

Young people and the new semantics of the future¹

Carmen Leccardi

Young people in the new century find themselves having to define their existential choices within a social landscape that is strongly characterized by the acceleration of change. Contemporary time seems to erase temporal continuity and the notion of the life-plan as developed in first modernity. The article analyses how this process impacts the biographical constructs of young people and how the changing experience of time affects the transition to adulthood and the spread of new values. The hypothesis is that the positive relation among life-plan, biographical time, and identity encounters difficulties when the future is shortened. Planning capacity is compromised and life-projects depend more on subjective factors than on completion of the canonical life-stages marked by institutional times-frames. As a result, young people “navigate by sight”, dealing with uncertainty, rather than following pre-established routes. But the re-definition of the relationship between identity and social time does not only consist in a growing focus on the present; it also implies a reconstruction of the relationship with the future. In a nutshell, a significant part of the “new youth” seems to possess sufficient capacities to be able to govern the dynamics of the high-speed society in which young people find themselves living.

Introduction

If over the course of the 20th century the image of the future as a field open to possibility became more and more evanescent, it is above all the new century that has rendered increasingly evident the interconnection between the two processes of social acceleration on the one hand and the crisis of the future (and of the modern temporal experience) on the other. It is not just that there is in fact a spread in the sensation of living in an epoch of uncontrollable risks and of correspondingly great uncertainties, such as to render the idea of the future as *undesirable* in itself; the growth in the speed of the rhythms of life together with the acceleration in the processes of economic, social and techno-

¹ A version of this article (*Changing Time Experience, Changing Biographies and New Youth Values*) was published in M. Hahn-Bleibtreu and M. Molgat (eds.) *Youth Policy in a Changing World: From Theory to Practice*, Barbara Budrich, Stuttgart 2012.

logical transformation also profoundly influences our very experience of time (Rosa 2003). In using the expression “speed of the rhythms of life” we refer to the results at the level of actions of the contraction in temporal horizons and the dominion of the short term; to the out-and-out hegemony of the deadline, elaborated as a principle of action; to the discrediting of perspectives founded on the idea of “once and for all” (i.e. irreversibility); and to the spread of a culture of the provisory. Together, these factors impact negatively not only on the ways in which we work, interact, and construct our actions in the present but also on our ways of looking at the future.

The consequence of living in a high speed society (Rosa and Scheurman 2009) is that the future is, so to say, burned up: it folds back into the present, it is absorbed within it and is consumed before it can really be conceived. The present in its turn becomes “all there is” (Harvey 1990: 240). Within the temporal frameworks redefined by the compression of time-space it appears as the only dimension available for the definition of choices, a fully-fledged existential horizon which includes and substitutes the future (and the past). The acceleration of social life and its various times renders these two dimensions ever more evanescent as reference points for action. To put it more precisely: although the evocation of the future continues to constitute a routine both for social systems and for subjects, it is in fact the present that is now associated with the principle of potential governability and controllability that modernity – through its normative ideal of progress – associated with the future.

Contemporary time therefore seems to erase not only temporal continuity but also the notion of the life-plan as developed in the modern era. In order to explain this process and its impact on the biographical constructs of young people today we must dwell further on the relationship between biographical time and planning (see: Anderson *et al.* 2005; Brannen and Nielsen 2002 and 2007; Machado Païs 2003; Woodman 2011). Then we must consider the essential features of the transition to adulthood today; and finally we must resume the theme of the changing experience of time connecting it with young people’s new values. The new semantics of the future will help us in understanding them.

Biographical time and the life-plan

The analytical point of departure here is *biographical time*, understood as the unitary temporal dimension that emerges from the processes by which people consider the past, live the present, and look to the future. Biographical time and identity are closely bound up with each other – nor could it be otherwise. Personal identity, just like time-of-life, is the outcome of the dialectical relationship between permanence and change, between continuity and disconti-

nunity, among past, present and future. Because it takes shape on the variegated terrain delimited on the one hand by the person's need for autonomy, and on the other by one's need for recognition, passing through a delicate mixture of identification and dis-identification, the raw material of personal identity is by definition time, both existential and social (Luckmann 1993).

If we adopt this perspective, biographical time must necessarily be compared with the social-temporal norms that determine and define the various life-stages from childhood to old age, set them in relation to each other, condition the transitions among them, and above all construct their meanings. The duration of these phases, the order in which they occur, their degree of constrictiveness, and so on, may vary according to the historical moment. Suffice it to consider, for example, how representations of the ages of life have changed since the Second World War. Though more diversified and certainly less cogent, the temporal norms which regulate life-courses still condition biographical construction – as they do every other aspect of social life (Zerubavel 1981). They play an ambivalent role: on the one hand, they prevent individuals from exercising complete control over their personal time because they force them to comply with temporal orders external to that time; on the other, and in parallel, they provide important support to development of the life-plan by allowing, in general, subjective options to be transformed into socially legitimated life trajectories.

It should be stressed in this regard that the possibility itself of conceiving a dialectical relationship between time of life and social time is considered a historical product of modernity. In fact, it was modernity that furnished a representation of time consonant with a conception of the time of life as (auto) biography (Leitner 1982): an abstract and empty dimension within a temporal flow depicted as linear, directed, and irreversible.

But a paradox arises. The “subjectification” of time embodied by the concept of biography is one of the outcomes of modernity's exteriorization and objectification of time whereby the latter is considered a thing separate from its perceiver, a dimension which flows autonomously, overwhelms human beings, and is articulated by the unstoppable movement of the instruments used to measure it (Adam 1995). This is a power more emotionally to be feared than space (Jaques 1982), with which, though, it is inextricably bound up².

As said, a particularly sensitive analytical tool with which to analyse biographical time and its change consists in the life-plan, which results from a perfect overlap between planning and biography. To adopt the perspective of social phenomenology, the life-plan can be considered emblematic of both

² This is mainly due to the fact that time by definition postulates death.

biographical time – “an individual’s biography is apprehended as [...] a plan” (Berger, Berger and Kellner 1973: 71) – and of personal identity³. On this view, where long-term planning exists, there arises both a biography in the proper sense and a full-fledged sense of personal identity. Accordingly, biography and identity have an irrepressible need for the medium-to-long term future (and before that, a linkage among past, present and future).

This positive relationship among life-plan, biographical time, and identity, however, encounters difficulties when the future is foreshortened – as happens in the acceleration society – and mastery over time becomes more problematic, also because of the unpredictability of courses of action in our era. Put otherwise, when the accidental, the possible, the fortuitous can no longer be controlled by means of planning (as a form of insurance against the future) because of the exponential growth of social uncertainty (Rampazi 2002), then planning capacity in the traditional sense of the life-project is compromised. Yet even if the life-project is understood simply in terms of an intention, design, scheme or programme (Boutinet 2003, 23), and even if one separates the noun “project” from its qualifier “life” and considers medium/short-term planning, the contemporary time requires that this key dimension of self-construction be re-thought.

The ungovernability of the future which largely accounts for present-day uncertainty, therefore, not only renders long-term plans potentially obsolete and predictions impracticable; it also alters the temporal structure of identities, creating fertile ground for redefinition of their postulates, and primarily among these the connection between identity and life-plan.

On discussing these matters, Hartmut Rosa has emphasised the close connection between the acceleration society and “biographical de-temporalization”. He writes,

life is no longer planned along a line that stretches from the past into the future; instead, decisions are taken ‘from time to time’ according to situational and contextual needs and desires [...]. Thus, a conception of the good life based on long-term commitments, duration, and stability is thwarted by the fast pace of social change (Rosa 2003: 19).

The severing of the connections among the different dimensions of biographical time – among memory of the past, choices in the present, and ex-

³ The interest of Berger, Berger and Kellner (1973) in the life-plan stems directly from the attention traditionally paid by phenomenological sociology to planned action. Schütz (1971), who resumed Husserl’s interest in the anticipatory character of action, analysed it in relation to action considered as “planned behaviour”, and studied its temporal structure.

pectations regarding the future – reverberates at the individual and social levels. At the individual level, it creates space for people to search out new forms of anchorage to the present for their expression of the self; at the social level, it uncouples life trajectories from the institutions as guarantors of individual and collective continuity. As a result, inner autonomy and social independence, that is the achievement of increasing degrees of independence made possible by a positive relationship with credible and non-fragmented social institutions, tend to split apart. The conclusion of the juvenile life-stage increasingly depends on wholly subjective factors which redefine the priorities and horizons of life rather than on completion of the canonical life-stages marked out by institutional time-frames such as education, work, and couple formation (Heinz, Weymann and Huinik 2009).

The institutional system as such – that is, independently of the concrete relationships which individuals establish with it – is increasingly averse to the future. As a consequence, young people tend not to receive support from the institutions in regard to their entry into adulthood. In other words, key social institutions like the school, work, or the family no longer guarantee the success of that transition. Whatever the level of individual commitment may be, the outcome is uncertain. Young people must individually negotiate the manner and timing of their entry into adulthood.

The inability of the social institutions to ensure that entry into adulthood follows a predictable pattern, notwithstanding a positive relationship of young people with these institutional times, is today entirely evident. Its impacts on biographical time appear to be profound. The existential discontinuities that it produces radically redefine the modes and forms of biographical narrative: As a result, *anticipation*, a crucial part of the construction of action, is prevented. Hence, whilst in the “tradition of modernity”

(s)tranches of time used to acquire their meaning from the anticipation of further sections of the time-continuum still to follow, they are now expected to derive their sense, so to speak, inside – to justify themselves without reference, or with only perfunctory reference, to the future. Time-spans are plotted beside each other, rather than in a logical progression; there is no preordained logic in their successions; they may easily, without violating any hard and fast rule, change places – sectors of time-continuum are in principle interchangeable. Each moment must present its own legitimation and offer the fullest satisfaction possible (Bauman 1999: 78).

The fragmentation of the experience of time distinctive of our era, and which young people experience through the progressive separation between times of life and institutional times (less at the level of everyday routine than

at that of overall meaning), therefore means that people “navigate by sight” rather than following pre-established routes.

It is essential, however, not to restrict the discussion to the loss, or the reduction, of possibilities for action associated with contemporary processes of time redefinition. In fact, these processes also have a positive, visible side which should be carefully analysed. Values undergo modification while people devise their strategies for coping with these transformations and, as far as possible, controlling them. The result of these important processes whereby the relationship with social time is restructured do not necessarily consist only in absolutization of the immediate present. Perhaps with the exception of a minority of young people, identities are not exclusively declined in the present. Young people seem more to be frequently engaged in a search for new relations between personal production and personal creation – which is anyway associated with the future – and the specific conditions of uncertainty that today define them.

Before dwelling on this positive redefinition of the relationship with the future, however, it is advisable to consider more closely the form assumed by these conditions of uncertainty for young people “in transit” to adulthood.

The uncertain transition to adulthood

The uncertainties of the transition to adulthood today seem to be due to a set of conditions. Firstly, the temporal duration of the transition has extended (young people become adults increasingly later in their lives), and it has fragmented. The various stages in this transition – conclusion of full-time education, exit from the parental home, stable entry into the world of work, and construction of an autonomous household – tend to “de-synchronize” themselves: that is, they abandon the traditional temporal order. That order foresaw a practically perfect overlap among three crucial stages in the transition: exit from the parental home, entry in the world of work, and couple formation (Galland 2001). Secondly, not only do young people undertake these transitions at an older age, but they frequently interrupt or delay them. In certain respects, as Cavalli and Galland (1993) put it, young people do not seem in a “hurry to grow”⁴.

The tendency for a prolonged transition to adulthood is therefore accompanied by its destandardization (Walther and Stauber 2002) and its fragmen-

⁴ *Senza fretta di crescere (In no hurry to grow up)* is the title of the Italian version of the book Cavalli and Galland published in French in 1993.

tation into discontinuous phases with no discernible connections between one and the next, as well as being reversible⁵. Salience is thus acquired by biographical patterns increasingly distant from linear life-trajectories (Côté 2000; Wyn and White 1997; White and Wyn 2008), and internally to which there arise, according to some authors (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; du Bois-Reymond 1998; Fuchs 1983), biographical constructions marked by both strong individualization and the prominence of specifically risky features⁶ due to the need to take decisions in a social context characterized by high degrees of discontinuity (as well as bureaucratic constraints).

This transition, amid the weakening of the consolidated trajectories of entry into adulthood, therefore tends to emphasize individual abilities to cope with the changes of course imposed by rapid shifts of circumstances, external and internal. We refer here not just to the continuous changes, big and small, that punctuate everyday life in an epoch, like our own, characterized by a rapid acceleration in the processes of transformation but also to the marked changeableness in “internal landscapes”. As a matter of course, the changes in the interior ways of considering and evaluating situations are especially accentuated in the life phase of youth.

This particular emphasis on the individual capacity to control the world obviously leaves intact the differences among young people in the social and cultural resources available to them to deal with the world: differences in resources that determine *a priori* the likelihood of whether or not the confrontation with uncertainty will be successful (Roberts 2003). In other words, the emphasis on the obligation to define the choices which ensure the success of the transition to adulthood subjectively does not off-set the weight of the inequalities with which young people have to cope (primarily of class and ethnicity, but also of gender and geographical area of residence: for example, as regards Italy, being young in the North or South still makes a difference; and the combination of individual differences reinforces it).

In general, a feature distinctive of our time is the emphasis on the *personal assumption of responsibility* for one’s social circumstances (Martuccelli 2001). This representation of individuality (and subjectivity) as a *deus ex machina* in regard to external difficulties appears particularly powerful among the young people of the new century, whose crucial years of political socialization have coincided with a historical period in which collective belongings have been singularly unfocused compared with those of the final decades of last century.

⁵ This trend is apparent in all the European societies (Sgritta 1999; Wallace and Kovatcheva 1998), albeit with some specific characteristics in the countries of Northern, Central and Southern Europe. See on this Van de Velde (2009). See also Cavalli and Galland (1993).

⁶ In this regard, Furlong and Cartmel (1997) used the expression “risk biography”.

This representation, moreover, appears symmetrical to the internalization of forms of social exclusion and marginalization regarded as “natural” on the basis of a doctrine which holds that individuals are masters of their fates unaffected by social factors and inequalities.

The features of contemporary transition to adulthood should also be understood in terms of visions of the world produced by the disappearance of collective referents able to link individual times and extra-individual times. This is the case, typically, with the loss of force in our time of social institutions, today less and less capable of offering themselves as a model for action. And for this reason less and less capable of tying personal times and social times in a long-term perspective. The loss of the future as governable time also coincides, as we know, with the demise of politics as the ability to exercise collective control over change. Thorough understanding of the critical relation with the future now taking shape among young people, and the cultures that they express (Nilan and Feixa 2006), centred on the celebration of the present and the cult of immediacy, requires us to set them in relation to this demise of politics as openness to the future. This means that, if the belief that it is possible to envisage a different, and better, future for all is decreasing, the way of dealing with personal and social time will also profoundly change.

Young people, new values and the new semantics of the future

The young people of today therefore live their lives amid a social climate in which a person’s right to choose who s/he wants to become is accompanied by the difficulty of identifying benchmarks for biographical construction which make it possible to evade uncertainty (Bynner, Chisholm and Furlong 1997). Moreover, the imperative of choice for young people is not flanked by their conviction that personal decisions will be effectively able to condition future biographical outcomes, owing to both the accelerated pace of change and the evanescence of institutions as models for action.

Hence, the future is related above all with indeterminateness. However, two aspects of this latter feature should be distinguished: on the one hand, unpredictability – what Grosz (1999: 17) aptly calls the “anarchization of the future”; on the other, the virtuality which by definition characterizes the future (what is in potency, not in act). Given the parallel growth of both these aspects, apparently crucial is the capacity of every young man and woman to devise cognitive strategies able to guarantee their autonomy despite the growth of contingency: for example, by developing the capacity to maintain a direction or a trajectory notwithstanding the impossibility of anticipating the final destination.

A survey conducted in the first decade of the new century on young French and Spanish people, which found a similar form of biographical behaviour, aptly termed this an “indetermination strategy” (Lasen 2001: 90). This expression is intended to highlight the growing capacity of young people with greater reflexive resources to interpret the uncertainty of the future as a proliferation of virtual possibilities, and the unpredictability associated with it as additional potentiality instead of a limit on action. In other words, faced with a future increasingly less connectable to the present through a linkage which reinforces both their meanings, a proportion of young people – perhaps not the majority, but certainly the most culturally innovative of them – develop responses able to neutralize fear of the future. Thus, a number of young people, young men and young women to an equal extent, display a willingness to embrace unpredictability, while also anticipating sudden changes of direction and responses constructed in real time as and when occasions arise. The training in the rapid responses required by the acceleration society is fruitfully exploited in this case: rapidity enables young people to “seize the moment”, to begin experimentation with positive impacts on life-time as a whole.

This view appears consistent with the above-mentioned emphasis on the individual’s responsibility for his/her future. Biographical continuity springs primarily from the individual’s capacity to define and redefine a set of choices of sufficient openness to allow revision of the priorities for action in light of the changes that occur. For young people, developing this capacity enables them to conquer new spaces of freedom and experimentation.

In sum, to understand new youth values in relation to the changing time experience it is necessary to focus on the predominance among young people of a particular cultural vision of action and strategies of action. This requires them to conceive themselves as autonomous actors, to assume constant responsibility for themselves, to impute the results of their actions only to themselves. A new figure emerges from this scenario: that of the hyper-activist individual able to construct his/her own biography, willing to explore and re-explore the present so greatly emphasised by the acceleration society. The “unplanned biographies” that young people seemingly pursue today appear congenial to the increasing frequency of this representation. At the same time, they suggest the desire and the determination not to be overwhelmed by events, to keep uncertainty at bay, to gain mastery over one’s own time.

Time in one’s grasp

For the above reasons, the more stereotypical notions of youth life-times must be abandoned. For example, those notions that unduly emphasise the pure

and simple erasure of the past, or those that identify the present as the only domain in which, by definition, the search for gratification takes place, and in which the spontaneity of desires is paramount. These tendencies exist, as has been repeatedly emphasised, but they should not be generalized.

For example, young people appear aware of the fundamental changes taking place in their social age. They endeavour to enter this new scenario by negotiating, if necessary, forms of the active management of the contradictions that they face. Even when the time of their lives provokes worries – this is visibly the case of those who engage in education or work but nevertheless live in fear that they have wasted their time or will do so – one once again finds response strategies which indubitably signal a desire to regain control over time.

As said, the relation with time replicates this pattern. Young people reflect critically (individually and together) on the best ways to maintain firm control over their lives despite the uncertain and fast-moving social time in which they are embedded. They adopt a plurality of “damage-control” strategies so that they can maintain their bearings amid the precarization of the future (Leccardi 2005; Woodman 2011).

In the new century, characterized by strong deregulation of time and by an equally intense process of individualization, it is increasingly widely believed that every individual has time in his/her grasp. This means that biographical success or failure, the capacity to stay on course in a baffling landscape which hampers forward projection in time, depends essentially on the individual's own decisions. From this also derives the widespread anxiety about failure to identify the shortest and most direct route, the fear of losing one's way in pointless explorations, the fear of falling behind.

Besides differences in the extents of time horizons, in abilities to cope with contemporary uncertainties, and in relations with the future, one is especially struck by the growth of what one may call an affirmative “state of mind” towards time among young people. This centres on rejection of every form of submissiveness, the determination not to be overwhelmed by the speed of events, to control change by equipping oneself to act promptly, not to waste time by “letting things happen”, not to be cowed by widespread insecurity.

Not all young people appear able to turn this state of mind into suitable biographical responses. External social conditions and internal conditions may separately or jointly thwart these responses. Nonetheless, one may state that the desire not to succumb either to the acceleration of time and change, or to the objective slowness (and fragmentariness) of the transition to adulthood, is today the most distinctive feature of young people's relationship with time.

To conclude, new relations between present and future (and among past, present and future) are arising, ones suited to the short time-frame in which we are embedded and to an acceleration of social life. This last, it has to be

underlined, is intertwined with the marked deceleration, for young people, of entry into adulthood. But which is the relation between these changes in temporal experience and values? If we consider values as a criterion of evaluation – a general principle through which we approve or disapprove certain modes of action and ways of thinking (Sciolla 1998) – which are the new values associated with this *Zeitgeist*? Values related to the positive evaluation of speed and flexibility (as well as to non-stop activities, for example in consumption) gain ground; flexibility in action, ability to seize opportunities – in short, being “fast” in life – are all aspects of these new cultural horizons. Thus, short-term undertakings seem to be preferred to long term commitments; quick reactions in facing changes to long decision taking processes. This affects biographies as well as the definition of the criteria to make use of in their construction.

Concluding remarks

Young people in the new century find themselves having to define their existential choices within a social landscape that is strongly characterized by the acceleration of change. As a consequence, openness to the new and to the “everyday-ization” of the processes of transformation constitutes an unquestioned given in their biographical construction. Of course, the growing weight that the new technologies of communication have assumed in collective living play a relevant role in this respect. However, this reality is not simply a fact that youth submit to. Rather, “the new youth” (Leccardi and Ruspini 2006) shows that in general it possesses sufficient capacities to be able to govern the dynamics of the high-speed society in which they find themselves living.

It is possible to argue that the very training for velocity imposed by the historical time in which young people today become adults pushes in the direction of a definition of a new suite of values. At their centre stand autonomy, self-determination, experimentation and creativity but also openness towards the other (Barni and Ranieri 2010). The biographical constructions of the 21st century, less and less founded on the idea of the life project transmitted by early modernity, place these values at their very centre. Many young people rely on these to confront the loss of the long-term future without retreating from the expression of their own subjectivity. In this way they seek to transform the social pressure towards acceleration into a form of personal empowerment.

But what are the youth policies⁷, we might ask ourselves by way of conclusion, that could most effectively work in harmony with this suite of values

⁷ For a recent reflection on youth policies in Europe see Wallace and Bendit (2009).

and with the new ways of living biographical time that correspond to them? Without doubt all those policies that are capable of developing and promoting the support of young people's autonomy and their expression of personal creativity, and that for this reason are capable of facilitating their integration into the social world.

Within this framework an element of great strategic importance that policies cannot forget to take into consideration is the contemporary obsolescence of the principle of deferred gratification. A principle, as we know, that up to a few decades ago constituted a fully-fledged point of reference in processes of socialisation. In a highly presentified environment like our own, in which the relationship with the future (and here the global economic crisis is an accomplice) appears to be objectively problematic, it is necessary to construct new forms of support in favour of young people. We need forms of the integration and socialisation of young people that are attune to our changed collective temporal orientations. In concrete terms this means support for the capacity of individual young people (and their associations, where they exist) to come to grips in an active manner with a transition to adulthood that is as slow as the social climate in which it unfolds is fast and uncertain. It requires maintaining an acute awareness, for example, of the centrality in young people's biographical construction of the dimension of the extended present, the temporal area that borders on the present without simply identifying itself with the here-and now (Nowotny 1996), and of the short-term future.

More generally, it is possible to argue that the very support for active citizenship and the participation of young people, one of the cornerstones of youth policies, can achieve greater effect in the moment in which it takes on board the contraction in biographical temporal horizons. This means, for example, recognising and valorising those cultural practices and forms of sociality among the young that are founded on reciprocal recognition, on dialogue and exchange in the present and for the present. Practices that guarantee forms of gratification that are not deferred but that at the same time appear oriented towards the reconstruction of public space: unleashing in this way a range of positive processes capable of recuperating a non-contracted temporality, one that is not exclusively entrenched in the present.

References

- Adam B. (1995), *Timewatch: The Social Analysis of Time*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
 Anderson M., Bechhofer F., McCrone D., Jamieson L., Li Y. and Stewart R. (2005), *Timespans and Plans among Young Adults*, in «Sociology», 39 (1): 139-155.

- Barni D. and Ranieri S. (2010), *I valori e la loro trasmissione tra le generazioni: un'analisi psicosociale*, in «Ricercazione», 2 (2): 253-268.
- Bauman Z. (1999), *In Search of Politics*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Beck U. and Beck Gernsheim E. (2003), *Institutionalized Individualism and its Social and Political Consequences*, Sage, London.
- Berger P.L., Berger B. and Kellner H. (1973), *The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness*, Random House, New York.
- Boutinet J.-P. (2003), *Anthropologie du projet*, Puf, Paris.
- Brannen J. and Nielsen A. (2002), *Young people's Time Perspectives: From Youth to Adulthood*, in «Sociology», 36 (3): 513-537.
- Brannen, J. and Nielsen A. (2007), *Young People, Time Horizons and Planning: A Response to Anderson et al.*, in «Sociology», 41 (1): 153-160.
- Bynner J., Chisholm L. and Furlong A. (eds.) (1997), *Youth, Citizenship and Social Change in a European Context*, Ashgate, Aldershot.
- Cavalli A. and Galland O. (eds.) (1993), *L'allongement de la jeunesse*, Actes Sud, Arles.
- Côté J. (2000), *Arrested Adulthood. The Changing Nature of Maturity and Identity*, New York University Press, New York and London.
- du Bois-Reymond M. (1998), *"I Do not Want to Commit Myself Yet": Young People's Life Concepts*, in «Journal of Youth Studies», 1: 63-79.
- Fuchs W. (1983), *Jugendliche Statuspassage oder individualisierte Jugendbiographie?*, in «Soziale Welt», 34 : 128-141.
- Galland O. (2001), *Sociologie de la jeunesse*, Armand Colin, Paris.
- Grosz E. (ed.) (1999), *Thinking the New: Of Futures yet Unthought*, in Id., *Becomings. Explorations in Time, Memory, and Futures*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca-London.
- Harvey D. (1990), *The Condition of Postmodernity. An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, Blackwell, Oxford.
- Heinz W.R., Weymann A. and Huinik J. (eds.) (2009), *The Life Course Reader. Individuals and Societies across Time*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Jaques E. (1982), *The Form of Time*, Crane Russak, New York.
- Lasen A. (2001), *Le temps des jeunes. Rythmes, durée et virtualités*, L'Harmattan, Paris.
- Leccardi C. (2005), *Facing Uncertainty. Temporality and Biographies in the New Century*, in «Young. Nordic Journal of Youth Research», 13 (2): 123-146.
- Leccardi C. and Ruspini E. (eds.) (2006), *A New Youth? Young People, Generations and Family Life*, Ashgate, Aldershot.
- Leitner H. (1982), *Lebenslauf und Identität. Die kulturelle Konstruktion von Zeit in der Biographie*, Suhrkamp Frankfurt a.M..
- Luckmann T. (1993) *Remarks on Personal Identity: Inner, Social and Historical Time*, in Jacobson-Wiggling A. (ed.), *Identity: Personal and Socio-Cultural. A Symposium*, Almqvist & Wiksell, Uppsala.
- Machado Pais J.A. (2003), *The Multiple Faces of the Future in the Labyrinth of Life*, in «Journal of Youth Studies», 2 (6): 115-126.
- Martuccelli D. (2001), *Dominations ordinaires. Explorations de la condition moderne*, Baland, Paris.
- Nilan P. and Feixa C. (2006), *Global Youth? Hybrid Identities, Plural Worlds*, Routledge, London-New York.

- Nowotny H. (1996), *Time: The Modern and Postmodern Experience*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Rampazi M. (2002), *L'incertezza quotidiana. Politica, lavoro, relazioni nella società del rischio*, Guerini, Milano.
- Roberts K. (2003), *Problems and Priorities for the Sociology of Youth*, in Bennett A., Cieslik M. and Miles S. (eds.), *Researching Youth*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Rosa H. (2003), *Social Acceleration. Ethical and Political Consequences of a Desynchronized High-Speed-Society*, «Constellations», 10: 3-33.
- Rosa H. and Scheurman E. (eds.) (2009), *High Speed Society. Social Acceleration, Power, and Modernity*, The Pennsylvania University Press, Pennsylvania.
- Schütz A. (1971), *Collected Papers*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague.
- Sciolla L. (1998), *Valori*, in *Enciclopedia delle scienze sociali*, Treccani, Roma, vol. VIII.
- Sgritta G. (1999), *Too Slow. The Difficult Process of Becoming an Adult in Italy*, paper presented at the Jacobs Foundation Conference *The Transition to Adulthood: Explaining National Differences*, Marbach Castle, 28-30 October.
- Van de Velde C. (2009), *Devenir adulte. Sociologie comparée de la jeunesse en Europe*, Puf, Paris.
- Wallace C. and Bendit R. (2009), *Youth Policies in Europe. Towards a Classification of Different Tendencies in Youth Policies in the European Union*, in «Journal of Social Policy», 10 (3): 441-458.
- Wallace C. and Kovatcheva, S. (1998), *Youth in Society. The Construction and Deconstruction of Youth in East and West Europe*, Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Walther A. and Stauber, B. (eds.) (2002), *Misleading Trajectories. Integration Policies for Young Adults in Europe?*, Leske and Budrich, Opladen.
- White R. and Wyn J. (2008), *Youth & Society: Exploring the Social Dynamics of Youth Experience*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Woodman D. (2011), *Young People and the Future: Multiple temporal Orientations Shaped in Interaction with Significant Others*, in «Young. Nordic Journal of Youth Research», 19 (2): 111-128.
- Wyn J. and White R. (1997), *Rethinking Youth*, Sage, London.
- Zerubavel E. (1981), *Hidden Rhythms. Schedules and Calendars in Social Life*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

