



Citation: Lo Schiavo, L. & Rebughini, P. (2025). Gender Potential in Italian Youth Activism: The Intersectional Assimilation of Gender Cultures After the Pandemic. *Società Mutamento Politica* 16(31): 25-32. doi: 10.36253/smp-16659

© 2025 Author(s). This is an open access, peer-reviewed article published by Firenze University Press (<https://www.fupress.com>) and distributed, except where otherwise noted, under the terms of the CC BY 4.0 License for content and CC0 1.0 Universal for metadata.

Data Availability Statement: All relevant data are within the paper and its Supporting Information files.

Competing Interests: The Author(s) declare(s) no conflict of interest.

Gender Potential in Italian Youth Activism: The Intersectional Assimilation of Gender Cultures After the Pandemic

LIDIA LO SCHIAVO, PAOLA REBUGHINI

Abstract. The article focuses on the intersection of youth and gender studies, analysing the complex relationships between gender and youth identity as experienced both in individual biographies, and within the context of participatory practices. Thus, the focus is on the legacy of feminisms in current mobilization practices. In the article, we refer to empirical material collected in Italy from 2017 to the present. What emerges from our empirical material is that the pandemic accelerated the inclusion of gender issues in many youth mobilizations and in local youth activism generally, by highlighting the themes of care, inclusion and sharing. The paper is based on 150 qualitative interviews, and a number of ethnographic moments conducted in several Italian towns between 2017 and 2024, and therefore includes a period spanning the pre-pandemic, pandemic and post-pandemic phases; however, for this article we will focus primarily on the interviews conducted immediately after the Covid emergency, which best highlight the assimilation of the gender culture of care in activism practices. Interviews were conducted with young women activists, but also with young men, including representatives from national student organisations. The empirical findings collected testify to the manifold nature of young people's participatory practices, which range from climate issues to gender identity, from student claims to antiracism. In this article we focus on the relationship between gender identity and participatory practices based on mutual care.

Keywords: young people, gender, intersectionality, care, participatory practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to explore how gender cultures, fundamental elements of feminist theory and the intersectionality approach have been fully integrated and assimilated into practices of civic and political activism among youth, also beyond feminist youth mobilizations. The article focuses on the intersection of youth and gender studies, analysing the complex relationships between gender and youth identity as experienced both in individual biographies, and within the context of participatory practices (Pickard and Bessant 2018; Pitti and Tuorto 2021; Lo Schiavo and Rebughini 2023, 2024; Colombo *et al.* 2024).

In the article, we refer to empirical material collected in Italy from 2017 to the present, thus, at a time when youth participation was having to contend with different crises and changes, including the Covid pandemic, with the related problems of isolation and the need to mobilise local resources, experimenting with new organizational practices and gender politicization. What emerges from our empirical material is that the pandemic accelerated the inclusion of gender issues in many youth mobilizations and in local youth activism generally, by highlighting the themes of care, inclusion and sharing. The paper is based on 150 qualitative interviews, and a number of ethnographic moments conducted in several Italian towns between 2017 and 2024, and therefore includes a period spanning the pre-pandemic, pandemic and post-pandemic phases; however, for this article we will focus primarily on the interviews conducted immediately after the Covid emergency, which best highlight the assimilation of the gender culture of care. Interviews were conducted with young women activists, but also with young men, including representatives from national student organisations. The empirical findings collected testify to the manifold nature of young people's participatory practices, which range from climate issues to gender identity, from student claims to antiracism. In this article we focus on the relationship between gender identity and participatory practices based on mutual care¹.

Our investigation begins with the acknowledgement that, over the last decade, the growing interest in feminist solidarity and the culture of care has expanded into different forms of youth social movements. Youth mobilizations have been characterized by politics reinvention

practices in response to the crisis of representative politics, in fields ranging from workers' rights to environmental protection, contributing to the transformation of protest practices and repertoires at the intersection of these different issues. They have taken to the streets as part of transnational movements as well as in a generational shift that is particularly evident in feminist, trans-feminist and queer mobilizations (della Porta *et al.* 2020; Lo Schiavo 2023; Lo Schiavo and Rebughini 2024; Pickard and Bessant 2018).

A common framework within these youth mobilizations is the assimilation of the *care* paradigm as an immanent criticism, beginning with everyday practices and prefiguring alternative social and political models (Fraguito and Tola 2021; Pulcini 2020; Tronto 2023). As a concept, *care* evokes the idea of mutual support in everyday life, as well as a kind of ethical orientation and an emotional and affective bond with the other (Littler and Rottenberg 2021). This feminist reference to care is not merely an offer of help, but an "acting in concert" – as Arendt already suggested – a reflexive recognition of mutual interconnections in an environment of social and identity differences. In addition to the neoliberal impoverishment of many sections of the population, a phenomenon which emerged strongly in most western countries (especially after the "Great recession" of 2008), the emphasis on care can be traced back to more recent mobilizations by women in opposition to the rising tide of sexism and misogyny that are often associated with nationalism and racism (Farris 2017; Brown 2019). After a period of activism primarily consisting of demands for rights and identity assertions, young women have been behind the most recent phase of feminist mobilizations. This new focus on care and the recognition of differences is now often known as the 'fourth wave' of feminism and is also characterized by digital activism. As Jo Littler and Catherine Rottenberg claim (2021: 865): «Solidarity invoked in a feminist context is often thought to cut across different identity categories – such as race, class, sexuality or nation – without assuming sameness among women or falling back into gender essentialism».

The culture of care fostered by young women in youth-led social movements bridges the gap between care in the intimate personal and interpersonal spheres, and care as an institutional duty. In contrast to the neoliberal emphasis on individualization and the individualistic culture, that often disregards both others and the environment, the culture of care serves as a mechanism for preserving social cohesion (Chatzidakis *et al.* 2020; The care manifesto 2020; Tronto 2013). Our fieldwork reveals that the broad reference to care has expanded beyond feminism to encompass a diverse range of move-

¹ Interviews were conducted in the cities of Milan, Bologna, Rome, Messina and Palermo, using snowball sampling. The research has a longitudinal approach in that the same groups, associations and networks were followed over time, although only in a few cases were the same people re-interviewed. Among the 150 interviews, 53% of respondents were women, 47% men, 4 interviewees without declared gender or in transition. All our interviewees have a high level of education and are either graduates or university students. None are unemployed, but most of them are precarious workers or occasional co-workers. The interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed jointly by the authors, along with an analysis of documents produced by the activists and the ethnographic material. All the names reported are fictitious and identities have been anonymized. In the excerpts, we refer to the city where the interview was realized, for example during an event (such as students camps, assemblies, demonstrations) or in the place where the interviewees carry out their everyday activism. In particular, we refer to interviews carried out with student activists in different Italian secondary schools and universities and especially in organizations such as The Student Union, Link University coordination and The Knowledge Network, but also with young people who are active in transfeminist collectives such as Non una di meno, and in trans and queer communities. The panel also includes volunteers working in NGOs, and young people who are active in local and neighbourhood civic initiatives or student squat centres.

ments, including youth social mobilizations, student activism, environmental advocacy and local mutualistic initiatives. In the aftermath of the pandemic – during which many activists implemented new forms of “care work” – the call for a “caring democracy” and “radical care” based on the acknowledgement of mutual interdependence and vulnerability has gained prominence within youth movements. This progression highlights one of the key contributions of the feminist culture and of the numerous young women taking part in contemporary youth mobilizations, especially those related to climate change and those involving students’ organizations. This has brought attention to a cultural struggle against individualistic power politics, by recognising personal fragility as an ethical resource (Butler 2020; Ahmed 2017; Fraser 2016).

In addition to emphasizing care, youth movements have also recognised the importance of gender identity issues, which is another theme that clearly emerges in our empirical material. In Italy, as in many other countries, we can observe how contemporary youth generations, Millennials and Gen Z, are identifying as queer and LGBTQ+ in significantly higher numbers than previous generations (Istituto Toniolo 2019; IPSOS 2024; Rinaldi *et al.* 2022; Stati Generali LGBTQIAP+ & Disability 2023; Guerzoni *et al.* 2024). Challenging gender norms within queer and transfeminist youth communities, in a social environment in which there is a growing politicization of gender identities, represents a crucial element at the intersection between youth movements and feminist cultures (Sulberg 2017). The participatory practices that express and politicize gender within LGBTQIA+ communities, particularly among student transfeminist collectives, can be recognised as both a means of individual gender affirmation through self-determination, and as integral components of wider youth mobilization efforts centred on support and care (Fragnito and Tola 2021; The Care collective 2021). In the research, we focused on these practices as they are at the intersection of themes such as gender identity, personal vulnerability, the culture of care, the need for inclusivity and solidarity. While youth mobilization practices are also the result of distinct organizations and a specific agenda, it is evident that the assimilation of a feminist culture of care and the inclusion of diversity has encouraged the intersection of this more specific topic with the wider ones of youth movements and student movements.

In our observations of youth mobilization, we found that gender subjectivation practices are embedded in everyday life and are linked to the politicization of gender and range from informal settings such as friendships and shared leisure activities, to the public sphere,

where artistic and performance practices are showcased, including more structured forms of protest and political action. This continuum can be analysed through the concepts of liminality or in-between forms of participation, which distinguish deviance on the one hand, and conformism on the other, both in individual and collective contexts (cfr. Pitti *et al.* 2021; Pitti and Tuorto 2021).

2. THE INFLUENCE OF FEMINIST ETHICAL CULTURES ON YOUTH MOBILIZATIONS

The overall trend in our research material reveals significant alignment with themes and languages present in feminist debates over recent decades. This includes an intersectional epistemic perspective that remains attentive to the situatedness and embodied experience of those speaking, where knowledge-making is seen as a way to make a difference. Most of this innovative debate, which strongly resonates in our interviews, is focused on challenging the dominance of the Western, male, sovereign subject, rejecting the Hobbesian vision of social and political relationships, (Brown 2019; Bell 2007), and the idea of power based on violence (Butler 2020; Braidotti 2019), while on the contrary, emphasising the extensive nature of social and ontological interdependence, highlighting the need for a society centred on mutual care, both among humans and between humans and nature. The feminist culture embraced by youth social movements is one that values the art of uniting differences, marginalities (hooks 1984), sexual differences (Butler 1993; de Lauretis 1991), vulnerabilities (Butler 2020), and material and symbolic dependencies (Haraway 2016), thus producing affirmative action as a way to generate power, rather than perpetuating control or repression (Braidotti 2019).

On this basis, the need to intersect criticism of androcentrism, eurocentrism and anthropocentrism has been advanced by leading feminist scholars, who converge around a redefined idea of political agency. In this framework, the more established work of self-reflection is integrated with an ethical approach to otherness. This shift has been made possible through both theoretical and also practical engagement within movements, drawing on perspectives from constructivist feminism (Butler 1993), postcolonial ideas of cultural interconnections (Spivak 1999) and coloniality of gender (Lugones 2010), the dismantling of traditional assumptions about gender and sexual identities. The emergence of an affirmative feminist approach has linked the cultural and epistemological aspects of feminist thought with the more ontological insights drawn from STS approaches (Braidotti

2013). This theoretical heritage, developed over the last 25 years, has profoundly influenced how youth engage in active politics within social movements. This highlights the different ways in which youth mobilizations can challenge the power structures of neoliberalism, individualism and the culture of dominance.

The resurgence of interest in care politics, gender issues, feminist solidarity, which is sensitive to differences and social categorizations, aligns with the growing reference to *intersectionality* as a cultural, heuristic and methodological tool. This approach helps us to understand how different elements such as gender, social class, education, health, sexuality, environment and the material connections between human and non-human, intersect. Indeed, intersectionality has served as the key heuristic tool that bridges feminist theoretical discussion with the practices of youth social movements.

From its inception, intersectionality has been deeply connected to the issues addressed by emancipative social movements, extending beyond just feminist movements. Although intersectionality is usually discussed in more specific areas of study related to gender issues, its ethical purpose lies in exposing power relations and social inequalities (Bilge and Denis 2010). In the analysis of social movements, one of the more promising applications of intersectionality is its use to study how social actors construct their agency in specific contexts, to address forms of domination – such as essentialized social categories – and to develop a creative and autonomous approach to these social categorizations (Hancock 2016; Rebughini 2021).

While intersectionality emerged during a historical period where categorisation as a form of identification – such as gender or class – was central, today, intersectionality has evolved within social movements into a heuristic framework that helps unify diverse issues, such as gender differences, climate change, social equality and a critique of neoliberalism, within the same practices. The ability to analyse how these issues intersect, rather than treating them as separate and independent forms of power relations, lies at the core of intersectionality as an epistemological approach to domination. In activism, an intersectional perspective can highlight how power relations are intertwined and mutually constitutive, cutting across issues like gender, climate and social stratification. Moreover, the intersectional approach emphasizes that the social categories we inhabit are not interchangeable but are historically and contextually constructed. Consequently, each subject can challenge reality as it is given, resisting individualism and valorising forms of care. Indeed, «intersectionality provides a critical lens to analyse articulations of power and subjectivity in different instances of social formations» (Bilge 2010: 23).

In the next section, we will use our empirical material to explore how these gender cultures have been integrated, both explicitly and sometimes indirectly, into the practices of contemporary youth social movements in Italy.

3. THE INTERSECTIONAL VOICES OF YOUNG ACTIVISTS

Our research material shows that, over the past ten years or so, youth movements in Italy have integrated discussions from gender studies into their practices, exploring the multiple relationships between gender and youth identity as experienced in the biographical dimension. The introduction and interpretation of concepts such as *caring democracy* and *queer youth*, reflect the liveliness of these references in contemporary youth movement debates, as well as framing concepts to help intercept and intersect various issues.

The empirical context we draw upon to analyse this process is extensive, both in terms of geographical scope within Italy and across different time periods, spanning before and after the Covid pandemic. Our primary focus is on highlighting how the increasing intersectionality of various themes emerges clearly in the empirical material, with clear connections to some of the core feminist principles such as care, inclusivity, queer theory, and the recognition of differences. Particularly in interviews conducted during and after the pandemic, there is a notable emphasis on viewing youth political activism as the generational foundation for the development of a caring democracy. Among these activist movements, transfeminist and transgender groups most prominently highlight the theme of care. Overall, the pandemic has profoundly affected social ties and networks within territorial contexts, and during this time, the demand for care, understood broadly as a mean to strengthen solidarity and collective action, has become especially prominent. Additionally, this period has fostered connections between issues like transfeminism, LGBTQIA+ rights, anti-racism, anti-fascism, solidarity, social justice, environmental protection, and anti-speciesism, thereby strengthening community bonds, mutualistic practices, and alternative societal models focused on care.

3.1 *In search of a caring democracy*

The reference to a caring democracy, and its origin in feminist cultures, clearly emerges among the student activists as well as among the young people involved in squat social centres or local voluntary organisations, which often serve as spaces for care and healing from

personal and social trauma. Politicizing care means bringing it into the light, away from the invisibility created by male-patriarchal and capitalist hegemony, while drawing on the intersubjective nature of the human condition (Barca 2024; Pulcini 2020). In this way, the ecology of care emerges as an intersectional societal framework which transcends the nature-culture dualism, forming the basis of an immanent social critique that spans ecofeminism, decolonial critique, and political ecology. While contemporary theoretical debate recognises the risk of essentializing the paradigm, such as in the case of “global chains of care” (Fragnito and Tola 2021), there is also an awareness that the “politicization of care” is a foundational element within the caring democracy paradigm.

In our interviews, while the concept of care emerges more explicitly in the narratives of young women – typically in terms of self-care, care for their environment, and broader care for the world – it is also notably present among young men. The need for ‘deep care’ – as one interviewee described it – is often evoked in contrast to the culture of individualism and the exploitation of resources, whether intellectual, labour or environmental. Many interviewees recognise that this heightened awareness of the need for care emerged during the pandemic, a period marked by uncertainty and a greater recognition of vulnerability and mutual interdependence.

Indeed, many elements of feminist culture, such as attention to others and to differences, listening, deep self-knowledge, awareness of one’s limits and vulnerabilities, and acknowledging that we are not omnipotent... have become integral to today’s movements, for example, I’m thinking of the environmental movements where people are actively engaging in caring for parts of nature... whether animals or plants... with an emphasis on caring, taking into consideration, and avoiding exploitation to the point of destruction and then disposal [...] I see that [also] in everyday life, among many young people, there is a focus on self-care, that is, care for one’s own intimate space, one’s own health, but as something that connects individuals, also to the environment. It’s not about doing this to be more efficient or to produce more, rather it reflects a deeper understanding of care. (Caterina, 26, recently graduated, volunteer for a local association, Milan, 2023)

Unsurprisingly, the issue of care is frequently mentioned by young people involved in activities that focus on caring for others or for the environment. However, the idea of renewing democracy through care stands at the core of discourses, speeches, manifestos and the working materials of many organised student groups or activist networks that have emerged from the various waves of student movements. This theme was strongly

emphasised during the pandemic and the lockdowns, which also highlighted the issues of isolation and individualization. In this case, the activists emphasised the shortcomings of an individualistic culture, which failed in the face of emergencies such as the pandemic, promoting instead, locally self-organized politics of care as a response.

There is also an analysis of feminism, of environmentalism that places all our practices in a precise frame of reference with defined coordinates that are those of the problems of our time. Care! The pandemic has taught us this. It is not a horizontal relationship but a circular one... and it means precisely that everyone does a bit of caring [...] during the pandemic the work of the Consultoria continued but it was transferred online (Elisa, 26, Mala Education, Bologna, 2021).

The suffering caused by isolation during the pandemic in 2020 prompted a deep reflection on the concept of care which does not mean maternal or paternalistic care towards younger comrades, but rather a collective responsibility shared by everyone in the assembly or within the discussion spaces or physical environments in which organizations operate, emphasising inclusivity, understanding and active listening. [...]. And then care, especially in local territories, is perceived as a reappropriation of one’s own lifetime... I see it very much as a generational factor, a paradigm shift, a slowdown (Emanuela, 26, Link University coordination, Bologna 2022).

We live in an individualistic society, amid polarized dynamics of blackmail... that’s why we need to create a dynamic of care... because if you live in an individualistic society, you have to think only about your own survival, but you also realize that you are in this situation together with others... that’s why we need an alternative relationship model (Aldo 20, Student Union, Torino, 2022).

The theme of care consistently emerges in the interviews and is viewed both as a legacy of feminist movements, and as a necessity stemming from environmental awareness, and as an intersection of generational, feminist and environmental concerns. For many interviewees, the pandemic was an opportunity for politicization, driven not by utopian ideals but by the need for safe spaces to gather, to avoid desegregation, isolation, and to ensure the preservation of spaces for open discussion, safe spaces where the prefiguration of a caring society is possible. This reference is particularly evident among interviewees involved in gender and LGBTQIA+ activism.

Drag, as an artistic form, is deeply rooted in revolutionary practices. The concept of a society of care has always been integral throughout the history of drag queens, who put the

queerness of their art at the forefront [...] this way of performing gender creates alternatives, fosters new possibilities, and builds communities centred on care and self-protection [...]. The underlying reasoning behind this is systemic, it aims to create a society of care in order to overcome the current situation which is based on violence, profit, and the exploitation of bodies (Savvy, 20 y.o, The Knowledge Network, Bologna, 2024).

The paradigm of caring democracy can be regarded as an open-ended political project which includes different empirical manifestations, and our interviewees believe that without forms of “caring participation” democratic societies will struggle to overcome the multiple crises they are facing, which threaten their very survival. Faced with the effects of the “systemic carelessness” produced by the neoliberal exploitation of the “forces of reproduction” (Barca 2024; The Care Collective 2021), there are no viable alternatives for emancipation other than the politics of care.

3.2 Queering youth

The construction of gender identity emerges strongly in the fieldwork and intersects in multiple ways with the concept of care democracy. This is experienced through stances of context-specific critique by young transfeminist and queer activists, who engage in artistic and performative practices that not only advocate for political change but also challenge and deconstruct binary and hetero-cis-patriarchal models (Pitti and Tuorto 2021).

In this context, rather than observing a broad influence of feminism on youth movements, we see a more autonomous and generational development of gender issues, focused on identity positioning and the pursuit of a caring democracy. Young activists engage in the “doing and undoing” of gender, embracing a fluid and plural subjective experience that shapes both their daily lives and their mobilizations. This experience is tied to individual processes of subjectivation within a continuum of structured political participation. As a result, gender identity becomes a central element of youth life, influencing both personal experiences and the formation of social, supportive and caring relationships – such as those found within transfeminist, trans and queer communities – as well as within more formal participatory practices in student organizations (Pitti *et al.* 2021).

On the one hand, the interviews highlight the structural link between the personal and the political, experienced through the individualization and politicization of everyday life and in the prefigurative vision of a society of care. On the other hand, the reference to intersection-

ality goes beyond the abstract notion of interconnected themes – such as feminism, environmentalism, social justice, capitalist extractivism – and is instead something subjectively experienced, and related to the critique of forms of domination. This is clearly illustrated in these two excerpts from interviews with two young activists in transition, who are involved in transgender organizations.

I believe that the politicization of this issue [the diagnosis of gender dysphoria disorder] arises from our very existence, [because] our existence itself is political, let's say by definition, because that's the way it is. When a subjectivity is isolated or when access to care is also isolated, it can lead to great loneliness, and even the fear of exposing oneself, so when you go to form a trans group, a consolidated trans area, you have to be very grateful for it, because it cannot be taken for granted [...]. I have promised myself one thing, that I will only engage in activism in groups where I feel a sense of team spirit. Because activism cannot be done among strangers, but only among friends, let's say between people who know each other, where a genuine bond is created (Will, 20, Messina, 2024).

Identity is a question of social and political positioning [...]. The same dynamics of power and acts of violence on subjectivities and on the environment, alongside the economic hierarchy of capitalization, that is, I think the coexistence of environmental issues is intrinsic to this kind of violence, because they always lead back to capitalist patriarchy. [...]. I think that this also reflects a distancing from individualism, where everyone must fend for themselves or must view otherness as the enemy; care [instead] means coming together and sharing responsibility for one another and for the community (Maze, 20, Messina, 2024).

In addition to groups more directly associated with LGBTQIA+, or feminist movements, such as Non una di meno, the interviews highlight the importance of queer identities in contemporary youth social movements, as a political focal point that intersects the cultural and epistemological issues, particularly in the effort to overcome binarism, especially in education. Other interesting discussions emerge from a generational articulation of gender activism. For example, some young activists criticized the consumerist approach, linked to the market and sponsors of Pride events organized by coordinated platforms, where the more established LGBT organizations in Italy showed a less critical stance toward the commercialization of Pride events. Another key point of generational differences involves the contrast between transfeminist positions, which include trans and queer subjectivities in feminist movements, and more exclusionary feminist views that are less accepting of transgender and queer individuals, as well as other

racialized groups or those not interested in anti-capitalist and postcolonial ecological critique.

Feminism or trans feminism has always been a theoretical movement, but also a set of practices [...]. Let's say that these battles are based on an ideal, but they are also deeply pragmatic. And there are also difficulties in finding a safe space to create them, to deconstruct languages that are still heavily charged, especially when you are forced to engage with administrations [...]. As for the transfeminist frame, the younger generations are often able to embrace it without too many, let's say, identity dramas. And this particular intergenerational question sometimes leads to communication barriers... what I've noticed is that there can sometimes be a difference in the ways people speak because maybe the older feminists often use a more binary language that we no longer use. (Elena, 27, Non Una di Meno, Messina, 2024).

4. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the empirical data clearly reveals the willingness of young activists to reframe issues of gender, class, race, the environment, pacifism, anti-militarism, anti-speciesism, and decolonialism through an intersectional lens. This highlights a distinct generational perspective on contemporary political challenges. Once again, the vision of a society centered on care appears to serve as a foundational paradigm for young activists, those who have grown up in an era marked by disillusionment and polycrisis. Their struggles unfold both “within” and “in opposition to” the power structures of modern societies. As one of our interviewees succinctly puts it:

At the moment, the hottest issues are transfem issues, which fall within the wave that also 'Non una di meno' has shaped and that has exceeded any expectations... and the whole issue of Palestine with all the complexities that it brings with it and the intersectionality of the antimilitarist struggle [...] These issues have really made us reflect on the relevance of advocating for a society of care, because they highlight the intersections and connections that exist between these forms of oppression, of violence, the implications that this model of society presents at this moment [...]. There is a strong need to demonstrate that an alternative is possible and to do it, as it were, from the ground up, starting from the local neighbourhood or from your university classroom (Fort, 25, The Knowledge Network, Milan, 2024).

Following the traumatic experience of the pandemic, care has emerged as an overarching reference, ranging from LGBTQIA+ rights to environmental protection, from student mobilizations to neighbourhood solidarity. While our focus is specifically on activism and not meant

to be understood as a broad generational trend, it undeniably marks a significant cultural turning point within Italian youth mobilizations, where the complex legacy of feminist struggles has fostered the intersection of previously separate issues, expressed through the bodies, emotions, imaginaries, practices and knowledge production of young women, men and transgender subjects. After a period of fragmented protests, mobilizations and critical cultures, this generation of activists is now seeking to reconnect and rebuild, relying on the heuristic plasticity of references such as intersectionality and a society of care, that also intersect in their everyday practices.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed S. (2017), *Living a Feminist Life*, NC: Duke University Press, Durham.
- Barca S. (2024), *Forze di riproduzione. Per un'ecologia politica femminista*, Edizioni Ambiente, Milano.
- Bell V. (2007), *Culture & Performance. The Challenge of Ethics, Politics and Feminist Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Bilge S. (2010), «Beyond subordination vs. resistance: An intersectional approach to the Agency of veiled muslim women», in *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 31 (1): 9-28.
- Bilge S. and Denis A. (2010), «Intersectionality Undone: Saving Intersectionality from Feminist Intersectionality Studies», in *Du Bois Review*, 10: 405-24.
- Braidotti R. (2013), *The posthuman*, Polity Press, London.
- Brown W. (2019), *In the ruins of neoliberalism: The rise of antidemocratic politics in the West*, Columbia University Press, New York, NY.
- Butler J. (1993), *Bodies that Matter: on the Discursive Limits of Sex*, Routledge, New York.
- Butler J. (2020), *The Force of Nonviolence: An Ethico-Political Bind*, Verso, London.
- Chadwick R. (2024), «The question of feminist critique», in *Feminist Theory*, 25(3): 376-395
- Chatzidakis A., Hakim J., Littler J., Rottenberg C. and Segal L. (2020), «From carewashing to radical care: the discursive explosions of care during Covid-19», in *Feminist Media Studies*, 20(6): 889-895.
- Colombo E., Rebughini P. and Demirsu I. (2024), «Enchanted realism: Representations of self-fulfilment among Italian youth after the pandemic», in *Current Sociology*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00113921241289608>
- de Lauretis T. (1991) «Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities. An Introduction», in *Differences*, 3, 2: iii-xviii.

- Della Porta D., Cini L. and Guzman-Concha C. (eds) (2020), *The Contentious Politics of Higher Education. Student Movements in Late Neoliberalism*, Routledge, New York-London.
- Fragno M. and Tola M. (eds) (2021), *Ecologie della cura. Prospettive transfemministe*, Orthotes, Napoli.
- Guerzoni C., Nothdurfter U. and Trappolin L. (2024), *Genitorialità queer in Italia. Filiazione, relazioni familiari, percorsi di legittimazione*, Mondadori, Milano.
- Hancock A. M. (2016), *Intersectionality: An Intellectual History*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Haraway D. (2018), «Staying with the trouble for multispecies environmental justice», in *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 8(1): 102-105.
- Harding S. (2008), *Sciences from Below: Feminisms, Post-colonialities, and Modernities*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- hooks b. (1984), *Feminist Theory. From Margin to Center*, South end press, Boston.
- Istituto Toniolo (2019), *Rapporto Giovani*, Il Mulino, Bologna.
- IPSOS (2024), *LGBT+ Pride Report* https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2024-05/Pride%20Report%20FINAL_0.pdf
- Littler J. and Rottemberg C. (2021) «Feminist solidarities: Theoretical and practical Complexities», in *Gender Work & Organization*, 28: 864-877.
- Lo Schiavo L. (2023), *Soggettività studentesca*, Morlacchi, Perugia UP.
- Lo Schiavo L. and Rebughini P. (2023), «Youth Multidimensional Political Activism Between Singularisation and Mutualism: The Case of Up Network», in *Cambio. Rivista sulle Trasformazioni Sociali*, 14 (27): 1-16.
- Lo Schiavo L. and Rebughini P. (2024), «Movimenti sociali giovanili», in E. Colombo e P. Rebughini (eds), *Orientarsi nelle trasformazioni sociali. Le parole chiave*, Carocci, Roma, pp. 141-156.
- Lugones M. (2010), «Toward a Decolonial Feminism», in *Hypatia*, 25(4): 742-759.
- Pickard S. and Bessant J. (eds) (2018), *Young People Regenerating Politics in Times of Crises*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Pitti I. and Tuorto D. (2021), *I giovani nella società contemporanea. Identità e trasformazioni*, Carocci, Roma.
- Pitti I., Mengilli Y. and Walther A. (2021), «Liminal Participation: Young People's Practices in the Public Sphere Between Exclusion, Claims of Belonging, and Democratic Innovation», in *Youth & Society*, 55(1): 143-162. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X211040848>.
- Pulcini E. (2020), *Tra cura e giustizia*, Bollati Boringheri, Torino.
- Rebughini P. (2021), «Agency in intersectionality. Towards a method for studying the situatedness of action», in *SOCIO*, 15: 189-205.
- Rinaldi C., Cappotto C. and Bacio M. (2022), «Born to Be Different: LGBTQ2 Children of Heterosexual Families», in B.J. Gilley and G. Masullo (a cura di), *Non-Binary Family Configurations: Intersections of Queerness and Homonormativity*, Springer, Berlin, pp. 189-204.
- Spivak Gayatri C. (1999), *A Critique of Post-Colonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*, Harvard University Press, Harvard.
- Stati Generali LGBTQIAP+&Disability (2023), <https://statigenerali.com/>.
- Stulberg L. (2017), *LGBTQ Social Movements*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- The Care Collective (2020), *The Care Manifesto. The politics of interdependence*, Verso, London.
- Tronto J. (2013), *Caring Democracy*, New York University Press, New York.
- Tronto J. (2023), *Who Cares? Come ripensare una politica democratica*, Castelvecchi, Roma.