses in Italian cities. In the past three decades the Chinese have enormously intensified their presence on Italian territory and have also increased the variety of businesses by which they pursue wealth.

The third wave of migration is the most relevant for Italy. Until 1975, the presence of Chinese immigrants in Italy was small (in 1975 only 1000).[16] This third wave coincided with the reforms led by Deng Xiaoping starting in 1978. Deng's policies of "Reform and Opening" were aimed at providing prosperity for all Chinese citizens, although some were to get rich sooner and others later. For this reason, Deng promoted the formation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) that adopted flexible economic policies (e.g., weak unions and low taxes) to increase economic development, favor import-export trade, and earn foreign currency. Besides these areas, there were also port cities that experienced relaxed economic rules. One of these was Wenzhou, in Zhejiang

[12] Di Corpo 2008, 12.

[13] Spence 1996, 209.

[14] Li 1999.

[15] Redi 1997.

[16] Li 1999, 22.

province, which, together with adjacent small towns, had a long history of out migration and which produced the majority of Chinese people going to Italy.[17]

Therefore, since the early 1980s, Italy's largest cities experienced a growing Chinese presence. Between the late 1960s and the early 1980s, migrants resorted to illegal means to get out of China and enter Europe. Some embarked from Hong Kong, arrived in port cities around Europe, mostly in the Netherlands, France or Great Britain, and then moved illegally within Europe. The European Union was still only an ideal then, and to cross borders many had to turn to the protection of middlemen. These middlemen, called in Chinese *shetou*[18] or snakehead in English, usually received substantial amounts of money to perform real acts of human smuggling: organizing migrants to sneak into the new country by crossing remote areas of the borders on foot.[19]

Most of the Chinese migrants who reached Italy entered some other European country first and only later arrived in Italy. The number of Chinese migrants increased after the Italian government approved several amnesties, aimed at legalizing the presence of illegal migrants in the Italian territory. The government also implemented other strategies, like family reunifications, designed to fight trafficking and people smuggling and create legitimate and smooth moving processes. The first amnesty to legalize the status of illegal immigrants already living in Italy was announced in 1986. After 1986, the Italian government promoted five more amnesties, specifically, in 1990, 1992, 1995, 1998, and 2002.[20]

The focus of this paper is on the third wave. As far as space frame, this research takes Rome as the starting point to discuss the tension between Chinese and Italian views of each other at the local level and beyond national borders. The situation of Rome is particularly interesting because for almost two decades (1990s–2000s) it has become a significant hub for Chinese businesses all over Europe. That is, imported and exported goods and merchandises reached Rome from the ports of Civitavecchia and Naples, and departed from Rome by train or truck to be distributed all over Italian and European cities.[21] Then,

[17] Santangelo 2006.

[18] 蛇头.

[19] One of my interviewees remembered how many Chinese people revered her father because he was one of the middlemen who had "helped" many migrants enter Italy through mountainous zones of the Alps at the border with France. Another interviewee stated that many other migrants left China through Siberia and entered Europe from one of the countries of Eastern Europe.

[20] Ceccagno 2003, 189–190.

[21] For a recent analysis of the recorded decline of Chinese business in Rome see Pedone 2013, 28–31.

with this essay I moved away from Rome and analyzed migrants' lives across the spectrum of their *glocal* experiences.

3. Selective Memories of the Esquiline

In this section, I explain that historical events linked to the Esquiline reverberate in popular conceptions as well as ancient records toward "others." These memories, used selectively, influenced and still do influence Italians of the Esquiline. Hence, images can have a direct impact on the ethnicization of both "us" Italian and "others" Chinese.

During informal interviews and open-ended conversations with Italians whose lives were impacted by the presence of Chinese migrants in Rome, I was often reminded of the beauty and majesty of the neighborhood of the Esquiline, one of the areas of Rome commonly associated with the presence of Chinese migrants.[22] Hence, I decided to explore the notion of spatial memory linked to the specific area of the Esquiline. I analyzed migrants' relations to their place of origin and I looked at memories engrained in the Esquiline. I argue that the post-unification history of Rome is still vividly recognizable in the assets and the organization of the city and the Esquiline in particular. Furthermore, the consequences of the establishment of Rome as the capital of Italy are crucial points to understand the development of Chinese commerce and ethnic activities in the Esquiline, and also to gauge the sentiments of Romans toward migrants in general, and Chinese in particular.

During my fieldwork in Rome, I have asked many people living, working, or passing by the Esquiline one simple question: if I say, "Esquiline," what comes to your mind? Among the people I interviewed, those aged fifty and above, replied that the Esquiline, and Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II as its fulcrum were once the commercial heart of the city. "Rome started and ended in Piazza Vittorio!" said the senior clerk of a historic shoe store located on the Piazza.

Memories of the past roles of the Esquiline and its long and complex history are echoed in many dialogues I have entertained with the Italian portion of my informants, which spanned from regretful: "It was a neighborhood of princes and aristocrats, look what it has become," to more analytical: "It is a commercial area, it has always been, with all the consequences of the marketplace." The identity of Roman dwellers relies, more or less conscientiously, on the specific past of the Esquiline. When they encounter the "other," who often

[22] Caritas Roma 2011.

does not know nor care about this past, the Romans instead build on it to delineate borders that should help differentiate "us" from "them."

Such images of past wealth and riches are linked to relatively recent literature or ancient history chosen *ad hoc* to reinforce the perceptions. After a close look at a few texts of the antiquity, we discover that the area was actually known as "Puticulus," with its semantic origin from the verb "putrere," which means, "to putrefy," as the writer Varro explains in his *De Lingua Latina.* In an ancient written text attributed to the Roman Procurator Festus, we read: "In the cemetery, where the dead bodies of the outcast were, outside the Esquiline Door."[23]

During the Republican period, Plautus (254 B.C. – 184 B.C.), in his *Curculio*, presents us with a negative image of immigrants from Greece, those who are ruining Rome and the Esquiline with their deplorable mores. Plautus writes: "And then those Grecians with their cloaks, who walk about with covered heads, who go loaded beneath their cloaks with books, and with baskets, they loiter together, and engage in gossiping among themselves, the gadabouts; you may always see them enjoying themselves in the hot liquor-shops."[24]

Plautus gives voice to popular criticisms and rage against the customs of foreigners and immigrants invading Rome, especially the Orientals (specifically, the Greeks). These remarks represent an interesting comparison with the contemporary perceptions of the Esquiline commonly held by Italians in the area. Opinions reported by Plautus in ancient Rome carry astonishing resemblance with current reactions and viewpoints about the Esquiline. I shall give example of how time seems to freeze in the heart of the Eternal City, which would probably not bear such title otherwise.

Fast forwarding through the records about the Esquiline we get to the early 1980s. Hundreds of articles have been published on the Esquiline and its voluntary or involuntary connections with immigration. Through a search in the archives of five of Italy's major newspapers, *La Repubblica*, *Il Corriere della Sera*, *Il Tempo*, *Il Messaggero*, *Il Giornale*, I have found 1248 articles related to Chinese people and the Esquiline. This result is the outcome of a search based on the keywords "Chinese" and "Esquiline." When adding the word "immigrant" and "immigration," the amount of results spikes to a very high number,

[23] "Puticulus, quo nunc cadavera projici solent, extra Portam Esquilinam" in Lumisden 1812, 193–194.

[24] "Tum isti Graeci palliati, capite operto qui ambulant, qui incedunt suffarcinati cum libris, cum sportulis, constant, conferunt sermones inter se drapetae, obstant, obsistunt, incedunt cum suis sententiis, quos semper videas bibentes esse in thermipolio" in Istituto Nazionale del Dramma Antico, Il Curculio di Plauto (Ministero del Turismo e Spettacolo Regione Sicilia).

but it includes more general views on immigration and also specific reactions to additional ethnic groups. Therefore, I prefer to limit the search to what is most closely related to this research. In this way, the result indicates a set of articles more focused on Chinese migration and makes further speculations not only simpler, but also more reliable.

According to my investigation, earlier articles (from the early 1980s) were illustrative of international relations and worldwide dynamics involving China, Italy, and Europe. In the 1990s, articles reflected an increasing acknowledgment of the ongoing changes in the Esquiline. From the 2000s, the recurrence of notions of decay and humiliation with respect to the Esquiline grew rapidly.[25]

In fact, toward the end of the 1970s, the Esquiline began hosting people from faraway lands; in particular, Piazza Vittorio, due to its proximity to the train station, became the destination of many migrants and other world travelers. During the 1990s, ethnic Chinese rented or bought many shops in the area, and populated the spaces around Piazza Vittorio. At the end of the 1990s, the image of the Esquiline was again associated with an idea that resembled the ancient definition of *puticulus*.

In the 2000s, a major change happened in Piazza Vittorio. The market, its symbol, was moved from the open air of the Piazza to the interior of two old military barracks abandoned for years and renovated for this purpose. This event was supposed to be the end of all the troubles of the Esquiline, commonly believed to have being caused by immigrants and predominantly by the Chinese conquest of the place. Natives were supposed to be appeased by the move, but that was not the case. The relocation of the market coincided with the peak arrival of migrants to Italy. Old problems were not solved, and a new scapegoat was found: migrants, immigrants, and extra communitarians became the number one enemy of the neighborhood's ancient alleged splendor.[26] But how ancient? It was a *puticulus*, a place to putrefy, have we forgotten? According to one of my interviewees (the only one though), during the 1960s the area was not less noisome and decaying. It was in fact famous for pickpocketing and prostitution, at least the most disreputable streets of the area. We realize that there is truth in Nora's statement that, as a consequence of the democratization of memory, everybody is his own historian. In fact, as we saw with the Esquiline, memo-

[25] For more details on the topic refer to Ravagnoli 2011.

[26] "Extra-communitarian" is the name Italian common people originally used to refer to migrants from countries that are not part of the European Union. Nevertheless, in jargon "extra-communitarian" is now derogatorily used to refer to all the immigrants (even those from countries within the EU like Romania).

ries are the results of private or collective constructions, which human beings use to define and give meanings to one's very existence.

4. Vignettes of Chinese Selective Memories

As follows I report on four out of thirty different oral histories of ethnic Chinese I interviewed during my fieldwork. I picked the stories of the following four people mostly because they are representative of different age groups. They show different personal reactions to migration and several ways to deal with new environments and territories. They present private and group emplacement commonalities, dissimilarities and strategies.[27]

While trying to trace development over time, or lack thereof, in the experiences of Chinese migrants in Rome, I highly valued the decisions of each of my interviewees to self-structure their own experience. They tell us how they try to make sense of the past and how they shape their current lives; hence, they set their narratives in the historical context. As Portelli states, "subjectivity is as much the business of history as are the more visible 'facts'."[28] Migrants' stories are made of different memories, shaped by individual experiences, psychology, and the interaction of cultures. Hence, memories contribute to the creation of meaning and are not mere collections of data. Oral sources, such as those I discuss below, are significant to show not how to preserve the past, but to appreciate the very changes produced by memories.

4a. Early Comers

Few migrants arrived in Italy between the 1950s and early 1970s, and the springs of their mobility were overseas kin and family networks. However, the myth of the entrepreneurial spirit of the coastal people resurfaced after Mao's death and became a constant in stories about Zhejiangese migrants. The lore

[27] For the nature of the research and the sensitivity of information about migrants' status in Italy, interviews were not recorded digitally or on tape. Some migrants I interviewed were not comfortable discussing or putting on record the methods and routes they utilized to enter Italy or other European countries. Some of them entered illegally and expressed fear or shame about it, so they would rather discuss their lives only after they established in Rome. Only through informal and open-ended conversations, during which I was allowed to take notes, migrants felt comfortable leading me through their migration journeys.

[28] Portelli 2002, 67.

of achievable enrichment and wealth pushed many disadvantaged peasants to look for better opportunities and move.

As we shall see below in the stories of both early and recent migrants to Italy, the coping strategies with emplacement and distance vary from migrant to migrant, but all migrants endure and struggle with interstitial lives, especially in places like Rome, where local culture is actively embodied and boisterously flaunted.[29]

The Changs

I had the privilege of spending a whole afternoon in the welcoming home of a couple that had lived in Italy for 60 years. They managed to escape the small town of Qingtian through Hong Kong in the 50s, and they were able to do so because of family networks. Kinship networks have been the primary source of migration at least until the early 1990s. The couple arrived in Italy through different routes. I will call them Mr. and Mrs. Chang.

Mr. Chang arrived in Europe in 1958. He had fled China through Macao, right after the beginning of the Great Leap Forward. In Macao, he waited for eight long months before being able to embark on a boat to Europe. During the trip he visited many places in India and swore not to go back there anymore. After a long trip, he arrived in Belgium first, later moved to Holland, and then to France. Mr. Chang lived in France for two years. When he arrived, he was still a young boy and had not completed his education. He stated he did not understand anything about European people, languages, and cultures; however, he had no time to learn. He soon married a young girl from his same village who had established herself in Rome. Mr. Chang finally arrived in Rome and started working in a leather factory, opened years before by some of his wife's relatives. These relatives were part of the few hundreds of Chinese who had landed in Europe as labor force between the two world wars and had decided not to go back to China. Mrs. Chang's paternal aunt had arrived in Holland in 1912.

Mr. and Mrs. Chang have raised three sons in Italy, and, even if they say they would rather move to France at this point, they feel at home in Italy. Starting in the late 1990s, they tried to go to China once a year, but they both stated

[29] Chinese migrants in Rome have unsettled relations with the autochthonous population due to a diffuse structural nostalgia for the past beauty of the neighborhood supposedly ruined by Chinese stores. Selected memories of a betrayed past together with a general lack of official recognition of roles and social spaces occupied by ethnic Chinese in Rome negatively influence migrants' perception of their place and role on Italian soil and in the Italian society.

that in China they feel like guests. Mrs. Chang worked in the leather and textile business for nearly sixty years, and she managed to meet many Italians. She felt that when she was at work she was very integrated. Also, she felt integrated during the popular group dance she participated in at the Public Elderly Center in her neighborhood. Nevertheless, the Changs complained that Italy is a very narrow-minded country, unlike Great Britain, Germany, or France. They described the numerous acts of racism and intolerance they have been subjected to in their lives. The latest incident happened to Mrs. Chang, when she was at the market with one of her grandchildren. Somebody between the stalls started screaming: "Go away, Chinese! Go away!!" Almost in tears, Mrs. Chang reported that her grandchild, to protect her, told her: "Let's go grandma! Let's go." The child was used to only speaking Chinese with his grandparents, so Mrs. Chang believed the kid hoped that his grandma would not understand those rough words.

Nonetheless, they decided to remain in Italy. The resolution to overcome the inconsistency of quotidian struggle of "us" and "others" was to balance their existence between participation and voluntary exile. The length of their stay, almost sixty years in Italy, makes them different from many other Chinese migrants of more recent generations. Mr. Chang explained that their first two sons speak Chinese, while the third does not. After a while it became impossible for them to just live a separate and parallel life, detached from Italian society. In fact, Mr. Chang explained that while they participate in Chinese activities, they also watch Italian TV and follow the news, even though they still barely speak Italian.

4b. Recent Comers

In more recent years, Chinese migrants to Italy have had more mixed backgrounds and ambitions than early comers; they also followed different migratory routes. The story below explains how a constant tension between emplacement and mobility is a poignant feature of the lives of second-generation Chinese as well.

Feifei

Feifei was born in Finland and was moved to Rome after her parents divorced. At the time, she was just a teenager. Once in Italy, she was sent to live with an uncle and discovered she also had a brother. This brother had been "given" (basically sold) to an Italian family when her parents had to leave Rome, where they used to live before her father became wanted by the police and had to flee to Finland. Feifei stated she had no roots, but described Rome as her city

of provenance. She spent there the years of middle and high school. She did not remember how to speak Finnish, but her knowledge of Italian was pretty good. She was enrolled in an American school in Rome, so she could state that her best language was English. She moved to America for college, but her father, now back in China, did not want her to stay in the U.S. forever. He was paying for her education and would have liked for her to get a degree in economics and move to China, even though her mom is still in Finland and her brother in Italy. Feifei had no intention of going to China and wanted to work in cinema. She did not have many strong opinions about herself except her love of Rome, and her only certainty was the annual Christmas reunion with the family in the Eternal City. Feifei was one of those second-generation youngsters that Amy Tan described as follows: "When you go to China … you don't even need to open your mouth. They already know you are an outsider."…Even if you put on their clothes, even if you take off your make-up and hide your fancy jewelry, they know. They know just watching the way you walk, the way you carry your face. They know you do not belong."[30] Feifei was aware of her in-between-ness and could only affirm to have learned to get the best out of each piece of her own self. Other second-generation Chinese I have observed have had different experiences and were learning to choose different survival strategies. The significance of the bottom-up *glocal* history is to be inclusive of many voices and the freedom the observer has from top-down categorizations.

5. Toward Glocal Oral History

To complete the picture, I travelled to the other end of the migratory chain and visited Qingtian in China. Qingtian is a small town in the southeastern province of Zhejiang. Qingtian has a population of roughly 40,000 inhabitants, while approximately 230,000 Qingtianese live in many countries all over the world.[31] During the Qing Dynasty (between 1644 and 1911), around four thousand people left Qingtian and began the journey that brought them to many corners of the earth. Qingtian has been a town of emigration since the earliest time but still counts today as one of the most prolific sending communities among Chinese cities. I picked Qingtian as the primary town for this study because most of my interviewees came from Qingtian or surrounding areas.

I ran into a lonely Spanish kid of Chinese origins. I was coming out of the Museum of Overseas Chinese and chatting with the Museum's guard, who had

[30] Tan 1989, 253.

[31] Compiling Committee of the Zhejiang People's Publishing House 2011.

kindly opened the section of the Museum of Overseas Chinese just for me.[32] In addition, since the guard had volunteered to accompany me through the sections of the Museum dedicated to Qingtian's *Shitou* (soapstone), I was expressing my gratitude to him for being patient and meticulously explaining all the natural combinations of colors, textures, and usages of the artifacts collected in the Museum. At that very moment, the boy passed by and stopped. He started staring and listening to the conversation. Since I had experienced people staring at me numerous times during my trip to Qingtian, at first I did not pay attention to him. When I finally waved good-bye to the nice guard and noticed that the boy was following me, I turned and made an interrogative expression. The boy looked back and was evidently looking for the right words, or better, the right language to use. After a few silent moments, he decided to use Mandarin, to ask me where I was from. His hesitant pronunciation revealed that Mandarin was not the language he spoke in his everyday life. Then I asked him where he was from. After he said he was from Spain, we exchanged a couple of sentences in a confused mix up of Romance languages, and after a funny "Vamonos! Andiamo!" we decided to take a walk. We had established a bond as Europeans in the far away land of China, but we kept speaking Mandarin. His father had dropped him in front of the Museum that day and told him "to go learn something." He would have picked him up somewhere later that day, upon receiving a text message from him. The father had friends to go visit. The boy did not. Therefore, after a brief stroll outside the Museum, and after discovering the Museum was almost closing, the boy decided to hang out with me. We got a rickshaw pulled by a strong lady in her fifties, passed the bridge and went around the town. We stopped in front of some peddlers who were selling special litchi-like fruits that I had never tasted before. The boy assured me that they were a delicacy of the place, and we bought some. We were conversing about what to do in Qingtian, making comparisons with Europe and talking about "*women nabian*"[33] which literarily means "we down there," or better, "we Southern Europeans." The boy looked lost and lonely, and was visibly upset that he could not play with his phone, which had a Spanish Sim card. I was extremely worried about how he was going to talk to his father, and where he was going to go. We entered the lobby of the Hotel I was staying at to find relief from the suffocating Chinese July heat. We sat comfortably in the conditioned fresh air of the Lobby where I shared my password for the Lobby WiFi to make sure he could reach his father and also, in exchange for the fruits he had insisted on paying for, I shared

[32] The Museum has an official function and it is open only for organized and specific events.

[33] 我们那边.

a bottle of truly Italian San Pellegrino sparkling water. Our bonding incorporated an exchange of some sort and became stronger at this point. He started telling me he was missing his friends, his skateboarding team, and Facebook, for which even the WiFi was useless since it is blocked in China.

My encounter ended there, in the Lobby of a four star hotel with Internet connectivity. Once the boy swore to me that he had spoken with his dad and that he was going to meet him in the plaza nearby, I felt reassured that I could let him go, and I continued with my plans for an evening at the library. The boy was almost forcefully experiencing a China that he said he liked mostly for the food. He told me he was in China once before this time when he was eight. He remembered his grandma and the food, but nothing else. This encounter raised many questions in my mind. What would he be taking home from the summer adventure in his father's hometown? What would he become later in life, an entrepreneur? A cosmopolitan entrepreneur? Would the journey to the hometown acquire different meanings once back in Spain? Would the suggestions of the trip come back in time and be evoked as essential and life-changing memories? Or would he forget all about the trip once back in Spain? Memories are certainly long lasting. Memories hide in dusty places of individuals' minds, and can always surprise us, resurface unexpectedly and contribute to defining moments of individuals and groups' history.

6. Conclusion

In this paper I proposed a *glocal* approach to discuss the history of Chinese migration to Rome. The temporal and spatial constraints linked to the evolution of Chinese migration to Rome required the analysis of oral sources. In fact, to the extent that was physically feasible I have tried to look at migrants' lives by tracing their journeys across the migratory chain. Therefore, the *glocal* approach allowed me to move back and forth from sending to receiving communities as migrants do.

In 1863 Baudelaire wrote: "To be away from home and yet to feel at home anywhere; to see the world, to be at the very center of the world, and yet to be unseen of the world, such are some of the minor pleasures of those independent, intense and impartial spirits, who do not lend themselves easily to linguistic definitions. The observer is a prince enjoying his incognito wherever he goes." While examining the world, the historian, like the observer in Baudelaire's poem, possesses regal privileges. Yet, even the unidentified prince is subject to social and spatial constraints. Nobody can be completely free from the environment he lives in or moves through; however, one can adapt and change as needed and wanted. Migrants construct their lives abroad, sometimes they

chose what to like, and sometimes they make do with what they have. In the same way, ethnic identities and memories are shaped within constraints; as a result, they are not permanent and static as I tried to demonstrate in this essay.

I have analyzed the lives of Chinese migrants in Rome as a function of the formation of *ethnicity* (*ethnicization*) and development of *memories* (both localized and global). *Ethnicization* is a process that migrants in Italy experience as a persistent dialogue between "us" and "them." Such dialogue can be voluntary or involuntary, circumstantial and incidental as well as essential or essentialized.

In conclusion, *ethnicity*, *memories* and, consequently, identities are moving targets and multilayered concepts. They become molded and shaped according to the needs and desires of each migrant. With the analysis of migrants' oral stories, I wish to contribute to a comprehensive description of a process that is simultaneously global and local; that goes beyond national borders and can, at the same time, be equally restrained or freed by transnational environments as well as by local frames.

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CHINESE MIGRANTS AND THE "CHINESE MAFIA" IN CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN CULTURE

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Abstract
In this essay, I suggest that the association of Chinese migrants in Italy with the "Chinese mafia" in Italian cultural texts is indicative of, and perpetuates, the tendency—which is characteristic of Italian media accounts of the country's initial contacts with mass immigration in the early 1990s—to relate an ethnic group to a specific set of bounded traits. How did contemporary Italian cultural practitioners make use of the association of Chinese migrants in Italy with the presumed "Chinese mafia" in their works? And to what specific rhetorical use is this association deployed in these texts? How did Chinese migrants respond to these depictions, and what in turn were the Italian creators' justifications? In order to answer these questions, I analyze two broad categories of cultural texts in which, since the 2000s, the aforementioned association has become meaningful for cultural practitioners in Italy—namely, the realist and postmodern varieties. Both approaches draw on, or ultimately manifest, an Orientalist discourse that uses the depiction of Chinese migrants living in Italy as a foil against which to investigate issues relating to Italy and Italians.

Keywords
Chinese immigration, the Chinese mafia, Orientalism, mass media, Saviano, Manetti Bros.

摘要
本文阐述在意大利文本中把中国移民与"中国黑手党"联系起来的现象。本文作者论述了这种现象的存在显示并延续了将一个民族群体特征进行圈定的趋势。在90年代初，随着外国移民大规模迁移至意大利，当地关于移民群体的媒体报告也相应诞生。上述的趋势便是其文本之一大特色。当代意大利文人在他们的著作中是如何将旅意华人与所谓的"中国黑手党"之间建立起联系的？两者之间的这种关联有什么样具体的修辞作用呢？面对这样的涂黑描述，中国移民有何反应？意大利文化工作者对于华人的反应又有何评论？在回答这些问题时，本文作者将分析两部2000年后意大利文人对上述联系有深入考量的作品，并把它们归为两大文派，即为现实派与后现代派。此两种派别或是建立在，或是显现了"东方主义"。在这其中，关于旅意华人的描述成为了探讨意大利及其民众的间接途径。

关键词
华人移民，中国黑手党，东方主义，大众媒体，Saviano, Manetti Bros。

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Introduction

In the early 1990s, as the number of Chinese migrants living in Italy increased dramatically, media accounts of them were in full force. A distinguishing characteristic of the initial chronicles of this migratory phenomenon in Italian mass media is an excessive emphasis on the presumed "Chinese mafia" operating in Italy. The so-called "Chinese mafia" is a term used by Italian journalists during the 1980s and 1990s to mean three distinctive things which, however, more often than not, coalesced to refer to the same phenomenon in their texts (e.g., *Spazio 5*). Some journalists used the term to indicate individual Chinese migrant criminals who may or may not work for larger criminal groups. Others intended the term to mean the network of various criminal groups composed of Chinese migrants which may or may not operate in agreement, most of which managed human smuggling from China to Italy and other European countries. Yet others applied the term to refer to large-scale criminal organizations of Chinese nationals, such as the Triad, the very influential Chinese transnational organized crime.

The year 1992 saw the news reporting of the first major police investigations into the Chinese migrant community in Italy that put criminals to court trials and sparked further media interest in this topic. By 1993, the leading Italian news daily *Il Corriere della Sera* had featured the presumed Chinese mafia in Italy numerous times, often showing a hodgepodge of socio-criminological facts and fantasies based on previous popular cultural archetypes of Chinese. Milan, Rome, Florence-Prato-San Donnino, and Naples are the most highlighted areas of concern in these accounts of Chinese criminality in Italy (Breveglieri and Farina 1997, 96–101; Galli 1997, 102–103). In the age of global migration at the beginning of the 1990s, the Italian public understood Chinese migration to Italy first and foremost through a peculiar socio-criminological lens as adopted by the country's mass media. This lens has proved to be enduring, and survived well into the 2000s in Italian media and other cultural domains.

In this essay, I suggest that the association of Chinese migrants in Italy with the Chinese mafia is indicative of, and perpetuates, the tendency characteristic of Italy's initial contacts with mass immigration in the early 1990s to relate an ethnic group to a specific set of bounded traits, the "metonymic freezing" of which Arjun Appadurai speaks (1988, 36). Throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, Italian readers and journalists regarded (and some still do to this day) the "Chinese mafia" as an attribute of the Chinese migrant community. The Chinese mafia served, and by and large still serves, both as a "shorthand" in interpreting existing activities of migrants and as a "guide" with which to navigate incoming information related to this migration. Such a use of the Chinese mafia in Italian journalism drew vocal criticism from Chinese migrants especially dur-

ing the 2000s. Such criticism came in a variety of modes, most notably through the writings of elite Chinese migrants who controlled the ideologies and technologies of Chinese migrant media outlets. Given the scope of this essay, I will examine mostly the Italian side of this story of media debates. But even so, I hope to clarify as much as possible that the Chinese mafia has become a compelling *idea* "around which to organize *debate*, whether such debate is about method, about fact, about assumptions, or about empirical variations" (Appadurai 1988, 45–46, the italics are Appadurai's).

How did contemporary Italian cultural practitioners make use of the association of Chinese migrants in Italy with the Chinese mafia in their works? And to what specific rhetorical use is this association deployed in these texts? How did Chinese migrants respond to these depictions and what in turn were the Italian creators' justifications? I will analyze two broad categories in which the association of Chinese migrants with the Chinese mafia has become meaningful for cultural practitioners in Italy since the 2000s—namely, the realist and postmodern varieties. Both approaches draw on, or ultimately manifest, an Orientalist discourse that uses the depiction of Chinese migrants living in Italy as a foil against which to investigate issues relating to Italy and Italians. In Italian mainstream journalism during the 2000s, the Chinese mafia was likened to the *Camorra*, a native Italian organized crime familiar to the Italian readership, a parallel sharpened and then popularized by Roberto Saviano's nonfiction *Gomorra/Gomorrah* (2006), to which I dedicate the first section of the current essay. In my account, Saviano's realist rhetoric to approach Chinese migration to Italy and the Chinese mafia is ultimately only concerned with such Italy-centered social issues as the *Camorra* and globalization. A brief analysis of Matteo Garrone's 2008 filmic adaptation of Saviano's book, also titled *Gomorra*, will throw Saviano's Orientalist vision of the Chinese migrant community into sharper relief.

In the second section of this article, I examine the film made for television titled *Vendetta cinese/Chinese Vendetta* by Manetti Bros. (2006) and the short story by Carlo Lucarelli, titled *Febbre gialla/Yellow Fever* (1997, 2012), on which the film is based, from the postmodern perspective as declared by the authors. While Saviano places the Chinese mafia at the center of a reality-based nonfiction—or so he claims—, Lucarelli and Manetti Bros. justify their manifestly offensive treatment of the same topic as the necessary evil when creating an engaging narrative. Thus the writer and the filmmakers poke fun at several things at once: at Italian media depictions of the so-called Chinese mafia, at certain behaviors of Chinese migrants that make the association between them and the organized crime seem plausible, and at how Italian audiences react to the media construction of the *idea* of Chinese migrants as members of the Chinese mafia. Ultimately, the textual practices in *Vendetta cinese* and *Febbre gialla* as

well as the comments offered by Lucarelli when confronted with a protest from Chinese migrants strongly suggest the presence of the Orientalist discourse, for which the Chinese mafia is a floating metaphor for Chinese migrants living in Italy and depictions of these migrants are meant to reveal some more nuanced aspects of Italians themselves.

Although the evidence from Chinese migrants on these texts as examined here is slim, one can nonetheless venture to postulate a power relation as manifest in the two texts under discussion, in which the Italian interpretation of the Chinese migrant community in Italy through the Chinese mafia had the upper hand over the counterarguments of Chinese migrants and others. In this light, what follows in this essay reveals much about Italians' views and methods of approaching Chinese migrants, and not much about Chinese migrants' interventions in the debates. This is a method validated by the tradition of the textual and discursive analysis advanced in Edward Said's *Orientalism.* Said analyzes the production and mobilization of knowledge of Islam or of the Orient in the West through studying textual representations of the Orient (Said 1978, 20–23).

However, I aim to examine the Italian authors' works by placing them in the contact zones to which both relevant texts of Chinese migrants in Italy and my knowledge as a scholar can contribute. I am of the opinion that without telling readers of this article what is sociologically accurate and proved, or what is obvious to Chinese migrant readers but not to Italian readers, my article would risk not contributing much to expanding the readers' knowledge of Chinese migrants in Italy, except for referring back to the Italians' knowledge organization of this migratory phenomenon. This would be a particularly problematic approach considering that there exists a vast sociological and anthropological literature in Italian on Chinese migrants in Italy. Therefore, both the accuracy of information, or the lack thereof, and the social imaginary of Chinese immigration to Italy being circulated in these two works are important to my inquiry in this article.

1. Orientalizing Chinese Migrants Through the "Chinese Mafia"

The most well-known journalistic depiction of the Chinese mafia in Italy appears in the first two chapters of Saviano's *Gomorra.* News commentators and critics have come to regard Saviano's book as the key narrative that brought the economic and criminal activities of the *Camorra* in Italy and worldwide to the attention of an international readership. Saviano denounced the *Camorra* so effectively in his writings that he had to be put under protection because of several death threats made by the *Camorristi*. What has not often been scrutinized in news analyses and critical literature is Saviano's use of Chinese migrants in

the opening two chapters as a ploy to set the stage for his condemnation of the *Camorra* in the rest of his book.

Nevertheless, news magazines and websites by Chinese migrants in Italy were quick to react to Saviano's depictions. In an editorial published in the bilingual Italian-Chinese magazine *Cina in Italia/China in Italy*, the editor-in-chief, Hu Lanbo, takes issue with the expression used in the book's opening paragraph—"The Chinese never die"—, and goes on to explain specific Chinese cultural practices and migratory patterns that contribute to keeping funerals of Chinese migrants out of the public's sight in Italy (2007, 52–54). Hu is mainly worried about the possibility that Saviano's view of the Chinese migrants in Naples would seem convincing to the average native Italian reader thanks to the book's realist rhetoric. An article published on the website of Associna, the important association for second-generation Chinese migrants in Italy, asks why Saviano elects to use unsubstantiated information about Chinese migrants in the book, including the striking image that opens the book, as frozen bodies of Chinese migrants fall from a container at Naples's port. Like Hu's article, Associna's statement accuses Saviano of knowing little about the Chinese migrant community in Naples while showing no hesitation in turning the community into a vehicle for journalistic sensationalism, a view endorsed also by China experts in Italy (associna.com 2006; Ceccagno and Rastrelli 2008, 132).

As pungent as these comments are, they manifest what Said aptly calls the positional superiority of Orientalism, which, to borrow the words of Daniel F. Vukovich, refers to "that tactic or de facto strategy by which the object of study is kept in place, never allowed to challenge let alone displace the effectively a priori assumptions, conclusions, and discourse" (3). Indeed, Chinese migrants were quick to identity the problematic deployment of stereotypes of Chinese and a simplistic dichotomy between Italians and Chinese migrants as represented in *Gomorra*. However, by unduly focusing on the sociological and anthropological accuracy of how Chinese migrants lived in Naples, Hu and the author at Associna seemed to be unwilling to acknowledge the fact that Saviano's narrative project in *Gomorra* is never to examine the Chinese migrant community in Naples on its own terms in the first place.

My entry into this discussion concerns how Saviano massages an Orientalizing discourse into his descriptions of Chinese migrants which are anchored to the Chinese mafia. Saviano's depiction of Chinese migrants in *Gomorra* manifests Orientalism not only in the format of "ideological suppositions, images and fantasies" of China, but also, perhaps more importantly, by reconsidering "the changing historical and cultural relationship between Europe and Asia" (Said 1986, 211; see also Said 1978, 2–3) during the 2000s when, if we were to follow Saviano's visceral and mostly fact-based arguments, Chinese global economy was expanding to the detriment of Italian economy. Saviano's use

of China in *Gomorra* is similar in rhetoric to the intellectual project revealed in references to China in the works of such contemporary critical theorists as Giorgio Agamben and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, in which, as Vukovich rightly notes, mentions of China are self-referential in that they "betray no serious engagement with the question of China through intellectual rigor" (128–135). If this is indeed the case, then what rhetorical purposes do the depictions of Chinese migrants focused on their criminal activities serve within *Gomorra*'s narrative project? I maintain that Saviano's Orientalizing discourse causes Chinese migration to Italy to function as the first and most effective case study in *Gomorra* to lead to the subjects that will concern Saviano in the rest of the book—i.e., the *Camorra* and globalization, both Italy-centered social issues. Saviano is not manifestly interested in contributing to the knowledge production of Chinese migrants living in Italy. Instead, the author's objective is to stimulate the readers' associative capabilities with which to make approximate, but emotionally powerful, evaluations of the similarities between the two transnational organized crimes, i.e., the *Camorra* and the Chinese mafia.

Saviano's Orientalization of Chinese migrants as members of the Chinese mafia is manifest when, despite the profuse use of statistics and on-site investigations that form the core of his book, his realist narrative devices do not tangibly increase the readers' knowledge of the migratory phenomenon. Ultimately Saviano is not so concerned with an accurate account of the Chinese mafia as seems to be the case at first glance. Saviano's account is accurate with regard to the Chinese migrant community in Naples insofar as it was intelligible to the general Italian readership. This point explains the sudden flight of the Chinese mafia from the second chapter, not to reemerge again in the book. Following the image of frozen bodies that opens the book, Saviano informs us that this first-person, eye-witness account is a transcription of what a crane operator told him. Subsequently, in the overview of the transactions at the port of Naples, Saviano makes a promotional use of statistics ("the largest cargo terminal" and "almost all the traffic," 5), the sources of which are omitted (elsewhere Saviano sometimes mentions his sources), leaving the reader with no clues about the exact criteria that are being used to substantiate such superlative claims.[1] Later in the chapter, Saviano uses the second-person imperative to invite the readers to call on their somatic experiences in daily life as well as on their familiarity with the genre of crime reporting in comprehending Chinese migration to Naples and the Chinese mafia. In the rest of the first chapter, Saviano gives a first-person eyewitness narration of his work in a Chinese migrant warehouse, underscoring the authenticity and value of his own observations. Through these narrative

[1] All quotes of this book are taken from Saviano 2007.

details, Saviano finally arrives at the conclusion in the first chapter of *Gomorra* that the Chinese mafia operates in Naples and collaborates with the *Camorra*.

What Saviano's first-person accounts, use of statistics, address to Italian readers, and assertive conclusions based on inconclusive evidence share in common is an Italian media milieu, in which these techniques were widely practiced throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Several of Saviano's points in the first chapter of his book had precedents in mainstream Italian media, which had already formed a cognitive map of this migratory flow for most of his readers. An article in the influential Italian news weekly magazine *Panorama* dated 2003 makes references to the recycling of passports possessed by deceased Chinese migrants, to the low number of Chinese funerals in Italy, and to the Chinese-Italian competition in the garment sector in San Giuseppe Vesuviano near Naples. As the garment industry in Naples has a tradition of hiring black-market native workers, and as the industry is "a business traditionally controlled by the *Camorra*, who had nothing to say on this. Strange, no? This is how the anti-Mafia investigators reason. They fear for an agreement between Chinese organized crime and the *Camorra*" (Pergolini 2003, 147). The basic logic for this media interpretation, to borrow an observation made by critic Massimo Introvigne, is not to run the risk of countering negative stereotypes about Chinese migrants in Italy by preempting a consideration of the presence of Chinese organized crime in the country (2010, 290). Speculations of a potential Chinese collaboration with the *Camorra* were also prevalent in mainstream Italian media outlets other than *Panorama* in the years 2000 and 2003 (Calabrò 2000; Marino 2003). Ultimately, Saviano asks his readers to recall this media knowledge about the Chinese mafia and Chinese migration to Italy in order to embrace his analysis. Saviano's rhetoric is tautological in its recycling of media content and methods from previous years. As such, *Gomorra* adds no particular insight into Chinese migration to Italy in the 2000s.

Saviano's realist strategy works in tandem with his affective strategy, with the latter contributing even less factual information to the public understanding of Chinese migration to Italy. A prominent example is Saviano's use of a sexually charged metaphor—Naples's port is like an anus—to accentuate the negative economic impact made by Chinese migrants on Italy. The port at Naples is compared to an "open wound" and to "the hole in the earth out of which what's made in China comes" (4). This "hole gets bigger and deeper" (4) as "the sheet metal and screws slowly penetrate the tiny Neapolitan opening" (6). Figuratively speaking, the act of Chinese bodily fluids (i.e., the flow of fleets carrying "Made in China" merchandise for Chinese migrants' import-export business in Italy) being injected into the Italian body (i.e., Naples's port) is metaphorical of the current Chinese invasion in Europe. For critic Alessandro Dal Lago, Saviano uses a "gastroenteric vocabulary" to denigrate Chinese by associating

them with abjection (2010, 48–49). This is part of a larger project undertaken by Saviano in this book and elsewhere that draw on cultural populism, dilettantism, and stereotypes to uphold a heroic image of the writer and journalist as the public denouncer on morally controversial social issues (Dal Lago 2010, 123–125). The anus metaphor undoubtedly provides Italian readers with an outlet for ventilation at the cost of the reputation of Chinese migrants—e.g., the menacing army of Chinese commercial fleets is only equipped with cheaply made merchandise. By condemning a complex social phenomenon through metaphors that evoke disgust and abjection, Saviano's book provides a potent form of psychological compensation for readers who may well face real-life problems resulting from globalization in Italy, of which Chinese immigration is an organic component.

While Saviano's realist and affective strategies do not contribute to enlarging his readers' knowledge of the presumed Chinese mafia and of Chinese migration to Italy, in the narrative economy of *Gomorra*, I contend, these strategies help to reflect on Italy's perilous positions in globalization and in migration management, with both subjects crucially linked to the book's main subject, namely, the *Camorra*. When Saviano expresses disgust at the image of the dead bodies of Chinese migrants and at Naples's port as an anus, he is setting the stage for his denunciation of the *Camorra* in ensuing chapters, which he does only with greater intensity and indictment. The psychological distance created between Italians and Chinese migrants in the first chapter of *Gomorra* prepares grounds for similarly emotionally charged distance between ordinary Italians and the *Camorristi* in the rest of the book. The Chinese-Italian commercial conflicts, as examined in the book's first chapter, functions effectively as the first major example to tease out Saviano's arguments on the *Camorristi*'s economic empire. These are all points that we can use to argue for the Orientalist modality in *Gomorra*, that is, the way of using the Chinese Other to better reveal aspects of the Italian Self. Let me examine in detail one such example from Saviano's book, that of the parallel between the Chinese mafia and the *Camorra* in Naples.

Xian is the book's only Chinese migrant insider in *Gomorra*, who is in charge of the Chinese-owned warehouses around the port area. It is through the interactions Saviano the journalist has had with Xian that Saviano the narrator claims the similar traits shared by the Chinese mafia and the *Camorra*. As Saviano tries to engage Xian in a conversation about the Triad, the latter shows no particular interest in this topic, offering, in a satirical vein, Euro, Dollar, and Yuan as his own triad. Momentarily Saviano goes on to state a main thesis in *Gomorra*—i.e., the *Camorra*, like the Triad, is an advocate of its low-ranking members, who survive the travails of life, often suffering from considerable economic and social hardship. A characteristic of Saviano's condemnation of Chinese migrants in his book is to target at the elites in the hierarchy of the

Triad—who do not figure in the book—rather than at low-ranked intermediaries like Xian and at migrant workers. On the contrary, in the Chinese migrant press, the transnational elites tend to associate the local underclass—including Italians and Chinese and other migrants—with crimes of an economic nature (Malavolti 2006, 150–152; Bauman 1998, 125–126). These opinions by elite Chinese migrant entrepreneurs only endorse further Saviano's analysis of a particular condition of ordinary migrants, who are simultaneously criminalized and protected (or perceived to be protected) by their elite counterparts.

Saviano will use this insight gained from the Chinese migrant experience to apply to the dynamics between the *Camorra* and local populations in Naples. Xian as a go-between is precisely how the *Camorra*, like the Triad, controls the "intermediate stages, financial transfers, and investments—everything that makes a criminal economic outfit powerful" (12). In the later chapter titled "The Secondigliano War," Saviano elucidates the exemplary nature of Xian's case for Italians. There, when Saviano describes how residents of Secondigliano depend on the *Camorra* for a living, detest state negligence of their social plight, and protest against a large-scale police raid in the area, the reader would legitimately recall the similar relationship between Xian and the Triad as described in the first chapter. *Gomorra* intimates that Neapolitans' rapport with the *Camorra* can be paralleled to Xian's with the Triad, both misdirected, and yet essential, for the survival of socially disadvantaged people.

The Orientalist punch of these narrative details is that the ultimate goal of the Triad/*Camorra* parallel is to interpret the *Camorra* as a social malaise in Italy, and not to investigate the Chinese organized crime on its own terms. To be sure, from a conventional perspective this goal is entirely justifiable, because Italian journalism is mandated with the task of critiquing social phenomena occurring on Italian soil for Italian readers. Moreover, as Said reminds us, since the Orientalist's vocabulary and language often do not even try to be accurate, there really is no point examining the accuracy of Saviano's empirical knowledge of the Chinese migrant community. Rather, the critic's task should be to show to whom and for what reasons such an account is written (Said 1978, 71–72). But my view is that immigration to Italy and the multicultural social reality in the country during the 2000s have made such a conventional perspective on national journalism obsolete and even dangerous. Italian national journalism is compelled to develop an intercultural competency that is able to adequately address the non-Italian native Other's diversity as well as to reevaluate the Italian Self's own assumptions. This point is particularly valid when we consider that unlike in the case of texts analyzed by Said, *Gomorra* was contested by Italians and by Chinese migrants, as the book's readership faced a Europe composed by very heterogeneous communities of migrants and natives, intellectuals and

laymen, artists and journalists. A socially engaged author like Saviano would certainly appreciate this point.

We will further understand Saviano's Orientalizing tendency in his depictions of Chinese migrants by observing the absence of it in Garrone's film version of *Gomorra*. Despite Saviano's collaboration on the film's screenplay, the social denunciation, testimonial mode, and moral indignation of his book are almost entirely missing from the film's realistic prose—the product of a conscious choice by Garrone (Braucci 2008, 73; De Sanctis 2008, 36; Antonello 2011, 378; Porton 2009, 1415). Drawing on the second chapter of Saviano's book, where the Orientalizing discourse is much less present, Garrone tells the Chinese storyline in four segments, which are distributed at several places in the film. Chinese migrants matter in the narrative economy of Garrone's film only insofar as they clash with the *Camorristi*'s investment in the Neapolitan garment industry. By hiring the seasoned Neapolitan tailor Pasquale Del Prete (Salvatore Cantalupo) secretly to teach high fashion skills to migrant workers, Chinese entrepreneurs including Xian (Ronghua Zhang) cause disturbance to the financial backup his long-time mentor and contractor Iavarone (Gigio Morra) has maintained with the *Camorristi*. Thus the criminal bosses must eliminate their business competitors, the Chinese migrant entrepreneurs and workers in Naples.

If there is an Italian-Chinese cross-identification to be found in Garrone's film, then it must be one between a Neapolitan (Pasquale) and a Chinese migrant (Xian) based on social marginalization.[2] This is quite a departure from the Italian-Chinese cross-identification through organized crimes—i.e, the analogy between the Triad and the *Camorra*—in Saviano's book. The film does not chastise the less than honorable tactics Xian uses to persuade Pasquale into working for his factory. Instead, Garrone crucially asks why Pasquale agrees to teach Chinese migrants. The initial motivation seems to be the lucrative pay—Pasquale would receive 2,000 euro for each of the ten sessions taught. In the Chinese workshop, Pasquale expresses his gratitude toward the appreciation shown by Chinese workers who clap and bow, calling him a master. He later relates this scene emotionally to his wife upon returning home. Other examples of Garrone's positive representation of Chinese migrants in the film include the seriousness with which they stitch the garments by applying skills they have learned from Pasquale, the orderliness of their factory, the good quality of their garments, their conscience to hide him in the trunk of the car that would eventually save his life, and even their food that Pasquale has learned to appreciate. When confronted by Iavarone, Pasquale justifies his decision to work for the

[2] Shelleen Greene reads this as the solidarity between two global southerners as envisioned by Pier Paolo Pasolini (Greene 2012, 250–252).

Chinese by commenting dryly that his skills as a tailor have not benefited from his friend's tutelage. In fact, Pasquale goes to reason, not only has Iavarone exploited him for his labor and craftsmanship, but the contractor has also failed to protect his life by informing him about the killing planned by the *Camorristi* during a car ride. Pasquale's ultimate exit from the fashion world to work as a truck driver also signals the exit of Chinese migrants from the film's narrative.

Garrone's film offers a sober representation of Chinese migrants, viewing the *Camorra* and the illegal business practices of Chinese migrants as two somewhat related, but fundamentally different, phenomena. No reference to the so-called Chinese mafia is mentioned in the film. The film's de-emphasis on Chinese criminality effectively counters the damage caused by Saviano's book on the public reputation of Chinese migrants in Italy. Most importantly, the storyline involving Chinese migrants in Garrone's *Gomorra* is not intended to tease out the illegal activities of the *Camorra* by way of analogy. Instead, the Chinese storyline gives but one among several examples of the range of criminal and economic networks of the *Camorra* in the film.

2. The "Chinese Mafia" as a Postmodern Cliché

Broadcast as a primetime program on RAIDUE on August 29, 2006, *Vendetta cinese* is a free-standing episode in the television serial *L'ispettore Coliandro/Inspector Coliandro* (2006, 2009–10, 2016), offering a tongue-in-cheek depiction of the Chinese mafia. The film tells the story of the young police officer Coliandro (Gianpaolo Morelli) in Bologna who, while investigating a traffic incident involving a Chinese boy, accidentally discovers a Triad-managed underground network specialized in the trade of human organs. Coliandro then teams up with the Chinese female officer Sui (Jacelyn Parry) from Hong Kong in their ultimate success in dismantling this network.

The directors of *Vendetta cinese*, Manetti Bros. (Marco Manetti and Antonio Manetti), are versed in multimodal films, having previously made *Torino Boys/Turin Boys* (1997) and *Zora la vampira/Zora the Vampire* (2000), in which they tell allegorical stories through immigrants in Italy in a thriller and in a film noir. Conceived holistically by fiction author and screenwriter Carlo Lucarelli, *L'ispettore Coliandro* presents several episodes, including *Vendetta cinese*, which reflect on the criminalization of migrants in mainstream Italian media. The main filmic mode to do this preferred by Lucarelli is the *poliziesco* or *giallo* genre. Such long-running popular television series produced by RAI Fiction as *Don Matteo* (2000–present) and *Il commissario Montalbano/ Commissioner Montalbano* (1999–present) may have also contributed to Lucarelli's choice of this particular film genre for a ready market of television spectators.

Vendetta cinese performs an explicitly postmodern pastiche on its narrative by reenacting stock elements culled from a variety of film genres, including the crime film, film noir, Kung Fu movies, and comedy film. The ostensibly socio-criminal explanations of Chinese migrants in Italy and the Triad merely serve to foreground intra-cinematic moments. The film's two leads are fascinated by cinema—Coliandro views his missions through the optics of James Bond films, while Sui mentions Hong Kong cop movies as a source of inspiration for her to join the police force. The narrative conceit of *Vendetta cinese* is then to have these characters act out their fantasies based on movies within the film's diegesis. While Coliandro chases criminals on the streets of Bologna, Sui fights with gang members in Kong Fu moves. The film thus creates a rupture between its narrative and social reality, both of which refer to the Chinese criminality in Italy, consciously disrupting the two's indexical bonds.

A discussion of the film's postmodern orientation was at the heart of Lucarelli's defense of his film script in the major Italian daily newspaper *La Repubblica*, which the writer offered in the wake of the protest of the Chinese migrant community in Bologna who judged *Vendetta cinese* to be a kitsch juggling uneasily between realistic and intra-cinematic components (Lucarelli 2006, 1). In response to the Chinese migrants' Marxian, or Gramscian, interpretation of the film (Yar 2010, 68–82), Lucarelli gives a postmodern defense. Elsewhere in his corpus, the author intimates that postmodernity is a characteristic of the life style encouraged by the urban sprawl created around the city of Bologna and in the Via Emilia area (Pezzotti 2012, 93–101). Let me unpack Lucarelli's postmodern approach before evaluating its implications within the cultural landscape concerning the Chinese migrant community in contemporary Italy.

After proffering an apology to Chinese migrants who were offended by *Vendetta cinese*, Lucarelli expresses his "esteem and sympathy" for their contributions to Bologna. To his knowledge, continues the writer, neither the Triad nor human smuggling exited within the Chinese community in the city. Lucarelli then presses on to make two interrelated key observations. First, he gives a dualistic depiction of the criminal and benign portions of the Chinese migrant community in Bologna; and second, insofar as the criminal portion of the Chinese community may be related to the Triad and Italy has its own native organized crimes, including notably the *Cosa Nostra*, it makes sense for the author to highlight the Chinese-Italian cross-identification through their similar organized crimes, in a similar vein to Saviano's reasoning in *Gomorra*:

> The bad guys are from the Triad, which is a body extraneous to the Chinese community, just as the *Cosa Nostra* is to Sicilians. However, it is possible that there were problems of underground conditions ("clandestinità"), legality [sic], and organized criminality among Chinese, even though not here in Bologna;

> that the *Cosa Nostra* and *'Ndrangheta* laundered money, even here in Bologna; that the University (in Bologna) was restless. The noir should serve as food for thought ("spunto di riflessione"). The rest is fiction.[3]

Lucarelli's Manichean understanding of the Chinese community, which Manetti Bros. express cinematically, underpins the storyline involving Sui in *Vendetta cinese*. Sui chases the Triad boss Lu Yang (Hal Yamanouchi) from Hong Kong to Bologna. Disguised as a waitress to work in a Chinese restaurant in Bologna, Sui receives instructions on the Italian-style *omertà* (oath of silence) from Lu Yang: "You only speak what's necessary, you only see what's necessary, and you only hear what's necessary." Coliandro's colleague explains the Triad to him by comparing it to the "Italian-American mafia" as well as by contrasting it with the "old and very integrated Chinese community in Bologna." In one scene, two second-generation Chinese migrants, or Chinese Italians, are having an aperitif and conversing in fluent Italian. Further, to highlight the parallel worlds within the same community in the film, the Triad members are mostly confined to nocturnal or enclosed settings, and their scenes are often underscored by several eerie-sounding, authentic Chinese and Chinese-sounding melodies. In contrast, Sui often appears in broad daylight, and to accompany her actions are musical motifs that recall James Bond movies. Ultimately, these depictions reinforce Lucarelli's claim about the analogy between the Triad and the *Cosa Nostra*, which was already a media cliché in the 1990s and was updated by Saviano and others to correlate to the *Camorra* during the 2000s.

To be sure, for Lucarelli postmodern literature continues the Italian tradition of writings that show civic commitment (*impegno*). According to critic Giuliana Pieri, Lucarelli creates a new persona for himself—"the crime writer as serious historian, and the crime writer as investigative journalist"—rather than have his fictional heroes take on these roles (Pieri 2007, 201). Consider that the marginal place occupied by migrant characters in Lucarelli's novels and those in his screenplays for *L'ispettore Coliandro* may well reflect the marginalized status of these characters in Italian society (Pieri 2007, 197–200). Further, Lucarelli's *Febbre gialla*, on which *Vendetta cinese* is based, gives some agency to Chinese migrants. The Chinese children imprisoned by the Triad eventually overwhelm their captors by assaulting them with needles that they use to manufacture leather goods. In the abovementioned news article, Lucarelli states that *Vendetta cinese* is intended to ridicule the political correctness of overemphasizing the bright sides of both Italian and Chinese communities, which Italian institutions tend to perform in public. A critique of the authorities and institu-

3 Lucarelli 2006, 1.

tions and their dominant discourses is surely one aspect of the civic commitment which Lucarelli bestows on postmodern literature.

Lucarelli does not err in making quasi-sociological investigations into current affairs in Italy through postmodern writings which draw on the noir, *poliziesco*, and *giallo*, with reference to Chinese migration to Italy and to other social issues. However, the end result in our case shows the writer's imperfect knowledge of some basic information about Chinese migration to Italy and of its political implications for a national cultural industry already slow to integrate diversity into its areas of interest. Lucarelli does not consider the social validity of his hypotheses in the above-mentioned quotation. Neither does the author question the effect his statement regarding the Chinese in Italy may have had on the Italian public, who is largely misinformed by the mass media on Chinese migration to Italy and on the presumed Chinese mafia. Thus Lucarelli is unwilling to show sensitivity to the political and public stakes of the economic tension between Chinese migrants and native Italians during the 1990s and 2000s. The disavowal of temporality and historicity in *Vendetta cinese* with regard to this contemporary reality manifests a principle inherent in much of the postmodern writing in which realities from different epochs often coexist (Jameson 1991, 307–10). Perhaps Lucarelli also understands the limits of any utopian efforts to attend fully to the representational needs of a minority community as heterogeneous as the Chinese in Italy.[4]

A related example of these dynamics is Lucarelli's *Febbre gialla*, which displays various features of postmodern pastiche, including the literary-cinematic hybrid and a typical postmodern thought process. The exploitation of child labor by the Chinese criminal organization is a central concern in the novel. Written in a language that lends itself easily to cinematic images, the short story refers to the Kung Fu movie genre and to films starring Italian comedians Franco Franchi and Ciccio Ingrassia that feature an imaginary China. In the short story, when Vittorio (Coliandro's counterpart) goes to a Buddhist center and sees a Chinese woman wearing kimono, the reader is made to think that Lucarelli's text proves to be unfortunate in showing a commonplace confusion of various East Asian cultures. A classic example of this confusion in another Italian text is the supposedly Chinese Kung Fu fighter who is dressed in the Japanese style in Mario Caiano's Spaghetti Western film *Il mio nome è Shangai Joe/My Name is Shanghai Joe* (1973). Further on, however, the reader finds out that these Chinese wearing kimonos are from Japan (Chinese migrants living

[4] For a similar case of the tension between postmodern and more stake-driven interpretations of cultural encounters, see Clifford 1997, 207–208. For other examples of Italian postmodern literature that concern Chinese migrants, see Zhang 2013b.

in Japan, or Japanese natives?), and that Vittorio may have visited a Japanese, not a Chinese, Buddhist temple (But is this because of Vittorio's own monocultural confusion, or the deception of the Chinese in the temple about their nationality?). No matter how improbable the plot now turns, it does set up the reader's assumption only to challenge it at a later time, in a typically postmodern way. Following a theorization on self-management in the postmodern era by Jean-François Lyotard (1984, 35–36), we may interpret this narrative to be an example of legitimating a knowledge of the Chinese migrant community in Italy not by focusing on the truth claims his novel makes about it, but rather by giving prescriptive utterances about it (e.g., "A Buddhist temple must be Chinese") that allow the reader to doubt and counter this proposition and to draw their own conclusions.

However, for Chinese migrants in Italy who have been vilified by years of media misrepresentation and subjected to institutional rulings that discriminated against their rights to commerce and trade in Italy, Lucarelli's postmodern narratives may well seem too semantically ambiguous, and at times, demeaning to Chinese. When migrants in China need money to travel to Italy, a cop explains in *Febbre gialla*, "then someone comes and assumes the debt, and this someone is the Triad, that is, the Chinese mafia. The Triad puts in money and organizes the trip by first amassing illegal migrants in the holds of ships and then inside lorries of containers" (Lucarelli 1997, 28). As this and similar information is articulated in a quasi-sociological language, however it may be intended to elicit an ironic reaction from the reader, the information's impact on readers of differing cultural backgrounds and social experiences is far less predictable than Lucarelli is inclined to acknowledge. This is not the place to relate the details of Italian media discourses on the itineraries of human smuggling from China to Italy.[5] Suffice to note that Chinese migrants who protested following the screening of *Vendetta cinese* did not share the pleasure that some viewers derive from—in Robert Stam's words—the "display of cultural capital made possible by the recognition of the references" to filmic and novelistic genres, part of the postmodern contract (2000, 305). These migrants were not entertained by the ironic depiction of them on screen. Postmodern pastiche and irony, which very likely were perceived as Italian or non-Chinese by these Chinese migrants, were not claimed by them as part of their cultural repertoire. Instead, engaged in "old-fashioned secondary identification with characters" (Stam 2000, 305) as they were, migrants expressed their disbelief at this exaggerated narrative and went on to demand clarification on the content of the text, that is the misinformation the text performs about them.

[5] On this topic, see Ceccagno and Rastrelli 2008.

Undoubtedly, if we were to follow Fredric Jameson in noting postmodernism as a historical and not merely stylistic conception (1991, 45–6), we must acknowledge how the protest of Chinese migrants was motivated and marked by moralizing statements on *Vendetta cinese.* But I argue that the crux of the problematic representations of Chinese migrants in *Febbre gialla* and *Vendetta cinese*, when analyzed from the perspective of cultural politics, concerns once again the Orientalist discourse in Italian narratives of Chinese migrants. In the final analysis, Lucarelli's book does not engage with the Chinese community in Italy, a literary practice that illustrates Linda Hutcheon's observation that "the postmodern is not transformative in aspiration or totally oppositional in strategy" (1988, 213–4). Like those in Saviano's *Gomorra*, Chinese migrant characters are again being exploited for the benefit of a more nuanced characterization of Coliandro/Vittorio as an inept Italian male cop extraordinaire, the main source of comedy in the two texts. The 1997 edition of *Febbre gialla* uses a Mandarin text, which is a transcript of a document left by the Chinese boy when he flees from the Triad on a motorbike in front of Vittorio's eyes. The Mandarin document, which is unintelligible to an Italian speaker like Vittorio, absolves him from being an omniscient character in the novella. Similarly, Lucarelli indicates the impossibility for him to inhabit a truly Chinese perspective in his narrative by using random Mandarin words from the transcript to indicate dialogues uttered by Chinese migrant characters in the rest of the novel. In the end, the readers know more about Vittorio's inability to effectively engage in intercultural encounters than about any aspect of the Chinese migrant community in Italy. The two narrative devices logically lead Lucarelli to fall back on his Italian perspectives in judging Chinese-related materials and Chinese migrants. As Mark Chu comments on the use of the transcript, "If the discourse of the Other is meaningless, then the Other is denied subject status" (2001, 53).

If Mikhail Bakhtin is right in asserting that "The primary stylistic project of the novel as a genre is to create images of languages" (1981, 364), then the visual contrast between the Italian and Chinese languages in the pages related to the transcript allows the Italian speakers among the novel's readers to experience Vittorio's confusion. But in fact the transcript in the 1997 edition is not wholly intelligible to Chinese readers either, as it appears to feature various font styles in typesetting that correspond to specific systems of classical Chinese calligraphy. In the 2012 reprint of *Febbre gialla*, the Mandarin transcript is replaced by a passage set in traditional Chinese characters that is partially grammatically coherent. The text now translates, in broken Mandarin, the Italian passage that immediately precedes it, which describes the moment in which Vittorio grabs this document in the air, preventing it from being blown away. The text in the 2012 edition remains perfunctory within the

Mandarin-speaking fictional world in the novella, where the Chinese migrant characters inhabit. The text still signifies confusion, for Vittorio as well as for Italian and Chinese speakers. And the text is still postmodern in that it refers to the main text of the novella itself. Lucarelli still does not give voice to the Chinese migrants involved. For the 2012 edition, the writer still withholds dignity to Chinese migrant characters because, to borrow Bakhtin's insight, his "parodic stylization" of the Mandarin text attends neither to Mandarin Chinese's "own internal logic" nor to the language's capability of "revealing its own world" (Bakhtin 1981, 364).

Vendetta cinese goes further than *Febbre gialla* in its use of the Orientalizing discourse by enacting the masculinist dichotomy of whore/Madonna in depicting women, and by way of synecdoche, the supposed dualistic division within the feminized Chinese migrant community. In several scenes in the film, Sui, the Madonna figure, fights a female Triad killer Shin (Rong Mei Li), the whore figure, in Kung Fu moves. When Coliandro is being assaulted by two Triad killers, Sui intervenes and defeats the male killer easily. When the two women confront one another, Sui gradually looses her grounds until Coliandro, having regained his consciousness, triggers his gun. In keeping with the American outlook in his oeuvre, Lucarelli's novel and his screenplays are inspired by the American cop film in which gun fighting and car chasing are de rigueur (Pezzotti 2012, 93). The efficacy of the gun in sealing the victory of good over evil remarks on the men's dominance over women, the West over the East, and the superiority of western technology over Chinese traditional martial arts. The gun's function is similar to that of the electricity used by the Brits to stun Chinese and Asian infidels in the final scene of *The Mask of Fu Manchu* (Charles Brabin 1932). In both films, western masculinity is revitalized through the conduit of a plot involving Chinese.

Given the importance of Coliandro's gun and the narrative centrality he occupies in *Vendetta cinese*, the whore/Madonna dynamics ultimately contribute to building the image of Coliandro as an antihero, a construction typical of the Italian police dramas from the 1990s. While the young cop's survival depends on female enablers and his characterization resembles an ordinary citizen, he remains the representative of institutional morality, with whom the average viewers are supposed to identify, after having been disarmed of their distrust of the Italian state through the film's narrative (Buonanno 2012, 119–121). These depictions of Chinese femininities gain interpretive power only when they are put into dialogue with the Orientalist legacy of gender dynamics between Italy/Europe and China. There is not enough textual evidence in *Vendetta cinese* to suggest a postmodern reading of this gendered cliché, because there is no clear subverting of it to be found anywhere.

Conclusion

Representations of Chinese migrants in the cultural texts examined in this article indicate that the "Chinese mafia" has become a regenerative principle with which to organize cultural debates about Chinese migration to Italy. The ability of this principle to construct new narratives about Chinese migrants in Italy is also evident in numerous television serials which catered to a wide range of viewers when aired on Mediaset and RAI channels, including "Un cinese di nome Gioia/A Chinese Named Gioia" in *Carabinieri* (Raffaele Mertes 2002) on Rete 4, *La moglie cinese/The Chinese Wife* (Antonio Luigi Grimaldi 2006) on RAIUNO, "I tuoi rimorsi/Your Remorses" in *La nuova squadra/The New Team* (Claudio Corbucci 2008) on RAITRE, and "L'invasione cinese/Chinese Invasion" in *Tutti per Bruno/All for Bruno* (Francesco Pavolini 2010) on Canale 5.[6] Saviano's *Gomorra* drew from and inspired these television shows, all of which arguably Orientalize Chinese migrants in order to explore Italy-centered issues or the nuances of Italian characters. Regardless of whether the association of Chinese migrants with the Chinese mafia is reinforced in Italian mainstream media, or contested in the Chinese migrant press, the "Chinese mafia," together with its Orientalizing modality, has been a cognitive cornerstone for addressing Chinese migration to Italy in contemporary Italian culture.

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[6] For references to the Chinese mafia in the news reporting of the 2007 riot in Milan's Chinatown, see Zhang 2013a.

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JAPANESE STUDIES

LITERARY BUSINESS TRIP IN THE LATE EDO PERIOD: JIPPENSHA IKKU AND THE SHINANO DISTRICT AS DOCUMENTED BY TAKAMI JINZAEMON'S DIARY

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Abstract
In her short essay included in a miscellaneous dedicated to travels, the writer Hayashi Mariko argues that individuals leave their houses in order to amuse themselves, to relax from stress, and to discover hitherto unknown places and cultures. An important role in Jippensha Ikku's travels was surely played by the aforementioned motivations but, as I argue, the main reason why the author was induced to travel lies in his constant search for inspiration. By roaming the most remote districts of Japan, he found interesting and inventive ways to pay back the favors received by friends and acquaintances.

Keywords
Jippensha Ikku, travels, Shinano, Advertisement, Hizakurige series, Acquaintances

要旨
十返舎一九を旅に誘う動機として重要な役割を果たすのが未知の異文化との対話であった。それは文学作品の商品化と強い関わりがあった。各地の名所を紹介することにより、読者層の関心と支持を獲得できるからであった。
本稿は、松本の版元高美甚左衛門への訪問を中心にして、十返舎一九の旅に対する態度を明らかにすることを目的としている。

キーワード
十返舎一九、旅、信濃、広告、『膝栗毛』シリーズ、知人

玉くしげふたつにわかる国境
所かはればしなの坂より
Shinanosaka, border between two countries,
Here onward, different the places and different the goods.
(*Hizakurige*, I, 84)[1]

[1] The entire apparatus of quotations from the *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* is from Nakamura 1976.

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1. Introduction

An appreciable amount of Japanese pre-modern literature is devoted to travels. From the Kamakura period (1192–1333) onwards, and even earlier, if we consider Ariwara no Narihira's journey from Kyoto to the eastern provinces, monks and occasional travelers, both men and women, recorded the main places along the route, including food and other attractions. By surveying the entire corpus we can clearly see the evolution and representation of social schemes related to travel, from a period when moving from a place to another was still dangerous, even risking death, to a new historical phase when the countrywide road network was provided, and old routes were connected to develop into what we nowadays call Gokaidō, the five main roads of the country, that, from Edo, connected the main financial and cultural centers of Japan, such as Kyoto, Nikkō, and the like.[2] It was during the Edo period (1603–1867) that travel became a commodity and a pleasure affordable for everyone, and literary productions reflected how funny and entertaining this development could be. These productions were no longer tied to old traditions, inspired by the famous places of poetry (*utamakura*), but, instead, they granted the author's creativity greater freedom of expression, resulting in immense and original literary production, whose nature was primarily secular.[3]

During the peace imposed by the Tokugawa regime, travel outside the country was prohibited; yet both travel and narratives of travel flourished domestically.[4] It was during this period that Jippensha Ikku (1765–1831) released his very successful series of travels accounts, such as the *Tōkaidōchū hizakurige* (1802–09),[5] the *Enoshima miyage* (Souvenir from Enoshima, 1809–10), and the several diaries and fictional travel accounts issued in the immediate aftermath

[2] The five main roads connecting the military capital with the rest of the civilized country were respectively: the Tōkaidō, the Nakasendō, the Nikkōdōchū, the Ōshūdōchū and the Kōshūdōchū. This system of five central highways served the need to bring together many regions, and to foster their interactions.

[3] Yasumi Roan completed in the seventh year of Bunka (1810) a work largely devoted to travel do's and dont's titled *Ryokō yōjinshū* (Precautions for Travelers), whose main purpose was to provide those who traveled with extensive advices.

[4] The long years of peace, together with improved economic conditions, the development of an integrated transport network that increased commoners' needs, the spread of fraternity groups (*kō*), and the practice of alms-giving, according to Constantine Vaporis (1989), all played a part in making travel possible for a wider specter of populace.

[5] The work has been brilliantly translated into English by Thomas Satchell under the title of *Shank's mare* (1960).

of the great fortune arrived at by the *Hizakurige*, which dealt with the adventures of two idiots from Edo, Yaji and Kita. This whole literary tradition was termed *hizakurigemono* after the first successful sample.

Ikku made an extensive use of highways connecting the center to the rest of the country to inform his travel accounts. For this, he travelled extensively throughout Japan, leaving Edo at least once a year in order to visit villages, to report travel time for distances, to judge the quality of the roads and inns, and to describe – often in relation with his plots – towns and locations, with the intention of weaving those data into the adventures of his two main characters. His travel records were then widely read by people willing to make the most of the flourishing printing industry and to follow the two protagonists' ribaldries. It was in this time that many Japanese wanted to know more about their country and to better understand it, and this quest was helped by the great popularity of his masterpiece. The pre-modern readers, namely those who enjoyed reading Ikku's works, and to whom the author referred, had a strong desire for travel, as they strove against being confined to their own localities.

A good part of the almost three-hundred works of Ikku is devoted to travel, and deals with the contrast between the *chihō*, the countryside, and the *chūō*, the center, referring to the city of Edo, and this contrast between Edo and the rest of the country, including Kyōto and Ōsaka, became increasingly evident during this period (Kishi 1963, 124). From the An'ei period (1772–81) onward, but particularly during Bunka and Bunsei (1804–30) periods, we notice how the *gesaku* (playful writings) tended to be countryside-oriented. Nakayama (1979) argued that this tendency originated in the publication of the *Inaka shibai* (The countryside theater) issued by Manzōtei (1756?–1810?) in the seventh year of Tenmei (1787). Farmers' and peasants' attitudes, slangs, and mispronunciations of the common language were often considered hilarious, and this contributed greatly to the widespread reading of these publications.[6] In the immediate

[6] There is a noteworthy quantity of Japanese pre-modern literature which dwells on an alleged contraposition between an individual, or a locus, considered the paradigm of normality – such as the inhabitants of the city, or the *tsūjin*, likewise known as the well-traveled man of the world, whose deep knowledge of brothels enabled him to cope with every situation – and a different entity, whose lack of conformity engendered something considered ironic. Behind this irony reflection was hidden. Shikitei Sanba (1776–1822)'s *Ukiyoburo* (The bathhouse of the floating world, 1810–20) and *Ukiyodoko* (The barbershop of the floating world, 1811–23) brought the strangers to the bathhouse and barber shop and there they interacted, and, by way of their interaction, they provoked laughter in the readers. They likewise allowed strangers to meet and to mingle. Contrary to Sanba, who allowed strangers to come to the cities, Jippensha Ikku sent his protagonists wandering in the countryside in his *Tōkaidōchū*

aftermath of the unpredictable and yet surprising popularity earned with the *Hizakurige*, the author, sometimes of his own accord, sometimes forced by the publisher aiming to profit from the success enjoyed by this type of production, edited works on travels, both long and short. Furthermore, by composing a sequel about the famous duo's travels to Miyajima, Kinpira, across the Nakasendō road, to Kusatsu and finally back to Edo, which kept him busy for more than twenty years, Ikku found new ways to cash in on the popularity of the twosome. At which point, he decided to focus on narrations of short trips, such as the *Roku amida mairi* (A comic account of the pilgrimage to the six Amida, 1811–13), about the six ritual pilgrimages to the Buddha Amida, very popular at the time, or his *Enoshima miyage*, a brief and entertaining description of the short trip of two rascals – no longer known as Yaji and Kita, but as Dontarō and Nesuke – to celebrate the ongoing exhibit of sacred images of the goddess Benzaiten in Enoshima, during the sixth year of Bunka (1809).

Jippensha Ikku's travel production can be divided into two subsections: the works dealing mainly with a hilarious enterprise, with two protagonists who closely resembled Yaji and Kita, with a plot constituted by short stories rearranged and adapted into a new format, written for the consumption of others in the third person, and, secondarily, more serious and introspective accounts. In this case the author happened to be the one and only protagonist, a cultured traveler who enjoyed the view and tended to place great emphasis on the literary dimension of his enterprise, such as his numerous diaries – *Ikku no kikō* (Ikku's travel account, 1815), *Kokkei tabigarasu* (The hilarious vagabond), but to mention a few – deciding to write his diary in the first person singular in imitation of a chronicle-writing poet.[7]

A vrai dire, no matter how prolific the author could be, works about travels were the only part of his oeuvre which gained a widespread reputation, proving the general appreciation by the readership of the perfect mix of entertainment and information. The capacity of this literary sub-genre to sell and to attract a multilayered and varied audience was the principal reason why it invaded the

hizakurige, a representative example of this more imaginative narrative. As Inouye (2007) argues, the development of a modern consciousness in Japan happened by way of challenging the mores of location, and travels had a great influence on this. Despite what many scholars think, Japan's modernity was not imported from western countries, in the immediate aftermath of Commodore Perry's arrival, as it was first felt during the Edo period, when the process was accelerated by urbanization and travels.

[7] Much Edo-period travel writing is squarely self-centered; the individual, more than a pre-ordinated rhetorical tradition, assumes center stage, with realistic observation and individualism that seem to go together.

late Edo publishing world. As the Tōkaidō road – which had a leveling effect, as it put the wealthy and the poor together on the same horse, and strangers in the same bed (Inouye 2007, 191) – the production inspired by this sort of journey had a great grip on society, and readers from whatever class enjoyed its reading, resulting in its great popularity. Economy and wealth were essential for the new professional author, born during the last part of the Edo period, in the aftermath of Kansei reform (1787–93), when the highest ambition of every literate became to publish and to make a living with his earnings. Therefore, no matter how abused a topic or a specific production could be, as long as it was popular, and if it sold well, publishers eagerly welcomed its publication.

According to Hayashi (2002, 46–47), we leave our houses to be able to relax and to get in touch with hitherto unknown culture and places; to Jippensha Ikku, however, undertaking a journey was not simply a delightful activity, it represented a suitable source of inspiration and a way of documentation. Ikku enjoyed observing people in their usual attitudes along the road, allowing their daily life, talks and activities to inspire him like every respectable travel writer. A rather large part of the *entr'actes* described in his masterpiece grew from his thorough and continual observation of the surrounding environment. However, travels had many peculiarities and offered the individual who decided to embark in this sort of activities a wide range of opportunities, ranging from the composition of poetries to, for example, the observation of flowers in full blossom or a crescent moon. Ikku, with his peculiar sense of business, tended to travel across Japan both for his pleasure and for his creative needs, while on the lookout for episodes that might interest his readers. During his life, he regularly left the city of Edo to undertake journeys which could last from one to several months, in order to become acquainted with regions and areas that he intended to describe, or in which he might set new episodes of his productions. Many of these travels were also financed by the publishers and, quite often, by accepting invitations from friends and long time admirers, he mixed business with pleasure. In the long list of journeys registered by Katō (1996), we see in particular how Ikku adapted travels to his means of documentation: in Bunka period, when he struggled with the publication of the *Hizakurige*, he moved to Ise in the second year of Bunka (1805) and then to the Kansai region during the following eighth year (1811), when he was forty-seven, in order to glean information on the Kisokaidō.[8] Three years later, during the eleventh year of

[8] The author intended to visit the Kamigata in order to record and to gather information on the region, that he knew only in part, due to his seven years in Ōsaka. As he recorded in the introduction of the seventh volume of the *Hizakurige*, "although I had lived in Kansai for many years, I spent my time mostly in Ōsaka and headed only

Bunka (1814), he left for the second time heading to the abovementioned highway, and then visited Matsumoto. We have many letters and correspondences exchanged between the author and his acquaintances, recording invitations to which the busy Ikku not always replied, it being impossible to accept all his friends' calls, due to publishing engagements that could not be postponed, in the need to serially produce more than thirty works per year. The list of his travels could be longer, but, this time, I intend to focus on the journey to Matsumoto, in order to look at this city as a case study, with the aim of showing in details the cultural interactions that often arose between host and guest, particularly when the latter was an eminent man of letters, and the former was an amateur composer eager to obtain literary visibility.

2. Ikku's travels to Matsumoto and the Shinano district

Throughout his prolific output, the author went regularly back and forth along the Tōkaidō road: "during these years many times I enjoyed travelling along the Tōkaidō" (*Hizakurige*, III, introduction), as he confirmed in his introduction to the third volume of the *Hizakurige*. The *kyōka* from which the epigraph at the opening of this present article was taken comes from the first volume and represents one of the several poetic spaces related to travel. However, whereas his trips along the coast were quite frequent, Ikku visited Shinano only four times: the first during the aforementioned eighth year of Bunka (1811), then subsequently in the eleventh year of the same period (1814), when he spent a good month visiting the local publisher Takami Jinzaemon, to collect information and details concerning the region and its dialects, as the fifth volume of the *Zoku hizakurige* (Sequel of the *Hizakurige*, 1810–21) – whose narrative was framed by a journey to Shinano – received some negative reviews, due to the author's lack of familiarity with local traditions and languages. His third travel, dated from the first year of Bunsei (1818), shortly before the publication of the first installment of the *Kokkei tabigarasu*, drew on the four months spent at Suzuki Bokushi's house; the fourth and last journey occurred the following year, during the preparation for the second volume of the abovementioned travelogue.

Shinano corresponded approximately to the prefecture of Nagano and, at that time, it was a quite popular and attracting place where, alongside amazing

sporadically to Kyōto". Ikku had to cancel the trip to Kamigata due to a temporary blindness that prevented him from visiting the region. This may be the main reason why the author often recurred to travel guides in the last four volumes of the work, in particular, from the pilgrimage to Ise to the city of Ōsaka.

vistas, religious benefits from merciful deities (Zenkōji) and echoes of classic poetry, the availability of services and amenities was very much appreciated.[9] Commoners nonetheless visited the region attracted by its gastronomic specialties and traditional lifestyle which differed considerably from those in the city of Edo. Ikku's travels to the region, besides having a strong marketing impact, as we will see, had also a strong cultural element, as he documented details of daily life and languages. There were two roads connecting the region to the military capital: Nakasendō, which ran parallel to the Tōkaidō, further inland toward the mountains, and Kōshūkaidō, with a constantly increasing number of commuters moving along them.

When Ikku moved toward Shinano found a place not lacking in any amenities, as the commodification of culture and the economy of consumerism had transformed it into a region easy to live in, in spite of the common feelings toward mountain regions. Conversely, only fifty years before, when other illustrious men of letters visited the district, as we will see with Takebe Ryōtai's journey, it was not so hospitable. Resulting from the beneficial outcomes that Kyōhō Reform (1716–45) had on the countryside, Matsumoto and the surrounding towns increased their population and moved toward a rapid industrialization process. However, it was only in the aftermath of the second important reform of the Edo period, held during the Kansei era (1789–1801), that the overall productive sectors of the region developed, resulting in a general raise of the living standards, economic growth, and cultural flourishing. The resultant consumerism turned many traditional *meisho*, or famous sites, into tourist attractions in which poetic reverberations were enhanced by the availability of material amenities and attractions for all tastes.[10]

[9] According to Shinno (1993, 160), to the people of the eastern part of the country, Zenkōji was probably a sacred location as important as Ise. It had a pedigree dating to the ancient period and occupied a special place in the religious history of the eastern half of the country. Some scholars have argued for a link between Zenkōji and Shinran (1173–1262), when he was exiled to the east.

[10] Further information concerning the *meisho* is available in the large bibliography by Plutschow and Elisonas, according to whom, a place, to be defined as famous, needed "political prominence, ritual status, or historical, poetical and prurient associations" (Elisonas 1994, 260). Hence, for a location to be recognized as a *meisho*, geographical assets had to be complemented and validated by a layer of additional symbolic attributes; a literary, historical, or religious aura was essential to make the transition from "pretty place" to "famous site" (Nenzi 2004, 289); travelers around Shinano could worship at the Zenkōji and enjoy the natural scenery in many places. However, in comparison with the far more visited and famous Sagami, along the coast, with its great number of *meisho*, such as Kamakura, Enoshima, but to mention a few, Shinano

3. Takami Jinzaemon's diary

The author's journeys to Shinano were recorded in diaries or short accounts by a local community of literati who jotted down notes illustrating the reputation Ikku enjoyed. The aforementioned Takami Jinzaemon owned a book shop in Matsumoto; in his diary he welcomes the author's arrival in the city in the eleventh year of Bunka (1814):

> 文化十一甲戌歳七月晦日、江戸より十返舎一九子并門弟花垣両人遊歴に尋ね来る。尤も、著述の膝くり毛、近々出版江戸帰路二及び、木曽路迄、夫より此松本へかかり善光寺通りの趣き出版之もやうなれ共、土地の風俗并言葉なまり等しれかね、遊歴傍来る。
>
> The last day of the seventh month of the eleventh year of Bunka, Jippensha Ikku visited our city accompanied by his disciple Hanagaki[11]. His masterpiece, the *Hizakurige*, which will be soon issued, is along the road that would bring its twosome of protagonists back to Edo, more precisely at the height of the Kiso road. Subsequently, he is planning to take them to Matsumoto, and then to describe the entertaining journey to the Zenkōji. However, he came to make the most of his time and, besides traveling, he intends likewise to learn the mores and the dialects of the region. (Suzuki 2001, 7–8)[12]

The city of Matsumoto, despite its less favorable position, in the inner mountains of Japan, was a lively cultural place; it had many circles devoted to *haikai* poetry and to prose, and its relative nearness to the new cultural center enabled this region to receive from Edo, the pinnacle of Japanese civilization, an extensive range of new trends and popular productions. Takami Jinzaemon did not descend from a dynasty of publishers; he was the first in his family to set up an activity related to publishing. He was born in the fourth year of Tenmei era (1784) and died exactly eighty years later, in the first year of Genji (1864)[13] and, before choosing the name under which we know him, he inaugurated his

could be considered as a newly developing region where the road to consumerism was yet to be fully marked.

[11] Hanagaki, likewise known for Tanbaya, was a carver from Bakurochō who specialized in *ukiyo-e* paintings.

[12] The entire collection of excerpts from Takami Jinzaemon's diary comes from Suzuki (2001). If the source is the same, from now onward, I will not specify its provenience, mentioning between brackets only the page number.

[13] Takami Jinzaemon's old publishing house is still operating and at full production after more than two-hundred years, and, most importantly, it is the house that released Suzuki's work.

publishing activity under the pseudonym of Shimaya Yoichi. In a *zuihitsu* titled *Toshi no otamaki* (The New Year Columbine), issued by his house during the twelfth year of Bunka (1815), he recorded the milieu of the city of Matsumoto at the end of Kansei period, when he set up his book shop. We read:

おのれなりはひに書肆の事の起りハ、父母の家に有し総角の頃より、絵草紙、あるハ物語り軍書様すべて物の本を好みてみる事一壁なりき。

I became a publisher by occupation as, since I was a child, and my hairs still combed in the child fashion, I was fond of reading every sort of books, stories, tales of war and picture books. (186)

此松本二て其頃迄ハ文屋という店なく、皆片店二而わづかに売の巳。大部の本類ハ都而三都へ見物に行人、あるハ偶タマタマ、飛脚等にたくして買うる事なり。こは寛政の年の末頃の事。

Heretofore, in the city of Matsumoto there was no bookstore, and all the shops sold only a small quantity of books, of a certain type. For the most part, books were indeed brought by those who travelled across the three main cities, who were able to buy them, and to serve as occasional couriers. This situation did not change as far as the end of Kansei period. (250)

Takami Jinzaemon opened his book shop during the ninth year of Kansei (1797). Heretofore *jōruribon* and *kusazōshi* were the only texts available in Matsumoto. Fortunately, the situation rapidly evolved and, in a few years, precisely during the Bunka period, we read the following excerpt:

夫より近々文花ハ盛りになりて、毎度江戸名古屋表へ仕入二行。近年学びの道大にひらけ而、先ハ此市中に予が店書肆一家を成せり。

Lately the culture is in blossom, thus we often trade with Edo and Nagoya. Recently the Way of Learning became accessible to everybody willing to study, and I set up the first bookstore in the city. (251)

It was during the Bunka period that the cultural policy held by the *han* of Matsumoto delivered the first benefits, which led to an increase in the demand for literature and culture in general. The city of Matsumoto was thus included as integral part of the communication net which linked Edo to Kyōto and Ōsaka, passing by Nagoya and other neighboring centers. The inhabitants of the city enjoyed poetry and novels, and measured themselves, from time to time, against the composition of prose and poetry.

The volume from the *Zoku* edition that is framed by the journey to the city of Matsumoto is the eighth, released during the fourteenth year of Bunka (1817); through its pages the author represents this place as rich and splendid as Edo. So far, this was not the first meeting that occurred between Ikku, who turned fifty at the time, and the young publisher. During the first year of Bunka (1804), in fact, Jinzaemon made his way to Edo to buy stocks and products for his bookstore. It was during this short trip that they met for the first time.

おのれ、江府へ文化甲子之年、店書物類并諸品仕入二行。其節通油丁蔦屋重三郎同道二而、両国万八楼二書画会江行。彼一九子并京伝子、外馬琴・画工菊丸等面会す。

I travelled to Edo during the first year of Bunka to buy books and other stuff for the store. On this occasion, by accompanying Tsutaya Jūsaburō from Edo Tōriaburachō, I participated in a composition meeting, in Ryōgoku, at the Manpachirō inn, and had the chance to meet his disciples Ikku, Kyōden, Bakin and the painter Kikumaro. (10)

In the first year of Bunka Jinzaemon visited the city of Edo, and met for the first time the local community of literati and painters. The Tsutaya Jūsaburō mentioned in the excerpt, who drove Jinzaemon around the city and to Ryōgoku, was the son and heir of the great publisher, who died at the age of forty-seven, during the ninth year of Kansei (1797). Jinzaemon's account continues:

わけて一九子と厚意二成。夫より吉原及び所々遊ぶ。吉原次郎庵といふ医者、其外通油丁［書林］村田や治郎兵衛［ひざくり毛版元一九作］、菊丸子などと角丁之中まん字や二遊ぶ。并大門通つたや［茶や］所々遊歴之内ちぎり置。

I got particularly close with Ikku, who was very kind to me. With him I visited the Yoshiwara and many other places: we went to encounter the doctor Yoshiwara Jirōan, and, most importantly, the publisher from Tōriaburachō named Murataya Jirōbee who releases the *Hizakurige*; then we celebrated with Kikumaro and many others to the Manjiya in Kadochō. Besides that, right when we were in a tea house called Tsutaya, in Daimondōri, he promised me to visit Matsumoto. (12)

Thus, in the aftermath of a joyful night, during which the happy fellows visited several *maisons de rendezvous*, the publisher invited Ikku to visit Matsumoto, but the author could not honor his promise. Jinzaemon had to make his way back to Edo another time before Ikku could live for Matsumoto:

其後、文化七年同仕入用二出府する。其せつも又々ねんごろに往来。漸々今年来る。

Subsequently, I left my province heading back to Edo for the same business, during the seventh year of Bunka (1810), and therefrom I went back and forth every year. He [Ikku] will finally pay all my visits back this year. (*Ibid.*)

The author, as we noticed by the list of travels to Shinano mentioned before, visited for the first time the region in the eighth year of Bunka (1811), but he could honor his friendship duties toward Jinzaemon only in the eleventh year of the same period (1814). His stopover was a long awaited event: Ikku was a real celebrity and his love for the countryside in general, being himself a native of Suruga, in Shizuoka prefecture, made him even more popular among the readers who lived far away from the principal cultural and political centers. The *Hizakurige*, with its description of villages and remote towns, was considered a form of production close to readers' tastes, which, as we may notice by the words recorded in many introductions and postfactions, held in due consideration the readership opinion.[14] Suffice it to say that the travel to Matsumoto itself was due to suggestions from the audience, for the author's observant eye and acute sense of hearing presented an untruthful description of the local dialects.

However, the journey across the countryside was not only due to the author's need to record it. It played a way more practical role in Jippensha Ikku's creations. We read that several individuals, in the hopes of convincing him to represent the places they loved the most – perhaps their inn or teahouse – acclaimed Ikku during his trip to Shinano.

新田町大圧家長丸、是ハ彼新田通り之趣よりみのち橋など之景色、膝くり毛二かかせんとのねぎ事二而兼而文通いたし、待居ル。

At the height of the town of Arada, Osamaru from the Daishō thought that, instead of the main road to Arada, the panorama from Minochi bridge would be worth viewing, and, since he has been in correspondence with Ikku for few months in the hopes to convince him to introduce these locations in his masterpiece, he waited for him. (14)

Events like this were the reason why Ikku's *chef d'oeuvre* established such a widespread reputation among the readers. The author not only drew inspiration from travels; he occasionally even accepted suggestions from passionate

[14] Many episodes of the entire work were introduced by popular acclaim, with the audience who demanded to read Yaji and Kita in true-to-life situations, such as the episode of the *sakayaki*, presented in the fifth volume of the *Hizakurige*, for, as Ikku registered, readers were eager to see the two protagonists at the barbershop.

fans. Osamaru's dream, however, came true in the ninth volume of the *Zoku* edition, when the publisher decided to present his illustration of Minochi Bridge (figure 1), while his two *kyōka* were presented as *gasan* in books seven and eight respectively.

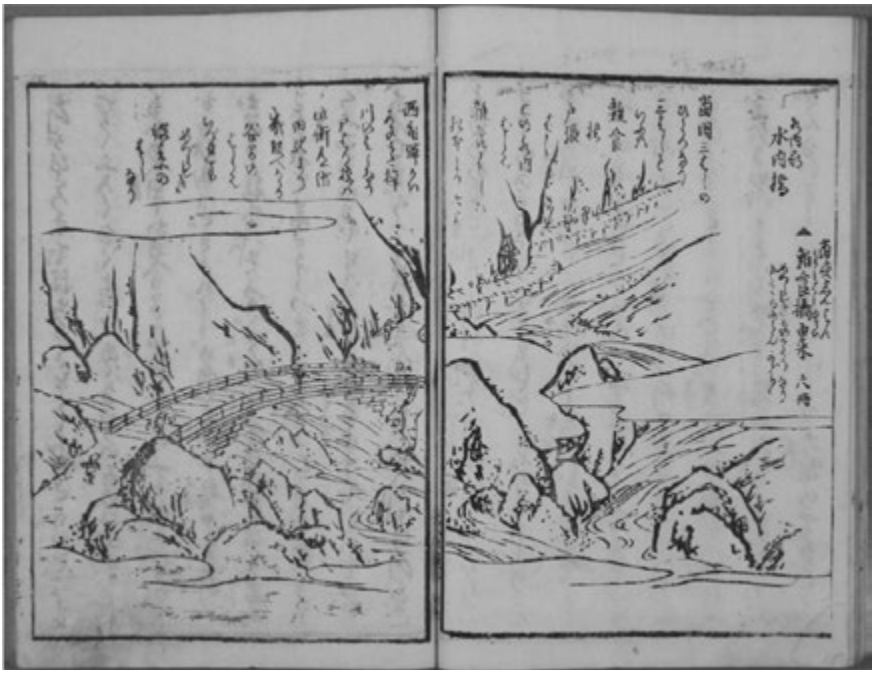

Figure 1. Minochi Bridge.

山ふかき木曽路ながらも名物のくしのはをひく往来の人
Travelers, as numerous as teeth of combs,
But not those renowned as special product from the Kiso road,
In the deep of the mountain.
(*Zoku hizakurige*, VII, 1, 6*u*)[15]

[15] The entire collection of excerpts from the *Zoku hizakurige* comes from the text held by Waseda University Library, issued from the seventh year of Bunka (1810) to the fifth of Bunsei (1822), by Murataya Jirōbee, Eiyūdō, and others publishers who shared the publication of the work in the immediate aftermath of Murataya's bankruptcy.

たち杉はますぐにのびて明王の利剣のなりにみやしろの山
Cedars, standing as swords,
Growing high and straight,
Akin to sharp sabers of wise lords.
(*Zoku hizakurige*, VIII, 2, 16*u*–17*o*)

These *kyōka* were signed by Osamaru and represented Ikku's personal expression of thanks for the generous hospitality received from him. *Kyōka* were one of the most useful and yet practical means of communication: their authors were generally chosen among Ikku's entourage and close collaborators.[16] However, the first real exchange of favors between Ikku and Jinzaemon begun a few years before, during the Bunka period, when a collection of *senryū* composed by poets from the city of Matsumoto, the *Kokin inakadaru* (The Rustic Barrel, a Collection of Ancient and Modern Comic Verses),[17] was issued; its introduction was drawn up by Ikku who pointed out: "the publisher came and asked me to write this introduction" (181). *Kyōka* and introductions were often used as means of exchange of courtesy between men of letters.

Ikku's trip to Shinano represented a rare and yet important occasion for several aspiring literati to attain visibility and to prove their skill at composing to one of the most popular authors of the time, who eagerly welcomed suggestions and contributions from local circles to introduce in his works. Although many people invited the author, he spent most of his sojourn at Jinzaemon's residence. The publisher thus wrote: "Jippensha and Hanagaki sojourned at my place, and everyday many painters and poets waited for them" (18). The author took part in several banquets, such as the gathering organized at the Seihōin,

[16] Ikku's attitude to use his friends and acquaintances as poets was already clear in his *chef d'oeuvre*. In particular, book five, released during the third year of Bunka (1806), presents *gasan* signed by the members of three different local groups of amateurs, namely those from Owari, Suruga, and Mikawa. It has been demonstrated that, such a show of solidarity towards small groups of *gens de lettres*, often confined in isolated villages in the countryside, required a corresponding pecuniary compensation that the members of the circles paid to Ikku in exchange for some literary visibility in one of the most popular work of the time.

[17] This collection of *senryū* was selected and edited by the first comic poet from Matsumoto, Inakabō Sōji; he played an eminent role in developing this genre in his city, and the abovementioned *Inakadaru* was meant to mark his consecration as man of letters. Unfortunately, he died shortly before the completion of the work, in the second year of Bunka (1805), assigning his disciples for the duty to end the collection, which presents no official date of publication, although many scholars argue that it was likely to have been released not that far from Sōji's death.

where he encountered the Misuzu *renga* circle that lavished him with food and, of course, a conspicuous amount of *sake*. Everyday composition meetings were organized in Ikku's honor, in several places, and the number of admirers and experts gathering for him increased day by day, with Jinzaemon who even noted their names in his diary: among them, he mentions Kiyosaburō Somendo, Atsumaru, Matsunari, Idemaru, Kimaru, Mitsuru, and Okazumi.

Ikku's trip to Shinano was not entirely devoted to celebrations, gatherings and banquets; as stated before, his real intention in engaging this month-long-trip was to collect information on the district. Hence, the three of them engaged in a trip around the most celebrated parts of the area, starting with the Manganji in Kurio:

> 八月十一日　新田より折々むかひ来る故、己も同道二而三人行。長丸方二一宿。夫より栗尾満願寺へ行く。雨ふる。待もふけの馳走種々。明朝御隠居此頃よりかこひの持山の内茸狩。松茸沢山二とり出す。両人執持。さておのれは其せつ小笹原様十五日御着の処、兼而御宿わり被仰付あれば、種々用事故花垣子同道二而先へ帰る。一九は廿日頃迄遊ぶ。
>
> The eleventh day of the eighth month, I met Ikku and his disciple coming from Arada and decided to join them so that we became three. We spent one night at Osamaru's place and then moved to the Manganji in Kurio. It rained. Many people treated us with food. The day after we went mushroom hunting on the mountain with a hermit and they collected many of them, especially the pine mushroom. They were both really good at it. At this point, as mister Kozasawara was supposed to visit me the fifteenth day of that month, and, since I had previously booked a room for them but also due to many other affairs, I decided to leave with Hanagaki in advance. Ikku enjoyed that place as far as the twentieth day. (24)

The Manganji temple in Kurio framed the narrative of the eighth volume of the *Zoku* edition: at the end of a very detailed descriptions of the thirty-six temples comprising the complex, and of Jūhachimachi no saka which, according to Ikku, led the travelers straight on top of the clouds, surrounded by a forest where old pine trees and ancient Japanese cedars grew wild, while the pure water gushed from the rocks, the text reads:

> 方丈をすこしはなれて、いんきよ所のある所へともなひてゆく。ここは見はらしのよき所にて、当山の隠寮なり。かけひの水にてあしをあらひ、ざしきへ打とほり見るに、小庵なれどもきれいにして、庭などもよく［後略］
>
> They headed together to a place akin to a hermitage, quite far from the hut. As it was very suitable for panoramas, someone decided to turn it into a hermitage on top of the mountain. After washing their feet with the water of a bamboo

pipe, they passed through the *zashiki*, and realized how little this place was, but still it was very pretty. Also the garden was very good [*Omissis*] (*Zoku hiza-kurige*, VIII, 2, 32*u*)

Judging by the author's words, the narrative is very close to Jinzaemon's description of the location, with the hermitage occupying central stage. Here an old man of about sixty years, akin to a hermit, perhaps Jinzaemon's father, draw direct inspiration from the real man who showed Ikku his mercy, and who was rewarded with a walk-on in his work. However, the fourth of April, Jinzaemon recorded the following message:

此節、栗尾山観音開帳。七日より十六日迄。当年江戸より一九子、栗尾山れいげん御法の花といふ新板ゑ入本作し来ル。

Meanwhile, they are holding an exhibition of the sacred images of Kannon in Kuriosan. It goes from the seventh to the sixteenth day. This same year, Ikku will prepare a new illustrated book titled *Kuriosan reigen minori no hana*, especially for this event. He plans on sending us a copy directly from Edo. (32)

It goes without saying that the good hospitality Ikku received during his short visit at the Sanctuary of Kurio was paid back with a brand new publication, dwelling exclusively on the exhibition held there. Ikku's *cadeau* was published in the thirteenth year of Bunka (1816), and it was titled *Shinshū Kuriosan Kanzeon minori no hana* (The flowers of the Holy Law of the Kannon from the Mount Kurio in Shinano), in three volumes, decorated by the expert brush of Katsukawa Shuntei (1770–1820). Ikku's travels across Shinano continued with a pilgrimage to the Mizusawa yamadera, where he spent three or four nights. Along the road, the number of admirers grew richer and, in addition to the already large group, Jinzaemon reports that: "many of us visited Mizusawa, including my wife and my mother" (28). Subsequently they moved toward the Hofukuji and the baths in Asama.

其後、植原保福寺へ重宝の松二行。隠居家へ登り遊びて帰宅。此前二浅間湯へ一日行。

Then we headed to the Treasure Pine of the Hofukuji in Uehara; we went up to the hermit's house to celebrate and then went back home. But before that, we decided to spend one day at the baths in Asama. (31)

Ikku left Matsumoto in the thirtieth day of the eighth month, after a good month spent in the city, surrounded by a constant audience of admirers and friends. He moved back to Edo with plenty of memories and souvenirs of the warm hospitality that required to be rewarded.

4. Senbetsu and payments

As mentioned before, Ikku's journey across the countryside was not only an unrepeatable opportunity for local men of letters and amateurs to attain a widespread reputation by captivating the author's sympathy, in the hopes to be rewarded with a place in his masterpiece, or a very brief quotation among the *gasan* that decorated its illustrated apparatus; it constituted likewise a very rare if not unique event in the literary panorama of Shinano, a former remote province whose kaleidoscopically variegated cultural network was striving to obtain some literary visibility and to officially acquire a fair reputation. From the Edoites' perspective, Matsumoto and the entire Shinano region appeared as a remote land, dominated by wild mountains and nature – to pass through which almost five hundred tunnels were dug (Karaki 1986, 152) – and whose geographical proximity to the new political center did not bring any particular benefit. Conversely, at Ikku's arrival, he found a culturally lively milieu whose literary tradition had developed since a very long time. Takebe Ryōtai,[18] more than fifty years before Ikku, in the thirteenth year of Hōreki (1763), traveled to Matsumoto and spent twenty-eight days in the city to discover that there was plenty of literary circles, with eminent and prestigious figures, unfortunately still unknown, such as Momohatatei and Tomoume (54).

Before Ikku's return home, Jinzaemon added a further paragraph to his diary:

> 所々より餞別集る。在町合せ五両斗凡出来る。悦び、又栗尾さして別るる。池田［中や瀬左衛門／角や源之助］其外仁熊村などへ添書認遣ス。追々所々二滞留二而越後辺遊暦いたし、十月二入、江府へ帰宅之由書状来る。
>
> Parting gifts gathered from several places. We barely collected from the neighboring villages an amount of five *ryō*. With great pleasure we headed to Kurio and then we parted. I handed him a presentation letter for the village of Ikeda [to Nakaya Sezaemon and Kadoya Gennosuke], and for the group of Nikumamura. He said that, little by little, he intends to stop by several places,

[18] Takebe Ryōtai (1719–74), likewise known as Kitamura Hisamura, was the second son of the head of the Kitamura *han* in Hirosaki; he moved to Kyōto at the age of twenty-one, abandoning his parental household, and travelled then to Edo where he formed a *haikai* circle. However, he is way more renowned as Takebe Ayatari, popular writer of *yomihon* (reading books), such as the *Honchō suikoden*, and painter under the nickname of Kan'yōsai. He subsequently joined Kamo no Mabuchi's disciples and his Kokugaku School.

> to visit Echigo,[19] and to come back to Edo at the beginning of the tenth month. At which point, he will inform me of his return with a letter. (34–35)

In order to celebrate his departure, inhabitants and men of letters from Matsumoto regaled Ikku a parting gift of five *ryō*, not much of a large sum, especially considering that, as one of the leading writers of the period, he could afford to travel. This served to wish him a safe trip to Echigo, the neighboring region where the author intended to travel around in search of inspiration and sources of documentation. *Senbetsu*, or partying gift, was a common practice among those who gave hospitality to eminent travelers or friends, and Ikku, being a great voyager, was used to get money for his return trip. It goes without saying that five *ryō* were not a sum that could enable any individual to cope with a long journey, as the one the author intended to undertake, but they represented a kind show of affection if not a sign of thanksgiving for the good company and the entertainment donated to a usually isolated district. Jippensha Ikku often received friends or supposedly disinterested benefactors' gifts. As mentioned before, the most part of the poets of the fifth volume of the *Hizakurige* were unknown, and, most importantly, they did not belong to Ikku's entourage. Next to each name reported at the bottom of the composition, the author recorded its provenience, and we can point out three groups: Owari, Mikawa and Suruga. The former had a special status and it was numerically larger than the latter two; its leader was a man of letter named Kinometei Dengaku, who, according to Tanahashi (2008),[20] met Ikku during an *utaawase* and helped him collect verses to adapt in the fifth volume of the *Hizakurige*. Verses from the abovementioned section of the work aimed at introducing and promoting amateur circles from small villages along the Tōkaidō road, where Ikku had some acquaintances, as happened with his friends from Matsumoto. In both cases, as witnessed by Jinzaemon's diary, and by a letter that the author himself sent over Dengaku, he received a parting gift.

[19] Jippensha Ikku visited Echigo three times: the first immediately after his sojourn in Matsumoto, the second in the first year of Bunsei (1818), while visiting his friend Suzuki Bokushi, and the third and last in the ninth year of the same period (1826). According to Ikku, Echigo was mainly the land of the so-called *shichi fushigi*, the seven wonders, and its purpose in travelling across that region was mainly secular.

[20] The letter, dated from the twenty-first day of the first month of the third year of Bunka (1806), was presented in Takahashi's article, and it is property of the University of Nara. The first scholar who deciphered its meaning was Professor Nagai Kazuaki.

5. Quotations as mean of thanksgiving

As we saw, Ikku visited the Shinano district and the city of Matsumoto, where he took advantage of his friend's hospitality. The most part of the advertisements in his productions, therefore, are reserved to this benefactor and host: firstly, Ikku presented three *kyōka* by Jinzaemon in the *Zoku hizakurige*:

丸山といふハ今井の四郎兼平の城跡なりといへば
What you call Maruyama is nothing but the vestiges of Imai Shirō Kenpei's castle (*Zoku hizakurige*, VII, 1, 1*u*–2*o*)

はや春のおしよするかとしろ山の雲のはた手になくほととぎす
Sparrows singing on top of the clouds in Shiroyama;
Perhaps they think spring is coming soon. (*Zoku hizakurige*, VIII, 1, 17*o*)

鶴尾山松尾寺薬師
色かへぬ松尾寺なれはおのつからここにちとせをふるき霊場
Matsuodera Yakushi in Tsuruoyama:
The temple that keeps unchanged its colors,
In solitude an old hallowed ground stands here from centuries. (*Zoku hizakurige*, VIII, 2, 11*u*–12*o*)

Ikku's gratitude toward Takami and his activities did not conclude with this; during the thirteenth year of Bunka (1816) Jinzaemon headed back to Edo in order to accomplish other duties. According to his account, he left Matsumoto in the twelfth day of the fifth month and, after worshipping at the Myōgisan,[21] one week later, he reached Edo accompanied by Moji no Fudehiko, a poet from the Mizusu group. Unfortunately, when the next day they visited Ikku's household, he was absent.

此せつ旅行二而留守也。内方の衆いろいろともてなし、又酒汲楽しみ篭にのりて吉原仮宅浅草山の宿なるふしみや方江行。
When we visited him he was not home. All the people of the house, servants and maids, treated us very kindly; they poured us some sake and we really en-

[21] Constantine Vaporis (1995) emphasizes the role of pilgrimage to explain how commoners came to engage in long-distance journeys. Because of their sacred nature, he argues, religious journey were not subject to the restrictions that the government placed on the movements of travelers. Thus, it is no surprise that a business trip, such as Jinzaemon's one to Edo, debuted with the worship at the Myōgisan, as, by taking advantage of this loophole, commoners used pilgrimages as an excuse for recreational journeys.

joyed the atmosphere, then we took a palanquin and headed to the Yoshiwara quarter, more precisely to a *karitaku.*[22] We finally made our way to Asakusa, at the Fushimiya inn. (48)

Three years later, during the autumn of the second year of Bunsei (1819), Jippensha Ikku left his residence to go back for the third time to Matsumoto, kindly treated by his old friend Jinzaemon, in whose diary we read:

今日十返舎主外二供壱人入来、滞留する

[Twelfth day of the ninth month] Today Jippensha visited me in company of another friend; they are going to spend the night here. (*Ibid.*)

十返舎扇面など認。八ッ頃より一九子同道、平瀬村［小松平十郎之隠宅へ行］。月晴るる夜九つ時帰宅。

[Thirteenth day of the ninth month] Jippensha chose the paper for the fans. Around the eighth hour, I left with him and his disciple for the village of Hirase [we visited Komatsudaira Jūrō's hermitage]. We made our way back home around the ninth hour of a night of shining moon. (49)

十返舎発枚。浅間へ送る二付、母并内行。［中略］夜四つ頃別れ帰宅。

[Fourteenth day of the ninth month] Jippensha left. When I accompanied him to Asama, my mother joined us. [*Omissis*] I went back home at night, around the fourth hour. (*Ibidem*)

As the first excerpt clearly demonstrates, Ikku visited Matsumoto in order to partake of a composition meeting, in addition to his usual documenting activity. Materials collected during this brief staying became a part of the aforementioned *Kokkei tabigarasu* – specifically the fifth year of Bunsei (1822) issue – a *gōkan* dedicated to Ikku's solitary journey, in which he even mentions Takami Jinzaemon, referring to him as "an old friend of mine."[23] In addition to that,

[22] The *karitaku* was a provisional housing, built within the red light district, or in its immediate proximity, where inns, teahouses and brothels could have a temporary accommodation in the aftermath of fires, floods, and other cataclysms.

[23] *Kokkei tabigarasu* was created as a patchwork of several topics, with the travel being the leitmotif of the entire production. It is composed by twenty-six volumes, irregularly published along more than twenty years, and each of them presents a narrative framed by the description of a specific region; for a detailed list of contents see Katō 1996, 131–32. The work thus stands as a long record of annotations of weird and

perhaps the most important of the advertisements that the author could have possibly done to Jinzaemon with his literary output came with the thirteenth volume of another *gōkan* titled *Muda shūgyō kane no waraji* (Golden straw sandals for a useless study trip, 1813–33), which reports an illustration representing his publishing house with the inscription "Keirindō" and the variety of items sold, "Chinese and Japanese books" (figure 2). In his desire to promote his friend's activity, Ikku prominently adopted the use of the visual image, a true-to-life picture which constituted the best promotion to Takami's activity and the expression of the author's feelings of gratitude.

Figure 2. Takami Jinzaemon's shop.

singular things that Ikku observed during his journeys, and that struck his curiosity. To create long lists of *mezurashiki mono*, of rare things, as the author said, represented the real essence of the *Tabigarasu*, which stands far from Ikku's typical comic production. The author *de facto* felt the need to break away from his old style by writing a work in which the humor was deliberately not based on dialogues, and, furthermore, without characters that could stand as Yaji and Kita's imitations. We thus see that the real protagonist of the work is the author, who, by limiting the dialogues, wanted to put himself under the spotlight, and to enter a way more private dimension.

Conclusions

What I just recorded may apparently seem the description of a good friendship liaison between one of the mainstream *gesaku* writers and the publisher of a small city in the countryside, but it clearly shows many cultural dynamics which constituted the very foundation of the circulation of book during the late Edo period. We should not forget that this period, especially in the immediate aftermath of Kansei reform, besides being characterized by a culture mainly popular in its contents, was likewise renowned for the increasing importance placed on the countryside, whose number of potential users, or buyers in our case, could decree the success or the failure of a literary production. It was therefore Ikku's intention to attract those readerships to his masterpiece by involving directly some of the most notorious local literati.

During the first part of the Edo period, those who shared interests in literature and poetry were not that numerous, therefore, authors like Ikku, or as Takebe Ryōtai, as we saw, by travelling across the rural areas of Japan, were likely to find nothing more than a limited amount of circles, whose members entirely belonged to the upper class, and were totally devoted to composition. The massive development of the late Edo literary production leveled the differences between centers and countryside and brought to a general flourishing the entire productive panorama of small cities, especially when they were in the vicinity of the main centers.

As we noticed, the sojourn of perhaps the most renowned and yet – *stricto sensu* – popular literate of this period constituted an unrepeatable and rare event for both the author and the readers; the former was sure that, by spending a good month in Matsumoto, his rising popularity would grow richer and, by mentioning names of characters met along the road, or even by portraying publishing houses or locations particularly popular among the citizens of that specific part of the country, he would have met their interest and, at the same time, ensured a rise in the sale of his masterpiece. The popularity of Ikku's oeuvre was built on this presentation of places familiar among a certain readership; the collaborative attitude between the author and the audience constituted a part of his immense success, ergo one of the reasons why the *Hizakurige* enjoyed such a great reputation. As a professional writer, Ikku realized that he would have rendered the local space in order to capture the hearts and the imagination of the reading public, and this was the principal need that brought him to travel across the country.[24]

[24] Other reasons why Ikku's narrative was so well appreciated lie in the prurient component of Yaji and Kita's adventures, which tickled the readers' curiosity. Secondarily,

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one curious aspect of the *Hizakurige* is the financial status of the twosome: Yaji and Kita are poor but, although they never work, they do not run out of money, and they magically have enough to survive. Their poverty represents an easy to relate to aspect. In addition to that, we should mention the narrative conducted in the third person: as third-person characters, Yaji and Kita are available to the readers and impersonal to be shared by many. By quoting Inouye (2007, 194), they are empty place holders and movable existences. In terms of social class, too, Yaji and Kita are presented with an ambiguity that makes it impossible to position them precisely on any social mapping. However, their very likeable essence lies in their pretentiousness to be this or that person.

CROSSING THE BORDERS OF THE PHENOMENAL WORLD: BUDDHIST DOCTRINE AS A LITERARY DEVICE IN KŌDA ROHAN'S EARLY WORKS

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Abstract
This paper attempts to present the literary personality of the novelist and exegete Kōda Rohan (pseudonym of Kōda Shigeyuki, 1867–1947) in the cultural context of modernity.
Behind the façade of old-style literatus, Kōda Rohan strives to seize the opportunity to reform the concept of fiction in his own way. His goal is that of proposing an alternative model of fiction that is distinctively unique in comparison to a sheer imitation of Western culture, particularly in its romantic stances. The main device he employs to pursue his goal at an early stage is a coherent and thoughtful reliance to the view of the doctrinal foundations of East-Asian philosophies as a literary theme. Rohan's case is exemplary in that his wide reliance on (and almost constant allusions to) pivotal Buddhist concepts as literary technique offer an allegory for the new significance that its author attributes to the creative process behind writing fiction at a time of reform and change. Moreover, in his early work, Rohan's preoccupation over presenting a view of Romanticism more coherent with his own's cultural asset was also at stake.
By means of a thorough rethinking of the broader significance of key philosophical concepts in Rohan's early fiction, I shall present concrete examples to back up the view that the heavy reliance on Buddhist doctrine informing Rohan's first attempts at literary creation conceals an eminently modern interpretation of the main stances of Japanese pre-modern culture, which testifies to the author's relevance as a modern thinker.

Keywords
Koda Rohan, *furyubutsu*, romantic mysticism, buddhism; Lotus Sutra, fiction.

要旨
本稿では、幸田露伴の作品と仏教との関わりを考察する。特に、『法華経』、『般若心経』など、東アジアの大乗仏教の主な経典から、小説家露伴はどのようなモチーフを取り入れ、それらの経典からインスピレーションを受けて彼の初期小説にどのような女性像が描かれたのかを検討する。更に、露伴の他の著作、エッセイなども考慮に入れつつ、『風流佛』という小説の譬喩的解釈を示す。『風流佛』の主人公珠運の美の探究と、その探求を妨げるかのような珠運の初恋というプロットの展開が、著者の思想の変遷においてどのような意義を持つかを検討し、

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坪内逍遥などが小説の革新を唱えていた過渡的な時期の文壇に露伴はどのような貢献を与えようとしていたかを明らかにする試みである。

キーワード
幸田露伴、風流仏、浪漫派、仏教、法華経、小説。

1. The literary context: Rohan's personal view on the reform of Japanese fiction in the 1880s

As Donald Keene suggests in his well-known and acclaimed volume, 'Dawn to the West', Kōda Rohan, along with Ozaki Kōyō, was one of the more active writers in the last two decades of the 19th century (Keene 1999, 150). The onset of Rohan's fervent literary activity follows after the tumultuous first decades following the Meiji restoration which infused new life in the country's cultural milieu; particularly after the foundation of the first literary circle of any distinction, the Ken'yūsha, in 1885 (Keene 1999, 119–121), by a group of young writers which, although soon to be overshadowed by another popular trend, that of the Naturalist school, enjoyed wide popularity in the first few year after its constitution. The literary renewal of this era continued throughout the 1890s, marking an especially fecund period of literary flowering. A passionate call for a renovation of fiction was also being advocated by seminal critics such as Tsubouchi Shōyō and writers such as Futabatei Shimei, who did not belong to any mainstream movement per se. Newly introduced ideals of the novel, variously inspired by European movements, particularly Romanticism, Naturalism, and the psychological novel, had left young writers the difficult task of establishing a new identity for Japanese literature, pushing those who dared venture in the realm of new trends towards a vital rethinking of the overall value of literature, particularly prose fiction, in the new cultural context of modernity.

Although sometimes regarded as an old-style literatus, Rohan had gained a momentum as a prominent writer of new fiction already by the time of his debut novel *Tsuyu dandan (Drops of Dew)*, which had appeared serially in the magazine *Miyako no hana* in 1889.[1] The novel's setting in America matched

[1] Rohan's literary debut features a Western contemporary setting and a simpler style but shares with the work that will be our main focus, *Fūryū butsu* 風流佛, published later the same year, a strikingly similar outlook as It emphasises the power of romantic love (*koi*, Kurita 2007, 382–391). It also shares the link between sensual love, compassion, and the fundamental quality – or character – of enlighten beings, see Kurita (Ibid., 408). Rohan maintains the philosophical trend towards Buddhism and Christianity throughout the whole first half of his literary production (Okada, 2012),

the novelties of the Meiji era with a distinctive literary quality, reminiscent of Asian masterpieces such as the Chinese short stories collection *Jingu qiguan* (*Stories of marvels, past and present*), conjuring up in both readers and critics alike the impression that the author was most likely deemed to be one of the best candidates to the sound reform of fiction advocated by critics.[2] Nevertheless, with the publication of *Fūryū butsu* (*The bodhisattva of sensual love*), shortly after his first novel had registered such a considerable success, it may seem that Rohan had already decided to place himself against the flow. Although the setting is, formally, contemporary, as far as factors as crucial as the style, content, and literary techniques employed are concerned*, Fūryū butsu* seems to sum up a manifesto against current literary trends. The new novel was very well received too, but it was distant, in concept, from both his previous work and, seemingly, that of any of his contemporaries. The choice of a style resembling *gesaku* fiction, the plot, and the several quotations from earlier literature mark the beginning of Rohan's struggle to preserve the values of the Chinese and Japanese tradition against the ever spreading Western influence that had characterised the first two decades of modern literary history. Rohan maintained his general cautious view towards acritical substitutions of old models with new ones well into the latter part of his writing career, touching upon the subject in dedicated essays, such as *Shinkyū zen'aku shō* (Brief survey over the good and bad of old and new, February 1927).[3]

Being virtually the sole Meiji writer to survive WWII, it is possible that indeed Rohan felt at some point compelled to assume the role of Meiji Japan's living legacy in view of the circumstances and the public's expectations. It is also true that Rohan, compared to some of his contemporaries, has been underrepresented in Western literary studies; this could be ascribed to the difficulty of his prose, as Rohan's prevalent mode of expression at an early stage lied in a pastiche moulded after Chinese and Japanese classic and, even in late works, the author displayed a mastery command of such 'classical' and obscure stylistic models that now seem totally anachronistic. A closer look at what has been

including short stories more overtly concerned with, and influenced by, Western literary models, such as *Taidokuro* (Encounters with a Skull), see Tanaka (2015, 89–124).

[2] As early as 1942, five years before Rohan's death, Yanagida Izumi, in his noted biography, stated that Rohan had been one a precursor (*senkūsha*) of the new novel of which Shōyō had been the first and foremost theoretician, confirming Rohan's canonization (Yanagida 1942, 70)

[3] Now reprinted in the supplementary volumes of the *Complete works*, see Kōda (1980, 296–298)

termed the literary output of a 'nostalgic', nevertheless, suggests evidence that the respect professed by Rohan for Chinese and Japanese antiquity had not, in any case, prevented the author from innovating the concept of 'fiction' with original choices of content. Even more significantly, the key themes that Rohan derived from an apparently faithful imitation of classical models, and which constitute the recurring elements of his poetics, upon closer examination, do reveal an architecture that sensibly hints at presenting the author's original re-interpretation of Japan's cultural past in view of his perspective as a modern writer. The highly personal interpretation of even the more classic of themes in Rohan's prose clarifies all the implications behind the façade of 'classicist' and 'idealist' with which Rohan seemed to mask his intents. The influence that his early efforts exerted on writers such as Higuchi Ichi'yō (1872–1896) — one of the first modern Japan's first woman writers —, the Bungakukai (Literature club) circle, and writers as diverse as Tanizaki and Mishima should also not be overlooked. At an age in which a wave of unthoughtful nationalistic reactions to two decades of intense Western influence was raising, it may well be the case that Rohan, sensing the perils that laid ahead for the future of *belles lettres* amidst this cultural turmoil, had come to the conclusion that Japan's new fiction would emerge not from reshaping Japan's classical literature in form or content, but by implying a new, much broader outlook. The most striking example in this respect is precisely *Fūryūbutsu*: an exploitation of covert and overt references and recurrent allusions in the novel helps to detail how Rohan's narrative incorporates key elements of Buddhist doctrines into a main plot devised to entice his readers into a fictional world pointing to quintessential truths.

Rohan himself sums up his attitude towards classic themes in one of the most noticeable essays of his mature writings, the short article *Koten shingan* 'Classic texts for modern eyes' (April 1921),[4] perhaps his most lucid statement about the need to re-read the cultural heritage of Japan in a distinctively new fashion. The essay opens with an advocacy of the need to approach ancient works such as *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* not so much for their relevance *per se*, but to offer a precise interpretative key in view of one's sensibility and experiences as a contemporary man. This particular essay is illuminating in that the author seems to clarify here an outlook which, in his early works of pure fiction, is an implied — not an overtly declared — perspective. In other words, Rohan mantains the attitude of consciously choosing old themes and styles not because of a lack of knowledge or a rejection of newly introduced Western models, but out of a perceived necessity to seize the opportunity to introduce them to a Japanese public

[4] 古典新眼, see Kōda (1954a, 349–353).

in the light of a new *forma mentis*. Several speeches and essays that the author delivered for the general public testify to his involvement in making the legacy of Japan's cultural heritage, that would have otherwise slowly disappeared, accessible. The novelist clearly sensed a modernity of tradition, and sensitive critics have, although rather inconsistently, already been questioning details in the interpretation of Rohan's literary stature as a nostalgic *persona* just because of his fondness for classical literature. Given the author's insistence on classical themes and styles as natural part of his cultural asset as a modern man and a Japanese man, this narrow interpretation of the author's significance in Meiji literature needs to be reconsidered.

2. Crossing the borders of reality: Fūryū butsu as an allegory of the nature of literature and the truth beyond appearances

As anticipated above, then, the main question here is how Kōda Rohan employed Buddhist doctrine as a literary device in *Fūryū butsu*.[5] The novel features Rohan's peculiar *haibun* style and complex, sometimes puzzling, phraseology, but, unlike his earliest work, it has a Japanese setting, centring around Shu'un — a sculptor — and his love for Otatsu, an unlucky orphan he meets in the village of Subara, on the lively Kiso road. The setting is somehow consistent with Edo style literature, but the story unravels in current times, as the reader can hint by statements such as that Shu'un has made up his mind to seek artistic perfection so that "Westerners with alabaster noses like statues" will not look at his country in contempt. This initial remark, paired with a quotation from a sutra that we shall comment upon shortly, implies a rejection of the supposed intellectual superiority of Western view on the value of art, the kind of stance promoted by the *Bunmei kaika* movement throughout the first decades of the Meiji period. Thinking of Rohan's novel as a pamphlet against such trends should help to clarify the concerns that guided the author to pick up one such subject. It should also not be overlooked that this novella actually marks the onset of Rohan's 'master craftsman' cycle, and is one of several stories centred on artisans (*meijin shōsetsu*). Just a few years before the publication of the work, in 1887, Ernst Fenollosa (1853–1908) had received from the Japanese government the task of registering Japanese (particularly Buddhist) art treasures, and his lectures on the topic were changing the Japanese's perception of their cul-

[5] For the original text of the novel the volume 1 of the *Collected works* (Kōda, 1952, 25–78) may be consulted. Keene (1999, *appendix*, 1227–1228) also offers an outline of the novel's plot.

tural and artistic patrimony. Fenollosa was strongly inclined towards a biased, 'orientalised' interpretation of the peculiarities of Japan's artistic heritage, ascribed to a supposedly homogeneous "world art" category (Faure 1998b, 771–772). The landscape here resembles closely what was happening in the world of prose fiction, where the debate over whether the newly imported Western models would supersede Japanese's customs of writing was still heated. The supposed "mysticism" (Donath 1998, 1059) with which Rohan reinterpreted such a pivotal theme as that of the 'living Buddha' images[6] that had shaped Japanese aesthetic perceptions several centuries earlier could as well be alluding to his particular way of interpreting the stances of Romantic literature. The novel reaches its climax when the sculptor confesses his love for Otatsu, anticipated by a vision he had had after their first encounter, in which she manifested as an emanation of Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion, while Otatsu, called away by her long lost father, flees the village without an explanation, and Shu'un, enraged, carves a statue of the Bodhisattva Kannon in her image. The statue is dressed at first but then he removes layer upon layer until it becomes a nude statue of the Bodhisattva. In a rage, when he hears Otatsu is to marry a certain nobleman, Shu'un almost destroys the statue, but, at that point, it miraculously comes to life and the pair ascends to heaven.

Despite the lack of realism — evident in an apparently unexplainable ending for a story with a contemporary setting — the novel had an immense impact, and it encompasses key themes upon which the author will continue to rely throughout his literary career; namely, the close intertwining of reality and art, the potential of sensuality as a driving force in spiritual awakening, and the focus on the individual's personal growth. The choice of Kannon as an icon is deeply rooted in a longstanding tradition of cults centred on one particular figure, that of the so-called Nyoirin Kannon,[7] and the author lends his consid-

[6] The 'living Buddha' tradition alludes to a particular function of worship of Buddhist statues which took place around the end of the Heian period. According to the records, these were mostly wooden carved icons that the aristocracy ordered for private services, in a somewhat smaller size than the statues for public display in monumental complexes, where the execution, generally denoting a notable craftsmanship, was aimed at presenting the deities as both "lovely and living presences" (Mimi 1991, 330). As Rambelli points out, these particular sculpture were either put on display solely at particular times or even, at times, not displayed at all, and served "as a bridge between the visible and the invisible" (2002, 273), very much like, we shall see, the character of the living sculpture in Rohan's *Fūryū butsu* represent the innermost essence of the artist's creative quest for beauty.

[7] The Nyoirin Kannon is a major figure of Japanese ancient religiosity, closely resembling the 'Jade woman'. Her cult, developed in Shingon centres from a *topos* of

erable talent to make the character of several popular accounts into a subject fit for a modern, romantically oriented work of prose fiction. The result could startle the less educated audience, yet the author has to be credited for the coherence with which he tries to adapt an old narrative scheme to a new cycle of "narratives of enlightenment" (*godō no bungaku*, Donath 1998, 1059) which is, in fact, a new genre, wholly experimental in nature. The author would later develop his reliance on medieval sources into an even more complex architecture in another work involving the idea of an icon, *Dogū mokugū* (*Clay doll, wooden doll*, 1905).[8]

Chinese import, exerted considerable influence over local creeds in Medieval Japan. Perhaps the primary source of this religious and literary theme is a letter in which Eshin-ni, the wife of the Japanese patriarch of the Pure Land (*Jōdō*) school Shinran (1173–1263), reports how the prelate had secluded himself in retirement for hundred days to meditate on Kannon after a dream in which the deity had proclaimed that she would serve as a 'jade consort' to the monk in order to convert his carnal lust into the path, and even swore that she would eventually lead him to the pure land of his creed. Shinran is also credited as having been persuaded that the times were ripe for the cult of this particular bodhisattva, initially a secret doctrine, to spread popularly. The monk had also reportedly had a vision of Kannon as prince Shōtoku taishi towards the end of his retreat. Another medieval account, the *Kakuzenshō*, compiled by Kakuzen around 1198, also reported that the 'honzon' (true object of devotion, that is, the deity of the meditation mandala) would turn into a Jade woman, in order to become intimate with the practictioner, granting him mundane fulfilment and eventually leading him to the pure land of Sukhāvatī (Faure 2003, 206–207).

[8] The novel has been studied by Donath (1998, 1061–62). This latter work appears heavily influenced by the Yogācāra (*yuishiki* 唯識) school of thought, and postulates an inseparable interrelatedness of reality and the otherworld on a grosser perception, the 'three existences' (*sanze* 三世) of past, present, and future, but on a subtle, ultimate level, the three realms (*sangai* 三界) of desire, form, and formlessness, which arise simultaneously in dependence of the mind's hindrances, defying the boundaries of time. According to this conception, deluded desire, particularly lust, stems from ontological ignorance (Faure 1998a, 34). This doctrinal background could account for Rohan's consistent choice of key themes to question the nature of desire and sentiments. *Dogū mokugū* also introduces the theory of parallel worlds in which the living and the dead live close to each other which is exactly the same background in which Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939), another novelist of the new Romantic trend, depicted several otherworldy characters. Rohan's obsession with animated statues of female characters also closely mirrors the structure of Kyōka's first novellas, always centered on the dynamic relationship — a common pattern in Noh theatre also — between a male human and a female ghost. Although Rohan's female characters lack the characteriza-

Rohan's involvement with Buddhism has indeed attracted the attention of many, and it is not surprising that the work, centred on the search for aesthetic ideals that the main character embodies, should contain many references to the *Lotus Sutra* (*Hōkekyō*[9]), one of the main Buddhist scriptures of East Asia. The way in which Rohan arranges these references around the main plot, however, starting from the very titles of the paragraphs, seems to have elicited, let alone one recent study[10] little attention up to these days. Let us consider the novel's final scenes:

> He jerked his body around to face the other direction. Then he heard someone speaking, sobbing. As the object of such doubt, such disgust, I have no reason to live. If it has come to this, I would rather my useless life were ended by your hand. The voice was indeed coming from the wooden image.
>
> How bizarre! Could it be that my own soul has entered the image of Tatsu I carved out with such single-minded devotion? Say it's an obsession that now rules its host: then it's a monster seeking to prevent Shuun from severing all bonds of mutual love and returning to the beginning before I went astray. Come, come! I'll show you the acme of an icon sculptor's skill: both love and regret sliced into shreds!
>
> So saying, he stood up arrow straight, hoisting high in his right hand a hatchet: the downstroke could cleave iron. But her own figure seemed replete, virtually overflowing, with nobility, compassion, love. In truth, her naked body looked so moist and tender that were he to cut it, warm blood would gush forth. How could he, brutally, ogre-like, visit upon her a cruel blade? His resentment, his anger, both froze: ice over flame.
>
> The hatchet slipped insensibly from his hand. Unable to cut himself free of an unrequitable love, this man could not hold back his tears but gulped them down as his writhing body fell prostrate with a thud. That instant, a crashing sound, as of something falling: was it descending from Heaven? Erupting from Earth? Pearl white arms warmly encircled his neck; a cloud of hair fragrantly caressed his cheek. With a gasp of astonishment, he shot a rapid glance: it was

tion as *femmes fatales* that informs Kyōka's works, these features clearly account for a consonance of interests, if not a mutual influence, of the two authors.

[9] 法華経.

[10] Here I am referring to the careful analysis of Rohan's religious conceptions and its reflections on fiction recently brought forth by Okada (2012). The quotations from the *Lotus Sutra* that I shall comment upon shortly are here discussed with reference to the slightly different order in which Rohan enlists the 'ten aspects' (see below) quoted in the second chapter of the Sutra, and the author reveals the rationale behind the pairing of each Lotus sutra's quotation in the novel's title paragraphs with their contents (Okada 2012, 241–247).

> her as she used to be back then. Tatsu! Shuun returned her embrace and kissed her on the forehead. Had the image come alive, or had the woman come to him? The question itself is naïve; any reply, deficient (Kurita and Lipson 2005, 151).[11]

This excerpt is definitely the most moving scene of the work. It also seems the last truly realistic passage of the novel, the last momentum in which the reader is still legitimately entitled to think that the supernatural events narrated may be in fact the product of Shu'un's imagination. The novel actually plays with the subtleties of a very diffused view in medieval Buddhist understanding that postulates that there is no real distinction between reality and fantasy. This has accounted for Rohan's fame as an idealist, but actually, it is possible to give a different interpretation of even the most refined allusion to traditional doctrines that he sprinkles his novella with. The search for the truth represented by artistic beauty, but fostered, in actuality, by passion, makes Shu'un's love struggles an allegory of the quest for the nature of reality, or "suchness" (*tathātā, shinnyo*[12]), mirroring the novelist's effort to discover the true meaning of art (another nuance, alongside that of 'desire', of the ubiquitous term '*fūryū*' featured in the novel's title). Shu'un's creation, once animated, embodies Rohan's fascination with a 'transcendental, ideal woman' (*kū no onna*[13]) that recurs in several of his fictions. In fact, Rohan's preoccupation with human emotions, and love in particular, is reflected upon in essays delivered at different stages of his career such as *Jō* (*On emotions*, 1916) and *Ai* (*On love*, 1939).[14] In his

[11] For the original text see Kōda (1952, 76–77).

[12] 真如.

[13] 空の女.

[14] Both essays can be consulted in Kōda (1954b, 76–83 and 1954c, 664–669 respectively). In the 1916 essay Rohan questions whether sensual love too can be an expression of a broader compassion (a theme clearly implied in the Nyoirin Kannon's cycle), and although reticent to assimilate the two, the novelist clearly admits that the former can be a temporary step toward developing the latter. In wording his thoughts on the matter, Rohan uses rhetoric phraseology as "is therefore love just lust, and lust just love" (*jō soku yoku ka, yoku soku jō ka* 情即慾か慾即情か, Kōda 1954b, 77), mimicking the most noted passage of the *Heart Sutra*, to which we shall return shortly, or "in any case, it is unmistakably a truth that there are, in this world, schools of thought oriented towards valuing sentiments: according to these views, it is a gross mistake to either suppress desire entirely, as compassion will never develop fully, just as it is wrong to advocate that 'beings of this world are all our children' [a quotation from the *Lotus Sutra*] if one does not somewhat restrain from passion" (何にしても、情を信仰する情宗のこの世に存在して居ることは事實である。慾を殺さざれば情亦た圓滿ならずで、慾を退治しないで「一切衆生即是吾子」と叫ぶに至

first novel dealing with the above subject, the passage where the bodhisattva manifests closes with an obscure statement and the next section, the epilogue, opens with the words "Always, but always, Heaven answers the call of love," and relates that the sight of the bodhisattva is experienced by several people in the surroundings, and each time she is seen, the love bodhisattva displays a slightly different look. The concluding chapter of the work is titled "the true aspect of all phenomena" (*shohō jissō*[15]). On general terms, this refers to one of the true aspects of reality in Buddhist epistemology: the voidness — or, in other words, interdependence — of all phenomena. Classic conceptions do stress two aspects of the nature of reality, voidness of the self, and voidness of all phenomena. Rohan's novel apparently refers to the latter, whilst in an essay on another sutra — to which we shall return shortly — he also touches upon the speculative intricacies pertaining voidness of the self. The title of the epilogue in *Fūryū butsu* points to a key passage in the *Lotus Sutra,* which is crucial to a full understanding the of the complex poetics underlying the novel. In its ending, the narrator relates how the creation of Shu'un is "beyond the slightest question (…) the myriad manifestations of a single Goddess of Enlightened Liberty, never mentioned in the Tripitaka: the very same one that Shuun carved."[16] The author seems therefore to suggest that there is indeed a truth even beyond the Buddhist (or any given) canon: i.e. that the passionate pursuit of the protagonist creates something more valuable than scriptures. I would at this point not hasten to conclude, as some do, that the creation evoked by Shu'un is so readily identifiable with the Kanzeon who manifests in thirty-three different aspects in one of the most famous chapters of the *Lotus Sutra* (Donath 1998, 1065; Okada 2012, 241–242). Rohan's text states that the goddess is actually not to be found in any given scripture *(issai kyō ni mo naki*[17]), just like Shu'un's falling in love complements his artistry in ways impossible in a traditional course of study, and, although drawing extensively from the living Buddhist images'

っては、それ危ない哉である） Kōda 1954b, 83. Rohan's heroines are a concrete embodiment of these speculations as they are endowed with the power to rescue the male characters by means of their love (Okada 2012, 322).

[15] 諸法実相. Burton Watson (1993, 24) in his classic translation of the scripture renders the compound "the true entity of all phenomena," while Gene Reeves (2008) translates the expression as "the true character of all things," see below the full quotation of the passage from Reeves' translation.

[16] "I should give her up completely and at once – renounce all worldly attachments and desire!" (Kurita and Lipson 2005, 150). 我(われ)最早(もはや)すっきりと思(おも)い断(た)ちて煩悩(ぼんのう)愛執(あいしゅう)一切(いっさい)棄(すつ)べし (Kōda 1952, 75–76).

[17] 一切経にもなき.

canon, Rohan's novel is, ultimately, a new work, based on a unique idea. Its reference to tantric praxes, which were also part of the mainstream Buddhist thought, emphasizing the role of sensuality and often centred around the mystic union (yoga) of male and female deities to signify the union of method (*hōben*,[18] *upāya*) and wisdom (*chie*,[19] *prajñā*), nurture and embellish Rohan's poetics, securing to his novel a multi-layered perspective. It is relevant that one of the most noted 'living sculpture' of Japan, the Ichiji Kinrin sculpture, enshrined at a temple in Hiraizumi (Iwate prefecture), and associated with the Shingon tradition in which Rohan also professed an interest,[20] depicts Vairocana (Dainichi nyorai) as the principal deity of the *Vajradhatu* mandala (*Kongōkai*[21]). In this case the deity is male, but it is noted since ancient times as the Dainichi of Human Flesh (*Hitohada no Dainichi myorai*[22]) because of its lifelike appearance. (Mimi 1991, 331). The choice of one such popular subject as that of an animated statue in Rohan's novel may therefore have sounded less bizarre than it is to contemporary readers, and the links to the philosophical speculation over the ineffability of the ultimate nature of things, beyond words and reasoning, unveils, given the context, a precise interpretation of the significance of literature. So the author deliberately chooses not to close its novel in an ordinary, conventional fashion, be it the definitive separation of the two lovers, or their still achievable, although improbable, reconciliation. If Rohan's novel is assumed to be an allegory of the search for a new meaning of art – a concern that had preoccupied the Meiji literati up to that point – its message becomes rather clear in spite of the elusive language, and seemingly old-fashioned choices of themes. The plentiful quotations from the *Lotus Sutra* yield an important key to the overall meaning of the story. Just before Shu'un's attempts at destroying his creation, the sculptor, sighing, laments his inability to exercise detachment towards the woman with which he has fallen in love.[23]

[18] 方便.

[19] 知恵.

[20] Many essays mention Shingon Buddhism, among these we have the record of a speech (Kōda 1951, 312–331) that Rohan delivered for a public of youngsters concerning Shingon's founder Kūkai's contribution to literary criticism, in which the priest is defined an important figure in regards to Japan's immaterial heritage and development of thought (*shisō* 思想) . One of Rohan's later novels, *Shin Urashima Tarō*, is also sprinkled with tantric imagery, mantras, formulas and rituals (see Donath 1998, 1066–1067).

[21] 金剛界.

[22] 人肌の大日如来.

[23] 是(これ)皆一切経(いっさいきょう)にもなき一体の風流仏、珠運が刻み

Shu'un's cry advocates detachment from *bonnō*[24] and *aishū*,[25] the desires and cravings of the deluded mind that characterizes the human condition in the realm of cyclic existence. It can be said that sensual love is the most concrete embodiment of such cravings and desires. However, the love that Shu'un feels for the heroine acts as both the drive to save her from her fate and his urge to seek aesthetic beauty. These could hardly be considered two worldly concerns, and, in addition, these are the two factors that ultimately enable him to actualize, in the closing passages of the narrative, a transfiguration of reality into the otherworld that highlights the writer's creative process.[26]

3. A (hidden) course in Buddhist Epistemology: the holistic view of Buddhist Doctrine as a literary device in Rohan's early fiction

By implying that his poetics stem from the doctrine of the *Lotus Sutra*, Rohan seems here to allude to a distinctive vital aspect of the epistemological foundation of Mahayana Buddhism. Postulating the fundamental unity of samsara and nirvana is a distinctive medieval interpretation of Buddhist doctrine, a hallmark of East-Asian Buddhism, subsumed under the motto *bonnō soku bodai*[27](worldy desires are enlightenment). Given the many overt references throughout the novel, it is likely that Rohan refers also in this case directly to the *Lotus Sutra*, which he must have thoroughly studied, since his family, before turning to Christianity, had belonged to the Hokkeshū, a school in the tradition of Nichiren. The Nichiren school is the Buddhist sect that, along with the Tendai school, maintains the *Lotus Sutra* as the highest expression of Buddha's doctrine. The motto, declined in a number of variants, such as *bonnō soku hannya*[28] (the deluded mind is the transcendental wisdom), *shōji soku nehan*[29]

たると同じ者の千差万別の化身(けしん)にして少しも相違なければ (Kōda 1952, 77–78).

[24] 煩悩.

[25] 愛執.

[26] The allegory concretely points to the creative process of the writer himself, Rohan, who in an article completed a few months after Fūryū butsu, stated "Prose is fiction, but good prose consists of the collected shadows of reality" (quoted in Donath, 1998, 1059).

[27] 煩悩即菩提. From this terminology, found classic scriptures such as the *Yuimakyō,* germinated pivotal interpretations of medieval Buddhist conceptions, see below.

[28] 菩提即般若.

[29] 生死即涅槃.

(the cycle of life and death is nirvana) and *ketsugō soku gedatsu*[30] (the binding karma is liberation) sums up, in most medieval interpretations, the pinnacle of Mahayana thought; the concept is, in fact, repeated in many scriptures such as the '*kanshūsei*'[31] section of the *Vimalakirti-nirdesa Sutra* (*Yuimakyō*[32]), and the first fascicle of the *Visesacintabrahma-pariprccha sutra* (*Shiyaku Bonten shomonkyō*[33]). It is, in truth, the doctrinal basis that assigs a prominent role to the transformation of ignorant desire, as in the tantric traditions that Rohan also knew. It is surely not a coincidence that the novelist actually named the ten sections of *Fūryū butsu* after the ten factors, or aspects, that constitute ultimate reality; this is referred to in a specific passage of the *Lotus Sutra* which is well worth quoting:

> 止舍利弗。不須復說。所 以者何。佛所成就第一希有難解之法。唯佛與佛乃能究盡。
>
> But this is enough Shariputra. No more needs to be said. Why? Because what the Buddha has achieved is most rare and difficult to understand. Only among buddhas can the true character of all things be fathomed.
>
> 諸法實相。所謂諸法如是相。如是性。如是體。如是力。如是作。如是因。 如是緣。如是果。如是報。如是本末究竟等。
>
> This is because every existing thing has such characteristics, such a nature, such an embodiment, such powers, such actions, such causes, such conditions, such effects, such rewards and retributions, and yet such a complete fundamental coherence.[34]

This passage lists ten aspects (*nyoze*[35]) or factors of suchness (*shinnyo*[36]), the nature of reality: Rohan also lists all ten, one for each chapter's title of his novel, even though these titles apparently have no direct connection with the unfolding of the main plot. In the passage quoted above, the *Lotus Sutra* also clarifies how these ten factors constitute the "true aspect of all phenomena" (*shohō*

[30] 結業即解脱.

[31] 觀衆生.

[32] 維摩経.

[33] 思益梵天所問経.

[34] The English rendering of this famous Lotus Sutra passage is that of the recent translation by Gene Reeves (2008, 76). For the original text from Kumārajīva's Chinese translation of the sutra I consulted the digital Taishō tripitaka by the University of Tokyo, see http://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/T0262_.09.0005c09:0005c10.cit (last consulted 15/06/2016), cfr. T0262_.09.0005c11-13 in the digitized archive.

[35] 如是.

[36] 真如.

jissō[37]). It is noteworthy that this nature, or suchness, to which this particular sutra refers as the character of all things, is precisely what the other scriptures define ultimate "emptiness" (*kū*,[38] Śūnya), the crux of the Madhyamika philosophy. Assigning the novel's ten chapters according to the ten factors then confirms Rohan's intention to recount a journey in search of greater truths. The fact that scriptures deem this ultimate nature of reality as unfathomable is what prompts the author to leave the novel unfinished by conventional standards.[39]

So the closing passage of the chapter before the last is actually rooted in an apophatic vision of reality. In the doctrinal interpretation offered by the *Lotus Sutra*, the nature of reality can be "understood only between Buddhas" (*yui butsu yo butsu nai nō kū jin*[40]); even the translation of the Sutra's title in Kumārajīva's version, *Myōhō renge kyō*,[41] alludes to a transcendental principle of reality (*hō*[42]) considered "ineffable, unfathomable" (*myō*[43]). This dharma beyond any description is the reality conventionally described as the "true aspect of all phenomena," and yields a particular interpretation of what, in the broader context of Mahayana thought, is the true meaning of emptiness, corresponding to the level of the ultimate truth (*paramārtha satya*). According to one edition of the novel, the assertion – probably expunged in most editions due to its obscureness – with which Rohan closes the passage of the work right before the epilogue, "this is truly the most unfathomable thing, the mystery of all mysteries,"[44] clarifies to what extent the author is indebted to the complex doctrinal framework that supports his prose fiction. In other words, drawing a pattern typical of the romantic European Bildungsroman, Rohan engages in a type of novel that exalts the search for a spiritual higher dimension, a distinctive feature of the East-Asian tradition of thought and manner of writing.

[37] 諸法實相.

[38] 空.

[39] Kōda (1952, 77), see above. One edition of the text — digitized by Aozora's library, see http://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000051/card2710.html (last consulted 15/06/2016) — closes the passage of the chapter before last with the additional remarks *gen no mata gen, maka fushigi* 玄(げん)の又(また)玄(げん)摩訶不思議(まかふしぎ), see the comments below.

[40] 唯佛與佛乃能究盡.

[41] 妙法蓮華経.

[42] 法.

[43] 妙.

[44] See above note 29.

Let us now make a comparison with another aspect of traditional epistemology to which Rohan is drawn. The words that the author employs to describe the transfiguration of the deluded desire and feelings of the protagonist of his novel,[45] closely resemble a metaphor that Rohan employed in a commentary on another important Buddhist scripture, the *Heart Sutra (Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya, Hannya Shingyō*[46]), titled "The deeper meaning of the *Heart Sutra*" (*Hannya shingyō dainigi chū*,[47]August 1890). In it, Rohan glosses the famous verse "form (matter) is not different from emptiness, emptiness is not different from form"[48] in this fashion:

> 然し誰も自己の色身のために色々様々のことをなして、錦襴緞子を纏はせたがり美味佳肴を食わせたがり、此正體不明のものに執着して堅く我身ぞとおもひ込み、之を随分可愛がりてやるなり。噫、即ち此處が顛底妄想、悔を後來に殘す種子なり。此四大所成の身は、恰も水を堅めて氷となしたる其氷の堅くあるうちの如く果敢なきものなり。氷というもの、其堅きが氷の相なり。而して氷は堅きといへる相を有すれど、其相は永遠不變のものにあらず、元來寒氣によって成りたる堅相なれば、一朝春風の吹くときは其堅きといへる相は空となる。それと同じく我等が赤肉團は、五十年か六十年か暫時の間、因縁によりて業果によりて人の相をなし居れど、元來四大の和合によりて成就したるもの故、無常の風來り生・住・壞・空の順序に追はれて、いづれへか露伴も飛散り、誰も彼も飛散る。されど中々如是悟つては居られず、毎日毎日只今も昨朝も矢張り此色身を愛し、此色身の為に我等の働き居ること、實に殘念心外の事なり。
>
> But anybody is keen on doing things for this very body of flesh, like wanting to have it wrapped up in a fashionable and pleasurable attire, let it eat and drink deliciously; we contrive a strong conviction that this body, whose real nature stays unclear, represents our self, and we hold it pretty dear. Ah, this is it — the source of the fundamental delusion, the seed from which all future regrets are bound to spring out. This body, made up of the four elements like ice made of crystallized water has, in itself, no other intent than to stay hard for as much as it lasts; its only characteristic being that of being solid. And although a block of ice does possess a solid nature, it is hardly the case that this nature can be labelled eternal or unchanging. The sheer truth is that since it is the product of cool air, this apparently solid block is bound to vanish one morning when the spring breeze rises. Likewise, this mortal coil made of flesh and bones, let it

[45] "His resentment, His anger, both froze: ice over flame" (Kurita and Lipson 2005, 151).

[46] 般若心経.

[47] 般若心経第二義注, see Kōda 1958, 79–103. See also Mulhern 1977, 62–67.

[48] *Shiki fu i kū, kū fu i shiki* 色不異空空不異色.

> be for some fifty or maybe sixty years, has solidified into a human appearance because of causes and conditions, of actions and their consequences, and yet, since this is originally the coming together of the four raw elements, it is subject to impermanence, compelled by the cyclic rhythm of becoming, staying, unravelling, and disappearing. One day this man, Rohan, will fade away, nor it will be different for any other person in this world. And yet, it is very difficult to realize this truth [*nyoze*], and we hold dear this body of flesh every day and every moment, undertaking any kind of endeavour on behalf of it, a pitiful thing indeed, regrettable beyond words.[49]

This, in Rohan's words, is the reflection on the illusory nature of the self-inspired by the Buddhist scriptures. The essay offers a unique interpretation of what is perhaps the most noted Mahayana scripture, striving to focus on the general meaning of spiritual enquiry on the journey to awakening. Once again, Rohan reveals an eminently modern mentality, sustained by the kind of spiritual endeavour which could be summarized in the phrase "do not seek to fill in the footsteps of the men of old: seek what they sought." His main concern is to accomplish the goal of deriving a single meaning out of the *Heart Sutra*, a meaning valid beyond all traditions, perhaps even religions, rooted into actual experience. It is far beyond the scripture's literal meaning, and Rohan encourages the readers of the sutra to go beyond the words and straight into the actualization of the experience of the truth that the sutra signifies, in the firm conviction that the sages of the past have strived to synthesize in words and parables a truth that in reality cannot be expressed through such means. The similes and parables of the scripture just foster the urge to actualise this truth through reflection. Reasoning is part of the experience, although it does not subsume all of it.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, as early as the 1890s, Rohan already tackled consistently in his fiction the main concerns of East-Asian philosophical speculation, and he encompassess such speculations freely into his poetics. His novel, *Fūryū butsu*, could be interpreted as an allegory of the search for a new fiction, and, on more general terms, as a unique interpretation of the Romantic ideals stressing the power of imagination and the artist's quest for passion and beauty. At the same time, Rohan's carefully devised architecture of allusions and quotations yields multi-layered interpretations, testifying to his greatness as both a writer and a

[49] Kōda 1958, 86–87.

thinker. The opening of his novel, "Thus I have heard," implies a substitution of the faith in Buddhist doctrine that characterises the spiritual path with the faith of the carver's character, Shu'un, in his *shishō* (master)'s teachings. The sculptor thus represents a Japanized version of the Romantic hero, while his female counterpart is an even more complex entity, inspired by a mix of popular religious beliefs, high doctrines, and yet fundamentally a literary creation. The outlook on Buddhist doctrines that Rohan relies upon in his works reveals an eminently modern mentality, and he uses it consciously to build the poetical core of his first novels, making them all the more compelling. Moreover, Rohan's syncretism of eastern and western's spiritual traditions — as well as his sound enquiry on human nature — is evident in the fact that the story of Shu'un and Otatsu seems to bring together the Buddhist ideal of compassion with the Christian conception of piety. Many elements in Rohan's early fiction trace back to Western notions, which were also slowly being incorporated into modern Japan's cultural asset. A man of his time, Rohan turned to his own cultural tradition to draw further inspiration beside European Romanticism. The elements he derives from Buddhism, Daoism, as well as any other tradition in his original works are not an end but a means. The author, relying freely on his vast erudition, clearly sticks to his role as a novelist. His craft as a philologist and exegete does not prevail, at least in this first phase, over that of the man of letters. Clearly, ever since his early works such as *Fūryū butsu*, the writer strives to promote art for art's sake, trying to restore the dignity of Japanese modern fiction, which was undergoing a process of change that was no longer reversible. More than any answers, he seems to raise questions for his readers. Therefore, reading *Fūryū butsu* — as the English translators note in the preface — we can ask ourselves the question this Meiji man is addressing to the benefit of posterity: can imagination liberate the spirit in a putatively "enlightened" era, in which freedom is stifled?

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(DE)CONSTRUCTING BORDERS: JAPANESE CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE AND TRANSLATION IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

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Abstract
In this paper I try to focus on the concept of "untranslatability" and to apply it to the works of four representative Japanese contemporary writers: the globally renowned author Murakami Haruki (b.1949), but also scarcely translated authors such as Toh EnJoe (b.1972), Tawada Yōko (b.1960), Mizumura Minae (b. 1951). Employing the theoretical approach of the most recent developments in Translation Studies – especially Emily Apter's works – I try to put into discussion the importance of translation and the value of concepts like "national/global/border-crossing" in the context of contemporary Japanese literature.

Keywords
Untranslatability, translation, Emily Apter, Murakami Haruki, Toh EnJoe, Tawada Yōko, Mizumura Minae,

要旨
本稿では現代日本文学の代表作家の作品における「untraslatability」（「翻訳不可能性」）という問題について検討する。分析対象はグローバルな作家の村上春樹（１９４９）及び円城塔（１９７２）、多和田葉子（１９６０）、水村美苗（１９５１）であり、これら四人の作家の小説やエッセーに現れる「日本現代文学の翻訳の可能性」や「グローバル文学」と言う概念である。翻訳学理論家エミリー・アプターの「untraslatability」を巡る理論を用いて、翻訳が現在の文学ではどのような意味を持っているのか、また「越境文学」、「世界文学」、「ナショナル文学」と言う概念は日本現代文学の流れにおいてどのような価値を持っているのかを考察する。

キーワード
翻訳不可能性、Emily Apter、村上春樹、円城塔、多和田葉子、水村美苗。

1. Tracing borders through (un)translation

The cultural processes of border-making, border-crossing, and border permeability in contemporary societies have been broadly analyzed in recent years. In an ostensibly borderless globalized world, two linguistic assumptions seem to

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be taken for granted: that translation is the necessary currency of exchange for the circulation of cultural products in the inter-cultural field, and that national languages do not all have the same value in terms of "purchasing power" in the struggle for legitimization and acquisition of symbolic capital. Actually, "we live in a very bordered world" (Diener and Agen 2012, cfr. Chapter 1) where national languages are seen as obstacles to progress that are opposed by the overwhelming power of English, the hegemonic *lingua franca*. Paradoxically, they are also viewed as endangered heritages to preserve. We live in a globalized but very bordered world where access to translation for cultural products — which is no longer "uniformly [conceivable as] a simple transfer of meaning from one language to another" (Casanova 2004, 136) — is a crucial and multifaceted issue.

My focus in this paper is with the specific problems of literary translation and the circulation of Japanese contemporary literature in the international literary field; in particular, I will focus on "untranslatability," which I consider to be a telling notion revealing the inner workings of contemporary literature worldwide.

Emily Apter's 2006 book, *The Translation Zone*, opens with a list entitled "Twenty Theses on Translation" — a series of propositions that range from "Nothing is translatable" to "Everything is translatable" (Apter 2006, xi–xii). The middle ground between these two (apparently) opposite theses are crowded with all the issues that lie on the edge between translation and comparative literature studies — issues that have often been raised in critical debate over the last few years.

(Re)definition of national borders in the global age, the conflicting relationship between linguistic and cultural translation, the role of dominant languages and resistance to Anglophone leadership by "minority" language authors, and the crucial role of translation politics in shaping the global literary canon — these are just a few of the crucial focal points developed around the two specular poles of "translatability" and "untranslatability." The term "untranslatability" apparently conveys a "semantic obviousness" related to an inherent impossibility to carry on interlinguistic processes partially or completely. At a very intuitive level, it is one of the most peculiar elements of the ultimate nature of translation itself. As stated by Apter, it is the focus of one of the "primal truisms of translation":

> Something is always lost in translation; unless one knows the language of the original, the exact nature and substance of what is lost will be always impossible to ascertain; even if one has access to the language of the original, there

> remain an x-factor of *untranslatability* that renders every translation an impossible world or faux regime of semantic and phonic equivalence.[1]

However, in a post-structuralist, post-colonial, and even "post-world literature" age (at least to critics like Apter), these concepts and their interpretations tell us more than what was suggested by the trite adage "traduttore-traditore." These ideas are also different from what Walter Benjamin meant by "Übersetzbarkeit"[2] — the quasi-esoteric definition of translatability, "seen on the one hand as an essential property of certain literary works, and on the other as a condition that might depend upon a text finding its ideal translator" (Wright 2016, 171).

Translation studies have undoubtedly added complexity and insights on key concepts of the contemporary critical debate, such as nation, nationalism, transmission and appropriation of cultural capital, creolized identities, and border (re)definition. This is because, as poignantly observed by Brett de Bary, "like the movement of a pencil tracing a line, or border, on a page of paper, translation is precisely the *movement* of creating the border, and must not be confused with the static (and arbitrary) *representation of difference* that is its after-effect" (de Bary 2010, 41).

The movement of translation itself creates a *caesura* more than filling a gap, since it allows us to distinguish between two or more languages. Very often, the pencil that traces the dividing line is metaphorically held by dominant languages, no matter if in the role of target or source language (and sometimes "central languages," as defined by Heilbron,[3] function as intermediaries or vehicular languages for "peripheral" language groups).

Translation emphasizes and (re)creates *difference* in its supposed pursuit of sameness; however, the inclination to assimilate and reduce differences (a normal part of the translation act as a result of the unavoidable "cultural filtering"

[1] Apter 2005, 159. [emphasis added]

[2] "In the introduction to [his German translation of Baudelaire's Tableaux Parisiens] an essay entitled 'The Task of the Translator', Benjamin outlines his theory on the translatability of texts. For Benjamin, 'the law governing the translation: its translatability' (1992: 71) has to be found in the original. […] In Benjamin's view, the translatability of a text is independent of whether or not such text can be translated. This is the reason why he asserts: 'Translatability is an essential quality of certain works, which is not to say that it is essential that they be translated; it means rather that a specific significance inherent in the original manifests itself in its translatability'" (*ibid.*). Cfr. De Pedro 1999.

[3] Heilbron 1999.

process) is seen by certain scholars as increasingly risky.[4] On the one hand, for a long time, *untranslatable* has meant (and in certain cases still means) "exotic", "strange", or "other", and then *negligible*. On the other hand, the idea that "everything is translatable" introduces the danger of assimilation dreaded by Antoine Berman, who warned against a "systematic negation of the foreignness of the foreign work."[5] The fascination with the supposedly untranslatable can certainly have important effects, like meaning attribution and an "essentialization" of the "other."

In this paper, I will focus on the idea of "untranslatability" conveyed in the works of a very limited group of contemporary Japanese authors who do not share a common vision about the ideas of "borders" or "translation." However, all deal—with varying levels of commitment—with the notion of "untranslatability" in their own idea of literature in light of their concern over the dissemination of their works abroad. As stated by Cassin in her introduction to the *Dictionary of Untranslatables*, to speak of untranslatables "in no way implies that the terms in question, or the expressions, the syntactical or grammatical turns, are not and cannot be translated. […] But this indicates that their translation […] creates a problem. […] It is a sign of the way in which, from one language or another, neither the words, nor the conceptual networks can simply be superimposed" (Cassin 2006).

2. Writing the (un)translatable

Speaking of contemporary Japanese literature in translation without mentioning the works of Murakami Haruki (b. 1949) would mean ignoring the proverbial elephant in the room. Spending much of his authorial time in the bad graces of some Japanese critics for his supposed excessive xenophilia and disregard for tradition (primarily influenced by American literature), Murakami is, as Cécile Sakai defines him, "the master of the game" (Sakai 2015, 366). It may appear out of place to match the notion of "untranslatability" with an

[4] Karen Bennet, as an example, spoke in very harsh terms of "epistemicide" operated by the positivist discourse connected with the overwhelming hegemonic role of the Anglophone world and its associations with the power structures of modernity (Bennet 2007, 151–169).

[5] "J'appelle mauvaise traduction la traduction qui, généralement sous couvert de transmissibilité, opère une négation systématique de l'étrangeté de l'œuvre étrangère." (I call bad any translation which, using the pretext of transmissibility, works towards a systematic negation of the foreignness of the foreign work). Berman 1984, 17.

author whose works have been translated into more than forty languages and who is one of the "star translators" of American literature in his own country. Translation is in fact inextricably connected with Murakami's writing; in a sort of mirror game, Japanese and English coexist in Murakami's works, and the *terrain vague*—an apparently smooth land of translatability in which they exist—seems to greet an always increasing number of readers worldwide. Sakai summarizes Murakami's reception in these terms:

> Schematically, we may say that Japanese readers approach the great American style through a Japanese story, and that American readers in translation focus on slightly alternative Japanese images integrated in familiar frames; other readers, in France for instance, feel fascination, or at least curiosity, for an East-West (Japanamerican) paradigm which dominated the global world in the first decade of the 21st century, appearing as a kind of major transnational utopia.[6]

Undoubtedly, Murakami's works from conception to dissemination are a very telling example of the dynamics of "border-blurring" in contemporary global literature. It is interesting, however, to consider a reflection on translation that the young Murakami reported in an early essay entitled "Kigo to shite no Amerika" (America as sign, 1983). According to the author himself, at the beginning of his long and intimate relationship with North American literature, he wasn't filled by any longing to actually visit the places he was translating into Japanese. America was for him, at the time, a sign to interpret, but his fascination with it was merely fed by his own yearning for a vague, exotic "untranslatable" and unknown world.

In a recent article, Rebecca Suter recounts a telling episode that occurred to the young translator:

> In the text, Murakami recounts how, while translating a novel, he encountered the expression 'you're cooking with Crisco,' a phrase that he had never heard before. Unable to find it in any dictionary, he asked an American friend, who informed him that Crisco is a brand of vegetable oil, and the expression is synonymous with 'you're cooking with gas,' meaning 'you got it right.' The episode gives the author pause, prompting him to reflect on what American culture, and by extension America as a foreign place, represent for him. […]
>
> However, discovering the meaning of the expression is ultimately underwhelming, and Murakami realizes that he preferred it when it had an aura of mystery: 'the echo of the word (the sign) Crisco, whose meaning I didn't un-

[6] Sakai 2015, 367.

> derstand, delighted me immensely,' and such delight was dulled when the allure of the 'pure sign' became lost in translation.[7]

Suter wisely matches this sign (anti)epiphany with Roland Barthes' "famous disquisition on the appeal of Japanese as 'the unknown language' that allows the European traveler to 'descend into the untranslatable, to experience its shock without ever muffling it'" (Suter, *ibidem*). Murakami's prosaic vegetable oil and the refined *Empire des signes* of Barthes share the fascination for a hypothetical "other," which is actually nothing more than a reassertion of their own individual subjectivities. Crossing the border is not deemed necessary—and can only be deceiving—because the *unknowable* is what they want to know and experience. Essentializing the "other" by conceiving it as "untranslatable" has for a long time hindered dominated languages' literatures from accessing the "world republic of letters," as Casanova calls it. However, the opposite attitude—which corresponds to the "everything is translatable" end of the spectrum—has caused, according to Emily Apter, the affirmation of an imbalanced "world literature," a dominant paradigm in the humanities "grounded in market-driven notions of readability and universal appeal" (Apter 2013, 3).

As for the place of contemporary Japanese literature in this scenario, Murakami Haruki certainly *is* the master of the game, but the rules that govern it—marketability and readability—systematically exclude a huge number of players from "international competiveness." Toh EnJoe,[8] a PhD physicist devoted to literature and author of a vast number of texts that include science fiction and metafiction, argued that "one of the possible definitions of [international competitiveness] is *translatability*" (in Okamoto 2013, emphasis added). In a conversation with Shimada Masahiko published on *Bungakukai* in 2012, EnJoe, freshly awarded the Akutagawa prize at the time, ironically tried to predict the future of this imbalanced situation, saying, "At the end of the globalization of literature, when the borders are crossed and regional differences are ironed out, what stands out as trustworthy piece would be a story handed down by word of mouth or a community-based one."[9] Of course, these "trustworthy" works would remain in their regional borders without translation, about which EnJoe holds a very disenchanted view:

[7] Suter 2016, 186.

[8] 円城塔 (officially transliterated as EnJoe Toh, nom de plume, real name unknown) was born in 1972.

[9] Cfr. EnJoe 2012b, translation by Sayuri Okamoto (Okamoto 2013).

> Translation is, so to speak, the customs duty to literary trade. It's an obstacle, and the goods must be worth the high tariff. If you can replicate the same stuff in your country, you don't need to import it paying a high tariff, no matter how useful the item is. It's certainly an irony that being special is a prerequisite of trade, but that being too special hinders it.[10]

The relationship between EnJoe's works and translation is somehow controversial. He defines himself as "a man on the fence" ("I'm the traditional-style sushi chef who can, however, also make international-style California rolls", in Okamoto 2013), since he writes both genre fictions and very complex literary works often judged as "impenetrable" (Okamoto) or even "discombobulating"[11] by critics. Some have been[12] translated and appreciated for their scientific lucidity unmistakably grounded in his educational background. In 2011, he found himself in the very uncommon situation of being a candidate for the Akutagawa prize but having some works already translated into English. However, the work *Dōkeshi no chō* (Harlequin's Butterfly, 2012a), which eventually won him the prestigious award, generated very conflicting reactions among the judges for its unreadability.[13] Ogawa Yōko's comment is particularly meaningful: "Even if the language I use could only be understood by myself, would I still write a story? The pattern that emerges in the end, to my eyes, is this very important question."[14] EnJoe's texts seem to be conceived as an incessant provocation to their readership, and at the same time to the potentiality of expression of the language itself. His *Self-Reference ENGINE*'s English translation ("Science, surrealism, number theory, and more dead Sigmund Freuds than you can shake a stick at. This is not a novel. This is not a short story collection. This is Self-

[10] Okamoto 2013.

[11] James Hadfield, "*Granta* opens a window into Japan", *The Japan Times*, April 2014.

[12] In addition to a certain number of tales and essays published in specialized literary magazines in English (*Speculative Japan*, *Granta*, *Monkey Business*, and *Words Without Borders*, among others), a major SF work—*Self-Reference ENGINE* (original English title, 2006, Hayakawa Shobō)—was translated in 2013 by Terry Gallagher; the work received a special mention in 2014 "Philip K. Dick Award" competition.

[13] Records of the judgments can be found here: http://prizesworld.com/akutagawa/ichiran/ichiran141-160.htm#list146

[14] 「もし自分の使っている言葉が、世界中で自分一人にしか通じないとしても、私はやはり小説を書くだろうか。結局、私に見えてきた模様とは、この一つの重大な自問であった。」 (Ogawa Yōko, Akutagawa Prize, 146th edition, 2011) Cfr.: http://prizesworld.com/akutagawa/sengun/sengun137OY.htm#list146

Reference ENGINE"[15]: a quintessential postmodern title indeed) needs some "instructions for use." One of them reads, "Remember that the chapter entitled 'Japanese' is translated from the Japanese, but should be read in Japanese."[16]

Like in a Chinese boxes structure, EnJoe's books always contain books—metaleptic writers and translators, often discussing writing and translation, frequently make their appearance in his pages. The first chapter of *Dōkeshi no chō*, for example, is supposed to be the "near-complete translation of Best Read Under a Cat, a novel by the peerless polyglot writer Tomoyuki Tomoyuki"; the first-person narrator takes on the responsibility of the translation:

> Since I was responsible for the translation, any literary effect that may be said to exist in the original has surely been lost. Before talking about effect, I'm not even sure if the literal meaning has been preserved. *Best Read Under a Cat* is written in Latino sine flexione, or Latin without inflections. Of the manuscripts left behind by Tomoyuki Tomoyuki, who wrote in some thirty languages throughout a life of continuous relocation, it is the only work written in this language.[17]

"Pseudotranslation," "fake translation," and "translation with no original" are narrative strategies largely exploited in postmodern literature worldwide, and they are certainly efficacious metatextual devices to lay bare the inner workings of the translingual process. Speaking of texts conceived as (pseudo) translations ("when there is […] no 'original' language or text on which the translation is based"), Apter observes:

> The reader is either placed in a nether-world of "translatese" that floats between original and translation, or confronted with a situation in which the translation mislays the original, absconding to some other world of textuality that retain the original only as fictive pretext. In both instances, the identity of what translation *is* is tested; for if translation is not a form of textual predicate, indexically pointing to a primary text, then what is it? Can a literary technology of reproduction that has sublated its origin still be considered a translation? Or should it be considered the premier illustration of translational ontology, insofar as it reveals the extent in which all translation are unreliable transmitters of the original, a regime, that is, of extreme untruth?[18]

[15] Cfr. the publisher website: http://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Self-Reference-ENGINE/Toh-Enjoe/9781421549361

[16] Ibidem.

[17] EnJoe 2013.

[18] Apter 2005, 160.

EnJoe, who admits to being aware that his writings may be perceived by Japanese readers as translations of scientific English textbooks, envisions translation and creative writing as "the same thing" (cfr. Okamoto 2013). In his idea of literature, a "natural Japanese" that can be smoothly transferred into another "natural language" without any loss or addition is not just an ideal—it is a lie, like any mimetic approach to writing. In this sense, and for all the peculiarities of his literary production highlighted above, EnJoe's works are substantially and consciously "untranslatable," since they reveal from within the complexity of the "experience of language" of every single author and every single text.

This idea of "unsolvability" of an experimental proximity with language and the literary creation is crucial in the works of another contemporary Japanese writer: Tawada Yōko. Having spent part of her life in two different countries, she has often been grouped by Japanese critics with authors like Mizumura Minae and Levy Hideo under the label of "ekkyō," or "border-crossing." This definition can be problematic, because as noted by Brett de Bary, "the representation of Tawada as boundary-crossing obviously construes this 'boundary' as that between Germany and Japan, making Tawada a representative of Japan while erasing heterogeneity between" (de Bary 2010, 42). Born in Tokyo (1960), she moved to Germany in the eighties; Tawada is now considered as "perhaps the leading practitioner today of what we might call exophonic writing" (quoting Perloff, in Slaymaker 2007, vii).

More than at the crossing of two languages, Tawada's literature can be found outside both of them. She can undoubtedly join the practitioners of what Umberto Eco has called "lunatic linguistics" (Eco 1998) — "writers that have in common the ability to make standard language strange to itself—superimposing their own private grammatical logics and laws of homonymic and syllabic substitution onto the vehicular tongue, such it remains quasi-intelligible; in a state, if you will, of *semi-translation*" (Apter 2005, 160). The poem that follows can be considered a telling example of Tawada's playful and paradoxical approach to linguistic creation; the title is "Die *Tōsō* des *Tsuki*s" (un-usefully un-translatable as "The Escape of the Moons"):

Die 逃走 **des** 月**s**

我 歌 auf der 厠
da 来 der 月 転t
裸 auf einem 自転車
彼 hatte den 道 mitten 通 den 暗喩公園 ge選
um 我 zu 会
戸外 道 entlang 散歩te 歯磨end eine 美人
auf der 長椅子 im 公園 飲 ein 男 in 妊婦服 林檎汁

Am 末 eines 世紀s ist die 健康 適
Im 天 穿 ein 穴
Die 月的不安 Der 月的苦悩 sind 去
全「的」 飛翔 活発 um das 穴 herum
Die 皺 des 深淵 s 平
Auf der 光滑en 表面 der 苦悩
登場 der 詩人 auf 氷靴 an
月 我的 neben 我[19]

The poem is taken from a conversation with the poet Tanikawa Shuntarō (cfr. Tawada 2010), in which she affirms, "I am using here the alphabet in place of *hiragana*" (ひらがなの代わりにアルファベットを使っています).[20] What she is actually doing is using kanji instead of German nouns; but for Tawada, resorting to the alphabet means opening wounds on the page, showing the entryways into the inner workings of language. The materiality of the language is both a theme and a device in several works by Tawada; in one of her first short novels, *Moji ishoku* (Transplanted Letters, 1999), the protagonist is a young female translator who feels unable to accomplish her task until she covers all the wounds on the page represented by the letter "O" that "has eaten the page," as she says.

Tawada's novels, poetry, and essays are written in Japanese *and* German, but more often in Japanese *or* German—she doesn't systematically self-translate her works, but her approach to the linguistic creative process goes beyond the conventional boundaries between "original" and "translation" to examine the area between "mother tongue" and "second language." In the conversation published on Shinchō in 2010, Tawada admits that "as far as the German language is concerned," she is not able to write just in German (ドイツ語ではドイツ語でかけることしか書けないし), and that's precisely why (だからこそ) she writes in a non-German-like German (ドイツ語らしからぬ). One may think that this is quite normal for a "naturalized" speaker expressing herself in a foreign language, but then she adds, "*Nihongo mo onaji desu*" (日本語も同じです, "it's the same for Japanese as well"; Tawada 2010, 157). Her writings are always composed in a language "in-a-state-of-translation," to quote Apter's words (Apter 2005, 160), and this greatly destabilizes the common logic and politics of interlinguistic exchange. I find symptomatic of this disorientation a very small but highly eloquent paratextual element in French translations of Tawada's "German works" published by Editions Verdier. The publisher points

[19] Tawada 2010, p. 162.

[20] Ibidem.

out in the frontispiece that the works are translated from German, but not from the "natural" language—rather, from "allemand-Japon" ("German–Japan").

In my opinion, critical reception of Tawada must embrace the fruitful notion of "untranslatability" in her texts. This in no way implies that they cannot be translated; rather, they should be considered an escape from the "celebration of translatability" and—as pointed out by de Bary—people should "read [Tawada] in ways that divorce her writings from the more intractable tensions of multicultural politics" (de Bary 2010, 43).

Following this path of "translatability" can lead, in my opinion, to simplistic readings of her work. One could be somehow connected to the sharp boundary between "strangeness" and "stranger/foreign" that can be found everywhere in Tawada's works. Speaking of her reception in Germany, Brendt says:

> When describing the writings of Yōko Tawada, journalists and critics alike have tended to include in the characterization of these works that they are "somehow surreal" and, in the same breath to flippantly dismiss them. When used in this, rather common… way, the word "surreal" is emptied of any specific meaning and has become an interchangeable synonym for a whole host of other words: "eccentric," "outdated," in some way "non-German," "strange," or simply "incomprehensible."[21]

While working on the translation of Tawada's first short novel, *Kakato o nakushite,* and reflecting on the narrative devices at work in the text, I have on occasion[22] tried to apply categories of "unnatural narratives" in order to show to what extent the dream-like "surrealism" of her text is a compelling narrative strategy that performs (in the words of de Bary) "a dislocation of the existing 'terms of intelligibility'" (de Bary 2010, 47). Almost reiterating what I have said about EnJoe's idea of translation and literature, I think that Tawada's narrative strategies suggest considering the notions of "unnatural" and "untranslatable" as devices that effectively make the reader aware of the "dimension of epistemological scam or faked up alterity inherent in all processes of linguistic creation, and then of *translation* in a broader sense" (Apter 2005, 167).

This process of "defamiliarization" — which echoes *ostranenie* — is also brilliantly displayed in the novel(s) *Schwager in Bordeaux*/*Borudo no gikei* ("A Brother-in-Law in Bordeaux," 2008/2009), one of the very rare cases of

[21] B. Brendt, "The Tea Ceremony of Marquis de Sade: Yoko Tawada and the Surreal," 2004, cit. in de Bary 2010, 46.

[22] "Donne senza talloni e uomini seppia: straniamento, riscrittura e ironia nelle *unnatural narratives* di Tawada Yōko (1960)," XXXVIII Convegno AISTUGIA, Università del Salento, Lecce, 2014 (Unpublished paper).

self-translation by Tawada. In these works, the narration is fragmented in very short sequences preceded by a single kanji, both in the German and Japanese version. The German reader cannot find the connection between the character and the development of the story, but the effect of feeling "lost in (un)translation" is precisely what Tawada aims for. In fact, in the Japanese text, the kanji is unreadable and has lost its inner semiotic charge, since it is reversed.[23]

The dangerous downside of untranslatability also concerns the complex politics of the international translation market. As Lawrence Venuti points out, translations have been used to build national identities by means of organized borrowing from different languages and cultures, guaranteeing visibility for a few "representative" writers in ways that corroborate existing ethnocentric biases. In this "specular process," "one becomes more oneself by selectively becoming another" (Venuti 2005, 178). Tawada's works, untranslatable by their own nature, do not preclude translation nonetheless; however, their disruptive approach to language and culture challenges the norm of the translation market and the conventional vision of Japanese literature in the Anglophone/Eurocentric literary field.

Tawada's works are in the very paradoxical status of being highly appreciated by scholars of Japanese, German and comparative literature, but proportionally very scarcely translated. "Translation — says Tawada in *Moji ishoku* — is, like itself a language. You can tell because you feel as if some pebbles were falling down on you".[24] The materialization of language, the epiphany of something falling from nowhere and shaking the old language: the burdensome work of the translator is impossible, but necessary, in Tawada's ironical view. Even more the translation of the untranslatable.

3. Conclusion: translatable or not translatable, that is the question

> The choice between the English language and the language that is not English does not represent a choice between two different languages. It represents a choice between a universal language and a local language. […] I was so busy resisting English that I could not see the two languages for what they were, totally unaware of the choice I had until the choice was irrevocably lost. […]

[23] A partial translation into Italian has been published in a literary review in 2014; the original texts—that is, the German and Japanese ones—and their Chinese characters have been included alongside the translation in order to try to preserve the effect of defamiliarization for the Italian readership (cfr. Tawada 2014).

[24] Translated by Keijirō Suga (in Slaymaker 2007, 26).

> I tried, through the Japanese language, to make a case for the irreducible materiality of all languages, the reason for which writing even in the most local of all the local languages becomes a worthwhile activity in itself. […]
> (T)he irreducible materiality of language —the untranslatability of language— is that which prevents the world from ultimately making sense only in English.[25]

These words that recall once more the "materiality of language" belong to Mizumura Minae (1951), a novelist born in Tokyo who grew up in the United States but established herself as a professional author in Japan. She has devoted a substantial part of both her fictional and non-fictional productions to showing the overpowering, hegemonic role of the English language and her personal fight against the taken-for-granted idea of "translatability." In her second novel, which is autobiographical in inspiration, the bilingual Mizumura — who holds a very resistant stance in choosing Japanese as her way of expression, defying the notion of translation by writing works that are deliberately untranslatable — portrayed a young Japanese woman living in the 1980s on the East Coast of the United States. The title, *Shishōsetsu from left to right*, is an important key to understanding the novel's concept. The novel is printed horizontally, defying the convention of Japanese vertical text, and words and sentences often appear in English, like the result of a language *grasp*, to speak in Tawada's terms. The graphic innovation defies the traditional content intent; *shishōsetsu* — or "I novel"— clearly recalls the autobiographical genre that laid the foundations of modern Japanese literature. *Nihon kindai bungaku* (Japanese modern literature) is the subtitle of this work, since the protagonist loses herself reading modern Japanese classics. This "regular attendance" with the language of her childhood allowed her to become a writer "in Japanese" when she went back to Tokyo years later.

The relationship between (modern) (Japanese) *literature* and (un)*translatability* is crucial in this work, and more generally, in Mizumura's understanding of literature as a local/global conflicting system:

> Hence the reason why it was only *kindai bungaku* that could have indicated to the protagonist the untranslatability of language. The language of *Nihon kindai bungaku*, born initially out of an effort to come up with translations of Western literature, is a language that sought the translatability of language in the language. (A writer like Izumi Kyoka who prided himself on his work being untranslatable was an only small minority.) It was a will to universal signification that was at the core of *kindai bungaku*. And it was this very will to universal signification, with its conscious and unconscious emphasis on the referential

[25] Mizumura 2004.

> function of language, that necessarily brought forth to the eyes of the protagonist the intrinsic and inalienable logic of the Japanese language. […]
>
> There may be some writers today, as there always were and always will be, who play with the notion of the untranslatability of language. But no writer today seems to find it necessary to actually seek the translatability of language. The translatability of the Japanese language is already assumed as a fact. The language, in other words, has become transparent.[26]

Tawada and Mizumura clearly look at the very same object—the irreducible materiality of language—from opposite perspectives, but even if different in terms of their approach and output,[27] their literature, like Murakami's or En-Joe's, cannot disregard the importance of translation in the global age in which it is produced and consumed. The "will to universal signification" that strengthened the foundation of modern literature has shown the political implications of the downside of translatability. Clearly, this is not a cultural process specific to Japanese literature; on the contrary, in this paper, I have tried to show that the concern over *untranslatability* is a telling aspect of contemporary global literature useful for showing how borders are (de)constructed and how the literary capital circulates in the "world republic of letters."

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[26] Mizumura 2004.

[27] For an interesting comparison cfr. Costa 2012 and Sakai 2015.

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