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CALL FOR PAPERS

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Articles can be in any language and length chosen by the author, while its abstract and keywords have to be in English.

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the topic of this issue

GLOCAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

Contrary to appearances, human relations in a globalized society seem to be becoming, in general, increasingly more significant, fed as they are by diverse forms of rationality not reducible to that of economy. Personal relations tend to integrate themselves into social networks that generate trust and create various types of interpersonal exchanges. They seem to be characterized by those “weak ties” which paradoxically have “strength”: friendly acquaintances that (differently than those shared by close friends, intimates, family and relatives) broaden the possibility of access to information and of finding self-satisfying jobs. These relations are increasingly becoming more relevant in building a social capital that brands itself as both local and global: it generates economic benefits for the individual and for the community to which he/she belongs, but not only this. In fact, social capital bases itself on trust, on shared standards and on mechanisms of relation created by human interaction. It produces inter-personal exchange and cooperation, constituting a precious immaterial resource for individual use. However, ever increasing migratory flows – which tend to characterize globalization – often challenge consolidated social equilibriums, both in the country of origin and in the country of arrival, breaking human bonds and giving rise to problems of social justice and public order. These tears can be partially repaired by the existence or by the formation of small communities (ethnic or cultural enclaves), which generate “binding social capital” and therefore positive fallout for the members of these communities. But binding social capital is unable to transform itself into “bridging” or “linking social capital” and thus produces social fragmentation. In effect, it causes individuals and communities involved in the process of globalization to become increasingly more weak and unable to face social challenges as part of a larger community. The obvious risk is the possible disintegration of global society into a multitude of closed communities. Institutional policies or political actions produced by social collaboration can partly govern this process of intensifying human relations and create significant links between society and individuals that in the end can generate new forms of polity.

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