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## **SPECIAL ISSUE/EDITORIAL**

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### **TENTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION OF *PARTECIPAZIONE E CONFLITTO***

#### ***ON BEHALF OF THE EDITORIAL TEAM:***

**Alice Mattoni, Louisa Parks, and Luca Raffini**

PARTECIPAZIONE E CONFLITTO [Participation and Conflict] was created in 2008, the first journal in Italy to specialize in work analyzing political and social participation. The journal was to be open to interdisciplinary work, internationally oriented, and founded on rigorous criteria for review. 10 years later in 2018, we believe we have respected that aim. In Italy, PaCo is a touchstone for work on contentious politics, political participation and grassroots mobilization in Europe, and is steadily becoming more and more international.

In the introduction to our first issue we described the journal as “an ambitious project born of the need to create an autonomous arena for debate dedicated to the study of the dynamics of transformation of contemporary political systems, with a specific focus on the analysis of participation and the political and social conflicts that characterize this. A journal not only about participation, but about political and social studies that place aspects of participation at their core, in all their intrinsic ambivalences, in their constitutive link to the dynamics of conflict”. We invited research and studies that focused on the transformations of politics and its principal actors: parties, interest groups, trade unions, social movements, associations, sub-cultural and counter-cultural communities, citizens’ committees and other forms of more or less formally organized

actors “from below”. We sought work that investigated the processes of democratization and new forms of democratic participation in a participatory vein, but also on the ways in which spaces for collective action were being squeezed, and dynamics of identity closure; on spaces opening up or closing down, on new forms of governance at local, national or supranational level, without forgetting those forms of participation and conflict that challenge, in more or less radical ways, the political, social, economic and cultural foundations of contemporary societies.

When we founded the journal, we did so in a context of a deep transformation/crisis of democracy in its traditional, state-bound forms. Yet the context was also one of innovation in participatory dynamics at the local and transnational levels, inviting investigations not only of the decline of conventional forms of participation, but the development of new forms of political action, including conflict. Calls to reconstruct communities on exclusive and reactionary foundations were counter-balanced, then as now, by the development of alterglobalisation movements. The image of the atomized society was balanced out by experiments with new modes of “identization” in movements and everyday relations to use the happy words of Alberto Melucci. In our first issue, 0/2008, we invited some authoritative authors to provide a critical view on the key themes and actors of political participation: on the relationship between social movement and other collective actors, on parties and their transformations, on trade unions, on the role of associationism, and on the new practices of participatory and deliberative democracy and the relationships between public policies and new forms of participation. Finally, we asked Alessandro Pizzorno, in a lengthy interview, to reflect on the paths of political participation, beginning with the actions linked to his 1966 writings in the *Quaderni di Sociologia*.

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In the past decade, the evolution of *Participation and Conflict* has followed the evolution of the social and political panorama, as is clear from a glance at the issues covered. The structure of a monographic issue accompanied by an open section has allowed us to combine depth with openness. This became all the more apparent in 2014, when the journal changed its look, acquiring a new editor and moving to a digital-only platform that allowed us more elasticity in terms of format and the number of articles published. This new format also opened up space for a review section, publishing symposia on authors, themes, or particularly important contributions.

The Symposium on Sidney Tarrow's *War, States, and Contention* - 8(1) 2015; the Symposium on Mario Diani's book “*The Cement of Civil Society: Studying Networks in*

Localities” – 8(3) 2015; and the Symposium in honor of Luigi Bobbio – 11(1) 2018, saw contributions from 23 authors engaged in open discussions.

Above all, the new *Participation and Conflict* had taken another step towards internationalizing, by choosing to combine online publication and open access with the choice to publish in English. Today, PaCo publishes work by international and Italian authors in equal measure. Among the Italian authors seizing the opportunity offered by this internationalization, a significant number are colleagues active in European and international universities as a result of the long-term crisis of the Italian university system. The special issues and articles published in PaCo over the last ten years have tackled the role, the identity, the action repertoires and the claims of movements at the local, transnational and global levels, and deepened the study of the principal movement actors and cycles that have taken center stage. They have investigated in depth the scenarios of change facing cities and States. Many have discussed the crisis of the EU, but many others have looked at other realities, particularly Latin America. They have zoomed in on the transformation of actors and organizational forms, but have also discussed individual approaches and interactions between individuals with particular attention paid to both the centrality of the dynamics of communication and the use of digital media. They have investigated the transformation of action repertoires and new (or not so new) participatory practices such as political consumption, occupation, civil disobedience and resilience and experiences in commoning. Phenomena of radicalization and political violence have been looked at, as have conflicts and the forms of participation developed in different contexts and on different issues, ranging from ethnonationalist to environmental conflicts and revolts against corruption, from religious clashes to those over neoliberalism and austerity policies. On this last issue, attention increased alongside the worsening of the economic, political and social crisis of the neoliberal model. Particular attention has also been paid to transformations in labor and the new conflicts that have accompanied these, to new urban conflicts, and to conflicts and participatory practices linked to immigration and the dynamics of mobility.

This attention to new actors and unconventional forms of participation was accompanied from the start by critical analyses of the transformations undergone by institutional actors; of the dynamics of governance, political parties, the third sector, and trade unions; and of new practices of “reconnection” and mending between institutional politics and bottom-up participation, from primaries to participatory-deliberative practices. The guiding narrative of the contributions hosted by the journal is the analysis of processes of de- and re-politicization. These processes have, in recent years, found their expression in the assertion of populism – a theme discussed ever more frequently in the pages of our journal, and in conferences and seminars alike – and anti-

mainstream parties and movements of the radical left and, above all, right. As we wrote at the start of this brief introduction, today as ten years ago social, economic and political change presents a scenario where pressure for openness and closure, the construction of new forms of transnational solidarity and regressive isolationism, coexist. In addition, the effects of crisis appear to be exacerbating reactionary, explicitly anti-democratic and openly xenophobic forces in Europe, Trump's USA, and elsewhere.

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The aim of the anniversary issue, celebrating ten years of *Paco*, is thus to look to the future, starting from the actors, spaces and themes that characterize political, economic, social, and cultural conflicts today. We asked for contributions reflecting on potential future developments related to the manifold ways in which grassroots groups seek to change societies, or to resist certain changes. We asked authors to pay particular attention to 'space' and 'time' as contextualizing aspects of conflicts, two dimensions that we felt were often neglected by existing research. The special edition aims to examine these themes beyond Europe, to shed light on conflicts in other regional contexts too. The overall goal was to build on empirical work on present day movements for change as the basis for reflections on future paths.

The articles collected in this special anniversary issue fulfill all these aims and more. Sidney Tarrow and David S. Meyer discuss the challenges faced by the anti-Trump movement in the United States, placing this movement exactly within the kind of scenario of polarizing forces we highlighted above. They describe this counter-movement against a background of a long history of "movementization" in the Republican Party and the resurgence of nativism. They ask whether the movement is effective, and in outlining the challenges faced reflect on how this might be achieved. Jennifer Todd speaks to how political change takes place at a more individual level. Her work explores everyday identity change in polarized societies, exploring the wide-ranging qualitative literature on identity change and highlighting an important and relatively new area dealing with changing away from exclusivist, closed and oppositional forms of group identity towards more open forms. Much can be taken from existing findings, she argues, but more research on everyday change through boundary work and self-work (amongst other themes) should inform our analyses. This could fuel understanding of how to move away from reactionary pressures.

Nonna Mayer also looks at more reactionary forces in contemporary society, this time voters in France's 2017 presidential elections, which saw a surge in support for

the populist radical right and, to a lesser extent, left. She provides us with a deeper understanding of how precariousness, indicated by measures of economic hardship and social and cultural isolation, impacts vote choices. Rather than the often-claimed automatic support among those in this category for the populist radical right, she finds that these individuals tend to abstain from voting, or expressing a choice, at all, and are thus silenced. Those who do vote appear to be driven by ideological division, not precariousness. Here too, our understanding of divided and polarized contemporary societies is furthered, and new paths for research into what drives electoral support for reactionary forces are opened up.

Gloria Pessina also focuses on far-right forces, though in another part of the world. She analyzes the Sabarmati Riverfront Development Project in Ahmedabad, one of the largest urban regeneration projects in India, undertaken in a region ruled by a far-right Hindu government. She discusses the evolution of the project, reflecting on the apparent absence of a conflict that many observers would have expected to occur given the scale of the intervention, as well as its social and environmental consequences. In so doing, Gloria Pessina shows that a strong ideological system that combines different narratives (development, global competition, fear and security, purity and cleanliness) underpinned the Sabarmati riverfront development in Ahmedabad. Such narratives, in turn, proved to be appealing in particular for the local middle-class, which identifies with the message of the far-right Hindu government: the respect of religious traditions, alongside an effort to conform to international development standards.

Daniela Cherubini, Giulia Garofalo Geymonat and Sabrina Marchetti's contribution moves us away from a specific regional area, offering a cross-country comparative study on domestic workers' local struggles and how they dealt with the International Labour Organization Convention n.189 on domestic workers enacted in 2011. Comparing four countries - Colombia, Italy, the Philippines and Taiwan - between 2011 and 2018, the authors explore the configurations of the strategic action field of domestic workers' rights in these countries, including the actors involved, the focus of their action, the alliances they establish, and the frames they activate. The analysis shows that Convention n.189 fostered transformations in terms of mobilization and the enlargement of rights in certain contexts. Where it promoted synergy between state and civil society actors, where it was embedded in pre-existing local struggles and larger progressive political projects, and where it was framed in ways that touched on issues of national identity. In so doing, the authors shed light on the conditions that foster a positive intertwining between international organizations and domestic civil society actors.

Louisa Parks and Mika Schröder reverse this focus on the role of international law in local settings to investigate how local voices might participate at the international lev-

el. They take a detailed look at the framing of participation by indigenous peoples and local communities in decisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Their aim is to contribute to the ongoing debate about whether the current clutch of multilateral environmental agreements can be reformed to make them fit for the purpose of managing environmental crisis – in particular by allowing wider participation - or whether radical reform and a new system is necessary. Their analysis uncovers the depth and range of meanings of participation within this multilateral environmental agreement and raises questions about how far the participation envisaged actually transfers power to indigenous peoples and local communities. Some central themes that emerge include where and when strong and weak (or directive and conditional) language is used, and where and when actors are named as accountable for participation. Although the final assessment is mixed, there are some encouraging signs in the CBD in terms of empowering local actors – though this may be too little too late given the urgency of the issues faced.

Finally, Jennifer Todd provides a rich review of trends in research on everyday identity change. This is an area of particular interest for scholars of participation and contentious politics alike, particularly at the present time, for a number of reasons. First, it looks both at how peoples' identities move into exclusivist and closed groups *and* how they move out from such groups. Second, it marries the study of ideological framing with that of personal identity in context-sensitive ways. Third, it looks at the ways that the identity politics of different processes intersect in the formation of everyday identity and change. In this sense it is a literature that can help to show us how individual level identity change feeds into wider political shifts, when taken into account in multi-level analyses. Todd suggests four insights that are particularly useful in this vein: the move towards an understanding of group boundaries that is more permeable (beyond formal and legal definitions); the identification of common mechanisms for identity and boundary change; the different repertoires of change that the once-dominated and once-dominant tend to appeal to; and the ways in which the trajectories of everyday identity change and social movements intersect.

The articles of this special 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition thus cover many of the areas the journal has devoted itself to. Yet beyond this they also give a glimpse at where new currents of participation and conflict are at work, or hint at where they may soon be at work again, and how. We hope our readers enjoy the article in this special anniversary edition, and to produce many more.

**Papers published in this Issue:**

- Bertuzzi N. (2018), "The Italian Animal Advocacy Archipelago and the Four Animalisms", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 865-890.
- Carrieri L. (2018), "Awakening the Sleeping Giant? The Euro Crisis and EU Issue Voting in Germany", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 838-864.
- Cherubini D., G. Garofalo Geymonat, and S. Marchetti (2018), "Global Rights and Local Struggles. The case of the ILO Convention n.189 on domestic work", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 717-742.
- Mayer N. (2018), "The Political Impact of Social Insecurity in France", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 646-691.
- Parks L. and M. Schröder (2018), "What We Talk about When We Talk about 'Local' Participation in International Biodiversity Law. The Changing Scope of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' Participation under the Convention on Biological Diversity", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 743-785.
- Pessina G. (2018), "The 'Missing Conflict' of the Sabarmati Riverfront. Authoritarian Governance, Neoliberalism and Water in Ahmedabad, India", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 692-716.
- Rosignoli F. (2018), "Categorizing Collective Capabilities", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 813-837.
- Tarrow S. and D.S. Meyer (2018), "Challenges of the Anti-Trump Movement", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 614-645.
- Todd J. (2018), "Everyday Identity Change. Convergences and Challenges, Achievements and Agendas of Recent Research", *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 11(3): 786-812.