Urban Conflicts and Immigration.

Resources and Risks for Social and Spatial Innovation

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Urban Conflicts and Immigration: *what ?*

- The conflicts between migrants and autochthnous people related to the representation and/or use of urban spaces

- Migrants and autochthonous people are 'spatial actors' (Gotham, 2003); home place-making/home place-breaking practices (urban belonging/exclusion): city is affected by a continuous production of emergent and conflictual spaces

- Diffusion and fragmentation of urban conflicts related to immigration:

  - Conflicts to defend the 'urban security' (e.g. against the diffusion of parochial migrants' spaces - , Semprebon, 2012 - and the presence of migrants in public spaces - Cancellieri and Ostanel, 2015)

  - Cultural conflicts (e.g. against the openness of mosques, Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2002)

Urban Conflicts and Immigration: why?

- To intersect urban studies and migration studies

- To put at the centre the spatial turn / 'emotional and practical turn' in migration studies

- To integrate the everyday life's practices and the structural socio-political dynamics: <u>to look for the 'political' aspects of social everyday life</u>

- *We must always allow for the possibility that conflict may appear and to provide an arena where differences can be confronted. The democratic process should supply that arena (Mouffe, 2000)*

Perspectives
on Urban Conflicts (UC)

- *Conservative:* UC are occasional urban pathologies that disturb the harmonious and consensual urban life: the sacralization/the myth of the consensus (ideal city=no conflicts)

- *Marxist:* UC are 'special shapes' of the class conflict (ideal city=no conflicts)

- *Darwinist*: UC are part of a zero-sum game for the evolution of social life (ideal city=city of destructive conflicts)

Two different 'City of conflicts'

Antagonistic City

- UC are zero-sum game

- The different positions are firm and try to get the maximum

- UC are struggles among enemies

Agonistic City

- UC are variable-sum game

- The different positions (more blurred) try to bring out urban needs

- UC are 'agon'=agoras, 'places' of meeting, contentions and transformations

Agonistic City: City where there is 'time and space for exploration, for action and interaction between actors' (Göle, 2014)

Analytical (and political) dimensions of UC: the case of Italy

- *Actors, alliances and publics:* small groups of Italian inhabitants (often organized in small committees), the local politicians, local mass-media. Migrants are passive actors: they have no voice

- *Allocation of urban stakes:* the spatial capital, visibility, recognition, the sense of place, the homogeneization/familiarization of the social landscape

- *The process of denomination:* the concept of 'urban decay' and its performative nature

- *The emotional and multisensory components:* 'moral panic', social atmosphere, durkheimian rituals.

- *Spatial and territorial affordances* in terms of different accessibility, encounter/negotiation and plural temporary appropriations

- *Institutional regulation (and other outcomes of the UC)*: the prevalence of a revanchist political repertoire

Analytical and political dimensions of UC

- Actors, alliances and publics (and forms of representation)

- Allocation of urban stakes

- The process of denomination

- The emotional and multisensory components

- Spatial and territorial affordances

- Institutional regulation (and the outcomes of the UC)

The struggle for space

- Migrants and autochthonous people are 'spatial actors'

- Home place-making/home place-breaking practices (urban belonging/exclusion): emergent and conflictual spaces

- Publicness: accessibility, encounter, temporary appropriation

Conclusion: the transformative power of UC

- To bring out and reveal urban actors

- To explore new urban points of view/urban needs and knowledge

- To 'raise' an urban practice from 'private' or 'parochial' to 'public' and 'political': to transform an invisible practice in a public battlefield (Lehtovuori, 2005)

- = UC have disruptive effects but they can also be heuristic and political 'tools' for social innovation

Thank you very much for your attention!

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