

The Effective Interaction of Cinematic Genres and the Portrayal of Migration in *Io sono Li* by Andrea Segre

Paolo Frascà
University of Toronto

Ongoing debates exist on the issues of the taxonomy of genres in film and cinema studies, as in literature: are genres an effective way of categorizing art, in general, or do they sometimes undermine its power? Generic categorization can often be harmful to the artistic and social value of a filmic work. Once labeled as part of a genre, the work of art is forced into a specific group, creating binding associations with other works, but also automatically excluding it from many other categories with which it might, instead, intersect on different fronts. The case of films that aim to denounce or highlight particular social circumstances (*film dell'impegno*), such as the problematic and onerous journey of a lone immigrant in *Io sono Li* (2011) by Andrea Segre, is a particular one. Films that portray such issues can be criticized if they do not represent those very problematic social circumstances in a way that is realistic, credible, and accurate. Traditional realism, in particular, demands that an audiovisual work of art not only be credible, but that it accurately portray a reality as unfiltered, unedited, and as unromanticized as possible, in order to possess documentary/historical validity. This is especially true in the Italian cinematographic setting, where the genre of post-war Neorealism established a tradition based on minimal resources, improvised scripts, the use of some non-professional actors, etc.¹ As Cesare Zavattini himself declares in his popular manifesto, *Some Ideas on the Cinema*, “[t]he cinema’s

¹ Bert Cardullo points out: “[a]lthough inconsistently or irregularly observed, the basic tenets of this new realism were threefold: to portray real or everyday people (using non-professional actors in actual settings); to examine socially significant themes (the genuine problems of living); and to promote, not the arbitrary manipulation of events, but instead the organic development of situations (i.e. the real flow of life, in which complications are seldom resolved by coincidence, contrivance, or miracle). These tenets were clearly opposed to the prewar cinematic style that used polished actors on studio sets, conventional and even fatuous themes, and artificial, gratuitously resolved plots – the very style, of course, that De Sica himself had employed in the first four pictures he made” (3).

overwhelming desire to see, to analyse, its hunger for reality, is an act of concrete homage towards other people, towards what is happening and existing in the world. And, incidentally, it is what distinguishes ‘neorealism’ from the American cinema” (51). *Neorealismo*, which, at one point, had reached global popularity, and its commitment to portraying as unaltered a version of reality as possible, have influenced contemporary cinema in a very tangible way.

Io sono Li, Andrea Segre’s first fictional *lungometraggio*, aims to represent the journey of Shun Li (Zhao Tao), a Chinese immigrant and a mother, who moves to Italy with the help of a legally ambiguous agency in hopes of creating a better life for herself but, especially, for her child, whose arrival in Italy constitutes her final reward and objective. This film undoubtedly brings to light many of the hardships and struggles of Chinese immigration to Italy, including the role of mediatory parties in the trade of human capital and exploitation, as well as the (inter)cultural phenomena that take place both within the immigrant community and between said community and the surrounding hegemonic society. In the film, these cultural and economic transactions are portrayed in a way that is perceivably credible and, to an extent, realistically accurate – these aspects will be discussed further. More notably, this is director Andrea Segre’s first attempt at a work of fiction, as his past cinematographic experience only involved the production of documentaries (most of which focused specifically on interculturality, minority cultures/ethnicities, diasporas, human rights, etc.).² *Io sono Li* is a fictional work that makes use of both lyrical (romantic/poetic and oneiric tropes) and realistic (minority languages, real settings/locations, some non-professional actors) elements in order to reach its audience in a way that is genuine and concrete, yet artistically mediated. As the filmmaker himself points out:

² See *Lo sterminio dei popoli zingari* (1998), *A metà – storie tra Italia e Albania* (2001), *Come un uomo sulla terra* (2008), *Il sangue verde* (2010), and others.

[I]’idea del film nasce da due esigenze: da una parte la necessità di trovare in una storia, allo stesso tempo *realistica e metaforica*, il modo per parlare del rapporto tra individuo e identità culturale, in un mondo che sempre più tende a creare occasioni di contaminazione e di crisi identitaria [...]” (Segre, *Note di regia*; italics mine)

This paper seeks to explore the ways in which the amalgamation of different, sometimes contrasting stylistic devices can produce a work that both denounces the problematic social circumstances it intends to portray while also aestheticizing the narrative in a way that can touch a significantly larger audience, therefore expanding the catchment area of the cinematic work and effectively fulfilling both its civil and artistic undertakings.³ Therefore, this analysis will explore different aspects and scenes of *Io sono Li*, with the intent of highlighting the function of both lyrical and realistic elements in the portrayal of the protagonist’s migratory struggle, and demonstrating how this hybridity can be effective in shaping what is, initially, socially driven content into a more commercially viable mold and, as a result, increasing its sociopolitical clout.⁴ As the director himself has clearly stated,

[I]e rappresentazioni cinematografiche sono credibili quando avvicinano lo spettatore alla condivisione delle emozioni. [...] Il cinema ha bisogno di minoranze e di storie eccezionali, se no non fa sognare. Ma tutto il cinema, anche quello documentario. La maggior parte dei protagonisti [dei] miei documentari sono persone poco, a volte molto

³ As Gaoheng Zhang reminds us, stylistic hybridization is very common among the production of Sino-Italian migratory literature, which is often of novelistic nature: “Another possible reason is the novel’s ability to maintain a high level of hybridized narrative forms, which is necessary for representations of complex migratory dynamics. The most significant aspect of literary hybridization in the novels I discuss is the cross-fertilization between fictional and documentary elements, which often allows the authors to take an unusually clear-cut stance regarding Chinese immigrants in Italy” (5).

⁴ When discussing ‘realistic elements’ in this paper, we refer to elements that contribute to the perceived realism of the work – they answer the question: is this credible and conceivable in reality? It is not within the scope of this analysis to draw out indexical bonds between the film and statistical or historical information.

poco “comuni”, sono eccezioni che fanno comprendere la normalità. (Personal communication, 19 Apr 2015)

Arguably, then, the viewer must feel a certain closeness to the subject matter in order to fully comprehend it and empathize with it, and this genuine relationship between the audience and the narrative (or the characters) can only exist if the film succeeds, through the power of its artistic charge, its dialogues, and its images, in arousing compassion and causing a strong emotive reaction in its viewers.⁵ In this respect, Pier Paolo Pasolini reminds us that it is the very poetic dimension of cinema that renders it a more genuine medium, thanks to its ability to appeal to primal human nature:

[the instruments] of the visual communication which is at the basis of cinematic language are altogether brute, instinctive. Indeed, gestures, the surrounding reality, as much as dreams and the mechanisms of memory, are of a virtually pre-human order, or at least at the limit of humanity in any case pre-grammatical and even premorphological (dreams are unconscious phenomena, as are mnemonic mechanisms; the gesture is an altogether elementary sign, etc.). (2)

The lyrical elements of a cinematic work, therefore, cannot be sundered from its realistic or perceived-to-be realistic qualities, nor should the former be employed as a critical tool in order to challenge the latter – filmic lyricism and filmic realism are not mutually exclusive stylistic features, and a combination of them certainly does not undermine the social power of a work of art such as the movie *Io sono Li*. Angelo Moscardiello reminds us that cinema is not a “mixed” art but, instead, it is a “complex” one; in cinema, various codes (images, words, music, color) are

⁵ “Le varie esperienze di regia con il cinema documentario mi hanno permesso di apprezzare il racconto non solo del reale, ma anche nel reale, aiutandomi a capire come con esso sia possibile scoprire la dimensione intima e profondamente umana della realtà, anche di tematiche urgenti ed attuali della società odierna. In *Io sono Li* ho voluto rispettare modi e stili conosciuti nel cinema-documentario, lavorando anche con attori non professionisti e scegliendo sempre location del mondo reale” (Segre, *Note di regia*).

not quite simply juxtaposed; they enter into a complicated dialectic, which allows the film to utilize lyrical elements in order to “penetrare nei territori di quel ‘reale invisibile’ ai quali tende, da sempre, la Poesia” (15). The story of Shun Li is one that touches upon many issues surrounding Chinese immigration to Italy as well as challenges of communication and integration into a host society. More importantly, the story of Shun Li is not just that of an immigrant looking for work, but also that of a melancholic woman, and, especially, that of an excruciatingly nostalgic mother. In order to understand the protagonist, viewers must empathize with how she feels, and, to achieve this, we are provided with aesthetic tropes that function as a tool of psychological penetration.



Figure 1: Celebration of the Poet Qu Yuan; scene from *Io sono Li*, Andrea Segre (2011)

Lyrical elements come into play in order for the characters' passions to be voiced. The role of poetry, in particular, is all but unrealistic. Poetry, for Shun Li, is a vehicle of expression, release, and protection. In the initial scene, we witness Li and a roommate celebrating the ancient Chinese poet Qū Yuán (屈原), and invoking his spirit so that it may help and protect them in this faraway land (Italy). Shun Li pleads (in Mandarin, with Italian subtitles, see fig.1): “Che il Poeta Qu Yuan ci aiuti ad affrontare un nuovo anno di vita” and another fellow Chinese woman

respectfully adds “[e] ci protegga in questa terra lontana” (*Io sono Li*). As we see, poetry lies at the very basis of this immigrant’s journey; one could say that the journey itself is a poetic one, and the invocation of the ancient traditional Poet is much like the canonical summoning of the muses. Poetry will allow Shun Li to vocalize her emotions as she embarks on this difficult venture and to share them with the audience. Let us also note that, right before this initial chiaroscuro scene, we are presented with a transtextual frame that reads “Qu Yuan è il poeta più importante della tradizione antica cinese. Viene celebrato facendo galleggiare candele e lanterne sulle acque dei fiumi. Si dice che servano a proteggere la sua anima, che ancora vive in quelle acque” (*Io sono Li*). The solemnity of these very lyrical initial scenes is soon disturbed by a fellow Chinese man who enters the dark room and brusquely turns the light on, allowing the viewer to discover that the elegiac celebration was actually taking place in a lavatory, with the candles floating on water in a filled bathtub. The intruder exclaims in a condescending tone (in Mandarin, with Italian subtitles) “Ancora con Qu Yuan? Siete matte!” before turning around towards the toilet and proceeding to noisily and shamelessly urinate (*Io sono Li*). Once he is finished, he approaches the bathtub and blows out the ritualistic candles, completely shattering the somberness of the previous moment. Before exiting the bathroom, he sternly professes “Siamo in Italia, non in Cina!” (*Io sono Li*). We therefore learn that Li and her friend are immigrants (as well as roommates) who live with this and other men in a boarding house of sorts; we become aware of the fact that the circumstances are far more crude and rudimentary than we had been lead to believe by the initial frames and dialogues. This very first scene is a great example of how lyricism and realism can work together to create effects that keep the audience involved while accurately portraying life-like situations in a credible and effective way. As Segre himself admits, the credibility of Shun Li’s character is not infallible – it would, in fact,

be very difficult to find a Chinese immigrant who is able to recite Qu Yuan's poetry by heart. With that said, it is elements like poetry that help make this work of art an attractive one, and one which can, through its oneiric and lyrical qualities, help us appreciate reality in a more profound way (Private communication with Segre, 19 Apr. 2015).⁶ For instance, in this initial scene, it is the abrupt disruption of the ceremonial moment that helps the viewer perceive the reality that takes over – a reality that is far from poetic (or worthy of celebration, for that matter). It is thanks to the combination of both lyrical and realistic elements that we, as viewers, are able to gauge the coarseness of the circumstances that surround the main character, as well as her own discomfort and powerlessness within the space she inhabits. Furthermore, Segre makes use of real-life locations in order to prove his point that, even though the film is a work of fiction, this does not mean that the narrative must be considered inconceivable in reality, or that it cannot come as close to reality as possible.⁷

As mentioned, Shun Li is not an all-around realistic character: her atypical knowledge of ancient Chinese poetry, her geographically inaccurate Chinese accent, and perhaps even her uncommon working knowledge of Italian (given she has recently arrived in Italy and has only worked with fellow Chinese individuals) and other traits certainly do not correspond to the typical attributes of Chinese women immigrants in Italy.⁸ Nonetheless, there are many other features of Li's character that would strike the average Italian viewer as those of a stereotypical Chinese immigrant to Italy, such as her strong foreign accent when speaking Italian (and her

⁶ Andrea Segre admits: "Detto ciò Shun Li è un personaggio fortemente poco verosimile... difficilissimo trovare una operaia cinese che conosce il Li Sao di Qu Yen... ma l'onirismo cinematografico aiuta a innamorarsi della realtà e a capirla più a fondo" (Private communication, 19 Apr 2015).

⁷ The director takes the viewer to real warehouses, restaurants and bars where immigrants work or have worked; the neighborhoods and the towns are also real-life locations: "la voglia di raccontare due luoghi importanti per la mia vita e molto emblematici nell'Italia di oggi: le periferie multietniche di Roma e il Veneto" (Segre, *Note di regia*).

⁸ As Zhang has noted, Shun Li's Chinese is unmistakably a northern variant, while the character declares her city of origin as being Fuzhou (Fujian region in Southern China); one must then consider how this linguistic inaccuracy could affect the realistic value of this film on the sinophone viewer's part (Oral communication, 20 Apr 2015).

inability to fully communicate with the locals), her physical appearance (sterile, deglamorized and almost defeminized), and the jobs that she performs (in the clothing/textile industry and at the *osteria*), as well as her often naïve and subservient attitude. These are all features that satisfactorily fulfill the need for a perceived realism, which helps the audience to believe that someone like Shun Li could exist in reality and that her character is a plausible reproduction of the typical characteristics of at least a few Chinese women immigrants in Italy. Of course, these perceivably realistic qualities could simply represent the director's personal understanding of the Chinese immigrant typecast and, therefore, inform his tentative predictions of his audience's perception of such qualities. Further research would need to be conducted regarding the source (and, therefore, the accuracy) of these stereotypical characteristics. However, the character's legitimacy is partially validated by the director when he admits that his inspiration for this film comes from a personal experience with someone very similar to the protagonist:

Ricordo ancora il mio incontro con una donna che potrebbe essere Shun Li. Era in una tipica osteria veneta, frequentata dai pescatori del luogo da generazioni. Il ricordo di questo volto di donna così estraneo e straniero a questi luoghi ricoperti dalla patina del tempo e dell'abitudine, non mi ha più lasciato. C'era qualcosa di onirico nella sua presenza. Il suo passato, la sua storia, gli spunti per il racconto nascevano guardandola. Quale genere di rapporti avrebbe potuto instaurare in una regione come la mia, così poco abituata ai cambiamenti? Sono partito da questa domanda per cercare di immaginare la sua vita. (*Note di regia*)

If Segre's inspiration came from a real-life encounter with a woman who, like Shun Li, found herself working in an *osteria veneta*, then we must agree that the protagonist is someone who could have truly existed, and who would have struggled to find ways to adapt to her new lifestyle

in the Veneto region – the protagonist was not invented *ex nihilo*. The rest is, as he admits, imagined, but certainly not impossible, especially given the fact that Chinese mass immigration is a current issue in Italian society. The inspiration from a real encounter and the depiction of social issues alone authenticate Shun Li's, at least partial, realistic value.

A very significant narrative subplot that can be analyzed in order to articulate the interaction between lyricism and realism is the platonic-romantic relationship that blossoms between Shun Li and Bepi (Rade Sherbedgia). Of course, and especially on the surface, this romance adds tragic and lyrical value to the film, appealing to audiences who enjoy such representations.⁹ However, there is a much deeper dimension to this relationship, which we should perhaps more accurately label as a *feeling of kinship* – this term is borrowed from David Eng's eponymous work (2010), in which he also discusses the *racialization of intimacy*. Although Bepi, being a fully integrated immigrant (also denoted by his use of the regional dialect), is viewed as a "local" by most and is accepted as part of the group of fishermen, he does not identify as Italian. It is this very feeling of shared experiences that brings Bepi close to Shun Li, and, as a result of this, their connection must be viewed as one informed by solidarity and mutual understanding rather than by romantic affinity or sexual attraction; this contention is especially supported by the desexualization of both characters (Bepi's old age and Shun Li's unfeminine appearance).

⁹ Especially once Bepi passes away.



Figure 2: Bepi and Li at the *casone*; scene from *Io sono Li*, Andrea Segre (2011)

Bepi is considered an Italian by his closest friend, Coppe (Marco Paolini), who continuously defends his *italianità*: when the Avvocato (Roberto Citran) questions Bepi's ability to judge the quality of the seafood they have just been served by Li at the *Osteria Paradiso*,¹⁰ Coppe snappishly retorts (in dialect, with Italian subtitles): “è trent'anni che è qui, vuoi che non capisca le canocchie?” Bepi, instead, swiftly responds by noting that he does not need to be Italian in order to be able to judge seafood, because “le canocchie si fanno anche a Pola” (*Io sono Li*). A similar situation occurs a few scenes later: as Bepi and Coppe are setting up their fishing nets, Coppe curiously asks Bepi about his relationship with Li (“però a me potresti dirlo che cazzo combini con la cinesina!”); Bepi simply and calmly explains that Li has been telling him about China and showing him pictures (“c'è qualcosa di male?” he wonders), but Coppe is not convinced, especially because Li is Chinese, and he finds it odd that Bepi would become friends with her. Coppe's latter observation sets Bepi off, who briskly and heatedly asserts: “Anche io sono straniero!” in response to which we, once again, hear Coppe's ready-made answer in defense of his friend's Italian identity “Tu? Straniero? Ma se è da trent'anni che sei qui!” (*Io*

¹⁰ A real location and a functioning *osteria* in Chioggia.

sono Li). Others also see Bepi as Italian, even Li, who refers to him as “un mio amico italiano,” as well as Li’s employers, who forbid her from seeing him because, in this business, people are not allowed to make Italian friends (“non gli devi più parlare, a parte le ordinazioni”) (*Io sono Li*). Moreover, once everyone finds out that Li and Bepi have been spending time together, they gossip about their relationship suspecting that she, like many other immigrants, is just looking to marry an old Italian man, in order to inherit his property once he passes away [Avvocato: “Comunque, la situazione si fa pericolosa. Lei lo vorrà sposare...Sì, la mafia cinese. Fanno sposare le donne [con] i vecchi e si tengono l’eredità” (*Io sono Li*)]. Had Bepi been considered an immigrant, his peers would not be this concerned. Notwithstanding his successful integration in the community, Bepi continuously refuses to identify as a local, and that is because he does not feel Italian. The fact that his only property, the so-called *casone*, is a stilt house standing in the *laguna*, away from the shore, cannot but indicate his (at least psychological) disenfranchisement from the host community. The other fishermen might perceive Bepi to be one of them, but he has not forgotten his journey and who he really is – a foreigner, just like Li. Bepi’s life experiences and struggles are likely much more in tune with Li’s than they are with the locals’. His perceived national and ethnic identity, especially in Coppe’s view, could be described, in Eng’s words, as a result of “the political, economic, and cultural processes, by which race has been forgotten across a long history of colonial relations and imperial practices, dissociated from or subsumed by other axes of social difference, such that it can only return as a structure of feeling, as a melancholic trace [...]” (10). However, Li’s presence has ignited in Bepi a sense of kinship and empathy towards her, which has reminded him that he, too, though a long time ago, was just like her – an outsider, a strange new face. The relationship between the two characters, therefore, is but a frivolous romantic trope. Instead, it represents intra-immigrant

group interactions and solidarity, similar to those between Li and her roommates. The development of this strong sense of solidarity between Li and Bepi is seen especially in the way in which they become acquainted with one another – they relate to each other by finding things that they have in common. In one particular scene, Li shows Bepi that her father was a fisherman, and that they, too, lived by the sea. Bepi observes the pictures and comments on some of the details (Li’s father’s fishing nets, his boat, etc.) and, once they get to a picture of Li’s young son, he quickly mentions his grandchildren who, however, live in Mestre, which is very close to Chioggia. Li’s son, instead, is still in China; he will not arrive until she has paid her dues to the organization that has advanced the funds to allow her to migrate and is providing her with an occupation. The kinship that is born between Li and Bepi is therefore based on a sense of understanding of one another – they are both *others*. By the same token, the lyrical value of this relationship is certainly not to be ignored; we know, for instance, that Bepi even writes a poem for Li. Also, at one point, the two are forbidden from seeing each other. Finally, when Bepi passes away, he writes a letter to Li, in which he leaves his *casone* to her, and hopes that she will be able to give him a celebration similar to the traditional one done in honor of the poet Qu Yuan: “Ho deciso una cosa: lascio a te il mio casone in laguna, mi piacerebbe che un giorno mi regalassi un funerale come quello del vostro poeta, quello vero” (*Io sono Li*). Their feelings for each other are genuine, and they are mediated through poetry in a way that reaches the viewer in a familiar and effective way. The film ends with a view of the *casone* being devoured by flames – one huge floating lantern burning for the poet(s). Through this scene, we are able to witness how both lyrical and realistic elements work together to create a powerful, touching, yet genuine narrative. As Segre discloses in an interview, his two driving ideas for the movie were, first, having met the Chinese woman (whom he calls “the real Shun Li”) at the *Osteria Paradiso* in

Chioggia, and, second, the idea of having a stilt house burning in the middle of the laguna; he describes these two driving forces as “one very real and the other very aesthetic-figurative” (Segre, *Intervista esclusiva*, translation mine). Segre continues by explaining that, after learning about the Chinese tradition of the burning lanterns for the Poet Qu Yuan, he knew that that was going to be the reason for which the *casone* would catch fire and burn at the end of the movie: “[...] da lì è nato tutto l’intreccio necessario con la poesia, e ho capito che quella poesia era anche la chiave che cercavo sin dall’inizio per partire dalla realtà dell’osteria [e] riuscire a trovare una strada per allargare poi l’orizzonte sia narrativo che etico [...] del mio racconto” (ivi). The last scene, just like the first scene, is a tribute to poetry, and this time to both Qu Yuan and Bepi. Through this very lyrically charged episode of the burning *casone*, we truly have a coming together of different cultures, experiences and struggles, all very real, yet wonderfully atoned and united by the fervent power of poetry.



Figure 3: The burning *casone*; last scene from *Io sono Li*, Andrea Segre (2011)

Through the survey of a few key scenes from *Io sono Li*, it is hoped that this analysis has shown how lyrical elements and realistic ones, often considered mutually exclusive, can effectively work together to form a narrative that not only denounces social circumstances by

portraying the journey of those who are disadvantaged and ostracized, but also touches the audience through the power of art in a way that can help raise awareness about the issues that are being brought to attention. Conclusively, as Moscariello so eloquently writes,

“[p]er essere ‘poesia’, il cinema non deve dire necessariamente ‘cose poetiche’. Anzi, meno ne dice e meglio è. Esso deve dire ‘poeticamente’ le cose, cose di per sé niente affatto poetiche. Esso deve procedere per “illuminazioni” ripetute capaci di estrarre dalla realtà il suo *noumeno* celato [...]. Se vuole davvero ‘vedere’, il cinema deve mettere in stato di massima allerta tutti i suoi codici, in modo che possano produrre una catena di ‘risonanze’ critiche ed emotive in grado di sfondare il muro dell’apparenza.” (16)

Works Cited

- Cardullo, Bert (ed.). *After Neorealism: Italian Filmmakers and their Films: Essays and Interviews*. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2009. Print.
- Eng, David L. *The Feeling of Kinship: Queer Liberalism and the Racialization of Intimacy*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2010. Print.
- Io sono Li*. Dir. Andrea Segre. Parthenos, 2011. Film.
- Marcus, Millicent. *After Fellini: National Cinema in the Postmodern Age*. Baltimore; London: The John Hopkins UP, 2002. Print.
- Martin-Jones, David, and William Brown. *Deleuze and Film*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2012. Print.
- Moscariello, Angelo. *Il Cinema-Poesia: Le Forme Di Un’idea Ritornante*. L’Aquila: Istituto Cinematografico dell’Aquila "La Lanterna magica", 1991. Print.
- Pasolini, Pier Paolo. “The Cinema of Poetry.” *Movies and Methods*, vol. 1 (1976), pp. 542-558.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.
- Segre, Andrea. “Intervista esclusiva ad Andrea Segre per Io sono Li.” *Rete degli spettatori*. *Youtube*. Web. 20 Apr 2015.

----- . “Note di regia.” *Io sono Li*. Web. 15 Apr 2015.

----- . “Re: Domanda (Io sono Li).” Message to Paolo Frascà. 19 Apr 2015. E-mail.

Io sono Li. Dir. Andrea Segre. RB Media/Film Movement, 2012. Film.

Zavattini, Cesare. “Some Ideas on the Cinema.” *Sight and Sound* 23:2 (Dec. 1953), pp. 64-9.

Zhang, Gaoheng. “Contemporary Italian Novels on Chinese Immigration to Italy.” *California Italian Studies Journal*, 4:2 (2013).