

ITALIAN PERSPECTIVES ON WORLD-ECOLOGY

Introduction

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This special issue was first conceived in late June 2018, after Jason W. Moore had travelled throughout Italy - from Ragusa and Catania to Padua, via Naples - to present his work on world-ecology to academic as well as activist audiences. To the benefit of the few readers unfamiliar with him, it may be useful to recall that Moore - environmental historian, historical geographer and professor of sociology at Binghamton University - is one of the most prominent analysts of the socio-ecological crisis presently active; a crisis which he reads by applying Marxian insights in an original way, namely the world-ecology perspective, which in the issue is debated through an interview, related commentaries and five articles.

Although what happened in 2018 was not Moore's first encounter with the Italian social sciences,¹ it certainly was the most comprehensive: three scientific workshops and two public speeches in the span of a week gave Moore plenty of time to engage with Italian scholars on issues that were not on the original world-ecology agenda. In a sense, we felt that the relationship between Italian thought and Moore's socio-geographical reflection could be finally analyzed on its own terms: on the one hand, Giovanni Arrighi's deep influence is unmistakable; on the other, the interest of our country for world-ecology is shown with equal evidence by the fact that his first collection of essays in Italian (Moore, 2015a) *predates* his first book in English (Moore, 2015b)². Thus, what had been lacking until 2018 was a wider conversation between world-ecology and connected Italian perspectives that had emerged in the last few years.

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¹ In May 2011 Moore gave two talks at the University of Calabria (Sociology Department).

² Two further works by Moore have been published as for 2019: again with independent publisher Ombre corte (Moore, 2017) and subsequently with a major publisher such as Feltrinelli (Patel, Moore, 2018).

Offering a venue to such wider conversation is the aim of this special issue of *Sociologia urbana e rurale*. In fact, Gennaro Avallone's interview is less an introduction to world-ecology than a detailed reply to critical issues that were raised during the aforementioned workshops - and that can be found both in the commentaries and in the research articles. The problem concerning dualism and the putative emancipatory character of its critique is exposed by Luigi Pellizzoni, whereas an attempt to "pluralize" the Capitalocene can be found in Maura Benegiamo's essay. The foundational role of social movements and the need to disentangle historical materialism from a State-centric approach (linked to a Marxist orthodoxy) are brought to the foreground by, respectively, Alessandra Corrado and Salvo Torre. Finally, Andrea Ghelfi poses the question of how a relational ecology can foster a politics of commoning, while Emanuele Leonardi focuses his attention on the nexus between contemporary valorization and crisis-theory.

Moore's interview and its commentaries attest to the conversation that has taken place during Moore's visit to Italy, pointing out lines of convergence and friction according to which the debate is likely to proceed in coming years. The special issue expands also in other directions, including critical remarks which had not been addressed to Moore last year (hence are not dealt with in the interview). Viviana Asara takes issue with the philosophical foundation of Moore's thought - namely dialectical holism - whereas Laura Centemeri proposes to widen the space for dialogue in order to include the insights of pragmatic sociology. Through a similar theoretical move, Marco Fama and Elena Musolino also indicate terrains for expanded discussion in, respectively, post-development theory and intersectionality. Finally, Alice Dal Gobbo argues that, by taking into account the everyday, the opposition between life and value - a key tenet of world-ecology - could be grounded more solidly.

The overall picture that results from reading the pages that follow on one side confirms the importance of Moore's outlook on the socio-ecological crisis, on the other shows the growing engagement of Italian scholars with cutting-edge international debates.

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