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Barbara Bracco: The project of the widespread museum at the Bicocca district

Barbara Bracco is Full Professor of Contemporary History at the Department of Sociology and Social Research, University of Milano-Bicocca. She has authored various volumes on the history of wars and memory. More recently she has studied the history of crime news and the social representations of violence.

Amongst her most recent publications:


You are promoting an important new project: the widespread museum. What is it?

We all know what a museum is and understand its importance, but we are not always aware that the history of a civilization, a nation, a city or a historical figure cannot be contained within the borders of a building. In fact, in recent years we have been thinking about a different form of "collection" of cultural heritage: the widespread museum. Its aim is to promote the tangible and intangible assets of a geographical area and to build a themed itinerary in that area.

Where will it be?

In the case of the University of Milan-Bicocca and the Bicocca district of Milan, the project of a widespread museum has two fundamental objectives. The first is to build a relationship between the heritage preserved in our University (and other buildings in the area) and the urban landscape. The second is to establish (or re-establish) a link between past and present. The University of Milan-Bicocca has twenty years of history and preserves a heritage of objects, images, machines that can and must tell the story of a district that represented an important suburb of the city of Milan in the last century. The buildings that house the University are part of an urban landscape that, on the one hand, is witness to the redevelopment of the district (with spaces and buildings that today house many creative activities) and, on the other hand, still documents the imprint of its past as an
industrial area. The photograph you see next to this interview documents in an exemplary way the relationship between internal heritage and the neighborhood and, at the same time, between past and present. It is an image that reminds us of the industrial origins of the area and, after all, the genesis of the neighborhood as we see and live it today. It is part of a collection that the Department of Sociology and social research has kept since its foundation.

**What is the role of photographs in this project?**

These are original photographs or reproductions exhibited in the common areas of the Department, collected at the beginning of the University’s activities and coming from different archives (Pirelli Foundation, Institute of Resistance, etc.). Our widespread museum project aims to catalog these dozens of images and enhance their value by giving them greater visibility and accompanying them with informative notes that, in addition to the archival provenance, date, eventual author, provide a description of the historical context of the subjects photographed. In fact, these photographs depict places and people not only in the Bicocca area but also in the entire city of Milan between the beginning and the end of the 20th century. They effectively document the relationship not only between this suburb and the city center but also and above all between the past and the present, the profound transformation of the urban, social, political and cultural context of this area. From industrial work to landscape, from the role of women to the partisan struggle, this collection is basically a narrative tape that tells urban metamorphoses and even more the social and cultural transformations of an entire city.
Sveva Magaraggia and Arianna Mainardi
Just to be kept in the picture: Gender studies centres @ the Department

Sveva Magaraggia, Associate Professor, is national expert on Gender Based Violence for EIGE-European Institute for Gender Equality. Currently she is part of the Inter-University Centre for Gender Studies “Culture di Genere”, University of Milan-Bicocca and of the Fondazione Badaracco, Milan. Since 2014 she is part of the Femicide Research Network (LCSS: London Centre for Social Studies). In 2014-2016 she was co-chair of AtGender, the The European Association for Gender Research, Education and Documentation. In 2015 she was awarded with a DAAD Scholarship and conducted research in Frankfurt, Germany, on “gender relations and parenthood”. Same theme was researched in 2012 in Sydney, Australia, where she was awarded with the “Endeavour Research Fellowship” (Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations).

Amongst her most recent publications:
- with S. BENASSO (2019) In transition... Where to? Rethinking Life Stages and Intergenerational Relations of Italian Youth, Societies, vol. 9, no. 7.

Arianna Mainardi, postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Milano-Bicocca. Vice-chair of the Women’s Network at ECREA (European Communication Research and Education Association). She has been Visiting Fellow at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, and Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Scuola Normale Superiore.

Amongst her publications:

The corridors of our Department aren’t just places of passage, they have been transformed into a journey through history. The past we see in the photos is not only that of Pirelli’s workers engaged in the tiring factory life of the 1950s, but also that of women and men struggling with the most varied daily activities. We see bodies engaged in daily life activities but also bodies in the foreground in the political space; images in which the dimensions of the public and private intertwine creating a political intimacy that strikes for the expressive power and contemporaneity of the meanings. What is revealed is a lively look at history that resonates well in the corridors of a Sociology Department. These walls tell us about a sensibility that since its foundation crossed our Department. Antonio De Lillo, former Head of Department, is the one who had chosen the pictures. When we
walk in the corridor the message that echoes is that we can’t forget our history and that our present is defined also by the movements that fought for our rights.

What are the main experiences on Gender Studies?
Indeed, since it’s foundation our University has supported the creation of gender studies centres. The interdepartmental Centre ABCD (Ateneo Bicocca Coordinamento Donne) was born at the end of 1999 as a meeting point and intended to be a place of debate between the women who live in this University. The inventor is our Department. Here, in fact, there is a core of professors - many of whom come from the experience of the Women’s Center of the University of Milan - which expresses a consolidated interest in gender issues. ABCD organizes initiatives and seminars in an interdisciplinary perspective. In the same year Carmen Leccardi is appointed rectoral delegate for Gender Issues and Equal Opportunities. This is a new figure, defined by a 1999 memorandum of understanding between the then President of CRUI Luciano Modica and Laura Balbo, Minister for Equal Opportunities. Since 2004 our Department is the core organising institution, with the Equality Committee (CUG) of the lifelong course “Genere Politica e Istituzioni”.

These courses, implemented in the first years by the Ministry of Equal Opportunities adopt a gendered lens, and have been able to bring people with different personal paths into our University. Further they promote us as catalysts and point of reference for people with different life projects and social situations, but with common interests. This project is now at its 12th edition, also thanks to the internal support of our University. Further, since 2013 our Department hosts the ADV-Italy Project, a network that promotes knowledge and researches on Gender-based Violence and is the driving force of the first Inter-university Centre for Gender Studies of Milan. Six Universities of Milan are part of it, and it is active in organising conferences, seminars, researches and activities with a gendered perspective. In recent years the Centre has become a reference point for the institutions of Milan, and it is a strong bridge between academia and civil society. Since 2018 our University is committed to publish a Gender Budget, and even in this endeavour our Department played a key role. All the above-mentioned experiences have both a national and international character.
And how is it possible to connect today with tomorrow?

It is about time to add a new picture on the walls of our Department. A snapshot that condenses all these endeavours and the importance that we are acquiring at European level: this picture could be taken during the 11th European Feminist Conference (EFRC) that we will host in June 2021. In our ambivalent and contradictory time, this international conference represents one of the major opportunities for feminist, queer and gender studies scholars, activists, artists and policy makers to gather and exchange experiences, and in 2021 we will discuss about “Social Change in a Feminist Perspective: Situating Gender Research in Times of Political Contention”.

Credits to Marzio Molli, 1975
The Governance of Large-Scale Projects: Local Governments and Finance Capital Interaction in Milan and Brussels

Veronica Conte
ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Veronica_Conte

Abstract: Is the governance of large-scale projects converging in Europe? How can we explain the different interaction between local governments and finance capital in the making of the city? What role do local governments play in urban transformations? In this dissertation, I address the aforementioned questions through a comparative analysis between CityLife in Milan and Tour and Taxis in Brussels.

To do so, I draw on the Urban Political Economy literature and, specifically, on Urban Regime Analysis and the accounts on the financialization of the city and urban governance. Having outlined the development trajectories and the governance architecture of Milan and Brussels, I examine the case studies in their development over time, in terms of actors involved, resources exchanged, investments and political logics, and institutional and regulatory frameworks.

I argue that CityLife in Milan and Tour and Taxis in Brussels are indicative of a governance shift sustained by the consolidation of development coalitions oriented to promote urban growth and respond to real estate interests. In both contexts, the governance of large-scale projects is increasingly shaped by the adoption of entrepreneurial practices and an instrumental use of planning. However, such practices differ in terms of scope and scale. CityLife is emblematic of a financialised governance of large-scale projects aimed at promoting the making of Milan as an ‘international city’. In Brussels, instead, Tour and Taxis is an emblematic example of a public-led entrepreneurial governance and is pivotal to the consolidation of the role of the Brussels Capital Region in urban development matters.

Keywords: mega-projects, governance, local governments, finance capital, Milan, Brussels
Abstract: This PhD dissertation is aimed at studying health inequalities in the Italian city of Milan. Moving from the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the Fundamental Causes Theory and the Social Determinants of Health approach this work intends to provide both an accurate mapping of the distribution of health conditions within the Milanese territory – and its association with individual and contextual socioeconomic status – and to contribute to the debate on the presence of neighbourhood effects on health. A fine-grained study of disease distribution among the neighbourhoods of the city of Milan was missing, and we opted to focus on Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus in light of its typical association with both individual socioeconomic conditions and environmental characteristics.

Relying on the unprecedented use of administrative healthcare data provided by the Epidemiology Unit of the Health Protection Agency of the Metropolitan City of Milan, linked with data from the most recent Italian census, we performed a multilevel population-based case-control study, aimed at assessing the relative impact of individual and neighbourhood socioeconomic status on the probability of developing the disease. Our results confirmed the presence of a social gradient in the distribution of the disease, with an increasing prevalence in correspondence with lower educational attainment. Moreover, we found evidence of a territorial heterogeneity in the distribution of the disease, which was not entirely explained by individual socioeconomic status.

In line with the existing literature, we found that individual characteristics still play a major role in explaining risk exposure, but also that the context where people live has a non-negligible effect and should be encompassed in the design of policies aimed at tackling the disease and reducing social inequalities at its onset.

Keywords: Health Inequalities; Neighbourhood Effects; Multilevel Modelling; Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus; Social Epidemiology.
The book, published by Il Mulino in 2019, collects the results of the survey work carried out by the research unit of Luiss LabGov.City, within the project “Casa Bene Comune. Dall’housing collaborativo all’housing di conunità” [House as a Commons. From collaborative housing to community housing]. The research is based on a legal and empirical analysis carried out at national and international level in order to identify innovative and sustainable management models in the public and social housing sector. It highlights the emerging variety of solutions and governance models, building its analysis on the theoretical framework of the Co-City’s protocol based on five design principles. The book shows the need for the public housing management companies to acquire a new centrality in the “complex and articulated architecture of the public policies dealing with the social disease”; as well as the importance of the public role (versus the privatization) in promoting, supporting, facilitating, moderating, monitoring, and being an enabling platform for all the actors involved in housing projects, through a polycentric model of governance. The text also highlights the need of involving patient or long-term investors to strengthen the existing public housing infrastructures and go beyond the real estate fund system, through a model that guarantees return on investment but also social and climate sustainability, thus minimizing the risks normally associated with this type of project. The book sees the contributions of Christian Iaione, Elena De Nictolis, Fabiana Bettini, Chiara Prevete and Monica Bernardi.
The Sociological Encyclopaedia of Places, edited by Giampaolo Nuvolati, is a collegian work that involves Italian urban sociologists in a reflection on how places are evolving, and on their past and present roles in shaping cities and marking the destinies of inhabitants and city users. The first volume of the Encyclopaedia has been published in December 2019, thanks to the contribute of twenty-four authors facing more than twenty places, from airports to houses, from urban parks to universities, from underground to coworking. The volume offers reading keys and theoretical coordinates, as well as case presentations, useful to develop localized research, and reduce the apathy towards spatial contexts that often characterizes sociological research. The term encyclopaedia may betray an excess of ambition, but it seemed the most suitable to convey the idea of a work able to touch many places: from those related to transport to those related to leisure, from those related to public safety to those related to consumption, and so on. Volume II is forthcoming with other nineteen lemmas.
The eBook edited by Fondazione Feltrinelli ("Scenari Series") reports the outputs emerged from the 2019 edition of URBANA. It is an initiative promoted by the Department of Sociology and Social Research of the Milano-Bicocca University since 2017 with the aim of fostering bridges and connections between citizens, researchers, scholars, artists, policy and city makers of the city of Milan. The 2019 edition has focused on the relationship between the centre and the suburbs, involving other two peripheral universities, Politecnico of Milan (Bovisa) and Libera Università IULM (Barona). The first working day saw actors coming from the academic, associative and institutional field, reflecting through guided panels on issues related to local identity, mobility and quality of life in the relationship between the territory and the University. The second day allowed participants to critically experience the three territories through guided flâneries in the three districts involved in the initiative. The volume collects the results of the two days thanks to the contributions of members and non-members of the Department (Giampaolo Nuvolati, Elena dell’Agnese, Sonia Stefanizzi, Matteo Colleoni, Greta Scolari, Luca Bottini, Monica Bernardi, Franca Zuccoli).
Davide CASELLI
Esperti. Come studiarli e perché

ANDREA CERRONI
Understanding the Knowledge Society

VERONICA CONTE
with F. Brill
Understanding project mobility: the movement of King’s Cross to Brussels and Johannesburg
In Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space

ALESSANDRA DECATALDO
with C. Liberati, A. Michelangeli, M. Tognetti
Millenials e religione: divergenza o continuità rispetto alla generazione dei genitori?
in Religioni e società
XXXI, 93, 21-28, 2019

with C. Facchini, B. Fiore
Le laureate in Sociologia tra sottoimpiego e sottovalutazione
in Quaderni di Sociologia
LXIII, 79, 123-149, 2019

PAOLO ROSSI
Non sarà un’avventura? L’innovazione delle partnership pubblico-privato e la co-progettazione dei servizi di welfare sociale
in Stato e Mercato
117, 411-447, 2019
with T. Bertotti
La costruzione «orizzontale» della discrezionalità nei servizi sociali, tra identità organizzative e meccanismi di integrazione delle Street-Level Bureaucracy
in Politiche Sociali
3, 447-468, 2019

with S. Negrelli
Trasformazioni del lavoro e welfare aziendale
in Politiche Sociali
1, 117-136, 2019

**EMANUELA MARIA SALA**

with C. Facchini
Anziani e nuove tecnologie. Rischi e opportunità
in Autonomie locali e servizi sociali, Quadrimestrale di studi e ricerche sul welfare
2, 151-162, 2019

with A. Gaia
Older People’s Use of «Information and Communication Technology» in Europe. The Italian Case
In Autonomie locali e servizi sociali, Quadrimestrale di studi e ricerche sul welfare
2, 163-183, 2019

**SARA SPANU**

with A. Mazzette (eds.)
Sassari. Tra declino e un futuro possibile
*Series Sociologia delle città italiane*
Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli 2020
The Research Infrastructure Commission of the University of Milan-Bicocca launched a Call of interest to promote the analysis and study of online teaching methods activated due to the COVID-19 health emergency. Prof. Alessandra Decataldo is the coordinator of one of the four selected projects. She will coordinate an interdisciplinary group on a project entitled “Give value to the emergency”.

GIVE VALUE TO THE EMERGENCY

Call of interest – April 2020
WORKSHOP: OLDER PEOPLE, SOCIAL NETWORKS AND WELL-BEING

Milan, 21 September 2020

On September 21th 2020 the Department of Sociology and Social Research will host the international workshop Older people, social networks and well-being. The workshop is part of the project Ageing in a Networked Society, coordinated by Emanuela Sala. Keynote speakers are Marja Aartsen (OsloMet) e Kieran Walsh (National University of Ireland Galway). The deadline for the abstract submission is May, 31st 2020 (agingnetworkedsociety@unimib.it). For more information on the project, see https://aginginanetworkedsociety.wordpress.com/workshop-older-people-social-networks-and-well-being-call-for-papers/
APPOINTMENTS

On 25 January 2020 Alessandra Decataldo was elected member of the board AIS (Associazione Italiana di Sociologia) for the period 2020-2023.

On 1 February 2020 Alberta Argia Andreotti was elected member of the board of SISEC (Società Italiana di Sociologia economica) for the period 2020-2023.