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Conflict and democratic participation in the digital society

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The concept of participation requires a careful and thorough revision. In the different ideals of representative democracy, political participation is declined as an institutionalised practice, considered as compulsory for the exercise of representation and necessary for increasing the civil attention to the common good; in the experiences of direct democracy (or rather in the various and sometimes trivializing theories of it) participation overlaps with the idea of personal involvement and it is exercised (usually) through the rejection of delegation. It is no coincidence that representation and participation were very often placed in an antithetical and mutually exclusive position. In the concrete practices of democracy, however, things are certainly more complex, to the point that the concept of participation itself has variously intertwined with that of representation, has been variously declined and even its operationalization appears at least problematic. The topic of conflict – traditional in the social sciences but at the same time declined in various dimensions – inevitably intertwines with the concept of participation and the practices of civic engagement. Alongside the forms of participation “by invitation” – typical, for example, of many experiments of democratic innovation or of some practices, more or less depoliticised, of collaborative governance – new trends of participation “by irruption” have developed, where social actors have become protagonists in the institutional re-shaping of procedures and organisation of social spaces. These two different directions of participation have variously intertwined both with the “institutionalized” political practices (political parties, trade unions, etc.) and with those of active citizenship and, finally, with the action of social movements in the urban contexts. This scenario is made even more complex by the growing centrality of digital ecosystems, which have become both a place of representation and a space of conflict.

This call intends to give space to innovative studies - first of all empirical but without excluding those with a theoretical critical cut - on the complex relationship between political participation, democracy and the several forms of social conflict also (but not exclusively) in the light of the transformations of the public sphere, symbolically identified with the growing social centrality of digital ecosystems.

Types of abstracts and deadlines

The extended abstract, in Italian or English (from 800 to 1000 words, references included), has to be send **by February 28, 2020** as e-mail attachment to: rivistacussoc@unisa.it

The extended abstract has to be submitted with full title and five keywords, furthermore it has to include name of author(s), affiliation(s), and e-mail for correspondence. In case of more than one author, the corresponding author needs to be indicated. The extended abstract should clearly illustrate the topic, theoretical framework, research proceedings and scientific relevance.

Communication from the Editors concerning selection of abstracts invited to develop into full papers (35,000 to 60,000 characters, including footnotes, references and spaces) **by March 15, 2020.**

The complete articles has be presented **by May 30, 2020** through the journal OJS electronic platform and they must comply with the guidelines, in addition the articles that will be presented in Italian must also include the English title (<http://www.cussoc.it/index.php/journal/about/submissions>).

Communication concerning the peer-review process **by September 15, 2020.**

Revised and language edited full papers: **October 15, 2020.**

Final decision on revised papers: **November 15, 2020**

Publication: **December 2020.**