



**EDUCATION  
OF AFFECTIVITY AND  
OF SEXUALITY  
OF YOUNG PEOPLE  
in contexts of  
complexity and fluidity**

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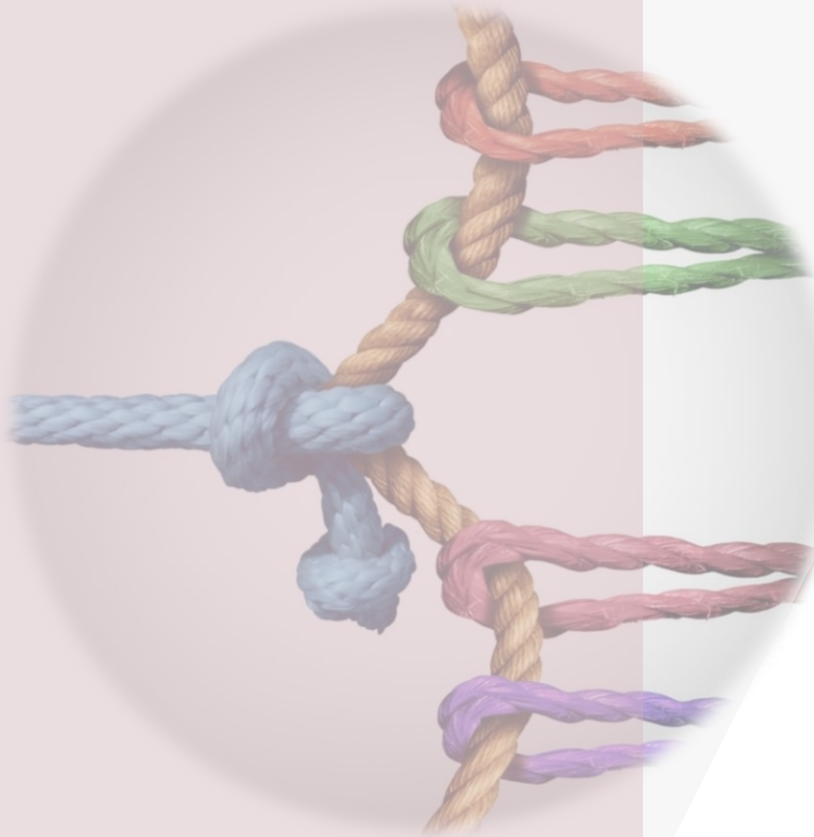
A photograph of four students in a library setting. A young woman with long dark hair is on the left, looking towards a young man in the center who is smiling. To the right, another young woman with glasses is looking at a document, and a young man is partially visible in the foreground on the right. They are gathered around a table with a laptop and books. The background shows bookshelves filled with books.

# **NODAL AND CRITICAL POINTS** for the education of affectivity and sexuality

**Anthropological challenges  
and educational implications**

# Anthropological and educative challenges

...connected to the diffusion  
of the  
«gender and queer theories»



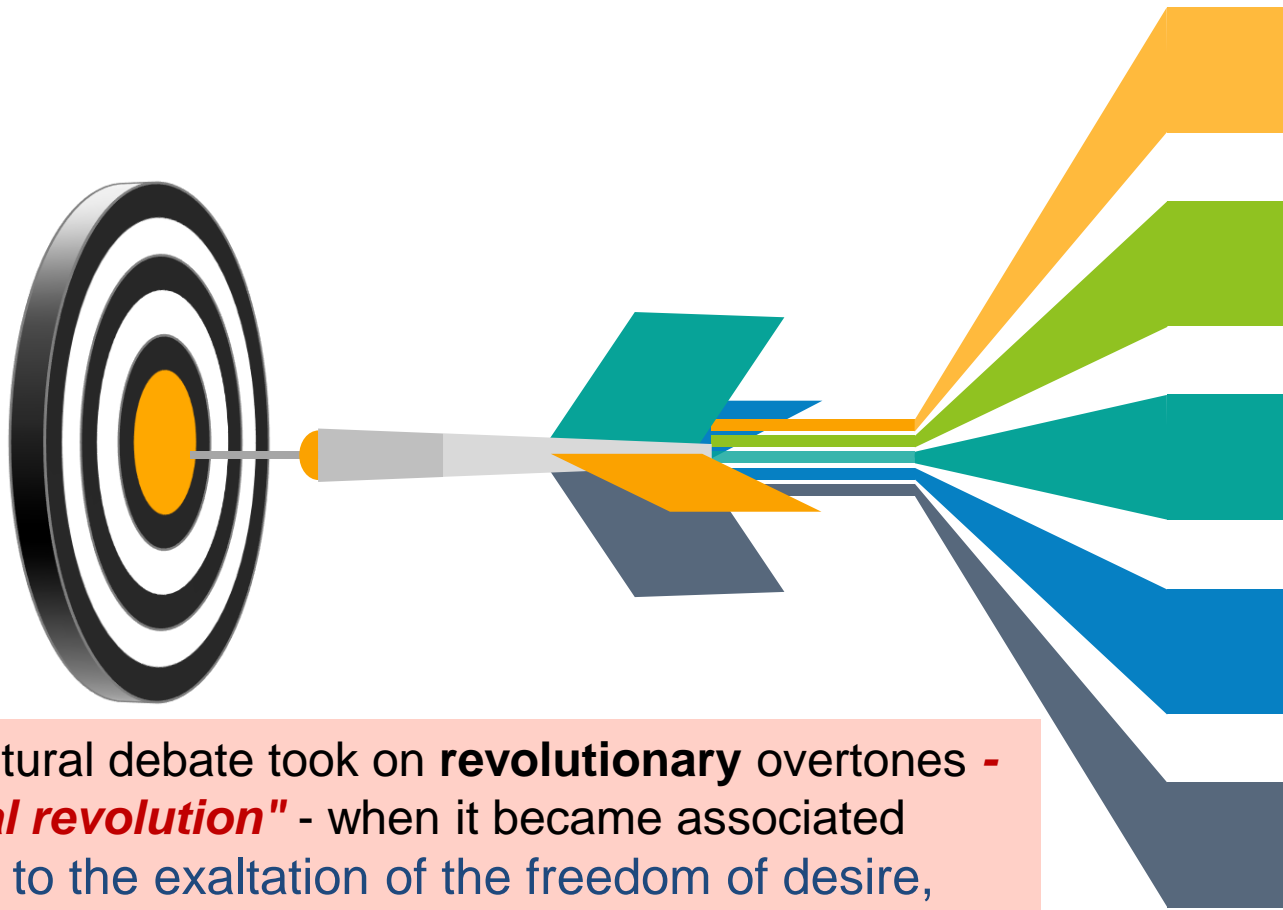
**Conceptualization of  
human sexuality with  
its transformations**

*Identity of the person  
with his or her  
educational processes*

**Sexuality/identity  
relationship**

**Alternative conception of  
the body and the man-  
woman relationship**

# Concept of "sexuality" and its transformations



Relationship between the sexes

Sexual Roles

Naturalness of the sexes

Link between sexuality and marriage

Link between genitality and procreation...

The cultural debate took on **revolutionary** overtones -

**"sexual revolution"** - when it became associated

- to the exaltation of the freedom of desire,
- to the sexual and social emancipation of women,
- to the criticism of natural family structures.

- Relevant **historical-cultural processes** that have been underway in society for a long time...
- We are facing with a **'new' anthropology and sexual ethics** which has put into crisis the **model of sexual anthropology** built over the centuries in Western culture.
- Awareness of being faced with a real **educational emergency**, particularly with regard to the issues of affectivity and sexuality
- The **'gender' issue... constitutes a real challenge** to education and formation



A document,  
sign of a particular  
attention from the Church and  
of its Magisterium

# Basic questions

- Can we be women and become men or vice versa be men and become women?
- Can we be neutral, that is, neither male nor female or male and female together?
- Is the fact that males and females are assigned a certain identity and role based on anatomy a natural fact or a convention? Or is it a socio-cultural construction that needs to be gotten rid of?
- Is sexual preference socially equivalent? Is *hetero/homo/bi-sexual choice* indifferent?
- What is the *significance of diversity* at the individual level and what are the implications in *interpersonal relationships*?
- What is the source of diversity, individual and interpersonal, **biology**, **culture**, or **individual will**?

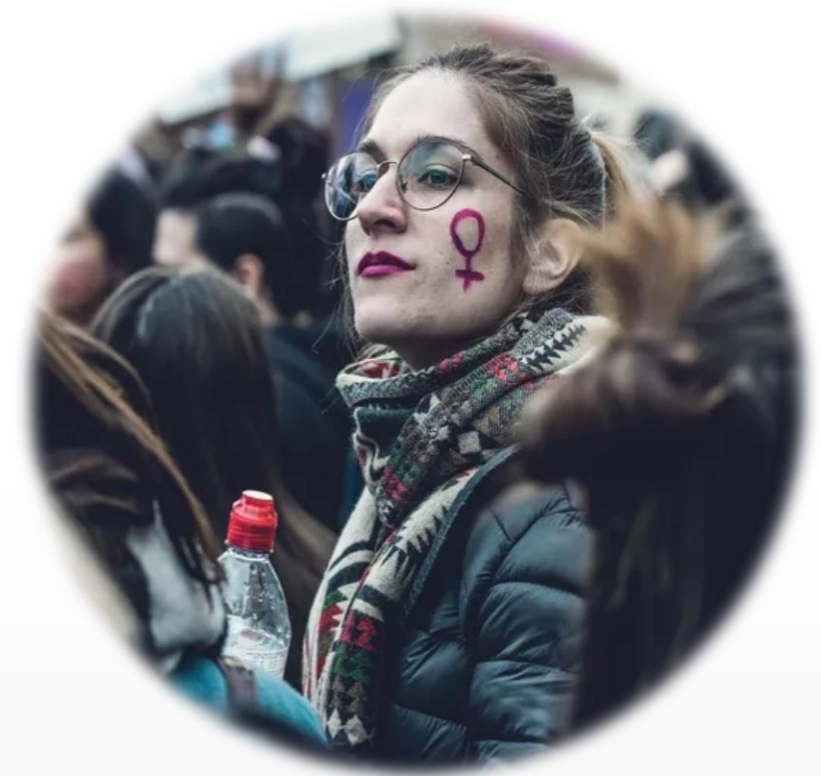


**‘Gender’ theories:  
a challenge to anthropology  
and to the processes of  
identity construction**

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# A true cultural-historical reversal...

What **radical feminism** had achieved with the **claim** of the **difference between the sexes**, quickly dissolved before the idea **of gender equality** proposed by '**gender**' theories, as a **liberation** from the weight of biology in the name of the **freedom to choose and decide one's sexual orientation** from time to time





Ambiguity of the term "**gender**" which has progressively replaced the term "**sex**"

- **Change of language**
- **Precise theoretical choice...**
  - denial of the difference between men and women, of **biological sexual differences** considered irrelevant for the construction of identity
  - liberation from the weight of **biology** in the name of freedom to choose one's **sexual orientation**

Rapid development and diffusion in the West... these ideas have affected philosophy, social and psychological sciences, law, international and national regulations ...

# Gender Theories



**Femininity** and **Masculinity** are induced *cultural constructions*, from which we must free ourselves to achieve perfect equality between the sexes and thus avoid any possible discrimination

Each person can **choose his or her gender identity** regardless of the sexuality of his or her body...

Every *'sexual orientation'* is as good as another, so **heterosexuality** is easily equated with **homosexuality**

**Genders** can be **infinite**; separating them from nature means that we can no longer speak of *categories* within which to confine **identity**: **locking identity within a gender** may already be an attempt at discrimination

*The nature-culture relationship* is one of the most critical points: the separation of the two terms of the relationship or the nullification of one at the expense of the other risks **undermining the unity and wholeness** of development in general, but especially **'human' development**.

# Gender Theories

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Neither **male** nor **female**...  
but only **people** in whom **male and female characters** intersect as a sort of "**hybridization**" without any boundary that defines them

...

## ANTHROPOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS on IDENTITY of THE PERSON

### UTOPIA OF THE "NEUTRAL"

- without *sexual differences*
- without the possibility of generative transmission of life
- with the unlimited possibility of *recreating one's sexual identity at will*

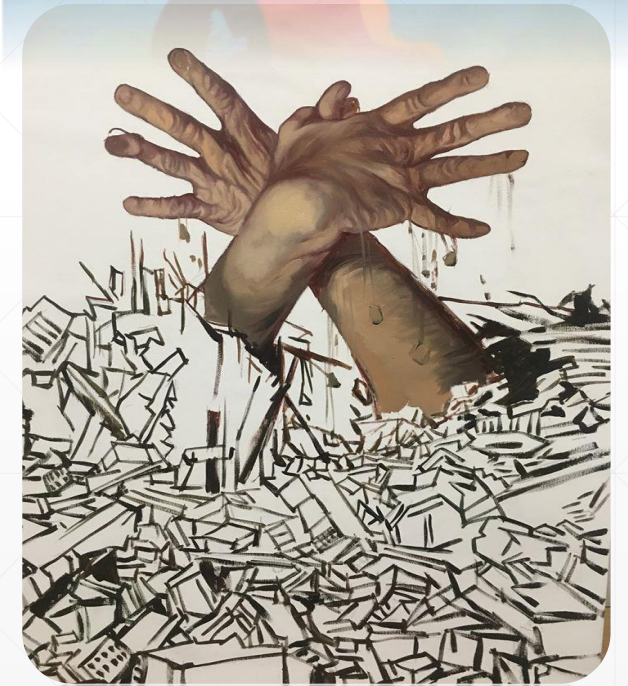


Priority of '*gender*' over '*sex*':  
marginality of nature and denial of its ontological dimension

## We are faced with...

- a process of *reformulation of personal identity* and the *sexuality/identity relationship*, perhaps never supported in the tradition of Western thought
- a real **cultural revolution** which, by touching personal identity, and therefore the very essence of every human being, deconstructing it in the context of a conception of 'nature' that is no longer 'static' but **changing**, always **fluctuating**, is undermining the "*anthropological question* " at the root
- a real **anthropological earthquake** underway that is undermining millennia-old traditions with the aim, through the world media, of propagating a '*new secular anthropology*'

Gender Studies



# CRITICAL ISSUES OF THE THEORETICAL MODEL...

## Masculine and feminine in the construction of identity

*Construction processes of Identity*

*Identity/corporeality*



## Affective maturation and sexual integration

*Education of affectivity and of the emotional world*

*Identity and relationship: basic affective choices*



## Family and sexual difference

*Man-woman relationship: original duality*

*Relationships between genders and generations*

# Processes of Identity construction

To educate, the first step is to encourage the *process of self-awareness*:

- **Corporeality/identity**
- **Sexuality and relationships**
- **Construction of the Self**



Personal  
planning



Affective  
and sexual  
maturation

Capacity of choice and of decision

# Relevant and critical challenge...

It is the issue of *sexuality*  
and its *integration*  
in reference to  
*any choice of life style*  
and/or *vocation...*

...

For those who educate and  
accompany, the open,  
complex, and delicate issue  
is the issue of  
*"homosexuality"*  
a phenomenon increased  
by the spread of  
*"gender" theories*



# **IN AN EDUCATIONAL KEY**

**Some trends  
that challenge**



# 1. 'Slowed' processes of growth

Transition to adulthood, autonomy, affective-relational maturation, integration of sexuality,...

# 2. Hesitations and doubts about identity, sexual orientation, family, future...

- Confusion at the level of emotions and feelings...
- Psychological experiences dominated by the imagination and by a strong emotionality or sensoriality mediated by the visual, by the 'felt' (often only virtually...)
- Difficulty engaging in 'committing' relationships

# 3. Elaboration and integration of the most difficult sexuality...

- Identification and differentiation processes
- Search for the identical and the similar (*narcissistic fusionality*)
- «*Gender fluid*»... homosexuality, transsexuality...



- **The INTERNET as a 'place of learning and socialization' to sexuality**
- **Voluntary social isolation:** phenomenon of *Hikikomori*, a form of **self-imprisonment** for fear of reality and interactions with others,...
- **Progressive withdrawal from the world of adults and self-referential solitude...**
- **'Weakness of family educational models** and adult **relational styles** and intrusiveness of media communication with its behavioral models



- ***Man-woman relationship between old and new paths...***

- globalization and homologation of differences
- fragmented identities, polymorphic identities and 'egoic plurality'
- weakness of otherness



- **"Faith" as an experience of relationship and trust:** through what 'mediations'? And what educational accompaniment?

- A misunderstood ***concept of freedom*** that rejects everything that constitutes a ***constraint*** and is driven by ***rules***

