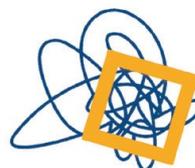


**Relational Studies  
in Sociology**

 Centro di Ateneo  
**Studi e Ricerche  
sulla Famiglia**



**DIPARTIMENTO  
DI SOCIOLOGIA**

**UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA**  
del Sacro Cuore

CALL FOR PAPERS

International seminar

## **The Relational Insight into the Changing Society**

The Catholic University of Milan (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)

1-2 February 2018

Relational sociology is increasingly spreading on the international scene. As it happens when a new scientific approach or paradigm attracts a growing number of scholars, researchers and practitioners, almost inevitably it gets interpreted and articulated in many and different ways. This is precisely what is occurring in a variety of centres for theoretical and applied research, not to mention many sectors of social policy, welfare services and best practices in applied social sciences. The present international seminar (which follows on from eight previous seminars held at the national level, starting in 2004, based upon the relational sociology developed in Italy since 1983) aims to highlight the peculiar nature of relational sociology vis-à-vis other sociologies. That is why the suggested focus for the contributions to be presented is the idea of what it could mean to do sociological research by assuming the standpoint of the ontological, epistemological and practical concept of 'relational insight' into social phenomena. In pursuing this perspective, the seminar is intended to emphasise the rationale underlying the distinction relational/non relational employed in the research field, so to be able to distinguish relational sociology from other approaches or paradigms that are only partially relational or are not relational at all. The seminar will be organised in three sessions giving participants the opportunity to exchange and compare views and experiences at the theoretical, methodological and practical levels.

### **Scientific committee:**

Elisabetta Carrà, Family Studies and Research University Centre, Catholic University of Milan  
Paolo Terenzi, Department of Political and Social Sciences, Bologna University - Secretary of the Relational Studies in Sociology Network ([www.relationalstudies.net](http://www.relationalstudies.net))

### **Promoters:**

Family Studies and Research University Centre, Catholic University of Milan  
Department of Sociology, Catholic University of Milan  
The Relational Studies in Sociology Network

## Programme

**First session:** Thursday 1 February, 15.00-19.00

### **What does the 'relational approach' to sociology consist in? Selected theoretical aspects**

The topic of the session: what is relational sociology's outlook on society and on social phenomena? Can we, indeed must we, distinguish between, on one side, a purely *descriptive and/or objectifying* view and, on the other side, a *reflexive and relational* insight? Relationality may remain *within the individual*, or it may be capable of *otherness*. It may be limited to our inner dialogue (that is, when we observe reality and discuss it with ourselves), and thus to a *personal*, individual form of self-reflexivity. Or, instead, our reflexivity may extend to the relationship itself, i.e. to our relationships with the natural world, the practical reality and social phenomena at large. In the latter case, it becomes *relational reflexivity* (P. Donati, M.S. Archer, *The Relational Subject*, Cambridge University Press, 2015). It is this second form of reflexivity that gives us to understand how and why the human being can transcend herself in the social relation and at the same time can reach a deeper understanding of our morphogenic society. Papers submitted may also examine the international literature in order to identify the main differences between relational sociology and other sociologies, such as transactional, merely interactional, communicational, exchange, structuralist sociologies, and so on.

**Second session:** Friday 2 February, 9.00-13.00

### **New directions for 'relational research and relational best practices'**

#### **Workshop 1: Research projects, already carried out or in progress (for PhD students and young researchers).**

Papers are supposed to present research projects already carried out or in progress explicitly set from a relational point of view. Papers may also be submitted that discuss recent publications (books or articles) which in one way or another state that they have been written from a relational perspective.

#### **Workshop 2: Practical experiences and applications of relational sociology.**

Papers may be presented here that deal with social practices, including methodological papers, papers concerning relational sociology applied to practical questions, in all fields, such as, for example, the social services, family networks, welfare, employment, health, the new media (Internet in particular) and so on.

**Third session:** Friday 2 February, 14.00-17.30

### ***Relational social work in social and family networks.***

This session shall focus on papers presenting studies of *relational social work* practices, conducted in regard to communities, social groups and, in particular, social and family networks.

### **Time-schedule**

**15 September:** deadline for the submission of a proposed paper (the following must be provided: the title of the paper; 5 keywords; a 500-word abstract; the session that one would like the paper to be presented in;

**15 October:** notification of those papers accepted (the secretary's office shall only notify the authors of the accepted papers);

**15 November:** publication of the final programme;

**15 January:** submission of the paper (total length: 7,000-8,000 words)

**15 March:** delivery of the final version of the paper.

Abstracts must be submitted by 15 September by e-mail to [elisabetta.carra@unicatt.it](mailto:elisabetta.carra@unicatt.it) and to [paolo.terenzi@unibo.it](mailto:paolo.terenzi@unibo.it)

### **Accepted languages of the papers: Italian and English**

The speakers presenting the accepted papers shall be provided with free hospitality and a contribution towards travel costs.