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WHAT IS LEFT OF THE ITALIAN FAMILY ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Some finance experts, policy makers and academics have announced the end of the ten year global financial and economic crisis initiated by the Lehman Brothers’ collapse in 2008, that deeply affected international finance but also global and local economic production. Indeed, data on Italian entrepreneurship, based on the central role of family and rooted especially in Northern Italy, show that it is coming back from very dark years. Nevertheless, the consequence of the global crisis has left its mark. Could you please illustrate the actual condition of the Italian family entrepreneurship model?

The global economic crisis has hit hard across all kinds of firms. Between 2009 and 2012, at the peak of the crisis, in Italy over 54,400 firms shut down just in the manufacturing sector. According to the Italian Statistics Bureau, at the end of 2016 the industrial production of Italian firms was still 20.8% less than what was produced in 2008. The recovery of the economy is slow and employment is rising even slower. In this situation, many family-run firms have not survived. However, the actual cause of so many terminations should not be entirely attributed to the long economic recession. As this kind of firm rarely reaches the third generation, it may well be the case that some enterprises simply failed to secure new leadership within the family, and the global crisis did nothing but accelerate the cessation that was bound to happen in any case. In 2011 there were almost 130,000 firms that were facing ownership succession.
Hence, it is likely that many intergenerational successions failed for the inability of the younger generation to take over. I will return to this issue later.
In other cases, the lack of entrepreneurs among the younger generations may have persuaded the family to sell the firm or share ownership with new business partners. This is what I have found out in my research. Although my ethnographic data refers to the industrial district in a specific geographic area of Lombardy region, the Brianza, their implications go far beyond the area and may give us useful insights on the Italian family entrepreneurship model as a whole.
In the Brianza several mid-sized family-run firms managed to survive and even grow thanks to the injection of capital from foreign investors or from entrepreneurs coming from other Italian regions. This is an interesting phenomenon, because one of the main characteristics of the Italian family entrepreneurship model is its strong ties to the local economy. Not only were the entrepreneurs autochthonous, but also most of their suppliers were situated in the same area of their client firms. During the latest economic recession those features began to change. Outside investors started to take over some of the most important firms and at the same time a lot of subcontracting small firms shut down, reducing the number of enterprises in the supply chain. As a result, we have now a transformed local economy: a few client firms run by outsiders and a smaller number of firms available for outsourcing production.
This is not the first crisis that this area has confronted, but it is quite different from the others. In the past crises the family entrepreneurship model emerged out of the general restructuring process of the large scale factories dismantled and de-verticalized during the 1970s and 1980s. Hundreds of jobs were lost, but several others were created, especially with the contribution of newly constituted small-scale firms that managed to keep costs down by employing family labour and by using the family property as a work space. By contrast, in the recent economic recession, they are those which have made labour force redundant. In other words, while at that time family entrepreneurship was the solution, in the current crisis that very model is part of the problem and for this reason put under scrutiny.

Photograph: http://www.flickriver.com/photos/93123479@N00/5058040424/
As masterfully illustrated by Max Weber, culture is a central dimension of the capitalistic model, and of the family entrepreneurship model as well. The success of family based entrepreneurship is rooted in the intergenerational relationships and in the socialization processes towards the ‘culture of entrepreneurship’ within the family. Are these intergenerational relationships in contemporary Italy strong enough to pass on the ‘culture of entrepreneurship’?

Before talking about the Italian case, I would like to say a few words on the relevance of the family-run enterprises in capitalist societies and the marginal scholarship attention that has been given to them. Statistics show that family-controlled corporation is by far the world’s most common corporate form. It is estimated that family-owned firms make up 80-90% of firms worldwide. This percentage decreases among the firms with over 300 employees, and yet according to the Fortune Global 500, which lists the world’s largest firms by sales, over 19% of the companies are family-owned, such as Wal-Mart, Ford, Tyson foods, Glencore, to name but a few. In Italy over 70% of the firms are family business, 30% of which are large firms.

It is unquestionable that this form of economic organization is a major component of contemporary capitalism, and yet it is still regarded as a minor player in the economy. For some analysts family business is an anachronistic as well as transitory institution, deemed to eventually develop into a “rational” and more “efficient” managerial organization.

For others it is a conundrum, as they find it hard to come to grips with this “peculiar” form of economic organization in which family and kinship relationships challenge the notion that rational economic action can coexist with sentiment and solidaristic values.

The engagement of family members in the organization of the firm brings evident competitive advantages: cooperation, trust, financial aid, and ultimately lower labour costs. In the small firms, for example, such collaboration is initially informal and becomes highly crucial not only to set the firm in motion, but also to get through those periods in which the entrepreneur toils to meet work order deadlines, or in times of crisis such as the most recent one, in which the workload has dropped back so much that the whole family has to take pay cuts to survive.

There is a caveat, though. Family entrepreneurship appears to be highly effective during the initial stage of an enterprise and its growth, but less so when it faces intergenerational succession. This is its Achilles tendon. In highly specialized small firms, where technical and practical knowledge is deemed essential for survival, greater social and economic value is attributed to men’s work. Women’s work is simply auxiliary. By subjecting herself to the notion that technical competence in production is superior to any other task, she inevitably downplays her contributions and accepts minimum recognition, especially in terms of ownership shares. In the absence of sons (or without sons showing an interest) in an enterprising family, the failure to take in male members through marriage may induce the entrepreneur to reduce capital investment in the family business, as he no longer sees the continuity of the family in the firm, with consequences not hard to imagine in terms of job loss and vanishing know-how.

Limiting the choice among the family male members, however pondered through the years, does not guarantee that the successor is able to operate successfully. This is the reason why a significant number of family businesses do not survive past the first generation. There is also another problem. Children may not be interested in, or may show aversion to, their parents’ entrepreneurial activity. There is a widespread complaint among the older generation of entrepreneurs, that their children belong to a new generation which had been indulged and therefore less prone to face the same hardship that their parents had experienced at work. This may denote a lower disposition towards highly (self) exploitative working conditions, especially in a period in which earnings are decreasing, as in the current economic situation.
Furthermore, the attainment of more freedom among the children can liberate the younger generation from family obligations. No longer obliged to follow in the footsteps of their parents, they can fulfill their projects and desires outside the family business.

As you underlined previously, the financial crisis had a relevant impact on the traditional characteristics of the family entrepreneurship model. One of main consequences concerns the transformations of job conditions. Could you please illustrate your recent research hypothesis on new ongoing processes of precarisation of labour within this sector?

Employment is undergoing major transformations. When I first did my fieldwork in the mid-1990s, the dominant pattern of recruitment was based on the informality of social relations. In other words, instead of relying entirely on the local employment bureau, the labour force was normally selected and recruited on the basis of existing social networks, including kinship, friendship and acquaintance.

This practice was of great importance for the management of the personnel in the workshop. It essentially established bonds of mutual obligation between the employer and the employee that were enacted on a daily basis.

The presence of a workforce that combines family members and local outsiders could reinforce familial-like and loyal relationships, emotional attachment and strong commitment toward the family running the firm because everybody, the employees and the enterprising family, works side by side. At the same time, such an organizational arrangement can stand as a very effective bulwark against unionization and other forms of collective organization, preventing the outbreak of conflicts. It may also have a positive effect on productivity. It facilitates direct surveillance on the process of production providing the management of the client firm with an indirect but potent instrument of control and exploitation over its local suppliers.

The various state reforms of the labour market have introduced forms of temporary, flexible and precarious work that have been incorporated in the hiring practices of small manufacturing firms.
The second-generation entrepreneurs have quickly embraced these new forms of employment that bypass the thick sociality their fathers were immersed in. New workers are frequently sought through temping agencies, avoiding the hassle of searching through their informal network and trying workers out for a trial period. The agency searches for the profile. If, after a few days of work, the candidate is judged unfit for the job, he or she is immediately replaced. As is evident from the increasing number of skilled workers employed in temping agencies since the recent recession, permanent contracts are losing ground with respect to temporary ones. Regardless of the nature of the contract, the choice made by the entrepreneurs is increasingly based on impersonal relationships, through a private employment service. Other work arrangements are also possible. Highly skilled workers made redundant during the economic recession are turning themselves into self-employed artisans. At a time in which there is a work order with a tight deadline or requiring a specific skill not available in the firm, these self-employed artisans are called in and paid for their professional services. The workplace is being entirely transformed by these labour arrangements. Under the same factory ‘roof’, precarious and permanent workers toil together with different rights and in a different kind of sociality.
The project examined socio-legal matters regarding the prevention and fighting of historical pollution caused by industrial emissions. “Historical pollution” refers to the long-term or delayed-onset effects of environmental crimes such as groundwater or soil pollution.

The research presented and compared national legal approaches and socio-criminological contexts, including the most interesting and effective mechanisms for managing environmental problems related to historical pollution. It featured interdisciplinary and international comparisons of traditional and alternative justice mechanisms. In particular, the socio-criminological contribution will be useful in increasing knowledge and promoting a theoretical reflexivity about the historical inheritance of industrialization processes.

The research was conducted between 2015 and 2016 with the support of private funds. It has been conducted by a group of scholars with different academic backgrounds and from different countries - USA, England, Germany, Spain, Italy and France. Lorenzo Natali of the Department of Sociology and Social Research at the University of Milano-Bicocca has taken part as member of the Italian research team.

The research is now published in the book entitled “Historical Pollution. Comparative Legal Responses to Environmental Crimes” (Springer, 2017). This book will be of interest to researchers in criminology, criminal justice and related areas, such as politics, law, and economics, those in the public and private sectors dealing with environmental protection, including international institutions, corporations, specialized national agencies, those involved in the criminal justice system and policymakers.

Project coordinator: National Centre of Prevention and Social Defence Foundation (CNPDS/ISPAC).

Project partners: Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano, University of California - Irvine, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne (Paris I), Queen Mary University of London, Universität Tübingen, Ludwig-Maximillians-Universität München, Università LUISS Guido Carli di Roma, Universidad Castilla-La Mancha, Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli.
EMOTIONAL DETERMINANTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

It is a research started at the University of Colorado Denver - School of Public Affairs. It consists of an empirical analysis on a sample of Italian public managers about the cognitive-emotional variables affecting the organizational citizenship. It is part of the International Public Service Project that includes US, Corea, India, Pakistan, Australia, Cina, Hong Kong. Authors: Riccardo Viale (Department of Sociology and Social Research) together with Mary Guy.

NUDGING AND BEHAVIORAL INSIGHTS FOR ITALIAN PUBLIC POLICIES

It is a research started at the Harvard University - Kennedy School of Government (Behavioral Insights Group). It is a study about suggestions coming from behavioral economics in improving Italian public policies, mainly in the development area. Authors: Riccardo Viale (Department of Sociology and Social Research) together with Max Bazerman and Francesca Gino.

SIMPLE HEURISTICS TO CHOOSE NEW VENTURES

It is a research started at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development of Berlin. It is an empirical analysis on a sample of start-uppers and business angels about the heuristics and choice variables in decision making on starting or financing a new venture. Authors: Riccardo Viale (Department of Sociology and Social Research) together with Gerd Gigerenzer and Shabnam Mousavi.

RISK LITERACY FOR FINANCIAL EDUCATION IN HIGH SCHOOLS STUDENTS

It is a research started at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development of Berlin. It is about an educational programme regarding risk literacy and uncertainty management addressed to the courses on financial education of Italian high schools. Authors: Riccardo Viale (Department of Sociology and Social Research) together with Gerd Gigerenzer and Niklas Keller.
The study of employment and occupations in Italy is lagging behind the service transition that took place in the mid-Seventies of the last century. In spite of the fact that, also in Italy, services are currently employing over two out of three workers and that their positive occupational development has been offsetting the reduction of industrial employment in recent decades, the characteristics and specificities of the service sector are only seldom analysed and discussed.

This is especially the case for low-skilled, labour-intensive and highly interactive service activities and occupations for private consumption. Shop assistants, sales workers, barmen and barmaids, waiters and waitresses, hairdressers, barbers and beauticians, receptionists, hospitality workers, hostess and stewards, travel attendants, cashiers and ticket clerks, security guards, helpers and cleaners in offices, hotels and other establishments account for a relevant share of employment and of the labour demand but represent a quite neglected area in labour market studies.

From a comparative perspective taking into account the institutional varieties of the service transition in Western European countries, this book deals with the main structural characteristics of both employment and workers in those private service activities and occupations addressed to personal and household consumption to shed an initial light on peculiarities of the Italian case.

This book analyses media representation of male violence against women as well as of violence perpetrated by women. Whether factual or fictitious, portrayed in global TV series or reported in national newspapers, thematized in music or depicted in advertisements, Brutal Relations explores models and actors, the social dynamics as well as the rhetoric, aesthetics and politics of gendered violence by juxtaposing the real with the representational.

More specifically, this book puts gender at the centre of analysis and compares male violence against women, focussing on intimate partner violence, with women’s violence. These are two phenomena with very different characteristics: the first is strongly entrenched in the culture, the second an exception. Placed in a position of mutual tension, something that has rarely been done before, they illuminate the many faces of the prism ‘gendered violence’.

A key finding emerges: both gender and violence ‘order’ social reality; gender defines as appropriate only certain bodies, behaviours, practices, attitudes and desires, while violence prescribes certain ways of ‘staying in the world’ and proscribes others.
INTRODUZIONE ALLA SOCIOLOGIA DEL MERCATO DEL LAVORO

Emilio Reyneri

Bologna, Il Mulino, 2017

With four editions since 1996 *Sociologia del mercato del lavoro* has been a long-seller textbook. *Introduzione alla sociologia del mercato del lavoro* is not the fifth edition, however. The experience has suggested summarizing some details, so that the book is now shorter and easier for the students. On the other side, the website of the volume contains more extensive materials: bibliographies, figures, links to websites on Italian and European labour markets.

The focus is on Italy, but the reference to other West European countries is constant. A comparative perspective is obvious as the labour market is part of a wider social system and national societies, far from being homologated by economic development, have different institutions and cultures. Nothing better than comparison helps explaining and understanding. Attention to changes over time is constant, as well, to outline long-term trends.

The main focus is on problems caused by the impact of the economic crisis on the Italian economy: the growing role of women facing the fall in male employment, the changes in the composition of unemployment and the increase of jobless households, the worsening of the quality of young people's first job and the lower return to education. Other issues discussed are: the spread and (perhaps) the decline of atypical forms of work, the worsening of professional qualification of employment with the risk of falling into a "low path" to decline, the first attempts at a policy of flexicurity, the black side of finding work thanks to personal relations, the revive of irregular employment, the structural insertion of immigrant workers and their permanent segregation in bad jobs.

NUOVI SCENARI DI SALUTE

Per una sociologia della salute e della malattia

Mara Tognetti Bordogna

Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2017

The actual society is characterized by significant changes in many fields: medicine, sanitary systems organization and also in the nosology scenery – the so called “social-scape” - including chronic diseases, degenerative illnesses, rare illnesses, and so on. They are important under way changes which consequences are not well defined: a future scenario that we need to imagine and explore.

In this context, in order to provide important knowledge and methodological notes to face the themes of health and illness from a sociological point of view, the book presents the issues both from a theoretical and empirical perspective.

In the first part of the text the author presents the evolution process which from the first statements of the sociology of the medicine has led to the definition of the sociology of health.
Furthermore, the book analyses the dimensions of health and illness and other remarkable matters influencing these topics: the environmental context in which people live; health inequalities, particularly referring to the immigrant communities; the effects of the economic crisis on the people’s lifestyles and on the strategies characterizing the public welfare politics; the processes of medicalization and pharmacolization occurring in each person’s daily life.

In the following section new possible research scenarios are described. Specifically, the author introduces some themes which both scientific community and citizenship will have to face in the next years: the ambiguous process of digitization of the health; the recourse to traditional and non conventional medicine (CAM) in time of economic crisis as a new strategy for health; the access to the sanitary services; the normalization of the diseases among communication of the diagnosis, needs of the sicks and their families, time for itself and time for the care.

COGNITIVE UNCONSCIOUS AND HUMAN RATIONALITY

Edited by Riccardo Viale, Laura Macchi and Maria Bagassi

*Cambridge (Mass.), The MIT Press, 2016*

This volume contributes to a current debate within the psychology of thought that has wide implications for our ideas about creativity, decision making, and economic behavior. The essays focus on the role of implicit, unconscious thinking in creativity and problem solving, the interaction of intuition and analytic thinking, and the relationship between communicative heuristics and thought. The analyses move beyond the conventional conception of mind informed by extra-psychological theoretical models toward a genuinely psychological conception of rationality—a rationality no longer limited to conscious, explicit thought, but able to exploit the intentional implicit level.

The contributors consider a new conception of human rationality that must cope with the uncertainty of the real world; the implications of abandoning the normative model of classic logic and adopting a probabilistic approach instead; the argumentative and linguistic aspects of reasoning; and the role of implicit thought in reasoning, creativity, and its neurological base.

The presence of an improvement in problem solving activity during the phenomena of incubation and mind-wandering and the recent discovery of the Default Mode Network, a neural network that is activated during the absence of targeted and focused perceptual and cognitive activity, seems to prove the hypothesis of a cognitive unconscious. Inductive and deductive reasoning is not only confined to the moments of awareness and attention. These data seem to enlighten the understanding of the mechanism of scientific and artistic creativity. Moreover the book helps to clarify the current controversy about dualism or monism of mind.
Andrea CERRONI

A City Full of Knowledge: Objects, Habitats, Symbols
in P. Pardalos and K. Gakis (Eds.)
Networks Design and Optimization for Smart Cities

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in Scienza e società
29/30, 25-34, 2017

Sebastiano CITRONI

Neighbourhood Events and the Visibilisation of Everyday Life: the Cases of Turro (Milan) and Norra Fäladen (Lund)
with M. Karrholm
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1-15, 2017

The Contradictions of Creative Activism. Situated Meanings and Everyday Practices in a Milan Case-Study
in City, Culture & Society
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with A. Pavoni
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Ivana FELLINI

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in Migration Studies
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Il terziario di consumo. Occupazione e professioni
Roma, Carocci, Biblioteca di testi e studi, 2017
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A “U-Shaped” Pattern of Immigrants’ Occupational Careers? A Comparative Analysis of Italy, Spain, and France
with R. Guetto
in International Migration Review
29, 1-36, 2017

Raffaele GUETTO

A “U-Shaped” Pattern of Immigrants’ Occupational Careers? A Comparative Analysis of Italy, Spain, and France
with I. Fellini
in International Migration Review
29, 1-36, 2017

La crescita delle unioni miste in Italia: un indicatore di accresciuta integrazione degli immigrati e maggiore apertura della società?
with D. Azzolini
in Mondi Migranti
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Do Mixed Unions Foster Integration? The Educational Outcomes of Mixed Parentage Children in Italy
with D. Azzolini and J.E. Madia
in Journal of International Migration and Integration
1-28, 2017

The Impact of Citizenship on Intermarriages. Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Two European Union Eastern Enlargements
with D. Azzolini
in Demographic Research
36(43), 1299-1336, 2017

Cultural Capital and Gender Differences in Health Behaviours: a Study on Eating, Smoking and Drinking Patterns
with F. Oncini
in Health Sociology Review
5(3), 1-16, 2017
Lorenzo NATALI

Perceiving and Communicating Environmental Contamination and Change: Towards a Green Cultural Criminology with Images
with B. McClanahan
in Critical Criminology
25(2), 199-214, 2017

The Contribution Of Green Criminology to the Analysis of Historical Pollution
in F. Centonze and S. Manacorda (Eds.)
Historical Pollution. Comparative Legal Responses to Environmental Crimes
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Chiara RESPI

Personalized Sms, Survey Participation and Data Quality – The Italian Case
with E. Sala
BMS. Bulletin De Methodologie Sociologique
136 (1), 21-39, 2017

Emanuela SALA

Gender Inequalities in Italian Academia. What Future for Female Academics?
with R. Bosisio
in Feminismo/s
University Research Institute for Gender Studies (IUIEG) - University of Alicante
29, 347-368, 2017

Personalized Sms, Survey Participation and Data Quality – The Italian Case
with C. Respi
BMS. Bulletin De Methodologie Sociologique
136 (1), 21-39, 2017
Riccardo VIALE

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in G. Coricelli and D. Martelli (Eds.)
Neurofinanza. Le basi neuronali delle scelte finanziarie
Milano, Egea, 2017

How to Decide in the Large World of Finance: the Bounded Rational Adaptive Nudges
in N. Linciano and P. Soccorso (Eds.)
Challenges in Ensuring Financial Competencies
Quaderni di Finanza Consob
84, 99-110, 2017

La decisione nel regno dell’incertezza
in Sistemi Intelligenti- Rivista Quadrimestrale di Scienze Cognitive e Intelligenza Artificiale
XXIX (2), 233-248, 2017

La razionalità limitata e le forme di paternalismo libertario
in Sistemi Intelligenti-Rivista Quadrimestrale di Scienze Cognitive e Intelligenza Artificiale
XXVIII (1), 181-194, 2016
WESTERN CAPITALISM IN TRANSITION
GLOBAL FORCES AND LOCAL CHALLENGES

International conference
23 November, 2017

On Thursday the 23rd of November 2017 starting from 10.00 a.m. in the Auditorium Martinotti, the Department of Sociology and Social Research of the Bicocca University was held the international Conference *Western capitalism in transition. Global forces and local challenges*, based on the volume edited by A. Andreotti, D. Benassi, and Y. Kazepov. The volume is a tribute to Enzo Mingione’s academic career. The Conference, as well as the volume, aimed at exploring how western capitalism is changing and with what consequences on the individuals’ life and communities. Speakers focused on the uneven effects of capitalism, on the manifold social conflicts emerging and on the possibilities for the mobilization of people and social movements, taking into consideration the interplay of micro and macro factors. The Conference reflected the structure of the volume and was organized around three thematic sessions. In the first session Ida Regalia, Francesco Ramella and Serafino Negrelli discussed with Saskia Sassen, Enzo Mingione and Simone Ghezzi on Western Capitalism in Transition. In the second session Mario Diani, Mauro Magatti and Fabio Quassoli discussed with Marisol Garcia, Sophie Body-Gendrot, Lydia Morris and Enrico Pugliese on Citizenship and Welfare. In the third and last session, Alessandro Balducci, Serena Vicari and Giampaolo Nuovolati discussed with Richard Sennett, Marco Oberti and Edmond Preteceille, Enrica Morlicchio and Patrick Le Galès on Old and New Challenges within Cities. An introduction by Michael Harloe on the changes in urban sociology opened the Conference.

The celebration for Enzo Mingione continued on Friday the 24th at the Fondazione Feltrinelli with a round table with some of the speakers.
Western capitalism in transition
Global forces and local challenges

23 November 2017
h 10.00 - 18.30
Auditorium G. Martinotti, U12
Via Vizzola, 5, 20126, Milano

10.00-10.30
Institutional welcome. Cristina Messa, Rector of the University of Milano-Bicocca and Giampaolo Nuvolati, Chair of the Sociology and Social Research Department
Introduction Alberta Andreotti, David Benassi, Yuri Kazepov (editors)

10.30-11.00
Michael Harloe: A child of its times: the "new urban sociology" in context and its legacy

11.00-13.00
1st Session: CAPITALISM IN TRANSITION
Chair: Ida Regalia - Discussant: Francesco Ramella and Serafino Negrelli
S. Sassen: Deconstructing labour demand: implications for low wage employment
S. Ghezzi: On the social (dis)embedding of the economy: where anthropology and sociology share analytical tools
E. Mingione: The double movement and the perspectives of contemporary capitalism

12.45-14.00 Lunch break

14.00-16.00
2nd Session: CITIZENSHIP AND WELFARE
Chair: M. Diani - Discussant: F. Quassoli and M. Magatti
S. Body-Gendrot: Urban disorder and the transformation of global governance
J.C. Barbier: The underclass and international comparison, variety and universalism
L. Morris: Welfare migration and civic stratification: Britain’s emergent rights regime
M. Garcia: Cities under economic austerity: the return of citizenship claims
E. Pugliese: International migrations and the Mediterranean

16.00-16.30 coffee break

16.30-18.30
3rd Session: OLD AND NEW CHALLENGES WITHIN CITIES
Chair: S. Vicari - Discussant: A. Balducci and G. Nuvolati
R. Sennett: The sense of touch
P. Le Galès: Urban political economy beyond convergence: robust but differentiated unequal European cities
M. Oberti and E. Preteceille: Urban segregation, inequalities and local welfare: the challenges of neoliberalisation
E. Morlicchio: Urban poverty and social cohesion: lessons from Naples

For information: Simone Caiello s.caiello@campus.unimib.it
On April 27th this year, an international seminar took place in our Department with the participation of Randall Collins (Dorothy Swaine Thomas Professor of Sociology), who gave a distinguished lecture titled “Violence. Pathways on the Micro/Macro Continuum”.

The event was organized by Gianmarco Navarini who, after the greetings of the Department Director, Giampaolo Nuvolati, introduced the seminar with remarks on Collins’ intellectual biography. The lecture focused on the micro-dynamics through which violence takes shape and especially on how such dynamics illuminate violence mechanisms beyond the situation level, on wider spatio-temporal scales.

The seminar included the interventions of Carmen Leccardi as discussant and by those of the large and diverse audience. The seminar was followed by an interview with Randall Collins held by Sebastiano Citroni and Gianmarco Navarini.
URBANA
QUALITY OF LIFE AND SOCIAL INNOVATION IN MILAN

Conferences, workshops and seminars
4-7 May, 2017

From May 4th to May 7th 2017, the Department of Sociology and Social Research of the University of Milano-Bicocca promoted and organized URBANA, under the patronage of the Municipality of Milan and the University. The initiative, coordinated by the Department Director Giampaolo Nuvolati, took place in the city of Milan, in the main representative locations, gathering more than 100 experts, social scientists, sociologists, journalists, artists and performers, for a total of 24 free entry appointments. The purpose was to bring University and Sociology from the suburban Bicocca neighborhood to the core of the city, and in this way to strengthen and consolidate the relation between the University and the city.

Four days of city storytelling to describe the city’s changes through different languages and perspectives, tackling many different topics, such as violence, food, gender, ageing, mobility, sharing economy, health, security, job market, sustainability and metropolitan city among others. Not only conferences and workshops but also artistic installations, music and theater performances, that gathered more than 1000 enthusiastic participants. The events was divided into four main macro themes: innovation, welfare, society and territory.

The Dean of the University of Milano-Bicocca Maria Cristina Messa highlighted the importance of this initiative in creating a stronger connection between the University and the city. The exchange of knowledge and know-how between citizens, Institutions and enterprises generates a grounded network able to enhance the human capital and to create an urban multifaceted space.

The Vice-Mayor Anna Scavuzzo (also council member for Education, University and Research), which took part to some of the events, stressed the important role of the Universities also outside their doors, as engineer of innovation, research and scientific method underling their ability to text, experiment and activate, together with the local institutions and associations, new ways to make Milan more beautiful, open and livable. Finally, the Department Director, Giampaolo Nuvolati, underlined how URBANA powered the subject of the quality of life bringing out the needs of the population as well as innovative solutions. The initiative was the opportunity for many citizens to approach new topics or to deepen old issues and represented a big chance of knowledge, debate and connection between the University and the city.
VISITING AND ERASMUS OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of Sociology and Social Research welcomes scholars to apply to our international programs to become a:

- Visiting professor / researcher;
- Erasmus professor / researcher.

Present Visiting scholars:
- Rafaela De Angelis (Universidade Estadual De Maringá, Brasil);
- Randall Osborne (Texas State University, USA).

Future Visiting scholars:
- Hamilton Viana Chaves (Centro de Ciências da Saúde – CCS, Universidade de Fortaleza, Brasil).
ASEP - Analysis of Social and Economic Processes

A new PhD program

A new PhD program in *Analysis of Social and Economic Processes* (ASEP) was established this year at the Department of Sociology and Social Research of the University of Milano-Bicocca.

The ASEP PhD program aims at training students for both scholarly and applied social research. Upon completion of the program, students will have the knowledge and skills required to design and carry out, in academic or non-academic settings, conceptually sound and methodologically rigorous empirical research on social and socioeconomic phenomena.

The ASEP PhD program has an international vocation. All activities are carried out in English, so that they are open to students from all countries. Moreover, students are required to spend 6 to 18 months abroad as part of their training and research. The program is managed by an international Steering Committee comprised of faculty from the Universities of Milano-Bicocca, Essex (UK), Frankfurt (Germany), Manchester (UK), Notre Dame (USA), Oxford (UK), and Pompeu Fabra (Spain). The members of the Steering Committee are a diverse group of scholars representing a wide range of disciplines, research interests, theoretical stances, and methodological approaches. Such variety of expertise provides students with a rich academic experience and a broad array of opportunities to pursue their research and career interests.

The first call for applications was largely successful: More than 120 candidates applied for one of the five fully-funded positions available this year. Applications came from all over the world: although Italy took the lion’s share (one third of the candidates came from our country), prospective PhD students also applied from Eastern Africa (20), Asia (19), Middle East (15), other European countries (10), Northern Africa (7), Western Africa (7), South America (4), and Middle Africa (3).
RETHINKING THE CULTURE OF TOLERANCE
EUROPE, BORDERS AND MIGRATIONS

International Summer School
East Sarajevo and Sarajevo
18-24 September 2017

The International Summer School “Rethinking the Culture of Tolerance”, as a joint program of the University of Milano-Bicocca, the University of Sarajevo and the University of East Sarajevo, started in September 2017 its second three-year cycle.

The new project concerns the concept and practice of toleration across European societies in the light of the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 2019.

The first edition of the School, entitled “Europe, Borders and Migration”, took place at the Faculty of Law of the Universities of East Sarajevo and Sarajevo from 18-24 September 2017. With 22 participants from Italy, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Germany, Macedonia, Slovenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro, the School involved more than 20 lecturers including academics and researchers from several European Universities, experts and practitioners from the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina and from international and national NGOs, as well as two visual artists.

The main topic of the School was approached from an interdisciplinary point of view, in such a way as to shed light both on the current ‘refugee crises’ and its consequences, and on the legacy of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. The Embassy of the Republic of Italy in Bosnia-Herzegovina supported the School with the Patronage for the third time; the Ambassador H.E. Nicola Minasi addressed the students during the final ceremony, pointing out once again the importance of new and alternative European bounds and solidarity.

Next year, in September 2018, the School will be hosted by the University of Milano-Bicocca, and in 2019 again at the University of Sarajevo.
KO.existence

Photography exhibition “Rethinking the Culture of Tolerance”
Casa dei Diritti, Bomprezzi Hall, 10, via De Amicis, Milan
23-29 October 2017

Without ever meeting in person, two photographers, Matteo Ceschi (from Milano, Italy) and Jim Marshall (a long-time resident of Sarajevo, originally from Scotland) created KO.existence - a B&W photo reportage, inspired by the theme of the 2016 International Summer School “Rethinking the Culture of Tolerance” that was organized in Sarajevo, September 2016.

The title of the series of 50 photographs is a pun implying a challenge to the viewers to rethink their notion of "coexistence" and avoid the danger of a social "knock out", which is why "co.existence" became "KO.existence". Each photographer has approached in his own style the different issues of contemporary co-existence trying to give substance to the suffix word "KO".

Organized by the Department of Sociology and Social Research, University of Milano-Bicocca, the exhibition opened on 23 October 2017 at the House of Rights of the City of Milan. The exhibition has been introduced by a public conference on the Culture of Tolerance, coordinated by Tatjana Sekulić. The conference has hosted several scholars from the University of Milano-Bicocca, the University of Milan, and the University Vita Salute San Raffaele (Milan), committed to the International Summer School from the very beginning.

After the first week, the exposition moved to the University of Milano-Bicocca.

Photograph: Jim Marshall
IN LAMPEDUSA TO DESIGN A SUSTAINABLE HOUSING PROVISIONS FOR THE MIGRANTS

VII School of Higher Education in Sociology of Territory
14-21 September, 2017

The VII School of Higher Education “A Lampedusa per progettare un’accoglienza sostenibile” (“In Lampedusa to design a sustainable housing provisions for the migrants”) promoted by AIS Sezione di Sociologia del Territorio and under the supervision by a scientific board formed by Silvia Mugnano (UNIMIB), Carlo Colloca (UNICAT) e Antonietta Mauzzette (UNISS), took place from the 14th to the 21st of September 2017, at Marine Protected Area of Pelagian Islands, Lampedusa.

24 students coming from several Italian universities and with different academic and professional profiles (sociologists, social workers, architects and urbanists) actively attended the school; and 36 academics engaged the students in interesting lectures and also guided them in the preparation of a final research project, which as every year at the end, it has been presented at local institutions and local communities.

This year several meetings with the local communities have been very moving and interesting. Among all, it is worth to mention, the day passed with Bartolo, the local doctor and responsible of the health care spot and polyclinic of Lampedusa (ASP Palermo). The famous “Lampedusa Doc” has told to the students his difficult working experience. For the last thirty years he has operated on the first line providing the medical first aid to hundreds of refugees landed safely to the Lampedusa’s cost but also has witnessed several tragic moments, such as the tragedy happened the 3rd October 2013 when 368 people lost their lives, among which 83 women and 9 children.

During the entire week the students got in contact with several testimonies offered by the local organizations operating on the island like the visit at the municipal cemetery with the “Forum Lampedusa Solidale” to pay a tribute to the migrants’ victims, the tour to the exhibition of the museum “Porto M” or the walk through the island guided by “Legambiente”.

A special attention should be paid to the study visit to the Hotspot of Lampedusa, this was the first time that scientific academic group had the opportunity to access to an hotspot, a shelter center for the migrants who come to the island. The center can host up to 300 people, who should stay, by law maximum 72 hours only for the indentification procedure but often becomes no adequate semi-temporary solution.

Photograph: at the policlynic with Pietro Bartolo

Photograph: Students at work - Marine Protected Area of Pelagian Islands, Lampedusa
THE THIRD MISSION OF UNIVERSITIES

CGIL - Camera del Lavoro Metropolitana di Milano

Starting from 2015, a group of students of the undergraduate courses in Sociology and Organization Sciences and of the graduate course in Sociology were involved in an experimental and innovative idea for stage opportunities, promoted in collaboration with the CGIL territorial trade union organization (Camera del Lavoro Metropolitana di Milano) and its territorial offices (specifically the offices of Giambellino, Gorgonzola, Lambrate, Rho, San Siro and Sesto San Giovanni). The initial collaboration between the Department of Sociology and Social Research and the Camera del Lavoro on stage opportunities for students has more recently developed into a formal and broader agreement of cooperation signed with the University of Milano-Bicocca and envisaging several fields of exchange and cooperation - both in research and training - to explore in the future.

Up to October 2017, around 35 students - trained, monitored and constantly supervised by Diego Coletto, Ivana Fellini and Giovanna Fullin - spent their 150 hours of stage participating to an explorative field research to study the services offered by the Camera del Lavoro (from the initial reception and screening to both traditional trade unions’ services and welfare and fiscal services) and the social needs of people addressing them. Another group of 7 was recently involved, under other forms of collaboration, to produce reports and syntheses of the very extensive research material students gathered along the three years (over 800 pages of ethnographical notes, around 280 semi-structured interviews and 800 questionnaires) and to carry out a special focus on young people’s representations of trade unions. Thanks to this opportunity, our students intensively confronted with the design and the use of different research tools (ethnographic observations, field-notes, interviews, focus group and questionnaires) in a context different from that of a research institution. Moreover, some of them based their final exam (“relazione finale”) on a more in-depth analysis of aspects that interested them during the stage.

The underlying idea for the “research-stage”, suggested by the Camera del Lavoro, was that people using services offered by their territorial offices are often coping with a very diverse range of problems and difficulties, only partially detectable when they address services to accomplish bureaucratic or administrative procedures or anyway to cope with a very specific problem. A more in-depth analysis of their personal conditions and lived experiences could help to understand the multidimensional character of their needs – and, from a sociological perspective, gather hints on changes in social needs in metropolitan contexts - and lead to a better managing of the territorial support the Camera del Lavoro can promote.

Along the three years, both in informal and formal occasions, students have presented the state of the art of their work, showing enthusiastic interest and satisfaction for the stage experience, shared by the tutors in charge of them in the territorial offices. On November 21st, with a public event organized by the Camera del Lavoro Metropolitana di Milano and our Department, students presented their work and discussed main results from the prolonged participant observation they carried out and from semi-structured interviews and the survey they contributed to realize.