



L'Aquila, Italy
27-29 June



Simone Ghezzi, associate professor, University of Milan-Bicocca, Italy

Artisan entrepreneurs: how the culture of craftsmanship shapes a local economy

Entrepreneurship is often viewed as a vocation, a driving force empowering individuals who are willing to take risks to possibly produce something different or new. Yet, an enterprising behaviour, whether innovative or imitative, does not come from a vacuum. Local culture plays a relevant role. It provides the fertile ground for various forms of entrepreneurship that develop within networks of thick sociality. It is in the same context that craftsmanship develops and becomes an essential asset of artisan entrepreneurs. No longer an exclusive feature of small-scale and artisan production, over time craftsmanship has become a defining aspect of the regional economies of Italian capitalism. Yet, both entrepreneurship and craftsmanship should not be considered as “given”, merely structural components of the system. They may decline and vanish at any time if neglected by institutions which should have a vested interest in their reproduction.

Short bio:

Simone Ghezzi (PhD, University of Toronto) is associate professor in economic anthropology at the University of Milan-Bicocca. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University (Providence), visiting professor at Huazhong Agricultural University, College of Human Science and Law (Wuhan, China), and at the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto (Canada). He is a member of the editorial boards of *Etno-antropologia*, and *Antropologia (New Series)*. He is also member of the URBEUR faculty board (PH.D programme in Urban and Local European Studies – Università di Milano-Bicocca and other European partners). His research interests include: family entrepreneurship, informal economies, culture and economy, artisan production, local development and kinship. He is currently continuing his research on the relationship between artisan and industrial production in northern Italian industrial districts.

Recent Publications:

2019 (with Enzo Mingione.) "Unsustainable Capitalism: Marx and Polanyi Contributions", in *Fiscaeconomia* 3(2, Special Issue):95-110.

2018 "On the social (dis)embedding of the economy in a local context: where anthropology and sociology share metaphors as analytical tools", in Andreotti, A, Y. Kazepov, D. Benassi (eds.) *Western capitalism in transition. Global processes, local challenges*. Manchester, Manchester University Press

"Familism in the Firm An Ethnographic Approach to Italian Family Capitalism", *Ethnologie française*, 2016/2 (N° 162), pp. 241-254, ISSN 0046-2616.

"Familism as a context for entrepreneurship in Northern Italy, *Human Affairs*, 25 (1): 58-70, ISSN 1210-3055