Abstracts

Urban Conflicts in Immigrants Citizenship Pathways. An Introduction

by Tommaso Vitale

Immigration is a main political topic. In Western Europe social conflicts, party systems and political parties have been restructured around an emerging cleavage between integration and demarcation. At the urban level, conflict among immigrant groups and native ones and contention between immigrants and the local authorities are major political dynamics. Main literature has explained why do we observe clashes between immigrants and natives in some locations, but not in others; and what accounts for change in immigrant conflict within locales over time. Not a lot has been written about the outcomes of these conflicts and their impact on citizenship. An emerging literature is measuring important effects in terms of political inclusion, but other effects on civic and social citizenships remain partially unexplored. Empirical researches collected for this special issue stress the dimension of agency of immigrant contentious politics, and show the heuristic value of new approaches in the theory of action, taking into account recognition as well as institutional and normative constraints.

Key words: Urban Conflicts, Migrants, Public Policy, Segregation, Urban Sociology, Institutionalism, Citizenship, Political Inclusion, Contentious Politics.

'We are not illegal migrants. We are new citizens'. Migrants' mobilizations between citizenship and recognition

by Ilenya Camozzi

In the last few years there has been a significant increase in studies on migrants' associations and political participation. These analyses generally focus on the macro-social aspects of migrants' associations and political participation: scholars combine this phenomenon with the study of social capital and networks on one hand, and the concepts of civic community and political opportunity structure on

the other. Nevertheless there is still a lack of attention to both the internal dynamics of migrants' associations, and the conflictual aspects of their mobilizations. The paper presents the results of an empirical study conducted in the city of Milan examining specific forms of migrants' associations claiming citizenship and political rights. The narratives of the migrants involved in these associations shed light on their subjective perception both of mis-recognition as humans from Italian institutions and paternalistic support from Italian activists. These conflictual elements are the reason they establish associations and embark on forms of mobilization. Special attention is devoted to an impressive protest that saw migrants occupying the top of a disused industrial chimney in November 2010. The protest – which came about against the outcome of the 2009 amnesty described by migrants as 'fraudulent', and at the same time aimed to relaunch the mobilization of migrants in Italy after many years of inactivity – failed after 2 months. Internal divisions within the Immigrants' Committee on the way to conduct the protest was one of the main reasons for its failure.

Key words: Migrants' Associations and Political Participation, Recognition, Citizenship, Conflict, Protest, Italy

Urban Conflicts and Migrants and Poor City Dwellers Empowerment: Roma coming from ex-Yougoslavia in Tours, Informal Areas Inhabitants in Dakar and Tunis

by Olivier Legros

What is the contribution of urban conflicts to the migrants and poor city dwellers empowerment? The paper is based on the observation of three contentious situations – fighting against the eviction of a little slum settled by Roma migrants from the Ex-Yougoslavia in Tours (France), complaining for land facilities and other collective goods in the informal areas of Dakar and Tunis. Urban conflicts mainly contribute to social regulation. Nevertheless, by incitating the public authorities to provide facilities (Dakar, Tunis) or temporary hosting systems (Tours) these mobilizations produced positive effects on capacity building and political participation of migrants and poor city dwellers. These resources, which have a strong spatial dimension, can be converted to symbolical capital. In addition to that, the land facilities can reinforce the economical capital of the deprived populations (or, better, of a part of them).

Key words: Roma Migrants, Informal Areas Dwellers, Urban Contention, Empowerment, France, Dakar, Tunis

Problems of governance. Organisational networks and structural weaknesses of local migrant associations

by Matteo Bassoli

The article assesses the role of civil society organisations in the governance framework. It looks at the migrant associations in Milan, their characteristics and their network to interpret the so-called crowding-out effect by autochthonous pro-migrant organisations in the provision of social services. The general hypothesis, building on the well-known governance literature, is that in the last decades public authorities while shifting towards more open decision making processes in other fields, did not follow the same approach for the migrant policies for specific reasons: both internal (such as political will) and external (migrant associations weaknesses). The article, using a network analysis approach, depicts the societal configuration created by the migrant associations in Milan to show that more factors are at game in the process of political isolation. Indeed, if the political support is completely absent, as typical of non-ethnicised societies, the civil society weakness has to be tracked back to three different aspects: the organisational fragilities, the geographic-based components of migrants associations and the multiple and confounding accesses that public authorities grants to migrant associations. The migrant civil society as a whole is thus isolated from public authorities unable to fully empower its constituency and to promote political activation in a context of small political opportunities structure. Nonetheless the most central actors within the migrant network are those able to actively cooperate with public institutions.

Key words: Local Governance, Network Analysis, Local Migrant Associations

The articulation between contentious dynamics, political engagement and recognition: A focus on immigrants in North-Eastern Italy

by Michela Semprebon

Italian scholars have demonstrated growing interest in immigrants' political engagement. Most studies have focused on associationism and conventional forms of political participation, while little research has investigated their unconventional involvement. Additionally, in the context of urban conflicts, they have been assumed as passive political actors, or at least this can be deduced from the scarce attention dedicated to them. The paper aims to question this interpretation, while at the same time contributing to research on immigrants' unconventional engagement, through an examination of two conflicts that exploded in north-eastern Italy. In particular, the following questions will be addressed: what shapes can immigrants' political engagement take? How does it articulate with contentious dynamics? Can any form of recognition emerge from it? In order to answer these questions, evi-

dence will be drawn from a research carried out in the cities of Modena and Verona, between 2008 and 2010. The analysis will build on the theoretical perspective by Dancygier (2010) to then criticise its scarce dynamicity with respect to a pragmatic approach. Contentious dynamics will be inspected alongside their articulation with immigrants' political engagement. This will provide empirical material to test the key hypothesis by Dancygier, according to whom it is power which mainly contributes to the emergence of native-immigrants conflicts, and the lack of it which anticipates the emergence of immigrants-state actors conflicts. The analysis will then be taken further to explore the type of 'recognition' (Fraser and Honneth 2007) that can derive from urban conflicts.

Key words: Immigrants, Political Engagement, Pragmatism, Political Opportunity Structure, Recognition

Heterogeneity of the relations with institutions and the activism of North African descendants in French suburbs

by Nathalie Fuchs

Through an analysis of the activism of the North Africa descendants from the suburbs in Paris region in the 1990s and 2000s, this article shows the plurality of their relationship to institutions (family, school, labor, government, police, justice, etc.). The study draws on a rich empirical material (forty one life stories of activists from three organizations, and focuses on difficult terrain often resistant to any sociological objectivation. Complementing the literature on the relationship to institutions of immigrant children, the approach microsociological, mesosociological and socio-biographic, by integrating personal stories in the analysis, the meaning that actors give to their actions, is fruitful because it renders an account of the impact of the structural and institutional factors, and the singularity of individual socializing experiences and various interactions that structure durably their relationship to institutions, while underlining at the same time, how they determine the differentiated forms of collective action.

Key words: Colletive action, Activism, Institution, North African descendants, French Suburbs

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