

CALL FOR PAPERS

RELIGIOUS CHANGE AND THE SHAPING OF SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN A TROUBLED EUROPE

Call for papers, Special Issue, *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia*, edited by
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Abstract

The theme of religious change is crucial in public and scientific debates and has relevant social and political implications. Nowadays, there are different and partly conflicting trends going on in Europe. On the one hand, the process of secularization is proceeding with the only exception of a few Eastern European countries; moreover, religiosity seem to acquire a more private dimension, with individual religiosity and practices (like praying) prevailing over belonging to a Church and participating to religious services. On the other hand, new religious movements born both inside and outside the traditional denominations are gaining momentum and extensively spreading. Next to these changes that are endogenous to European societies, other exogenous factors drive religious change and represent potential sources of conflicts. Among them the most significant seems to be the intensification of global migrations that increases religious diversity and pluralism of the European societies, challenging their social cohesion. As to these exogenous factors, the key question is how migrants' religious background and practice favors or hinders the integration into host societies.

The call is looking for contributions dealing with the role played by religious change in shaping solidarity and social participation. Editors are equally interested in longitudinal approaches that link religious change to changing forms of solidarity and social participation and in cross-sectional approaches dealing with the relationship between solidarity, social participation and individual religiosity.

Although in partially different ways, the issue involves both the native and the migrant population. Among the native population, individual religiosity affects attitudes towards redistribution and welfare state, social capital and opinions on migration (both extra- and intra-EU). Inside this broad field, specific research questions can be addressed: e.g., is religiosity a driver rather than a constraint to the development of a European identity supporting social solidarity? Is there room for the emergence of a new religious cleavage, linked to nationalism and populism? Are attitudes towards redistribution and welfare state changing for religious and non-religious people and in different religious denominations? Is the relationship between trust and religiosity changing over time?

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Among the migrant population, individual religiosity can affect the opportunities of social participation in the labor market, in education, in the other realms of social life and the overall degree of social integration in the host society. Divergent outcomes can arise among national groups characterized by different prevailing denominations as well as individuals with different religious belonging within the same national group, for example in areas like education, labor market and political participation.

It goes without saying that the triangle religiosity-solidarity-participation is exposed to the tensions activated by the ongoing European crisis and international conflicts. Both the economic and the refugees crisis trigger geographical cleavages that partially overlap with well-known religious cleavages (Catholicism Vs. Protestantism, Catholicism and Protestantism Vs. Orthodoxy, etc.). The economic crisis brought out contrasting views on solidarity among member states between Northern and Southern countries and also tensions on intra-EU migration between Western and Eastern European countries. The refugee crisis created an atmosphere of suspicion between Mediterranean and the other European countries, and even stronger friction between Western and Eastern countries.

On these premises, the call looks for contributions in English dealing, both empirically and theoretically, with the relationship between religiosity, solidarity and social participation within European countries. The call is keen on a variety of methodological perspectives: qualitative and/or quantitative, longitudinal and/or cross-sectional, comparative and/or national designs as well as case studies are welcome and encouraged.

Deadlines and guideline

Abstracts due by **November 15, 2016**. All abstracts (500 words), with 5 keywords, should be sent as e-mail attachments to: ferruccio.biolcati@unimi.it

Communication from the Editors concerning the selection of articles by **December 15, 2016**.

Submission of first versions of articles to the editors by **March 31, 2017**. Articles – written in English – should follow the journal guidelines and sent to: ferruccio.biolcati@unimi.it

Communication from the Editors concerning the peer-review process by **June 30, 2017**. Revised versions sent to the editors by **September 15, 2017**.

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