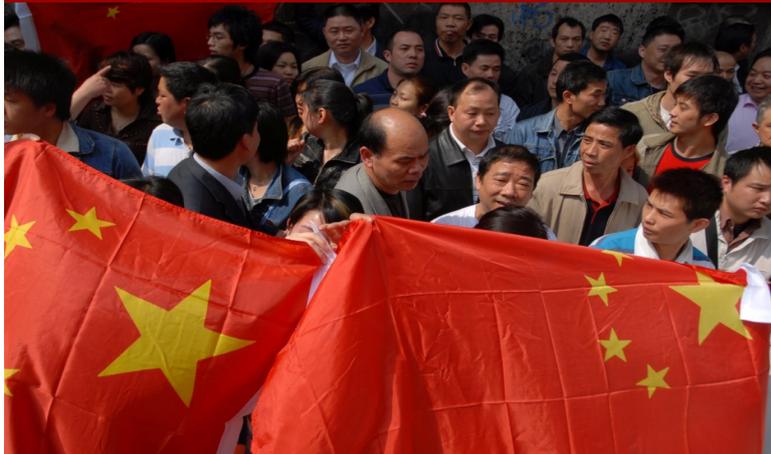


Film Releases

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VISUAL APPROACHES TO URBAN ETHNOGRAPHY

A Social Documentary from the Milan's Chinatown



The Urban Conflict in Paolo Sarpi Street on April 12, 2007.

Filmmaking and Ethnographic Research: the backstage.

The documentary is focused on contested urban spaces and it approaches the riots in Milan's Chinatown under the lens of gentrification, globalization and migration policies in Italy.

The author/director has recently won a Student Award by presenting her work at the Visual Sociology section of the American Sociological Association - ASA Annual Conference, in Denver Colorado, where the documentary was screened (August 2012).

I shot this documentary in 2008 during the ethnography that I was carrying out for my master degree in Social and Political Communication at the University of Milan. I have never had any particular competence in filmmaking. Of course, I used to be a journalist for over ten years, so I have probably developed a visual sense, but it was more than that.

The empirical research was done to observe a process of urban transformation taking place as political and cultural gentrification of an ethnic neighborhood, while at the same time building the social construction of stereotypes and prejudice.

I got a call. I was there with my notes and my camera, and I felt the need to represent "another story" from the Milan's Chinatown. Thus, I gave voice to my "social actors". After three years from the final editing, a class on film directing, some publications and a few public screenings I believe it is time to forgive my incompetence and disseminate this visual knowledge.



The visual tells
about the city

Filmed in Milan, Italy.
Independent Production by
Lidia K.C. Manzo
Genre: social documentary
Author, Director: Lidia K.C.
Manzo
Editor: Francesca Cogni
Director of Photography and
Camera Operator:
Mariangela Giannoccaro
Assistant Camera: Antonia
Giannoccaro
Camera Operator on De
Corato's interview: Lidia K.C.
Manzo
English Subtitles Editors:
Marco Ligabue e Lorenza
Salati
English Language Supervisors:
Laura D'Abbondanza and
Danny Berryman.

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English published works of the author on Milan's Chinatown include "The 'Asian Betweeners'. Cultural Identities and the new communication technologies", in German, M. & Banerjee, P. 2011 (eds), *Migration, Technology & Transculturation: A Global Perspective*, and "Emergent spaces, contemporary urban conflicts. Experiences of social mix in changing neighborhoods: The case study Milan's Chinatown", in Cami Yeakey, C. 2012 (eds), *Living on the Boundaries: Urban Marginality in National and International Contexts*.

A-WAY from PAOLO SARPI

(Original: "VIA | da | PAOLO SARPI")

2009. 49 minutes. Color. EN subt.

Synopsis

Few of the spaces of Milan are so strongly loaded with cultural and political baggage as "Chinatown" – the ethnic neighborhood on Paolo Sarpi Street – where a handful of roads, the global flow of Chinese goods, and the daily routines of elderly people and families are merged. The complexity of the "Sarpi Question" is precisely determined by the discussion of social dimensions, space and ethnorracial, economic and political, all at once.

The documentary presents the images of Jianyi, member of AssoCina, as an example of the extreme vitality of the second generation Chinese, together with the ones of the "liberal" Chinese Catholic Pastor - Don Paolo Chen - and the entrepreneurial Chinese Overseas success symbolized in Oriente Store and in its pioneer: Uncle Romanino. Totally unexpected, we discover the cosmopolitan character of Walter - the neighborhood's butcher – who is capable of combat the rhetoric on cultural diversity in his little store. In this cultural complexity, if on one side there are young Chinese people who appreciate the luxury of Italian fashion, on the other we find Italian local store owners who build up independent associations to preserve presumed national identities.





This framework deals with reclaiming urban space and the requalification processes aimed at improving the physical context of the Sarpi area, and especially at starting up processes of financial revitalization.

The voice of Italian residents is only one of those emerging from the results of this research, along with those of business owners, city users, and local politicians. It is an interplay between antagonism and juxtaposition in which I have tried to highlight the existing conflict with the aim of understanding and explaining the tension in this urban space.

The opening conclusions deal with the paradox of the urban safety policies promoted by the Milan local government as a place of decompression in the face of strong social pressure on immigration, precariousness, and insecurity. Strategies aimed at places to act on people.

Screenings

- August 2012. ASA Conference - Denver, Colorado USA.
- July 2012. ISA, TG05 Workshop on *Visual Sociology* - Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- November 2011, Mass Communications, Delaware State University - Dover, USA.
- October 2011. Public Anthropology Conf., American University - Washington DC, USA.
- April 2011. SIEF Conference, Universidade Nova de Lisboa - Portugal.
- April 2011. BSA Annual Conference - London School of Economics - GB.
- March 2011. Urban Affairs Association Conference - New Orleans, USA.
- November 2010. Materiali di Antropologia Visiva, Università La Sapienza - Roma, Italy.
- April 2010, Urban Hybridization Conference, Politecnico di Milano - Italy.
- January 2010. Docucity 2010 Award - Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy.
- November 2009. International "Gold Panda" Awards for Students - Sichuan, China.
- October 2009. SMMS - Research Center of University of Trento - Italy.

Lidia K.C. Manzo is a PhD Candidate in Sociology at the University of Trento, Italy. She has a MA in Political and Social Communication at University of Milan where she has carried out an ethnographic research and a social documentary production of Milan's Chinatown. Currently she is a Visiting Researcher at The City University of New York where

she's conducting field research based on the study of 40 years span of gentrification of a Brooklyn neighborhood. Her area of interest in the field of urban studies is connected with the analysis of socio-cultural boundaries in super-gentrified neighborhoods. She works reflexively both on ethnographic experience using visual methods.

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