



Università
degli Studi di
Messina

DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE
POLITICHE E GIURIDICHE

STUDENT CONFERENCE
CALL FOR PAPERS

POWER AND CONTROL: THE STATE AND SOCIETY IN TRANSFORMATION

NOVEMBER 14-16 2024

UNIVERSITY OF MESSINA

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND JURIDICAL SCIENCES

PHD IN POLITICAL SCIENCES

PHD IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS SCIENCES

The current global scenario inevitably compels us to reflect on two central themes in contemporary political and social debate: Power and Control. Although these terms are distinct at the semantic level, they are closely interconnected and consequential in the study of democratic legitimization processes at local, national, and supranational levels, and in light of the increasingly dominant structural and value transformations impacting society and State.

On a definitional level, the concept of power encompasses various facets: the ability to do something; capacity of influence other individuals; holding political authority; possessing the legal capacity to perform actions, and free will. Control, instead, is characterized as the activity of verifying the regularity of something or someone, both in public and private spheres.

Therefore, if power is not conferred, there can be no exercise of control. The most well-known form of power is undoubtedly that of the State. From the earliest communities of individuals to the establishment of modern states, there have always been entities (which later became institutions) considered as leaders, entrusted with making decisions and choices necessary for their respective communities.

The legitimization of power, for instance, according to Hobbes as elucidated in *Leviathan*, is found in a pact made among several individuals to transfer authority to one chosen

individual, in order to avoid anarchy, disorder and inequalities. The reflection on power remains relevant today in light of contemporary societal phenomena, such as, by way of example and not exhaustively: the consolidation of authoritarian regimes; conflicts between sovereign states; the increasingly significant role of artificial intelligence; the establishment of increasingly unhealthy and oppressive interpersonal relationships; the empowerment of women in various sectors of society; the crisis of political institutions and the simultaneous emergence of new forms of participatory democracy that could redefine state powers as previously understood.

The task of scholars, therefore, will be to investigate the reasons for and possible solutions to the changes (whether advantageous or disadvantageous) in the paradigm of power and control. The *Student Conference* organized by the PhD students in "Political Sciences" and "Public Administrations Sciences" at the University of Messina is aimed at PhD students and recent PhD graduates (within the last three years) in Political Sciences, Public Administration, Law, Economics, and the Humanities.

The Conference aims to foster the intersection of methodologies and disciplinary fields on the following topics:

1. Individual and community: freedom and boundaries of power and control;
2. Roles, relationships, power asymmetries, and media as a tool of social control: what order in society;
3. Innovation: the impact of artificial intelligence on power and control dynamics;
4. Power and control in political theory: origin, evolution, and symbols;
5. Challenges to the state in modern and contemporary ages: nationalism, integration, globalization;
6. The international scenario: old and new instruments of power and control;
7. Distortions of power in political and social dynamics and legal protection: abuses in family and work relations; gender-based or discriminatory violence; use and abuse of public force and political power;
8. The State: power, democratic participation and the guarantee of fundamental values;
9. Transparency and power: control over the exercise of administrative power;
10. Entities and Agencies with control functions: protection of the State and the citizen.

HOW TO PARTECIPATE

By 22th July 2024 candidates must:

- Fill in this FORM: <https://forms.office.com/e/8qXqswFFDv>
- Send an abstract (max. 500 words) and a CV to the following e-mail address: conferencescipog@unime.it

Candidates will receive the results of the assessment by the 16th of September 2024. Selected papers will undergo peer-reviewed for possible publication.

The Student Conference will be held at the University of Messina on November, 14-15-16, 2024.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Roberto Amagliani, Salvatore Bottari, Giuseppe Bottaro, Mario Pio Calogero, Dario Caroniti, Luigi Chiara, Elena Di Blasi, Franco Maria Di Sciullo, Lidia Lo Schiavo, Francesco Martines, Michele Messina, Alessandro Morelli, Giovanni Moschella, Daniela Novarese, Maria Felicia Schepis, Fabrizio Tigano, Maria Francesca Tommasini, Angela Villani.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Doctoral students of the PhD course in Political Sciences

Doctoral students of the PhD course in Public Administrations Sciences

Department of Political and Juridical Sciences – University of Messina

INFO

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