



DELIBERA

Organo	COMITATO PER IL RECLUTAMENTO E LO SVILUPPO DELLE CARRIERE
Data seduta	25 settembre 2018
Sede	Via Calepina 14, Trento – riunione telematica
Oggetto	Valutazione di ricercatore di cui all'art. 24, comma 3, lett. b), L. 240/2010 ai fini della chiamata nel ruolo di professore associato: dott. Andrea BRIGHENTI, Dipartimento di Sociologia e Ricerca Sociale
Allegati	-

Sono presenti alla deliberazione:

VALENTINA NIDER	Presidente	P
ALBERTO BELLIN	Componente	P
YURI BOZZI	Componente con funzioni di segretario	P
LUCA NOGLER	Componente	P
RAUL PAOLO SERAPIONI	Componente	P

Visto lo Statuto dell'Università degli Studi di Trento emanato con D.R. 167 del 23.04.2012;

Vista la legge 30 dicembre 2010 n. 240 "Norme in materia di organizzazione delle Università, di personale accademico e reclutamento, nonché delega al Governo per incentivare la qualità e l'efficienza del sistema universitario" e in particolare l'art. 24, comma 5;

Visto il Regolamento per il Reclutamento e la progressione di carriera di professori e ricercatori, emanato con D.R. n. 563 del 29 ottobre 2013 e in particolare l'art. 32 "Valutazione dei titolari dei contratti di cui all'art. 20, comma 1, lettera b) del presente Regolamento ai fini della chiamata nel ruolo di professore associato";

Visti i "Criteri per la valutazione dei ricercatori a tempo indeterminato con contratto di cui al comma 3, lettera b), dell'art. 24 della Legge 240/2010, ai fini della chiamata nel ruolo di professore associato", approvati dal Comitato per il Reclutamento e lo Sviluppo delle Carriere nella seduta del 21 luglio 2015;

Vista la delibera del Consiglio del Dipartimento di Sociologia e Ricerca Sociale del 21 marzo 2018, con la quale si esprime parere favorevole all'inquadramento del dott. **Andrea BRIGHENTI** nel ruolo di professore associato per il settore concorsuale 14/C2 (Sociologia dei processi culturali e comunicativi), settore scientifico disciplinare SPS/08 (Sociologia dei processi culturali e comunicativi);

Vista la propria delibera del 8 giugno 2018, con la quale sono stati individuati i referee esterni chiamati a valutare la maturità scientifica e didattica del dott. **Andrea BRIGHENTI** nel ruolo di professore associato per il settore concorsuale 14/C2 (Sociologia dei processi culturali e comunicativi), settore scientifico disciplinare SPS/08 (Sociologia dei processi culturali e comunicativi);

Viste le valutazioni espresse dai tre referee sul profilo del dott. **Andrea BRIGHENTI**, di cui sono riportati di seguito alcuni estratti:

Referee 1:

As requested, I am writing in response to your request for a reference assessing the research of Andrea Brighenti. Dr Brighenti is an excellent, creative and thoughtful scholar. I am fully aware of his work, which is widely known in the field of social theory. I have encountered his work in the past and have read a number of research outputs. His work is very well regarded (which is evidenced by his keynote talks as well as the citations of his work). His publications are highly articulate and original. Indeed, his originality and creative approach are significant strengths that ensure that he will continue with his successes into the future.

As well as having a track record of producing engaging and substantial books he has also published a wide range of peer reviewed chapters and articles. His book on visibility is a particular notable contribution to the field and is the leading text in that particular topic. His The Ambiguous Multiplicities book is a fascinating intervention into cultural materialities that will continue to be widely read. I notice that he also has strong book projects in the pipeline. Beyond these achievements, Dr Brighenti is an active editor who has published key collections – his edited works on urban cultures and materiality have been particular important. These editorial projects are indicative of someone who is taking a lead in the field and who is actively shaping these international debates. The journals Dr Brighenti has published in is impressive as is the scope of his peer-reviewed outputs. His major achievement in terms of article outputs is perhaps his article on 'The Social Life of Measures' in Theory, Culture & Society. [...]I know that this journal is extremely difficult to publish in. Dr Brighenti's article is a standout piece that has had significant impact.



Indeed, it is a crucial intervention in debates around cultures of measurement. I see this as being an example of the creative and cutting edge work that he is doing at the forefront of social theory, urban sociology and visibility. Taken together, this is an impressive range and depth of publications that are illustrative of his significant research strengths and standing. This is complemented by his notable list of keynote presentations and other conference papers. These show the international standing and activity of Dr Brighenti.

Overall, I have no hesitation in recommending that you promote him. In my view, Dr Brighenti exceeds the standards that might be expected for promotion to Associate Professor and I would fully support his application. I am confident that he will continue to flourish and to build his international reputation over the coming years and he already has an impressive portfolio of research outputs.

Referee 2:

I write this letter in order to express my highest possible regard for Dr. Andrea Mubi Brighenti outstanding accomplishments and promise in scholarship and professional service. Dr. Andrea Mubi Brighenti impeccable record of innovative research, outstanding publication record, and excellent leadership should grant him a promotion to associate professor with tenure.

More specifically, Dr. Andrea Brighenti's research and scholarly contributions on visibility, territories and public spaces, have been recognized internationally and made significant contribution to social theory. Here are some examples to illuminate and support this statement.

Visibility -- *One of the key questions that engage scholars in social sciences is the issue of visibility and its relationships with surveillance and control practices. In his ongoing theoretical work on the concept, Brighenti has managed to conceptualize the category of visibility and to offer a complex perspective on the contemporary dynamic between technology and society. As he has argued, "What the user actually gets is only one actualised possibility (a syntagm) within a larger matrix of possibilities envisaged and foreknown by engineers and programmers (a paradigm). Thus, what the users see is, in fact, only an epiphenomenon of the matrix" (Brighenti, 2012). He continued developing this idea in his recent paper "The visible element of the social" (2017), where he further explores the hierarchy between the virtual and the actual. This body of research has been extremely influential; I use his innovative ideas in my own research on public spaces.*

Territories and territoriality – *a significant number of books and papers of Brighenti focuses on this timely issue. Thus for example, "Beyond rhythmanalysis: towards a territorialology of rhythms and melodies in everyday spatial activities" (2018), The Ambiguous Multiplicities: Materials, episteme and politics of some cluttered social formations (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), Urban Walls. Political and Cultural Meanings of Vertical Structures and Surfaces (2018) aims at challenge assumptions that are perceived as axioms. For example, Brighenti suggests thinking of territories rather than territory. Existing and emerging territories are not one fixed and uniform thing. Territory production is a continuous process so that in one place you can find more than one territory. Territories reflect complex ideas, projects, imaginations, relationships, norms, expectations, laws, passions, all of which can be invoked in territories. People constantly have to adapt to territories, to change and adapt, it requires constant adjustment. This conceptualization is critical and influential not only in social theory but also in more concrete areas of study such as, urban planning and policy.*

Social theory-- *In general, what characterizes Andrea's work is the investigation of a specific concept, by challenging the limits of existing knowledge, as a mean to develop methods and science. This is evident in his recent paper "Beyond rhythmanalysis: towards a territorialology of rhythms and melodies in everyday spatial activities" (2018). The idea of Lefebvre's book *Éléments de rythmanalyse* (1992), have been explored vastly. Yet, Brighenti develops and integrates it to a wider science of territories, what he suggests is to enrich the standard social-scientific understanding of the relation between rhythms and territories. Dr. Brighenti is a world-class researcher, and a creative problem solver and the kind of innovator who is a rare blend of critical thinker and team player. His depth of knowledge in theory provides a unique understanding of society development globally. It is my conviction that Dr. Brighenti's intellectual and professional contributions, steady production and future publications as manifested in his impressive record, makes his promotion case clear – he should be promoted.*

Referee 3:

I am happy to respond to your request for a letter concerning the promotion of Dr Andrea Brighenti to the position of tenured Associate Professor at the University of Trento. I have known Dr Brighenti in a professional capacity since around 2010. We have never co-authored or collaborated. [...] This letter is going to be shorter than the ones I usually write. Your deadline was very tight and so I did not have time to dedicate to reading his work extensively. I will not comment on classroom teaching here as I believe my role is to evaluate research. However, I looked over your web pages. It is clear that Brighenti is able to supervise students over a wide range of thesis topics. He seems to be popular, flexible and adaptable. My best guess is that he fills valuable institutional needs in this regard. I would suggest you consult with the Departmental Chair for more information about his teaching niche, impact and responsibilities.

Looking over Dr Brighenti's CV I see a highly productive scholar. Over the past eight years he has



generated 3 completed monographs, some edited books, over 40 articles or chapters. The quality of publication venue is generally good with high points in Theory, Culture and Society and Urban Studies. There is also a strong emphasis on publishing in English as well as Italian.

Unfortunately, these days this is important for having an international reputation. I do feel Brighenti might turn the tap down a little however and focus a little more on placement. In US Sociology, the most prestigious outlets are with major university presses (Oxford, Chicago, Cambridge, California etc.) but Brighenti aims for a lower bar (Routledge, Palgrave, Ashgate). Similarly, the articles and chapters are not always in the best places. An equally strong CV might have only two monographs with a top press and twelve high impact articles in places as strong as Theory, Culture and Society.

The quality of mind in Brighenti's work is excellent. He is extremely inventive, erudite and has a literary intellectual sensibility that does not come at the price of analytic capacity. I have learned from his writings and wrote a favorable review of the book on visibility a few years ago. I detected there a certain magpie (gazza but not of course gazza ladra) quality to his writing, as if his brain was so full of ideas that he was compelled to collect them and get them down on paper one after another. The intellectual style was not unlike Benjamin or Nietzsche. At the end of the day his visibility book was full of insights but it was not quite certain how they cumulated or fit together. Still his work is adventurous and there is a sense of being taken on a journey by a highlevel intellect. This is anything but prosaic work where the author is obsessed with ticking methodology boxes. Perhaps for this reason it works best with cultural studies and British/European cultural sociology audiences – at least more so than with those in the US. When it comes to impact the CV documents several keynotes in places such as Russia, Sweden, the Czech Republic, France and of course Italy (confirming the impression of my last sentence in the prior paragraph). These talks concerned Brighenti's core themes of visibility, urbanism and territory. A trip to Google Scholar shows excellent citation impacts. Brighenti has around 1600 citations total, of which more than 1200 have come in the past five years. This is a very strong showing. It would be considered a high number for an Associate Professor with a circa 2006 PhD working in an elite US Department (Benchmark individuals with PhDs in similar year to Brighenti: Rene Almeling (Yale) 1211; Felix Elwert (Wisconsin) 1652; Cybelle Fox (Berkeley) 1069). This citation count is very strong for a junior sociologist in Italy and is outstanding for someone doing theory/qualitative sociology (demographers, criminologists etc. typically have larger scores). Citations to the four most cited items are close to the scores we would see for publications from the same years on Brighenti's topics by the world's most senior scholars (say Lyons on surveillance or Sennett on the urban). In sum, the citations are a really strong suit. Of course, citations can be a weak indicator of pure quality for a number of reasons. They do however offer quite a good read on visibility and impact and here Brighenti's record is pointing in the right direction. A lot of people are reading his work and finding it useful.

Now to benchmarking Dr Brighenti against Italian cultural sociologists known to me. To my reading he is substantially ahead of Matteo Bortolini (PhD 2000, Associate Professor Padova) and Andrea Cossu (PhD 2007, has worked at Trento) and somewhat ahead of Marco Solaroli (PhD 2010, on contract at Bologna). His work is less conventional (e.g. concerned with institutions, status struggles, influenced by Bourdieu etc.) than that of Marco Santoro (Bologna, PhD 1993, perhaps the godfather of cultural sociology in Italy today) and Monica Sassatelli (Goldsmiths, unable to find PhD year). Brighenti is more creative than these two but they hit professional norms more closely and have more disciplinary centrality. This comment reflects Brighenti's cultural studies or social philosophy qualities. The best comparison in terms of intellectual style one generation ahead would be to Roberta Sassatelli (PhD 1996, Professor Milan). She is also highly creative, crosses intellectual boundaries and writes on what some would consider slightly off-beat topics (in her case food, body, consumption; in Brighenti's territory, place, visibility). Brighenti compares favorably on quality, citations and recent volume of output with all these more long-established scholars. I also note similar patterns of publication for all the above involving both Italian (e.g. Studi Culturali, Il Mulino) and English outlets, the mixing of single authored work in quality journals with contributions to edited collections, the use of Palgrave, Sage, Routledge etc. as book publishers. This offers a comparative context for my comments in my second paragraph. To summarize I see here a very strong case. I would like to have seen more publications in leading international refereed journals and perhaps fewer in other places. A book with a leading university press would strengthen the CV. However, Dr Brighenti matches or betters tenured peers for output, citations and in my opinion research quality, especially when we control for PhD year. He substantially outperforms untenured peers. His research style will not please all Sociology Departments, especially those informed by positivism, looking for policy-relevant large grants, exploring inequality or informed by United States norms. Brighenti is influenced by philosophy and cultural studies. If your institution is looking for a highly productive scholar with a very quick mind who can produce humanities-style theoretically informed Sociology (e.g. in the mode of Bauman, Lash, Sennett, Wagner-Pacifici) that gets read and cited then Dr Brighenti is probably as good as any of his generation. He is a real intellectual, not just an academic and this shows in the thoughtful properties of his scholarship.

I believe that Dr Brighenti fully deserves a tenured appointment at Trento as an Associate Professor.



Visto il *curriculum vitae* del dott. **Andrea BRIGHENTI**;
Con voto unanime;

Delibera

1. di formulare la seguente valutazione del dott. **Andrea BRIGHENTI**, ai fini della chiamata ai sensi dell'art. 24 comma 5, L. 240/2010 nel ruolo di professore associato per il settore concorsuale 14/C2 (Sociologia dei processi culturali e comunicativi), settore scientifico disciplinare SPS/08 (Sociologia dei processi culturali e comunicativi):

*I giudizi espressi dai referee esterni sul contributo scientifico, la qualità dell'attività di ricerca e l'esperienza professionale del dott. **Andrea BRIGHENTI**, nonché sulla coerenza del suo profilo con i requisiti attesi per il ruolo di professore di seconda fascia, sono molto positivi.*

*A seguito di attenta valutazione del curriculum e delle pubblicazioni, e sulla base dei giudizi formulati dai referee, il Comitato ritiene il profilo scientifico del candidato pienamente adeguato al ruolo ed esprime parere favorevole alla chiamata del dott. **Andrea BRIGHENTI** nel ruolo di professore associato per il settore concorsuale **14/C2** (Sociologia dei processi culturali e comunicativi), settore scientifico disciplinare **SPS/08** (Sociologia dei processi culturali e comunicativi).*

F.to Il Presidente
Prof.ssa Valentina Nider

F.to Il Segretario
Prof. Yuri Bozzi