

Newsletter No 13 2021

The Newsletter of the Research
Committee on Social Movements,
Collective Action and Social Change

G

Grassroots

The Newsletter of the ISA Research Committee RC48
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Note from the RC48 President



Dear Colleagues, Members of RC48,
I am pleased to introduce our second issue of Grassroots for 2021.

This issue includes the special report of the International Conference “When Disobedience is «social»: Democratic Protests and New Forms of Collective Action” that was held at the University of Catania, Italy, October 21-22, 2021. The Conference was the last event of the Department Project bearing the same name and had the support of our research network and the Italian Sociological Association – Research network Sociological theories and social changes. Members from ISA, and in particular from RC34 and RC48, and expert colleagues on related topics had lively interactions during the Conference. You can read a detailed report regarding this conference in this edition of Grassroots.

The central topic of discussion was that the concept of disobedience, that has traditionally expressed itself through collective actions and protests, and which configures alternative social scenarios to the status quo, needs today new sociological definitions also emerging from collective action and social movements research. The definition of disobedience in contemporary age should be seen as a right granted to the individual within democratic systems, and/or duty imposed in the interest of society, also in social and prosocial sense.

The conference, a main outcome of a two-year long research project funded by the University of Catania and the Italian Minister of University and Research (MUR), met its principal aim to highlight the several changes within the disobedience concept and action, by addressing theoretical and applicative studies relating to the issue. The classical idea of disobedience was

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overcome by the different and fertile contributions useful to update and give a nuanced shape to the concept by adhering to the intrinsically multicultural and globalised contemporary social reality.

I would like to thank all the ISA members who supported this meaningful and special event. I would like to also express my particular gratitude to the Conference Scientific and Organising Committee for their efforts.

On another topic, I am happy to present the 'On Focus' section for this edition 'Pandemic solidarity and mutual aid: what social movements can learn?'

RC48 Members' conversation regarding the relationship between the pandemic and social movements scholarship started in July 2020, and it is now enhanced by several remarkable contributions. The short papers included in this issue come from different countries and perfectly fit the focus subject. Donatella Della Porta (Scuola Normale Superiore, Firenze) highlights how times of deep crisis such as the pandemic can generate innovative and alternative forms of protest and how social movements can create and recreate ties, such as mutual support groups. Giuseppe Caruso (University of Helsinki) discusses the potential for the emergence of new networks and platforms from the World Social Forum to better coordinate social movements for covid governance. Matthew Whitley (Lehman College, New York) writes about 'mutual aid' and how it should be based on solidarity, not charity, focusing on "building 'bottom-up' structures of cooperation. Finally, Rinku Sen (Narrative Initiative, New York) stresses on how the pandemic pushed local organising groups towards 'mutual aid', especially around food, because there is so much need.

As done by the previous 'On Focus' section, this edition of Grassroots addresses an important sociological subject and debate, related to Catania's Conference theme. Very challenging reflections have emerged from this perspective. Protests are not

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only aimed to defend or claim human rights. They are also now oriented to issues related to solidarity and the protection of the needs of the weak. We encourage RC48 members to contribute to this emerging debate, focusing on the consequences of the pandemic on social issues, in particular inequality.

As usual, this edition of Grassroots presents a list of recent publications by members of RC48. Please continue to send us your contributions and information in relation to publications, events, call for papers, and job opportunities. We will be extremely glad to publish this information in the next edition of our newsletter.

Finally, this issue gives me the opportunity to present the ISA RC48 Mid-term Conference 'Reinventing the future: addressing social movement challenges in a post-pandemic world' that will be host at the University of Huddersfield (UK), July 21-22, 2022, addressing a hybrid format (On-campus and online).

All RC48 members are invited to attend, presenting papers, panels, or roundtables. Please take a look to our website to have more information about this event:
<https://isarc48.wordpress.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/isarc48/>.

Your sincerely,
Liana M. Daher
President RC48

About RC 48

The Research Committee on Social Movements, Collective Action and Social Change (RC48) is part of the International Sociological Association (ISA). It was founded as a Working Group in 1992, under the presidency of Prof. Bert Klandermans. In 1994, it was recognized as an ISA Research Committee.

The objective of RC48 is to foster intellectual, academic and scholarly exchanges between researchers of broadly defined social movements, collective action and social change. The RC48 is currently based at the Collective Identity Research Centre (Department of Sociology 2, University of the Basque Country, Spain).

The ISA was founded in 1949 under the auspices of UNESCO. With more than 5,000 members coming from 167 countries, the ISA is currently the most important international professional association in the field of sociology. Its goal is to advance sociological knowledge throughout the world, and to represent sociologists everywhere, regardless of their school of thought, scientific approaches or ideological opinion.

The on-going scientific activities of the ISA are decentralised in 55 Research Committees (RC), 3 Working Groups (WG) and 5 Thematic Groups (TG), each dealing with a well-recognized specialty in sociology. These groups bring together scholars who wish to pursue comparative research on a transnational basis and they constitute basic networks of scientific research, intellectual debate and professional exchange. Although they must fulfil certain minimum requirements, RCs have complete autonomy to operate. Each RC's governing body is the Board, formed by a President, a Secretary, and a variable number of board members. RC48 participates in the organisation of both the ISA World Congresses, celebrated every 4 years since 1950 (Zurich), and the ISA Forums of Sociology, also celebrated every 4 years since 2008 (Barcelona).

In contrast to the ISA World Congress, which has a more professional and academic character, the forum's original purpose was to establish an open dialogue with colleagues

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doing sociology in public institutions, social movements, and civil society organisations. This means that every two years, we are involved in the organisation of a worldwide event. In between ISA World Congresses and forums, our committee organises smaller scientific meetings called RC48 international conferences. These meetings tend to be more narrowly focused than other ISA events and, on average, they gather between 30 and 60 scholars. Consequently, colleagues can make longer presentations, and we can go hold deeper and more enriching debates.

RC48 Board members (2018-2022) Extended 2023



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Special Report. International Conference
“When Disobedience is «social»: Democratic
Protests and New Forms of Collective Action”
(University of Catania, Italy. October 21-22, 2021)

**When Disobedience is «social»: Democratic Protests and New
Forms of Collective Action**

On Thursday, October 21, 2021, and Friday, October 22, 2021, at the Department of Education (University of Catania) was held the Conference When Disobedience is «social»: Democratic Protests and New Forms of Collective Action (online format).

The Conference addressed the theme of “social disobedience” and the main focus was (but not limited to): a) reconstruct from a theoretical and conceptual point of view social disobedience and the relative state of the art with the intent to explore its capabilities heuristics also a multidisciplinary perspective, current and innovative; b) analyse its phenomenology concerning a territorial horizon defining the different empirical facets with the objective of uncovering social and pro-social aspects related to today’s forms of disobedience.

The Conference started with the Welcome Greetings of Francesco Priolo, Rector of the University of Catania, Rosa Loredana Cardullo, Director of the Educational Sciences Department, Massimo Penzenza, Coordinator of AIS – Teorie Sociologiche e Trasformazioni Sociali, Liana M. Daher, Full Professor of Sociology of the Department of Education, and President ISA RC48 – Social Movements, Collective Action, and Social Change.

The Conference addressed several and challenging topics. After a theoretical definition of Civil and Social Disobedience the subject was discussed related to several contexts: pandemic, law, education, and solidarity. The aim was to achieve a common and nuanced definition of social disobedience in contemporary society.

In the Introduction (by Liana M. Daher, University of Catania, Italy) a

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first definition of disobedience was proposed, arguing that the “principle of humanism” defined by Brownlee highlight that the theories on civil disobedience of Henry David Thoreau and Hannah Arendt cannot currently be an exhaustive model through which analyse all nowadays’ social protests. An extensive model is needed that includes social or prosocial disobedience, as a new form of collective action, linked to questions related to solidarity and defence of human rights, and aiming to make a positive social change of civil society.

The Opening Session debated inspiring issues on disobedience and around. Helena Flam (University of Leipzig, Germany) discussed the definitional aspects of the concept of civil disobedience, focusing on the question of how to transfer this concept to the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes in which virtually any person in a position of formal authority can define what is the law or the party or government line; Teresa Serra (Sapienza University, Italy) showed that social disobedience and constituent disobedience, tending to produce political decisions on the common as a constitutive power of the civil order, come up beside the classic civil disobedience; Jennet Kirkpatrick (Arizona State University, USA), examined the key passages of one of the most important works of Tocqueville, Democracy in America, including sections on civil associations, political associations, and the tyranny of the majority; Tova Benski (The College of Management-Academic Studies, Israel) examined the concept of civil disobedience and the new trends in social disobedience, focusing on what has come to be named ‘breaching events’ or ‘breaching protests’ in the 21st century movements.

The second session, focusing on Disobedience in Pandemic Times, saw stimulating contributions very fitted to today’s conditions: Chiara Sagone (University of Catania, Italy) analysed contrasts emerging between the State and Regions in the management of the Covid-19 pandemic in Italy; Miriam Gal Ezer (Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee, Israel) presented the theoretical and empirical

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concepts of peaceful civil and social disobedience, as well as total obedience to the authoritarian ruler of populist collectives’ organised violent actions even of armed civil militias; Francesco Antonelli and Santina Musolino (University “Roma Tre”, Italy) presented the analysis of the riots and social movements against the introduction of ‘Green Pass’ in Italy, in particular, the paper was focused on the frame alignment process preparing social disobedience against green pass at the symbolic and political-cultural level.

During the Session on Disobedience and the Law, Edoardo C. Raffiotta (University of Milano Bicocca, Italy) aimed to highlight the increasingly emerging role of the private sovereign subjects, to whom only the processes of supranational integration can represent an attempt to react to the protection of state sovereignty, democratically legitimised, and Augusto Sperb Machado (University of Lausanne, Swiss) examines the ‘standard’ definition of civil disobedience and implications of this criterion in relation to the notion of the rule of law.

The presentation of Maurizio Merico and Nadia Crescenzo (University of Salerno, Italy) opened the session Social Dissent and Disobedience in Education, offering a reappraisal of the analysis elaborated by the social psychologist Kenneth Keniston on the forms of dissent that involved US students during the sixties; Anna Maria Leonora and Augusto Gamuzza (University of Catania, Italy) discussed the first evidences and theoretical implications coming from a qualitative research focused on the participation of the Italian homeschooling groups to the protests against the COVID-19 restrictions; Giorgia Mavica and Alessandra Scieri (University of Catania, Italy) analysed the protests both for and against distance learning in Italy, in order to grasp the main aspects of the content and the protagonists of the protest, and to highlight the challenging picture of short and long-term effects on school and young generation.

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Several attractive papers enliven the interdisciplinary session: Caterina Drigo's (University of Bologna, Italy) presentation aimed to delve into some theoretical challenges posed by the phenomenon of disobedience; Vito Giannini, Nicola De Luigi, and Ilaria Pitti (University of Bologna, Italy) explored the messiness of individual processes of political activation, questioning the apparent homogeneity of the political groups emerging from acts of disobedience; Francesco Paterniti (University of Catania, Italy) addressed the case of the limits placed by Italian law on the parental perspectives of homosexual couples; Emanuele Coco (University of Catania, Italy) highlighted the contraposition between obedience and disobedience.

The last session focusing on solidarity processes welcomed the papers of: Camilo Tamayo Gomez (University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom), whose paper aimed to analyse how the 2021 Colombian protests can be understood as a main act of social disobedience; Lina Vosyliute (CEPS Centre for European Policy Studies, Belgium) and Stephanie Brenda Smialowski (University of SciencesPo, France), arguing that social disobedience by civil society actors, starts when governments begin to disobey international human rights and humanitarian law; Davide Nicolosi (University of Catania, Italy) who aimed to explore and analyse the concept of 'prosocial activism' through recent studies on pro-migrant networks operating on the Sicilian region; and last but not least, Martin Julian Acevedo Miño (Pontificia Universidad Católica, Argentina) presented a paper on Civil Disobedience as a Current Form of Resistance focusing on what was called the 'crisis of the agricultural sector', 'the farmland strike', or 'the crisis of the field' that occurred during the year 2008 in Argentina.

The closing session reported, through the summary of the chairs, the main evidence from the sessions. The main heuristic aims of the conference, to discuss the concept of 'social disobedience' as different from civil disobedience, was achieved. The disobedience

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act still emerged as a method of political participation and a means through which forms of active citizenship can challenge any authoritarian drift, and underlying social problems and morally controversial issues. The new forms of collective action discussed during the conferences gave the opportunity to decline the civil issue into social or prosocial focusing on a kind of protest and claim aiming at defending rights or claims of ‘the others’.

The Conference debate was very much appreciated by the participants. It allowed us to share opinions and open exciting arguments and new issues related to the concept of civil and social disobedience, offering fertile ground for the development of social and human interdisciplinary research.

Report written by the Scientific and Organising Committee of the University of Catania

Liana M. Daher, Augusto Gamuzza, Anna Maria Leonora, Giorgia Mavica, Davide Nicolosi, and Alessandra Scieri

Please find attached the book of abstracts
at the end of the newsletter (Page 53)

Grassroots On Focus: 'Pandemic solidarity and mutual aid: Lessons for social movements'

Preface

Kaan Agartan and
Camilo Tamayo Gomez



In this issue Grassroots is focusing on the possible paths social movements might take in the aftermath of the pandemic. In order to do that, we compiled four short articles published at the beginning of the pandemic that were early glimpses into the early adaptations social movements have been experiencing.

The first article in the dossier is “Social movements in times of pandemic: another world is needed” by Donatella Della Porta. In this piece, Della Porta discusses how times of deep crisis such as the pandemic can generate innovative and alternative forms of protest, including but not limited to online mobilisations, car convoys, flash mobs, protests at balconies, and so forth. For her, times of deep crisis allow for ‘cognitive openings’ that would help us imagine future scenarios. After almost two years of living through pandemic conditions, it would be interesting for students and scholars of social movements to assess which of these scenarios are more likely to survive and continue to shape the imagination of social movements.

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No matter what form or shape they might have taken, social movements were significant in pointing out the necessity for creating and recreating ties, networks, and platforms to better coordinate efforts to survive the pandemic. It is in the second article in this dossier, “We are all in this together: from global pandemic to global solidarities” by Giuseppe Caruso, that we find a good discussion of why “global solidarities in a wide regime of global political interconnection could be strengthened by densely networked practices developed locally but also in the new global localities afforded by shared online communication platforms.” Caruso delves deeper into the commentaries of Slavoj Žižek and David Tuckett on the pandemic to demonstrate that it is possible - if not essential - to revive global networks around issues and platforms of global corona governance. Through Žižek and Tuckett, Caruso reminds the readers of the need to create new forms of global solidarity and cooperation in response to the pandemic.

While the inevitably ‘global’ nature of the pandemic calls for a similarly globally-coordinated response and governance, it is equally if not more important to focus on its ‘local’ dimension, especially when considering the role of social movements in shaping this response. This is why we believe the article “Why ‘Mutual Aid’? – ‘Social solidarity, not charity’”, by Matthew Whitley, is a crucial read for social movements scholars. Whitley focuses on one particular mode of solidarity-building activism, i.e., ‘mutual aid’, and discusses how it should not be based on charity. For him, it is about “building ‘bottom-up’ structures of cooperation, rather than relying on the state or wealthy philanthropists” and “horizontal networks of solidarity rather than “top-down” solutions”. Whitley connects mutual aid to “a particular kind of politics, rooted in ideas around direct democracy, self-management, and decentralization”, traces the historical roots of the concept of mutual aid back to P. Kropotkin who emphasised ‘cooperation’ rather than ‘competition’ as the key component of human evolution. In times of isolation when demonstrations, assemblies, and mass meetings are limited or banned altogether, mutual aid in the form of

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housing, self-organized schools or medical clinics, and even labor organising become crucial methods that social movements can utilize to help those in need and strengthen ties of solidarity. As such, mutual aid reveals “the depth of our connection to each other” because “[it] shows us a powerful vision of an alternative society - one in which we are no longer imagined as individual brands, consumers, or entrepreneurs in endless competition, but a collective connected by compassion, cooperation, and the spirit of participatory democracy”. We believe this is a crucial intervention and a novel way of considering social movements as society-building, community-making, “constitutive” agents rather than mere reactionary mobilisations. In a nutshell, scholars of social movements need to take ‘mutual aid’ seriously in order to be able to reimagine the ways social movements can have a real and meaningful impact in the lives of vulnerable people.

The last article in the dossier, “Why Mutual Aid Is Critical to Today’s Social Revolutions” by Rinku Sen, takes up this issue critically and emphasises the relationship between methods of mutual aid (such as “checking on neighbors, dropping off food and medicine, providing protective personal equipment to incarcerated family members, and giving cash to those suddenly unemployed”) and fighting for social justice issues including collective rights and discrimination. In other words, Sen reminds us that the pandemic brought down the artificial split between direct-action (which is often left to highly specialised and professionalised social work by non-governmental organisations) and social movements (which often do not bother to touch the lives of the underserved sectors of the population in favor of an abstract image of social revolution that is supposed to take care of everything). For Sen, activists that focus on mutual aid during the pandemic have been “creating social ties by helping each other out, and those ties fueling collective fights for new systems and policies.” To be specific, there is a two-way relationship between mutual aid and social movements, which center around building and serving the community. The task for scholars of social movements would be to better understand the strengths and weak-

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nesses of this relationship to ensure the success of these movements.

It is our hope that this dossier can contribute to explore how the aftermath of the pandemic is affecting social movements scholarship from different perspectives and angles. After addressing the pieces that are shaping this section, it is clear that sociological notions including solidarity, mutual aid, social justice, and cooperation are becoming crucial to understand contemporary dynamics and forms of individual and collective action across the world. If how different scholars have claimed recently that it is time now to 'reinvent the future' and adopt novel sociological perspectives to find solutions for major worldwide post-pandemic problems, this dossier wants to inspire our readers to rethink social movements through the particular lens of mutual aid, and mutual aid through the lens of social movements.

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Social movements in times of pandemic: another world is needed

Faced with the glaring need for radical and complex transformation, social movements in times of crisis act differently from protests.

By: Donatella Della Porta



Times of pandemic bring big challenges for the activists of progressive social movements. They are not a time for street activism or politics in the squares. Freedoms are restricted, social distancing makes the typical forms of protest impossible to carry out. Mobilization is not only difficult in public places but also in our places of work, given the very strict limitation on the right to meet and the reduced opportunity for face-to-face encounters. The continuous emergency constrains our mental spaces, challenging our creativity. Individual and collective resources are focused on everyday survival. Hope, that stimulant for collective action, is

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difficult to sustain, while fear, that so discourages it, spreads. Crises might trigger selfish defensive choices, turning the other into an enemy. We depend on governmental efficiency and expert opinions.

The continuous emergency constrains our mental spaces, challenging our creativity.

Nevertheless, social movements often do emerge in moments of high emergency, of (more or less natural) calamities, and of strong repression of individual and collective freedoms. Wars have triggered waves of contention in the past. Not only is it the case that “states make wars and wars make states”, but portentous contestations have accompanied military conflicts – before, after, at times even during these. Such revolutions testify to the strength of engagement in moments of deep crisis.

Times of deep crisis can (even if not automatically) generate the invention of alternative forms of protest. The broad spread of new technologies allows for online protests – including, but not limited to, e-petitions that have multiplied in this period (ranging from the quest for Eurobonds to the request for a suspension of rents for students. Car marches have been called for in Israel. Workers have claimed more security through flashmobs, implemented by participants keeping a safe distance one from the other. In Finland, public transport drivers have refused to monitor tickets. In Italy or Spain, collective messages of contestation or solidarity are sent from balconies and windows. Through these innovative forms, protests puts pressure on those in government and control their actions.

Faced with the glaring need for radical and complex transformation, social movements also act in various ways that differ from protests. First of all, social movements create and recreate ties: they build upon existing networks but also, in action, they connect and multiply them. Faced by the manifest inadequacies of

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the state and, even more, of the market, social movement organizations form – as is happening in every country hit by the pandemic – into mutual support groups, promoting direct social action by helping those most in need. So, they produce resilience by responding to the need for solidarity.

Movements also acts as channels for the elaboration of proposals. They make use of alternative specialist knowledge but they also add to this the practical knowledge arising from the direct experiences of citizens. Constructing alternative public spheres, social movement organizations help us to imagine future scenarios. The multiplication of public space allows for cross-fertilization, contrasting the over-specialization of academic knowledge and facilitating the connection between abstract knowledge and concrete practices. From this knowhow cross-fertilization comes also the capacity to connect the various crises – to prise out the connection between the spread and lethality of the corona virus and climate change, wars, violence against women, the expropriations of rights (first of all the right to health). In this way the reflection in and of social movements increases our capacity to understand the economic, social, and political causes of the pandemic, which is neither a natural phenomenon nor a divine punishment.

[They make use of alternative specialist knowledge but they also add to this the practical knowledge arising from the direct experiences of citizens.](#)

In this way, social movements can exploit the spaces for innovation that open up in moments of uncertainty. In the most dramatic way, the crisis demonstrates that change is needed, a radical change that breaks with the past, and a complex change that goes from politics to the economy, from society to culture. If in normal times, social movements grow with the opportunities for gradual transformation, in times of deep crisis movements are spread instead by the perception of a drastic and deep threat,

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contributing to cognitive openings. While everyday life changes drastically, spaces for reflection about a future that cannot be thought as in continuity with the past also open up.

Crisis also opens up opportunities for change by making evident the need for public responsibility and civic sense, for rules and solidarity. If crises have the immediate effect of concentrating power, up to and including its militarization, they however demonstrate the incapacity of governments to act merely through force. The need for sharing and widespread support in order to address the pandemic might bring with it the recognition of the richness of civil society mobilization. The presence of social movements might thereby provide a contrast with the risks taken by an authoritarian response to the crisis.

What is more, crises show the value of fundamental public goods and their complex management through institutional networks but also through the participation of the citizens, the workers, the users. They demonstrate that the management of the commons needs regulation and participation from below. In any mobilization during a pandemic, the value of an universal system of public health emerges as not only just, but also vital. If claims for health in the working places and the universal protection of health as a public good are traditionally the demands of trade unions and of the Left, the pandemic demonstrates the need to reaffirm these rights and expand them to include the least protected. In its global dimension, the pandemic triggers reflection on the need for global protection of the right to health protection, as often explained by civil society organizations such as Doctors without Borders or Emergency.

[Crises demonstrate that the management of the commons needs regulation and participation from below.](#)

Of course, all this does not happen automatically. These crises are also give occasion to the accumulation of profit by dispossession,

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for the experimentation of authoritarian governments, for social anomie. Emergency and shocks create rich occasions for speculators. But, if the crises increase competition for scarce resources, they also increase the perception of a shared destiny. Increasing inequalities, rather than levelling them, they also instil a deep sense of injustice. Bringing with it the singling out of specific political and social responsibilities. As in wars, the exacting of terrible sacrifices from the people fuels claims of rights and participation in decision making, As collective mobilization grows, also the hope for change ensues – for another world that is still possible and all the more needed.

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We are all in this together: from global pandemic to global solidarities

To be effective, social movements' actions must be grounded in effective organisational dynamics and democratic decision-making. Alternatively, individual isolation and social fragmentation could escalate the crisis.

By: Giuseppe Caruso



The spread of the current global pandemic is unprecedented. Future consequences are difficult to predict (will global geopolitics be radically altered? Will the global dominant economic system be superseded? Will the pandemic spell doom for the global metropolis?). The degree of uncertainty heightens paranoid states of mind (such as the belief that the virus was produced in a lab and unleashed on the world with perverse intentions).

In such critical moments, some believe that the time of politics accelerates, that slow decision-making must be superseded by fast-paced executive actions. The guidance of experts and the

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support of science (as if it were one and universally coherent) are widely invoked. But science that is itself struggling to respond to the new data and to the salvific projections that it is subjected to by citizens and governments alike. By the beginning of April, as the initial shock started to sink in, the WTO compared the current crisis to the Great Depression, warning of similar consequences especially on the most vulnerable sections of the world population.

As the weakest and most vulnerable are bracing themselves to face the brunt of the coronavirus consequences, from many parts inspired collective actions begin to create a network of activists-led responses to the crisis building potentially global solidarity networks. After the 2008 crisis, the World Social Forum, the largest global civil society initiative to date, organised one of its most successful events in Brazil. Participants were galvanized by the need to work globally to provide a response to the consequences of the global financial crisis. The event resonated with slogans like "Your crisis, Our solutions".

This slogan reverberated around the planet among movement activists and boosted the mood in the WSF for a few years. The so-called Arab Spring and the Squares movements contributed to that impetus. The crucial point made by that slogan and those protests was that the crisis was due to the global prevalence of individualistic and exploitative capitalism compounded by patriarchy and colonialism. The current systems of political participation through political representation were deemed, in fact, to be counterproductive to individual and group emancipation and were profoundly contested. An adequate response, activists all over the world believed, one that subverts that mind-set (political, economic and cultural), needed to be grounded in global solidarity and cooperation.

At the moment, however, it seems as though the WSF may have to postpone its 2021 global event. This was meant to be a particularly celebratory one as it marked the 20th anniversary since its

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first meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in January 2001. But it is also possible that a renewed capillary reconnection of allied networks around issues and platforms of global corona governance, could give a new boost of energy to its process. Some of its constitutive networks are particularly prominent in coordinating social movements responses to the corona crisis in all continents of the planet. Perhaps, the extent to which so much communication is currently based on the proficient use of Internet-based technologies might contribute in the future to activist organising. As activists become more adept at using technologies, the global solidarity movement in the future, could become more inclusive, less dependent on the discriminating availability of travel resources, and allow for the representation of otherwise unheard people, discourses and interests.

Global solidarities in a wide regime of global political interconnection could be strengthened by densely networked practices developed locally but also in the new global localities afforded by shared online communication platforms. The speed of the uptake of these new forms of communication and collective action was unthinkable only a few weeks ago. How they will shape collective solidarities and global narratives, will in turn impact on how the world works through the effects of the pandemic. “Collective solidarities” and the effects of “conviction narratives” and the framing of the crisis on decision-making are at the core of two recent commentaries by Slavoj Žižek and David Tuckett about the global response to the coronavirus pandemic. I will consider them in turn.

Trauma and mourning in coronavirus times

Reflecting on the reactions to the pandemic, Slavoj Žižek quotes Elisabeth Kübler-Ross’s work. She proposed an analysis of the cycle of grief in five phases: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. These phases are not strictly limited to mourning death, but all catastrophic losses (a job, a relationship, the failure of a project or of an idea). The progression through phases

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is not linear and some of them are experienced several times before the work of mourning is completed. Sometimes this process fails. Sigmund Freud called un-mourned loss melancholia, a severe psychological condition. Žižek finds that “[o]ne can discern the same five stages whenever a society is confronted with some traumatic event.” He illustrates his point with examples of ecological catastrophe, digital control, the Trump presidency and medieval plagues. On the coronavirus pandemic he writes:

“First, there was a denial (nothing serious is going on, some irresponsible individuals are just spreading panic); then, anger (usually in a racist or anti-state form: the dirty Chinese are guilty, our state is not efficient...); next comes bargaining (OK, there are some victims, but it’s less serious than SARS, and we can limit the damage); if this doesn’t work, depression arises (let’s not kid ourselves, we are all doomed).”

How could we, he wonders, gain acceptance, the final working through of the traumatic loss? What would such an acceptance look like, for individuals, groups, communities, global society? For Žižek, we need to accept that this pandemic will not “explode and then fizzle away”, it will “stay here and just persist, bringing permanent fear and fragility to our lives.” We should accept “that there is a sub-layer of life, the undead, stupidly repetitive, pre-sexual life of viruses, which always was here and which will always be with us as a dark shadow, posing a threat to our very survival, exploding when we least expect it.”

This is literally true, but it is even more poignant in its metaphoric sense. What Žižek describes is the sub-human quality of a life that has not reconciled itself with its vulnerability and mortality. A life which is undead (not quite alive but not dead either), pre-sexual (cannot connect with others to create something new), it is stupidly repetitive (like Socrates’s unexamined life or Hannah Arendt’s parvenu existence, these are devoid of any self-determination). This anti-life drive lives in individuals, groups, and societies as a dark shadow, it is what Freud called the death drive. The

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virus Zizek describes is deeply nested in our depth and manifests itself through denialism, negation and disavowal of reality.

Perhaps, though, Zizek's meditation on what he defines as the "meaninglessness of our lives" in the face of such a devastating pandemic, is somewhat overstated. We do live fragile existences destined for death, but they are not necessarily meaningless. The pandemic does not have an inherent meaning but in accepting the lack of a necessary meaning (a profound loss in itself) exists the possibility of collectively making and giving sense as, in fact, he writes later on.

If, on the one hand, acceptance may seem to indicate an act of submission to an overwhelming power against which there is no possible emancipation, on the other, accepting our existential vulnerability and mortality as facts of life does, in fact, free us. Fear and fragility can be worked through, if in incomplete and precarious ways, into creative and meaningful, autonomous existences. The time of politics and autonomous action can be reclaimed and executive actions by omnipotent leaders guided by omniscient scientists do not need to be wished for. This is also Zizek's conclusion when he suggests "collective solidarity" as an adequate response to the pandemic and to the risk of authoritarian drifts.

Seen like this, the present coronavirus outbreak offers also an opportunity amid the death and despair it brings. The sudden and profound shock, makes denying human vulnerability impossible. Perhaps, then, we can spare ourselves the narcotic, deadening, effects of the denial pandemic. Those same effects that led us to the brink of ecological catastrophe and escalated destructive social inequities. Might we be able to appreciate the need but also the possibility to radically change our way of life, or will we want to continue on the path of denial and omnipotence that makes us believe that mere technological arrangements will prevent ecological disaster? Will we attempt to rebound into more of the same and remain on track for catastrophe? Alternatively, will

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we be able to accept our vulnerability and make radical changes to the way we relate to each other on a global scale and to the environment?

Zizek crucially makes an association between pandemics and protest movements. This should make us acutely aware how these processes of recognition and acceptance of human mortality and interrelatedness are very different between and indeed within communities. Individual and collective emancipation are intertwined and dependent on each other. Let me turn now to a reading of the current crisis that contributes further insight on the relationship between acceptance of the facts of life, solidarity, and meaningful collective representations and political action.

Decision-making in critical times

David Tuckett is director of the Centre for the Study of Decision-Making Uncertainty at University College London. Through his groundbreaking work he developed a model of decision-making in fast-paced and stress-intense environments where impacts are extensive on the lives of many. He recently reflected, on the response to the covid-19 pandemic by financial markets. His considerations apply to the general pattern of responses to the pandemic by national and transnational governance institutions.

Crudely simplified, Tuckett's model pivots around three points. Individuals and groups develop 1) "conviction narratives" to justify their pursuit of 2) "phantastic objects" (unconscious beliefs) in contexts of radical uncertainties about the future. The response to traumatic events (caused by the loss of highly invested "phantastic objects") ranges from 3) illusion-based behaviour to reality-based thinking.

After the shock of the current pandemic, a "phantastic object", the belief of control over external events and individual lives has been shattered. Like for Zizek, what is lost in the traumatic event

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is also the belief in an individual and collective omnipotent self and a life devoid of uncertainty. Such belief had been structured into narratives that, in the face of an active denial of the real facts of life, sustained the decisions actors (individual and collective) took in going about their lives. With the explosion of the coronavirus, reality has made a violent irruption into the lives of virtually all human beings (though with dramatically different impacts). The shock caused by this violent disruption (in fact, invalidation) of their belief systems, compounds the actual losses caused by the pandemic (bereavement, isolation, joblessness).

Traumas strike in unexpected and unpredictable ways. They provoke profound disruptions to individuals' and groups' sense of self and belonging. Often, responses are sought in the belief system invalidated by the trauma and that contributed to shape the configuration of the crisis in the first place. A new belief system has not yet been developed. In the interregnum, helplessness can prevail and actions may be ineffective. This state of affairs can further heighten the feeling of impotence in the face of trauma. Without mourning the loss of the phantastic object, it can be impossible to mourn the loss of a dear person, a job, one's lifestyle.

Recall how for Žižek the first stage of grief is denial. In his interview, Tuckett reflects on how slowness to react is not surprising in the first phase of major crises. Accusations of indolence have been voiced widely. China, Italy, the UK, the US, Brazil, India, the WHO have been accused of downplaying the severity of the challenge. Whereas the reasons and the rationale attributed vary, what strikes one is the global prevalence of these accusations. Recall, again, Žižek's characterisation: "nothing serious is going on, some irresponsible individuals are just spreading panic". The invitations to carry on as usual have been widespread (sometimes justified by misconceptions of the real consequences of deliberately pursuing herd immunities).

The realisation of the changed circumstances comes as a shock.

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Tuckett describes such a shock when financial markets fell dramatically on March 9. First, there was a cut in interest rates in the US in the teeth of a president who denied that the coronavirus was more severe than the seasonal flu. Later that day, there was a drop in oil price by 10 USD. The consequence of these combined reality checks manifested itself in a spate of major value losses across the world.

In the quoted interview, referring to the market gains on March 10, Tuckett says: "The rebound on Tuesday is nothing more than the attempt by market players to try to hang on to their illusions of yesterday." Alternatively, he suggests, the current trauma can be worked through if investors, and more broadly those affected by the coronavirus pandemic, will collectively create new conviction narratives, new representations, "that will integrate the new health situation" and its implications.

The process of construction of new conviction narratives and lifestyles can be illustrated with the following image suggested by Stefano Bolognini, former president of the International Psychoanalytic Association. In an online webinar on the current pandemic, he suggested that we could think of ourselves as currently living in tents after a powerful earthquake has destroyed or made unsafe our homes. The tent, which deceptively reminds us of holiday camping and adventure, is not an exciting place at all to live in when your life has been dramatically changed by events beyond your control. The image of the tent and its associations invites us also to consider the following. Whose houses were most affected? Villas, condos, shanties? Historical buildings or more recent ones? Will the new houses be weak like the ones that fell? Or, will they be stronger and sustainable for all? These are questions that global activists have been asking also before the crisis, and are now raising once again with added stress.

The houses we lived in will not be restored, but new ones will be built. What those houses will look like, what the neighbourhood, and indeed, what the world will look like, depends on many fac-

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tors. Tuckett observes that financial markets entered this crisis with a mindset of illusory optimism similar to the one preceding the 2008 crisis. Financial operators acted as though they could control financial markets to a greater extent than was in fact possible. Politically, economically, socially, global society approached this crisis with a similar mindset of denial and the delusion of control. Nuclear disaster, environmental catastrophe and increasing social inequality are three current devastating prospects the reality, or possibility, of which is being denied.

Similarly, for Žižek the acceptance of this crisis “can take two directions. It can mean just the re-normalization of illness: OK, people will be dying, but life will go on, maybe there will be even some good side effects. Or acceptance can (and should) propel us to mobilize ourselves without panic and illusions, to act in collective solidarity.” It is through widespread solidarity that meaning is found and given and crises overcome. Global activist networks including the environmental, peace, and human rights movements (human right to work, to food, to housing, to health) could contribute the energies and the thinking to work through this crisis. In turn, the struggle to work through the present crisis could contribute to addressing the denial of these environmental and social crises.

To restate this point, this crisis is a collective trauma. Both words carry the meaning of laceration and cutting. The global trauma separates each of us from everyone else and from our previous selves. When the wound is not mortal, trauma can force us to mobilise healing energies. As the trauma is collective now, it could mobilise collective healing energies.

I wish to thank the Academy of Finland for financial support to the research project ‘Democratic Decision-Making within Transnational Social Movements’.

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Why 'Mutual Aid'? – social solidarity, not charity

Peter Kropotkin's most famous work advancing a belief in the depth of our connection to each other is titled 'Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution'.

By: Matthew Whitley



'Mutual aid' has suddenly entered the collective consciousness as we seek ways to support our friends and neighbours amidst a global pandemic. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has tweeted about it, The New York Times has discussed "so called mutual-aid" networks in major cities, and mutual aid workshops have spread throughout the United States.

But often the term is used without ever addressing the question – what is mutual aid? "Social solidarity - not charity," might be the slogan response, but conceptualizing the difference is not easy. Fundamentally, mutual aid is about building "bottom-up" structures of cooperation, rather than relying on the state or wealthy philanthropists to address our needs. It emphasizes horizontal networks of solidarity rather than "top down" solutions, networks that flow in both directions and sustain the life of a community.

In this way, mutual aid represents a particular kind of politics,

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rooted in ideas around direct democracy, self-management and decentralization. But where do these ideas and practices come from? To answer this question we must go all the way back to the turn of the century, and to its origin in nineteenth century naturalist debates and early theories of anarchist socialism.

Mutual-aid is a concept born from a curious hybrid of Russian evolutionary theory and anarchist thought. It is, specifically, an idea associated with Peter Kropotkin - a well-known anarchist-socialist thinker – also a naturalist, geographer, ethnographer and advocate of scientific thought. Kropotkin, along with other Russian scientists, developed mutual aid in response to the profound impact of Darwin's evolutionary theory and the focus on competition among his adherents.

Most people have heard the phrase "survival of the fittest" or the more poetic idea of life as "red in tooth in claw" – but they are quotes often misattributed to Darwin himself. These clichés that emphasize war, violence, and destruction in the struggle for life were first used by one of Darwin's adherents, Herbert Spencer, who was a social scientist as much as a biologist. Spencer believed in the progressive evolution of not only organisms but also human societies and helped to popularize evolutionary theory as a social, and not only biological, phenomenon. Humans are, after all, an element of nature.

Kropotkin, however, was deeply concerned about an interpretation of evolutionary theory that emphasized hostility and competition, especially when extended, as it still often is, to the social and political lives of human beings. He saw that "survival of the fittest" would inevitably be used to justify poverty, colonialism, gender inequality, racism and war as "natural" processes – innate and immutable expressions of our very genetic being.

Capitalism – and its stratified wealth and power – could be seen as merely an expression of this natural competition, in which a neutral playing field produced winners and losers based on merit.

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Instead of this relentless competition, Kropotkin saw cooperation everywhere he looked: in colonies of ants, in the symbiotic behaviors of plants and animals, and in the practices of peasants in his own travels.

While Kropotkin did not deny elements of competition, he believed that cooperation was at least its equal in the process of evolution: “the fittest are not the physically strongest, nor the cunningest, but those who learn to combine so as mutually to support each other, strong and weak alike, for the welfare of the community.” Extended to humanity the implications of his thought was clear, capitalism – and the obsession with competition it brought – was the aberration, and socialism and social solidarity were natural expressions of human life. His most famous work advancing this belief is titled, 'Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution'.



Instead of this relentless competition, Kropotkin saw cooperation everywhere he looked.

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Mutual aid has extended past this foundational argument over species evolution and biology to become a fundamental tenant of anarchist (libertarian-socialist) practice. Today its influence has pervaded a vast array of left-leaning social movements worldwide. The examples are numerous and diverse. Think occupied buildings which provide refugee housing in Europe, self-managed security and medical clinics in Greece, Autonomous Tenants' Unions as in Chicago, self-organized "Free Schools" across the U.S., worker controlled "mutual aid" funds, or rank-and-file labor organizing.

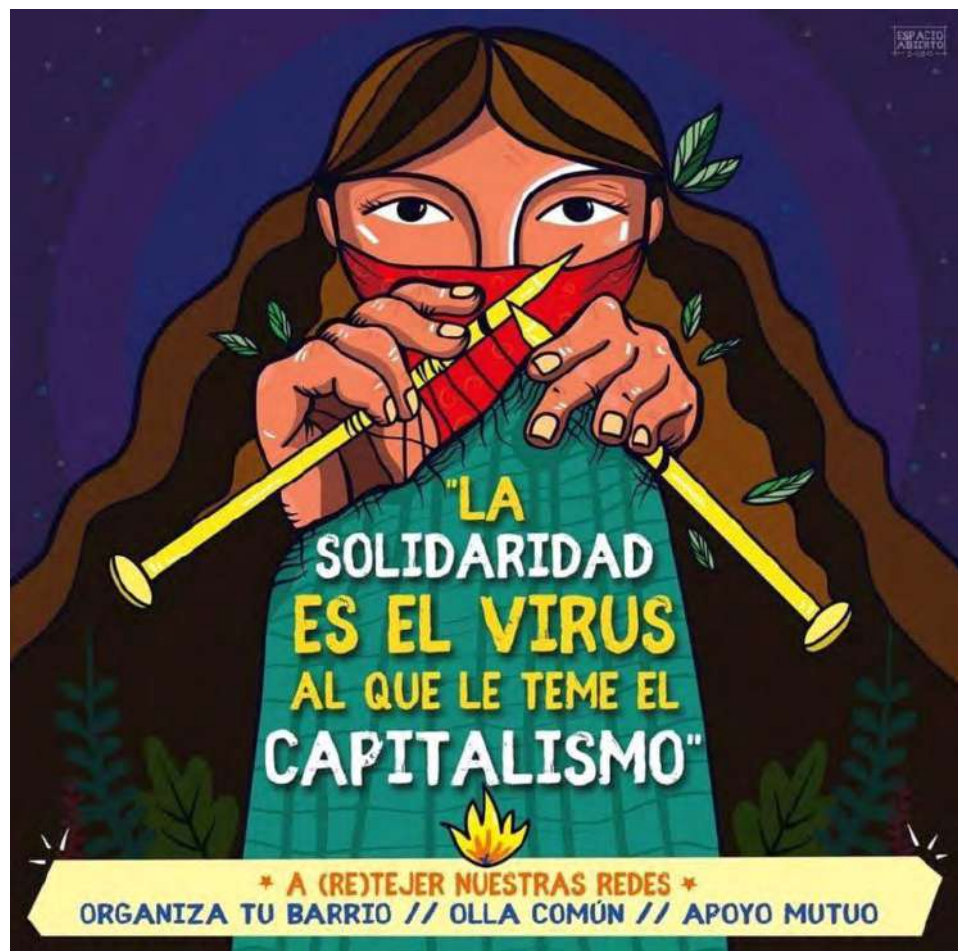
Today, these activists are faced with a new challenge – organizing in an environment in which demonstrations, assemblies and mass meetings are still limited or forbidden across much of the United States and worldwide. Overcoming these challenges has meant creating a dizzying array of new, innovative structures that connect worldwide movements with the hyper local: conference calls used to organize activists' singular apartment building for action on rent freezes, "mutual aid self-therapy" conducted in Zoom breakout rooms, food centers organized and collected via Google docs, and the incarcerated are communicating with outside networks to advance diffuse strikes seeking safer conditions and the release of vulnerable prisoners.

[Overcoming these challenges has meant creating a dizzying array of new, innovative structures that connect worldwide movements with the hyper local.](#)

The most magical aspect of this type of organizing under "social distancing" is that it reveals, even in a moment of extreme isolation, the depth of our connection to each other. Mutual aid goes beyond simple charity and patronage - it mobilizes society itself for society itself. In its most advanced form it can show us a powerful vision of an alternative society - one in which we are no longer imagined as individual brands, consumers, or entrepreneurs in endless competition, but a collective connected by compassion, cooperation, and the spirit of participatory democracy. For

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this reason covid not only represents a great threat to public health, but also an incredible opportunity to build these networks “from below” – to return, if only bit by bit, to the spirit of cooperation which has always been at the heart of society.



"Solidarity is the virus that capitalism fears." Knit (back) our networks. Organize your neighborhood. | Mutual Aid. Corporate Watch. Some rights reserved.

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Why today's social revolutions include kale, medical care, and help with rent

In the Pandemic, Community Organizations Have Returned to Their Roots in Mutual Aid and Self-Determination

By RINKU SEN



When I needed to donate a box of vegetables recently, I called a nonprofit in my neighborhood in Queens, New York, that organizes low-wage immigrant workers. As we arranged the pickup, the organizer, Will Rodriguez, said, “You know, Rinku, we don’t usually do this stuff, but we just had to jump in because the need is so great. People are suffering so much.”

By “this stuff,” he meant mutual aid, in which members of a community work together to meet each other’s urgent needs. Norma-

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lly, the day laborers and domestic workers who are members of his organization, New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE), work together on direct-action campaigns to fight exploitation and advocate for their rights. But the pandemic has pushed them into organizing mutual aid around food.

They are not alone. In recent months, members of progressive direct-action organizations have developed new systems for checking on their neighbors, dropping off food and medicine, providing protective personal equipment to incarcerated family members, and giving cash to those suddenly unemployed to meet immediate rent, food, and medical needs. At the same time, they're continuing to press for workers' rights and proper health care during the pandemic, as well as ensure access to federal stimulus money for individuals and small minority-owned businesses.

In so doing, these organizations are harkening back to their roots: people creating social ties by helping each other out, and those ties fueling collective fights for new systems and policies.

Combining mutual aid and direct action might seem like common sense, but in today's corporatized and professionalized nonprofit world, this model had disappeared almost completely. Community-based nonprofits in the United States today are split into distinct silos, with service provision firmly compartmentalized in one box and direct-action organizing in another.

The roots of this split lie in the increasing professionalization of the sector over half a century, driven by no small amount of sexism, classism and racism.

Throughout American history, mutual aid societies existed wherever poor, disenfranchised people could be found, particularly Black, Indigenous, and immigrant communities. Chinese immigrants of the 19th century formed networks to defend against xenophobic violence and to fund their businesses when banks

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refused. Native Americans formed urban community centers in the 1950s and 1960s after the government terminated the rights of more than 100 tribes, forcing people off traditional lands across the Great Plains as well as California, Texas, New York, Florida, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Montana. These urban centers provided employment support, housing assistance, and health care, creating both the material and political conditions for self-determination.

The combined disruption of an ongoing deadly pandemic, record unemployment and multiracial uprisings to defend Black lives will soon make many of our existing models irrelevant.

During and immediately after slavery, free Black people formed mutual aid societies to provide resources denied them by the white community. The first was the Free African Society of Philadelphia, founded in the 1770s to provide a place to worship and financial resources to members. Similar organizations soon sprung up in Philadelphia, New York, New Orleans and Newport, Rhode Island, providing non-denominational spiritual guidance and resources such as banks, schools, burial societies, newspapers, food, support for widows and orphans, and more. W.E.B. DuBois called these “the first wavering step of a people toward organized social life.”

These organizations were a threat to the racial status quo. Charleston shut down the Free Dark Men of Color in the 1820s for fear of slave insurrections and Maryland made it a felony to join a mutual aid society in 1842. Despite the crackdowns, thousands more societies formed after the Civil War, making enormous gains for Black communities. Decades later, these self-organized groups would become the infrastructure of the Civil Rights Movement and the inspiration for the Black Panthers, who famously served up free breakfasts and health programs alongside their fight against police brutality and exploitation of Black communities.

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European immigrant communities of the 19th and 20th centuries, too, relied on cooperative efforts that helped their members learn English, find decent housing, and resist labor abuse. Incorporating a mix of mutual aid, community organizing, and legislative campaigning, the social reformer Jane Addams founded Chicago's Hull House in 1889, sparking a movement that counted more than 400 "settlement houses" within 20 years. Addams had been inspired by visiting an English settlement house where she saw boundaries of language, class status, and religious affiliation stretching and blurring. In the United States, settlement houses were community arts centers, social service providers, and civic action committees all rolled into one.

Formalizing social work for white people began with the settlement houses. In the late 1890s, Addams' training of settlement house volunteers became the basis of early social work college programs. Settlement house workers increasingly felt the need for credentials because the medical doctors and lawyers who intervened in the lives of poor families routinely ignored the insights of the volunteers, mostly well-off white women, whom they perceived as amateurs. Early training programs were practical, such as the 1904 partnership between Columbia University and the New York School of Philanthropy. In 1915, medical educator Dr. Abraham Flexner critiqued social work as lacking professionalism of the sort that's found in medicine, law, and preaching, and labeled social workers as "narrow minded technicians." Colleges then began to push curricula that would elevate the "theory" of social work rather than the practice.

The settlement houses, meanwhile, continued their social reform projects, including sanitation reform, women's suffrage, temperance, legislation against child labor, and labor law. Movement leaders such as labor advocate Frances Perkins wrote many of these ideas into the New Deal. In the throes of the Great Depression, the Social Security Act of 1935 created pensions for the elderly, care for the disabled, a state-run medical insurance program for the poor, and unemployment insurance. But the legisla-

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tion also reflected the prevailing racism of the time, excluding domestic and farm workers in a compromise that ensured that Southern Democrats and the agricultural industry would continue to have access to cheap labor. Left to fend for themselves, those communities, largely comprised of people of color, continued to rely on mutual aid even as they tried to organize for change.



At the same time, Black social work traditions grew out of mutual aid organizations, added journalism to the practice, and for decades had a testy relationship with the white social work establishment. Leaders like Mary Church Terrell, Anna Julia Cooper and Mary Jane Patterson founded the Colored Women's League in 1892 to generate racial uplift through self-help. Thyra J. Edwards, virtually unknown in mainstream social work history, was also a trained journalist. These women made lynching their top priority.

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Despite political action among social workers of all races, Saul Alinsky is the white man credited with codifying the social action elements. Starting in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood in the 1930s, Alinsky eventually became the nation's most famous "community organizer" with his approach of starting with local issues in order to rally people to fight for broader political change. He described this approach in his 1971 book *Rules for Radicals*: "They organize to get rid of four-legged rats and stop there; we organize to get rid of four-legged rats so we can get on to removing two-legged rats." Alinsky built the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), one of the largest and most powerful organizing networks of the 20th century, uniting churches, ethnic associations, and neighborhood groups in direct-action campaigns. It was an IAF affiliate in Baltimore, for example, that won the first local Living Wage law in 1994, the precursor to today's "Fight for \$15."

The Alinsky model came to dominate the way activists were trained and organized. It featured highly professionalized, well-paid organizers who kept any radical politics to themselves in the name of people power. The IAF also had a distinctly male culture. Alinsky expected organizers to work around the clock; women, he thought, were too delicate, even if he didn't publicly discourage them from the work.

Alinsky's influential "rules" saw services—mostly organized by and provided by women—only as a means to direct action campaigning. The goal was to deliver "winnable" material improvements as well as change the relations of power between everyday people and the institutions that shaped their lives. Described as "non-ideological," this model characterized membership-based community organizations for many years. But over time, organizers who were women and people of color have disrupted and changed that norm, arguing that racism, sexism and capitalism would never be challenged under these conditions.

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In any case, the split between providing services and advocating for systemic change had long been established in the U.S. When the National Association of Social Workers was formed in 1955, providing services via casework and organizing for systemic change had become distinct streams of social work. By 1960, they had their own tracks at various universities. Funding patterns followed. Philanthropists, too, viewed these functions as separate, driving far more resources to apoliticized service provision than they did to community organizing. When I was learning to organize in the late 1980s, I was consistently told that self-help schemes, lending circles, and cooperative businesses had little to do with “real” organizing.

Today, though, a new generation of activists is erasing that distinction.

The pandemic, in particular, has clarified that organizing cannot be divorced from actually helping people. In March, on a webinar about race and COVID-19, the moderator asked us panelists, “What inspires you?” I applauded all the self-organized mutual aid schemes and noted that prominent organizing networks have jumped in, including the Center for Popular Democracy, People’s Action, the National Domestic Workers Alliance, Black Lives Matter, United We Dream, Faith in Action, and Make the Road, among many others. All are responding to the immediate needs of their constituencies—food, masks, money, help navigating government assistance—and diverging from their pre-coronavirus activities. Another panelist countered: “But mutual aid can’t solve this crisis at scale. Only government can do that.” Some activists fear that politicians will try to replace government care with community care, or that mutual aid will absorb all of our energy, leaving nothing for political fights.

But especially in times when the state dramatically fails to deliver what people need, mutual aid is a powerful way, sometimes even the only way, to help people manage daily life while sustaining their spirits in the struggle for systemic change. Organizing requi-

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res courage; courage comes from community. Mutual aid fuels the audacity to demand more because it reinforces that we are not alone in our suffering.

Chai Moua, the Civic Engagement Director at Freedom, Inc, a 17-year-old coalition of Black and Southeast Asian groups in Wisconsin, told me that her organization has been ready for this moment. “We have always believed in combining service and organizing to get to a bigger future,” she said. “Our food pantry is actually part of our civic engagement work. We’re not just giving you food but showing systematically ‘this is why our folks don’t have access to healthy food,’ and then changing those systems.”

The United States, and perhaps the world, is at the beginning of a string of fundamental shifts in culture, politics, economy and daily life. The combined disruption of an ongoing deadly pandemic, record unemployment, and multiracial uprisings to defend Black lives will soon make many of our existing models irrelevant. Photos of sophisticated mutual aid operations at recent Black Lives Matter protests powerfully symbolize the future of organizing, protest, and direct action. Everyone is discovering what some of us have always understood: The social ties cultivated by mutual aid are the same ties needed to fuel a historic boycott, a union organizing drive, or a campaign to close down prisons. Our ancestors knew this well, and now we do too.

RC48 Internet and Social Media Report



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David Dueñas Cid and Natalia Miranda

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Social Movements, Collective
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Reinventing the future: addressing social movement challenges in a post-pandemic world

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CALL FOR PAPERS

Presentation

How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected social movements and society in general? What are the intellectual challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic is bringing to social movements scholarship? By what means the COVID-19 pandemic has made an impact on collective action and social change? Is it time now to 'reinvent the future' and adopt new sociological perspectives to find solutions for major worldwide post-pandemic problems?

As for how different social scholars across the globe have been pointed out, the COVID-19 pandemic has occurred in a specific sociohistorical context that has deeply affected social movements. The rise of populist leaders, the imposition of lockdown measures and other restrictions on mobility, deepening inequality in global vaccine distribution, the rise of poverty, global waves of protests, and a tense geopolitical context that has transformed the relationship between governments and their citizens are just a few examples of the most visible outcomes.

We are experiencing a double tension-dynamic inside the social movements field: while progressive intellectuals, radical thinkers, and social movements consider the pandemic as an opportunity to build a fairer and equal world, they compete with authoritarian and reactionary state actors and greedy capitalists to shape the meaning of the crisis and the world that may come out of it. In this context, the challenges encountering social movements scholarship are not minor.

This ISA RC48 mid-term conference enables social movement scholars and practitioners from around the world to share their work on these topics. The main aim is to exchange perspectives and create collaborative ideas regarding the challenges that social movements are facing in this post-pandemic future. It also offers an opportunity for networking (in person and virtually) that will extend into future academic and research collaborations. Also, and following recent global developments, this conference will host a session to explore the challenges of social movements in contexts of war and violent/armed conflict.

During this two-day conference, we will address the following main issues:

- (1) Theoretical and conceptual reflections concerning outcomes and/or production of solutions by social movements and grassroots organisations to address the challenges of a post-pandemic future.
- (2) Methodological considerations regarding how to research social movements in post-pandemic settings.
- (3) Analysis of case studies exploring different countries and regions, presenting comparative research in Western and non-Western contexts.
- (4) Evaluate the challenges for social movements in contexts of war and violent/armed conflict.

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Inspiring global professionals

This conference is hosted by the School of Human and Health Sciences at The University of Huddersfield (UK).

It will be conducted in a hybrid format, and it is free of charge to participants and attendees (previous online registration).

Modes of Participation

Individual Submissions

If you are interested in presenting a paper at this mid-term conference, please e-mail a 300-500 word abstract, a 2-3 sentence bio, and contact information to the conference organisers: Liana M. Daher (daher@unict.it), Tova Benski (tovabenski@gmail.com), and Camilo Tamayo Gómez (c.a.tamayogomez@hud.ac.uk) no later than **Monday, 16 May 2022**. This material should be sent as a single email attachment.

Panel Submissions

Panels consist of a chair and 3-4 panellists. Panellists should plan to speak for 15 minutes each. Panellists do not need to circulate their papers in advance. If you are interested in submitting a panel, please provide a title for the panel and a brief overview of the theme or question that the panel will explore. Participants should also provide a title, a 300-500-word abstract for their presentation, and a 2-3 sentence bio with their contact information. These materials should be submitted as a single email attachment to: c.a.tamayogomez@hud.ac.uk no later than **Monday, 09 May 2022**.

Roundtables

Roundtable sessions consist of 4-5 discussants and a moderator, who participates more fully in the session than a chair in a traditional panel. Participants in roundtables do not present or read formal papers, but rather engage in a discussion or exchange about a specific question, text, or issue. The focus of the discussion must be clearly articulated in the abstract, and participants are expected to prepare their remarks in advance, even if the nature of a roundtable is less formal than a traditional panel. If you are interested in submitting a roundtable abstract, please include the title of the roundtable, a description (300-500 words) of the issue or question to be discussed, and a list of participants with a brief bio for each person listed, including contact information for each participant. These materials should be submitted as a single email attachment to: c.a.tamayogomez@hud.ac.uk no later than **Monday, 09 May 2022**.

ISA RC48 mid-term conference organising committee

Liana M. Daher, University of Catania, Italy.
Tova Benski, College of Management Academic Studies, Israel.
Benjamín Tejerina, Universidad del País Vasco, Spain
Natalia Miranda, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium.
Kaan Agartan, Framingham State University, USA.
David Dueñas-Cid, University of Tartu, Estonia, and Kozminski University, Poland.
Camilo Tamayo Gomez, The University of Huddersfield, UK.

<https://isarc48.wordpress.com/>

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Recent Publications, Book Recommendations, Call for Papers, and News from Members of RC48

Job Opportunities

The Faculty of Arts at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada invites applications to the Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERC) Program from a recognized international leader in the area of Democracy and Social Inequality, with a focus on one or more of the following areas: the dynamics of disenfranchisement in democratic countries; grassroots collective action and democratic revitalization; social movements, polarisation and extremism; the politics of race; Indigenous governance; for a non-renewable period of 8 years.

https://hr.cf.ryerson.ca/ams/faculty/preview.cfm?posting_id=544940

Recent Publications, Book Recommendations, Call for Papers, and News from Members of RC48

Recent publications by members of RC48

How Social Movements Can Save Democracy

Democratic Innovations from Below

DONATELLA DELLA PORTA

Scuola Normale Superiore

"An engaging read by one of Europe's leading scholars of contentious politics." Sidney Tarrow, Cornell University

"If our democracies don't improve, they may not survive. Donatella della Porta makes clearer precisely how movement politics can fuel civic reforms to make democratic systems more worthy of that name." John Gastil, Pennsylvania State University



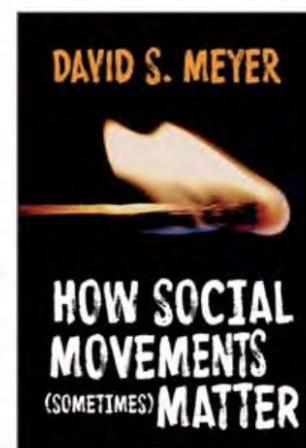
How Social Movements (Sometimes) Matter

DAVID S. MEYER

University of California, Irvine

"With characteristic eloquence and humor, realism and optimism, David Meyer has given us a new book about the success (sometimes) of social movements, both in America and abroad." Sidney Tarrow, author of *Power in Movement*

People protest to try to change the world, because they think they can help change the world, and *sometimes* they do. But not by themselves, and generally not just how and when they want. This book explains how groups of ordinary individuals can affect the world, what makes it possible when it works, and why it sometimes doesn't go to plan. With sharp insight and a wealth of intriguing cases, this book offers a fuller understanding of the politics and potential payoffs of protest politics.



Recent Publications, Book Recommendations, Call for Papers, and News from Members of RC48

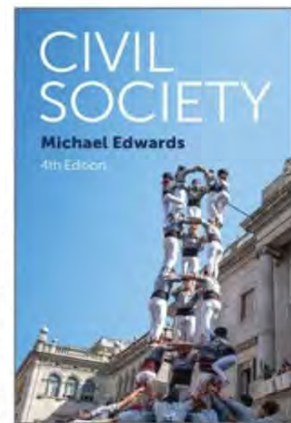
Civil Society

Fourth Edition

MICHAEL EDWARDS

Transformation (openDemocracy)

"This significantly updated edition provides an authoritative account of the contemporary complex relevance of civil society for the future of participatory democracy. Lucidly conceptualized and fluently written, this is required reading for twenty-first-century citizens of conscience." Richard Falk, University of California, Santa Barbara, and former United Nations Special Rapporteur



Now in its fourth edition, *Civil Society* has become a major work of reference for those who seek to understand the role of voluntary citizen action in a troubled world. Ideas about the civil sphere can shed much light on how we might respond to polarization, privatization, and authoritarians of different various stripes.

Social Capital

JOONMO SON

National University of Singapore

"A must-read for researchers, teachers, and students." Beate Völker, Utrecht University

Social capital is a principal concept across the social sciences and has entered into mainstream discourse. However, this popularity has taken its toll, with no consensus over its meaning and use. Son helps to make sense of this concept by carefully analyzing commonalities and differences across a range of theoretical and practical approaches. *Social Capital* will be of immense value to readers across the social sciences and practitioners in relevant fields seeking to understand this mercurial concept.



Recent Publications, Book Recommendations,
Call for Papers, and News from Members
of RC48

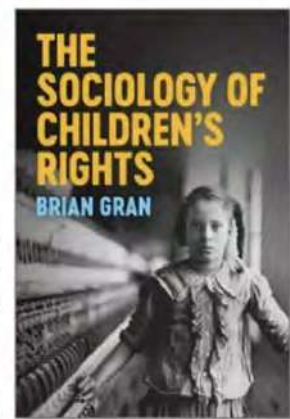
The Sociology of Children's Rights

BRIAN GRAN

Case Western Reserve University

"Gran has shown more understanding of children's rights on an international level than any other professional I have worked with... a significant contribution to the area of children's rights." Margrét María Sigurðardóttir, Ombudsman for Children in Iceland

Children's rights appear universal, inalienable, and indivisible, at least on paper. Yet evidence suggests that the international framework of children's rights contains fundamental contradictions that weaken commitments to children's real-world rights. This insightful book reveals what is at stake when children's rights are compromised. *The Sociology of Children's Rights* is a critical and accessible introduction and compelling read for students and researchers concerned with human rights in sociology, political science, law, social work, and childhood studies.



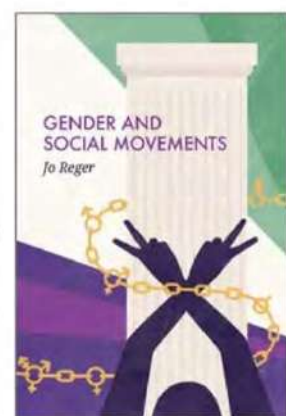
Gender and Social Movements

JO REGER

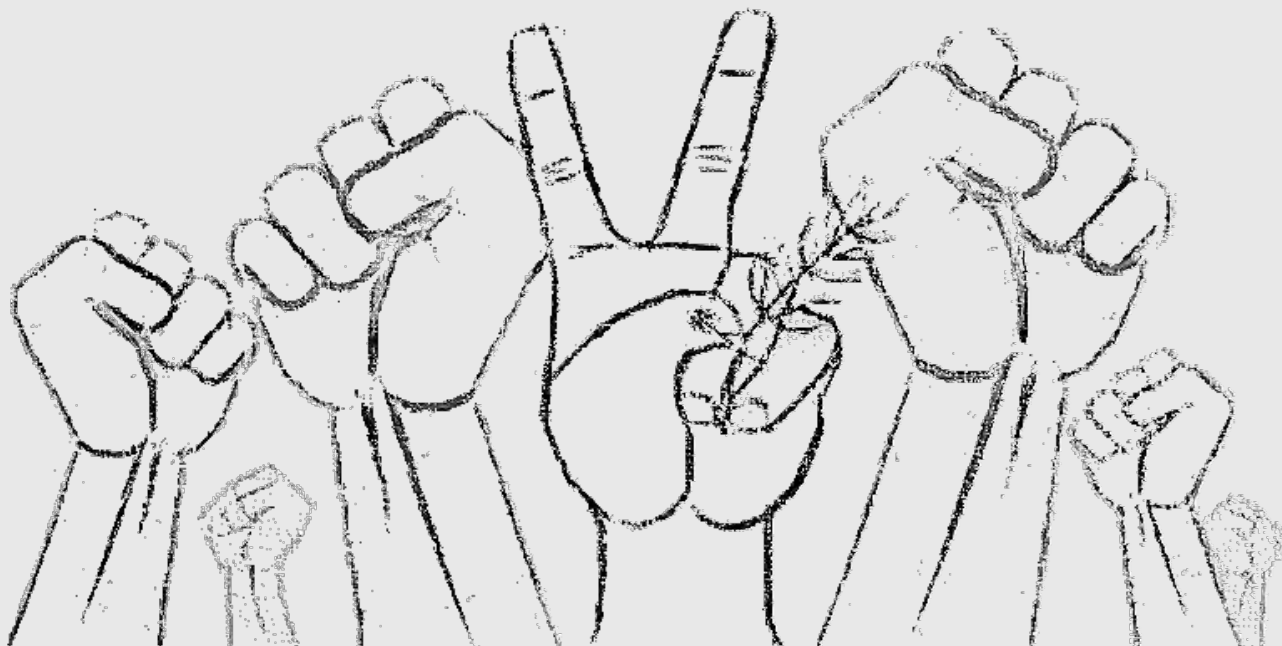
Oakland University

"both eminently teachable and a must-read for scholars." Nancy Whittier, Smith College

Jo Reger provides a comprehensive look at the ways in which people organize around gender issues and how gender shapes social movements. Adopting both an intersectional and global lens, the book introduces readers to the idea that gender, as a form of societal power, is integral in all efforts for social change. With a critical overview across different types of movements and gender activism, such as the women's liberation, #MeToo, and transgender rights movements, this book offers a solid foundation for those seeking to understand how gender and social movements interact.



WHEN DISOBEDIENCE IS «SOCIAL»: DEMOCRATIC PROTESTS AND NEW FORMS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION



**Department of Education
University of Catania
October 21-22, 2021**





OPENING SESSION
Civil and Social Disobedience:
Challenging Issues

The Puzzle (of) Civil Disobedience

Helena Flam – Universität Leipzig

The concept of civil disobedience is a special case of protest which is characterized, among others, by i) conscientious, intentional breaking or disobeying a government law, regulation or rule ii) (to achieve) the visibility iii) of protest against the perceived social injustice iv) while appealing to higher values, not necessarily reflected in the extant laws, regulations or rules, v) without resorting to violence and vi) with the preparedness to accept the consequences for one's life and body. These consequences usually take the form of repression or legal sanctions.

Some cases of civil disobedience may be employed for the sake of gaining social justice for one's own group. But one should not forget that it is usually a relatively small group of mobilized individuals who take the risks associated with civil disobedience on themselves for the sake of a social category they construct and identify with. This applies as much to, say, worker- as to the civil rights- or women-activists who stand up for the rights and emancipation of the category of "workers" or "Black Americans" or "women". Approached from this perspective, such risk-taking, principled mobilisations on behalf of one's "own" group do not differ much from mobilisations on behalf of "the other". "The other" in this case is a member of a category with whom the mobilised feel solidarity and on behalf of whom they mobilize, but whose members do not mobilise. They nevertheless stand to gain, if the mobilization is successful.

Also from another perspective "mobilizing for the other" should not be studied as a separate category of solidarity. It has to be understood that solidarity "with the other" is the same as solidarity "with oneself". A "democratic" state which oppresses internal minorities or supports regimes that do so should be opposed by those not directly affected by this oppression for the sake of achieving "true(r)" and "more just" democracy. Otherwise one is an accomplice in the oppression. This was understood by, for example, Henry Thoreau, who refused to pay taxes to protest their use by the US government to finance its war against Mexico, slavery and the violations of the rights of native Indians.

Civil disobedience became over time associated with such names as, for example, Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. but this "manner of speaking" or the old-fashioned way of writing history as if it was moved forward by great personalities should not make us believe that these great personalities acted as isolated individuals. On the contrary, virtually every known case of civil disobedience has been carried out by a social movement. Rosa Parks' refusal to sit down in the bus section reserved for Blacks being yet another case in point.

As the text so far shows, part of my argument will be devoted to the definitional aspects of the concept of civil disobedience. The other part will focus on the question of how to transfer this concept to the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes in which virtually any person in a position of formal authority can define what is the law or the party or government line. The final part will turn to the question of the circumstances under which civil disobedience emerges. Is it as unpredictable as some authors claim?

Helena Flam gained her Fil Kand in Lund, Sweden and her Phd at Columbia University in NYC, US. She is now professor at the Institute of Sociology at the University of Leipzig. Among others she edited: *States and Anti-Nuclear Movements* (1994), *Emotions and Social Movements* (2005) and *Methods of Exploring Emotions* (2015). She wrote "The Emotional 'Man'" which appeared in two consecutive issues of IS in 1990 and *Mosaic of Fear: Poland and East Germany before 1989* which came out 1998.

Recently she has been exploring how research on social movements and (the legal) professions can be joined ("Civic society and professions" in *Professions & Professionalism*, 2019, "Lawyers, their transgressive Cases and Social Movements" in *illegal* 2021, und "Juristische Expertise: Zwischen Profession und Protest, *Nomos*, 2020). She was an initiator of ESA's RN11 on Emotions and of ISA's WG08 on Society and Emotions, of which she also is the current President.

From the Civic to the Social. Disobedience as Need of Transition to the Democracy of Future

Teresa Serra – Sapienza University

Today, *social disobedience* and *constituent disobedience*, tending to produce political decisions on the common as a constitutive power of the civil order, come up beside the classic civil disobedience. The disobedience follows the crisis of representative democracy events, and the evolution of the constitutionalism increasingly tending to reevaluate the constitutive function of the community, lying in the experience of man within the social sphere and not in the power of institutions. In the current times, the disobedience expresses the need for the participation in the definition of decisions concerning the future of the world. It is also a cultural development in which the planetary dimension acquires centrality, highlighting the human rights issue extended to the rights of humanity and living beings as a whole. Disobedience seems to indicate the way for the future of a democracy system consistent with its principles.

Teresa Serra is full professor of Political Philosophy at the Department of Political Sciences of the Sapienza University.

She was Assistant of Philosophy of Law at the Sapienza University of Rome and of Moral Philosophy at the University of Macerata. She taught Political Philosophy at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the University of Calabria, State Doctrine at the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Teramo, Political Philosophy and Philosophy of Law at the University of Teramo, Trieste and Rome "Sapienza", Faculty of Political Science. She was director of the Institute of Historical Studies and President of the Degree Course in Political Sciences of the University of Teramo. She was director of the Department of State Theory of the 'Sapienza' University from 2006 to 2011. She is director of the scientific journal "Il Contributo" and member of the scientific committee of various journals. President of the Center for Italian Philosophy and honorary member of the Fundacion de Altos estudios en Ciencias Juridicas of Buenos Aires. She directs the Collection of legal and political studies 'Interest' at Giappichelli, Turin, and the series 'Between past and present' of the publishing house "La Nuova Cultura" in Rome. She is a member of the Scientific Committee of numerous journals and of the Encyclopedia of Bioethics published by ESI.

After an initial period of study dedicated to legal and political idealism and the age of the Restoration, scientific interests focused on the relationship between politics and law, on the theme of the crisis of law and institutions, on consent and dissent. A line of research, which crosses all the others, is the theme of communication and its impact on the legal and political. Another line of research concerns bioethics. In recent years, the interest in the theoretical themes of democracy and the crisis of the state has been enriched with the study of democratization processes and the strengthening of the rule of law.

She has numerous volumes to her credit, among which are mentioned: *La disobbedienza civile. Una risposta alla crisi della democrazia?*, 2000; *L'uomo programmato* (2003); *Lo stato e la sua immagine*, 2005; *La critica alla democrazia in Joseph de Maistre e Louis de Bonald*, 2005; *Dissenso e democrazia. La disobbedienza civile*, 2010; *Le afasie della politica. Achille e la tartaruga* (con Fiammetta Ricci), 2013. Numerous interventions in journals and conference proceedings.

Tocqueville Considers Bad Civil Society *Jennet Kirkpatrick – Arizona State University*

One of Tocqueville's important legacies is his argument that civil associations can have a salutatory effect on democratic governance, a view emphasized today by the neo-Tocquevillians. This interpretation of Tocqueville is widespread, but is it accurate? This paper investigates this question by examining key passages in *Democracy in America*, including sections on civil associations, political associations, and the tyranny of the majority. Reading a broader swath of the text reveals that Tocqueville had a more complex notion of civic engagement in the United States than the neo-Tocquevillians generally allow. Tocqueville understood that, while associations can be beneficial, they are neither beyond evil nor an automatic mechanism of democratic growth and wellbeing. In this respect, his writings gesture to a contradiction within democratic thought: civic engagement, which sustains democracy and is necessary for its welfare, can also damage democratic life.

Jennet Kirkpatrick is an Associate Professor in the School of Politics and Global Studies at Arizona State University.

Professor Kirkpatrick's work focuses on resistance and political theory. She is the author of *The Virtues of Exit* and *Uncivil Disobedience*. She has published articles in *Political Theory*, *The Review of Politics*, *Dissent*, *Theoria*, *Politics*, *Groups*, and *Identities*, *Contemporary Political Theory*, *American Political Thought*, and *Perspectives on Politics*.

In addition to her interest in resistance, Professor Kirkpatrick also teaches and writes about morality and politics, and feminist theory. She earned her B.A. in Politics from Mount Holyoke College and her doctoral degree in Political Science from Rutgers University.

Between Civil and Social Disobedience

Tova Benski – The College of Management-Academic Studies, Israel

For me, a scholar of Social Movements, all forms of protest are social and express some disagreement with authorities, with some laws, or with accepted and even taken for granted practices, etc. They all involve emotions and wish to change or to stop certain changes in society, culture, and/or the political.

As the call for papers states, the goal of this conference is to reconstruct from a theoretical and conceptual point of view social disobedience and to analyse its phenomenology. This presentation is aimed to be a modest contribution to the discussion towards such a goal by contrasting Civil Disobedience with other forms of Disobedience, most particularly value and symbolically laden protests that either state or enact social disobedience without breaking the law and is in a sense directed towards relieving the oppression of others than the protesters. I will start with civil disobedience and discuss new trends in social disobedience, focusing on what has come to be named "breaching events" or "breaching protests in the 21st century movements.

Tova Benski is a senior lecturer emerita at the School of Behavioral Sciences, The College of Management – Academic Studies, Rishon Leziyon Israel. Her fields of academic interest and research include: gender, social movements, peace studies, and the sociology of emotions. She has been engaged in research on the Israeli women's peace mobilizations since the late 1980s and has published extensively and presented many papers on these topics. She is the co-author of the book *internet and emotions* (Routledge 2013), and co-editor of Current Sociology special issue (2013). Presently she is on the Executive Committee of the ISA and served twice as the president of RC48.



SESSIONS
Disobedience in Pandemic Times

The Handling of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Regional or Local “Disobedience”

Chiara Sagone – University of Catania

This paper aims to analyze the contrasts that emerged in the management of the Covid-19 pandemic in Italy between the State and the Regions. The regional structure enshrined in the Italian Constitution had to deal with a health emergency that had never occurred before in the history of the Republic, which highlighted significant difficulties in the coordination between the different Governmental bodies and required the intervention of the administrative judge and, most recently, of the Constitutional Court. After a representation based on the local and regional measures adopted, the work underlines that the Constitutional Court has preferred the application of a unitary discipline that would efficiently preserve people’s right to health equally and manage constitutional freedoms.

Chiara Sagone was born in Caltagirone (CT) on June 18, 1992.

She attended the Department of Law of the University of Catania and in 2016 graduated with a thesis in Constitutional Law, based on the principle of solidarity as a founding value of the constitutional order. After graduation she started a period of internship at an important office specializing in administrative law.

Since 2018 she is a PhD student in Constitutional Law at the University of Catania, Department of Political and Social Sciences, with a research project related the relevance of the territory in the constitutional order.

She collaborates with the chairs of Public and Constitutional Law of the Department of Political and Social Sciences, Department of Education and Department of Law in Catania.

In 2019 she obtained the qualification to the profession of lawyer, winning the “Marco Ubertini award” for the high score in the court of appeal of Catania achieved in the tests. She is a member of the Caltagirone Bar Association since 2020.

Publications:

C. Sagone, *L’obbligatorietà dei vaccini tra libertà di autodeterminazione del singolo e tutela della salute collettiva alla luce del principio di solidarietà*”, in *LexItalia*, 7/2018, ISSN 2240-5534;

C. Sagone, *Il territorio come elemento dell’identità culturale della Repubblica*, in F. Paterniti-D. Privitera (edited by), *La complessità della cultura. Flussi, identità, valori*, Milano 2019, ISBN 9788891789112;

C. Sagone *La specialità regionale: verso un ineluttabile declino o prospettive di un nuovo inizio?*, in C. Bertolino, A. Morelli, G. Sobrino (edited by), *Regionalismo differenziato e specialità regionale: problemi e prospettive*, Torino 2020, ISBN: 9788875901554;

C. Sagone, *La libertà di circolazione e le limitazioni poste per motivi di sanità nell’ordinamento regionale*, in *Rivista AIC*, 4/2020, ISSN 2039-8298;

C. Sagone, *Profili ricostruttivi della responsabilità penale dei Ministri tra modello astratto e prassi applicativa*, in *Rivista AIC*, 2/2021, ISSN 2039-8298.

Israel Covid-19 Authoritarian 'Disaster-Capitalism' and Media: Obedient Populist Collectives' Organised Violent Actions against Disobedient Democratic Social-Civic Collectives' Protests

Miriam Gal Ezer – Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee

The focus of this research is on the Israel phase of "Authoritarian Democracy" which was oppressed gradually on the citizens through the last decade by Netanyahu (former Israel PM, 1996-1999; 2009- June 2021), and its resemblance and connections to "Trumpism" and Trump (former US President, 2017- January 2021). Both illeaders tyrannise hard austerity measures within populist strategy of social-political-economy designed to benefit only the rich (1% and less), through advancing fake facts and various myths to manipulate the media in order to create false reality and consciousness while coercing deep ruptures in society in order to achieve greater obedience of citizens to the ruler.

Through the last decade of PM Netanyahu, Israel had deteriorated further and became to be more authoritarian. On the eruption of the Covid-19 in Israel in January 2020, Netanyahu took hold of the pandemic as a single ruler and deliberately coerced Israel to its current phase: a brutal neoliberal anarchic political-economy of "Disastrous Distraction", in order to entrench "Disaster Capitalism" of "Shock-Doctrine", in which the ruler pushing swiftly shock through shock on the citizens. Netanyahu connections with Trump, before the pandemic and especially through this phase and even now, were and are very clear and prominent.

Hence these Illeaders Netanyahu and Trump were and are "Heroes" and mythic "Saviours" of their totally obedient extreme right US very violent "White Supremacy" and more, even armed militias, as well as Israeli "Jewish Supremacy" nationalistic armed settlers, and the "Patriotic Base" that acts sometimes by armed militias; while the "others" are social-civil disobedient citizens and collectives, which are peaceful protestors: many groups and movements of democratic, liberals, centrists, and also liberal right wingers, which are stigmatised by states illeaders, by the state apparatus various security official organisations, by the illeaders obedient nonofficial armed militias, thus the protestors are persecuted, beaten, abused and even arrested as "Radical Leftists", "Traitors", "Mob", "Real Enemies", "Collaborators with Terrorists", "Anarchists", "Plague Disseminators", and more.

It seems that this case-study enables discussion and analysis of the theoretical and empirical concepts of peaceful civil and social disobedience, as well as total obedience to the authoritarian ruler of populist collectives' organised violent actions even of armed civil militias. The question investigated here is where the social? Is it a new democratic concept of civil disobedience, or it is social-collective-total-obedience to the authoritarian ruler?

Miriam Gal-Ezer (Ph.D. Hebrew University of Jerusalem) is a Lecturer at the Department of Communication, Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee, Israel. Her research interests include: visual communication, documentary, TV and digital genres, personal and collective memory, sociology of language and CDA, audience reception studies, sociology of art and culture, media and feminism, and the body. Recently, she was a guest editor for the special issue of the academic journal *Language and Intercultural Communication*; she serves as a peer reviewer to this journal and more. She has published both in international and Israeli journals, won research grants and stipends, and is currently involved in several studies - audience reception study of TV series, Israeli Arab middle class, the Israeli social protest, communities of remembrance. She also works as an art advisor, researcher and curator; is a member of Israeli public art committees. She is involved in Israeli journal special issue initiatives and guest editing, art exhibition for 2013 and more.

Her book: *Israeli Canonic Art Field* was accepted for publication (Hebrew). Formerly – lecturer in Emek Yezrael College, Hebrew University and more. Programme planner, Founder and Director of Art Education Centre, Tel-Aviv Museum of Art; Founder and Director of on-job training programme in Communication Studies for high school teachers - Oranim College, and a supervisor for the Ministry of Education Media Studies for teachers.

Social Movements and Social Disobedience at the Time of Covid19 Crisis: the Case of the Italian University

Francesco Antonelli, Santina Musolino – University “Roma Tre”

The purpose of the paper is to contribute to the analysis of riots and social movements against the introduction of “green pass” in Italy. After having discussed social disobedience in theoretical terms and defined it as a complex socio-political practice at the cross between subjectivation and radicalisation, the paper is focused on the frame alignment process preparing social disobedience against green pass at the symbolic and political-cultural level. Our attention is on the case of Italian University. The main conclusion of our work is that the reference to the freedom of individual subject against the government intrusiveness is preminent. Such an idea seems to adjust riots against “green pass” toward post-social movements as well as a libertarian discourse very similar to Thoreau’s perspective about the relationship between the individual and the government. In other words, these orientations do not break with contemporary culture of the individualism as well as with individualisation process and late modernity, coextensive with neo-liberal globalisation, but they radicalise them.

Francesco Antonelli is Professor of General Sociology at the Political Sciences Department, Università degli Studi “Roma Tre”. He is the coordinator of the Horizon2020 Project PARTICIPATION “Analyzing and Preventing Extremism Via Participation” (2020-2023) and he was work-package leader of the Horizon2020 Project TRIVALENT “Terrorism pReventIon Via rAdicaLisation countEr-NarraTive” (2017-2020). He is secretary of the Research Committee “Sociological Theory and Social Transformations” at Italian Association of Sociology (AIS) where he was also past secretary of the Research Committee “Gender Studies” (2015-2018). He was visiting professor at EHESS in Paris, Universidade de São Paulo, Universidade do Minho, GESIS-EUROLAB in Colonia and at La Troube University in Melbourne. Author by more over 150 scientific papers in Italian, English, France, German and Dari, among his latest publications: *Radicalizzazione* (Milano 2021); “Emerging Aspects in Technocratic Politics at the Time of the SARS COVID19 Crisis” (RTSA, 2/2020); *Tecnocrazia e democrazia. L’egemonia ai tempi della società digitale* (Roma 2019).

Santina Musolino is PhD in Political Sciences. She is currently a research fellow in Sociology at the Political Sciences Department, Università degli Studi “Roma Tre”. She is Project Manager of the Horizon2020 Project PARTICIPATION “Analyzing and Preventing Extremism Via Participation” (2020-2023) and she was member of the research team of the Horizon2020 Project TRIVALENT “Terrorism pReventIon Via rAdicaLisation countEr-NarraTive” (2017-2020). She is a member of the Research Committee “Gender Studies” at Italian Association of Sociology (AIS). Her main research interests include the study of terrorism, radicalization, and violent extremism from a gender perspective.



Disobedience and the Law

The 'Standard' Definition of Civil Disobedience Between the Fidelity-to-Law Requirement and the Rule-of-Law Ideal

Augusto Sperb Machado – University of Lausanne

The “fidelity-to-law” requirement is certainly one of the most debated criteria of the so-called “standard” definition of civil disobedience, most famously developed by John Rawls. This paper examines the grounds and implications of this criterion in relation to the notion of “rule of law” in order to provide a more robust interpretation of that definition. It will be argued, on the one hand, and contrarily to what is often implied by some interpretations, that fidelity to law is not grounded in the rule of law. Once we adopt an asymmetrical interpretation of the latter, the promotion of the rule-of-law ideal cannot indeed be mobilized as the reason why civil disobeyers must be faithful to the law – and, thus, as the reason why they must accept the legal consequences of their acts (punishments included). On the other hand, this paper proposes that the rule of law is not completely unrelated to fidelity to law, as conceived in the standard definition. In regard to the communicative aspects that are inherent to the practice of civil disobedience, both play indeed an important role in implementing a “moral dialogue” for giving effect to the special kind of publicity required by that definition. Therefore, although the rule of law is not at the basis of the fidelity-of-law requirement, it is a presupposition of civil disobedience (implicit in the Rawlsian notion of a “nearly just society”).

Augusto Sperb Machado is currently a PhD candidate in Public Administration and a graduate assistant in Political Theory and History of Political Ideas at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. Previously, as an Eiffel Excellence Scholar, he obtained a Master's degree in Politics at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, in Paris. He also holds a Bachelor of Laws and a Master's degree in Philosophy, both at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.



Social Dissent and Disobedience in Education

The Education and Dissent: Rethinking Kenneth Keniston's Contribution to Youth Studies

Maurizio Merico, Nadia Crescenzo – University of Salerno

Within the broader scenario of the research carried out during the sixties on student protest and the consolidation of youth counterculture, the paper aims at offering a reappraisal of the analysis elaborated by the social psychologist Kenneth Keniston on the forms of dissent that involved US students in that historical period. On this basis, the paper aims to show how Keniston's proposal to identify a "new image" of youth through the analysis of the interweaving of the processes of social change, the biographical dimension and the psycho-social development, placed at the base of his reflection of youth cultures, opens to an intrinsically educational system. The dissent that animates the young students to which Keniston refers is a constructive one, grounded on a critical spirit, on a sense of civic responsibility, and on political participation: all concepts of strong educational density.

The attempt of the paper, therefore, is to critically reflect on Keniston's contribution to the study of youth cultures, trying to grasp, within his theoretical and methodological framework, both the aspects of continuity and of discontinuity that – after about sixty years – still represent an effective guide for those who deal the study of young people and youth cultures.

Maurizio Merico is Associate Professor at the University of Salerno where he currently teaches “Sociology of education” and “Sociology of Youth Cultures”. Former member of the “Pool of European Youth Researchers”, he is Editor in chief of the “*International Bulletin on Youth Research*”, Deputy-Chairman of the “*Generation and Educational Science Institute*” (GENESIS) (Austria) and scientific responsible of “Youth Wiki - Italy”. His main research interests include: youth studies; youth cultures; temporal perspectives; youth work; non-formal education. Among his recent publications: *Giovani e generazioni* (edited by, 2019) and *Belli e dannati. Percorsi di analisi delle culture giovanili* (2018).

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Since 2017 she is Honorary Fellow - Scientific Sector “Sociology of Cultural and Communication Processes” (SPS/08) – CD in Sociology – at the University of Salerno.

In May 2021 she received a Ph.D. in “Language Sciences, Society, Politics and Education” at the Department of Political, Social and Communication Sciences of the University of Salerno with a thesis on “Non formal education in Italy. Theories, policy, practices and experiences in the framework of European Youth Policy”.

Her main research interests include: non-formal education; European youth policy; youth work; educational processes.

Cosmopolitan Educational Disobedience. A Theoretical Proposal for Changing Times

Anna Maria Leonora, Augusto Gamuzza – University of Catania

Social disobedience in present times can't be analytically portrayed without considering its close and inescapable relation with pandemic social *milieu*. In this sense, an evocative example that connects dissent and pandemic is the transnational protest against COVID health pass (and against any kind of mandatory vaccination policy) across Europe since 2021. These events require the scientific observer to consider the generation of a complex phenomenology characterized by different *nuances* of collective actions if confronted with the classics of civil/social disobedience. It was also emblematic of the disparate groupings that have joined these anti covid-restriction protests. The main aim of this paper is to briefly discuss the first evidences and theoretical implications coming from a qualitative research focused on the participation of the Italian homeschooling groups to the protests against the COVID-19 restrictions. Amplified by the pandemic lockdowns, alternative education in Italy is a growing phenomenon but an elusive community for social researchers to access. Collected data show that the members of this community present some oppositional elements (which therefore explain their support for the protest) but they appear to be substantially configured as opponents of the institutions as such although presenting some elements of a cosmopolitan socialisation, openness to freedom and tolerance, attraction towards 'the others'. Analysing the Italian alternative education community on this issue implied the necessity of a critical confrontation with the social context of reference unveiling alternative trajectories for social disobedience dynamic.

Augusto Gamuzza is associate professor in Sociology at the University of Catania, Department of Education Sciences and researcher at ISIG (Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia) and CURE (Interdepartmental Research Center for the Community University Engagement - University of Catania). Since 2016, he is the Scientific Director of the research laboratory "OfficinaSociale" and board member of NGO COPE Cooperazione Paesi Emergenti, Catania. He was Visiting Professor at the Department of Humanities, Institute of Sociology, University of Szczecin (PL). Engaged in the coordination of transnational research on European competitive calls since 2010, his current research interests focus on four main areas: development cooperation as a cosmopolitan practice; identity dynamics in contexts of cultural contact; radicalisation phenomena and extreme behaviour among young people; methodological and epistemological aspects of action-research strategy. Currently, he is senior researcher for the Horizon2020 project "PARTICIPATION Analyzing and Preventing Extremism Via Participation" aimed at preventing extremism, radicalization and polarization that can lead to violence through more effective social and education policies and interventions.

Anna Maria Leonora is researcher in Sociology at University of Catania, Department of Education. Her main research interests are: solidarity and socialization processes, alternative forms of socialization and educational processes – with a special focus on homeschooling practices and communities in Italy; the link between socialization and educational practices in postmodern society applying mixed method approaches. Since 2010, she works as senior researcher in transnational research projects. Currently, she is senior researcher for the Horizon2020 project "PARTICIPATION Analyzing and Preventing Extremism Via Participation" aimed at preventing extremism, radicalization and polarization that can lead to violence through more effective social and education policies and interventions.

Disobedience in Pandemic Times: Protests for and against Distance Teaching in Italy

Giorgia Mavica, Alessandra Scieri – University of Catania

The measures taken by the Italian government to contain the first wave of Covid-19 had important consequences on the school world. The widespread use of distance learning (DaD), although it has allowed a certain degree of continuity at the crisis stage, it has been followed by several issues related to the pre-existing vulnerability conditions (Dressen *et al.* 2020). Hence the important socio-economic inequalities that characterize the national context, the levels of participation and the learning problems of students have triggered a series of events from the North to the South of Italy that have affected many cities and saw specific social and economic categories as protagonists, influencing all the sphere of the Italian population. Such protests present specific characteristics, linked to the type of workers involved and the kind of prohibition. These groups linked the social protest to several youth education and socialization issues.

The Corona virus pandemic crisis has, in fact, also affected the social, emotional, relational contests in the scholastic sphere. The several preventive measures, implemented by the government to try to contain infections, have struck the school at his heart.

Within the above condition the most affected social category where the students, which have experienced the hardest situation to remain at home accepting distance teaching (Dad), and suffering a complete change of their everyday life. Even if also teachers put forward several issue linked to their professional lifen (Roncaglia 2020).

The paper aims to bring this constellation of events, both for and against DaD, into a categorization useful to compose a detailed picture of the protest in Italy, it also aims at achieving a descriptive and interpretative frame, in order to obtain a first focus of the problem.

The research reports the analysis of a remarkable number of press articles relating to the above-mentioned protests, in order to grasp the main aspects of the content and the protagonists of the protest in order to highlight the challenging picture of short and long-term effects on school and young generation. The analysis of the articles was conducted through the 5W+1H strategy (Singer 2008; Hamborg, Breitinger & Gipp 2019) considered suitable to achieve the purpose.

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Giorgia Mavica is a Research Associate in General Sociology SPS/07, PhD in Human Sciences and Expert in General Sociology at the Department of Education, University of Catania.

Her current research interests focus on the theme of youth subjectivity expressed through collective action and the consequences of such action and on the processes of youth radicalization.

She collaborates, and has collaborated, as Junior Researcher in several national and European projects (e.g. Cursemom; PARTICIPATION - Horizon 2020; TIEREF Erasmus +; Unaccompanied and Separated Children in their Transition to Adulthood in Italy UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM NORADICA Erasmus +; Multicultural Schools Erasmus+).

She has several scientific publications to his credit.

Alessandra Scieri is a PhD student in Educational processes, theoretical-transformative models and research methods applied to the territory at the Department of Education Catania. His current research interests focus on the ethics of responsibility in young people, environmental issues and on several forms of protests, such as the international network of activist #Fridaysforfuture.

She collaborates, and has collaborated, as Junior Researcher in several national and European projects (e.g. Cursemom; TIEREF Erasmus+; Unaccompanied and Separated Children in their Transition to Adulthood in Italy, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM; Multicultural Schools Erasmus+).



**Disobedience as a Form of Resistance:
the Interdisciplinary Outlook**

From Civil Disobedience to Social Disobedience: New Paths on a Globalised World.
Theoretical Framework and Case Studies
Caterina Drigo – University of Bologna

This paper aims to delve into some theoretical challenges posed by the phenomenon of disobedience. As it is known, there are several difficulties in defining both the concept of civil disobedience, and the one of social (or pro-social) disobedience, analysed from a juridical point of view.

In our societies, obedience – at least a certain type of obedience - is often perceived as a value, something worthy, while disobedience is considered negatively. We all are raised as kids learning this, it is our “imprinting”. But disobedience is the engine of history: what allows society to evolve. More precisely, a certain type of disobedience. And, on the contrary, obedience, a certain type of obedience, turns out to be a defect, a factor of immobility, stagnation, and, in some cases, even complicity with evil.

According to the Bible (Adam and Eve) and Hellenic myths (Prometheus), the history of humankind started with an act of disobedience, human civilization evolved from an act of disobedience. Even a civilization that is geographically distant and culturally rooted from the Western one, as the one centered on the Buddhist religion, places an act of disobedience at the origin of the path that leads to enlightenment, to holiness (The young Siddhartha Gautama).

Disobeying, seen from this perspective, serves to break a status quo, to overcome an immobility that closes history and does not make it evolve. From David Thoreau onwards, civil disobedience is functional to justice and democracy; it is a means of social emancipation, and it has specific liberty goals, such as to eliminate inequalities. In this theoretical framework disobedience to the law is justified if it is useful to oppose what the conscience and dignity of individuals mean if it violates fundamental human rights. Given this assumption, what seems complex to identify is what exactly the practice of civil disobedience consists of, which forms of protest against the established authority and/or its laws can be considered legitimate and justified and which not.

If in Italy civil disobedience was adopted for many years by the Partito Radicale, both against laws considered liberticide, and to introduce new civil rights into the legal system, nowadays new forms of controversial protest have emerged, and they are not always pigeonholed in the traditional concept of civil disobedience.

They often oppose not so much the individual or individuals against the State, but, ultimately, the rights of individuals vs the rights of other individuals, as in the case of protests against vaccination obligations or against the so-called “green pass”. Again, although the role of social movements in civil disobedience has always been of crucial importance, recently a different paradigm is also found. There are forms of protest in which the role of social movements seems marginal and the behavior of individuals who violate the law is moved by an ethical imperative, such as in the cases concerning the rescue to (non-regular) migrants (for example *Rackete case*) and also the case of some disobedient Mayors who, before the intervention of the Constitutional Court, refused to apply the so-called Security Decree in the part in which it prevented asylum seekers from registering with the Municipality. Similarly, there are cases of disobedience connected to profound ethical themes that evoke the concept of human dignity, its absolute, axiological (and unavailable) nature, or, on the contrary, its being expressive of the principle of self-determination of the individual, as in the *Cappato case*.

This paper will try to identify some theoretical paths moving from the abovementioned cases placing the mentioned forms of disobedience on the crest between meta-juridical values and law.

Caterina Drigo is currently Senior Assistant Professor (fixed-term) in Constitutional law and, from the 5th of November 2021, she will serve as Associate Professor at the Department of Legal Studies – Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna.

She holds a Ph.D. in Constitutional law and she is qualified as Associate Professor both in constitutional law (from 2017) and in Comparative Law (from 2018).

She teaches Fundamental rights, Public Law and Protection of Fundamental Rights, Regional law, and she wrote mostly in the field of fundamental human rights and constitutional adjudication.

Why Disobeying the Law? Emotions and Reasons in the Protest against the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline

Vito Giannini, Nicola De Luigi, Ilaria Pitti – University of Bologna

The present article's intention is to contribute at literature on disobedience and protest by exploring motivations for participating in collective actions of disobedience through an analysis of emotions in protest. Applying an emotion-based approach to the study of disobedience the paper explores the messiness of individual processes of political activation and, in so doing, it questions the apparent homogeneity of the political collectivities emerging from acts of disobedience. The paper considers the protest developed in the Apulia region (Italy) against the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline as a case study and asks how do emotions intervene between the perception of unjustness and the decision to disobey. After presenting the current debate on the role of emotions in protest, the paper introduces the case study of the No TAP protest movement and the main traits of an ethnography conducted on the movement between 2018 and 2019. The analysis then explores the role that emotions have in explaining why people decide to disobey the law despite risks, sanctions, and defeats.

Vito Giannini holds a PhD in Sociology and Social Research at the University of Bologna (UNIBO), where he graduated in Sociology with a thesis on the occupation and self-management of a social centre in Bologna city as an experience of political participation in urban space. His current topics of interest are activism, identity, conflict, social change, ecology, with attention to the relationship between culture, emotions and social action. His PhD research looks at protest movements in socio-environmental conflicts and is based on an ethnographic analysis of local opposition to the TAP gas pipeline in Apulia region (Italy). Currently he collaborates with LACAB (Laboratory on grassroots activism and alternatives), a project based in two research entities of the UNAM (Mexico): the Institute for Social Research (IIS) and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Humanities (CEIICH).

Nicola De Luigi is full professor of Sociology at the University of Bologna (UNIBO). In the last decade, his research activities have focused on two main fields: youth studies and social policy. In particular, his research activities have addressed the following issues: gender inequalities in the transition from education to the labour market, educational processes and labour market changes, young people and gambling, youth politics and participation in urban spaces. He has been involved in several research projects concerning young people's participation in European urban spaces (PARTISPACE – Horizon 2020), adolescent gambling behaviour and attitudes (Young Millennials Monitor) and educational and labour market policies in relation to varieties of capitalism (Prin 2015). He is the author of many papers and works with research institutes and networks at both national and international levels.

Ilaria Pitti is Senior Assistant Professor at University of Bologna (UNIBO) and Humboldt Experienced Researcher at Goethe Universität – Frankfurt. She currently holds the position of Vice President of ISA's RC34 "Sociology of Youth". Youth studies are her main field of research and she has conducted several studies on youth participation in subcultural scenes and social movements, also in the framework of EU funded projects (Marie Curie, FP7 and Horizon 2020). She collaborates with the Ministry of Work and Social Policies as an expert on the same topics. Amongst her recent publications: the article "Liminal Participation: Young People's Practices in the Public Sphere Between Exclusion, Claims of Belonging, and Democratic Innovation" (con A. Walther e Y. Mengilli, *Youth&Society*, 2021) and the edited book "Young people's Participation. Rethinking Youth and Inequality in Europe" (con M. Bruselius-Jensen e K. Tisdall, Policy Press, 2021).

Children in the Context of Homosexual Couples, between Legislative Limits and the Disobedience of Would-be Parents. Reflections on a Problem Awaiting Solution

Francesco Paterniti – University of Catania

The reflection addresses the theme of civil disobedience, in its social dimension, as a form of opposition to the law considered unjust. The analysis specifically addresses the case of the limits placed by Italian law on the parental perspectives of homosexual couples. The analysis tends to highlight the difficulty of considering disobedience as a legitimate form of opposition to be lawful, highlighting what different tools should be activated to react if the law is considered contrary to the values of the constitutional order.

Francesco Paterniti is Associate Professor of Public Law at the University of Catania. He has published two monographs and co-edited a manual of public and constitutional law, now in its fifth edition. He has written dozens of scientific articles on public and constitutional law, dealing with, among other topics, the protection of the inviolable rights of individuals.

Philosophy of Disobedience. The Detachment from the Rule as a Theoretical Act

Emanuele Coco – University of Catania

In 1953, when he published *The murder of Christ*, Wilhelm Reich quoted Rousseau's dismayed observation: "Man was born free and everywhere he is in chains. He who believes himself to be the master of others is nevertheless more a slave than they are. How did this change come about? I don't know." ¹ Reich added: "Jean Jacques Rousseau asked this question at the very beginning of his *Social Contract*, about two hundred years ago. If this fundamental question is not answered, the new social contracts will be of little use." ¹

In welcoming with enthusiasm the themes of the conference «When Disobedience is "social": Democratic Protests and New Forms of Collective Action Department of Education» I would like to start from an apparently opposite direction: disobedience to oneself as a key manoeuvre to move towards a *personal theoresis*, an awareness of the true self, which is a prerequisite both for a different conception of the world and one's existence in it and for a conscious adhesion to collective forms of disobedience.

In the course of my intervention I will make use of some authors – Reich, Freud, Marcuse, Jung, Bruno among others – to highlight the difficulties that the counterpoint between obedience and disobedience to the *rules of our person* poses to us: the abandonment of this part well known to us is a feat that requires *heroic fury*, something we would gladly renounce, resigned to a quiet assimilation with our *traditional self*, were it not for the fact that – as Jung had to explain – the most creative part of us never tolerates such betrayals of its needs and ends up taking revenge on our lives with no less unhappy outcomes. The balance between these *different truths about us* passes through a laborious process of *philosophical investigation*. A path aimed at creating a new *theory*, a new representation of ourselves, otherwise inaccessible.

Emanuele Coco is associate professor in History of Philosophy. Former Marie Curie fellow at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris (EHESS), he is *membre associé* at the same institution (Laboratoire d'anthropologie des institutions et organisations sociales, LAIOS-IIAC).

She has taught at the Universities of Florence and Lille. He now teaches at the courses of *Education and Training Sciences* (three-year degree), *Psychological Sciences and Techniques* (three-year degree) and *Psychology* (master's degree) at the University of Catania.

He is scientific responsible for the local research units of the European projects Erasmus+ Task 21 and BeYou.

He is a member of the Interuniversity Centre for Epistemological and Historical Research on the Sciences of the Living (Res Viva) and of the scientific committee of the Fird 2017-2019 project dedicated to the relations between Myth and Logos.

He is part of the editorial board of the philosophy magazine *Logos* and of the scientific periodical *Suitefrançaise* and is co-director of the scientific series *Imaginalia* published by Malcor D' Edizioni.

Biologist and philosopher, he began his research dealing with the relations between biology and cultural contexts, working on the biological paradox of altruism and devoting a critical study to the unpublished lectures of the English evolutionist William D. Hamilton, which he found in the British Library. Later, he broadened his research interests to the collective imagination - and its relations with science, psychology and philosophy - with particular reference to symbolic, mythological and narrative elements and their diffusion in society.

He is the author of essays and theatrical texts related to the themes of science, psyche and philosophy. Among these: *Egoisti, malvagi e generosi. Storia naturale dell'altruismo* (Bruno Mondadori); *Il circo elettrico delle Sirene* (Codice); *Dal cosmo al mare. La naturalizzazione del mito e la funzione filosofica* (Olschki); *Tanz! musicconcerto d'ispirazione filosofica* (2016 Scenario Pubblico) and *Consigli pratici per evolucionisti spaesati*, show and double CD with the participation of Francesco Bearzatti, Leo Gullotta and Elio e le Storie Tese (2009 Festival della Scienza di Genova). He has written for several periodicals, including *MicroMega*, *il domenicale del Sole 24 Ore*, *Doppiozero* and *Atlante* dell'istituto Enciclopedia Italiana Treccani.



Disobedience and Solidarity Processes

Understanding the 2021 Colombian Protests as an Act of Social Disobedience: Places, Spaces, and Bodies of Resistance and Solidarity

Camilo Tamayo Gomez – University of Huddersfield

On 28 April 2021, different protests and demonstrations began across Colombia, initially in opposition to a proposed tax reform. Colombian President Iván Duque Márquez argued that the reform was crucial to overcome Colombia's economic crisis and mitigate post-pandemic unemployment. The reforms involved a rise of taxes on basic products including food and utilities, moving middle-class earners into a higher tax bracket, and making the health care system more privatised. The reform aimed also to eliminate tax exemptions to lower-class individuals, as well as increasing taxes imposed on businesses. After four days of protests, the government withdrew the tax proposal. Nevertheless, demonstrations regarding a range of diverse issues, including economic inequality, police violence, unemployment, and poor public services, continued until July 2021.

In Colombia's history of protest, the 2021 mobilisations are the most serious public unrest in recent memory. According to Human Rights Watch (2021) and Amnesty International (2021), 68 deaths occurring during the four months of demonstrations. The principal responsible of have committed these killings against mostly peaceful demonstrators are the members of the Colombian National Police. Human Rights Watch documented 16 cases in which the police appear to have killed unarmed protesters or bystanders with live ammunition, 17 cases of protesters or bystanders being beaten, often with police truncheons, and 71 cases of gender-based violence by police officers, including rape, sexual assault, slapping and verbal abuse. Also, at least 419 people have been reported missing since the protests began. One of the main characteristics of these protests was the involvement of a diverse urban and rural constituencies in a single national protest, where young people made up the core of the demonstrations. In this context, this paper aims to analyse how the 2021 Colombian protests can be understood as a main act of social disobedience. It will explore how the intersection between the symbolic reconfiguration of public spaces (streets, squares, public roads) during the protest, and the impact of police violence on demonstrators' bodies, is showing new dimensions of social disobedience where the body become a place of resistance and the public space a site of civic solidarity.

Camilo Tamayo Gomez, PhD, is Senior Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Huddersfield (UK). Senior Adviser in Transitional Justice for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and appointed to Colombia's Truth, Memory and Reconciliation Commission. He is also affiliated to the British Sociological Association (BSA) and is board member of the Research Committee on Social Movements, Collective Action and Social Change (RC48) of the International Sociological Association (ISA). His current research focuses on the relationship between security, conflict, transnational and comparative criminology, global south criminology, multiplatform social justice, and transitional justice from a sociological perspective.

Guilty without Crime: Policing of Solidarity with Refugees and Other Migrants

Lina Vosyliute – CEPS (Centre for European Policy Studies)

Stephanie Brenda Smialowski – SciencesPo

In this article, we argue that social disobedience by civil society actors, starts when governments begin to disobey international human rights and humanitarian law. We call civil society actors, including volunteers, citizens, journalists and migrants themselves. For instance, when governments at the EU external borders started to conduct illegal pushbacks, pay third countries to conduct pull-backs as to prevent arrivals of refugees and other migrants or mistreat them while in detention or put them on quick return procedures. Some independent civil society actors came in to uphold customary law and internationally agreed values. When we look up closely, if anything, those showing solidarity with refugees and migrants were performing acts that are not only moral and legitimate but also constitute positive state obligations. For instance, civil society actors have been conducting rescue operations, providing basic services, from food to blankets, ensuring migrants' their access to justice or asylum procedure. Thus not civil society, but various governments disobey agreed international norms and customary laws by passing unconstitutional, illegitimate, disproportional and undemocratic laws, policies and practices. Civil society actors and international institutions become an inconvenience for governments to continue such restrictive, preventative or punitive migration policies, practices. Civil society on the ground becomes the target itself, as without them also international and European institutions are merely walking in the dark. Thus, it is not by a coincidence, when international law disobeying governments attempt to prevent any arrivals, civil society actors get accused, first and foremost as "facilitators of irregular migration". Paradoxically, civil society gets called out as the ones 'disobeying' the government policies, thus governments shifting the onus to them to prove that they are not the smugglers.

Lina Vosyliūtė is a Research Fellow at CEPS Justice and Home Affairs Unit.

She focuses on the topical issue of criminalisation of solidarity, among broader migration and asylum, criminal justice and fundamental rights issues. During ten years of professional experience, Lina conducted research and advocacy to public institutions, foundations and NGOs in Lithuania, Malta, Hungary, Belgium, the Netherlands and South Africa. Before joining CEPS in 2015, she worked at Vilnius-based private research institute Visionary Analytics.

Within the frame of H2020 project ReSOMA – Lina led research and discussions with civil society, criminalised individuals and their lawyers as well as policy makers. Policy options briefs based on legal and policy analyses related Crackdown on NGO's assisting refugees and other migrants and Strategic Litigation on how to prevent the criminalisation of solidarity. The research has been quoted, although not entirely reflected in the EU Guidelines on exempting Criminalisation and Humanitarian Assistance'. In the project The Effects of EU's Anti-Smuggling Policies on Civil Society Actors financed by the UK ESRC, Lina has coordinated a team and co-authored the book on Policing Humanitarianism: EU policies against human smuggling and their impact on civil society and an academic article on Policing the mobility society: the effects of EU anti-migrant smuggling policies on humanitarianism and Picking 'Low-Hanging Fruit' While the Orchard Burns: the Costs of Policing Humanitarian Actors in Italy and Greece as a Strategy to Prevent Migrant Smuggling.

Lina has contributed to the Studies Commissioned by the European Parliament. In 2018, she co-authored a study on the fitness of the EU's legal tool, Facilitators Package is fit for purpose to tackle migrant smuggling and how the criminalisation of solidarity exacerbates vulnerabilities among the smuggled migrants. And last year, presented a study on 'Protecting civil society space: strengthening freedom of association, assembly and expression and the right to defend rights in the EU - Think Tank (europa.eu), shedding the light how human rights defence and civic liberties can be curtailed when governments have tools to criminalise civil society.

Since 2019, she has acted as a peer-reviewer for the Editorial Board of Oxford University Press, International Studies Perspectives (ISP) Journal and the Executive Board of the McGill Journal of Sustainable Development Law (MJSDL) and International Journal of Migration and Border Studies (IJMBS). In 2018, she was ranked among the 100 women of Lithuania that all Lithuanians worldwide are proud of.

Lina holds an MA degree in Human Rights from the Legal Studies Department at Budapest based Central European University (CEU) in 2011.

Stéphanie Brenda Smialowski earned a Master diploma in International Public Management from Sciences Po Paris, with concentrations in Migration and European studies in 2020.

She has previously interned at the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in São Paulo, the Centre for European Policy Studies in Brussels and, at the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. In 2021, she concluded the Schuman Traineeship at the Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Service (DG EPRS), where she worked in the Citizens' Policy Unit (CPOL) as part of the migration and security teams.

During these professional experiences, she has developed an expertise in policy analysis in EU Justice and Home Affairs and Institutional Affairs. Her research focuses on migration and asylum; the criminalisation of humanitarianism; migrant smuggling; Roma inclusion and anti-Gypsyism; the role of civil society actors and broader rule of law and fundamental rights challenges.

In the context of her research on the criminalisation of the humanitarian assistance to migrants, Stephanie has co-authored a study Commissioned by the European Parliament 'Fit for purpose? The Facilitation Directive and the criminalisation of humanitarian assistance to irregular migrants: 2018 Update' and another publication to the European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research 'Picking 'Low-Hanging Fruit' While the Orchard Burns: the Costs of Policing Humanitarian Actors in Italy and Greece as a Strategy to Prevent Migrant Smuggling'. During her traineeship at the European Parliamentary Research Service, she also co-authored the study 'Understanding EU action against migrant smuggling'.

Prosocial Activism: First Evidences from the Protests for Migrants' Rights in Sicily

Davide Nicolosi – University of Catania

In recent times, different organizations joining together creating associative networks at several levels with the aim of playing roles of political influence, humanitarian support, dissemination of culture and specific values. In particular, the presence of several associations dealing with the defence of migrants' rights has exponentially grown, in connection with the issues regarding the social integration of these subjects in the European countries. The presence of the *No Borders* network, which has recently distinguished themselves for demonstrations in defence of asylum seekers, should be considered of relevant importance to this case. This network highlights the evolution of the role of volunteers/activists from advocacy activities towards the provision of services to asylum seekers, refugees, and irregular immigrants in trouble.

The *No Borders* network, as well as other similar groups, shows the overlap between the figure of humanitarian volunteer and political activist. The combination of these two figures seems to reveal widely multifaceted and complex forms of *civic activism*, prefiguring cases of *prosocial activism*. This latter is characterized by the presence of people involved in collective actions (protests, demonstrations, etc.) focused on the defence of vulnerable social categories.

The goal of this paper is to explore and analyse the (new) concept of "prosocial activism" through recent studies around the above and similar kinds of collective action. The research will allow the implementation of new speculative models through which to examine this kind of activism in some pro-migrant networks operating on the Sicilian territory.

Davide Nicolosi is a PhD student in Educational processes, theoretical-transformative models and research methods applied to the territory at the Department of Education Catania. His current research interests focus on the theme of the collective action and on several forms of protests, such as those of second generations of migrants and prosocial activists. He collaborates, and has collaborated, as Junior Researcher in several national and European projects (e.g. TIEREF KA3 Erasmus +; Unaccompanied and Separated Children in their Transition to Adulthood in Italy, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM; NORADICA KA2 Erasmus+).

Civil disobedience as a Current Form of Resistance: the Tax Rebellion of the Agricultural Sector in Argentina

Martin Julian Acevedo Miño – Pontificia Universidad Católica

As it is well known, the agricultural sector has been one of the great engines of the Argentine economy since the dawn of the national organization. If we made a report of the political and social movements that had media coverage in Argentina and that promoted publicly disobeying a norm, considered unfair, installing public debate on it during 2008, we could focus our analysis on what was called the "crisis of the agricultural sector", "the farmland strike" or "the crisis of the field".

It has been said that "in contemporary life the validity of the principle of legality means the submission of all state acts to the provisions emanating from legislative bodies, and also, the submission of all singular, individual and concrete acts, originating from an authority to the general, universal and abstract norms previously established, even coming from that same authority". We also know that the state attribution to regulate the exercise of constitutional rights is required to harmonize the use of different rights by different people; to prevent the practice of a right by one person from preventing others from using the same faculty. In short, regulations impose limits on human action to facilitate social coexistence and general well-being and for freedom to constitute a common heritage. This limitation - which has been repeated ad nauseam - must be formulated by law, in a formal and material sense, with two parameters or limitations: art. 19 (principle of non-interference and principle of legality) and art. 28 (principle of reasonableness) of the National Constitution.

A ministerial decision that does not respect these guidelines is doomed to be resisted by civil society. The Argentine rural sector - "wayward" or "disobedient" in the terms we analysed - basically refused to comply with a norm that perceived unfair and unconstitutional. In Argentina, March 11, 2008, marked the beginning of a crisis that rethought the political scene and, to date, is considered a turning point in several senses. A politically motivated, public, non-violent movement with a clear awareness of the violation of the law (in this case, a ministerial resolution) rose up against the regulations that were intended to be applied to them regarding export taxes.

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