Gaoheng Zhang presents a major case study from his current book project entitled “Chinese Immigration to Italy and Cultural Identities (1998-2012): Media, Entrepreneurship, and Diplomacy.” It concerns the cultural representations of the protest by Chinese merchants in Milan’s Chinatown in 2007 and its aftermath. Both Italians and Chinese immigrants were responsible for producing cultural texts of the event. This is the first major violent protest by a single ethnic minority group against the police authorities in contemporary Italy.

Its origin and impact in cultural texts are lenses through which to address such crucial issues as the presumed Chinese mafia and the gender and racialized bias toward immigrants and Italians during recent Chinese immigration to Italy. An analysis of the protest also provides an opportunity to investigate rhetorical strategies and social effects of cultural texts in migratory processes. Gaoheng Zhang will elucidate the conceptual framework, interdisciplinary methodology, and critical implications for this case study, which will be explored at greater length in his book project. Moreover, he will clarify the significance of studying culture for a deep understanding of Chinese immigration to Italy, which is one of the most dramatic migrations in Europe in the recent decade.

All of those who are interested in Italy’s and China’s global networks, as well as migration and culture in comparative contexts, are warmly welcome.