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*Noi Siamo i Giovani*: the Popular Media Construction of Italian Youth  
through Style, 1965-1975

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by

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## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	4
<b>Abstract</b> .....	6
<b>Preface</b> .....	8
<b>Chapter 1</b> <b><i>I giovani</i> in Italian popular media</b> .....	14
1.1 The Construction of Youth in Post-war Italian Popular Media .....	14
1.1.1 ‘Commercial’ and ‘political’ youth, 1965-1975 .....	21
1.2 Young People vs. <i>I Giovani</i> .....	25
1.3 Performative <i>Giovani</i> : Style, Transnationalism, Gender .....	34
1.3.1 <i>I giovani</i> ’s style, bodily practices and stars .....	35
1.3.2 Transnational <i>Giovani</i> .....	43
1.3.3 <i>Giovani</i> Masculinities and Femininities .....	47
1.4 Sources: <i>Giovani</i> Popular Media Products .....	54
<b>Chapter 2</b> <b><i>Beats</i>, 1965-67</b> .....	66
2.1 Beats, Italian style .....	68
2.1.1 The ‘birth’ of the <i>giovane</i> style .....	72
2.1.2 Becoming <i>beat</i> as a performance .....	86
2.2 Translating the <i>beat</i> : translation as a choice .....	94
2.2.1 ‘Mirroring’ .....	96
2.2.2 ‘Othering’ .....	104
2.3 <i>Capelloni</i> and the absence of female sexuality .....	111
2.3.1 <i>Capelloni</i> , or the redefinition of male attractiveness .....	112
2.3.2 Androgynous women, or the problematization of female sexuality .....	120
<b>Chapter 3</b> <b><i>Hippies</i>, 1967-70</b> .....	139
3.1 <i>Sessantottini</i> and <i>Hippies</i> .....	141
3.1.1 <i>Hippies</i> against consumerism and authority .....	147
3.1.2 ‘True’ vs. ‘Fake’ <i>giovani</i> : a question of authenticity .....	154
3.2 When the ‘Other’ is fashionable: ‘other’ times and ‘other’ places .....	166
3.2.1 The 1930s, ‘epoca giovane’ .....	168

	3.2.2 Somewhere else: the Afro style .....	175
	3.3 Effeminate masculinities and dangerous femininities .....	187
	3.3.1 Discovering sex. Sexual education and <i>hippy femmes fatales</i> .....	188
	3.3.2 <i>Capelloni</i> and beyond: towards a redefinition of <i>giovane</i> masculinity .....	202
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Fragmented <i>giovani</i>, 1970-1975</b> .....	213
	4.1 Italian <i>giovani</i> in the <i>Anni di Piombo</i> .....	216
	4.1.1 The end of the <i>hippy</i> and the style of 1970s political <i>giovani</i> .....	218
	4.1.2 The reconciliation between <i>i giovani</i> and <i>gli adulti</i> .....	228
	4.2 The fragmentation of the community and the emergence of <i>giovani</i> identities .....	232
	4.2.1 Discrimination .....	235
	4.2.2 Inclusion .....	243
	4.3 <i>Giovani</i> Femininities and Masculinities in the early 1970s: transformations and reactions .....	253
	4.3.1 From young women's freedom to women's liberation .....	257
	4.3.2 Glam and the perpetuation of Italian virility .....	271
	<b>Conclusion</b> .....	284
	<b>Bibliography</b> .....	294
	Primary Sources .....	294
	Magazine articles and Advertisements .....	294
	Songs .....	303
	Films .....	304
	TV programmes/ <i>Caroselli</i> .....	305
	Secondary sources .....	306

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## **Abstract**

This thesis analyses the media construction of the ‘imagined community’ of Italian youth from 1965 to 1975 by looking at representations of young people’s style and bodily practices in magazines, *Musicarelli* films and television programmes aimed at an audience of young people. The term *i giovani* is used here to refer to representations of young people in popular media: *i giovani* were a performatively constructed category, as they were not defined by a specific age, but by specific practices, often connected to the consumption of commercial goods. The first chapter describes the interdisciplinary and intersectional approach used to examine the media construction of *i giovani*, which includes popular music studies, feminist theory, cultural studies, star studies and the history of 1960s and 1970s Italian society.

The subsequent three chapters chronologically outline the emergence of different trends for Italian *giovani*. Chapter two analyses the *beat* trend, which appeared in popular media during the period 1965-1967. Chapter three examines the introduction of the *hippy* fashion in the period 1967-1970. Lastly, Chapter four investigates the alleged ‘normalisation’ of the *giovane* style in the early 1970s. These chapters together highlight four main processes that worked together in the construction of Italian *giovani*. Firstly, they show the naturalisation of a *giovane* identity through the passage from a unitary construction to a more fragmented representation. The analysis also shows how discourses around the *giovane* style were influenced by social changes affecting young people in the Western world as well as Italian society in the 1960s and 1970s. Moreover, the chapters show how representations of *giovani* gender identities produced anxieties regarding a change in gendered dynamics of power in Italian post-war society. Finally, the analysis of

the transnational inspiration of the *giovane* style shows how the media construction of *i giovani* was influenced both by Italy's relationships with its own past and by the modernity embodied by foreign young people. The definition of a specifically Italian way of being *giovani* thus ultimately confirms the significant role of popular media in constructing Italian-ness.

## Preface

*Ma che cosa c'è/Balla insieme a me*

*E vedrai che poi/Ti passerà.*

*Noi siamo i giovani/I giovani più giovani*

*Siamo l'esercito/L'esercito del Surf.*

'L'esercito del Surf' (Mogol & Pataccini, 1964)

In 1964, Belgian actress and singer Catherine Spaak hit the Italian charts with the song 'L'Esercito del Surf' (Mogol & Pataccini, 1964). In the song, Spaak directly invites an individual to join a group of people dancing, so as to overcome his/her problems. That group of people is referred to as *i giovani*, the Italian term for 'young people'. The song defines *i giovani* through a practice, namely dancing, which connects them to the act of spending free time together. *I giovani* are also defined by referring to the 'surf' music genre, which originated in the United States and was most famously represented by the Beach Boys. The song was written by an Italian lyricist and an Italian composer; however, the fact that reference is made to a foreign genre and that the song is sung by a foreign singer who sings with a strong French accent arguably suggests to the listener that the community of *i giovani* has no national boundaries. It also seems that in this group there are no gender differences: although Catherine Spaak is singing about *i giovani*, which in Italian is a masculine noun, and although the word 'army' usually defines a group of men, the fact that the singer is female means that women are also included in the community of *i giovani*. Clearly, *i giovani più giovani* described in this song are a homogenous group of



people, defined through leisure practices, where national and gender differences have been erased.

What is more, the song seems to invite young people to join a community of peers identified with the personal pronoun *noi*, as the point of view adopted in the song is not that of an external viewer but comes directly from inside the group. In other words, the lyrics of the song do not *discuss* young people; rather, they are *directed at* young people. This form of address is symptomatic of a broader trend in Italian culture: from the mid-1960s, popular media forms aimed at an audience of young people proliferated in Italy. Young people started to be interpellated in songs, magazines, television and radio programmes, and films. In these popular media forms, young people seemed to be the active agents of their own representation; yet, this was a fiction, because these popular media were ultimately controlled by the publishing, music, television and cinema industries led by adults. The use of the personal pronoun *noi* in popular media functioned to socially construct youth: by interpellating young people, popular media were contributing to the construction of a collective identity, which had commercial, community building, and ideological functions.

This thesis analyses representations of Italian youth in popular media products aimed at an audience of young people, and specifically magazines, television programmes, and *Musicarelli*<sup>1</sup> films, during the period 1965-1975. *I giovani* are the focus of this study: I use the Italian term to denote the popular media representation of young people, and to distinguish that from actual people of a young age, for which I use the

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<sup>1</sup> The *Musicarello* was a musical film genre that appeared in Italy between 1959 and 1960, which was intended for an audience of young people. According to Jacopo Tomatis, ‘the *Musicarelli* consisted of a series of musical numbers, featuring teen idols, singers and entertainers; the plot was weak, and tailored to the protagonists’ public image and talent’ (Tomatis, 2014: 26-27). For a detailed discussion of this film genre, see section 1.4.

English term 'young people'. From the mid-1960s, popular media played a role in constructing *i giovani* as a performative identity (Butler, 1999; 2011) which was not defined by age, but rather by the reiteration of specific practices. In particular, this thesis deconstructs and analyses visual and written representations of young people's style and bodily practices, focusing on their clothes, hairstyles, dances and the spaces occupied by their bodies. These elements are particularly relevant for the construction of the *giovane* identity for different reasons. Firstly, youth fashion was one of the main categories of goods created for young people's consumption, and at the same time it was one of the vehicles through which young people were able to express political and social claims. Secondly, the trends adopted by Italian young people, and those appropriated by the fashion industry, were often inspired by global trends coming from other Western countries. Thirdly, style and bodily practices were also used by young people to define their gender identity, and therefore often resulted in being the main site of struggle between the emancipation from, and the reaffirmation of, stereotypical gender roles, at a time when the construction of masculinities and femininities were being questioned both by emancipatory movements and by consumer culture.

The period under consideration starts in 1965, when media forms aimed at an audience of young people started to proliferate, going through to 1975, when media products for young people became diversified.<sup>2</sup> During this period, Italian young people became an 'imagined community', to use Benedict Anderson's terminology (2006). Popular media contributed to homogenising their practices, values, and desires, and in setting boundaries to distinguish them from 'other' identities, first and foremost adults, who were equally constructed through practices. The choice of the time period also comes

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<sup>2</sup> For an explanation of the choice of time period in relation to the sources taken into exam, see section 1.4.

from my desire to contribute to the history of Italian young people in the 1960s. Previous research in the field, in fact, has often equated all Italian young people with the students participating in the Italian *Sessantotto* (Parisella, 1998; Giachetti, 2008). Through looking at popular media representations, instead, I question the stereotypical division between those young people who are considered agents of history because they participated in the demonstrations and occupations of the *Sessantotto*, and those young people who are described as ‘passively’ adapting to the trends that the industry was imposing on them.

This thesis is structured in four chapters. Chapter one contextualises this study against other work conducted on Italian post-war youth cultures, and explains the choice of sources and the periodisation. It also provides the theoretical and methodological framework for this thesis, which draws on discourse analysis (Foucault, 1978; Barthes, 2010), gender theory (Butler, 1999; 2011), and cultural studies (Hebdige, 2002). The following three chapters constitute the main body of analysis and are chronologically divided into three main periods. This division comes directly from the examination of primary sources: my study of magazines, television programmes, and films pointed to three distinct periods in which *i giovani*’s style was different, and explained to the audience in different ways. Each chapter explores the significance of different *giovani* trends and bodily practices in relation to the cultural and social processes that were taking place in Italy during the 1960s and the 1970s.

Chapter two concentrates on the period 1965-67, and on the emergence of the *beat* trend. In this period, *i giovani* were constructed in popular media in opposition to *gli adulti*, and through reference to free-time activities, especially those practices linked to experiencing music, such as concert and club attendance. The prominence of free-time activities in the construction of *i giovani* also implicitly suggested the political and social

disengagement of youth as opposed to the perceived threat of those young people who were starting to demonstrate in schools and in public spaces. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the Italian appropriation of the mid-1960s' British 'Carnaby Street' style and of the American beatnik movement, by looking at strategies of 'mirroring' and 'othering' in popular media. The chapter also outlines how the *beat* style started to modify the construction of *giovani* gender identities during this period, as the trends of long hair for men and miniskirts for women demonstrates. It thus analyses representations of *giovani* masculinities and femininities by looking at the construction of stars such as Rita Pavone, Caterina Caselli, and Gianni Morandi.

From 1967 to 1970, representations of young people's style in popular media became more 'political', but yet still defused. Chapter three, titled *Hippies*, discusses how *i giovani* started to be constructed in opposition to the *beats* because, in contrast to them, they were adopting a style which was anti-consumerist (that is, not produced by the industry) and anti-authoritarian (that is, not dictated by fashion designers). It also analyses the problematic commercial recuperation of two American-inspired trends, namely the Afro style and 1930s-inspired fashion, in order to show how transnational influences were renegotiated in Italian popular media. As well as foreign influences, popular media contributed to the recuperation of the increasing sexual emancipation of young women. The representation of sexually active women like Patty Pravo was also a compromise between the emergence of a *giovane* sexuality and the preservation of young women's respectability. At the same time, the construction of *giovani* masculinities, which increasingly appropriated aspects traditionally considered 'feminine', revealed anxieties about homosexuality and a change in the power structure between genders.

Chapter four focuses on the fragmentation of the *giovane* identity in popular media during the period 1970-75. During the early 1970s, an apparent ‘normalisation’ of the *giovane* style coincided with the recognition of young people’s political role. However, while the *giovane* style was becoming increasingly similar to that of *gli adulti*, gender, class, and regional differences started to become more visible within media representations of the ‘imagined community’ of young people. This chapter evaluates to what extent this fragmentation was a result of the inclusion of identities which were previously discriminated against in the construction of *i giovani*. In particular, this chapter discusses the impact of social and emancipatory movements that were introduced, in Italy and in other Western countries, by feminist and gay liberation movements, Marxist political movements, and anti-racist movements, and their significance in the construction of gender, class, and ethnicity in the Italian society of the 1970s.

## **Chapter 1**

### ***I giovani in Italian popular media***

This chapter describes the theoretical and methodological frameworks that have been applied in this work, as well as the choices of sources and periodization used in this thesis. It is divided into four sections: the first section describes the emergence of young people as a collective identity during the post-war period, by presenting a critical review of other research on the media representation of Italian young people. It also explains my focus on the period 1965-75, by outlining specific limitations with previous research conducted on this time frame. The second section introduces my reading of *i giovani* as a normative representation that has been naturalised in popular media, by concentrating on the role of popular media in constructing the ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 2006) of young people. The third section briefly presents the methodology applied to the three main themes of this research: the performative media construction of *i giovani* through style, bodily practices and *giovani* stars, the transnational inspiration of the *giovane* identity, and the media construction of *giovani* masculinities and femininities. Finally, the fourth section presents the sources that have been used in this research, and explains how they have determined the periodization of this thesis.

#### ***1.1 The Construction of Youth in Post-war Italian Popular Media***

Youth, ‘the period between childhood and adult age’ according to the Oxford online Dictionary (2017), is a social construction that has been naturalised over time. Its definition and relevance have been analysed by sociologists (Mannheim, 2008; Frith, 1984), historians (Mitterauer, 1993; Sorcinelli & Varni, 2004), cultural theorists (Hall &

Jefferson, 1975; Hebdige, 2002, 1988) and journalists (Savage, 2009). Most historians have argued that, in the Western world, the construction of youth began in the nineteenth century (Mitterauer, 1993; De Bernardi, 2004). However, it was in the twentieth century that generational kinship started to prevail over other patterns of social interaction for young people. As Michael Mitterauer maintains, in nineteenth-century European societies, young people did not share the same formative experiences, as their regional, class, and gendered forms of belonging were more significant in their development than their generational identity (1993: 235-240). Young people's values and attitudes were also much more influenced by the family context, since young people had fewer occasions to meet and to share experiences with their peers. Furthermore, it was during the twentieth century that the meaning of youth went beyond the mere definition of a cohort of persons of the same age: on the one hand, since then youth has represented an ideal of health and vitality, to which adults refer with nostalgia. On the other hand, as Valerio Marchi explains, in the twentieth century youth has denoted 'turbolenza', or a certain attitude of rebellion against the established social order (Marchi 2014: 23). This representation was not negative in itself: in specific events of recent Italian history, for example during totalitarian regimes, the unruliness of youth was celebrated as part of the reactionary and belligerent ideal of Fascism. However, Marchi highlights how the perception of youth as unruly was often limited to specific rebellious groups, especially those with a working-class background.

It was during the post-war period that youth started to be increasingly perceived as a homogenous group. According to Mitterauer, three processes taking place in this period contributed to creating this perception: the increasing equality among young people from different backgrounds thanks to compulsory education, the creation of a youth market,

and the improvement of means of communication. These processes, which took place in the United States in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, started to affect Italian society in the late 1950s to early 1960s, during the *Miracolo Economico Italiano* (Crainz, 1996). Schooling had the effect of creating a standardized lifestyle for young people, and therefore standardized problems (Mitterauer, 1993: 237-238). In Italy, secondary compulsory education until the age of 14 was introduced by law in 1962. As a consequence, the number of school students had nearly doubled by the end of the 1960s (Ginsborg, 1990: 298). Not only did young people meet in schools, but they also started to come together in their free time. Mitterauer argues that in the post-war period the ‘informal gathering of friends’ became ‘the most important form of adolescent community’ (1993: 225). Young people also started to use their appearance as a form of identification and differentiation from other social groups. Interestingly, this process was inherently transnational and political: Mitterauer underlines how, during the post-war period, young people’s style became increasingly similar in Europe and the United States, and the wearing of the same clothes often had political or social meanings (ibid.: 227).

Fashion trends were not only emerging from within the community of young peers: the fashion industry also invented a market specifically aimed at young people. As Luca Gorgolini points out, in the late 1950s young people became a potential category of commercial consumers (2004: 214). The market took advantage of this newly-created and relatively wealthy section of society by creating goods specifically for them. Young people used these goods as means of visible recognition and distinction from the adults:

Il mercato, che si accorge di questo nuovo gruppo di acquirenti-consumatori [young people], inizia a convogliare accortamente verso di loro tutta una serie di



prodotti, in massima parte nuovi, che finiranno per essere strumenti indispensabili nella costruzione di un'identità generazionale da parte dei teenager italiani. (ibid.)

The products designed for young people's consumption included mopeds and cars to improve mobility, fashion and hairstyles to visually distinguish young people from adults, and popular music. The commercial designation of products specifically aimed for young people as consumers contributed to the homogenisation of young people's tastes and of their free-time activities.

The perception of youth as a homogenous group was also facilitated by the improvement of communication, both direct – through increased personal mobility and travel – and indirect, through the mass media (Mitterauer, 1993: 238). Indeed, the post-war emergence of young people as a social category coincided with the widespread diffusion of popular media during the *Miracolo Economico*, and especially of television (Crainz, 1996: 142-146). The mass media played a significant role in putting young people from different nationalities and social classes virtually in contact, particularly those who could not afford to travel overseas or within Europe. The mass media also helped to spread fashions and trends all over the globe. Thus, Italian popular media products represented the features of the newly formed 'youth culture' through images, songs, and language (Gorgolini, 2004: 219). By doing so, they facilitated the process of naturalising Italian young people as a distinct group, and they contributed to making youth more intelligible to both adults and to young people themselves, by characterising them with specific styles, practices, and behaviours. During the late 1950s to early 1960s, however, youth also became a projection for all the anxieties connected to the rise of consumerist society and to the increasing social and sexual liberation of the young population. Marchi notes how 'nella seconda metà del secolo XX [...] i giovani

divengono dei catalizzatori di *Moral Panic* indipendentemente dalle proprie origini sociali' (2014: 27). In other words, the homogenisation of young people also created a homogenisation in the perception of youth as a preoccupation, which was no longer limited to specific groups.

From the late 1950s, then, young people became a 'discursive object' that represented either a danger or a category of consumers (Colombo, 1993: 65). Media representations of Italian young people in this period can be seen to echo those summarised by Dick Hebdige in his study of post-war media representations of British subcultures and, in particular, of punks. According to Hebdige (1988: 19), 'youth' tends to be represented by the media either as 'youth-as-trouble' – criminal, delinquent youth – or as 'youth-as-fun' – commercial, consuming youth. In Italian society, both aspects were rather worrying. The delinquency 'without a cause' committed by a small minority of Italian young people in the late 1950s was represented in popular media as a large-scale phenomenon that could lead to social division (Piccone Stella, 1993: 145). Consumption too was seen as a danger for the young generations, thus the *Democrazia Cristiana*, the conservative party in power, and the Catholic Church, argued that consumerism could corrode traditional Italian values. Mass consumption was also questioned by the left-wing intelligentsia, who saw it as the main instrument for the Americanisation of Italian society (Gundle, 2000: 80-82). From the late 1950s, youth was therefore perceived by Italian society as a problem, which more generally reflected anxieties towards the increasing modernisation of that society.

Two main studies on Italian youth in the late 1950s have underlined the importance of the popular media in socially constructing this category. Simonetta Piccone Stella's *La Prima Generazione* (1993) discusses the emergence of representations of

young people in Italian print media during the late 1950s. Piccone Stella argues that this period was fundamental for the definition of youth as a separate social group in Italy, as young people were constructing their generational identity through the consumption of specific goods. In this process, the body played a central role, as young people expressed their difference from adults by establishing new standards of beauty and adopting new trends (Piccone Stella, 1993: 14). Meanwhile, print media tended to present an image of irresponsible youth to adults. In particular, young people became visible in the media through newspaper representations of the emergence of *teppismo*, or minor youth delinquency, in the major cities of Northern Italy from 1958 to 1963. The theme of youth deviancy was also dominant in cinema during the late 1950s, as Enrica Capussotti has underlined in her book *Gioventù Perduta* (2004). Capussotti investigates the emergence of age as a significant feature in the definition of subjects in popular media discourse in this period. In particular, according to Capussotti youth became a discursive tool to represent criticisms of traditionalist Italian society. To demonstrate this, she analyses representations of 'lost youth' in Italian film, in order to emphasise the use of 'youth' as a metaphor for social change through which to measure the anxieties of the adult generation. These two works examine the complex relationship between the media construction of young people as a separate social group, the impact of this construction on the adult audience, and the importance of youths' consumer status as an element of their identification. However, although Piccone Stella identifies the late 1950s as the moment at which a proper 'condizione giovanile' started to be constructed in popular media, she also underlines that Italian young people at the time did not identify themselves in a collective manner (Piccone Stella, 1993: 9-11).

Scholars have highlighted how, during the first half of the 1960s, the connection between youth and deviancy started to disappear in popular media. Piccone Stella explains that after 1962, representations of young people were separated from those of youth delinquency (Piccone Stella, 1994: 158). Popular media products tended instead to offer a reassuring representation of Italian youth for the adult audience. Marco Grisignini underlines how, for example, in the 1964 *Corriere della Sera* column ‘Il tempo dei giovani’, journalists projected the potential dangerousness of young people on their foreign – and potentially dangerous – counterparts, such as the British teddy boys (Grisignini, 1993: 36). Conversely, entertainment popular media products such as the 1962 programme *Alta Pressione* (Trapani, 1962) invited the audience to ‘scoprire i giovani d’oggi’ (*Alta Pressione*, episode 1, 16/09/1962) through the reassuring presentation of Italian young people’s leisure practices, such as dances and music. However, the division between ‘youth-as-fun’ and ‘youth-as-trouble’ remained: if representations of young people entered television entertainment programmes, news reports and newspapers presented with concern the political youth, which started to be noticed during the anti-fascist demonstration in Genoa in 1960 and during the 1962 clashes between factory workers and the police in Piazza Statuto in Milan, as a danger. As Paola Ghione points out, in both events young people were described in popular media by referring to their style. For example, the young anti-fascists of the Genoa demonstrations were termed by journalists *i giovani con le magliette a strisce* (Ghione, 1998: 115-117). In these two events, the adoption of a specific style therefore started to be presented as a sign of young people’s unruliness and political participation.

### ***1.1.1 'Commercial' and 'political' youth, 1965-1975***

Accounts on the media construction of youth in Italian society become less nuanced when it comes to describing Italian youth of the late 1960s and early 1970s, which is the period I focus on in this thesis. Academic works dealing with representations of Italian youth during the second half of the 1960s and the early 1970s tend to distinguish between the 'commercial' youth of the years 1965-67 and the 'political' youth of 1968 and the following years. Paola Ghione and Marco Grispigni have indicated how accounts of Italian youth in the late 1960s tend to draw a separation between 'una dimensione politica e l'altra impolitica' (1998: 9): according to this division, 'capelloni, musica beat, vestiti sgargianti, gonne corte, Beatles e Rolling Stones, sono una cosa, il '68 un'altra' (ibid.). One example of this approach is Diego Giachetti's book on 1968, in which he describes the generation previous to 1968 as a 'generazione leggera' (Giachetti, 2008: 21), defined by music, fashion, disengagement and consumerism, while, still according to Giachetti, 1968 represents 'la fine dell'identificazione fra giovani e moda' (2008: 27). Even the volume by Fausto Colombo, *Boom: Quelli che non hanno fatto il '68* (2008), which recalls the leisure practices enjoyed by the generation which was young in the period 1953-64, seems to use the reference to the *Sessantotto* to implicitly set a distinction between the 'political' youth of 1968 and the youth of the previous period, who are considered more 'commercial'. In contrast to this strict division, Ghione and Grispigni's edited book *Giovani Prima della Rivolta* (1993) concentrates on the period 1965-67 to demonstrate that, even before 1968, Italian youth was far from unpolitical. However, in this book the *Sessantotto* is still used as the term of reference, with the essays focusing on retracing the origins of 1968 in the previous years, and to understand the dynamics of

1968 by looking at the previous decade, in this way still implicitly affirming the predominance of representations of ‘political’ youth during the 1960s.

Conversely, it is rare to find reports of the ‘commercial’ side of youth in the period 1968-1975. In accounts of this period, young people are conflated with those young people who were part of the Italian student movements. Scholars often consider the political role of youth in the Western world and in Italy as predominant, to the point where, for some of them, young people were all to a certain extent ‘political’. Crispigni describes the generation of young people from 1968 to 1975 as a ‘generazione politica’, in which most young people were united by political ideologies (1993: 46). The alleged division between the ‘generazione leggera’ of the period 1965-67 and the ‘generazione politica’ of the period 1968-70 is caused by the evident centrality of representations of the *Sessantottini* in Italian history, journalism, and cultural analysis. It is quite common to associate the idea of young people uniquely with those young students and workers who, from 1966 to 1969, started to organise demonstrations and occupations to demand better education, social emancipation of the working classes, better contracts, and a more integrated society in general. Moreover, for historians, the *Sessantottini* seem to be the only ‘subjects of history’ in the 1960s, thus the only young people who deserve academic consideration. This kind of approach, according to which the young people who did not participate in the *Sessantotto* are less historically relevant than their ‘political’ peers, is exemplified by this quotation by historian Antonio Parisella:

oggetto del nostro discorso non è l’intero universo giovanile, ma solo quella parte di esso – particolarmente gli studenti – che è sembrata svolgere un ruolo storico, sia pure con un senso molto largo di questa espressione, oppure quella che è stata

più estesamente rappresentata dai mass-media e dalle culture ufficiali. (Parisella, 1998: 20)

Interestingly, according to Parisella, the fact that the mass media extensively represented the *Sessantottini* gives them historical relevance. It would be superficial to claim that 1968 was not fundamental in the history of young people and of Italian society as a whole; however, it seems evident that the history of 1960s' Italy is far too '68-centric', and does not take into consideration other, more commercial aspects of the emerging Italian youth cultures. John Foot claims that a reason for this is that the history of the 1960s is mainly a 'self-referential' history (2011: 115), written by the *Sessantottini* themselves, which tends to ignore other histories that were arguably less politically relevant but nevertheless significant from the point of view of social, generational, and gender changes in Italian society.

The history of 1968, and of the various emancipatory movements that emerged in Italian society during the 1960s and the 1970s, influence this study only tangentially; other historians have already analysed this period rather exhaustively.<sup>3</sup> The aim of this thesis, instead, is to look at how young people as a collective identity were constructed in popular media, and to demonstrate that in media representation the clear-cut division between 'commercial' and 'political' youth often overlaps. During the 1960s and the 1970s, countercultural protests were recuperated in popular media in order to tame the protesting attitude of young people and make Italian youth acceptable. Popular media products also show how emancipatory and political claims were used in advertisements to appeal to an audience of young people. However, media representations of young people also testify to the permanence of discriminatory discourses against subordinate identities

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<sup>3</sup> For example, De Bernardi & Flores, 1998 and Lumley, 1990.

such as women, the ethnic ‘other’ (be it the black or the *meridionale* ‘other’), the working classes, and homosexuals.

In order to analyse media representations of Italian young people, this thesis concentrates on a specific typology of source, which has been only marginally taken into account in previous research: films, television programmes, and magazines aimed at an audience of young people.<sup>4</sup> Most of the research that has been conducted into 1960s’ youth analyses representations of young people in popular media aimed at an audience of adults. Despite their relevance in describing the increasing modernisation of Italian society and the construction of youth as a catalyst for anxieties towards consumerism, these sources tend to mainly conceptualise youth as a problem to solve in relation to adults’ values and lifestyles. In other words, as Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel point out, ‘the discussion among adults about the “teenage problem” tells us, ultimately, more about adult society than about young people themselves’ (Hall & Whannel, 1964: 271). Media aimed at an audience of adults tended to talk about youth using the third person plural: young people were talked about as an ‘other’ in relation to Italian society. Because of the different targeted audience, the point of view adopted in the popular media I look at was extremely dissimilar. Young people were talked about as a *noi*, by adopting a point of view that sought to favour the identification of the young audience and the homogenisation of patterns of youth consumption. To do so, media aimed at an audience of young people proposed a version of ‘youth culture’ that was, like the British media analysed by Hall and Whannel, ‘a contradictory mixture of the authentic and the manufactured: it [wa]s an area of self-expression for the young and a lush grazing pasture for the commercial providers’ (Hall & Whannel, 1964: 276). In other words, discourses in

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<sup>4</sup> *Giovani Prima della Rivolta* is a notable exception, as it has a section devoted to representations of young people in popular media, including some of my primary sources.



these media promoted an unconditional sympathy with young people, supported young people's claims and requests for emancipation and magnified the generational opposition between young people and adults. However, these media products were not self-produced by young people: given that they were produced by adults, their primary function was still to decrease the potential of youth as dangerous, and to influence young people's consumption. Exploring the original point of view and the liminal position of popular media aimed at an audience of young people can therefore problematise the strict division between 'commercial' and 'political' discourses in representations of youth in the 1960s and 1970s, and show these two aspects were both part of media representations of Italian young people. Section 1.4 will provide an overview of the sources that will be analysed in this thesis in greater detail. I will now concentrate on the focus of this analysis, namely the media construction of *i giovani*.

### ***1.2 Young People vs. I Giovani***

The subject of this analysis is young people; however, I do not focus on a specific age group, nor do I consider youth as a generational unit that responds in a similar way to the same historical circumstances, as in Mannheim's sociological theory of generations (Mannheim, 2008). In this thesis, the Italian noun *i giovani* is used to describe the popular media representation of young people, and the adjective *giovane* here defines anything pertaining to *i giovani*, to distinguish that from the term 'young people' – by which I mean the actual individuals of a young age. The use of the word *giovane* in this work is therefore a stylistic and deliberate choice: my aim is to distinguish the youth represented in magazines from those young people at whom this construction was directed. As this study will show, popular media did not uniquely use the term 'i giovani' to normatively

describe young people: the names of the thesis chapters, for example – *beats* and *hippies* – refer to other terms that were used to describe *i giovani*, and they suggest a different characterisation of the *giovane* identity over time. Moreover, other labels referring to young people’s style that were used to describe *i giovani* in the 1960s – for example, the term *capellone* – will be dealt with in this analysis, as they suggest that style and fashion were central to the definition of the *giovane* identity.

In this work, *i giovani* are a media construction ‘interpellating’ (Althusser, 1971: 127-186) Italian young people. Althusser notably introduced the term ‘interpellation’ to indicate how ideological state apparatuses contribute to the creation of ideological subjects (Althusser, 1971: 174). Those apparatuses, such as educational, religious, and family institutions, turn ideology into ‘a lived, material practice – rituals, customs, patterns of behaviour, ways of thinking taking practical form’ (Storey, 2009: 78). Althusser explains how this process functions by referring to a policeman, who hails an individual on the street: by interpellating him/her, the policeman exercises a power over him/her. By responding to the policeman’s hailing, and therefore by acknowledging this interpellation, the individual becomes an ideological subject. As well as schools, the family and the church, Stuart Hall has pointed out how popular media can be also considered ideological state apparatuses as, according to Hall, modern media have the function to ‘ceaselessly [...] perform the critical ideological work of “classifying out the world” within the discourses of dominant ideologies’ (Hall, 1977: 346). Italian popular media interpellated young people as their audience, by constantly naming them *ragazzi*, or *giovani*. At the same time, they were contributing to the formulation of this ideological category, by defining what was considered *giovane* and what was not. The analysis of the elements through which *i giovani* were constructed in popular media can therefore

illustrate the roles and behaviours that Italian society envisaged for young people in the 1960s and the 1970s.

In the process of socially constructing *i giovani*, popular media reproduced dominant discourses that were circulating in Italian society during that time. Discourse denotes here ‘a system of representation’, as Stuart Hall (1997: 44) defines it, which includes all the ideas, practices, acts, and language that circulated in the media to create normative identities, such as *i giovani*.<sup>5</sup> As Michel Foucault argues, discourse can either stabilise or undermine relations of power within society, where power is a ‘process which [...] transforms, strengthens or reverses [force relations]’ (Foucault, 1978: 92). The idea of power as a *process* suggests that it is constantly produced from ‘innumerable points’ (ibid.: 93), and therefore can be inherently ambiguous. Media representations of young people were not solely controlled by commercial, social, and political hegemonies, nor had the work performed by journalists, directors, screenwriters and actors a deliberate normative aim. *I giovani* were constructed through a contradictory combination of normative and subversive discourses, in which the hegemonic power was exercised and resisted at the same time. As John Storey highlights, popular culture is a site of struggle

between the “resistance” of subordinate groups and the forces of “incorporation” operating in the interests of dominant groups. Popular culture in this usage is [...] a terrain of exchange and negotiation between the two: a terrain [...] marked by resistance and incorporation. (Storey, 2009: 10)

In other words, popular culture does not necessarily represent a site of domination; it is also the place where resistance originates and is experienced.

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<sup>5</sup> Some significant works that have analysed normative representations of young people can be found for other national contexts: on the popular media construction of young femininities in France see Weiner 2001; on the relationship between youth and popular culture in France see Briggs 2015; on the impact of popular culture in the construction of youth in Northern Europe see Schildt & Siegfried 2006.

In this thesis, *i giovani* are also considered a ‘collective identity’ (Eisenstadt & Giesen, 1995: 74-76), homogenised in popular media through the construction of ‘symbolic codes of distinction’ and of elements of demarcation between an ‘outside’ and an ‘inside’ of the community itself. In his book on the relationship between mass culture and the Italian communist party from the post-war period to the 1990s, Stephen Gundle has highlighted how 1960s’ youth was ‘the first generation in Italian history to be broadly homogenous in terms of language, tastes, and cultural reference points’ (Gundle, 2000: 108). Considering the geographical, social, and gender differentiations that permeated Italian society, it may seem unexpected that young people were so homogenous in their cultural tastes. I am arguing that the media construction of *i giovani* played a fundamental role in the process of homogenising Italian young people. As Stuart Hall has noted about the role of the media in the construction of social groups,

as social groups and classes live [...] increasingly fragmented and sectionally differentiated lives, the mass media are more and more responsible [...] for providing the images, representations and ideas around which the social totality composed of all these separate and fragmented pieces can be coherently grasped. (Hall, 1977: 340-341)

According to Hall, the media can be considered one of the vehicles through which society is perceived to be organised in different social groups, as they provide homogenous representations and fill these representations with meaning and values. In other words, media representations homogenise the members of a group, through symbols, practices and language, in order to make identities more intelligible to society as a whole.

In order to analyse the function of the media in the creation of collective identities such as young people, works on the modern social construction of national communities,

and in particular Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (2006), are particularly relevant. Representations of young people, in fact, echo many of the aspects examined by Anderson (2006: 5-7). Firstly, just like nationalism, youth is a relatively modern concept, and it is a socio-cultural construction that has become naturalised over time: a person is young as well as he/she belongs to a certain gender, nationality, and ethnicity. Secondly, similar to the nation, the community of young people can be considered 'imagined' because its coherence is secured not by the direct communication between its members, but by institutions such as the popular media, which tend to ideologically delineate those features with which individuals could identify as a group. In the period taken into exam, popular media often represented *i giovani* visually as an indistinct crowd, a 'unisonant' group singing, listening to music from a juke-box, dancing together in clubs, and adopting the same style. The notion of 'unisonance' is used by Anderson to explain how, for example, singing the national anthem together helps to create a bond between people and thus a national imagined community. Practices enacted together, such as singing and dancing, make individuals 'feel selfless' (Anderson, 2006: 145), thus encouraging the sense of belonging to a group such as *i giovani*.

Another significant aspect that equates the 'imagined community' of young people with national groups is its limitedness. Anderson has stressed the importance of the creation of an 'other' to be distinguished from in the construction of 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 2006: 7). This opposition is not necessarily violent, as has often been the case with national states; sometimes it just creates a distinction, as John Dickie points out:

The "construction" of a national identity does not necessitate the "destruction" of other identities. One of nationalism's most important effects is simply to create

distinctions between “us” and “them”. The vague “we” of the nation can overlap with the “we” projected by other ideologies: we the believers in true religion; we the party; we the real men; we the proletariat. (Dickie, 1996: 31)

Similarly, discourses pertaining to *i giovani* in popular media tended to create a distinction between *i giovani* and other groups, often by paradoxically insisting more on what *i giovani* ‘were not’ than on what they actually ‘were’. Popular media discourse also underlined how *i giovani* felt discriminated against by the adults because they were seen to be different, but at the same time it celebrated *i giovani*’s difference by defending their ‘otherness’. In their analysis of collective identities, Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt and Bernhard Giesen have highlighted how the boundaries constructed to delimit one group from another are not necessarily static, but they may vary depending on the necessity to exclude or include more people:

Any chance of crossing the boundary between inside and outside [of a collective identity] would obviously blur the distinction and weaken the control over the members of the collectivity. However, sometimes a limited crossing of the boundary is necessary – whether to oust members from the community in order to avoid internal crisis, or to adopt new members from outside. (Eisenstadt & Giesen, 1995: 78)

Likewise, although *i giovani* were constructed in opposition to other groups, this opposition changed over time: the ‘other’ could be the adults, other groups of young people, or young people from other countries. This thesis examines to what extent these changes in representation were influenced by the social and political situation of the country, as well as by the different preoccupations that Italian society projected on to the construction of *i giovani*.

When analysing the media construction of *i giovani*, this thesis also aims to identify evidence of its fictionality: scratching beneath the surface of media discourses around young people reveals the existence of an ‘ideal’ *giovane*, who was mainly male, heterosexual, middle-class, and northern. The construction of *i giovani* in Italian media, in fact, was similar to that of the French *copains* in the 1960s. According to Jonathayne Briggs, the media construction of the *copains* provided a homogenous and fictional image of French young people, which erased the social, geographical, and gender differences that were present in the community itself:

this conflation of youth categories [in the image of the *copain*] ignored the real divides that existed between young people in the early 1960s in France. Despite the seeming availability of social movement symbolized by the *copains*, the reality was that divisions still existed within France, between urban and rural experiences, between Paris and the provinces, between men and women. Despite the rhetoric of inclusion, *copains* varied widely in their lives. (Briggs, 2015: 25)

A similar ‘rhetoric of inclusion’ is evident in media representations of young people. For example, according to the popular media *i giovani* used a common language which involved foreign jargon and erased regional accents, and wore a unisex fashion, which apparently erased gender differences. Moreover, in popular media, *i giovani* were mainly described using plural nouns – indeed, I am using the term *i giovani* almost uniquely in the plural form. As this thesis will show, the homogenous construction of *i giovani* will be questioned from the early 1970s, when a fragmentation of the *giovane* identity took place in Italian popular media. Chapter four examines the potential causes of this fragmentation, by looking at the social and cultural factors that could have influenced this shift in media representations of young people.

In order to analyse the practices through which young people were represented in popular media, I consider *i giovani* as a performative identity, drawing on Judith Butler's analysis of the social construction of gender identities (1999; 2011). Similar to gender identities, which are produced through the constant reiteration of specific practices such as 'acts, gestures, enactments' (Butler, 1999: 173), *i giovani* were constructed in popular media by the reiteration of specific practices, such as language, style, music, and dances that defined and at the same time constituted them. These practices were often delineated in opposition to other social groups, and in particular to *gli adulti*, a category that was also performatively constituted in popular media to represent adults. By delineating an identity for *gli adulti*, popular media were creating an 'other' from which *i giovani* could differ. For instance, *i giovani* were characterised by a specific language, which created the effect of an unavoidable incommunicability between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*. Furthermore, *i giovani* and *gli adulti* differed in their practices: while *gli adulti* were represented through practices recalling their role in the family and their jobs, *i giovani* were mainly constructed through reference to free-time activities, such as the consumption of style and music. The relationship between style and *i giovani*, which is the main focus of this dissertation, will be discussed more in depth in the following section. Here, it is significant to briefly underline the significance of popular music in influencing the construction of the *giovane* identity. Popular music scholars have pointed out how the history of popular music often overlaps with that of youth. Roy Shuker notes that since the late 1950s, certain popular music genres such as rock and pop were specifically aimed at an audience of young people (2001: 193-194). Popular music, as youth-oriented, became one of the practices that contributed to the media construction of *i giovani*: music was in fact an activity that could be enjoyed within a group of peers without the



intervention of adults. Thanks to the profusion of records and juke boxes in bars, young people could easily meet to listen to their favourite singers without the presence of their parents. Moreover, popular media constantly circulated images of singers and of young people dancing and going to concerts. By doing so, they influenced young people's practices and behaviours, and contributed to the creation of a virtual community of *giovani* who listened and danced to the same music. In other words, popular music became a fundamental feature through which young people's collective identity was constructed. Simon Frith (1996: 122) points out how popular music 'stands for, symbolizes and offers the immediate experience of collective identity', as it creates narratives with which an individual can identify.

In being performative, the *giovane* identity was also fluid and accessible: one could 'become' *giovane* by adopting those practices that were said to be *giovani*. As a consequence, when someone abandoned those practices, he/she 'grew up'. I use this term in inverted commas because even the process of growing up can be considered performative, as specific practices – that are often gendered – define the moment at which a *giovane* abandoned his/her *giovane* identity to become an *adulto*. Pregnancy and marriage, for example, are two practices through which 'growing up' was performatively constructed. The abandoning of a *giovane* style, and of going to *giovani* places like clubs, also determined the moment at which someone stopped being *giovane*.

Asserting that the *giovane* identity was performative, however, does not mean that it was immutable. Butler underlines how

what the person "is" [...] is always relative to the constructed relations in which it is determined. As a shifting and contextual phenomenon, gender does not denote a

substantive being, but a relative point of convergence among culturally and historically specific sets of relations. (Butler, 1999: 15)

Similarly, the construction of the *giovane* identity was influenced by historical events, social relations, and cultural practices. As these changed, so did representations of young people. This thesis traces these changes: to do so, it is divided into three main chronological phases, which delineate different ways of representing *i giovani* over time. Chapter two, *Beats*, outlines the main practices through which *i giovani* were constructed during the period 1965-67, which were mainly connected to those elements that were created for young people's consumption, such as music and style. From 1967 to 1970, the increase of social conflict in Italian society represented in particular by the student and workers' movements influenced the media construction of *i giovani*: representations of the Italian *hippies*, analysed in Chapter three, merged practices of consumption with social claims such as anti-consumerism and anti-authoritarianism. Chapter four explains how, during the early 1970s, the practices constructing *i giovani*, including political participation, were 'normalised' in popular media products, and they were presented as more similar to those of *gli adulti*.

### ***1.3 Performative Giovani: Style, Transnationalism, Gender***

The themes that emerge from my analysis can be grouped under three main areas: the media construction of *i giovani* through style, bodily practices and representations of *giovani* stars; the transnational inspiration of the *giovane* style; and the representation of *giovani* masculinities and femininities. These three themes influence the structure of each subsequent chapter, with the chapters being divided into sections that examine specific aspects of the construction of *i giovani* in relation to these themes. However, there is not a

clear-cut division between these areas, as they often overlap in the popular media construction of *i giovani*.

In each chapter, the first section outlines the elements of style and bodily practices which constructed the *giovane* identity in popular media in that specific period, and contextualises this construction in the Italian political and social situation. The second section of each chapter concentrates on those aspects concerning *i giovani* as a transnational identity by analysing the influence of national, racial, and ethnic ‘others’ in the media construction of Italian *giovani*. The third section deals with the role of style and bodily practices in defining *giovani* masculinities and femininities, and it evaluates to what extent representations of the *giovane* style show the permanence of normative discourses that reinforced the power structure between genders. The three following subsections illustrate my theoretical approach to these three themes, in order to inform the reader about the approach that will be adopted throughout this analysis.

### ***1.3.1 I giovani’s style, bodily practices and stars***

Within the practices that defined *i giovani*, this thesis concentrates on those relating to bodily practices, style and their embodiment by *giovani* stars who featured in popular media products. The word ‘style’ is used here to express every aspect linked to bodily practices and bodily adornment through which *i giovani* became visible in popular media, both as a form of identification with their peers, and as a vehicle to signify opposition to *gli adulti*. Style and the body were two significant features through which *i giovani* expressed their difference from *gli adulti*; moreover, as elements that had both commercial and political connotations, they constitute useful examples through which to analyse the media construction of the *giovane* identity. The analysis of *i giovani*’s style in

the 1960s and the 1970s is particularly relevant if we think that, as Eugenia Paulicelli has pointed out, this was a period in which ‘it was very easy to deduce ideology and political orientation from the way people were dressed’ (Paulicelli, 1994: 176). Fashion, accessories, and hairstyles therefore played a crucial role in expressing the political and social engagement of young people. Moreover, in this period young people’s styles often challenged the traditional gender division of fashion, which was characterised by an ‘exaggeration of difference [of] the social practice of dress, adornment and the like’ (Connell, 1987: 81) between men and women. The choice of analysing style, then, comes from the recognition of its strong symbolic value in determining young people’s political, national and gendered identity. Moreover, style is useful in showing the commercial appropriation of subcultural and countercultural features: the youth market, in fact, was taking inspiration from the extravagant style of the mods, the beats, and the hippies, but it tended to recuperate these by erasing their cultural and political value.

Dick Hebdige (2002) has highlighted the power of style by analysing British working-class subcultures’ subversive use of fashion and hairstyle to express a challenge to hegemonic culture, and as a vehicle through which mainstream cultures appropriated and therefore controlled youth subcultures. According to Hebdige, forms of resistance through style are eventually domesticated by the media, and consequently lose their subversive power. Subcultural signs can be converted into mainstream objects, so that original innovations are codified and used for commercial and normative purposes. This appropriation works through the mass production of objects, which turns the subversive wearing into a commercial trend. Moreover, deviant behaviours are labelled and then re-defined by dominant groups, who create a domesticated version of subcultural styles. An article on a ‘punk marriage’ with pictures, for example, can recuperate a subversive style

through references to a ritual which is understandable to the reader (Hebdige, 2002: 94). Hebdige's analysis can be applied to this study, as *giovani* popular media contributed to the promotion of a specific *giovane* fashion and style and, in doing so, they participated in the commercial incorporation of subversive fashion elements taken from various Western subcultures and countercultures.

My approach to the analysis of style is also inspired by Roland Barthes' semiological analysis of 'fashion through the written word' (Barthes, 2010: X), or the description of fashion in magazines. In *The Fashion System*, Barthes maintains that fashion is created when a piece of clothing becomes language, as in discourses around style, and therefore when it is given a meaning. Not only does language give a signification to the actual garment (by which, for example, a dress becomes an evening garment, or a skirt becomes a female prerogative), but it also carries hegemonic values that are naturalised through fashion. In other words, according to Barthes, a semiological analysis of the language used to describe fashion can show how the fashion system has a normative side. Barthes' methodology will be used to understand to what extent popular media masked the subversive meaning of specific style trends. Moreover, this thesis shows how, by representing and describing mass-produced trends, popular media contributed to perpetuating hegemonic values such as the respectability of *giovani* women and the virility of *giovani* men.

A second element of the analysis of style is the representation of young people's bodies and the spaces that they occupied in Italian post-war popular media products. Michel Foucault (1995; 1978) has demonstrated that the body can be examined as a site of struggle, where discursive and institutional forces create, exercise and resist power, for example by creating forms of deviations which naturalise acceptable bodily practices. By

showing images of *i giovani* dancing and interacting with young people and adults, popular media offer a privileged point of view from which to analyse bodily representations of young people, and their significance in determining *i giovani*'s generational, national, and gender identity. The generational difference of *i giovani* from *gli adulti* was expressed not only through a different style, but also through the representation of the social, romantic and sexual relationships between young people. An examination of music performances and dances shows the acceptance of, but also the resistances to, on-going changes in young people's social and sexual behaviours, for example through the definition of the movements considered to be 'appropriate' for them. Moreover, the physical space reserved for young people and their practices in television programmes and films reveal to what extent young people could express their identity in private and public spaces. The representation of a difference in bodily practices between Italian and foreign young people also informs us about the construction of 'otherness' as expressed through *i giovani*'s bodies. This construction concerns not only ethnicity, but also nationality, as often it seeks to reaffirm an ideal of superior Italian-ness, reminiscent of fascist ideals. Finally, the analysis of representations of young people's bodies in popular media is particularly telling with regard to the definition of *giovani* gender identities. Not only did bodies express changes in gender identities, but they also portrayed the permanence of discriminatory discourses. For example, my analysis of the representation of young women's bodies explores the extent to which the body was a site of sexual emancipation or a source of objectification for young women.

To analyse *giovani* bodies, this thesis adopts an intersectional approach, in which it outlines the intersections of generational, gender, sexuality, race, and nationality issues in the construction of *i giovani*. The concept of intersectionality has been developed by

feminist theorist Patricia Hill Collins, who, in her analysis of black feminism, explains how analyses of identities need to take into account the connections between different identity features:

Intersectionality refers to particular forms of intersecting oppressions, for example, intersections of race and gender, or of sexuality and nation. Intersectional paradigms remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice. (Collins, 2002: 18)

For example, in Collin's analysis, the intersection of gender and ethnicity work together to construct patterns of injustice for black women. This thesis identifies the discriminations playing out through the definition of *giovani* style and bodies in order to question the assumption that *i giovani* were a homogenous group, and to highlight the discriminatory discourses on class, race, gender and sexuality that were being perpetuated in representations of young people.

The *giovane* style was not only defined in magazines through written words or fashion spreads; it was also promoted through representations of specifically *giovani* stars, who performed their *giovane* identity in films, magazines, and television shows. During the 1960s, many young music stars came to be characterised by being, performing, and behaving as *i giovani*. The celebrity status of *giovani* stars was not limited to their success in the music industry: they were also television hosts and cinema actors, meaning that their celebrity status was reinforced and reproduced by all *giovani* media products. Just like other *giovani*, *giovani* stars were not necessarily defined by their young age, but by the practices they performed in popular media.

The specificities of these singers echo Hall and Whannel's 1964 description of the British pop singer:

He is usually a teenager, springing from the familiar adolescent world, and sharing a whole set of common feelings with his audience. But once he is successful, he is transformed into a commercial entertainer by the pop-music business. Yet in style, presentation and the material he performs, he must maintain involvement with the teenage world, or he will lose his popularity. The record companies see him as a means of marketing their products – he is a living, animated, commercial image. The audience will buy his records if they like his performances, and thus satisfy the provider's need to keep sales high: but they will also regard the pop singer as a kind of model, an idealized image of success, a glamorized version of themselves. (Hall & Whannel, 1964: 276)

Like the 'pop singer', Italian *giovani* stars were characterised by their humble, 'common' origins, and by maintaining a friendly behaviour towards their peers, despite their fame. Unlike other stars, then, *giovani* stars were 'non più "divi", icone lontane e inavvicinabili, ma compagni di viaggio, espressione del nuovo e agenti di mediazione nel passaggio dal passato al futuro' (Piredda, 2013: 268). If, as Edgar Morin points out, one of the most important features of the cinema star is to condense in his/her star persona elements of both ordinariness and extraordinariness (Morin, 1961), then the *giovane* star was presented as ordinary, because part of its construction functioned to reinforce the idea of *giovani* as a community of homogenous individuals.

Extraordinariness in *giovani* stars was given by the fact that, just like other celebrities, they functioned as role models for their audience: they promoted the identification, or, as Edgar Morin defines it, the 'mimetism' of the audience with the star (1961: 166). The style of many Italian *giovani* stars, for example, was widely imitated by their young audience. Some singers started to be identified by style features, which



became their trademark and inspired their nickname: for instance, Caterina Caselli's hairstyle, invented by the Vergottini hairdressers in Rome, inspired her nickname, *Casco d'Oro*, and was immediately replicated by many of Caselli's female fans (RAI, n.d.). In this study, particular attention will be given to the strategies through which *giovani* stars presented and promoted the *giovane* style: through their own style, which was clearly different from that of *adulti* film and television stars, *giovani* stars seemed to declare their difference from *gli adulti* in general, and from their social rules. The style used by *giovani* stars can be defined as a 'panoply', an armour of adolescence, or 'a wardrobe in which is expressed a whole attitude towards society: blue jeans, heavy sweaters, leather jacket, no tie, unbuttoned shirt, deliberate sloppiness are so many ostensible signs (having the value of political badges) of a resistance against the social conventions of a world of adults' (Morin, 1961: 124-125). This term, used by Edgar Morin to describe James Dean's style, highlights the relevance of style in characterising *giovani* stars and in opposing them to *gli adulti*.

The different and often provocative style of *giovani* stars was mainly controlled by the music industry, and it therefore functioned to promote specific trends. Stars can be considered as living advertisements for commercial products, as their audience want to imitate them: this is why they are commonly used in advertising. Morin highlights how '[the star] invites us to use her cigarettes, her favourite dentifrice, i.e., to identify ourselves with her. [...] The consumer appropriates, consumes, and assimilates into his own personality a little of the star's body and soul' (1961: 169). This influence of stars, according to Richard Dyer, is encouraged by the easiness of their imitation, which is itself granted by the commercial production of specific trends: '[stars] may spend more than the average person, but none the less they can be, on a smaller scale, imitated. Their fashions

are to be copied, their fads followed, their sports pursued, their hobbies taken up' (2004: 39). The stars' individuality becomes reproducible and sellable; and the stars actively promote the merchandising inspired by them.

However, the 'mimetism' of the audience with the star did not only concern the products used and suggested by the stars. The model promoted by stars also influenced standards of beauty and attractiveness, behaviours and lifestyles, gender roles and values. Both Morin and Dyer have analysed the role of stars in shaping not only commercial taste and desire, but also in producing normative identities: as Richard Dyer notes, 'the star phenomenon reproduces the overriding ideology of the person in contemporary society' (Dyer, 2004: 12). The star is in fact an ideological construct: *giovani* stars' performance of their *giovane* identity on screen influenced the way in which young people imagined, and performed, themselves and their generational identity. Dyer has also pointed out how stars represent ways of 'making sense of the body' (ibid.): through their style, their interactions with other people, and their performances, they naturalise ideas about gender, sexuality and race, by reproducing acceptable behaviours and values. Moreover, the *giovani* singers' influence was not limited to their mere performances, but included also their 'private' life, or the magazines' narration of their private lives. As Richard Dyer points out,

a film star's image is not just his or her films, but the promotion of those films and of the star through pin-ups, public appearances [...] as well as interviews, biographies and coverage in the press of the stars' doings and "private" life. Further, a star's image is also what people say or write about him or her, as critics or commentators, the way the image is used in other contexts such as advertisements. (Dyer, 2004: 2-3)

The presence of different levels of ‘intimacy’ in a star persona is what allows a contradictory construction of the star: it is by playing with a stars’ on-stage and off-stage persona, his/her ‘true’ versus ‘artificial’ self, that a star can embody multiple meanings at one time. This study examines these ambiguities to explain how *giovani* stars were constructed in the popular media as simultaneously subversive and normative, and therefore both appealing to a young audience and acceptable to the adult audience.

### **1.3.2 Transnational Giovani**

The construction of *i giovani* as a collective but restricted community concerned not only the internal opposition between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*, but also the relationship between *i giovani* and foreign young people, who were a fundamental source of inspiration for Italian youth cultures. In the popular media, one of the prominent aspects of the construction of *i giovani* was its dependence on other Western youth cultures. Most of the trends that started to emerge in Italy during the 1960s were represented in popular media as being inspired by foreign groups, such as the Carnaby Street-style beats and the Californian hippies. Indeed, most of the practices that defined *i giovani*, such as the music young people listened to, the fashion they adopted, and the stars that *i giovani* imitated and idolised, were imported from abroad. Moreover, the language used to describe the *giovanne* style drew on foreign languages, and especially English: as Franco Minganti points out, the ‘cultural deparochialization’ of Italian society embodied by *i giovani* in popular media was symbolised by the use of ‘forestierismi’ and distinctive jargon (Minganti, 1999: 150).

Foreign inspiration within Italian popular culture, however, was not new, nor was it limited to young people. Stephen Gundle (1996: 312) and David Forgacs (1993) have

demonstrated that the influence of Western countries – and especially the United States – on Italian popular culture was present during the inter-war period, when Hollywood films started to be imported into Europe, including Italy, on a massive scale. The process of appropriating foreign trends in the *giovane* identity during the 1960s and 1970s followed a similar path: imports of American and British trends were constant in the popular media construction of *i giovani*. However, the models to which *i giovani* inspired were not only provided by the Hollywood cinema industry, but also by those politically and socially engaged youth countercultures such as the beats and the hippies that, by adopting a distinctive style and demonstrating their difference towards adults, were starting to be represented in media across the world (Portelli, 1998: 35). Despite the apparent erasure of national boundaries in the community of *i giovani*, distinctions were made between foreign and Italian young people, and they functioned to create a normative Italian *giovane* identity by foreignising and ‘othering’ those subcultural aspects that were deemed threatening to the social and sexual ‘respectability’ of young Italians.

In order to analyse the extent to which Western influences shaped *i giovani*, David Forgacs proposes several points pertinent to the analysis of American influences in Italian culture. Firstly, Forgacs underlines that it is essential to take into consideration not only the reality of the relationship between the two countries, but also the ways in which the ‘other’ country was imagined and represented (Forgacs, 1993: 162). Secondly, one should situate the foreign influence in a specific historical, geographical, class, and generational context to better understand the extent to which the foreign culture was appropriated by different sections of the Italian population (*ibid.*). Thirdly, Forgacs claims that one should ‘distinguish between Americanisation and an Italian modernisation process; between American models in themselves and the reinvention and reworking of those models in

Italy' (Forgacs, 1993: 165). As Forgacs suggests in fact, often 'the naming of things as American was a way of attributing to and displacing onto an external agent changes which from another point of view one could see as endogenous, generated from within Italian society' (Forgacs, 1993: 159). Lastly, and most importantly to this discussion, Forgacs emphasizes the importance of 'pay[ing] attention to the contradictory perceptions and descriptions of Americanisation, the overlaying of positive and negative judgements, sometimes in the same subjects' (Forgacs, 1993: 166).

The four points raised by Forgacs inform my analysis of the appropriation of foreign elements in the *giovane* identity. In most cases, popular media representations of foreign youth were based on stereotypes. At times, the foreign ideal was positive, as the provincialism of Italian society was said to prevent the modernity and freedom enjoyed by foreign young people. Yet, negative stereotypes such as the sexual freedom of Northern European young women, or the drug addiction of American hippies, were used to affirm the moral superiority of Italian young people. References to foreign trends in the *giovane* style were in fact used as a way of transferring anxieties to 'other' countries and 'other' subjects; the distinction often made in *giovani* media between Italian *giovani* and foreign young people reproduced a normative Italian *giovane* identity that was still respectable. Respectability is meant here as the bourgeois set of "decent and correct" manners and morals' (Mosse, 1985: 1), especially as regards sexuality, whose history in relation to nationalism has been notably traced by George Mosse. Similarly, being respectable *giovani* in Italian society meant limiting extravagance to clothes, dances, and language, and avoiding active sexuality, a troubling gender identity, drug use, and political activity. Journalists, singers, presenters, and actors featuring *giovani* popular media products acted as invisible cultural translators of the 'foreign' for the Italian audience, therefore

influencing the audience's reception of foreign trends and contributing to the media construction of foreign young people and Italian *giovani*. *Giovani* media domesticated the foreign 'other' by either 'mirroring' or 'othering' trends, attitudes, practices, and language (Venuti, 2008).<sup>6</sup> The media therefore facilitated the appropriation of several aspects attributed to foreign youth into the Italian *giovane* identity, whilst simultaneously highlighting the 'otherness' of those aspects that were not compatible with the definition of respectable Italian *giovani*.

Moreover, the availability of foreign (or foreign-inspired) goods in Italy, the circulation of news about Western countries, and the contact with 'the foreign' that young people could experience through the popular media needs to be taken into consideration when analysing media representations of foreign young people. In this sense, the popular media played a significant role in making foreign trends available to social and geographical strata as diverse as the urban middle class, the southern young people who were migrating to industrialised northern cities, and those who were still living in the rural south. However, as Forgacs suggests, one should make a distinction between what was actually 'foreign' and what was a reflection of the modernisation of Italian society, but still labelled as 'foreign'. Both Forgacs (1993: 160) and Franco Minganti (1999) underline how the reception of foreign influences in post-war Italy was far from passive, but was rather an active process of appropriation. In reference to the diffusion of Italian covers of English songs, Minganti points out that the process of appropriation of foreign trends often reveals more about those who imitate, and about the selection processes put in place during the appropriation, than about the actual foreign cultures (1999: 149). Italian appropriation of foreign trends can also be seen as a form of creolization: 'a metaphor for

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<sup>6</sup> The concepts of 'mirroring' and 'othering' foreign youth cultures in the construction of the *giovane* identity will be further examined in section 2.2.

the transformations that languages and cultures undergo when, far from their original heritage, they turn into new, recombinant formations among groups of diverse geographical and cultural origins' (Minganti, 1999: 149). Similarly, the fashion, language, and star system connected to *i giovani* were imbued with references to a foreign 'other', where often the references to actual foreign influences got lost in translation. The potential of foreign appropriation, then, did not only constitute the imposition of a normative identity on Italian young people, and an act of cultural imperialism, but it was also a source of emancipation for Italian youth, which helped to create a distinctive Italian popular youth culture.

### ***1.3.3 Giovani Masculinities and Femininities***

In her seminal article about gender and history, historian Joan W. Scott highlights the relevance of representations of gender identities in tracing the history of social relationships. Historians, she argues, need to pay

attention to symbolic systems, that is, to the ways societies represent gender, use it to articulate the rules of social relationships, or construct the meaning of experience. Without meaning, there is no experience; without processes of signification, there is no meaning (which is not to say that language is everything, but a theory that does not take it into account misses the powerful roles that symbols, metaphors, and concepts play in the definition of human personality and human history). (Scott, 1986: 1063)

According to Scott, the analysis of the process of social connotation of gender identities is useful to understand the shifting structure of power between genders and the historical reformulation of gender identities. In my case, the specific language used to describe

*giovani* men and women, and the images of *giovani* femininities and masculinities, reveal an interesting combination of emancipatory discourses from traditional gender roles and, at the same time, the permanence of normative discourses.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the modernisation of family and social relationships, and the impact of feminist and gay liberation movements on civil society brought about changes in traditional gender roles. Jo B. Paoletti observes that what has been conventionally defined as the ‘sexual revolution’ of the 1960s was mainly a ‘gender revolution’, and the reason why it was called ‘sexual’ was because the word gender had not yet entered the academic and journalistic vocabulary (Paoletti, 2015: 21). According to Luisa Passerini (1996: 144) the relationship between women and men, and femininities and masculinities, underwent a process of great change in post-war Italy. This process culminated in the 1970s, with the emergence of the Italian feminist movements and their impact on the debate around a series of laws passed by the Italian government in the subsequent period.<sup>7</sup> These laws granted more freedom for women both in their social role and in questions concerning their own bodies.<sup>8</sup> The ‘gender revolution’ was also accompanied by a ‘sexual revolution’, which for young people consisted of the acceptance of premarital sexual experiences, the right to an appropriate sexual education, and unrestricted access to contraceptive methods.<sup>9</sup>

From the early 1960s, *il giovane* became the canvas onto which the tensions arising from changes in gender identities and sexual emancipation were projected in popular media. Magazines published letters and reported on demonstrations of young people asking for sexual education, while magazines, television programmes, and films

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<sup>7</sup> Amongst which were the divorce referendum of 1974, the reform of family rights of 1975, the 1978 law for the decriminalization of abortion, confirmed with a referendum in 1981.

<sup>8</sup> On the specificities of Italian feminism, see: Parati & West, 2002; Miceli Jeffries, 1994.

<sup>9</sup> The contraceptive pill was legalised in Italy in 1976.



also displayed the on-going changes in masculinities and femininities, especially in discourses around style. The watchword used to describe the *giovane* style in the 1960s and the early 1970s was ‘unisex’. Paoletti points out how, in the United States in her case, during the 1960s and 1970s, the term ‘unisex’ came to define different trends, which did not necessarily imply a gender neutralization. Unisex clothes were also those in which male and female fashions were combined, or where garments traditionally worn by the opposite sex were appropriated:

Unisex includes many different ways of challenging gender rules. Some styles are best described as “androgynous”, or combining elements of masculine and feminine styling (a longhaired girl in a miniskirt, button-down shirt, and tie). The opposite approach to androgynous design is a neutral style, devoid of masculine or feminine elements (a turtleneck sweater, jogging suits). The third approach to unisex dressing is best termed “cross-dressing”. (Paoletti, 2015: 30)

Similarly, the Italian *giovane* style in the 1960s tended to challenge the traditional boundaries between masculine and feminine appearance. *Giovani* men adopted long hairstyles, while *giovani* women wore trousers, cut their hair short, and wore the miniskirt, which threatened their sexual ‘respectability’.

By adopting a style that challenged traditional notions of gender, *i giovani* were disrupting that ‘metaphysical unity’ of sex, gender, and desire that Judith Butler identifies as the basis of the social construction of ‘women’ and ‘men’ (Butler, 1999: 30). According to Butler, it is through the fictional unity between sex, gender, and heterosexual desire that the binary of gender roles becomes naturalised. The unisex style was seen as a threat on two main levels: firstly, the ‘effemination’ of men and the ‘masculinization’ of women increased anxieties about homosexuality. Secondly, the

growing sexual emancipation of young women, which was often connected to the adoption of garments which showed increasing portions of women's skin, was seen to pose a problem for young women's 'respectability', and was seen to question the power structure between the sexes. However, unisex fashion did not necessarily represent an equal practice. As Paoletti points out:

The rules of masculinity rarely permit cross-dressing, and even in that defiant time doing so was limited to details, not entire outfits. Women, on the other hand, could not only wear "man-tailored" clothing and "boyfriend sweaters" but could also wear actual men's clothing, as was the case with young women who bought their jeans in the boys' department. (Paoletti, 2015: 30)

Paoletti explains how the female appropriation of garments traditionally associated with men's fashion was more accepted than the male appropriation of 'feminine' style features, and male cross-dressing was limited to details. Similarly, the media representation of Italian young people was far from being 'unisex': it was instead based on a differentiation between genders, and on a general maintenance of a differential between men and women that sustained patriarchal power.

Many works on youth cultures and representations of young people in the 1960s have underlined how the label 'young' often implicitly referred to a predominantly male experience. Susan Weiner (2001: 17-19), analysing representations of young women in post-war French literature and cinema, has underlined how 'youth' in France was primarily constructed as male and masculine. The construction of young femininities was instead more influenced by social expectations, as for young women 'there [wa]s no viable position outside the codes that determine[d] the "good girl", that one c[ould not] escape heterosexuality, the family, and marriage' (Weiner, 2001: 17). In France, young

women were represented in literature and film as ahistorical and apolitical, which differed from the characterisation of their male peers as having political views and participating in the political history of 1968 in France.<sup>10</sup> The same can be said of Italian *giovani*: for example, John Foot has underlined how in historical accounts of Italian student and worker movements women are completely invisible, despite their actual participation even before the emergence of Italian feminist movements (2011: 126). Interestingly, however, young women were extensively present in popular media products aimed at an audience of young people: in particular, many *giovani* female stars featured in magazines, films, and television programmes. Looking at popular media representations, then, can aid investigation of the construction of *giovani* femininities, and to understand to what extent popular media contained or promoted images of ‘masculinised’ and sexually active young women. As Angela McRobbie has demonstrated in her discussion of young British women in the 1950s, consumerist culture can become a vehicle to resist traditional norms and to fight ‘the monolithic heterosexual norms which surround [young women] and find expression in the ideology of romantic love’ (1991: 26-27). Similarly, through popular media Italian young women started to become familiar with troubling femininities that challenged standards of female respectability, such as Rita Pavone’s, Caterina Caselli’s and Patty Pravo’s. At the same time, however, strategies were used in popular media to contain the subversive potential of these representations, and to reaffirm the naturalised image of the ‘good girl’.

The idea of *giovani* men as merely ‘political’ during the 1960s and 1970s is also limiting, as it ignores two on-going processes that were generating a ‘crisis’ in traditional

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<sup>10</sup> This is particularly visible in the film *Masculin Féminin* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1966) that emphasises the difference between young men and young women in mid-1960s France. The film clearly represents young men as political and engaged, while young women are represented as commercial and disengaged. For a further analysis of this film, see Weiner, 2001: 187-196.

masculinities: the appropriation of traditionally feminine features in men's fashion, and the new role of men as consumers. The appropriation of female features in male *giovane* fashion represented a significant change in the modern history of style and fashion; as Alessandra Castellani has pointed out, it was only in the 1960s that men's fashion changed, after its bourgeois standardisation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (2010: 4-6). The nineteenth century was also the period in which the link between effeminacy and homosexuality started to become naturalised. According to Alan Sinfield, who analyses the trials involving Oscar Wilde to trace the discursive history of this connection, it was only 'in the mid-twentieth century [that] effeminacy and queerness became virtually synonymous' (1994: VII). Robyn R. Warhol points out how effeminacy is a behaviour that has been used to discriminate against both women and homosexuals:

effeminacy [...] denotes both "qualities more often associated with women than men" and "weakness and excessive refinement". Indeed, women are seldom called effeminate, probably because the culture still takes it for granted that women are already characterized by "weakness and excessive refinement" [...]. Men whose gender performance includes details coded as feminine [...] are called "effeminate" [...]. Implicit in the label of "effeminacy" is the sexual position "more often associated with women than men", the sexual role of the one who is penetrated – hence the widespread association in Western culture [...] of "effeminacy" with male homosexuality. (Warhol, 2003: 9-10)

Warhol explains how the concept of effeminacy is generally associated with weakness and passivity, two behaviours that are stereotypically associated with femininities. The naturalisation of this connection shows how the concept of 'effeminacy' is inherently misogynistic and homophobic, as it tends to naturalise the subordinate position of women

and non-hegemonic masculinities. Michael S. Kimmel and Amy Aronson also note that ‘the label of effeminacy has had less to do with censuring any one particular sexual act than with ensuring the continuation of power structures based on the maintenance of clearly demarcated male and female social roles’ (2004: 247). Effectively, the derogatory use of effeminacy, and its naturalised connection to homosexuality, maintains a distinction, and therefore preserves a hierarchy of power, between gender-based identities. The adoption of features traditionally associated with female attractiveness such as long hair and floral and colourful patterns in the *giovane* style thus created social anxieties about the potential homosexuality of *i giovani* and, consequently, troubled the power structure between genders.

As Sandro Bellassai (2003) has pointed out, the emergence of mass culture and the crisis of the rural patriarchal world also created a ‘crisis’ in the conceptualisation of Italian masculinities, and preoccupations towards young men’s homosexuality.<sup>11</sup> The association between masculinity and consumption challenged the naturalised division of labour between men, earning money, and women, consuming for the household.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, during the 1960s, representations tended to connect the act of consumption to the reaffirmation of Italian men’s virility. In constructing masculinities, strategies were used to constantly reaffirm ‘compulsory heterosexuality’, to use Adrienne Rich’s terminology (1980), and male domination over women in order to dispel anxieties towards male homosexuality and reaffirm the virility of the consuming man.<sup>13</sup>

My analysis of discourses around the *giovane* style shows how media representations of gender identities cannot be reduced to the equation

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<sup>11</sup> The same point has been made by Christopher E. Forth (2008) in relation to the United States.

<sup>12</sup> On the social construction of this division in the Western world, see De Grazia & Furlough, 1996.

<sup>13</sup> More on the history of the concept of Italian virility and its ‘crisis’ during the 1960s can be found in Bellassai (2011).

femininities/commercial and masculinities/political. Instead, I aim to demonstrate how, behind the image of ‘unisex’ *giovani* during the 1960s, examples of alternative femininities and masculinities started to appear in popular media products. Discourses around troubling gender identities, however, attest the permanence of discriminations based on gender, sex, and sexuality.

#### ***1.4 Sources: Giovani Popular Media Products***

The main focus of this analysis concerns representations of young people’s style and bodily practices; as a result, visual media such as television programmes and films have been privileged. Magazines have also been taken into consideration, as they offer not only images of *i giovani*, but also written descriptions of their style. Media forms such as songs have been considered only peripherally, in that they have been considered only when their lyrics concerned young people and their style. Other media, despite their importance in the construction of Italian *giovani*, have not been examined. For example, although radio programmes such as *Bandiera Gialla* and *Per Voi Giovani* were fundamental in the media construction of Italian youth during the 1960s, they do not offer the visual support that this analysis necessitates. A *trait d’union* between all these *giovani* media, as they will be named throughout this thesis, is their musical inspiration: magazines featured descriptions of the on- and off-stage lives of singers, the television programmes were mainly musical programmes, and the film genre that has been analysed, the *Musicarello*, was a commercial product whose main aim was to promote singers and their songs (Della Casa & Manera, 2011: 11). In all these media forms, then, one can observe the ‘physicality of music’ (Lury, 2001: 49): they show singers and young people performing, dancing, and interacting with other young people or with adults. However, one must take into account

the specificities of these three media forms, in order to evaluate their normative or subversive potential when it comes to representations of young people. In the forthcoming paragraphs, I will present the three media products that I focus on, and the possibilities and limits that a researcher should bear in mind when analysing them.

To understand the context in which *giovani* television programmes were broadcast, one must look at the political function of Italian national television (RAI) during the 1960s and the 1970s. The appointment of Ettore Bernabei, Amintore Fanfani's<sup>14</sup> 'uomo di fiducia' (Guazzaloca, 2011: 141), as RAI general director from 1961 to 1975 strengthened the political power over national television. RAI programmes were strictly controlled, and representations of bodies and sexuality were censored, according to the Catholic and conservative ideals of the *Democrazia Cristiana*, the party in power. As programmes were strictly supervised, so were representations of identities, including those of young people. According to Mauro Morbidelli, during the 1960s RAI did not have a strong impact on the young audience: while there were programmes for children,

se si esclude la pubblicità, nel corso degli anni Sessanta il media televisivo [...] esercita uno scarso ruolo di stimolo alla formazione di una autonoma cultura giovanile e con il passare degli anni diventa per i giovani sempre più chiaramente un simbolo negativo, espressione [...] dell'arretratezza culturale del vecchio e asfittico "mondo dei Matusa". (Morbidelli, 1998: 181)

Morbidelli also points out how television could not be easily consumed by young people without the presence of adults, and therefore RAI was not too interested in this segment of the audience. In the early 1960s, however, television represented young people, and as highlighted earlier in this chapter, it tended to present youth as either a danger – by

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<sup>14</sup> Amintore Fanfani was a prominent member of the *Democrazia Cristiana* and Italian Prime Minister for several legislatures.

showing episodes of delinquency regarding young people – or as fun – through entertainment programmes. Morbidelli explains how a ‘strategia aziendale’ was used in television programmes to recuperate young people and give a reassuring image of them:

La televisione mostra una gioventù disimpegnata e superficiale, limitandosi ad esaltarne gli aspetti ludici più tipici del giovanilismo che proprio in quegli anni conosceva una grande diffusione: le nuove mode canore, provenienti inizialmente dalla Francia, i balli importati dall’America che ogni anno si rinnovano, il successo degli urlatori e dei primi rockers, diventano così occasione per nuove trasmissioni e per un parziale ricambio di programmi e conduttori. (Morbidelli, 1998: 182-183)

Morbidelli concludes by saying that this strategy was abandoned in the two-year period 1965-66, when, as a consequence of the emergence of Italian *beats* and *capelloni*, youth started again to be seen as a danger: ‘il giovane esprime disagio, malessere e la televisione ne prende atto, collocando l’argomento nell’ambito serio e adulto delle inchieste giornalistiche. Dalla spettacolarizzazione dei giovani si passa alla preoccupazione per atti e atteggiamenti che non si comprendono’ (ibid.: 185). Although the idea of a ‘strategia aziendale’ well explains the approach taken by Italian television to represent *i giovani* – *giovani* television programmes were almost uniquely entertainment programmes, where representations of sexuality and political activism were seemingly absent – Morbidelli is wrong in claiming that, from 1965 onwards, young people only appeared in journalistic accounts. It is actually from 1965 that entertainment television programmes aimed at an audience of young people started to be broadcast by Italian television. These programmes exclusively interpellated young people as their audience, and they were characterised by the presence of *giovani* stars and (usually) of a *giovane* studio audience who often



actively participated in the programme itself. Entertainment programmes such as *Stasera Rita* (Falqui, 1965), *Diamoci del Tu* (Siena, 1967), *Speciale per Voi* (Ragionieri, 1969; Siena, 1970), and *Tutto è Pop* (Moretti, 1972) clearly show the continuation of RAI's 'strategia aziendale', and the increasing interest of national television in young people as a desired audience. In these shows, the protesting attitude of *i giovani* was recuperated, and the generational conflict was debated from the point of view of young people.

As far as magazines and films were concerned, the influence over representations was more overtly commercial than political: the main aim of these media products was in fact to promote products such as music, fashion, films, and magazines themselves. The films that I consider in this thesis are those that are broadly categorised under the label *Musicarello*.<sup>15</sup> This genre, which can be compared to the British trend of musical films such as the Beatles' *A Hard Days' Night* (1964) and *Help!* (Lester, 1965), was the first Italian media product aimed at an audience of young people. It developed at the end of the 1950s, when it aimed to 'dare un volto ai beniamini della radio' (Capussotti, 2004: 247), thus representing *giovani* stars when they were not yet featured in television programmes. As a consequence, early *Musicarelli* were often very critical of RAI and of the fact that national television completely excluded *i giovani*. This is also why, according to Capussotti, the *Musicarello* genre did not last long: as soon as *giovani* stars were fully accepted into the Italian television star system, the *Musicarelli* slowly stopped being produced.

Daniele Magni explains that there are three main phases in the evolution of the *Musicarello* genre: the first is that of 'degli urlatori', whose most representative films are *I Ragazzi del Juke Box* (Fulci, 1959) and *Urlatori alla Sbarra* (Fulci, 1960). Here,

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<sup>15</sup> On the *Musicarelli*, see: Arcagni, 2006; Buzzi, 2013; Della Casa & Manera, 2011; Magni, 2012.

although *giovani* stars such as Adriano Celentano and Mina were present, the plots were always centred on a group of *giovani* that had to protect *giovane* music against institutions such as national television or the recording industry (Magni 2012: 32). The second phase is that from 1964 to 1967, which is also the most prolific phase. In this period, *Musicarelli* increasingly featured *giovani* stars, including Gianni Morandi, Caterina Caselli, and Rita Pavone. These stars often played the role of young singers looking for success, in this way influencing the identification of the audience with the character in the film. In these *Musicarelli*, moreover, the plot was often centred on a love story, usually obstructed by a generational struggle going on in the family. The third phase, going from 1967 to the early 1970s, is that in which the *Musicarelli* start to suffer a crisis, partly because of the increasing presence of *giovani* stars in television, and partly because, as Magni suggests, ‘il *Musicarello* rimane aggrappato alle sue storielline d’amore [...] segnando così lo scollamento dal mondo giovanile che lo porterà all’estinzione’ (Magni 2012: 42). According to Magni, the *Musicarello* genre did not evolve to follow new themes that increasingly featured within youth cultures, such as protest, and therefore they became obsolete for the audience for whom they were produced. In this thesis, particular focus on *Musicarelli* films is given in Chapter two, given the popularity of this media form in the period 1965-67, while the two following chapters do not feature many references to such films.

*Musicarelli* films had a deliberate commercial aim: according to Della Casa and Manera, the name *Musicarello* clearly recalls the *Caroselli*<sup>16</sup> of Italian television of the period (2011: 11). The films were part of a promotional circuit film-singer-song, for which every element of the circuit promoted the other two. The commercial aim of these

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<sup>16</sup> The *Caroselli* were short films, songs, comic sketches used to advertise products which were broadcast in the famous Italian television show *Carosello*, aired from 1957 to 1977.

films is also the element that is mostly emphasized by cinema critics: as far as the predominance of musical performances and the weakness of the plots are concerned, these films are criticised as lacking of any cultural interest. For example, Daniele Magni defines these films as a ‘roba sdolcinata e ipercolorata, a base di canzoncine e amorzzi’ (Magni, 2012: 21). Not only are the terms used by Magni to describe these films extremely dismissive, but Magni also insists that the sole presence of songs and love stories in their plots negates the academic relevance of these films. Magni’s interpretation, however, overlooks the significance of these films in representing Italian youth, as they testify well to the normative construction of *i giovani* in popular media. In *Musicarelli* films, it is possible to see the strategies through which the generational struggle was domesticated in popular media: the generational struggle was often translated into a musical struggle, in which the young people and adults fought over the affirmation of ‘their’ musical genre over the opposite. This recurrent plot device represents a recuperation of the generational debates that were taking place outside the silver screen. Furthermore, the *Musicarelli* always ended with a resolution of the struggle, and a reconciliation between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*. As Della Casa and Manera have highlighted, these films suggested a social reconciliation between generations: ‘è proprio attraverso il cinema che si produce una sorta di “normalizzazione” e “conciliazione”, una sorta di sintesi temporanea di vecchio e nuovo, di estero e nazionale’ (2011: 15).

Television programmes and films, then, are significant sources for analysing the recuperation and spectacularisation of youth cultures as, in these media products, the entertaining features of *i giovani* prevail over their subversive representations. This is probably because, although films and television shows were mainly addressed to an audience of young people, their mode of consumption suggests that they were also

directed at a wider audience: both media products were in fact available only in regulated social contexts, such as the household and the cinema, where the interaction between different age groups was unavoidable. Moreover, given the limited availability of television programmes (in 1961, the *Secondo Canale* was created, but up to 1975 the choice of television programmes was limited to two channels) and, in some areas of the country, of the unavailability of cinemas and films, these media products were created with a target in mind, but without forgetting that a wider audience should have access to these programmes and films. This is why, in these two media products, representations of young people tend to be entertaining, or to depict the resolution of the generational conflict: a secondary aim was to reassure the adults about the emergence of this new social subject.

A different case needs to be made about *giovani* magazines, which, given the wide availability of print media and the possibility of individual consumption, were uniquely aimed at young people. In this thesis, three magazines have been analysed: *Ciao Amici*, *BIG: il Settimanale Giovane*, and *Giovani*.<sup>17</sup> These three magazines can be considered the first three Italian *giovani* magazines, or the first ones to be directly aimed at an audience of young people. *Ciao Amici* was first published in 1963;<sup>18</sup> after the success of this publication, *BIG: Il Settimanale Giovane* started to be published in June 1965. The magazine *Marie Claire* changed its name to *Giovani* in 1966, officially becoming a *giovane* magazine. These *giovani* magazines mainly profiled music and music stars; however, they also featured reports on fashion trends, society, and news from foreign countries, especially the United Kingdom, France, and the United States. Another

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<sup>17</sup> Concerning these magazines in particular, see Giachetti, 2002b and Grispigni, 1998.

<sup>18</sup> The magazine was itself inspired by the French teen magazine *Salut Les Copains*, as the title suggests, first published in 1962.

important aspect of these magazines is that they promoted virtual and physical encounters between young people, by putting young individuals in communication with their peers. Not only did they publish readers' letters, which could be answered by other readers in the following issues, they also organised concerts, where readers could meet and exchange views on their favourite singers or their experiences as young people with their peers. In 1967, the magazines *Ciao Amici* and *BIG* merged into the magazine *Ciao Big*, which was renamed *Ciao Duemilauno* in January 1968 and continued to be published up to the 1990s. From 1970, the magazine *Giovani* was called *Qui Giovani*, and was discontinued in 1974.

In these media products, it is possible to see how discourses around the leisure aspects of youth interacted with other factors such as young people's political orientation, contemporaneous news about the Italian and foreign social and political situations, and debates around young people's emancipation from their parents, young people's sexuality, and their political involvement. It is certainly true that, in these magazines, *i giovani* are represented as overcoming representations given in entertainment media products. Grispigni points out how in these magazines 'emerge il disagio' (1993: 38), and Giachetti (2002b) claims that these magazines were an expression of youth subcultures in Italy. Although Giachetti's main point is questionable, as these magazines were still commercially produced by adults, he is correct in underlining the subversive potential of these media products. As Alex Schildt and Detlef Siegfried have argued in reference to Northern European youth, 'youth magazines evolved into important mediators of consumer culture and political standards within the young generation during the course of the 1960s' (Schildt & Siegfried, 2006: 24-25). It is then especially in magazines that one can observe the commercial incorporation of youth subcultures, which is one of the most

significant aspects of *giovani* media. As Schildt and Siegfried have noted about the process of defusion of subcultural elements in mass culture,

Subcultures infiltrated mass culture; but the subcultures regarded this as a commercial appropriation of originally oppositional styles, which destroyed their revolutionary potential. Therefore, new deviant styles had to be developed, to stand outside the established ones. This confrontation between mass culture and counterculture fostered an ongoing process of innovation. (Schildt & Siegfried, 2006: 2)

Similarly, *giovani* media were favouring the industry's appropriation of subcultural elements; but at the same time, they were denouncing the industry's appropriation of subcultural styles, thus convincing their audience that they were going against the industry.

While Musicarelli films are nowadays relatively easy to access (most of them have been distributed on DVD, and some can even be found full-length on YouTube), my analysis of television programmes and magazines has required several research trips to libraries and archives in Italy. With regards to magazines, I accessed *Ciao Amici*, *Big*, *Ciao Big/Ciao Duemilauno*, *Giovani/Qui Giovani* at the *Biblioteca Nazionale* in Rome. I have also visited the *Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense* in Milan to analyse some of the early issues of *Ciao Amici* and *Sorrisi e Canzoni TV*. Television programmes are also not easily available: at the time of writing, the free online accessibility of RAI archival material is still limited to the most popular television shows (such as *Studio Uno*). Clips of television programmes are available on YouTube; however, in order to watch entire episodes I had to consult the RAI online catalogue, which is the online archive of all the material broadcast from RAI television and radio. The catalogue can only be accessed from certain

national libraries and at the RAI regional offices. For the research for this thesis, I visited the *Discoteca di Stato* in Rome and the *Mediateca di Santa Teresa* in Milan, where it is possible to consult this catalogue and watch digitised programmes and films. However, not all the material I sought to access was available for consultation at the time of conducting this study: some television programmes, such as ...*E sottolineo yé* (Molinari, 1967) and most of the *Speciale Tre Milioni* (Nicotra, 1971) episodes have not yet been digitised. They have therefore been excluded from my discussion.

The chronological division of chapters has been informed by my analysis of the media themselves: through reading the magazines and watching the television programmes and films, it became evident that there are specific moments at which the construction of *il giovane* changes, although, as this thesis will show, often the passage between one 'identity' and another is not so clear-cut. My choice of sources has also been the rationale in choosing the periodisation of this thesis, where the focus is the decade from 1965 to 1975. The starting point is in the year 1965, when a proliferation of media forms specifically directed at young people as the audience took place. Both *Ciao Amici* and *BIG* were first published in this period, and as Daniele Magni (2012: 38-39) points out, the period 1965-67 was the most productive for the *Musicarello* film genre. In addition, in 1965 television started to consider young people as an audience through programmes such as *Stasera Rita* (Falqui, 1965), hosted by Rita Pavone, and *Diamoci del Tu* (Siena, 1967), hosted by Caterina Caselli and Giorgio Gaber. This convergence of events produced a proliferation of discourses around young people, and therefore a proliferation of connotations around young people as an 'imagined community'. My discussion ends in 1975, as during the second half of the 1970s there were some substantial changes in the popular media products analysed. The 1975 RAI reform pursued the liberalisation of

private television: as a consequence, television channels multiplied, and most were no longer controlled by the political party in power. As well as the multiplication of *giovani* television programmes, the mid-1970s testified to the end of publication of some of the media taken into consideration, such as the magazine *Qui Giovani*, and to an increase in the specialization of magazines and film genres for young people. Most importantly, from the mid-1970s some 'forme di autodescrizione' (Grispigni, 1993: 52-53), or self-produced *giovani* media, including free radio stations and magazines such as *Re Nudo*, started to increase in circulation and to have a significant impact on the media construction of *i giovani*.

This chapter has outlined the theoretical and methodological approach to my analysis of representations of young people in Italian popular media. To conclude, it is beneficial to summarise the main aims and objectives of this thesis. Firstly, this thesis aims to analyse the media construction of a generational identity, namely *i giovani*. In doing so, it benefits from the analysis of the negotiating power of popular media, in which normative and subversive elements are equally in place. The choice of analysing popular media aimed at an audience of young people, in fact, aims to get beyond the widespread consideration of popular media as uniquely a site of oppression, by showing that popular culture in the 1960s and 1970s was also the place where emancipatory discourses could circulate. Differently from other research done on Italian youth, this thesis demonstrates how discourses around political and social emancipation were not only present in the student movements' claims, but also in popular media products.

Secondly, *i giovani* is considered as a performative identity constructed through practices. In this thesis, particular attention is given to style and bodily practices, both



because of the relevance of the body and adornment in defining a person's individual and collective identity, and because, during the 1960s and the 1970s, style was notably used by young people to express their differences to adults and to other groups. In popular media, this construction was represented as unitary, immanent, and unchangeable. This thesis aims to deconstruct this representation by looking at the changes in discourses around *i giovani*'s style and bodies over time.

Finally, by looking at images and descriptions of *giovani* bodies and style in popular media, this thesis engages with the ambiguous media construction of *i giovani*'s generational, national and gender identity, and its relationship with the social and historical changes of Italian society during the 1960s and 1970s. It questions to what extent the *giovane* identity was influenced by emancipatory discourses, and by the perpetuation of discrimination and stereotypes.

## Chapter 2

### *Beats, 1965-67*

Chapter one introduced the methodological and theoretical approach I use in this thesis to analyse the media construction of *i giovani* in popular media aimed at an audience of young people. This chapter starts the chronological examination of the period under scrutiny by describing the emergence and development of the *beat* trend as constructed in popular media. The choice of the year 1965 as a starting point needs to be further explained, since, as the previous chapter pointed out, some media forms aimed at young people, such as the *Musicarelli* and the magazine *Ciao Amici*, were already being produced before then. It was not before 1965, however, that magazines started to present the *giovane* style as a form of expression for *i giovani*, the reflection of common values and behaviours, and one of the main elements of opposition to *gli adulti*. Section 2.1.1 describes this emergence in more detail. Moreover, it was in the period 1965-1967 that popular media became integrated in a proper system promoting similar trends and the same *giovani* stars. As a consequence, a *giovane* star system started to be created in the popular media: singers and actors such as Gianni Morandi, Rita Pavone, Caterina Caselli, and Shel Shapiro became the representatives of *i giovani* both on screen and in magazines. These *giovani* stars appear in the wider discussion of *beat* fashion as it develops in this chapter. *Beat* was in fact the umbrella term used to define anything related to *i giovani* in the period 1965-67:

“Beat” [...] was employed as an adjective and applied to anything new and supposedly young: “*musica beat, disco beat, moda beat, ragazza beat, ballo beat*” (beat music, beat record, beat fashion, beat girl, beat dance). Furthermore, the term

often overlapped with “beatnik”, and was accordingly connected to the Beat Generation. (Tomatis, 2014: 27)

Jacopo Tomatis underlines how the term ‘*beat*’ in the Italian context embodied different meanings, which transcended the English expression itself. Who were the *beats*? This term, and its meaning in the Italian context, is the object of this chapter. Three main connotations of this term as constructed in popular media will be considered. Firstly, the countercultural meaning of *beat*, as it referred to the social movements of the ‘beat di strada’ (De Angelis, 1998) developing in Milan and Rome during the mid-1960s. Section 2.1 questions to what extent these experiences were defused in discourses describing the *beat* style in *giovani* media, and what the main features of this style were, according to magazines. This first section also discusses strategies of domestication of the *giovane* style in cinema, where the adoption of the *beat* style was often represented as a performance. The second aspect that will be analysed is the transnational meaning of *beat*, for in popular media products it referred both to English beat music and to the American beatnik movement. Section 2.2 investigates how *giovani* media translated the foreign inspiration of the Italian *beats*, by either ‘mirroring’ or ‘othering’ language and practices coming from other countries. The third aspect taken into consideration is the effect of the *beat* style on the redefinition of *i giovani*’s standards of attractiveness: section 2.3 examines how the elements of the *beat* style, such as long hair for *giovani* men and an androgynous appearance for *giovani* women, were deprived of their subversive meanings, namely gender bending and sexual emancipation.

## ***2.1 Beats, Italian style***

In his essay about the Italian ‘beat’ movement, Roberto De Angelis underlines how a distinction needs to be made between the ‘beat che divenne costume, moda, musica di protesta e un beat “di strada”, che costituirà la prima vera rivolta giovanile’ (De Angelis, 1998: 75). De Angelis describes what he defines as ‘beat di strada’ as one of the first examples of Italian post-war youth rebellion, whose influence inspired, according to the author, the movements of the Italian *Sessantotto*. De Angelis also points out how the ‘beat di strada’ was incorporated into popular media representations of young people, through the construction of what he names ‘beat mediatizzato’: popular media representations, in fact, ‘rappresentava[no] in maniera rassicurante i luoghi comuni sulla protesta giovanile definiti beat’ (De Angelis, 1998: 75). This section thus discusses the main features of the ‘beat mediatizzato’ as they emerged in Italian popular media, and the main strategies through which the opposition between the *beats* and *gli adulti* was made safe in representations of that generational struggle.

The ‘beat di strada’, as De Angelis terms it, developed in Milan and Rome from 1965 to 1967, with substantial differences in these two contexts. In Milan the *beats* were an organised group, meeting in a building called ‘la cava’, where the movement also self-published an underground magazine, *Mondo Beat*.<sup>19</sup> The themes discussed in the magazine, which was also a manifesto of the group’s claims, are well summarised in its first editorial: ‘basta con l’autorità, la famiglia, la repressione sessuale, l’economia di consumo, la guerra, i poliziotti, i preti, la cultura, i pedagoghi e i demagoghi’ (*Mondo Beat* cited in De Angelis, 1998: 76). Here, we see how the movement was inspired by the

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<sup>19</sup> De Martino and Grispigni (1997) have written a complete history of the magazine. In their book it is possible to find a reprint of all the seven numbers of *Mondo Beat* (1966-67).

primary message emerging from the American beatnik movement:<sup>20</sup> a rebellion against the consumerist society created by the Economic Boom through promoting sexual freedom and critiquing the authority of the ‘father’ as expressed by the family, the school, and the Church. In 1967, the Milanese beats set up a commune, defined by journalists as *Barbonia*, which was dismantled soon after by the police. In contrast to the Milanese beat movement, the movement in Rome was less organised, and would meet in public spaces such as Piazza di Spagna, where young Italian and foreign *beats* used to organise sit-ins.<sup>21</sup> In 1965, the police dispersed the beats from Piazza di Spagna multiple times. The mainstream media constantly dismissed the social actions of the Italian beats, who were also accused of merely promoting drug consumption and sexual misbehaviour (Castellani, 1998: 176).

In contrast to mainstream media, which completely failed to speak to the *beats*, *giovani* media took inspiration from these newly-established Italian youth cultures, and appropriated some of their claims. During the period 1965-67, *giovani* media products commonly used the word *beat* to refer to everything related to *i giovani*. Maurizio Vandelli, leader of the Italian *beat* band *Equipe 84*, recalls in 1972 that

circa dieci anni fa, quella che oggi definiamo pop si chiamava musica beat. Ma con questo termine (in inglese significa “battere”) si parafrasavano cose o persone. Erano beat le magliette, le scarpe, le cravatte, i pantaloni. Chi si faceva crescere i capelli era considerato beat. (Vandelli, 1972: 40)

Vandelli misremembers the emergence of the *beat* trend in the early 1960s, as this trend appeared in popular media only in 1965, and then developed in the two-year period 1966-

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<sup>20</sup> On the origin and development of the American beatnik movement, see Brownell, 2011.

<sup>21</sup> The sit-in was a form of protest that was commonly used by social movements during the 1960s. It envisaged the peaceful occupation of a space by a group of people.

1967. Yet, his declaration highlights how the word ‘beat’ was used to define diverse products and people. Firstly, Vandelli refers to *beat* music, or the *bitt*, as musicologist Franco Fabbri (2014: 41) defines it. This specifically Italian music genre, inspired by the English beat scene, was characterised by the emergence of the *complessi* singing covers of English songs translated into Italian. Secondly, the term *beat* was used to define commercial goods intended to appeal to a *giovane* audience. Advertising, for instance, made widespread use of the adjective ‘beat’: magazines sold ‘distintivi beat’ and ‘anelli beat’ (Nuovo stupendo pacco regalo!, 1967: 3), or lipsticks ‘bikini beat’ (Cutex, 1966: 24). In *giovani* popular media, the term *beat* was applied to items of consumption such as music and commercial products, in contrast to the original anti-consumerist claims of the ‘beat di strada’.

Vandelli’s quotation does not take into account the political meaning of the term *beat*; instead, it reflects how this term was resignified in popular media for commercial purposes. However, it would be superficial to interpret the incorporation of the *beats* in popular media as a mere commercial enterprise. The media incorporation of the *beat* also involved an appropriation of some of the political themes that the ‘beats di strada’ were disseminating. In 1966, the magazine *Ciao Amici* defined who *i giovani*, their audience, were:

I giovani sono la parte migliore di noi. I giovani che cantano e ballano, quelli che impazziscono per i Beatles e quelli che lavorano e studiano, quelli che ci seguono tutte le settimane e che sono sempre stati in prima linea nelle nostre battaglie per *la Zanzara*, per l’integrazione razziale, per la pace, per la libertà di ogni individuo, sono dalla nostra parte. Libertà di parola e di pensiero, ma anche libertà di

capigliatura, di calzoni, di minigonne, di canzoni, di chitarre, è il loro motto. (In Prima Linea, 1966: 49)

There is a conflation here of the leisure and political aspects in the claims for freedom attributed to *i giovani*. These claims simultaneously involve social issues (freedom of speech and thought, especially towards *gli adulti*) and freedom of leisure activities such as music and fashion: *i giovani* sing and dance, listen to the Beatles, and want the freedom to wear trousers and miniskirts as they choose. Moreover, the quotation demonstrates how foreign issues (the struggles for racial integration, for instance, which refers to the American civil rights movements) influenced Italian youth, while these also co-existed alongside specifically Italian social experiences (such as *La Zanzara* case, which will be explained later in this chapter). Comparing this editorial to *Mondo Beat's* editorial, discussed above, some similarities become evident. Themes that were present in *Mondo Beat's* editorial – the refusal of authority and the family, sexual freedom, and pacifism – are, in *Big's* editorial, converted into a generalised desire for freedom that mixes a freedom from the authority of *gli adulti* with the freedom of expressing oneself through consumer goods.

A very similar discourse is used by Rita Pavone in an article that appeared in *Big* in 1965 to describe young people's, and her own, discrimination:

No no, l'emancipazione dei giovani esiste solo in piccolissima parte, ma per quella maggiore non esiste. Guardate me: io sono libera solo... di cantare! Non posso firmare contratti, non posso votare, non posso andare a ballare da sola, non potrei sposarmi, se volessi, senza il consenso dei genitori, non posso andare all'estero senza l'autorizzazione, non posso, talvolta, vestirmi come mi piace... Insomma, una vera frana. (Pavone, 1965: 25)

Although Pavone explains that she is an international star, she still faces the same difficulties that the readers are facing. Again, the narration mixes together the need for the freedom of leisure-time activities (such as dancing and shopping) and a lack of social and legal freedom (she cannot sign contracts or get married without her parents' consent, and she cannot vote).

These two quotations from *Big* summarise the way in which the *giovane* identity was formulated in popular media in the period 1965-1967. The claims on the freedom from authority of the 'beats di strada' were turned, in the 'beat mediatizzato', into a general desire for freedom from *gli adulti*. However, for *giovani* media, the means through which this freedom could be obtained were through the consumption of those goods created by the industry for young people, particularly music and style. The next subsection demonstrates how *i giovani*'s desire for freedom was expressed in the presentation of the *giovane* style in the period 1965-1967.

### **2.1.1 The 'birth' of the *giovane* style**

In 1966, in an article summarising the achievements of *i giovani* in the previous year, the magazine *Big* celebrates the 'birth' of a *giovane* fashion:

Quest'anno [...] è nata la moda giovane. Fino a oggi esisteva, soprattutto da noi in Italia, una moda per bambini e una moda per adulti. Adesso i giovani hanno cominciato a scegliersi dei capi più pratici e comodi e meno costosi, forse un poco più vivaci magari di quelli di una volta [...]. Un poco alla volta si è creato, forse procedendo a tentoni, uno stile. (Chi è senza miti scagli la prima pietra, 1966: 10)

Here, reference to a 'birth' insists on the idea that the *giovane* style is something completely new, which leaves the past behind. This sentence also erases previous post-



war uses of style as a form of expression for young people, which were present, as the studies presented in the previous chapter pointed out. Moreover, the allusion to a ‘birth’ naturalises the commercial production of the *giovane* style as an established and unquestionable fact, created by young people themselves. The participation of young people is presented as a fundamental aspect of the *giovane* fashion: young people are said to deliberately choose their own garments and create their own style. In other words, the article seems to suggest that *i giovani* are actively making their own space within a generational discourse that formerly recognised only adults and children. However, the ‘birth’ officiated by the magazine in the article is not the emergence of young people’s fashion, but rather the emergence of a commercial, mass-produced *giovane* style. Not only was the *giovane* fashion said to be created by *i giovani*, but its commercial production was also justified as a way of allowing every Italian young person to become *giovane*. For example, in 1966 *Big* launched the ‘Big Pipermarket’ initiative, allowing ‘i ragazzi e le ragazze che non vivono a Roma’ (G.S., 1966: 44) to receive by mail garments and accessories sold by the Pipermarket boutique in Rome. In this way, young people living in peripheral parts of the peninsula could feel part of the ‘imagined community’ of young people, by buying and wearing the same products as young people living in big cities such as Rome. An essential feature of the *giovane* fashion, then, was its mass production, which paradoxically was said to allow the originality of the *giovane* style. An article that appeared in *Big* points out, with reference to U.S.S.R. young women, how in this country ‘manca una produzione di massa [...] che consenta alle ragazze di essere carine e originali’ (Dessy, 1967a: 39, my italics).

The *giovane* fashion, then, tended to aesthetically homogenise youth through the sale of mass-produced fashion items. However, the impact of *giovane* fashion was not

limited to that, as the adoption of specific garments was said to reveal a unity of thought, suggesting that *i giovani* wearing the same style also had the same ideals. A 1966 article appeared in *Big* claims that

ciò che “unisce” i ragazzi di oggi è il loro particolare modo di vestire. Vedendosi vestiti alla “loro” maniera, essi si riconoscono subito, capiscono di trovarsi in presenza di qualcuno che la pensa come loro e fraternizzano senza bisogno di convenevoli e presentazioni. (Chi è senza miti scagli la prima pietra, 1966: 10)

In the article, the *giovane* style is said to be the element through which *i giovani* can be recognised, especially by other young people. In popular media representations, then, style is said to contribute to building a sense of community, that of *i giovani*. The values reflected in the *giovane* style are delineated, for example, in a 1967 advertisement for a fashion brand, appearing in *Big*:

Se siete davvero giovani vestitevi così...! Se siete davvero di quelli che fanno quello che pensano, e vi va sia uno smoking a colori che un paio di pantaloni a vita bassissima, se vi fa orrore la cravatta del padre, e non avete complessi: questo è il vostro stile! (SanRemo, 1967:41)

This advertisement, again, highlights how descriptions of the *giovane* style promoted not only specific garments, but also similar values and behaviours. Here, these values reflect the absence of any psychological problem and distance from the previous generation, that of the ‘fathers’. In other words, through their style *i giovani* were said to express two main ideals: that of freedom, which reflected a personality not regimented by pathological behaviour, and that of opposition from *gli adulti*, represented here by the patriarchal image of the ‘father’. The same values of freedom and opposition emerge in representations of the *giovane* style in magazines, films, and television programmes. The

*giovane* style was intended to visually distinguish *i giovani* from *gli adulti*, and often its promotion was based on the delineation of different values proper to the two groups. The opposition was subsequently beneficial to the acquisition of freedom: in popular media, *i giovani* were finding their freedom in those leisure-time practices where they did not have to relate to *gli adulti*. The alleged association between *i giovani* and leisure activities, however, also limited *i giovani*'s freedom to certain aspects of their life, those linked to their free time, in this way excluding other activities – such as political participation – that could create preoccupations over young people's role in Italian society.

Opposition to *gli adulti* can be found in the description of the violent and dynamic colours that defined *giovane* fashion. According to *Big, beat* fashion was colourful, in contrast to the clothes worn by *gli adulti*, 'tutti eguali nei colori e nelle linee, [...] tristi e squallidi' (Quello che si è detto, 1966: 10): 'i nostri colori [...] sono decisamente il verde-pistacchio, l'arancione, il viola-melanzana, il giallo e il rosa' (Fischer, 1966a: 36), 'colori violentissimi' that 'con i loro contrasti stridenti e dinamici, tipo illuminazione al neon nelle città di notte, esprimano tutta la nostra gioia di vivere' (ibid.: 37). The use of strong, 'fiammanti' (Ducati, 1966) colours literally made the presence of *i giovani* visible because of the contrast to the colours worn by *gli adulti*. What is more, the colours used in *giovane* fashion were said to express joy, in contrast to the sadness of *gli adulti*. The link between bright colours and mood is also stressed in an extract from *Ciao Amici*, in which a tailor asserts:

Dimenticati di tutto quello che ti hanno insegnato in fatto di colori: come la foggia degli abiti anche i colori sono l'espressione di un modo di vedere la vita, di uno stato d'animo. (Pencill, 1967: 60)

The statement shows again how fashion was often connected to *i giovani*'s values and behaviours. Bright colours, in contrast to the dark colours worn by adults at work, conveyed the ideal of a joyful, but powerless *giovane*, particularly with regard to male fashion. John Harvey has analysed the 'empowerment of black' (Harvey, 1995: 10) in male fashion throughout modern history. The colour black, he maintains, has become increasingly associated with power, in particular masculine power over women and the feminine, for whom, up until the second half of the twentieth century, black was reserved for mourning. Black as a colour connoting power opposes itself to the strong colours used in 1960s' male *giovane* fashion: for the first time, 'l'universo maschile si appropria [...] di abiti e accessori colorati, accedendo ad un ventaglio di tonalità che erano semplicemente improponibili prima' (Castellani, 2010: 38). The use of colours in male fashion was useful to 'stand out', to be different, not only from previous styles, but also from the anonymity of middle-class working city life, which was instead associated with *gli adulti*. An article published in *Ciao Amici*, which describes British youth fashion, explains how

qui in Inghilterra, fino a ieri, si diceva che un uomo è veramente elegante quando può mettersi sotto la statua di Nelson, in Piccadilly Circus [...] senza che nessuno si accorga di lui. Oggi è tutto diverso. Gli uomini, i giovani soprattutto, sentono la necessità di distinguersi, di affiorare dall'anonimato cui l'affollamento delle grandi città ci condanna. (Pencill, 1967: 60)

The use of colour in *giovane* fashion here seems to suggest a critique of the bourgeois way of life, which is uniquely associated with *gli adulti*. However, the giving up of dark colours prevented *i giovani* from wearing appropriate business attire, thus offering the

image of a powerless *giovane* who only thought about leisure, and did not engage with the society he/she lives in.

*Giovane* fashion did not just stand out and impress with colours; it also conveyed meaning through written words as garments were decorated with ‘slogans, cifre, sigle’ (Fischer, 1966a: 36). The use of language in *giovane* fashion opens a window onto a new kind of language specific to Italian *giovani*, which also contributed to the creation of an ‘imagined community’. Benedict Anderson has pointed out how language makes ‘imagined communities’ accessible to everyone, as by learning the language anyone can access the national community (Anderson, 2006: 146). Similarly, the construction of a specific language for *i giovani* created a sense of community: by learning the language, as well as listening to specific singers, and adopting a certain style, anyone could become part of the community of *i giovani*. According to Jacopo Tomatis, with the Italian *beats* a media Italianisation of the English language took place. Journalist and *Musicarelli* director Piero Vivarelli recently declared that during the 1960s, ‘some English words were used without fully know[ing] their meaning’ (cited in Tomatis, 2014: 27). In *giovani* media, the English language was often used to define those elements pertaining to *i giovani*: this practice mainly functioned to characterise *giovani* products, music, and dances. However, as Vivarelli points out, this was often a misuse: for example, an article in *Big* reports that the acronym V.I.P. ‘significa “Very Important Person” [...] ma voi potete darle un altro qualsiasi significato; per esempio “Vivere In Pace”’ (Fischer, 1966b: 35). English terms, far from being translated literally, mainly functioned to emphasize the incommunicability between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*: by speaking different languages, communication between the two groups was inhibited. The same effect was produced by the inclusion in the *giovane* language of meaningless words that could make sense only

within the community of *i giovani* itself, such as *Geghegè*, the title of a famous song interpreted by singer Rita Pavone.<sup>22</sup> In an interview published in *Giovani*, Pavone tries to explain the meaning of this expression to the adult journalist:

- Ma cos'è, dunque, questo “geghe, geghe, geghe, gè”?

- Uffa, ma non l'hai ancora capito? È un nostro modo di parlare, un modo di noi giovani. Uno ci chiede “Cosa fai oggi?”. Se non si sa esattamente cosa si fa, si risponde “geghe, geghe, geghe, gè”. Ecco tutto.

- E il “rif”?

- Il “rif” vuol dire tutto: che si sta bene, che si è innamorati, che si ama la vita, che si ha voglia di cantare. Capito? (Liverani, 1966: 39)

The quotation shows Pavone's difficulties in communicating the meaning of certain words to people outside the community of *i giovani*, such as the journalist in this case. The *giovane* singer explains here both English – although wrongly spelt: the rif in the text is the English riff – and meaningless words. Interestingly, the meanings given to these words by Pavone are extremely vague: they can mean ‘everything’. This example, again, shows that the use of a new language was not beneficial for communicating specific meanings, but rather it emphasized the difference between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*.

The promotion of a different language for *i giovani* in popular media can also be understood in terms of consumption: when the language presented above was also used in advertisements, *i giovani* could immediately connect the product to the *giovane* identity. This is why advertisements made substantial use of expressions that only had meaning for a *giovane* audience. For example, the Aquiletta Bianchi becomes ‘una moda che spacca’ (Bianchi, 1966), the Amaro Ramazzotti is shortened in ‘vecchio Rama’ (Ramazzotti,

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<sup>22</sup> This song was also used as the theme song of the TV programme *Studio Uno* in 1966. See: Brioni, 2017.

1966). The audience is also involved to create slogans for adverts: for instance in 1966, the beauty product brand *Miners* launched a contest to choose the new slogan for the brand. The winner was Anna Santambrogio, from Agrate, Milan, as the advert tells us. Her slogan was: ‘la linea bomba per le ragazze in gamba’ (*Miners*, 1966). Here, again, the use of words such as ‘bomba’ as an adverb and the phrase ‘in gamba’ replicated the way young people spoke, and did not conform to the language used in traditional advertisements. The fashion brand *Brick* invented the verb ‘brickizzarvi’ to indicate the action performed by young people when they choose their garments, which represented ‘libertà, colore, vita’ (*Brick*, 1967). Use of the written word in fashion was also visible in the trend of wearing badges with written messages on them, which confirms the importance of style in visually representing *giovani* values. These messages were either in Italian, in English, or made up of imaginary words, for example: ‘Fate l’amore, la guerra no’, ‘I am a genius’, ‘Vengo da Marte’, ‘balli?!’, ‘I love everybody’, ‘Ecquequà!’ ‘No’, ‘Si doomanii’ (*Ecco i favolosi Pat-Beat*, 1967: 66). The language used on these badges summed up the common language of *i giovani*, but the content then reproduces the conflation between political and social messages (‘make love, not war’) and messages linked to leisure-time activities (‘want to dance?!’) that characterised the *beat* identity.

Style was not the only feature that differentiated *i giovani* from *gli adulti*. Bodily movements – and dance in particular, characterised and constructed *i giovani*. As a young man affirmed in an interview about the meaning of being *giovane*, in fact, ‘sei giovane se ti muovi e balli, se canti e salti, se giochi, se ruzzoli’ (*Luciano*, 1967: 26). In this quotation, bodily acts such as dancing and moving are said to be a fundamental feature of *i giovani*, and they emphasize the importance of music in this construction. In contrast to traditional dances, which envisaged strict routines, the *giovane* dancing was said to be

characterised by a complete freedom of movements. An article describing the Shake, the most popular dance at the time, in *Ciao Amici* explains that ‘[basta] incollare i piedi saldamente al terreno e poi, seguendo scrupolosamente il ritmo, muovere a volontà capo, busto, braccia, mani, anche, gambe’ to dance it (Come si balla oggi, 1966: 43). Many *Musicarelli* films emphasize the involvement of various body parts in *giovani* dances: for example, the club featured in *Rita la Zanzara* (Wertmüller, 1966) is extremely dark, and spots of light hit specific body parts following the rhythm. The dark lighting of the club and the use of close-ups also emphasizes a dancing that seems not to need any specific routine but is naturally performed by *i giovani* in those spaces where they are allowed to listen to *giovane* music.

However, although *giovani* dances were presented as spontaneous, they did not leave too much space for freedom, and were in fact as regimented as traditional dances. In television programmes and films, *giovani* stars explained dances to the audience, in order to enable everyone to perform them and therefore to include more young people in the ‘imagined community’ of youth. For example, the lyrics of Rita Pavone’s song *Il Plip* (Mantovani, Meccia & Migliacci, 1965), performed in the *Musicarello Rita la figlia Americana* (Vivarelli, 1965), explain how the dance of the same name has to be executed. The lyrics are as follows: ‘Tocca il pollice con il mignolo di quell’altra mano tua, poi col mignolo l’altro pollice e continua a far così. Con un tacco tocca l’altra punta della scarpa poi riporta l’altra punta l’altro tacco ritoccar’. By giving the audience a chance to learn the dance, popular media products were also providing the possibility of ‘becoming’ *giovane* to anyone. This possibility was also given to adults, thus confirming the idea that being *giovane* is not necessarily a matter of age. In the *Musicarello Non stuzzicate la Zanzara* (Wertmüller, 1967), Rita Pavone teaches the actress Giulietta Masina, her mother in the



film, how to ‘do the shake’.<sup>23</sup> The mother in the film is presented as different from the father and three aunts who live with the family, who are all judged as ‘noiosi’ by Rita. The mother instead is a hybrid character, adult in body but not in spirit and, because of that, she is considered ‘mad’ by the father and aunts. She admires the secret career of her daughter as a *beat* singer, and she enthusiastically accepts Rita’s offer to teach her how to dance. The mother tries to dance the shake but at first she dances it like other dances, and she justifies herself by saying “sono Matusa e non ballo yé-yé”.<sup>24</sup> However, she eventually understands how to dance the shake thanks to her daughter’s advice: “lasciati andare ed è subito shake”; “su dagli dentro con tutto il tuo beat”. The main feature of dancing in a *giovane* way, according to Pavone, is losing control, and this, interestingly, fits into the description of the mother as a ‘mad’, troubled, character. Pavone seems to affirm that the shake is not made up of predefined moves, like traditional dances; rather, she claims that people have complete freedom of movement, and they only have to ‘follow the beat’. By teaching her mother how to become *giovane* while dancing, however, she demonstrates that *giovani* dances had their own rules and regulations to follow.

The dances performed by *i giovani* also tended to redefine gender relations, as, differently from traditional dance routines, *i giovani* were said to dance ‘separated’. A 1966 article that appeared in *Big* explains the reasons why *i giovani* do not dance in couples:

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<sup>23</sup> I am referring here to the performance of ‘Non è difficile fare lo shake’ in *Non Stuzzicate la Zanzara* (Wertmüller, 1967).

<sup>24</sup> The term ‘Matusa’, widely used in *giovani* media, derives from name of the biblical figure Methuselah [Matusalemme] who was said to have lived almost 1000 years. The word ‘matusalemme’, commonly used to define extremely old people, during the 1960s was shortened to ‘matusa’, and started to be derogatively used by young people in order to define their parents, or the previous generation.

Certo i giovani ballano “staccati”. “Non apprezzano nemmeno il piacere di stringersi tra loro”, si dice. Certo, perché il loro modo di ballare è fatto di amore per la musica, di ritmo, di movimento. È un lasciarsi trascinare, è uno sfogo e nello stesso tempo, e non è un paradosso, un relax. (Chi è senza miti scagli la prima pietra, 1966: 10)

Here, the spontaneity of dance is connected to the love for music, which in representations of young people dancing exceeds romantic and sexual love: the article describes how *i giovani* dance ‘separated’, as young people prefer to dance in groups instead of dancing in couples. However, the couple dynamics are not completely erased by *giovani* dances, but rather differently proposed. For example, in the television programme *Stasera Rita* (Falqui, 1965), the *corps de ballet* is made up of *giovani* men and women who often dance in couples, but also dance separately, and with the whole group: the traditional couple is therefore given another meaning by including it in group dynamics. Partner dances, in the case of *i giovani*, are in fact accepted to the extent that they do not presume romantic relationships. For example, gadgets such as the *Grab*, a bracelet with a small heart that could be clasped to someone else’s *Grab* if a couple decided to dance together, became extremely popular in *giovani* magazines. The use of this bracelet while dancing mimicked less enduring and more playful romantic relationships:

Il Grab è il distintivo della giovinezza, un mezzo visibile, per i giovani, di distinguersi dal mondo dei grandi. Inoltre, il fatto stesso di portare questo braccialetto e di agganciare due cuori rossi, rende possibile un’intesa immediata tra un ragazzo e una ragazza. (R.S., 1966: 60)

In 1966, the ‘Grab Decalogue’ was published in *Ciao Amici*: ‘4. Il “Grab” non è un feticcio da usare per conquistare un ragazzo, ma è solo il passaporto dell’amicizia. [...] 9.

Col “Grab” sono vietate le scene di gelosia. Se il vostro ragazzo vuol ballare con più ragazze, guardatevi dal rimproverarlo’ (ibid.). Interestingly, these commandments are directed at *giovani* women, and therefore place women in an active role in the couple. However, the active role of young women does not imply a potential seduction: the definition of this partner dance as ‘il passaporto dell’amicizia’ negates romantic relationships between young people and maintains *giovani* women’s sexual innocence.<sup>25</sup>

Another aspect that needs to be taken into consideration when outlining the key features that construct *beat* identity is space. Spaces are very significant in the definition of the *giovane* identity in this period, as it is from 1965 to 1967 that clubs intended specifically for a *giovane* audience started to appear in Italian cities. The first of these clubs was the Piper, which opened in Rome in 1965. Soon after that, another Piper club was created in Milan and Coca-Cola, in an advertisement, offered a ‘guida al Piper Club di Milano’. Clubs were spaces where young people could meet and listen and dance to music, and most importantly were spaces exclusively dedicated to youth. Rita Pavone wrote in *Giovani* in 1967: ‘sono stata al Piper Club, l’altra sera, [...]. Uno sfacelo. Nessun giovane, ma tutti “grandi”, tutti quarantenni. Non è una contraddizione, questa? Era o non era un locale fatto e inventato apposta per i giovani?’ (Pavone, 1967: 21). The fact that, two years after its opening, the Piper club had become renowned and was therefore also frequented by adults shocked the *giovane* singer, who reclaimed the space of the club for *i giovani*.

Interestingly, almost all visual representations of young people in popular media in 1965-67 are set in a club, or in a club-like space. The club was a recurrent setting in *Musicarelli* films, and it was often the space in which struggles between *i giovani* and *gli*

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<sup>25</sup> The defusion of *i giovani*’s sexuality in popular media representations will be discussed in more depth in the last section of the chapter on the redefinition of *giovani* femininities.

*adulti* started.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, *giovani* television programmes tended to recreate a space where only *i giovani* were allowed. In the show *Diamoci del Tu* (Siena, 1967), hosted by Caterina Caselli and Giorgio Gaber, the space reserved for the audience becomes part of the stage itself, as the singers perform amongst the audience members. The stage is round and the audience sits around it: even though the camera is constantly moving during the performances, a portion of the *giovane* audience is always in shot. The opening theme, which is addressed to the audience, asserts:

“Salve amici, ciao ragazzi, forza dai, scendiamo in pista! Se ci dicono che siamo pazzi, chi li sente, alé ragazzi! Qui siamo tutti a casa nostra, qui parliamo solo noi, qui cantiamo solo noi, qui balliamo solo noi. Balleremo shake, parleremo dei beat”. (*Diamoci del Tu*, episode 1, 27/03/1967)

The lyrics of the opening theme define the show as a space that is intended only for *i giovani*, on stage and at home. The 1965 programme *Stasera Rita* also reproduces the dynamics of a club in which *i giovani* can dance together, without the supervision of *gli adulti*. In this depiction, the host, Rita Pavone, constantly dances with her *corps de ballet*, the *Collettoni* and the *Collettine*, and *gli adulti* are not allowed in the show, except as a source of ridicule. Sometimes the spaces dedicated exclusively to *i giovani* were not enclosed, as is the case with Corso Europa in Milan, described in an article which appeared in the magazine *Marie-Claire Giovani*:

Quella strada, dove ci riuniamo, si chiama Corso Europa, ma ormai tutti la indicano come la “via dei giovani” perché è il luogo fisso dei nostri quotidiani

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<sup>26</sup> Most of the *Musicarelli* feature *giovani* clubs. The most interesting examples of their role as a place of struggle are the early *Musicarelli*, and most notably *I ragazzi del Juke-box* (Fulci, 1959) and *Io bacio... tu baci* (Vivarelli, 1961). In the period 1965-67, struggles over clubs are a substantial part of the plot in *Rita, la figlia Americana* (Vivarelli, 1965), *Rita la Zanzara* (Wertmüller, 1966) and *I Ragazzi di Bandiera Gialla* (Laurenti, 1967).

appuntamenti [...] il posto insomma dove possiamo stare insieme per parlare liberamente dei nostri problemi, e anche per divertirci. [...] Qui in Corso Europa ci sono i “nostri locali”: il Copacabana, che funziona tutto il giorno [...]; il Paip’s dove andiamo di solito alla sera a ballare [...]. Nella nostra via di giovani ce ne sono sempre. A qualsiasi ora ci andiamo troviamo sempre qualcuno con cui fare quattro chiacchiere e uno shake. (Bonazzoli, 1966: 8)

Although a public space, Corso Europa is described in the article as a space reserved for *i giovani*. It is the place where every activity linked to the community of *i giovani* can be carried out: meeting and talking about ‘our’ problems, but also having fun together, and listening and dancing to music.

The strategy of constantly representing *i giovani* in a delimited space signals a discriminatory attitude towards the space occupied by young people in Italian society. This section has shown how representations of young people insisted on their difference from adults, and on their desire for freedom. However, the limitation of *i giovani*’s freedom to leisure activities, such as music and style, and the spatial limitation of them to specific places, such as clubs, functioned to reduce the subversive potential of the *beat*. While the *beats* were free to express their opposition to adults in the spaces dedicated to them, such as clubs, the beats occupying central squares of Italian cities, such as the beats meeting in Piazza di Spagna, became ‘space invaders’, to borrow Nirmal Puwar’s term. Puwar uses this term to describe women and racialized minorities who occupy political and social spaces from which they have been historically or conceptually excluded. According to Puwar, ‘social spaces are not blank and open for anybody to occupy. There is a connection between bodies and spaces which is built, repeated and contested over time. While all can, in theory, enter, it is certain types of bodies that are tacitly designated

as being the “natural” occupants of specific positions’ (Puwar, 2004: 8). Similarly, when the beats expressed their difference to *gli adulti* in public spaces, such as the ‘beats di strada’, they were critiqued by the media, because they were occupying a place that had not been dedicated to them.<sup>27</sup> Conversely, the *beats* were free to express their difference in spaces designed for them, and through appropriate commercial trends that were also economically beneficial to the fashion industry. De Angelis observes that the manager of the Piper club often ‘permetteva, nel ’66, l’entrata gratuita al proletariato giovanile di piazza di Spagna per fare colore, dato il loro abbigliamento’ (De Angelis, 1998: 82): even the ‘beats di strada’ could be accepted if they entered the space of the club. The media incorporation of the *beat* style thus produced a trivialisation and an erasure of the original claims of the ‘beat di strada’. By creating an alternative version of the Italian *beat*, popular media were making safe a potentially troubling identity in the conservative context of Italian society of the 1960s.

### **2.1.2 *Becoming beat as a performance***

The previous subsection explored the discourses that constructed a homogenous version of Italian *giovani* through the *beat* style. This section further investigates the media domestication of the *beat* identity by focusing on a specific strategy that served to recuperate the subversive potential of style in constructing *i giovani*: the strategy of presenting the *giovane* style as a performance. In order to understand the relevance of this strategy, a distinction needs to be made between the meaning of ‘performative’ and that of ‘performance’ when talking about identities. Chapter one highlighted how, in this thesis, the *giovane* identity is theorised as performative, as it was constructed by referring to a

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<sup>27</sup> For example, the *giovani* magazines’ descriptions of *i capelloni* in Piazza di Spagna analysed in section 2.2.2.

series of practices which were naturalised in popular media. This conceptualisation comes from Judith Butler's analysis of the performativity of gender identities. However, as Sara Salih has pointed out, since the formulation of this concept, Butler has insisted in distinguishing the concept of performativity from that of theatrical performance, as this point was one of the most confusing for her readers (Salih, 2002: 10-11).<sup>28</sup> According to Butler, the performativity of gender is not something consciously performed by a subject: instead, it is the reiteration of specific acts that construct the subject itself, and therefore performativity does not presuppose a subject to consciously 'perform' a certain identity. There are occasions, however, where gender can be consciously performed, often in a parodic way; for example, in drag. As Salih points out in reference to Butler, in drag 'the disjunction between the body of the performer and the gender that is being performed [...] effectively reveal[s] the imitative nature of *all* gender identities' (Salih, 2002: 65). In other words, for Butler, the performance of gender identity is not only possible, but it can also have a subversive potential: the act of drag, which disrupts the fictional unity between sex and gender, reveals how gender is performative in its 'imitative structure' (Butler, 1999: 175). However, the self-conscious performance of gender identity is not inherently subversive: for example, according to Butler, some examples of cross-dressing in popular culture do not function to reveal the inner fictionality of gender identities, but they rather reinforce the divide between genders (ibid.: 176-177).

The previous subsection showed those practices through which *il giovane* was constructed as a performative identity: by identifying certain style features and bodily practices, popular media were contributing to a definition of the *giovane* identity, and they were giving to these elements certain ideological significations. This subsection

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<sup>28</sup> A clarification of Butler's conceptualisations of 'performance' and 'performativity' can be found in the debate between Seyla Benhabib and Butler herself, published in Benhabib et al., 1995.

interrogates the meanings behind what I see as the parodic representation of ‘becoming’ *giovane* as a performance, both on-stage and off-stage, which can be found in popular media, and especially in *Musicarelli* films. In most of the *Musicarelli* films produced in the period 1965-67, the audience directly assists in the process of ‘becoming’ *giovane* of the (young) characters through the adoption of the colourful, eccentric *giovane* style presented above. This recurrent strategy shows the importance of style in the construction of the *giovane* identity, and it emphasizes the difference between being young and being *giovane*. However, it also suggests a certain tendency in popular media to present the *giovane* identity as fictional, because it was based on the act of disguising. Disguise can in fact be seen as a leisure activity, thus reinforcing the idea that being *giovane* is ultimately a game that promotes the disengagement of young people.

In viewing disguise as ‘a discursive strategy – one that indicates the degree of identification with, or distance from, certain social performances one enacts’ (Tseëlon, 2001: 153), it is possible to identify different meanings of the representations of becoming *giovane* in *Musicarelli* films. Firstly, the use of disguise indicates that the *giovane* identity is not based on age, as the *giovane* style can be appropriated also by adults. In *Rita la figlia Americana* (Vivarelli, 1965), Totò performs the role of Rita Pavone’s stepfather, an unsuccessful orchestra leader who hates modern music. At the end of the film, he understands that he can become popular by turning into a *beat* music player. However, in order to be accepted by the crowd, he needs to disguise himself and does so by wearing a wig and a *giovane* outfit, and thanks to this disguise, he is acknowledged by *i giovani* in the club. The adoption of a *giovane* style, in Totò’s case, makes him become *giovane*, as if his disguise were enough to express his belonging to the community of *i giovani* and his acceptance of *giovani* values.



The same parodic performance is used to show the passage from being young to being *giovane*. In *Io non protesto, io amo* (Baldi, 1967), Caterina Caselli is a young teacher who is experimenting with new teaching methods: she explains history by performing songs to her students. Her antagonist character is a penniless count who cannot stand the young teacher's innovative methods. Everything changes when, in conversation with an Italian-American cousin, the count understands that *giovane* music is profitable, and so he devises a plan, together with Caterina, to introduce her as a *beat* singer to his cousin so that they can make money together. To do this, she literally dresses up. We see her completely changing her style by adopting a leather jacket and trousers, riding a motorcycle, and speaking in an Italianised English: "You American? I Italian. Just moment". For Caselli too, it seems enough to adopt a *giovane* style to become part of the community of *i giovani*. Moreover, both examples present the *giovane* identity as commercially profitable, in that both Totò and Caselli decide to become *giovani* to be successful in the music industry, and to do so, they use commercial products, such as wigs and garments. In the representation of Toto's and Caselli's becoming *giovani*, commercial products play a substantial role both in influencing the transformation of the main character, and in allowing this transformation. The impact of consumerism in the *giovane* identity is both exposed and promoted in the two films. The use of performance unveils the significant role of the industry in the process of becoming *giovane*; but conversely, the adoption of commercial products is presented as inescapable for young people, in order to become part of the 'imagined community' of youth. The problematic role of the industry in defining the *giovane* identity can also be seen in the film *L'immensità* (De Fina, 1967). In this film, singer Don Backy<sup>29</sup> plays the role of Dario, a young classical music player.

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<sup>29</sup> Don Backy (pseudonym of Aldo Caponi) is an Italian singer. He started his career as part of Adriano

Dario is in love with Monica, a *giovane* woman who loves beat music and wears *giovane* fashion. Dario and Monica always fight about their differences; nonetheless, they love each other. At the end of the film, Dario will be the one who changes in order to make their relationship work by deciding to become a beat singer, but before that, he goes into a clothes shop to buy clothes that can make him appear *giovane*. Again, style is linked to music, as it shows that, in order to acquire celebrity status, young singers have to become *giovani*. Moreover, for Don Backy, adopting a *giovane* style is also for personal reasons, as he has to conform to the standards of *giovane* male attractiveness, which envisage a specific style, in order to stay with his girlfriend.

The representation of the process of becoming *giovane* as a performance actually reveals the performative construction of *i giovani*: one ‘is’ not *giovane*, but ‘becomes’ *giovane* by adopting specific practices such as dressing up as *giovane*. As with gender roles, reducing the *giovane* identity to a performance has the potential of revealing the naturalisation of *i giovani* as a generational identity. That by appropriating style elements, people of any age can become *giovani* shows how this concept is not necessarily connected to age groups. Moreover, the presentation of becoming *giovane* as a performance clearly reveals the importance of the industry in the construction of *i giovani*. This representation can be seen to have subversive meanings, in that it makes visible how the music industry required young singers to become *giovani* in order to be commercially profitable, while other music genres – such as classical music – were not considered equally sellable. However, the conformity to the style standards of *i giovani* is presented as the only way for young people to enter the community of *i giovani*, and to have

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Celentano’s clan, but during the 1960s he became famous for being a non-*giovane* singer, as he strongly criticised young people who were following a *giovane* fashion (similar to, for example, Johnny Halliday in France). He wrote an anti-*capelloni* song called ‘Serenata’, which I will discuss in the next section.

romantic relationships or friendships. In this sense, the representation of the *giovane* identity as a disguise not only rendered the *giovane* identity more accessible for everyone, but also promoted the conformism of the *giovane* style created by the industry.

When presented as a disguise on screen, being *giovane* was also reduced as a temporary experience, thus limiting its subversive potential. For example, in an interview published in *Big*, the members of Rita Pavone's *corps de ballet*, the *Collettine*, seem to make a distinction between their role as performers on television and their 'real' life outside the scenes:

Le "collettine" e i "collettoni" hanno, invece, imparato [a ballare] da soli: con i quattro salti in famiglia, le festicciole da ballo in casa di amici e, solo per qualcuno, il Piper. [...] "Ci piace divertirci un po' [...] ma non è detto che stiamo tutto il giorno a pensare al ballo. Andiamo qualche volta al Piper, ma poi non tanto. [...] Per il resto siamo ragazze normali, pensiamo al lavoro, alla famiglia [...]. E, alla fine, se troviamo un ragazzo sincero che ci vuole veramente bene, creda a me, mettiamo da parte quella *maschera* di cinismo e di folle spregiudicatezza, e ce lo sposiamo di corsa". (Dietro le quinte di Studio Uno: il colpaccio di Rita, 1966: 29, my italics)

Here, the *Collettine* present their on-screen selves as a 'maschera': even if they seem *giovani* on TV, when they are off-stage they do not perform *giovani* rituals, such as going to the Piper. Moreover, they declare themselves ready to abandon their *giovane* identity to 'grow up', by following the traditional naturalised stages of a woman's life, such as getting married, in this way recuperating the potentially troubling representation of *giovani* femininities. The fact of emphasizing a difference between an on-stage and an off-stage behaviour also seems to suggest that the *giovane* identity can be easily

appropriated, but also easily abandoned. Butler notes how the exhibition of performative identities is differently perceived on- and off-stage. To explain this, she refers to the presence of a transvestite on a theatrical stage, or sitting next to us in a bus. She claims that, while the audience can ‘de-realize’, and thus accept more easily, the theatrical act, when the same act is performed on the streets, or in a bus, it becomes dangerous for the audience, because ‘there are no theatrical conventions to delimit the purely imaginary character of the act’ (Butler, 1988: 527). Similarly, the restraint of the *Collettine*’s *giovane* identity to on-stage performances seems to reduce the potential dangerousness of young people’s difference, by de-realizing it.

The use of *giovane* style as disguise in television and cinema performances had the effect of unveiling its performative construction. However, when the disguising was represented as off-stage, it could also become an empowering practice. For example, for those young people living in Southern Italy, where society still prevented young people’s emancipation, disguising oneself as *giovane* was a subversive practice, which made him/her become part of the community of *i giovani*. An article in *Big* describes the process of young women from Palermo dressing up as *giovani* every time they go to a club:

Le ragazze palermitane arrivano all’Open Gate, quartier generale della gioventù beat locale, con le minigonne nascoste nella borsetta. Poi, nel guardaroba del ritrovo, le indossano, *trasformandosi* in perfette “piperine”. Sono costrette a questa clandestinità, perché l’opinione pubblica non accetta ancora la moda giovane, ormai in voga in tutto il mondo. Qui i capelloni portano la parrucca. Le minigonne viaggiano in borsetta. (Pietrucci, 1966: 9, my italics)

According to the magazine, disguising oneself as *giovane* becomes a political act in the context of Southern Italy. The article from which this quotation is taken is entitled ‘I carbonari dello Shake’ and compares Southern *giovani* to the *Carbonari*, the members of the secret society *Carboneria*, which during the nineteenth century promoted the idea of a united Italy. Without concentrating here on the specific features of this secret society, what is of interest in this definition is that this comparison outlines the adoption of *giovane* style as a political act. Thus, just like the *Carbonari* were secretly fighting for the unification of Italy, *i giovani* are said to adopt the *giovane* style to defend their freedom to be *giovani*. The political use of the *giovane* disguise through wigs and miniskirts is said to be a political act in Southern cities (Risponde il Direttore, 1967a: 3), where young people’s difference is still not accepted by society as a whole. However, the significance of this ‘political’ act is still nevertheless limited, given that it happens in the safe space of the club, where the *giovane* style is permitted.

This section has outlined how, in the period 1965-67, the media construction of the *giovane* identity was extremely influenced by the commercialisation of products aimed at young people. The first subsection outlined how the refusal of parental authority and the freedom of expression claimed by the ‘beat di strada’ were defused in the *beat* style, for which commercial products were said to distinguish *i giovani* from *gli adulti* and to give *i giovani* more freedom. However, as the second subsection pointed out, the relationship with the industry was contradictory: popular media representations of becoming *giovane* tended to stress the control exercised by the industry over *i giovani*, and at the same time, the inevitability of the commercialisation of the *giovane* style, in order to be accessible for the entire ‘imagined community’ of young people. Moreover, in popular media, the *giovane* identity tended to be circumscribed to either certain spaces, or to on-screen

performances. This limitation gave to the *giovane* identity an allure of fictionality, which was beneficial in dispelling anxieties regarding the potential ‘difference’ of *i giovani*.

## ***2.2 Translating the beat: translation as a choice***

The previous section explored the strategies through which young people’s desires for freedom were expressed in the construction of the *beat* style in Italian *giovani* popular media, and its connections with countercultural movements such as the Italian ‘beat di strada’. However, a substantial part of the popular media construction of the Italian *beats* was related to its dependence on and/or distance from other countries’ youth cultures. References to the ‘beats’ in fact depended also on two very distinct models: on the one hand, they were inspired by the British beat musical scene and Swinging London fashion, that of the Beatles and Mary Quant. On the other hand, ‘beats’ were connected to the artistic and social movement of the American beatniks, which were in fact the inspiration for the ‘beat di strada’ and of similar protest movements that emerged in Europe during the 1960s. If one thinks of the features of Italian *beats* described in the previous section, it is clear that the colourful fashion adopted by Italian *giovani* had a British inspiration. While the Beatnik movement also appeared in the pages of *giovani* magazines, its domestication was more difficult, as it was a movement promoting practices such as free love and drug use.

Arthur Marwick (1998: 560) defines the ‘High Sixties’ (1964-1969) as the era of the ‘British Invasion’ of the four countries he analyses (Britain itself, the United States, France, and Italy). According to Marwick, during the mid-1960s, British pop music (and most notably the Beatles) and pop fashion (the miniskirt invented by Mary Quant) became two global icons for young people. Italian *giovani* magazines tended to refer to Britain as

a place where youth had the freedom to really express themselves. However, the strong influence of British style, language, and music necessitated translation for its inclusion in *giovani* popular media, as most Italian young people did not speak English and could not have a direct experience of the atmosphere of ‘Swinging London’. The word ‘translation’ here not only refers to language itself but also to the translation of cultural practices, music and fashion, which were equally domesticated for the Italian audience from one culture to the next. *Giovani* popular media presented the trends coming from Britain in a way that could be intelligible for an Italian audience; at the same time, this translation work had strong normative potential that could be used to create a distinction between Italian and foreign young people, and characterise these two groups differently.

In order to understand how the translation of foreign influences worked in popular media, Lawrence Venuti’s seminal work about the ‘scandal of translation’ (1998) offers guidance regarding the process of ‘domestication’ adopted by translators. According to Venuti, translation is a cultural practice that does not merely consist of a linguistic conversion, but also involves a ‘creative reproduction of values’ (Venuti, 1998: 1). When working on a text, the translator makes discursive choices (ibid.: 3) which can reproduce, or limit, stereotypical views about the ‘other’. In other words, translators construct foreign cultural identities in their work, and they can contribute to naturalising, or contrasting, stereotypical views about a foreign culture. The reproduction of stereotypes is often a result of the domestication of the foreign, or the ‘rewriting [of] the foreign text in domestic cultural terms’ (Venuti, 1998: 82): by associating foreign concepts to ideas that are familiar to the domestic audience, translators often risk losing the original meaning of the text. These observations are used by Venuti to advocate a different, more ethical form of translation, which takes into account cultural differences and avoids stereotypes.

Venuti's remarks are useful when applied to the different patterns of the popular media appropriation of foreign cultures. The concept of choice is fundamental in understanding this process, as *giovani* media descriptions of the foreign 'other' were based on the definition of 'positive' and 'negative' examples, which were either appropriated or rejected. In the period 1965-67, popular media products offered to their audience an almost literal translation of foreign cultural trends. This strategy of translation recalls Venuti's definition of the process of 'mirroring': here, the construction of domestic cultural identities is influenced by the appropriation of a foreign text, in which the reader recognizes domestic values (Venuti, 1998: 76). *Giovani* media tended to 'Italianise' certain cultural products of foreign cultures, in order to render them more intelligible to the Italian audience. A simultaneous process, however, tended to 'other' those aspects that were considered 'dangerous' for Italian youth, such as gender bending and political participation. The foreignisation of certain features of youth cultures, based on the reiteration of stereotypical views about Western youth, established certain behaviours that were not to be appropriated by the Italian young audience. As Venuti points out, 'translations [...] position readers in domestic intelligibilities that are also ideological positions, ensembles of values, beliefs, and representations' (Venuti, 1998: 78). This section examines in detail the strategies of 'mirroring' and 'othering' in the popular media translation of the 'foreign' in *giovani* popular media in the period 1965-67.

### **2.2.1 'Mirroring'**

The following letter from a young woman writing to the editor of the magazine *Big* illustrates how youth cultures coming from Western foreign countries became a model for Italian young people, especially when compared to the conservativeness of Italian society:



Caro Direttore, sono una ragazza 18enne ultramoderna, frequento il primo anno dell'università, mi pettino come Sandie Shaw, mi vesto Courrèges, porto quattro anelli alle dita, adoro George Harrison e so ballare lo shake come pochi altri. Sono giunta ad una conclusione: noi italiani siamo degli arretrati. Ciò dipende innanzitutto dalla mentalità gretta e conservatrice dell'italiano medio [...]. Io che sono abbonata ai giornali inglesi americani tedeschi e francesi so bene che in quelle nazioni la "beat generation" detta legge e le vecchie generazioni si piegano volentieri alle sue regole che rappresentano il futuro, il progresso. [...] Ma perché non ci svegliamo ragazzi, perché non ci scrolliamo di dosso quella patina di polvere e di muffa accumulatasi sui nostri padri e trasferitasi su di noi e che invece a partire da vent'anni fa i nostri coetanei degli altri paesi hanno già spolverato via?

(Risponde il Direttore, 1966a: 3)

It is interesting to point out how the young woman here appropriates foreign elements in order to describe her *giovane* identity. All the features the young woman uses to define herself come from foreign youth cultures: her hairstyle is inspired by the British model Sandie Shaw, her style by the French fashion designer Courrèges, and she listens and dances to foreign music, as her adoration for George Harrison demonstrates. The young woman also declares that she reads magazines produced in other countries. In her words, foreign countries are seen as the model for emancipation for *i giovani*, a model that Italian young people should follow. According to the letter, Italian *giovani* are in fact still too influenced by the culture of the 'padri', defined as a coat of dust and mould, and therefore out-dated. For the young female author of this letter, then, identification with foreign cultures becomes an emancipatory act, which makes her both veer away from and criticise Italian society.

The emancipatory appropriation of the ‘other’, as represented by the letter above, was accompanied by a commercial incorporation of the passion for the foreign in popular media: the magazine *Big*, for instance, used to organise trips to London for its readers (Viaggiate Big! Tutti a Londra, 1966: 12-13). However, for those *giovani* who could not afford direct contact with the foreign, *giovani* media became the instrument through which young people could get information on foreign trends, and especially music and fashion. The strategy through which Italian popular media presented these trends was to construct an ‘Italian version’ of, for example, British trends, through which Italian young people could feel part of a global process by still consuming Italian commercial products. To explain how this ‘mirroring’ process worked, this subsection analyses two specific examples of this type of translation: that of a band, namely the Beatles, and that of a street, namely Carnaby Street.

The ‘British Invasion’ followed the enormous success of the Beatles and the worldwide tour that brought the ‘Fab Four’ to Italy in March 1966. The Beatles and their music played a substantial role in the media construction of *i giovani*. Arthur Marwick points out that ‘*BIG* [...] presented the Beatles as the symbol of the struggle of young people against the older generation’ (Marwick, 1998: 463). The Beatles, as much as the commercial products presented in the previous section, were represented by popular media as an instrument of rebellion against adults. Not only did the Beatles have many young Italian fans, but, as Fabbri (2014: 41-56) points out, the success of the first Beatles’ hits on the Italian record market in 1963-64 influenced the formation of the first Italian *beat complessi* [bands]. The Italian *beat* music scene, in fact, was much more populated by bands than by individual singers (who were, however, the main visible representatives of *i giovani* in mainstream media such as television and cinema). By literally being a

group of people, the *complessi* clearly fitted into the representation of young people as a community and reflected the main interest in music of the *beats*. In the *complessi*, the effect of a homogenous community was also reinforced by the trend (also borrowed from the Beatles) that required every member of a band to dress alike: ‘the public image of the bands [...] offered a social model of participation and friendship: band members wore the same outfits, shared the same microphone, did everything together and supported each other’ (Tomatis, 2014: 32). By looking visibly similar, *complessi* reproduced the idea of the ‘unity of thought’ between *i giovani* who dressed in the same way.

Interestingly, in Italy certain bands composed of foreign young people enjoyed significant success in this period. Fabbri highlights how these British bands’ careers ‘took place almost exclusively in Italy, and all their songs (with very few exceptions) were sung in Italian’ (Fabbri, 2014: 42). The success of bands such as the Motowns and, most notably, the Rokes was not only in their foreignness, but also in the way in which they represented an Italian imitation of British bands. The case of the Rokes is particularly interesting because they were the only *beat complesso* who became mainstream in Italian media. The band, formed by Shel Shapiro, Bobby Poster, Johnny Chalton, and Mike Shepston, started their career in Italy in 1963 (Della Casa & Manera, 2011: 104). This was how, some years later, the arrival of the band in Italy is described by the magazine *Giovani*:

Il 12 maggio 1963 alle dodici in punto l’Orient Express entrò sferragliando alla stazione di Milano. Da una carrozza di seconda classe scesero uno dopo l’altro quattro ragazzi, quattro giovani inglesi con i capelli lunghi, i calzoni a tubo di stufa, gli stivaletti con il mezzo tacco. Quattro eccentrici sconosciuti che la gente si

fermò a guardare a bocca aperta come se si trattasse di marziani. (Isa Bella, 1967: 24)

The article goes on to present the band, but this representation of four young men, with long hair and a *giovane* style, arriving at Milan station, could easily be the introduction of an article on the Beatles. Moreover, use of the term ‘marziano’ in the quotation tends to emphasize the ‘foreignness’ of the Rokes. The Rokes’ style was clearly inspired by the ‘Fab Four’; thus, when *Ciao Amici* published an interview with the Beatles’ tailor in 1967, the pictures in the article depict the Rokes, even if references to the Rokes are only made in the subtitle of the piece and in the final part of the article. The tailor in fact is said to dress both groups (Pencill, 1967: 57). The identification of the Rokes with the Beatles was not only thanks to their similar style. For example, the legendary rivalry between the Beatles and the Rolling Stones also found its Italian translation: ‘[the Rokes’] rivalry with Equipe 84 provided Italian audiences with the kind of spice that also propelled the careers of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones’ (Fabbri, 2014: 52).

The Rokes’ Italian success was helped by their affiliation with Teddy Reno, Rita Pavone’s manager, who turned them into film and television personalities. They featured in the Algida ice-cream *Carosello*, and participated in the *Musicarello Rita la figlia Americana* (Vivarelli, 1965). Their trademark, as Fabbri notes, was the ‘mixture of British look and Italian sound’ (Fabbri, 2014: 52): on the one hand, the Rokes looked exactly like the Beatles, but on the other hand, despite their British accents, they spoke and performed almost exclusively in Italian. Their strong British accents, indeed, gave the band a comic feature, noticeable, for example, in *Rita la figlia Americana*. Just like the Italian dubbing of Laurel and Hardy sketches, in which the English accent with the Italian language works as a comic device, the Rokes’ anglicised way of speaking Italian was used to produce a

comic effect. Comedy here functioned not only to 'Italianise' the Rokes, but also to decrease their subversive potential: adding humorous aspects to a foreign band might be seen as a strategy to recuperate their potential 'otherness'. The Rokes represented the Italian version of the Beatles, and a blend between Italian and British cultures: they portrayed the British style, but at the same time they 'domesticated' it, by using the Italian language that was understandable for the audience.

A similar popular media appropriation occurred with British fashion. In *giovani* magazines, Italian *giovane* fashion was said to be 'di diretta derivazione anglosassone, come la musica. [...] La teen-ager è nata proprio con la valorizzazione della moda giovane, importata dall'Inghilterra. Lo stile francese e, peggio ancora, quello italiano, sono roba "out", da femmine sopra ai venti' (D'Amico, 1967: 39). It was London that 'stabilisce la lunghezza delle gonne e delle chiome maschiline della "beat generation"' (Lo Pinto, 1966b: 26). However, when British fashion was imported to Italy, there was a tendency to 'Italianise' it: to explain this point, the case of the twinning of Carnaby Street in London with Via Margutta in Rome in 1966 is particularly significant. Via Margutta, situated just off Piazza del Popolo in Rome, was supposed to become the Italian Carnaby Street, at least according to magazines describing the decision of Mary Quant and other British designers to open their shops in this street. The commercial enterprise was also accompanied by an extensive advertising campaign that presented this operation as a cultural twinning, and as a step towards the modernisation of Italian society. An act of commercial imperialism, that was the establishment of British shops in Italy, was instead presented as a 'twinning' that placed the Italian and British cultures on the same level, as if it were an exchange. Soon after the declaration of the 'twinning' of the two streets, a point of order was raised by two *Democrazia Cristiana* members of parliament, for whom

the creation of a space for *i giovani* right in the centre of the capital city was problematic. The parliamentary debate was discussed in an article that appeared in *Big*, in which it was explained how the two politicians,

concludendo l'interrogazione, chiedono di sapere se “non si reputi utile, anche da un punto di vista di costume e di ordine pubblico, che via Margutta e le zone adiacenti evitino di trasformarsi in un permanente luogo di incontro tra gli appassionati di una moda discutibile, ecc., ecc., ecc.”. La nobile mozione termina con i soliti attacchi contro la moda che piace ai giovani e con i soliti appelli al buon costume, alla pubblica quiete e via discorrendo. (Sveglia, ragazzi! Onorevole ci dica: come ci dobbiamo vestire? 1967: 5)

In the quotation, the journalist underlines how the influence of foreign countries is seen by politicians as a potential danger for young people. This attitude is criticised in the article, because the arrival of British fashion brands in Rome is seen as an emancipatory possibility for *i giovani*. In other words, the article here seems to defend the appropriation of the ‘foreign’ made by *i giovani* as a form of self-expression, against the politicians’ attitude of saving Italian *giovani* from foreign ‘aggressions’.

At the same time, other articles in *giovani* magazines presented an opposing attitude, which promoted the creation of a specifically Italian *giovane* fashion. An article in *Ciao Amici* written in collaboration with the Italian fashion brand Valstar endorsed the creation of a specifically Italian *giovane* fashion:

Basta con l'imbottimento del cervello a suon di op, pop, beat, tutta roba che viene dall'estero, per un certo tipo di fisico che magari è tutto l'opposto del nostro! Una moda giovane, italiana, dettata dai giovani, questo è quanto abbiamo deciso di darvi e per questo abbiamo bisogno della vostra collaborazione. (Renata, 1966: 49)

The article had a promotional function; however, it also signalled a nationalistic narrative that, although not prevalent in *giovani* magazines, recalled the fascist imperative to ‘dress Italianly’ (De Grazia, 1992: 225). One of the aims established by the Fascist regime during the 1930s was the complete economic autonomy of the Italian state: in order to achieve this, the Regime promoted the purchase of Italian products, including fashion. Women’s magazines discouraged the adoption of foreign trends, and an emphasis was placed on the moral duty of buying Italian fashion. However, Sofia Gnoli underlines how this strategy only worked on the surface, as ‘le maggiori case di moda [...] continuarono a trarre ispirazione dalla moda francese, riproducendo con piccole varianti le mise comparse sulle passerelle parigine’ (Gnoli, 2005: 89). Similarly, even if *giovane* fashion was extremely dependent on foreign models, a hidden narrative that insisted on the prevalence of Italian fashion over other European countries is identifiable in the magazines. This narrative is sustained in the quotation above by using discourses such as the physical difference between Italian and British bodies. Moreover, in the same article, when summarising the results of an enquiry, the magazine points out how Italian young people:

5. [...] giudica negativamente la moda beat, le minigonne e gli eccessi in genere.

6. Il popolo più elegante è l’italiano, vengono poi gli inglesi, i francesi. È opinione comune che gli americani vestano in modo orribile. (Renata, 1966: 50)

A supposed superiority of Italian citizens with regard to elegance is underlined here, and this notion of elegance does not include the *beat* fashion, which is judged as ‘excessive’ by Italian youth, the article claims. The presence of this narrative shows how, despite the generalised presentation of *i giovani* as a transnational community, where inspirations from other countries were recognised as forms of identification for Italian *giovani*, some boundaries were still drawn between Italian and foreign fashion trends. The permanence

of autarchic discourses, celebrating the quality of the ‘Italian product’ over products coming from other countries also reflects the longevity of fascist-reminiscent discourses on a supposed supremacy of the Italian population over racial and national ‘others’, which celebrated the moderation of Italian style against foreign excesses.

### 2.2.2 ‘Othering’

The contradictory position on *beat* fashion outlined above shows how some aspects of foreign cultures were not easily appropriated in Italian *giovani* media: British commercial fashion was accepted by magazines, but an Italian *giovane* fashion was still desirable. Still, British *beat* music and fashion were ‘mirrored’ in Italian culture because they emphasized the leisure aspect of youth cultures: *giovani* popular media translated them in order to promote an Italian youth culture based on consumer goods. Other aspects, such as the politicisation of youth and the androgyny promoted by the *beat* style, were much less easily accepted in Italy. In popular media, these two aspects were distanced from Italian *giovani* by uniquely associating them with foreign youth. In other words, in translating these attitudes, popular media operated an ‘othering’, in which foreign young people were accused of promoting bad behaviour and influencing Italian *giovani*.

In *giovani* magazines, articles concerning foreign news were often organised in the form of reportages. For example, an article appeared in *Big* defines a trip to London as a ‘caccia al beat’ (Londra: Caccia al Beat, 1965: 48), recalling the language used in ethnographic and anthropologic accounts. The aim of the reporters’ trips was to describe the latest foreign trends to the Italian audience. In this approach, the observers put themselves outside the scene and described an ‘alien’ world made up of the most eclectic styles, where young women’s appearance was ‘marziano: gonne cortissime sopra il



ginocchio, e non solo di sera' (Boncompagni, 1966: 13) and young men had long hairstyles or used wigs: 'fa fortuna di questi tempi un negozio che vende parrucche con capelli lunghissimi per uomo' (Londra: Caccia al Beat, 1965: 50). The geographical and cultural distance expressed in reportages was a good strategy to externalise specific aspects to a 'someone' and a 'somewhere' else. Discourses in *giovani* magazines separated the Italian audience from fashion trends that carried specific social meanings, such as gender bending. The *beat* style, and its reconfiguration of traditional gendered style features – such as long hair for young men and short hair for young women – challenged the gendered division of fashion between 'masculine' and 'feminine' garments. Raewyn Connell, in her analysis of the processes of naturalization of gender division and patriarchal power, points out how 'one of the most familiar features of sexual display is behaviour and clothing that emphasizes stereotyped sex differences' (Connell, 1987: 181-182). British subcultures challenged this division by adopting a 'unisex' style that favoured a recombination of gender features. Alessandra Castellani points out that 'lo stile androgino [della metà degli anni Sessanta] propone non tanto una donna vestita da uomo o un uomo poco virile, ma l'immagine di un giovane che gioca con il suo doppio: i ragazzi e le ragazze si inseguono nel paradigma dell'assimilazione' (Castellani, 2010: 38). British young women were described as follows in a reportage from London that appeared in *Big* in 1965:

hanno lo stesso stile, nell'abbigliamento e nei capelli, dei loro ragazzi. [...]  
Entrando in una delle solite cantine adattate a ritrovo dei giovani londinesi sono rimasto meravigliato nel vedere con quanta difficoltà, nella penombra del locale, era difficile distinguere i maschi dalle femmine. (Londra: Caccia al Beat, 1965: 52)

The (male) journalist, describing his visit to a club in London, declares he is ‘surprised’ by the impossibility of distinguishing between young men and young women, because their style is so similar. The ‘surprise’ expressed by the journalist is not necessarily a negative judgement of the androgynous British style; it appears rather to underline the erasure of gender differences in foreign young people’s style. The way in which British young people are presented in the quotation, in fact, functions here to reinforce the idea of a unitary community of young people, more than discussing the potential gender trouble contained in this image. Not long after the London report, in fact, *Big* announced that in 1967 even in Italy ‘ragazzi e ragazze vestiranno tutti con lo stesso stile’, celebrating ‘l’era del mono-sesso’:

questo infatti è il momento della moda mono-sesso, dello stile androgino, dei pantaloni per ragazze, di camicie di velo fiorito pei ragazzi, di robette asessuate nate da un dialogo puro, eclettico, privo di orchestrazioni, fatto di giovani ambo-sesso che vivono la stessa vita. (Lo Pinto, 1966a: 32-33)

Thus, unisex fashion, when it reaffirmed the unitary construction of *i giovani*, was accepted. In the quotation, the unisex style is considered as a reflection of the unity of *i giovani* who, no matter what their sex, ‘vivono la stessa vita’ (ibid.). However, the way in which the unisex features of the *giovane* style were narrated did not call gender roles into question. When this happened, magazines tended to disapprove of the change in gender roles that is suggested by a unisex style:

No, no e poi no, mille volte no. No a quel sarto parigino che ha pensato di cambiare l’ordine dei fattori mandando in giro due creature, un uomo e una donna, lei con i pantaloni, lui con la sottana. [...] Mi chiedo [...] dove può portare un

simile eccesso. [...] Non voglio che la mia ragazza passi domani da mia madre per domandare la mia mano. (Fulvio, 1966: 46)

Interestingly, again, in this quotation the idea of ‘cambiare l’ordine dei fattori’ is ascribed by the journalist to a tailor from Paris. Anxieties towards a redefinition of gender roles, and especially towards a female appropriation of traditionally masculine practices such as the wedding proposal, are dispelled by referring to the foreign ‘other’, in this way separating Italian *giovani* from potentially subversive discourses.

The same ‘foreignising’ attitude regarding aspects of the *beat* style that could carry potentially dangerous connotations can be found in discourses around the political participation of young people. In particular, this happened when the term *beat* was equated with the term ‘beatnik’, by directly referring to the social and political meaning of this term. In reportages, beatniks living in the United Kingdom were described by magazines as vagabonds and criminals:

Come i vagabondi essi si spostano, in bande, arrestandosi dove capita, accampanandosi [...] in edifici diroccati fino a quando non vengono cacciati. Vivono di espedienti [...] come l’elemosinare, il ricattare, il rubacchiare e qualsiasi altra cosa... Lungi da una nobile esistenza bohémienne di ribellione e di stenti, il beatnikismo è una squallida vergogna. (Cianfanelli, 1966: 28)

The beatniks’ lifestyle is described as a sequence of criminal offences, such as stealing, blackmailing and begging. The journalist also questions the idealistic engagement of the beatniks, by saying that behind their claims stands delinquency. There is also a critique here of the beatniks’ disengagement: despite their ideological engagement, they are seen as wasting their time, not sticking to the ethics of work. In the same article, a young

British man tells a *Ciao Amici* journalist how he renounced his beatnik life because he could no longer find meaning in it:

“Mi sono trovato un impiego statale [...]. Con i beatniks non ha funzionato. Stare sempre nell’ozio, con la sola protesta sociale come programma, non dava senso alla mia vita. Niente rimpianti ora. Mi accorgo però che ho perso un sacco di tempo”. (ibid.: 29)

In the quotation, the young man’s new position as a state worker is presented as a positive change from his previous beatnik lifestyle. This ‘normalization’ of the young man here seems particularly striking, especially if one considers how the construction of the Italian *beat* was based on practices referring to leisure activities. This example shows how contradictory the construction of the *giovane* identity could be, especially when it came to the concerns about the political participation of young people.

The constant representation of the ‘beatnik’ as a foreign person is particularly significant, given that there were Italian ‘beat di strada’ movements. Even when social and political participation happened in Italy, *giovani* media often still represented it as a foreign phenomenon, in order to continue the presentation of Italian *giovani* as politically disengaged and therefore more reassuring. For example, when a journalist described the beats occupying Piazza di Spagna<sup>30</sup> in Rome in an article for *Big*, he declared himself to be:

preoccupato nel constatare la facilità con cui i primi beatniks hanno fatto seguaci tra i ragazzetti e le ragazzette del nostro paese che scappano da casa per unirsi a loro, votandosi all’acattonaggio in nome di una protesta, di cui non sanno dare neppure una spiegazione plausibile. (Steni, 1965: 53)

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<sup>30</sup> On the *capelloni* di Piazza di Spagna, see also Giachetti, 2006: 70.

The ‘beatniks’, or the subjects that made the journalist worried, are defined here as foreign subjects, who are said to negatively influence Italian young people’s behaviour, such as the act of running away from home – a practice that, according to *giovani* magazines, was particularly common amongst Italian youth. The responsibility for Italian *giovani*’s bad behaviour, and for their becoming ‘space invaders’, to refer back to Puwar’s concept, was thus given to the influence of foreign young people. A line was drawn between foreign and Italian young people demonstrating in the square: in the same article, a caption reminds readers that ‘l’italiano si distingue sempre per l’eleganza. Questo vale anche per i “capelloni” nostrani, che mostrano un abbigliamento più decente e un contegno meno anticonformista’ (ibid.: 52). The decency of Italian *giovani* is here underlined by their comparison with foreign young people, who are said to be more ‘anticonformisti’ – that is, in this context, more politically active. Furthermore, the reference to the body and, in particular, to the decency and cleanliness of bodies, can be seen as a discourse that aims to bodily differentiate Italian *beats* from foreign young people and to affirm a supposed superiority of Italians: ‘una cosa va detta di noi italiani: ribellione o no, ci laviamo il collo tutti i giorni’ (Pagani, 1966: 32). Political activism is distanced here from Italian *giovani*, who are ‘clean’: the Italian term ‘pulito’ stands both for ‘physically clean’ and for ‘honest’, ‘respectful’, and, in this case, not politically engaged. The advice for young people, then, was to be careful in adhering to potentially dangerous lifestyles. This narrative is also retraceable in the song ‘Serenata’ (Beretta, Del Prete & Celentano, 1966), sung by Don Backy in the film *l’Immensità* (De Fina, 1967):

Signori capelloni questa serenata voglio a voi cantar/smettete la polemica e fate qualche cosa per favor/la gente che vi guarda per le strade pensa solamente che/le vostre idee son corte quanto lunghe son le vostre chiome, ahimè/ [...] cercate di

creare qualche stile che nessuno ha fatto già/vedrete che sarete ancora i primi come nell'antichità/Inglese, Francesi, Normanni, ci han dato qualcosa/capelli d'Italia, la musica è nata da noi/ [...] smettiamo di seguire quelle impronte che non sono adatte a noi/tagliatevi i capelli e da seguaci diverrete primi voi.

The song insists on underlining the bad influence of other countries on young people's *giovane* identity, by returning to a narrative of superiority derived from the splendour of the Roman Empire (the song in fact refers to 'l'antichità'). The song suggests that, if Italian *giovani* stop following other countries' bad influence, their nation can be a leader again.

This section has demonstrated that references to the foreign in Italian *giovani* media during the period 1965-67 were often contradictory. It seems, however, that both the strategy of 'mirroring' foreign cultures, and that of 'othering' some aspects of them, produced a differentiation between Italian *giovani* and foreign young people. This separation can be seen as a continuation of nationalistic discourses that were circulating in Italian society not only during the Fascist period, but also after the Second World War. Moreover, these two strategies signal how the model of Western Anglophone countries was not only received as a positive example of modernity, but was also used as a negative model for young people. The foreignisation of the 'beat di strada' shows how the political and social engagement of Italian young people was problematic for Italian society and therefore defused in popular media. Moreover, the 'othering' of the troubling connotations of the unisex style, and especially those suggesting a change in gender roles, confirmed the anxieties projected on *i giovani*'s gender identity. The next section will discuss and problematise further the discourses about unisex appearance and the appropriation of troubling gender features in the *giovane* style.

### **2.3 Capelloni and the absence of female sexuality**

In the mid-1960s, two elements became representative of new attitudes towards sexual and social politics for young people: long hair for *giovani* men, and the emergence of discourses around *giovane* female sexuality. Long hair was fundamental to the *giovane* male style, to the point where the word *capellone*, literally ‘young man with big hair’, became a synonym for *i giovani*.<sup>31</sup> However, the male appropriation of a traditionally feminine beauty feature such as long hair problematised representations of *giovani* masculinities in popular media. In this period, moreover, discourses around *giovani* women’s sexuality started to emerge in *giovani* media. From 1965, current affairs, namely the *La Zanzara* case and the episode of Franca Viola in Sicily, which will both be explained later in the section, brought young women’s attitudes towards sexuality to the attention of mainstream media. At the same time, the trend of the miniskirt, which showed a greater portion of women’s bodies, was said to increase the sexual attractiveness of young women. However, whilst magazines encouraged the wearing of long hairstyles and miniskirts and defended those young people who were discriminated against for wearing them, discourses around miniskirts and long hair also seem to suggest a cautious approach to female sexual liberation and to changes in the media construction of *giovani* masculinities and femininities. The following sub-section concentrates on long hair, and on the multiple connotations that this style took on in *giovani* popular media. The second sub-section then analyses the discourses that show a change in the media construction of *giovani* femininities, by focusing on Rita Pavone and Caterina Caselli as case studies, and discusses to what extent the miniskirt was presented as an instrument of sexual

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<sup>31</sup> The image of the *Capellone* to represent Italian *giovani* soon entered Italian popular culture: for example, in a 1967 episode of the well-known series of *Caroselli* Miralanza – the brand which introduced the famous black chick Calimero in Caroselli – Calimero is visited by Teofilo, ‘il cugino *capellone*’, a teenager characterised by a long hairstyle (*Carosello Miralanza*, 1967).

emancipation.

### **2.3.1 Capelloni, or the redefinition of male attractiveness**

During the period 1965-67, the adoption of long hair for young men was undoubtedly one of the features that contributed to the change of Italian male beauty standards. Alessandra Castellani points out how, from the mid-1960s, ‘i capelli maschili diventano liberi, non irreggimentati dalla brillantina o da oli, tenuti in ordine ma più liberi rispetto al decennio precedente’ (Castellani, 2010: 40). The previous section has shown how, in 1965, the long hairstyles of the *capelloni* were connected in popular media to the ‘beat di strada’, and were therefore criticised in *giovani* popular media as a sign of untidiness. However, thanks to international stars such as the Beatles, who popularised the trend of long hair, from 1966 this feature was appropriated by young men, who used their hairstyle as a way to differentiate themselves from adults. While in mainstream media the nickname *capellone* mainly referred to politically active young people, in *giovani* media this term was depoliticised and became one of the names with which *giovani* men were commonly defined.

During the 1960s, the trend of long hair started to be promoted by Italian music stars. In the film *Cuore Matto* (Corbucci, 1967), for example, the singer Little Tony (the nickname for the singer Antonio Ciacci) sings to an audience solely of women who constantly wink at him, saying “quanto è bello con quel ciuffo!”. The quiff, celebrated in his song ‘Il ragazzo col ciuffo’, was Little Tony’s trademark: ‘Mi han detto che ti piacciono i ragazzi col ciuffo [...] ed io mi sono fatto crescere i capelli per farmi guardare da te’ (Cassia, Ciacci & Minardi, 1962). Little Tony was known to the Italian audience for being the Italian equivalent of Elvis Presley: his quiff, recalling that of Presley, became an



element of attractiveness, which was displayed and constantly remarked upon in films and television appearances. These new standards of attractiveness circulated in *giovani* magazines and proliferated within young men, to the point that an article in *Big* in 1967 declared that ‘il “bello” di oggi è l’uomo che fino a ieri era considerato [...] brutto’, and it elected the Rokes’ singer Shel Shapiro, with his long hairstyle, ‘il più bello del mondo’ (Paola, 1967a: 42-45).

Most importantly, long hair became an essential part of their *giovane* identity for most men: ‘una parte di giovani considera la questione *capelli* una questione di moda, di realizzazione del sé, inserita in un discorso circolare relativo al radicale cambiamento del gusto rispetto a quello degli adulti’ (Calanca, 2008: 170). For example, French singer Michel Polnareff, who often featured in Italian magazines, confirmed the importance of hair as the expression of his identity by saying that without his long hair ‘avrei l’impressione di essere nudo’ (Il capello in crisi-Michel Polnareff diventerà calvo?, 1967, 44). Similarly, in a letter to the editor of *Big* a young man declared that his long hairstyle was his way of expressing his being *giovane*:

Caro Marcello, sono un ragazzo che ha da poco compiuto i vent’anni. Il mio stato d’animo è a terra: a casa ero un piccolo idolo, le ragazze mi venivano appresso a frotte, ma come per incanto la mia vita è cambiata. Mi hanno tagliato i capelli e ho un senso d’inferiorità che non riesco neppure a descriverti. Ti prego, aiuta tutti gli ex capelloni sotto le armi. Fai un appello a tutte le ragazze d’Italia che ci tengano più in considerazione. Un’altra cosa: [...] ho sentito dire che vendono parrucche alla Beatles. Come fare per procurarmene un paio? (Risponde il Direttore, 1966b: 3)

In the letter, the young man suggests that he was obliged to cut his hair because of

compulsory military service: suddenly, he feels inferior for not being able to express his *giovane* identity through his appearance and thus also through his hair. He asks the editor advice about where to buy a wig, which could temporarily solve his problem, and make him a *capellone* again. The young man also uses the magazine to tell young women that it is not a soldier's fault if he has to cut off his hair, but the army's, therefore they should be more sympathetic. This suggestion is interesting, because it shows the insecurity of the young man towards young women who are here connoted as actively choosing their partner.<sup>32</sup> Letters also testify to the unhappiness linked to the sense of loss caused by the haircut:

Ero felice, sino a pochi giorni fa. Ma alcune persone a cui non andava a genio la mia zazzera lunga, mi hanno insultato e a viva forza hanno reciso la mia bella chioma. Non mi crederai, ma in me si è verificato questo: ho perso la felicità. Soffro di un complesso inspiegabile e non sopporto più la compagnia di nessuno e tantomeno la mia ragazza. Io le voglio bene ma non desidero che mi veda finché non mi ricrescerà la cara chioma. (Cara Paola, 1967: 10)

In both the above letters, it is interesting to note how a style feature such as long hair becomes an element on which the power of *gli adulti*, represented by the army or an undefined crowd, subordinates *i giovani*, thus reproducing the power structure in which young people were subjected to adult authority. Moreover, both letters show the emergence of preoccupations about the effect of this act on other *giovani*. The Sardinian young man writing the letter above cannot stand the idea of his girlfriend or his friends seeing him without his long hair, indeed, he feels insecure, to the point that he declares he

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<sup>32</sup> The acknowledgement of young women's sexuality will be discussed in the next section; however, this is a good example of how the active involvement of young women in romantic and sexual relationships starts to emerge in letters written by young men.

has lost his ‘happiness’. Not only has the young man lost one of the features of his attractiveness, he has also lost an element of identification with, and belonging to, the community of *i giovani*.

This letter also introduces a recurrent theme that appeared in letters written to *giovani* magazines, namely numerous attacks by the police, or by an undefined crowd, in the streets, during which the *capelloni*’s hair was cut off for no apparent reasons. The quotation reported below comes from one of the numerous letters denouncing these acts that were sent to *giovani* magazines in the period 1965-67:

Caro Marcello, le persecuzioni continuano. Credevamo che il “taglio di capelli” fosse ormai un incubo dimenticato, quando, l’altro giorno, mentre mi trovavo in casa è arrivato un nostro amico, ex capellone, rapato a zero. Individui non ben definiti, l’avevano chiuso in una stanza e tosato. Ma è possibile questo? Siamo andati in questura, ma ci hanno riso in faccia. A chi rivolgersi? È mai possibile che soltanto in Italia esistano questi soprusi [...]? (Risponde il Direttore, 1966c: 3)

In this letter, no explicit meaning is given to these episodes, apart from the difficulty Italian society has in accepting the trend of long hair, and the feeling of discrimination of the *capelloni* from *gli adulti*. However, it can be assumed that two main meanings were connected to long hairstyles, and created anxieties in Italian society: firstly, the early identification of the *capellone* with the political, and mainly foreign, beatnik, and secondly, the potential threat of long hair to the definition of Italian masculinities and maleness. For example, another letter recalls:

qualche giorno fa un giovane di bell’aspetto, Giuseppe B., attraversava una delle strade principali della città ostentando indifferenza ai risolini della gente per la sua folta e lunga chioma. Ad un incrocio, un gruppo di ragazzacci prese a sottolineare

il suo aspetto mettendo in dubbio, a voce alta con l'approvazione delle persone nelle vicinanze, la mascolinità del giovane. A questo punto Giuseppe si avvicinò al gruppetto. La discussione si animò finché si venne alle mani. (Il corriere dei Supporters, 1967: 8)

In this letter, Giuseppe B., a young man, is said to be induced to fight with a crowd on the street because they questioned his 'masculinity'. The 'masculinity' discussed here is clearly the heterosexuality of the young man: as Chapter one argued, the appropriation of feminine features, such as long hairstyles, in men's appearance was often equated with a potential homosexuality of the bearer, and therefore the adoption of this style by young men troubled the traditional aesthetic ideal of virile Italian masculinity. This last letter, then, suggests that during the mid-1960s the Italian *capelloni* reflected preoccupations about a change in the conceptualisation of masculinities, which often created anxieties about male homosexuality; the cutting of young men's hair was therefore a punishment and an attempt to symbolically restore their heterosexuality. This does not mean that the anxieties towards the potential homosexuality of the *capelloni* was the only reason why they were discriminated against in Italian villages and cities, as the political meaning given to long hair was also a matter of preoccupation. However, this connection was surely present, as it is also found in other popular media texts.<sup>33</sup> I *giovani* themselves tended to dismiss the adults' critiques on the non-masculinity, or effeminacy, of their hairstyle. For example, the members of the Renegades, a British band who participated in

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<sup>33</sup> A homophobic representation of the *capelloni* can be found in 'Il mostro della domenica', the episode directed by Steno of the film *Capriccio all'Italiana* (Bolognini et al., 1968). In this episode, Totò, angry with some *capelloni* who occupied his house, decides to take revenge against as many *capelloni* as he can gather together. He uses many strategies in order to kidnap and punish them. One of these is to pretend to be a homosexual person (in doing this, using all the most stereotypical traits of the effeminate homosexual) inviting two *capelloni* to follow him. The two men obviously accept, confirming the fictitious link between long hair and homosexuality.

the Sanremo Festival in 1966, used *Big* to specify that they were biologically male and heterosexual.

Desideriamo solo che tutti i giornali che si sono rivolti a noi con frasi offensive sappiano questo: [...]

4- come da certificato di nascita risulta che il nostro solista KIM BROWN è nato a Birmingham il 2 maggio 1945 e secondo gli accertamenti del chirurgo, dell'assistente e di un paio di infermiere, è risultato di  *Sesso maschile* [...]. Questo per chiarire sempre ad alcuni i seri dubbi che avevano circa il sesso di Kim. Cose da pazzi! Domandatelo alle amiche di Kim se è uomo o donna e ne sentirete delle belle... (Renegades: siamo uomini, ci laviamo, 1966: 12)

The arrogant display of heterosexuality contained in this quotation, and especially in the machismo expressed in the final comment, shows how even young people themselves were ill at ease with the accusations of homosexuality made by journalists. Although long hair was, in the mid-1960s, a fundamental part of the *giovane* male identity, popular media representations tended to contain its subversive connotations, and to reaffirm the normative image of heterosexual young men.

In 1967, the dissemination of the trend of long hair started to be questioned by young people who, in letters written to *giovani* magazines, debated the extent to which long hair was still as an emancipatory sign indicating their difference with *gli adulti*. Through letters to the editor's section, the magazine *Big* hosted a debate between those young people who, given that long hair had become purely a fashion feature, wondered whether it was time for young men to cut their hair and start to enter into dialogue with adults, and those who thought that long hair continued to have political connotations, and thus giving it up would have been the proof that it was only a trend (Risponde il Direttore,

1967b: 3-4). It is significant to note how, in *giovani* magazines, style features became the object of debates that involved the meaning of being *giovane*, and the commercialisation of the *giovane* style. The debate outlined above demonstrates how young people were far from passively accepting the imposition of commercial trends, but rather were conscious of the industry's appropriation of trends coming from below, and they were debating the commercialisation of style elements with a political meaning. This debate anticipates the centrality of the 'political' in representations of young people that would characterise the period from late 1967 to 1970, and that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Alongside the figure of the *capelloni*, other, more reassuring images of *i giovani* were constructed in popular media, as representations of several male *giovani* stars demonstrate. These stars mainly featured in cinema and television, which were the two media products that could not be consumed independently by young people. Gene Guglielmi for example, a young Italian singer and television personality, played the role of 'the beatnik' in the television quiz show *Giochi in Famiglia*, hosted by Mike Bongiorno. However, his role was that of the *capellone* accepted by all his family: 'mamma è d'accordo, babbo lo stesso, la nonna dice che a lui i capelli lunghi donano, "e poi se li tiene bene, li lava tre volte alla settimana"' (Ardini, 1966: 64). Despite his long hair, in this article Guglielmi is presented by referring to all his relatives: in representations of this male star, the generational struggle is completely absent. Moreover, emphasis is put on underlining that Guglielmi is clean, in this way reproducing the stereotype of Italian *capelloni* as cleaner and more elegant than foreign beatniks. The construction of the acceptable *capellone*, as represented by Gene Guglielmi, shows the attempts to recuperate the potentially troubling image of *i capelloni*, especially in those media products, such as television programmes, consumed also by an adult audience.

Most notably, singer and actor Gianni Morandi represents the compromise between *i giovani* and *gli adulti* in the period 1965-67. Unlike the *capelloni* and the members of the *complessi*, Morandi's style, even if *giovane*, did not emphasize any of the troubling meanings that have been outlined thus far in this chapter: he did not have long hair, nor did he wear colourful garments. Moreover, both his acting roles in *Musicarelli* films and the off-stage accounts of his life as told by magazines formed a coherent persona, that of the 'boy next door', who never contradicts adults and is accepted by them in return. This effect was also enhanced by the fact that in Morandi's *Musicarelli* trilogy, *Non son degno di te/In ginocchio da te/Se non avessi più te* (Fizzarotti, 1964/1965/1965), the role of Morandi's partner was played by his actual fiancée, Laura Efrikian, whom he married in 1966 and whose love story was recounted by *giovani* magazines. Morandi's character in the trilogy, Gianni Traimonti, is a young man who has to move from the countryside in Emilia Romagna to Naples for his compulsory military service. His love for music is what defines his being *giovane*; however, his provincialism determines an attachment to traditions, namely respect for family roles and the value of marriage. Gianni Morandi's star persona seems to contradict most of the features of the *beat* identity, especially those that constructed *il giovane* in opposition to *gli adulti*. However, in popular media, he is identified as *giovane*, and embodies a representative for *i giovani*, as well as his foreign and more subversive peers. His presence in Italian *giovani* media shows that, despite an apparently homogenous construction, images of *i giovani* were actually diversified, with some tending to recuperate youth by giving it a more reassuring representation. Morandi's celebrity also highlights how the construction of *i giovani* in these popular media was ultimately controlled by adult persons, who still aimed to give a

normative representation of young people which could please not only young people, but also their parents.

### ***2.3.2 Androgynous women, or the problematization of female sexuality***

During the 1960s, traditional notions of morality started to be questioned and challenged by young people on a global scale, as a result of the desire to overcome the ‘chaos of unknowing’ (Weeks, 2007: 58) that surrounded everything relating to sex. From 1965, Italian *giovani* magazines described increasing requests for sexual education in schools, and new attitudes towards premarital and teenage sexuality. However, discourses around young people’s sexuality were influenced by gender, and they tended to exclude young women. As Marwick claims, in the 1960s ‘sexual liberation [...] was somewhat too much of a male monopoly’ (Marwick, 1998: 566). For example, although Gianni Morandi was the ‘boy next door’ of Italian popular media, in the film *In Ginocchio da Te* (Fizzarotti, 1964) he is represented as cheating on his girlfriend by having a three-day trip and love affair with another woman. His affair does not affect his construction as a good young man as he is ultimately forgiven by his girlfriend, and although his behaviour is disapproved of by her, she does not completely condemn it. The idea of young men having premarital sexual relationships was not a moral problem in Italian society. The same sexual freedom was not as easily accepted for young women, who were still expected not to have multiple sexual partners and to maintain their virginity until their wedding day.

By the mid-1960s, two events had put the sexuality of Italian young women at the forefront of popular media interest. In 1965, the story of Franca Viola signalled a change in the silent acceptance of traditional norms of respectability. Franca Viola was a Sicilian



young woman who, after being kidnapped and raped by her ex-boyfriend, had refused the *matrimonio riparatore* and reported him to the police (Crainz, 2003: 186). One year later, in February 1966, the school magazine of the *Parini* high school in Milan, *La Zanzara*, published a report called ‘Cosa pensano le ragazze d’oggi?’. This survey concerned the role of women in contemporary society, and demonstrated young women’s acceptance of premarital sex and birth control. Following this report’s publication, several Catholic associations decided to sue its editors, because the enquiry was, in their opinion, an ‘offesa recata alla sensibilità e al costume morale comune’. The editors were eventually acquitted, but the affair resulted in a considerable debate in magazines and television programmes about the taboo of sex and the different generational perspectives on this topic (Crainz, 2003: 205-206).

The discussion around these two cases signalled a change in young women’s attitudes towards sexuality in the mid-1960s. Most importantly, they put young women at the centre of this change: as Alessandra Castellani (1998: 172) points out, the *Zanzara* case was particularly significant because sexuality was recounted from the point of view of young women who, up until that point, had never been interrogated on matters concerning sex. Similarly, the case of Franca Viola was sensational because not only did it represent a rebellion against traditional mores, but also opened up the possibility of women having more than one sexual partner in their lifetime.

That said, Italian young women in mid-1960s Italy were far from sexually emancipated. The documentary *Comizi d’amore* (Pasolini, 1965)<sup>34</sup> interrogated how sex as a topic was perceived in different areas of the peninsula, and by people of different

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<sup>34</sup> The documentary showcases a series of interviews recorded by Pier Paolo Pasolini on Italian beaches with people coming from different social classes (middle-class intellectuals such as Oriana Fallaci, and working-class men and women) about the themes of sex and sexual liberation.

social backgrounds. This is clear from the names of the sections into which the film is divided (for example: ‘Comizi sulle spiagge milanesi o il sesso come hobby’ and ‘Comizi sulle spiagge meridionali o il sesso come onore’). While in the larger cities of the North, and in the upper social classes, female sexual emancipation was more accepted, the documentary shows how female sexuality in particular was still experienced, and discussed, as illegitimate, especially in the South. In these cases, female sexuality was socially not permitted outside of marriage, and unmarried women were still heavily controlled by the family in their relationships with male partners.

Meanwhile, media representations of standards of female attractiveness were also changing during the 1960s: for femininities, in particular, a ‘loss [...] of some of the exterior and behavioural indicators of the Mediterranean woman’ (Gundle, 2007: 179), such as the curvy body shape of the *Maggiorate*, took place. Stephen Gundle points out how during the 1960s, Italian popular media portrayed multiple female beauty standards. Even if the ‘maternal and consolatory’ (ibid.: 171) image of the Italian woman, reminiscent of Fascist ideals, persisted, a *giovane* femininity started to be represented. This new beauty standard was inspired by foreign models: as Gundle argues,

the popularity in Italy of Twiggy (*Grissino*) and Jean Shrimpton (*Gamberetto*) signalled the emergence of a new type of youth and fashion-oriented beauty that was associated with the swinging London. [...] The ubiquity on billboards and in media of slim young women with a Northern European air heralded a decisive shift in canons of beauty. (Gundle, 2007: 179)

The new standards portrayed an androgynous woman, with a slim body and short hair; these features contrasted sharply with what were previously considered to be sexually appealing feminine features in Italy, such as long hair and curvy bodies. Here, then, I

focus on how *giovani* popular media recuperated the image of the sexually emancipated *giovane* woman by constructing *giovani* female stars that could embody the new standards of female beauty, without referring to sexual emancipation. This section concentrates on Rita Pavone and Caterina Caselli, as these two singers are probably the most famous examples of this turn in representation. They became famous, and accepted by both the adult and the young audience, because of (and despite) their British-inspired androgynous style that, as this chapter has already discussed, was difficult for Italian society to accept.

Rita Pavone as a ‘modello di comportamento’ for her peers has already notably been analysed in 1964, by Umberto Eco.<sup>35</sup> Pavone was already a star before 1965: she was a successful singer and featured in several RAI programmes such as *Alta Pressione* and *Studio Uno* (Brioni, 2017). Eco underlines Pavone’s specificity in her being a teenager: ‘la Pavone appariva come la prima diva della canzone che non fosse donna; ma non era neppure bambina’ (Eco, 1999: 290). He also points out how early television performances by Pavone in the period 1962-64 contrasted with the meaning of the songs she was singing. Specifically, her youthful appearance clashed with the lyrics of the songs she was singing about love and relationships, such as ‘Come te non c’è nessuno’ (Migliacci, Politi & Vassallo, 1963) and ‘La partita di pallone’ (Rossi & Vianello, 1963):<sup>36</sup> ‘questa voce ineducata il cui timbro, la cui intensità ben si addiceva a chiamar la mamma dal cortile, [...] trasmetteva messaggi di passione sgomenta [...]’ (Eco, 1999:

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<sup>35</sup> Eco’s analysis is part of the essay *La canzone di consumo*, preface of the book *Le canzoni della cattiva coscienza* by Straniero, Liberovici, Jona and De Maria (Milan: Bompiani 1964). The essay has also been included in the collection *Apocalittici e Integrati*, first published in 1964.

<sup>36</sup> ‘Come te non c’è Nessuno’ the story of a woman who is in love with a man: ‘Come te non c’è Nessuno/ è per questo che t’amo/ed in punta di piedi entrerò/nei tuoi sogni segreti’. The song ‘La partita di pallone’ talks about a doubtful woman who does not know if her boyfriend is going to the football match or is he is betraying her: ‘Ma un giorno ti seguirò perché/ho dei dubbi che non mi fan dormire/e se scoprire potrò che mi vuoi imbrogliar/da mamma ritornerò’. Interestingly, in Pavone’s first television appearance, Rita sings the song ‘La partita di pallone’ while being taken off from a giant crib: here the contrast between the visual representation and the song is very strong.

291). Eco interprets this discordance as a way to start representing the sex appeal of puberty: ‘in Rita Pavone per la prima volta, di fronte ad una intera comunità nazionale, la pubertà si faceva balletto e acquistava pieni diritti nell’enciclopedia dell’erotismo [...]’ (Eco, 1999: 291). Eco’s interpretation, however, overlooks the fact that Pavone’s repertoire probably conformed to the repertoire of other female singers such as Mina and Ornella Vanoni in the early 1960s, and was therefore centred on love songs. If one analyses Pavone’s bodily representations, there seems to be nothing ‘erotic’ in her performances; instead, her sexuality is constantly negated in her representations in *giovani* media. This effect is given by the fact that Pavone’s persona is much more identified with childhood than with a stage ‘in-between’, even in the period 1965-67, which is the one I focus on in this section.

The first television appearance of Rita Pavone (*Alta Pressione*, episode 2, 23/09/1962) shows Pavone being taken from a giant crib by Gianni Morandi. One can argue that this image refers to the idea of the ‘birth’ of the star Rita Pavone. There are then other signs that identify her as a child: for example, in the programme *Stasera Rita* (Falqui, 1965), a weekly sketch features the comedian Bice Valori playing the role of Pavone’s mother. Here, Rita is constantly called ‘la bambina’ by her mother, who also constantly updates the audience about her daughter’s health (*Stasera Rita*, episode 1, 13/11/1965). In fact, Pavone’s appearance helped the audience to identify her as a child, as she was extremely petite and thin: her nickname was ‘la minicantante’. It is also significant to recall that one of the most successful roles of Rita Pavone on Italian television was her interpretation of Gian Burrasca in a televisual adaptation of Vamba’s book *Il Giornalino di Gian Burrasca*. In the TV series (Wertmüller, 1964), Pavone plays the role of a male child. This choice seems interesting when connected to the social

anxieties towards homosexuality caused by gender-bending practices such as the male adoption of long hairstyles. Unlike long hair for men, the choice of Pavone for interpreting a male role was not seen as problematic in Italian media, and the *sceneggiato* was extremely successful. The audience's acceptance of Pavone's gender bending can still be explained by referring to Pavone's petite body: as her physicality was extremely different from that of the Italian *maggiorate*, her subversive appearance and androgyny were seen more as a child's game than as a practice threatening her femininity.

The constant representation of Pavone as a child might also signal how, in the early 1960s, youth was often equated with childhood, as youth as a social category was still not established in Italian society. The role of Gian Burrasca influenced the casting decisions for her subsequent *Musicarelli* films: for example, in *Rita la Zanzara* (Wertmüller, 1966) and in the sequel *Non stuzzicate la Zanzara* (Wertmüller, 1967), Pavone plays the role of an undisciplined schoolgirl. Paolo, Rita's music teacher and lover, repeatedly tells her "Non fare la bambina!". The plot of the *Musicarello Rita la Zanzara* (Wertmüller, 1966) itself is particularly useful to illustrate the recuperation of female sexuality in Italian popular media. The film title clearly recalls *La Zanzara* case: in the film, however, the school magazine *La Zanzara*, written by Rita and her colleagues, talks about beauty secrets such as night beauty masks, instead of dealing with sexual liberation. The film, then, refers to *La Zanzara*, but the case is emptied of its subversive potential, and every reference to female sexuality is erased.

Not only was Pavone constantly named a 'bambina' in popular media, but it is possible to note how, in her performances, she struggled with coming to terms with her femininity. Style helped in distancing Pavone from the standards of traditional femininity outlined above; for example, in the magazine *Giovani*, she declares that:

Sono convinta che la moda Courrèges sia l'unica portabile. Detesto i vestiti *da donna*: i vestiti Courrèges non sono vestiti che ti fanno sentire addobbata. Sono abiti funzionali, divertenti, comodi, nuovi. (Pavone, 1966: 25, my italics)

The *beat* style, represented by reference to Courrèges' fashion, is said to be the only one that makes Rita feel at ease. Moreover, Pavone declares that she hates women's fashion, in this way distancing herself again from traditional female beauty standards. Magazines also pointed out how women's outfits did not suit her childlike body:

quelle sue pellicce costose e piuttosto eleganti mal si addicono a quel faccino giovanile e sbarazzino. Piace invece quando si veste per uscire a comprare le sigarette al padre: camicie americane con bottoni e pantaloni a zampa di elefante, che lei indossa volentieri, perché la rendono più disinvolta. (Modugno, 1967: 34)

The (un)definition of Pavone's gender is also represented in *Musicarelli* films through the use of disguise. Throughout the film *Rita la Zanzara*, Rita constantly wonders what kind of woman Paolo, the teacher she is in love with, would like, and expresses her inadequacy in conforming to traditional beauty standards by daydreaming of being disguised as Marilyn Monroe, Carmen Miranda, and Mina; again questioning her own femininity. As Deborah Toschi has pointed out, the use of dream as a device creates a distance between Pavone and the models of femininity she performs: 'la cornice del sogno, letterale o a occhi aperti, è un espediente per combinare in un impossibile altrove la sensualità che la protagonista potrebbe incarnare [...]. L'esibizione di una marcata femminilità finisce per esserne una presa di distanza' (Toschi, 2011: 82).

Representing Rita Pavone as a child not only created an androgynous image of the singer, but also distanced her from an active sexuality. Although she is represented as having love affairs, especially in *Musicarelli* films, any form of physical contact with men

is erased in these media products. For example, differing from other couples in *Musicarelli* films, the audience never actually sees Rita Pavone kissing her partners in *Musicarelli* films. In *Rita la figlia Americana*, when Pavone is kissing her boyfriend Fabrizio, the camera moves away from the faces to shoot the couple's feet. Again, in *Rita la Zanzara*, when Paolo and Rita kiss at the end of the film, the camera quickly distances itself from the couple ending in a long shot. At the beginning of the sequel *Non stuzzicate la Zanzara*, Paolo and Rita cover their kiss with an umbrella, and the audience does not see the couple kissing until the end of the sequel. These examples demonstrate how, even if Italian *giovani* stars such as Pavone appropriated the androgynous beauty standards coming from the United Kingdom, these young women's gender indeterminateness inhibited their representation as romantic and sexual partners. This attitude was caused by the 'gender troubles' represented by these stars' ambiguous gender identity, which produced preoccupations about homosexuality.

Caterina Caselli also represented a negation of *giovane* female sexuality and at the same time a challenge to traditional standards of Italian femininity. Her most famous songs of the period 1965-67 depicted her as an independent, sexually emancipated *giovane* woman. In 'L'Uomo d'Oro' (Guatelli, Panzeri & Pace, 1966) she declares her freedom of choice for a partner, and her possibility of having more than one relationship: 'quell'uomo d'oro forse sei tu, ma non so. Mi guardo un poco in giro e poi ti dirò'. The famous 'Nessuno mi può giudicare' (Beretta, Del Prete, Pace & Panzeri, 1966) is an admission of infidelity: 'la verità ti fa male, lo sai. Nessuno mi può giudicare nemmeno tu. [...] Se sono tornata a te, ti basta sapere che ho visto la differenza tra lui e te ed ho scelto te'. However, Caselli's representation of independence is expressed through a masculinisation of her persona. As Gundle points out, Caselli adopted a tomboy style,

mainly represented by her short hair: ‘the blonde Caterina Caselli, whose declaration of autonomy in “Nessuno mi può giudicare” [...] struck a widespread chord, was a tomboy who broke all the accepted canons of femininity’ (Gundle, 2007: 178). Caselli’s unique hairstyle, a short blonde bob (often obtained through the use of wigs) that inspired her nickname *Casco d’Oro*, had an androgynous allure, and it became her trademark. It was not only Caselli’s tomboy style that contributed to her masculinisation, as the power she exerted in music performances and in the music industry also helped her identification with traditionally masculine roles. In an era in which female singers were always soloists, and bands were always male, Caterina performed with a *complesso*, called *Gli Amici*. Moreover, Caselli was a musician and played the bass. In this way, she distanced herself from the divas of the Italian canzone (Mina, Ornella Vanoni, Rita Pavone), who only interpreted songs, thus entering the masculine world of musicians and bands. As *Big* points out, in fact, ‘una ragazza che sa suonare la chitarra elettrica e la batteria, fa sempre un certo effetto’ (Caterina Caselli sotto Esame, 1967: 35). Caselli’s gender blurring was also confirmed by the absence of ‘private’ love stories in magazines. Giachetti describes how

il cruccio dei giornalisti [...] è che non riescono a trovarle un fidanzato. Sono insistenti con lei, probabilmente perché è donna, più che con i giovani cantanti uomini [...]. Lei si difende dicendo che è troppo impegnata col lavoro per coltivare relazioni affettive serie, che vadano oltre la semplice e intensa amicizia *cameratesca*. (Giachetti, 2006: 83, my italics)

The military term ‘cameratesco’ again usually refers to relationships exclusively between men, reinforcing Caselli’s construction as part of the young men’s group, and suggesting a possible anxiety on the part of the journalists over her sexuality.



Caselli's subversive representation, however, was recuperated in popular media through references to her style as inauthentic.<sup>37</sup> For example, an article that appeared in *Big* discusses the singer's style by saying that 'i suoi capelli, per qualità e colore, sono di gran lunga migliori delle parrucche che si ostina a portare. Il vero casco d'oro è il suo. [...] Gli altri, i posticci, dovrebbe usarli solo quando esce di casa per andare a far compere' (Caterina Caselli sotto Esame, 1967: 33). This critique applied also to her manner of performance, and the way in which she moved her body.

Solo da poco tempo ha smesso di roteare le mani in quella assurda e ridicola gesticolazione dello shake stilizzato. Questa sembrava una mossa studiata, a regia [...]. Ora non sa più che farsene delle mani [...] tanto che spesso, con queste, esprime tutto il contrario di quello che dice cantando. (ibid.: 34)

By denouncing the artificiality of Caselli's body movements and style, magazines declared the fictionality of her masculine style and, at the same time, of her independent attitudes. In this way, the media nullified the potential challenge expressed by Caselli's androgynous persona. This process is also reconfirmed by the fact that her performing self was said to contrast with her 'private' self, characterised by her rural origins: 'il suo volto è genuino e forte come i prodotti della terra dove è nata. La sua vera bellezza sono i suoi vent'anni, la spensieratezza, l'entusiasmo, la voglia di vivere e la semplicità esteriore' (ibid.). In this quotation, reference to the genuineness of the countryside, and to the beauty and enthusiasm of young people, recalls the fascist myth of youth, embodied by the Fascist hymn 'Giovinezza'<sup>38</sup> (Manni, Oxilia & Blanc, n.d.). Caterina-tomboy, in contrast,

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<sup>37</sup> Discussion on the 'authenticity' of *giovani* stars will be elaborated upon in the next chapter.

<sup>38</sup> The song, saying 'giovinezza, giovinezza, primavera di bellezza', depicts youth as the hope for the future Fascist Italy, connecting it with beauty, health, and strength.

is often defined by magazines as ‘not beautiful, but fun’, as in this article that appeared in *Marie-Claire Giovanissima*:

Caterina è bella? Non so. È simpatica, questo sì. [...] Comunque è molto alta. Glielo dico. “Alta sì, ma non basta. Voglio essere magrissima. Dimagrirò. Adoro Françoise Hardy soprattutto perché è magrissima, perché è tutta Courrèges. Se fossi un uomo, me la sposerei”, e giù in una fragorosa risata. (Isa Bella, 1966a: 46)

This quotation again plays with Caselli’s masculinisation. Caselli in fact declares, laughing, that if she were a man she would marry Françoise Hardy; a statement which thus plays with Caselli’s sexuality, and hints at the possible homosexuality of the singer.

The construction of Caselli’s femininity also problematizes her role as lover in *Musicarelli* films; her alternative femininity seems to impede Caselli from having romantic relationships, or making these relationships visible. In the two *Musicarelli* starring Caterina Caselli, *Nessuno mi può giudicare* (Fizzarotti, 1966) and *Perdono* (Fizzarotti, 1966), Caselli’s sexuality is absent. The singer never plays the part of the lover, and this aspect contrasts with the typical plot of the *Musicarelli*, which envisages the singer as the protagonist of the love story. In both films the romantic story involves instead Caselli’s co-star, Laura Efrikian, who is featured in most *Musicarelli* films as the main female character.<sup>39</sup> Although Efrikian was a young actress, none of her characters possess *giovani* features, as they do not listen to music, never dance (except for slow dances with her fiancé in *In ginocchio da te*), and they do not adopt a *giovane* style. Moreover, as in *Perdono* (Fizzarotti, 1966), her characters always follow their parents’ advice and dream of getting married and having children. Efrikian therefore represents a more respectable, and less *giovane*, femininity. In both films, even if Caterina is the main

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<sup>39</sup> For example, *Una Lacrima sul Viso* (Fizzarotti, 1964); *In Ginocchio da Te* (Fizzarotti, 1964); *Nessuno mi può Giudicare* (Fizzarotti, 1966); *Non Son Degno di Te* (Fizzarotti, 1965); *Perdono* (Fizzarotti, 1966).

character, the love story is experienced by Laura (Laura Efrikian), and not by Caterina, who in the films is more interested in pursuing a music career than in falling in love. In *Perdono*, however, Caterina has an affair with Federico, Laura's fiancé, but the affair only makes sense to justify the use of the song giving the name to the film (*Perdono* in fact tells the story of forgiveness after an affair). Moreover, the affair ends very quickly, when Federico chooses Laura again over Caterina. For her part, Caterina does not seem interested in love and relationships, and when she is, a more reassuring feminine character is chosen over her. Thus the construction of subversive femininities such as Pavone's and Caselli's seems particularly telling of the recuperation of *giovane* female sexuality in the popular media. The foreign-inspired standards of attractiveness which promoted a more androgynous appearance resulted, in Pavone's and Caselli's case, in the erasure of the two singers' potential active sexuality, in this way also preserving their respectability.

An analogously cautious approach to female sexuality can be seen in descriptions of the miniskirt as a sexually emancipatory sign. The miniskirt has been considered as an early sign of female sexual liberation in Italy, as well as independence from and disrespect towards paternal authority. Giachetti defines the miniskirt as: 'un vestito che in Italia si carica di un significato che va oltre l'esibizione delle gambe e che vuole segnalare "la disobbedienza". [...] Per le ragazze degli anni Sessanta, quell'abito è un simbolo di liberazione ostentato con decisione e radicalità. È anche un modo per dire basta al sesso vissuto come un mistero, come capitale da nascondere e proteggere' (Giachetti, 2006: 55). Another commentator also affirms that 'la minigonna è il messaggio con cui le donne affermano "Mi vesto come voglio", è un gesto di grande portata politica, una rivendicazione di libertà' (Minetti cited in Giachetti, 2006: 55). Yet *Giovani* magazines demonstrated a dual attitude towards miniskirts. On the one hand, they promoted the

miniskirt and encouraged young women to wear it. On the other hand, they were careful with the presentation of the miniskirt as a medium for female sexual liberation. Instead of a sign of freedom, in fact, discourses around the miniskirt presented it as a coercive garment, for which Italian society was still not ready.

In *giovani* magazines, the miniskirt became one of the ‘*messaggi* prettamente giovanili’ (La minigonna sotto Accusa. Undicesimo: non scoprire le Ginocchia, 1967: 54, my italics), a non-verbal sign of the *giovane* female identity. *Giovani* magazines promoted the adoption of the miniskirt, and it was described as a garment that could be worn by any young woman. In 1966, *Marie Claire Giovani* introduced the *ginocchietto*, according to which, with some adjustments, everyone could wear the miniskirt:

Gonne corte? Sì, gonne corte. Per tutte? Sì, per tutte. La moda vuole così, e poi sembra fatta apposta per le giovanissime, per tutte voi quindi. Ma quanto devono essere corte? Ecco, questo è il vero problema. Per essere sicure di trovare la vostra soluzione vi consiglio di guardare bene la lunghezza delle vostre gambe. (Isa Bella, 1966b: 64)

However, discourses around the miniskirt in *giovani* magazines seemed to scale down its sexually emancipating potential. Talking about her invention, Mary Quant recalled in an interview in *Big* that ‘da piccola vedevo che le donne anziane portavano le gonne lunghe. Così, gradualmente, mi si formò la convinzione che la vecchiaia fosse una questione di lunghezza di gonne. Portandole corte, come quelle delle bambine, ho scoperto che ci si sente veramente giovani’ (In carne e Ossa: a tu per tu con Mary Quant, 1967: 5). Interestingly, the miniskirt is connected by Quant not only to youth, but also to childhood, in this way detaching it from its sexually emancipatory meaning. Magazines also tended to defuse the effect of the miniskirt on *gli adulti*: a *Big* journalist wondered, in an article,

whether ‘le gambe di una ragazza possono veramente offendere il pudore del privato cittadino o sconvolgergli la mente’ (La minigonna sotto Accusa. Undicesimo: non scoprire le Ginocchia, 1967: 57), implicitly suggesting that the miniskirt does not have all this sexually alluring power.

At the same time, however, magazines reported how Italian young women sometimes felt unease in wearing the miniskirt, in that they felt uncomfortable in wearing it outside of *giovani* places due to fear of being judged by wider society. The wearing of miniskirts thus questioned the sense of modesty of young women, especially given the prejudice that connected sexual emancipation with perceived sexual availability. A young woman wrote to *Ciao Big*’s editor in 1967:

Ho un grosso guaio: pur essendo molto carina (mi guardo spesso allo specchio) non ho ancora il ragazzo. [...] Le mie amiche dicono che è colpa delle mie minigonne: secondo loro sono troppo corte e per questo non mi invitano mai alle loro feste perché temono che la mia presenza le renda poco serie. (Gli amici di Luciano, 1967: 10)

Similarly, *Ciao Amici* published an enquiry in which young women were asked whether ‘provate o non provate dell’imbarazzo quando andate in giro con la minigonna, specialmente se vi trovate in autobus, in tram, nel metro, quando state sedute e, necessariamente, la gonna si alza e mette in mostra le giarrettiere, per esempio?’ (Lania, 1966: 58). This very specific and rather rhetorical question shows how the link between sexual availability and the use of the miniskirt is present in popular media discourse. In the enquiry, young women answer in various ways, but most of them say that wearing the miniskirt actually creates some embarrassment for them. By reporting these comments, magazines warned young women of the connection between sexual availability and the

wearing of a miniskirt. Moreover, the miniskirt was accused of promoting rape: ‘diciotto ragazze sono state aggredite da altrettanti bruti in meno di un mese. La colpa, secondo la polizia francese, è delle minigonne. Per questo motivo la prefettura parigina ha invitato le ragazze a non tentare il diavolo’ (Dessy, 1967b: 12). According to the article, then, the miniskirt needs to be worn with care: when the miniskirt was recognised as a sexually emancipatory sign, magazines tended to warn readers about the potential problems of wearing it in a society where this display of sexual emancipation was still not accepted.

This analysis of the construction of *giovani* masculinities and femininities during the period 1965-1967 has highlighted some aspects that will be beneficial in the discussion about *giovani* gender identities in the following chapters. Firstly, it has shown how changes in standards of male attractiveness started to create anxieties towards male homosexuality. In this period, these anxieties were dispelled through the construction of ‘reassuring’ *giovani* masculinities, in which the original meaning of *i giovani* as opposed to *gli adulti* was lost. Secondly, it has demonstrated how sexuality was erased in media representations of androgynous *giovani* femininities such as Rita Pavone and Caterina Caselli in this period. The absence of sexuality helped preserve the ideal of the purity of *giovani* women, and recuperate potentially subversive femininities such as Pavone’s and Caselli’s.

This chapter has demonstrated how, during the period from 1965 to 1967, an apparently homogenous *giovane* identity, that of the *beat*, was constructed in Italian *giovani* popular media. *Giovani* media described a world in which ‘tutto era beat. La musica, le ragazze, i vestiti, la barba, gli occhiali, i raduni, i capelli. Sembrava veramente un mondo beat’ (Ceri & Pascale, 1993: 3). In this period, then, representations of young people became

homogenised in popular media. Indeed, the impact of this process on Italian society is demonstrated by the fact that in 1967 national television created a programme intended for a non-*giovane* audience, called *Noi Maggiorenni* (Golletti, 1967). This programme, which broadcast popular songs and music from the 1920s to the 1940s, was intended for those people who were young during that era. As the host explained at the beginning of the first episode:

Ad un certo punto mi sono detto: ci sono tanti programmi per i giovani, tante rubriche musicali di musica yé-yé e contro le quali, a dire la verità, non abbiamo nulla di particolare [...]. Però, in Italia, di maggiorenni ce ne sono tanti. Quindi perché non fare un programma dedicato a noi maggiorenni, fatto di affettuosi ricordi e di musica? [...] ecco l'argomento della nostra trasmissione. (*Noi Maggiorenni*, episode 1, 21/05/1967)

Here, the widespread presence of discourses about *i giovani* in mainstream media is seen as having constructed a certain set of guidelines about the practices defining the *giovane* identity more in general. In this programme, the audience was invited to retrospectively construct their *giovane* past via musical memories. However, the description also highlights how the programme sought to remind adults of only certain aspects of their youth, namely the music that young people listened to in the period 1920-1940s. References to potentially traumatic memories, such as those linked to the Fascist regime, were erased in this nostalgic reappropriation of the past. The next chapter shows how a similar process of erasure influenced the appropriation of a 1930s-inspired style in 1968.

This example also shows how the construction of the *giovane* identity in 1965-67 was the result of a selection process, which influenced the values and behaviours expressed by it. The popular media construction of the *beats* as linked exclusively to

leisure activities, such as music and style, implicitly erased the image of the political young person who was starting to emerge in Italian society during the 1960s. This process might have influenced today's perception of youth as merely 'commercial' during the period 1965-67, as outlined in Chapter one. In popular media, young people's desire for freedom was restricted to specific places and activities. When this desire went beyond these limitations, it was transferred to a foreign 'other' in order not to trouble the Italian *giovane* identity. The media incorporation of the 'beat di strada' was mainly commercial: ideals of freedom and opposition to *gli adulti* were used to promote products created by the industry for young people. However, from 1967, the *beat* trend as presented in magazines started to display an increasing connection between style and political claims. A convincing example of this is represented by the trend of military uniforms, coming from London, described in this 1967 article taken from *Ciao Amici*:

Se camminate per Londra, vedete un sacco di uniformi militari: sembra un controsenso; a una visione superficiale, la cosa potrebbe apparire come una specie di mania bellica, di ossessione esibizionistica che fa pensare, almeno a noi italiani, a tempi non lontani, quando tutti il popolo era in divisa [...]. Ma tutte queste uniformi, questa moda delle uniformi antiche e colorate, nasconde invece il nocciolo di [una] protesta antimilitarista e pacifista [...]. I ragazzi cercano nei magazzini le più antiche uniformi degli eserciti di mezzo mondo e poi le indossano proprio per smitizzarle, per farsene un camuffamento clownesco: e se le uniformi ricordano truci precedenti, sul tipo di quelle naziste delle SS, è ancora meglio. (Tati, 1967: 20)

In this quotation, the new trend is immediately recognised as the bearer of a political value, that of antimilitarism and pacifism. Although, as for other political trends outlined



in the chapter, the fashion of military jackets is here ‘foreignised’ (the article, in fact, is talking about London), it seems that political involvement is not judged as dangerous. Moreover, the trend of wearing military uniforms became extremely popular within Italian *giovani*, especially for *beat complessi*. The shift from the ‘commercial’ to the ‘political’ meaning of *giovane* fashion will be further analysed in the following chapter, which discusses the politicisation of the *giovane* style during the period 1967-70.

The ‘othering’ of some of the connotations of the *beat* style, as well as the Italianisation of the most commercial aspects of *giovane* fashion also show the contradictory representation of the Italian-ness of *il giovane*. Despite acknowledging the importance of foreign influences in the definition of the modern *giovane*, popular media discourses reveal a certain preoccupation towards the acceptance of foreign trends, as well as the permanence of a fascist-reminiscent ideal of Italian superiority over other countries. However, representations of the foreign ‘other’ also demonstrate that popular media tended to project onto the ‘other’ some aspects that could be rather worrying for Italian society, such as the politicisation of youth and gender-bending practices.

Preoccupations also influenced the media construction of *giovani* gendered identities, especially in terms of protecting the purity of young women and the virility of young men. Popular media contributed to the resignification of some of the troubling connotations linked to the *giovane* style. For example, the androgynous bodies of *giovani* female stars represented a change in standards of female attractiveness, and therefore a potential issue in the construction of *giovani* femininities. However, in popular media this new appearance was resignified to erase potential anxieties regarding the increasing sexual emancipation of young women. Moreover, the definition of *giovani* masculinities and femininities during the period 1965-67 started to signal two main anxieties linked to

young people's gender and sexuality, namely the sexualisation of women and the effemination of men. These two features, together with political participation, became even more problematic during the following period, when the *hippy* trend started to appear in *giovani* popular media.

## Chapter 3

### *Hippies, 1967-70*

Chapter two showed how in *giovani* popular media the Italian ‘beats di strada’ were recuperated through the construction of a ‘beat mediatizzato’. This was characterised by reference to practices related to free-time activities such as the listening and dancing to, and singing and playing of *giovane* music, and by the adoption of a commercial style specifically aimed at young people as consumers. However, during 1967, criticisms concerning the commercialisation of the *beat* style emerged in *giovani* magazines, television programmes, and films. Letters and articles in *giovani* magazines started to highlight that, even if the *beat* style conveyed a generic message of freedom from *gli adulti*, it was strongly influenced by the music and fashion industry – in other words, by those capitalistic values that defined *gli adulti* themselves. The commercial production of the *beat* style was also said to demonstrate that the *beat* identity was inauthentic, in that it did not come directly from *i giovani* even though it was specifically directed at them. In the previous chapter, there were hints of this attitude, for example in the representation of the process of ‘becoming’ *giovane* as a performance, and in the letters discussing the commercial appropriation of long hair.

From the second half of 1967, a rejection of the commercialisation of the *giovane* style became particularly evident in Italian popular media through the promotion of new trends which were said to bear political meaning, such as the appropriation of military jackets discussed earlier, the ‘flower power’ trend, and the use of vintage fashion and handmade products. These trends foreshadowed countercultural ideals, namely pacifism, anti-authoritarianism, and rejection of consumerism, which reflected claims of the

American pacifist hippie movement and of the 1968-69 Italian student and worker movements. The first section of this chapter questions to what extent the *hippy* style, as the multiplicity of trends described above were named in popular media, still functioned to construct a normative representation of the ‘imagined community’ of young people which was not only based on opposition to *gli adulti*, but also to the *beat* as a consumerist identity. It also discusses how, in the period 1967-70, commercialisation became a sign of inauthenticity in popular media, and (fabricated) authenticity was established as a significant feature in the definition of *hippies* and *hippy* stars. The second section looks at transnational references of the *hippy* style, which included not just contemporary Western youth cultures, but also ‘other’ eras and ‘other’ ethnicities. The way in which these multiple inspirations were represented in *giovani* media influenced the representation of an Italian *hippy* style that included several ambiguities. For example, discourses around the 1930s-inspired style showed the tension between nostalgia for the past and the reinvention of the adults’ *giovane* identity. Meanwhile, representations of the Afro trend were informed by the political use of a non-Western style, and the permanence of colonialist and orientalist discourses circulating in Italian society. The third section of the chapter looks at how the media construction of the *hippy* identity impacted the redefinition of *giovani* masculinities and femininities, revealing on-going changes in the power structure between genders. Representations of *giovani* femininities were influenced by an increasing sexual freedom for young women, which was also testified in the emergence of sexually provocative *giovani* stars such as Patty Pravo. Furthermore, the *hippy* style troubled *giovani* masculinities by adding stereotypically feminine aspects to the male *giovane* style, which went beyond the mere question of long hair.

### 3.1 Sessantottini and Hippies

During the second half of 1967, popular media increasingly featured correspondence by young people denouncing the commercialisation of the *beat* trend. A letter that appeared in *Big* displayed criticism of young people who had adopted a *beat* style without participating in political demonstrations:

Caro Marcello, ma insomma, dove sono i ragazzi che dovrebbero cambiare il mondo? Non certo a Torino dove erano gli [...] pseudo-beatniks, quando [...] c'è stata la silenziosa marcia per la pace. Forse erano al Piper o al Club 84, non certo tra noi [...]. A meno che questi capelloni di casa nostra non credano che per essere beat sia sufficiente non lavarsi, ballare gli ultimi balli, portare i capelli lunghi [...].

(Risponde il Direttore, 1967: 6)

The letter criticised what it considered to be effectively ‘pseudo-beatniks’ who, despite appropriating *giovani* practices such as dancing specific dances and wearing their hair long, did not endorse the political ideals that should be connected with them, such as pacifism in this case. Moreover, the writer distinguishes between a ‘noi’ – that of the ‘authentic’, political, *giovani* – and an implicit ‘loro’ – the inauthentic, commercial *beats*: in other words, this letter is symptomatic of emerging differentiations within the community of *i giovani*. From 1967, a new identity started to emerge in popular media representations in contrast to the consumerist *beats*: the *hippies*. Unlike the *beats*, the construction of the *hippies* was not based on practices recalling consumption, but on the politicisation of young people’s leisure activities that took place from 1967 onwards. This ‘politicisation’ did not mean that magazines were promoting the active political engagement of *i giovani*, but rather that the political context increasingly influenced popular media representations of young people. The Italian *hippy* was in fact the product

of a mainstream incorporation itself: media discourses around the *hippy* style revealed the persistence of certain preoccupations with the increased politicisation of Italian young people as social agents. Moreover, political discourses were transferred by *giovani* magazines into a consumerist and normative frame that still enhanced young people's consumption.

In order to delineate the multiple influences of the *hippy* style, a brief historical overview of the *Sessantotto* and its aftermath in Italy is necessary, as it influenced the media perception of young people as a social category. The two-year period 1968-1969 has been defined by Italian historiography as marked by two main waves of student and worker protests, namely the *Sessantotto* and the *Autunno Caldo* of 1969. The increasing participation of young people in the protests that involved schools, universities, and factories has been seen as the consequence of educational reforms in the 1960s. Thanks to these reforms, the number of students at all levels, including university, increased (Ginsborg, 1990: 298-299), and factory workers became more open to collaboration with students and more conscious of their own employment rights, as they were 'more literate and more aware than the previous generations' (Ginsborg, 1990: 310). There is no space here to fully explain the specificities of the *Sessantotto*:<sup>40</sup> in brief, according to Alberto De Bernardi and Marcello Flores, after the early university occupations of 1967, protests against academic culture and authority, embodied by school headmasters and deans, evolved into a broader 'rifiuto del capitalismo e dei suoi modelli culturali mercificati' (De Bernardi & Flores, 2003: 220). The Italian *beat* had a twofold influence on the *Sessantotto*: on the one hand, the 'beat mediatizzato' inspired a reaction against the

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<sup>40</sup> For a further reading on the *Sessantotto* in Italy, its causes and consequences, and an overview of the political movements of 1968 in other Western countries, see De Bernardi & Flores (2003). An interesting analysis of the Italian 1968 and its aftermath (the *Autunno Caldo* and the 1970s, up to the 1977 movement) has also been made by Robert Lumley (1990).

consumerism of 1965-67 youth. On the other hand, the *Sessantotto* can be considered an extension of earlier demonstrations of youth movements that promoted alternative cultures, such as the 'beat di strada', and of the student protests that started in Italian universities in 1966 (Ghione & Grisigni, 1998; De Angelis, 1998).

The demonstrators participating to the *Sessantotto* adopted a specific style that distinguished them aesthetically from the non-protesting young people. As Robert Lumley (1990: 71-72) points out, for the *Sessantotto* youth movement, which mainly consisted of the sons and daughters of the urban middle-class, the adoption of a specific style was beneficial for differentiating themselves from other middle-class young people. While in 1967 students demonstrating and occupying universities wore ties and suits, for the demonstrators in 1968

the Cuban-style beard is in fashion, many men and women students are wearing *blu-jeans* (as they are known in Italian), men are not wearing jackets, unless they have a military look with cap to match. Some have red handkerchiefs tied around their neck, but the tie has been dispensed with. [...] For demonstrations the movement developed its own sort of uniform. In winter, everyone wore khaki *Eskimo* jackets, trousers and long scarves. (ibid.: 71)

Some garments in particular, such as the Eskimo or the military jacket, became emblems of these movements, as they were affordable and therefore available to young people of any socio-economic background. Moreover, the style used by young people expressed the endorsement of specific ideals, such as pacifism for military jackets, and revolution for the adoption of Cuban beards. This distinctive style appeared in television news and national newspaper articles dealing with the clashes between the police and students

during demonstrations, such as the ‘battaglia di Valle Giulia’ in Rome on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1968.<sup>41</sup>

Interestingly, however, the style presented by *giovani* magazines in fashion reports from 1968 to 1970 did not reproduce the style of demonstrators described above. As the naming of this trend suggests, the *hippy* style was said to be inspired by the style adopted by the countercultural movement, as Theodor Roszak (1969) defined it, of the hippies, which developed in California during the 1960s.<sup>42</sup> American hippies inspired a new lifestyle for young people, which questioned traditional social norms with experiments such as the commune as an alternative to the conventional family structure,<sup>43</sup> or practices like hitchhiking holidays instead of seaside summer holidays.<sup>44</sup> In 1967, one of the first articles on the American hippies to appear in a *giovane* magazine defines them as follows:

Hippy letteralmente significa ipocondriaco. La malinconia depressiva degli hippies si esprime con la rinuncia all’inserimento borghese nella società meccanizzata. [...] Il loro simbolo sono i fiori, non la zazzera e la chitarra. Fiori, l’LSD, libero amore e libera vita, questa è la cura per gli ipocondriaci d’America. (Olmi, 1967)

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<sup>41</sup> The ‘battaglia di Valle Giulia’, as it has been called by Moroni and Balestrini (1997: 397), is one of the events from which historians tend to date the *maggio strisciante*, or the main core of the Italian *Sessantotto*. This clash between the police and the demonstrators of the faculty of architecture in Rome resulted in the injury of several policemen and students. Most notably, after this clash Pier Paolo Pasolini provocatively wrote a poem in which he supported the policemen who fought against the students, because the true proletarians in the battle were the policemen themselves (De Bernardi & Flores, 2003: 225-226).

<sup>42</sup> For an historical overview of the emergence of the hippie movement in the United States, see Issitt, 2009: 1-18.

<sup>43</sup> In Italy, *giovani* magazines talked about how Italian hippies tried to set up communes in Italy, for example, next to Piazza di Santa Maria in Trastevere in Rome. See: Miloro, 1969.

<sup>44</sup> Summer seaside holidays were one of the aspects that characterised the Italian economic miracle of the late 1950s: the possibility of summer holidays for the entire family was a reflection of a better economic condition for Italian society. Holidays were also part of the construction of *i giovani* during the 1960s: they were the occasion for young people to meet new people that, despite coming from different places, shared the same emblems characterising the community of *i giovani*. Several *Musicarelli* are set during summer holidays: for example, *Stasera mi Butto* (Fizzarotti, 1967) depicts the creation of a group of friends meeting in the same hotel during the summer holidays. The passage to the promotion of alternative holidays for *i giovani* in magazines, then, marks a difference not only to the adult world, but also to the *beats*.



In the quotation, taken from the magazine *Big*, Californian hippies are described as drug addicts, sexually emancipated, and against American consumerist society. As happened with the beatniks in 1965-67, however, over time the domestication of an ‘other’, foreign-inspired concept, such as the hippie, worked through the ‘mirroring’ of some aspects stereotypically associated with the hippie movement, and the ‘othering’ of some practices – such as drug consumption – that were not considered acceptable for Italian *giovani*. This chapter uses two different spellings in order to make a distinction between the American countercultural movement (hippie) and the *giovane* identity construction of the period 1968-1970 (*hippy*), as differently from the official English spelling of the word ‘hippie’, Italian *giovani* magazines tended to use ‘hippy’ as the singular form of the word ‘hippies’.<sup>45</sup>

The foreignisation of the *giovane* style through references to the hippies made by *giovani* popular media can be interpreted as an ‘othering’ strategy to distinguish *i giovani* from the Italian young people who participated in student and protest movements, and it can therefore be seen as a means to depoliticise the *giovane* identity. Interestingly, although during the period 1968-70 magazines tended to publish articles dealing with politics and society, much more attention was given to foreign politics than domestic politics, in some ways suggesting an estrangement from the conflicts taking place in the Italian peninsula. For example, *Big* published posters of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, and their deaths were widely covered by the magazine; furthermore, from June 1968, a section of *Big*, titled ‘La grande rivolta dei giovani in Europa’ (1968) surveyed the political movements that started to emerge in Western countries such as Germany,

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<sup>45</sup> The term ‘hippy’ was also used by magazines to describe most of the trends emerging in the period 1968-70 (but not all: for example, the fashion inspired by the 1930s was not called *hippy*), and more generally to define the *giovane* identity until 1970.

France, Spain, Yugoslavia, and the United States. By contrast, the protests going on at Italian universities and factories were not extensively discussed in *giovani* magazines: for instance, no mention of the *battaglia di Valle Giulia* was made in any *giovane* magazine in March 1968.

This does not mean, however, that discourses around the *Sessantotto* did not enter Italian popular culture; indeed, a media depoliticisation of the *Sessantottini* appears in the widespread use of discourses around protest in advertisements on *giovani* magazines. In an advertisement for the ice-cream 'Paiper', a group of smiling *giovani* are eating ice-cream, and demonstrating by carrying posters saying 'vogliamo l'estate più lunga' (Gelato Paiper, 1969: 11). The image of young people demonstrating here is taken out of context and used to advertise a commercial product, in this way reducing the political impact of demonstrations as a sign of protest. An advertisement for the male underwear brand Jockey shows a *giovane* young man with long hair and a beard, wearing just a medallion and his underwear, the slogan saying 'Jockey... non si contesta' (Jockey Underwear, 1969: 65). Again, the use of specific style features that were emblems of the student movement, such as long hair and the beard, to characterize the model, and the link between protest and consumption, seems to undermine the meanings of the 'real' protests. The incorporation of the theme of protest in popular media products shows how, in 1967-70, discourses around the *giovane* style were increasingly influenced by the on-going politicisation of youth in Italian society. To further discuss the media domestication of young people's political participation, the following subsection situates the main influences of the Italian *hippy* style and characterises its main features.

### **3.1.1 Hippies against consumerism and authority**

In Chapter two, representations of the *beat* style in magazines were characterised by two dominant discourses: the difference of the *giovane* style from *gli adulti*'s fashion, and the freedom that this style should represent from *gli adulti*. While the difference and freedom of the *beats* were constructed through reference to free-time activities, for the *hippy* these two discourses were conveyed by referring to claims that the American countercultural movements of the beats and the hippies were bringing to the social agenda, namely pacifism, anti-consumerism, and anti-authoritarianism. An early version of the *hippy* was the colourful, floral, and Indian-inspired 'flower-power' trend that appeared in Italian *giovani* magazines at the end of 1967 (La Moda Big. Moderatamente Flower, 1967: 49). This trend was characterised by the appropriation of a sign, namely the flower, which was used in hairstyles, shirts, and trousers as an emblem of pacifism. Like the trend of military jackets, 'flower-power' fashion represented the commercial incorporation of the international wave of youth criticism of the Vietnam War.

In 1968 and 1969, the *giovane* style began to increasingly refer to other themes emerging from the social unrest emanating from countercultural movements. Firstly, the *hippy* style reflected a generalised ideal of anti-consumerism: the tendency towards a refusal of mass-produced objects of consumption was rendered in the new trend by the adoption of elements of recycling or home-made products that were not commercially produced. This created a contrast between the *hippy* style and previous representations of young people as consuming subjects. *Giovani* magazines apparently accepted and promoted this trend, by explaining how to make jewellery, clothes, and accessories at

home without spending money and thus creating a unique fashion.<sup>46</sup> They also sponsored artisans who produced handmade creations:

Francis è l'individuo più semplice e antisnob dell'universo. Chiama i suoi originalissimi gioielli "ornamenti", e non realizzerebbe in oro una delle sue creazioni... per tutto l'oro del mondo: preferisce la rustica semplicità del ferro e del rame, all'oro e all'argento. Un'altra cosa che non piace a Francis (trent'anni, una moglie giovane giovane, un bimbo di dieci mesi che si chiama Igor) è il prodotto in serie [...]. (Pady, 1967: 49)

This description of the jeweller who creates ornaments in copper and iron underlines the refusal of 'mass-produced' objects of the *hippies*. The *hippy* trend was in fact characterised by the adoption of unique and cheap garments. Uniqueness was secured by the use of hand-made or vintage fashion, and affordability was obtained through the use of unconventional materials such as 'poor' materials (in the quotation, copper and iron as opposed to silver and gold) and second-hand clothes. Discourses around the *hippy* style in *giovani* magazines emphasized how home-made fashion guaranteed originality: home-made, second-hand, or unconventional garments could not be imitated, and were therefore unique. Stars promoted the idea of making their own clothes, as was the case with Julie Driscoll, an English singer, who in an article claimed that

Non faccio acquisti in nessuna boutique: i miei vestiti li invento da sola. Non nel senso che li cucio con ago e filo. Vado al mercato di Chelsea, compro gli abiti vecchi, li accorcio o li allungo, faccio applicare il corpetto di uno sulla gonna di un altro ed ecco il modello in esclusiva che nessuno può copiare. (Driscoll, 1968: 13)

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<sup>46</sup> For example, Fateli da voi i gioielli di carta, 1967: 68-69.

Here, Driscoll explains her fascination with flea markets, where she buys garments with which to create her own original style. Although the singer is English, and discusses a London market, she refers to a trend that had already influenced Italian *giovane* identity. In *hippy* fashion, the flea market substituted the *beat* Carnaby Street (or Via Margutta) shops by being the place where one could buy *giovane* fashion, as such stalls paradoxically sold ‘pezzi di antiquariato per una moda nuova’ (P.R., 1969: 18). An article in *Ciao Big* described the ‘eccentriche’ women going to the Fiera di Senigallia in Milan to look for second-hand clothes that, even if they were not perfect – ‘i merletti non sono sempre perfetti, le camicie, i vestiti, hanno perso il colore degli anni, qualcosa andrà rammendato, lavato, aggiustato’ – guaranteed these women’s originality: ‘nessuno potrà vantare alle feste, ai cocktails, alle serate con gli amici un abbigliamento così eccezionalmente autentico, e con quel tocco che solo il tempo e la lavorazione originale di allora possono dare’ (Speranza, 1968: 63). In this quotation, the use of vintage, old garments functions to affirm the authenticity of the *hippy* style. Analysis will return to questions of authenticity (3.1.2) and to the role of references of the past (3.2.1) in the *hippy* style shortly. For now, the trends of DIY and vintage dresses as represented in *giovani* magazines suggest a further element of the general construction of *i giovani* in Italian popular media. The media representation of the *beat* style in the period 1965-67 had been based on the opposition between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*; the difference in style of the *beats* was expressed through mass-produced fashion, which was created for *i giovani* by the industry. Conversely, the *hippy* style was characterised by an opposition to both the *gli adulti* and the *beats*, where both identities were identified with consumption. The goods through which this difference was expressed were either home-made objects, or objects coming from a mythologised pre-consumerist period, such as those vintage

objects that *i giovani* could find in flea markets. The *hippy* style, then, highlighted anti-consumerism as a founding feature of the *giovane* identity.

However, from 1969, the *hippy* trend itself was appropriated by the fashion industry and commercially produced. *Giovani* magazines such as *Ciao Duemilauno*, for example, started to sell *hippy* dresses. The following quotation is taken from an advertisement for garments sold directly by the magazine:

Muoversi nella moda con spirito vagabondo, scegliere uno stile e giocare ad immedesimarsi in esso e mescolarlo ad altri e inventarlo ogni volta. [...] Per facilitare l'operazione acquisto degli abiti dai colori super-brillanti "CIAO 2001" vi propone uno shopping vantaggiosissimo: basterà riempire il tagliando a pag. 66. Fate bene attenzione che si possono acquistare soltanto gli abiti in primo piano. Gli altri hanno una funzione esclusivamente decorativa ed indicativa, a cui potranno ispirarsi le più eccentriche. (Castagna, 1969b: 64)

This example shows how, just like the *beat* style, the *hippy* trend was soon incorporated by the fashion industry, therefore becoming itself commercial. The advertisement invites readers to 'play' at identifying with the *hippies* depicted in the magazine by buying garments: in other words, it gives to the readers the possibility of performing a *hippy* identity by adopting consumer goods. In this enterprise, then, *giovani* magazines used anti-consumerist discourses to sell products, in this way potentially nullifying the political signification of the *hippie* trend.

Another substantial aspect of the *hippy* fashion was its anti-authoritarian attitude, which was also incorporated from countercultural movements. Like young people protesting against teachers, headmasters, and deans who exercised their authority in schools and universities, the challenge to mid-1960s *beat* fashion and to *gli adulti* accused

of being its creators was conveyed in *giovani* magazines through a critique of high fashion. In magazines, the *hippy* style was presented as not determined by designers such as Mary Quant or Courrèges, who had influenced the *beat* fashion; conversely, according to *giovani* magazines, designers were drawing inspiration from the freedom of the *hippy* style. For instance, an article in *Ciao Duemilauno* describes designer Jean Bouquin's fashion as follows:

Il grande sacerdote di quel nuovo tipo di moda che si ispira molto da vicino ai costumi degli hippies è Jean Bouquin. [...] I materiali con i quali Jean Bouquin confeziona i suoi modelli, sono la chiave del successo che in cinque anni lo ha reso enormemente ricco e famoso. Jean infatti usa solamente tessuti che lui stesso o qualche suo collaboratore vanno scovando nelle vecchie madie delle case di campagna, nelle soffitte di antichi palazzetti di provincia e a volte anche nelle gallerie di qualche castello. Sono quindi abiti che sono confezionati con tessuti che hanno almeno cent'anni e che "emanano" un fascino particolare, un po' di mistero, delle suggestioni [...]. Ma in tutto questo c'è un neo, [...] gli abiti di Jean Bouquin infatti costano molto cari e nessun hippy potrebbe mai acquistarne uno. (Nassi, 1970b: 63)

The case of Jean Bouquin shows how discourses in magazines claimed that the fashion industry was trying to appropriate the *hippy* style by imitating it. For example, in the article above Jean Bouquin is said to produce high fashion from vintage fabrics, just like *i giovani* going to flea markets described earlier. In other words, the quotation suggests that the true creators of the *hippy* fashion are *i giovani* themselves. What is more, instead of attracting *i giovani*, the fashion industry is creating 'vestiti *hippy* ma non per gli *hippy*' as the title of the article suggests. This title implies a critique of the fashion system: the

commercial production of *hippy* designer garments made this fashion extremely expensive, so that *i giovani* could not afford them.

Furthermore, although the fashion industry superficially tried to please the *giovane* audience, magazines claimed that *i giovani* resisted its commercial authority. The *hippy* fashion was defined in an article in *Ciao Duemilauno* as ‘anarchica’:

Dobbiamo essere riconoscenti alla moda di oggi, perché ci lascia tutta la libertà che desideriamo. Pur seguendo le linee generali e le indicazioni degli atelier, la moda dei giovani non è mai stata tanto simpatica, come adesso. Perché mai come oggi è stata tanto anarchica: non obbedisce più a nessuna legge, se non a quella del gusto personale. (Nassi, 1969: 66)

Here, the influence of the fashion industry is compared to a law, and therefore to a form of authority, that *i giovani* can decide to be inspired by, but can choose to not follow. The idea of an active resistance against the power of the industry here can be seen as an adaptation of the anti-authoritarian message coming from protest movements. Magazines also promoted an active challenge to the authority of the fashion industry by suggesting to their readers that, if they are ‘stanch[i] delle imposizioni dei grandi sarti’, they should, for instance, ‘disegnare da soli i loro abiti’ (La moda Big di Tonie e Jo. Facciamo da noi?, 1967: 49). Some fashion reports also did not advertise a specific fashion brand, but rather underlined the personal choice of *i giovani* in deciding their own style, by displaying for example the ‘guardaroba senza etichetta’ of *giovani* stars, which only showed the bearer’s ‘gusto’ and ‘preferenze’ (Castagna, 1969a: 58). The intrinsic ‘demercificazione’ (ibid.) of DIY and second-hand fashion promoted in *giovani* magazines guaranteed the possibility of expressing oneself outside of the frames given by official fashion.



However, as noticed earlier, the refusal of high fashion did not completely erase the commercial incorporation of the *hippy* trend. A 1970 article that appeared in *Ciao Duemilauno* talked of an on-going ‘crisi’ of the youth fashion industry:

La “Haute Couture” è sempre più nel caos: le collezioni non sono mai state così varie (e confuse). [...] Si vuole venire incontro al gusto giovane, e ci si dibatte nell’incertezza più nera. Anche se non lo ammettono, i “creatori” sono in crisi. Perché proprio il mondo giovane ignora nel modo più completo i loro dettami: non riceve il “messaggio”. Sarebbe giusto dire che lo riceve esattamente quando gli fa comodo. I veri creatori della moda oggi sono proprio i giovani [...]. Nelle grandi capitali si adotta ciò che si vuole, e si va in giro vestiti uguali, come se si indossasse una divisa: anche questa è una forma di protesta che distingue il giovane da chi, non essendolo più (o non volendolo essere) non può e non sa indossare le stesse cose. (Nassi, 1970a: 72)

According to the quotation, although the fashion industry tried to impose trends on *i giovani*, *i giovani* actively ignored this ‘messaggio’. However, the quotation also claims that the difference from *gli adulti* was secured by the adoption of a homogenised fashion: this last observation ingenuously highlights how, despite its claimed freedom, the *giovane* fashion was in some way codified, to the extent that it is defined, in the article above, a ‘divisa’. Despite being apparently anti-authoritarian, then, the *hippy* style was still determined by popular media such as *giovani* magazines, or even by the fashion and the music industries. A 1969 article that appeared in *Ciao Duemilauno*, for example, insisted on the relevance of *giovani* music stars in influencing the *hippy* fashion:

La nuova moda dice che... non ci importa cosa dicono Nina Ricci e Valentino. Al massimo possiamo copiargli qualche idea. Noi ragazzi abbiamo la nostra moda.

Che è fatta non tanto dai maghi della linea, quanto da ciò che portano quelli che per noi “contano”. Il foulard di Hendrix. La camicia di Paul [McCartney]. La mini-indiana della Baez. (2001 Moda, 1969: 51)

This last article shows how, despite the critique of the fashion industry, *giovani* magazines still identified *giovani* music stars as influential in determining the *giovane* style. Although this quotation reaffirms the importance of international stars such as Jimi Hendrix and Joan Baez during the period 1968-1970, the role of stars as representatives of *i giovani* started to be problematised in *giovani* media. The next section concentrates on the construction of Italian *giovani* music stars in both magazines and television programmes to show the emergence of a critique of *giovani* stars, who were accused of being ‘fake’, or ‘inauthentic’ on account of their commercial role.

### **3.1.2 ‘True’ vs. ‘Fake’ giovani: a question of authenticity**

In popular media, the commercialisation of the *beats* was not only criticised through the presentation of an ‘anti-consumerist’ and ‘anti-authoritarian’ fashion; commercialisation was also connected to a supposed inauthenticity of the *beats’ giovane* identity. This discourse was mainly directed at those *giovani* stars who, during the period 1965-67, had often appeared as spokespersons for *i giovani*. After 1967, the representative role of stars started to be questioned in *giovani* media: they were criticised for being part of the music industry, and therefore an artificial product of the youth market. Moreover, the ‘artificial’ style and ‘inauthentic’ behaviour adopted by *beat* stars was interpreted as a sign of the inauthenticity of their *giovane* identity. Unlike them, several new *giovani* singers such as Lucio Battisti, Nada Malanima, and Massimo Ranieri were said to embody an ‘authentic’

*giovane* identity, because of their natural style or their sincere and down-to-earth behaviour.

Before discussing the media construction of *giovani* stars' authenticity during the period 1967-70, however, it is necessary to point out that authenticity as a concept suggesting the trueness, reality, or genuineness of a particular object or subject (Thornton, 1996: 26) is a social construction, and it therefore always conceals a fabrication. More than being an objective process, in fact, the definition of what is 'authentic' is always the result of an interaction. Richard E. Peterson indicates how 'authenticity is a claim that is made by or for some one, thing or performance and either accepted or reflected by relevant others' (2005: 1086). Authenticity is thus the relationship between the person or object that claims authenticity and the person or group of people who accepts or rejects – in other words, who authenticates or deauthenticates – this construction. Authentication, then, is the result of a constant negotiation between different subjects, such as the industry and the fans in Peterson's analysis of country music (Peterson, 1997: 6) and, in the case of the *hippies*, between the industry, *giovani* media, and young people themselves. In the present analysis, the concept of authenticity will be explored from the point of view of the authentication given by both *giovani* magazines and the studio audience of television shows to the *giovane* identity as embodied by singers.

The conceptualization of *giovane* authenticity offered by magazines and television programmes after 1967 reflected the generalised anti-consumerism of the *hippy* style: according to magazines, the mass production of the *giovane* style undermined it as an authentic form of expression for *i giovani*. Magazines began to denounce the commercial appropriation of countercultural styles, which had reduced their subversive potential. An article that appeared in *Ciao Big* in 1968 explained this process of appropriation:

Ci fu anche chi, con felice intuito commerciale, volle sfruttare i capelli lunghi e le vesti multicolori e strane dei beats, elementi quanti mai esterni e superficiali della loro ribellione. Si videro allora dilagare camicie a fiori, pantaloni di velluto; si diffusero, ma sempre più purgate ed edulcorate, le “canzoni di protesta”, che ripetevano all’infinito, in facili slogans, e in forme che spesso denunciavano la prevalente mira commerciale, i motivi del pacifismo, della libertà, della lotta contro il razzismo, trasformando e facendo degenerare tutto in un gioco di moda. (Modesti, 1968: 53)

In this quotation, the industry is accused of having exploited the *giovane* ‘flower power’ style and *giovane* music, in this way defusing *i giovani*’s social claims and reducing them to mere slogans. The widespread adoption of *giovani* trends caused by commercial production, and the repetition ‘all’infinito’ of political claims in songs produced by the music industry, is here accused of de-politicising the *giovane* style and practices. The circulation of *giovani* trends is also said to have homogenised *i giovani*: for example, an article that appeared in *Ciao Big* claimed that ‘il capellonismo [è] diventato, ormai, una forma antipatica di conformismo’ (Quattro chiacchiere con il Direttore. I Capelloni, 1968: 12): the adoption of long hairstyles had become so common that, according to *Ciao Big*’s editor, this act lost its subversive potential. As a consequence, in popular media, to reject those elements appropriated by the industry, and therefore to adopt the *hippy* style presented in the previous subsection became a strategy to increase authenticity.

The authenticity of the *giovane* identity in popular media was in fact not only constructed through a critique of the commercial incorporation of the *giovane* style, but also through the presentation of *il giovane* as a spontaneous and sincere subject, especially when interacting with other *giovani*, on stage and at home. This aspect is well represented

by the presence of *i giovani* in the television programme *Speciale per Voi* (1969-70), a musical show broadcast by RAI's *Secondo Canale* for two series, in 1969 and 1970. The programme featured musical performances and interviews with singers, athletes, actors, and cartoonists, and the *giovanne* studio audience was a fundamental part of the show, as its members were invited to interact with the guests. In *Speciale per Voi*, the studio setting and the contents of the programme were constructed to seem spontaneous and unplanned: the programme always starts with a long shot of the studio in which the *giovani* members of the audience are talking among themselves as if they were accidentally being filmed. Seats are randomly placed all over the studio, and the host, Renzo Arbore,<sup>47</sup> needs to ask for the studio audience's attention in order to start the show (*Speciale per Voi*, episode 1, 18/03/1969). The scenery is empty and the frequent long shots film the entire audience, in this way suggesting their full participation in the programme. Arbore insists on defining the show 'un programma vero' (ibid.), in which there is no script: Arbore himself is 'caught' by the camera while informally talking to a young woman at the beginning of several episodes (see for example *Speciale per Voi*, episode 5, 22/04/1969 and episode 6, 29/04/1969) and the dialogue between the audience and guests is often in an informal register. The programme is constructed to display that there is no filter between the audience and the actual guests of the show: *giovani* singers perform live in the studio, and when they do not perform, they are sitting with the audience, and participating in the discussion. In addition, translators who speak with foreign guests such as the Greek band Aphrodite's Child and the French singer Eric Chardin are presented as accidentally being

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<sup>47</sup> Renzo Arbore, musician and radio and television presenter, is a clear example of a *giovanne* who is not necessarily young. Born in 1937, he famously hosted the radio programme *Bandiera Gialla* from 1965 to 1970, in this way becoming a representative of *i giovani* in media products. He was 32 years old in 1969; however, as he states on the show, "Io mi annovero tra i giovani" (*Speciale per voi*. Episode 1. 18/03/1969).

part of the studio audience (*Speciale per Voi*, episode 3, 08/04/1969 and episode 5, 22/04/1969).

Most importantly, the *giovane* audience in a certain way leads the show: members of the audience talk directly to the musical guests, often standing above Arbore with their voice and their presence. Arbore continually moves in the studio with a microphone in order to let the audience pose their questions to the guests, and he asks for the permission of the audience when singers start to perform. In the show, *i giovani* are introduced as a critical presence: the members of the audience interact with the guests in a polemical style, asking thorny questions and criticising their attitude. As the show was broadcast after 1968, this behaviour can be interpreted as another media recuperation of the protesting attitude of the student and worker movements. The audience's critiques concern the way in which *gli adulti*, or the mainstream media, discriminate against *i giovani*, as they had in previous programmes such as *Diamoci del Tu*. In addition, in *Speciale per Voi*, the audience interrogate the stars performing on the show and criticise those who do not seem authentic in their behaviour, in this way rejecting the role of stars as representatives for *i giovani*. In other words, the role of the studio audience is to 'demitizzare i miti attraverso le domande', as Renzo Arbore underlines in one episode (*Speciale per Voi*, episode 5, 22/04/69). *Speciale per Voi* shows how the critique of the inauthenticity of *i giovani* involves an evaluation of *giovani* stars as products of the music industry: as well as criticising the commercial appropriation of the *beat* style, *i giovani* in popular media products disapproved of the commercial function of *giovani* stars. As a consequence, the practice of identifying *beat* music stars as representatives of *i giovani* started to apparently be challenged. For example, in an episode of *Speciale per Voi*, Gianni Morandi enters the studio while the audience whistles to criticise him, and some

members accuse him of being too mainstream and disengaged. One member of the audience also asks Morandi not to sing his latest single, 'Occhi di Ragazza' (Baldazzi & Braidotti, 1970), in order to demonstrate that his presence on the show does not have promotional reasons (*Speciale per Voi*, episode 2, 21/04/1970). Renzo Arbore also states that singers actually fear the *Speciale per Voi* audience, because they are too critical: if singers want to be taken seriously by *i giovani*, they need to sing on the show, and answer the audience's questions (*Speciale per Voi*, episode 6, 29/04/1969).

Accounts of stars being commercial products and thus inauthentic *giovani* also emerged in *giovani* magazines: in a 1969 editorial in which *Ciao Duemilauno*'s editor presented his magazine, he explained how

Un anno e mezzo fa lo dissi chiaro e tondo che un giornale per i giovani non poteva continuare a creare miti, ad alimentarli, a cercare urletti di gioia, fasulli attori purché giovani all'anagrafe e vecchi perché nati in un sistema vecchio ed istruiti peggio. Non è giusto mi dicevo. [...] Non sono questi i giovani a cui ci rivolgiamo. Sembrano così perché li vogliamo credere tali, perché è più facile star loro dietro [...]. Un taglio netto ci vuole, una rivoluzione (il termine è troppo forte per il mio scopo, ma non ne trovo un altro subito) nel colloquio con la gioventù. (Untitled, 1969)

*Ciao Duemilauno*'s editor explains here his antagonism to celebrity stories in *giovani* magazines, as according to him the role of *giovani* media is not to foster the celebrity of music and cinema stars. Although young in age, these stars are said to be *adulti*, because they are working in a commercial system, namely the music and cinema industries. The director claims that a 'revolution' in the way in which *i giovani* are narrated needs to take place: again, the choice of terms such as 'revolution' recalls the general protesting attitude

of *i giovani* in this period. However, when looking at *Ciao Duemilauno*, one can see how the editor's words in this article are true only to a certain extent. Although the magazine profiled articles on society and politics, celebrity gossip was present in the magazine, and therefore *Ciao Duemilauno* still functioned to foster the celebrity of stars.

This observation shows how discourses around the rejection of supposedly inauthentic stars were not necessarily a reflection of an anti-consumerist attitude, but rather of a renegotiation of those features constructing the *giovane* star. During the period 1968-1970, new *giovani* stars promoted by the industry were characterised by a supposed authenticity, which did not involve any exaggerated behaviour or extravagant style. This authenticity was, however, fabricated by the industry, which presented singers through discourses recalling their friendly behaviour and natural style, despite the fact that these stars were commercial products as much as their *beat* predecessors. The process of fabricating authenticity in the music industry is well explained by Peterson (1997), according to whom the music industry tends to 'fabricate' a cohesion to a stereotyped account of a certain music genre, in order to sell music records and advertise singers (ibid.: 5).<sup>48</sup> The authenticity constructed in *giovani* music singers during the period 1967-70 functioned to challenge the image of *giovani* stars as commercial products, by underlining the modest and friendly behaviour of those singers and the apparently natural style they adopted.

Lucio Battisti, for example, became a singer and therefore a celebrity only after 1968, although he had previously been a songwriter for several *beat* bands. The way in

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<sup>48</sup> In Peterson's analysis, the fabrication of authenticity specifically concerns the making of country music: 'entertainment music impresarios sensed that the essential appeal of the music was rooted in the feeling of authenticity conveyed by its performers' (Peterson, 1997: 5). However, we might think of many other music genres and commercial objects for which authenticity is used to attract consumers: for example, folk music, or products such as Italian food both in Italy and in foreign countries.



which he was presented tended to emphasize his anti-star construction; in one article, he was defined as the ‘anti-Morandi’ (Resta, 1969a: 50), in this way confirming his difference to previous *giovani* stars. According to an article that appeared in *Giovani*, Battisti ‘non vuole essere definito un “personaggio”. Nel vestire non si lascia andare a stranezze, non si compera macchine sportive, non scende a compromessi per un po’ di pubblicità’ (Le Vacanze sul Fiume del Cantante Solitario, 1968: 27): he is an ordinary person, and does not want to take advantage of his popularity to conduct a celebrity lifestyle. Furthermore, the authenticity of his persona was reflected in his style, which was presented as ‘natural’. In a 1969 interview to *Ciao Duemilauno*, Battisti comments:

“E i miei capelli! Lo sai che più di una persona pensava che portassi la parrucca e, quando dicevo: toccate, toccate, sono veri, tutti si allontanavano, come di fronte a uno zulu? Oggi le ragazze trovano addirittura sexy la mia capigliatura, ma io li lascio così soltanto perché odio tagliarmi i capelli e pettinarmi”. (Resta, 1969a: 52)

This attitude concerned not only his hairstyle, but also his style, which is commented as follows:

Anche il suo modo di vestire è sempre lo stesso: trasandato in maniera comoda, distratto, à la page soltanto per quell’eterno foulard di seta legato alla gola [...]. Gli hanno detto che deve un po’ dimagrire; via, le cosce sono un po’ troppo robuste; ma lui lascia cantare e continua a portare sgraziati pantaloni che certo non aggraziano la sua figura. “Non ho alcuna intenzione di diventare un divo, sia ben chiaro”, puntualizza, ridiventando serio. (ibid.)

Here, Battisti describes his afro-inspired hairstyle<sup>49</sup> and the adoption of a *hippy* fashion as something completely casual and natural. He insists on the fact that he does not wear

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<sup>49</sup> The incorporation of the Afro style in Italian popular media will be discussed in depth in section 3.2.2.

wigs, in this way accentuating his supposedly natural style. Moreover, he says that he does not want to lose weight in order to become more desirable for his fans, but he is conscious of the fact that his hairstyle, for example, is considered as attractive by his female fans. He justifies his style, and therefore contributes to the construction of his own authenticity, by saying that he is too lazy to get a haircut, and he states that he wears what he likes; however, his style and hairstyle clearly recall the *hippy* trend advertised by magazines during this period. Battisti was presented as authentic because of his supposedly natural style; however, he was clearly following the *hippy* trend, and despite his presentation as an anti-celebrity, he was as much a part of the music industry as other singers.

Similarly, Nada Malanima, who won the Sanremo Festival in 1969 when she was only fifteen years old with the song 'Ma che freddo fa' (Migliacci & Mattone, 1969), embodied in her star persona the naturalness and authenticity of the *hippy* star. In 1970, the magazine *Ciao Duemilauno* described her as follows:

I riflettori della musica leggera [...] sono puntati ormai da mesi, su questo personaggio, minuscolo personaggio dal sorriso dolce e semplice, e dalle maniere ancora non rovinare dalle manie della pubblicità, o dagli atteggiamenti da diva. [...] Si è imposta anche per le sue caratteristiche fisiche: un tipino adolescente, niente fronzoli, niente atteggiamenti caricaturali, semplicissima nei modi e nel vestire. Una tipica – accettabilissima – ragazzina dei nostri giorni. (Nada vince Contro-Canzonissima, 1970: 36)

Here, Nada is praised for being an anti-diva, still modest in her style and manners. She is said not to have an overstated way of presenting herself, both in appearance and behaviour. Nada also adopted a simple and natural style, which tended to stress her

authenticity. In a backstage interview during her participation in a show on Spanish television published in *Giovani*, she says:

“Guarda come mi hanno conciata! [...] Ho un dito di cerone in faccia che mi pizzica! Se qualche ragazzo italiano mi vedesse conciata così, non mi riconoscerebbe nemmeno! Una cosa però ho rifiutato, pestando come una matta i piedi: le ciglia finte. Eh, no! Quelle sono davvero troppo. Io voglio cantare con la faccia pulita, alla mia età me lo posso permettere”. (Tumbarello, 1969: 30)

The singer here complains about the heavy make-up and the fake eyelashes that the Spanish television producers want her to wear, because she thinks that these are not necessary given her young age. Most importantly, this declaration insists on Nada's discomfort in looking constructed through an abuse of make-up: she states that her Italian audience would not recognise her with this much make-up on. Nada's extremely young age contributed to the construction of her persona as simple and natural, far from the excesses of other stars.

Finally, Massimo Ranieri, a singer and actor who reached the peak of his popularity at the end of the 1960s, also represented the stereotype of the 'boy next door', in some way recalling Morandi's star persona during the *beat* period. In *Ciao Duemilauno*, Ranieri, as well being an anti-star, was portrayed as a friend to readers and his job as a singer did not make him a celebrity:

Se non facesse il cantante, potrebbe essere un compagno di banco, o l'amico con il quale si studia più volentieri, o il ragazzo con il quale si va volentieri al cinema (se si è una ragazza) o a tirare quattro calci al pallone. Massimo Ranieri è talmente lontano dalle “deformazioni” della pubblicità e degli atteggiamenti da divo, che

può ispirare una immediata, genuina, divertente simpatia. (Massimo ci ha Confessato, 1970: 26)

The quotation concentrates on Ranieri's behaviour towards other *giovani*, in order to stress his anti-star nature. It shows how, given his friendly behaviour, Ranieri as a star can appeal to everyone: to women, who would go on a date with him, and to men, with whom he would become friends. The distance between Ranieri and the industry is underlined in the text in the reference to the singer's behaviour and his attitude in not promoting himself: despite his career as a singer, he is far from behaving like a celebrity. Similarly, in a 1970 appearance in a *Speciale per Voi* episode, a member of the audience tries to question Ranieri's authenticity by saying that when he entered the studio he was wearing a casual outfit and blue jeans, while during his performance he was wearing a suit and a shirt. Asked about what was his 'true' self, Ranieri answers that 'io sono lo stesso che in blue jeans', in this way affirming that his authentic self and his star persona were the same (*Speciale per Voi*, episode 13, 07/07/1970).

The similar constructions of Battisti, Malanima, and Ranieri emphasize how, during the *hippy* period, the term 'star' acquired negative connotations: if the *beat* stars were the representatives of *i giovani* during the period 1965-67, a critique of this previous identity was conveyed through a direct criticism of their way of performing being *giovani*. Discourses around the *beat* in 1967-1970 depicted them as inauthentic, commercial, artificial, and insincere. Conversely, *hippy* stars were defined by an anti-star attitude and by a natural style that seemed not to require commercial fashion or artificial style features. However, as shown in the previous examples, the authenticity of the *hippy* stars' 'natural' construction is questionable: a supposedly natural style does not necessarily mean that these stars did not follow or promote a trend; moreover, the anti-star representation of

singers such as Battisti, Malanima and Ranieri clashed with their role as representatives for *i giovani*. As this telling quotation taken from *Ciao Big* about Patty Pravo suggests, star personas, despite being constructed as authentic or inauthentic, were all fabricated by the media:

Costruita? Ma un personaggio è sempre costruito. Anche la più bella, spontanea melodia del mondo è qualcosa di costruito. E se Patty Pravo è qualcosa di artificiale, bene, questo ci sembra un suo merito in più [...]. Patty Pravo non vuole essere il simbolo mimico-musicale della ragazza spontanea, dagli atteggiamenti spontanei: non vuole essere la contropartita musicale di Gianni Morandi. Ma la “spontaneità” di Morandi (personaggio) è una “finzione artistica” né più e né meno della sofisticazione un po’ barocca di Patty Pravo. (Scaccia, 1968b: 52)

This analysis ably summarises the meaning of ‘authenticity’ in the media construction of *giovani* stars. The way in which the authentic *hippy* was constructed in *giovani* media had the double function of building a sense of community and creating commercial star personas, such as Nada, Battisti, and Ranieri, who despite performing their *giovani* nature in different ways still had the same function as *beat* stars: that was, to sell records and to promote a specific style. However, this construction was based on a rejection of the *beat* identity: this process confirms the definition of the *hippy* in opposition not only to *gli adulti*, but also to previous representations of young people.

This section has demonstrated how the *hippy* style was influenced by some of the political and social claims that were circulating in Italian society during the period 1968-1970, for example protest, pacifism, anti-consumerism, and anti-authoritarianism. In particular, the *hippy* style was presented as a contrast to the increasing consumerism of *i giovani*: it was often described in opposition to the commercialisation of the *beat* style,

which had been incorporated by the industry. The tendency towards the anti-consumerism of the *hippy* style was also present in the apparent rejection of *beat* stars, who were accused of being produced by the industry and therefore inauthentic. However, the *hippy* style was itself commercially incorporated by the industry: the anti-consumerist style of the *hippies* started to be mass-produced, and discourses around protest were trivialised in advertisements. The authenticity of new *giovani* stars was also a fabrication of the music industry, and had a commercial aim. *Giovani* popular media, then, promoted and reproduced some of the subversive claims of young people, but also trivialised and depoliticised them, in order to sell commercial products.

### ***3.2 When the 'Other' is fashionable: 'other' times and 'other' places***

The previous section outlined the anti-consumerist and anti-authoritarian inspirations for the *hippy* style, and it showed the importance of popular media discourses around authenticity in defining the *hippy* in opposition to the *beat*. This section now concentrates on the strategies through which, during the period 1967-70, the anti-consumerist inspiration of the *hippy* style was represented through the emergence of several trends inspired by 'other' times and 'other' places: at the end of 1967, the 'flower power' trend, directly inspired by the American hippie movement, was complemented by the spreading of an India-inspired style. After the Italian release of the Hollywood film *Bonnie and Clyde* (Penn, 1967) in December 1967, a wave of 1930s-inspired fashion was presented in popular media. However, this trend quickly disappeared during 1968, while at the same time an Afro trend, that influenced especially hairstyles, emerged. Often these different trends were casually appropriated by mainstream fashion, in Italy and elsewhere. Sonia Ashmore points out, for example, that the British hippie fashion was characterised by an

indiscriminate mix of styles as diverse in their inspiration as Indian garments, gypsy skirts and scarves, western boots and shirts, and native American fringes:

In the 1960s and 1970s, a different kind of interest in “ethnic” dress emerged as part of a counter-cultural reaction to conventions of all kinds. [...] While hippy clothes often referred unconsciously to a historic British relationship with India in their adoption of vernacular costumes and decorative Indian fabrics, exoticism was often undifferentiated. North African, Native American, South American, “peasant” and “gypsy” styles were also casually borrowed [...]. (Ashmore, 2010: 110)

The combination of different inspirations tended to decrease these trends’ specific signification, which often came from countercultural ideals. The same apparently accidental incorporation of ethnic elements can be found in the Italian *giovane* style, where the ‘ethnic’ style was used to represent the difference of *i giovani* not only from adults but also from their foreign peers, for it expressed an eccentricity and extravagance that, in the Italian case, always had to be taken with moderation:

Adesso è il grande momento dello stile western. Ma anche tutte le altre influenze, sia orientaleggianti che del terzo mondo, sono accettate, purché siano un po’ attenuate. Insomma, pensiamo proprio che i guru e tutte quelle stravaganze che sino a ieri dettavano legge oggi siano state bandite dal guardaroba maschile. La nuova parola d’ordine è: stravaganti sì, ma con moderazione e gusto. [...] Naturalmente, parliamo dell’aspetto esteriore. Perché dentro, i ragazzi, oggi sono più rivoluzionari che mai. (Le Camicie del Far West, 1968: 34)

The quotation shows how, as was the case with the Carnaby Street influence for the *beats*, the appropriation of foreign influences in the Italian *giovane* style needed to be toned

down in order to be accepted. The reference to moderation suggests a desire for the normalisation of Italian *giovani*, in comparison with the overstatedly extravagant style of their foreign peers.

All these different styles were influenced by transnational trends that were developing in Western countries, both in mainstream culture, such as the 1930s-inspired trend, and in countercultures, such as the ‘ethnic’ looks. However, their reception in the Italian context acquired specifically national meanings: in order to show how these trends’ commercial and political meanings were modified in Italian popular media, this section will use two of these trends as case studies. It will analyse firstly a transhistorical appropriation, namely the 1930s-inspired trend, and secondly a transnational inspiration, the Afro style developing in 1968-69.

### **3.2.1 *The 1930s, ‘epoca giovane’***

One of the main differences between the *beat* and the *hippy* style can be found in the references that, from 1968 to 1970, were made to the past. If during the period 1965-67 the opposition to *gli adulti* implied a refusal of everything that was considered ‘old’, from the end of 1967 there was a re-evaluation of the past as a source for inspiration for the *giovane* style and, subsequently, the *giovane* identity.<sup>50</sup> An article in *Ciao Big* announces at the end of 1967:

Il futuro [...] ha un cuore antico. Cinque o sei anni fa, questa affermazione sarebbe apparsa strana. [...] E i disegnatori di moda si affannavano a immaginare abiti alla marziana, con caschi e cappotti in materiale plastico, se non addirittura in amianto.

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<sup>50</sup> References to the ‘future’ did not disappear in *giovani* popular media: for instance, in March 1968 the name of the magazine *Ciao Big* was changed to *Ciao Duemilauno*, almost at the same time of the American release of the film *2001: a Space Odyssey* (Kubrick, 1968).



Invece, che cosa è accaduto? Sono nati i “figli dei fiori”, gli hippies e nel giro di un anno (anche meno) si è affermato lo stile liberty, quello stile fatto di ghirigori, di ornamenti bizzarri, di fiori, di quei fregi dolci e tenui che si affermarono negli anni a cavallo tra le due guerre mondiali (1920-1940). (Settimelli, 1967: 83)

Thus the difference between the *beats* and the *hippies* is underlined here by explaining how modernity, in the *hippy* style, is not to be found in sci-fi outfits or the use of unconventional materials, but rather in references to the past. Section 3.1.1 already pointed out that one of the main features of the *hippy* style was vintage fashion, or the anti-consumerist re-use of second-hand clothes. The particular period from which the *hippy* style took inspiration was the inter-war period: for example, the floral theme of the ‘flower power’ trend was said to be inspired by 1920s’ *Art Nouveau*, which also made substantial use of references to floral patterns. Most importantly, at the beginning of 1968, the *giovane* fashion was inspired by the release of the American film *Bonnie and Clyde*, set in the United States of the 1930s. The success that this film experienced not only in the United States, but also in Europe, provoked the emergence of a 1930s-inspired trend, the main features of which were curly hair, heavy makeup, and the wearing of female and male suits. Although this fashion lasted for only a short time – references to this style only appeared in *giovani* media during the first three months of 1968 – it was widely covered in magazines, and influenced fashion<sup>51</sup> and television programmes.<sup>52</sup> As a consequence, a discourse that did not consider the ‘past’ as contradictory to the *giovane* identity, but

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<sup>51</sup> Many fashion reports feature *giovani* stars dressed in 1930s styles, accompanied by a short history of the period and a description of the many features of it. See: Un documentario esclusivo di Giovani: gli anni Trenta rievocati dai cantanti, 1968.

<sup>52</sup> For example, the RAI programme *Giochiamo agli anni Trenta* (1968) hosted by singers Ombretta Colli and Giorgio Gaber. The programme was broadcast in October 1968.

rather as a renewal of what the *giovane* identity was supposed to embody, began to emerge:

Dopo il lungo periodo “beat”, dunque, in cui era la “swinging” London a dettar legge, ora è la volta della “roaring” America. [...] E’ chiaro che con una mise del genere i capelloni stoneranno terribilmente: perciò, bene le basette a metà guancia e oltre, e benissimo il capello liscio con scriminatura a sinistra. (Pady 1968: 17)

According to this article that appeared in *Ciao Big*, 1930s’ style implied a refusal of the *beat* period, embodied here by the *capelloni* and their style which does not seem to fit with the new trend. The writer points out that the new trend emerging in 1968 is not inspired by a contemporary foreign phenomenon, such as swinging London, but rather a past, and foreign, cultural reference: the American 1930s.

Popular media discourses around the American ‘roaring 30s’ trend sought to construct a historical connection between the 1930s and the *giovane* identity: they emphasized how several practices that emerged during the inter-war period anticipated modern *giovani* practices. In *giovani* magazines, the inter-war period started to be described as ‘l’epoca giovane’ (Movilia, 1968: 18). On the one hand, it was described as the period in which adults were *giovani* themselves, thus mitigating the distance between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*. On the other hand, the inter-war period was represented as the period in which ‘nasceva [...] tutto quello che amiamo oggi’ (ibid.), as the title of an article in *Ciao Big* states. According to this narrative, it was in the 1930s that most of the free-time activities that *i giovani* enjoyed were invented, such as *giovani* dances and a *giovane* fashion. *Giovani* magazines narrated the 1930s as a period in which much more freedom in leisure activities was given to *i giovani* of both sexes. For example, an article in *Ciao Big* described the 1930s by referring to sports and games:

Gli anni ruggenti sono quelli nei quali si scopre la vita moderna, lo stile novecento, lo sci d'acqua, lo sport femminile e signori per bene, seri e vestiti di scuro camminano per la strada facendo andare su e giù lo yo-yo. È la mania di quegli anni. (Movilia, 1968: 18)

In other words, the way in which *giovani* magazines presented the 1930s in Italy clearly represented a stereotyped appropriation of the 1930s, which concentrated on certain activities, and was clearly borrowed from transnational experiences. Although the inter-war period can be considered a watershed for the way in which Italian people performed their free-time activities, in fact, the Fascist regime, which ruled Italy during the *Ventennio* from 1922 to 1943, notably tended to exercise direct control over the Italian population's leisure activities and their individual bodies. The social life of the younger generations was strictly ruled by a system of associations that organised young people's free time, their holidays and their bodies. Discussing the use of physical exercise by the Fascist regime, George Mosse underlines that

the overriding importance of physical exercise in Italy [...] was not so much centred on the symbolic importance of the beautiful body as, above all, on its use to instil discipline and a sense of order, and proper comportment was considered essential. (Mosse, 1996: 161)

Furthermore, the role of women in society was also controlled and ruled by fascist propaganda: Victoria De Grazia points out that despite the existence of images of 'modern' women in Italian inter-war culture – the *donne-crisi*, Italian translations of the French *garçonne* and the American *flapper* – these images were used in fascist imagery as a negative counterpart to the preferred image of the woman-as-mother:

Fascist propaganda manufactured two female images. One was the *donna-crisi*: she was cosmopolitan, urbane, skinny, hysterical, decadent, and sterile. The other was the *donna-madre*: she was national, rural, floridly robust, tranquil, and prolific. (De Grazia, 1992: 73)

The misremembering of the past, and the transposition of nostalgia about the 1930s to the American context, can be interpreted as a strategy to deal with a traumatic past such as the Fascist *ventennio*: referring to an imagined past, such as that which comes from Hollywood imagery and American popular culture, partially erased the memory of living under a dictatorship, and therefore influenced the collective memory of the inter-war period in Italy. This observation also reveals the agency of the magazines' writers and editors in this act of renegotiation of the past, in that, as the young people at whom this representation was directed did not experience the Fascist regime, descriptions of the 1930s arguably reveal the presence of adults working through their own experiences, and perhaps trying to gain the acceptance of their young audience. A similar reappropriation of the adults' own young past also took place in the television programme *Noi Maggiorenni*, discussed in the previous chapter. The reference to *Bonnie and Clyde* is also interesting because film scholars have pointed out how violence in this film functioned, in American society, to recuperate the violence of the Vietnam War (Devine, 1995: 56-57). The absence of violence in accounts of the film, and of the 1930s in general, in Italian media, reaffirms the tendency of erasing potentially traumatic elements of Italian history, and the political activism of young people in the late 1960s.

The creation of an imagined past, in addition, had a more direct effect in the media construction of *i giovani*: references to a fictional past, such as that created by Hollywood, functioned as a myth of origins for the community of *i giovani*, in this way contributing to

the reinforcement of this construction. In the television programme *Speciale per Voi* (1969), part of the discussion in the studio dealt with the supposed discrimination of *gli adulti* towards *i giovani* and the incommunicability between the two groups. In *Speciale per Voi*, the studio audience tended to justify their behaviour by linking it to that of their parents, who during the inter-war period performed the same practices as they did in the 1960s. For example, during a discussion about the *giovane* style, a member of the audience declares that he does not understand how *gli adulti* can consider *i giovani*'s style 'strange', as his parents adopted a similarly 'strange' style – he does not specify which – when they were *giovani* (*Speciale per voi*, episode 3, 08/04/1969). Similarly, when discussing *giovani* dances, another member of the audience describes how their parents' generation danced similarly to today's *giovani*, for example when they danced the Charleston (*Speciale per Voi*, episode 4, 15/04/1969).

In these examples, reference to the inter-war period as a *giovane* era effectively functioned as an 'invented tradition' for *i giovani*: that is, it became an ideological construction that created an illusive link to the past. According to Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 'invented traditions' have a strong ritualistic, symbolic, and therefore ideological function (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2004: 4): they are often at the base of the construction of 'imagined' national communities, and function as a strategy to naturalise them. Similarly, the creation of a past for the community of *i giovani* functioned to naturalise not only the social construction of youth as a collective identity, but also the practices through which it was constructed in popular media. Hobsbawm and Ranger underline how, in invented traditions, references to the past do not need to be historically accurate, but rather 'the continuity with [the historical past] is largely fictitious' (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2004: 2). The practices through which the studio audience in

*Speciale per voi* described the 1930s are in fact acquired from an imagined past. According to David Forgacs and Stephen Gundle (2007), the freedom to experience free time and social relationships, especially outside major cities, was extremely restricted for young people during 1930s' Italy: for example, 'public dances [for young people] were often declared off-limits by parents who could no longer exercise appropriate control' (Forgacs & Gundle, 2007: 86). As a consequence, it is arguable that the popular media imagery of 1930s' young people dancing the Charleston was not experienced by the majority of the Italian population. Similarly, Forgacs and Gundle note how the use of commercial fashion during the 1930s was limited to the few people who could afford it:

[Before 1945] although even poorer people were aware of fashion, attractive or even new clothes were usually out of reach. [...] Before the mass consumption of fashion, clothes, and cosmetics, there was a period where working-class and some peasant women sought to emulate the appearance of women with higher incomes but could do so only in a rough and ready way. (Forgacs & Gundle, 2007: 87)

The authors point out how trends of style and appearance, despite being present, could not be followed by the majority of the Italian population during the 1930s, especially those living in peripheral or poorer areas of the country. As a consequence, the assumption that young people in Italy – or the parents of the 1960s' *giovani* – used to wear a 'strange' style is very unlikely to be true. In *giovani* popular media, then, references to the 1930s as the 'epoca giovane' dealt mainly with those aspects, namely dance, fashion and music, which were the main features of the *giovane* identity in the 1960s: as a consequence, the popular media construction of 1960s' *giovani* through leisure practices was justified by a fictionally historical legacy.

In *giovani* magazines, references to a stereotyped past – and in particular to the Hollywood representation of the ‘roaring 30s’ – in 1968 *giovane* fashion were turned into an ‘invented tradition’ for Italian *giovani*, which created a foundational myth that could favour the creation of the ‘imagined community’ of young people. This representation did not reflect the actual situation of 1930s’ Italy: it was rather the result of a recuperation of stereotyped images of the ‘roaring 30s’, in this way aligning to Hobsbawm and Granger’s definition of the ‘invented tradition’ as a fictional construction. Interestingly, the ‘invented tradition’ through which *i giovani* were naturalised was not only transhistorical, but also transnational, as it referred to an American imagery. The next section will analyse how references to the American-inspired Afro style were also the subject of a domestication conducted by *giovani* magazines.

### ***3.2.2 Somewhere else: the Afro style***

References to the ‘other’ in the *hippy* style not only concerned the past: the *hippy* fashion was also characterised by the appropriation of several ‘ethnic’ features, apparently coming from non-Western countries. Similar to the ‘roaring 30s’ trend, ethnic trends in this period were not an Italian peculiarity. In 1967, for example, an Indian-inspired trend emerged in the United Kingdom in which young people started to wear saris, kaftans, and Indian textiles. In 1968, an African-inspired trend developed in the United States that concerned particularly ‘afro’ hairstyles, but also accessories such as ‘African’ necklaces and bracelets. The appropriation of ethnic features was not a new development for Western fashion; as Jennifer Craik points out, a fascination with the exotic has always permeated occidental trends:

The incorporation of exotic motifs in fashion (across all cultures) is an effective way of creating a “frisson” (a thrill or quiver) within social conventions of etiquette. Because fashion systems are built on the interrelationship and tension between exotic and familiar codes, exotic looks are all the more effective as techniques of display. Consequently, fashion systems plunder “exotic” techniques and codes from “other” looks and fashions [...]. In Western fashion, the term “exotic” is used to refer to elements of new fashion codes or ‘new looks’ codified as profoundly “different” from previous or contemporary fashion techniques. (Craik, 1994: 17)

Craik underlines how ‘exotic’ elements in fashion have always been used to state a difference from conventional fashion features. Since the long period of European colonialism in Africa and Asia, the Western adoption of aspects of the colonised countries’ traditional garments was used to express extravagance and originality, whilst also reaffirming the supremacy of the West over the colonised populations. However, the 1960s’ appropriation of ethnic elements was substantially different from previous appropriations, for its signification became countercultural and political: references to the ‘other’ tended to express either a refusal of the Western, consumerist society, as was the case with the hippie appropriation of Indian garments, or to visually demonstrate belonging to emancipatory groups such as the American Civil Rights movement, like the American Afro style. To explain how these Western trends were incorporated in the *hippy* style, the case of the Afro trend seems the most significant, not only because the Afro style represented a strong political statement in the Western world, but also because the *giovane* style had not previously incorporated elements questioning issues of race and



ethnicity. This section signals the extent to which the Afro trend was politically relevant in Italy, and it shows the endurance of racial and ethnic discrimination in Italian society.

The reappropriation of African style features by the African American community during the 1960s had a strong political aim: it was one of the signs used by the Civil Rights Movements to create a common identity and to show a sense of belonging to a shared tradition. Susan B. Kaiser explains how in the United States, ‘in 1952, a black woman proudly wearing “nappy” hair was unfashionable. In 1960, she was a curiosity, in 1965 a militant, and in 1968 stylish’ (Kaiser, 2012: 78). Ayana Byrd and Lori Tharps (2014) explain how the African American style before the 1960s was extremely influenced by Western culture, especially in the styling of hair, which used to be straightened and coiffed in order to conform to American white standards of beauty. From 1965 onwards, however, the adoption of curly and ‘nappy’ hairstyles and the abandonment of several techniques of hair straightening became the symbol of a challenge to the subjugation of black people in the United States, summarised in the Civil Rights Movements’ slogan ‘Black is Beautiful’ (Kaiser, 2012: 80). Byrd and Tharps explain how

between 1964 and 1966, colored people and negroes “became” Black people. [...]

The shift to calling oneself Black and being proud of it translated into a style that proudly hearkened back to Africa. More than skin color, the word became a political statement in terms of one’s consciousness, color and culture. After generations of trying to neutralise distinctive African characteristics, people began to celebrate them. And just as hair had been central to the way blacks of earlier years had sought to mainstream themselves, hair became a key determinant in visually declaring Black Pride. (Byrd & Tharps, 2014: 50-51)

The Afro hairstyle was thus a ‘declaration of [African Americans’] racial pride’ (Byrd & Tharps, 2014: 54), and it became a political statement, as it aesthetically declared an involvement in the Civil Rights Movement.

The Italian domestication of the Afro trend completely erased this political signification. Instead of connecting the African influences of the *hippy* style to the American Civil Rights Movement, *giovani* magazines tended to locate the origin of the Afro trend in a orientalist idea of ‘Africa’. Edward Said notably theorises Orientalism as a discourse adopted by Western colonisers ‘for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’ (Said, 2003: 3). According to Said, Orientalist discourses did not stop with the end of colonialism, but they were reinforced by the modern multiplication of media forms: media products strengthened the proliferation of a ‘latent Orientalism’ in popular culture, which increasingly stereotyped the Western perception of the Orient:

One aspect of the postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, the films, and all the media’s resources have forced information into more and more standardized modes. So far as the Orient is concerned, standardization and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of the nineteenth-century and imaginative demonology of the “mysterious Orient”. (Said, 2003: 26)

The Orientalist, in Said’s work, is the artist, novelist and reporter who practises an ideological incorporation and assimilation of the Orient (Said, 2003: 210) which is the result of a simplification, in order to render the Orient understandable for Western readers. Similarly, *giovani* magazines during the period 1968-70 used cultural references that were closer to Italian culture such as colonial and racist tropes on ‘Africa’ and

‘African people’ to make the Afro style more understandable and acceptable for an Italian audience.

Almost every account of the Afro trend in *giovani* magazines referred to ‘Africa’ as a unitary entity, in which different traditions were mixed and randomly borrowed:

Nella moda Giovane [...] è arrivata l’Africa. La più Nera. La più Colorata. La più Pazza: collane berbere su caffetani arabi; sandali congolese con mantelli libici. Africa per tutte le ore. Per farsi il primo caffè ancora a piedi scalzi: il lungo caffettano bianco o nero, con disegni che nevrrotizzeranno tutta la giornata. [...] Per la sera lei indosserà la lunghissima tunica da preferita di harem, e lui quasi la stessa, ma con ricami importanti, da sceicco. E collane a chili: perfino le bancarelle ne sono piene [...]. (Moda, 1969: 66)

The highlighting of the colourful and eccentric features of the Afro style here tends to reduce the appropriation of ethnic trends to an extravagant act, thus dismissing the political signification that this trend was carrying. The erasing of the specificities of different African traditions and styles, such as Arab, Berber, Congolese, and Libyan, also implicitly inferred that these cultures were all similar, and could be randomly and indistinctly appropriated. Similarly, for Said, the way in which the Orient is described by Western Orientalists is characterised by an ‘unchallenged coherence’ and a ‘unanimity, stability, durability’ (Said, 2003: 206). Italian popular media references to Africa in descriptions of the Afro style also presented these societies as unchanging and immutable, not only in space, but also in time:

Prossimamente le pettinature anni Trenta verranno soppiantate da quelle ispirate all’Africa. Le negre che si acconciano ancora davanti alle capanne di fango e di paglia, hanno molto da suggerirci. I parrucchieri creeranno parrucche e toupet

ispirandosi a quelli di lana e fibre vegetali delle donne bantù e *zulù*. Caschetti di capelli arricciati cortissimi, parrucche di media lunghezza lanose, toupet vertiginosamente alti, simili a coni piazzati sulla sommità del capo, ciondoli di cinghia e metallo ad imitazione di quelli di teck e semi delle negre, per la gran sera. (L’Africa nei Capelli, 1968: 84, my italics)

Here, ‘Africa’ is presented as a backward society in which people live in huts and use archaic embellishments. The immobilised representation of Afro fashion conveys the idea of ‘Africa’ as a place outside Western progress and modernity. It is a place without history, in which colonization and decolonization never happened. ‘Africa’, just like ‘the Orient’ described by Orientalist writers, is a place where ‘the very possibility of development, transformation, human movement – in the deepest sense of the word – is denied’ (Said, 2003: 208).

Moreover, it is interesting to see how, in the quotation above and in that which follows, Africa is often identified with the Zulu tribe: the term ‘*zulù*’ in Italian language has been used since the nineteenth century in a derogative way to indicate an ‘ignorant and rough’ person (Vocabolario Online Treccani, n.d.). The conflation between ‘Africans’ and Zulus reinforces the construction of ‘Africa’ not only as an immobile space, but also as a backward society. References to tribalism in style imply a savageness of the ‘African’ subject that, the author of the next quotation hopes, the West will not adopt:

Questa ondata ha colpito anche il mondo maschile. [Portano] qualche collana di perline colorate come quelle degli *Zulù*, altre di vetro con pendagli anch’essi di vetro, altre di panno con guarnizioni varie. Poi ci sono le zanne di cinghiale, appese a catene d’argento. [...] È una moda che sta invadendo l’Inghilterra. A che

cosa si arriverà? Forse ai piattelli che certe tribù dell’Africa inseriscono sotto le labbra? Speriamo di no. (Mascalero, 1970: 47)

The journalist celebrates the originality of Afro fashion, as long as it does not reach certain excesses, which are instead identified with the ‘African’ population. This quotation reaffirms the colonial dynamics of power between Western and non-Western subjects: despite the appropriation of trends that are said to be ‘African’, the supposed modernity and moderation of the West is celebrated against the backwardness and savageness of ‘African’ subjects.

References to the ‘African’ ‘other’, in fact, cannot be separated from the European, and in this case the Italian, colonial past. As Jacqueline Andall and Derek Duncan underline in their edited volume on the legacy of Italian colonialism, the memory of Italian colonial experience can still be found in social, political, and cultural representations of both Italy and its former colonies. According to the authors, the specificity of the Italian post-colonial legacy is ‘the particular way in which it has been both remembered and forgotten’ (Andall & Duncan, 2005: 15). On the one hand, the Italian colonial experience tends to be discharged as ‘less pernicious than that of other European nations’ (ibid.: 11); on the other hand, the ‘Italian colonial encounter often returns as a latent and repressed memory in moments of crisis’ (ibid.: 19). References to the Afro style in *giovani* magazines show the legacy of Italian colonialism, for example in the use of words that directly evoke the Italian colonies: in an article describing the fashion of curly hair, that appeared in *Big* in 1967, curly hair is described as ‘*abissino, cresposo, divertente, volutamente trasandato*’ (Nichi, 1967a: 80, my italics). The term ‘abissino’, as well as the term ‘libico’ used in a previous quote, was not used to indicate a specific geographical region, but simply as a synonym for ‘African’, thus demonstrating

the latent conflation of the ‘African’ and those African populations that were colonised by Italy.

Reverberations of the Italian colonial past also appear in media descriptions of the body of the ‘African’ ‘other’, and in particular of his/her black skin, as references to skin immediately bring to the mind of an Italian reader the fascist colonial imagery of the *faccetta nera*,<sup>53</sup> or the racist depiction of the colonised ‘other’s’ bodily features as a form of domination. In analysing his identity as a person of colour, Frantz Fanon talks about a ‘color prejudice’ (Fanon, 2008: 88-89) that views black people as ‘savages, brutes, illiterates’ (ibid.: 88). He points out how dark skin makes the identification between the stereotypical and immutable image of the ‘negro’ and black men impossible to escape from. Similarly, Shirley Tate explains in her sociological essay about the renegotiation of meanings of skin for black people, that still today, black skin remains an immutable signifier in Western societies: ‘skin signifies. It is a mark of ethnicity, status, identity, self-hood [...]. Through the discursive construction of difference that emanates from the dominant culture, Black women and men continue to be placed as other: as Black others imprisoned by discourses of skin.’ (Tate, 2001: 209). Before discussing the domination of the black ‘other’, however, it is significant to stress how, in *giovani* magazines, people with black skin were almost uniquely represented as ‘Africans’. For example, in a photo story which appeared in *Ciao Big* the African American singer Rocky Roberts, who became extremely famous in Italy during the *beat* period, performed as a Congolese student moving to Italy for his studies (30 in *Amore*, 1969: 56-59). Here the person of colour is directly associated with ‘Africa’, instead of with his own national origins. Rocky Roberts was in fact an African American marine who first came to Italy during the 1960s

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<sup>53</sup> The reference is taken from the Fascist song ‘Faccetta Nera’ (Ruccione, 1938).

as part of military operations. Once in Italy, he became a successful singer with his band, the Airdales, made up of some of his comrades in arms (Della Casa & Manera, 2011: 103).

At the end of 1967, two extremely popular songs, both sung in Italian by French singers, focused on black skin as a permanent marker of difference. These two songs demonstrate how, in *giovani* popular media, discourses around black skin tended to inscribe in the black ‘other’ prevailing stereotypes such as a naturalised predisposition to rhythm and musicality, and an inner inclination to sexuality and an animal instinct. Nino Ferrer’s ‘La pelle nera’ (Ferrer, 1967) narrates the outburst of the singer who would like to sing like Wilson Pickett and James Brown but cannot. As a consequence, he wishes he could have their black skin, in order to be able to ‘naturally’ sing like his idols:

Eeeh dimmi Wilson Pickett/eeeh dimmi tu James Brown/questa voce dove la trovate [...] io faccio tutto per poter/cantar come voi/ma non c’è niente da fare non ci/riuscirò mai/io penso che sia soltanto /per il mio color che non va/ecco perché io vorrei/vorrei la pelle nera [...] eeeh dimmi tu signor Faubus/eeeh dimmi come si può/arrostire un negretto ogni tanto/con la massima serenità/io dico nino tu non ci dovresti pensar/ma non c’è niente da fare /per dimenticar/‘sto maledetto colore di pelle che mi/brucia un po’ [...] Poi vorrei stare laggiù/abitare a New Orleans/ascoltare il Mississippi, fare a pugni con gli amici/tutti neri e musicisti, saper suonare la tromba/poter parlare l'inglese, l'italiano non funziona per questa musica qui/poi vorrei poter gridare/yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, all right!

The song is intended to be an anti-racist song: the singer talks to Orbal Faubus, the Governor of Arkansas who became known world-wide during the Little Rock Crisis of 1957, when he stopped African Americans from attending Little Rock Central High

School as part of the federally ordered racial desegregation programme. In the song, Ferrer polemically asks him how he could be so cruel towards black people. However, the song is full of racist stereotypes, as it equates black skin with a naturalised inclination to rhythm and musicality. The singer is white so he cannot sing as he likes, but he wishes to have black skin so that he can finally be more similar to his idols. The description of the New Orleans environment is also significant: black skin is equated with naturalised acts such as violence – ‘fare a pugni con gli amici’ – a different language – ‘poter parlare l’inglese’ – and again, music – ‘amici tutti neri e musicisti, saper suonare la tromba’. Moreover, even though ‘La pelle nera’ clearly talks about African American singers, the Italian cover of Ferrer’s album is a white drawing on a black background representing an ‘African’ tribal warrior, with face paint and ornaments: again, the sign ‘black skin’ is translated in Italian media through a direct reference to ‘Africa’.

Whilst ‘La pelle nera’ concentrates on the naturalised musicality and aggressiveness of black people, Antoine’s ‘Cannella’ (Antoine & Pagani, 1967) is about a young mixed-race woman with whom the singer falls in love.

La chiamerò Cannella/per il colore che ha./La chiamerò Cannella/in privato e in  
società./La pelle di Cannella/impazzire mi fa./Se dico così/una ragione ce l’ho:/io  
l’ho assaggiata e voi no. [...] Ti metterò un guinzaglio/per essere sicuro che/da  
oggi in poi,/nemmeno per sbaglio,/tu possa fuggire da me.

As both Said (2003: 207) and Anne McClintock (1995) point out, in colonial discourses, the Orient, or the earth to be conquered by the Europeans, is often feminized; it is the virgin, natural territory that needs to be actively subjugated by the colonial white male. In particular, Anne McClintock talks about a ‘porno-tropic tradition’ (1995: 22), which sees imperialism as a male penetration of a veiled female interior. This discourse is also



transferred to the colonized female 'other', who has to be conquered and tamed: 'within this porno-tropic tradition, women figured as the epitome of sexual aberration and excess. Folklore saw them, even more than the men, as given to a lascivious venery so promiscuous as to border on the bestial' (ibid.). Echoes of a porno-tropic tradition are retraceable in 'Cannella': the young woman is identified through the cinnamon-like colour of her skin, that literally defines her, as Cannella is the name which the singer calls her, not only in private situations, but also in public. Moreover, the way in which the singer refers to Cannella suggests a subjugation and animalisation of the female black 'other': on the one hand, the singer is proud of having 'tasted' her and her skin; on the other hand, he says that he will use a lead to prevent her escape, in this way affirming his conquest of the young woman and equating her with a slave, or an animal.

Singer, dancer, and television personality Lola Falana also embodied the sexualisation of the black 'other' in Italy during the period 1967-1970. The African American artist, who became a celebrity in Italian popular media during the second half of the 1960s, was often referred to as *la venere nera*, indirectly alluding to the colonial imagery of the 'beautiful, docile and sexually available' (Ponzanesi, 2005: 173) black Venus. As Sandra Ponzanesi points out, to Western male colonizers the black Venus is 'the quintessential emblem of the other, both in racial and sexual terms' (ibid.: 166). In the *Musicarello* film *Stasera mi butto* (Fizzarotti, 1967), starring Rocky Roberts and Lola Falana, the two stars portray themselves; in the case of Lola Falana, her role is already stated in the film credits, where she is defined as *la venere negra*. Even if Rocky Roberts in the film is identified as African American (for example, in the film he speaks English), his black skin is linked to his supposed African origins: while he is singing a song in the film, an old lady comments: 'queste urla mi ricordano il viaggio in Africa del mio povero

Filippo', her dead husband. Lola Falana is also stereotypically represented as the sexual temptation of the protagonist, Carlo Timidoni, performed by Giancarlo Giannini. Not only does Falana help Carlo to make his girlfriend jealous by pretending to have sex with him, but she also is the central female object of desire in the film. For example, comedians Franco Franchi and Ciccio Ingrassia, playing the role of two lifeguards, open a business allowing all the men in the beach resort to spy on her through a keyhole while she is naked in a changing room. Discourses around the ethnic 'other' in 1960s' Italian *giovani* media thus still concentrated on black skin and on its stereotyped behavioural and social significations. As Ponzanesi has noted about contemporary representations of the black body in Italian advertisements, in Italian popular media 'the black body is still crystallized in its immutable otherness, stuck in passive, solitary sensuality. This is indeed an exoticization and eroticization of the Black body, where it is very much entrapped by the Orientalist gaze, not unlike during the fascist period' (Ponzanesi, 2005: 180).

The analysis of references to 'other' times and 'other' places in the *giovane* fashion during the period 1968-70 has demonstrated the significant role played by popular culture in mediating transnational influences. Discourses around the appropriation of two Western trends in Italian popular media took very different trajectories from their original inspirations. In Italian *giovani* magazines and television programmes, the Hollywood-inspired 1930s trend became an 'invented tradition' for the community of *i giovani*. The Afro trend, on the other hand, was depoliticised by erasing its reference to American Civil Rights movements and transferring it to a stereotypical representation of 'Africa'. The relocation of the *giovane* style to imagined times and places – the Hollywood representation of the 1930s, and Orientalist 'Africa' – suggests that these trends tended to remove *i giovani* from the Western reality of the 1960s, where young people were starting

to be politically active. The fact that the popular media representation of Italian *giovani* was so dependent on faraway inspirations, in fact, can be considered as a strategy to escape from a social reality in which young people were actively starting to demonstrate against power in schools and within Italian society as a whole. This strategy tended to depoliticise *i giovani*, as well as providing a more reassuring image of Italian young people. This section has also shown how descriptions of both the transhistorical and the transnational influences of the *hippy* style can shed light on the difficult relationship between Italian society and its own past. If discourses about the inter-war period tended to hide the trauma of Fascism, Orientalist descriptions of the ‘African’ ‘other’ in the 1960s show the permanence of racist and colonial discourses. These aspects clearly demonstrate how, in the 1960s, a contradictory renegotiation of the Italian recent past was taking place, and it was influenced by the circulation of discourses around the ‘other’ as expressed in popular media.

### ***3.3 Effeminate masculinities and dangerous femininities***

During the period 1967-70, some of the discourses that had started to characterise the construction of *giovani* masculinities and femininities in 1965-67 became more evident. The previous chapter showed that, despite the fact that the miniskirt had introduced a discussion around *giovane* female sexuality, the construction of *giovani* female stars such as Caterina Caselli and Rita Pavone tended to represent an absence and negation of sexuality for *giovani* women. From 1967, the increasing presence of discourses around *giovane* female sexuality introduced new ways of representing *giovani* femininities in popular media. However, the new role of women as sexually active and emancipated questioned male domination over women, not only in the sexual sphere, but also more

generally in Italian society. In popular media, the potential male loss of power was represented as a form of effemination of Italian masculinities, as seen in discussions around *giovani* men's fashion. The *hippy* style increasingly eroded the boundaries between masculine and feminine styles, for it significantly changed male beauty standards. The following sub-sections deal with the popular media incorporation of changes in the construction of gender identities, and show how discourses around femininities and masculinities were influenced by social and gender anxieties that encouraged a recuperation of traditional ideals of femininities and masculinities in popular media.

### ***3.3.1 Discovering sex. Sexual education and hippy femmes fatales***

From 1967, articles discussing the ways in which sexuality was experienced by *i giovani* multiplied in *giovani* magazines, as did discussions on society's reluctance to accept young people's approach to sex and premarital sexual experiences. One of the problems with which *giovani* magazines dealt the most was the lack of sexual education for Italian *giovani*. An article that appeared in *Ciao Big* in 1968, for example, stated how in Italy there was a complete absence of sexual education, not only in schools, but first and foremost in the family. Even if young women have 'il coraggio di mettere la minigonna, spesso contro il parere non solo dei genitori, ma anche del fidanzato giovane', 'il loro coraggio non sembra avere un riscontro sulla maturità sessuale e, prima ancora, nella coscienza dei fenomeni fisiologici' (Settimelli, 1968: 10-11) because, according to the journalist, their mothers do not explain to them anything about sexual intercourse and contraceptive strategies, with obvious consequences:

Naturalmente quando la ragazza “fa il salto”, l’ignoranza delle cose sessuali porta a risultati deleteri. Perché la perdita di quella che viene eufemisticamente chiamata “purezza” (proprio per dare l’idea del... peccato che si commette perdendola) si accompagna troppo spesso ad una immediata maternità. (ibid.)

The silence of the family, and adults in general, is also found in discussions about contraceptive methods. While in Italy free access to the contraceptive pill was not legalised until 1976, a debate around this topic started to circulate at the end of the 1960s. An article that appeared in *Ciao Duemilauno* in 1969 summarised this dispute as follows:

Di fronte all’argomento pillola le reazioni del costume sono state due, ben differenziate. Una attiva, una passiva. Entrambe significative. Una mentalità attiva, curiosa, senza preconcetti – per lo più da parte dei giovani. [...] Per la mentalità passiva invece parlare della pillola è già comprometersi. Il pregiudizio blocca, il tabù provoca la frenata improvvisa. [...] Signora, scusi, ma la pillola esiste. Mi dica solo il suo parere, cosa ne pensa. Silenzio... (Benzoni, 1969: 14)

While, according to the writer, *giovani* women are actively interested in getting information on the contraceptive pill, the reaction of adults is often silence. This absence of speech was considered problematic for magazines, which identified the family as the right place where *i giovani* should get information about sexuality. As a consequence, *giovani* magazines often acted as substitutes for the family in discussions of sexuality with young people: they had an educative role, as they answered those questions to which *giovani* women could not find an answer from their mothers. The way in which sexuality was discussed by *giovani* magazines, however, does not signal a complete openness towards sexual liberation, especially for young women. Indeed, some articles still

maintained a moralistic approach to the subject, defending women's *pudore* as a naturalised behaviour, or encouraging their prudence on engaging in sexual intercourse:

Oggi sono poche le donne che sanno resistere alla tentazione della minigonna, alcune addirittura l'hanno ridotta nei termini a pochi centimetri di stoffa, ma per una misteriosa forza il pudore ha reagito e con successo. Se la minigonna bomba si permette ogni audacia, ecco nascere spontaneamente il collant che sembra un aggeggio di niente [...] ma che in realtà esercitano una notevole pressione psicologica, tale da disinnescare la carica esplosiva della "bomba". [...] L'evoluzione dei costumi [...] può dare l'impressione che il pudore sia un valore dimenticato, invece è proprio il contrario perché nessuna donna accetterebbe i capricci della moda senza aver salvaguardato quel sentimento intimo e quel suo mistero che è appunto il pudore. (De Santis, 1969: 19)

The potentially sexually inviting features of the *giovane* fashion, such as the miniskirt, are said in this article to be toned down by those naturalised feelings that every woman has inside herself, such as modesty. Here, the miniskirt is described as a 'bomb' ready to explode, and therefore is dangerous; but the simple wearing of tights is said to 'disarm' the potential sexual threat represented by the miniskirt. Many articles in *giovani* magazines insisted as well on the modesty of Italian *giovani* women and promoted sexual abstinence for young people.

Yet, despite these moralistic representations, interviews and readers' letters printed in magazines reveal that a *giovane* sexuality existed, and that young women desired liberation from taboos in order for sexuality to be discussed and subsequently accepted. A letter from a young female reader, for example, shows the emergence of feminist ideas about gender equality in approaches to sex:

Qui non si tratta di “darsi o non darsi, negare o non negare il proprio corpo all’uomo che sta con noi”. Visto così il problema è sbagliato. È sbagliato secondo me perché rimane sempre l’uomo il signore e padrone. [...] Qui si tratta di prendere con la forza il diritto di fare l’amore, care ragazze, qui si tratta di avere del coraggio e dire basta a questa schiavitù. Dobbiamo una volta per tutte decidere che anche noi come loro, anche noi ragazze come loro ragazzi abbiamo diritto di fare l’amore e voglia di farlo. (Sally, 1970: 57)

In the letter, the young woman expresses her views about premarital sex and consent: sex is not only a passive act that women can accept, it can also be a genuine desire that a woman chooses to satisfy, and not just as a way to please her boyfriend. The actual existence of premarital sexual experiences for young Italian women also emerged in articles published in *giovani* magazines: after an interview with a group of young women on holiday on the Adriatic coast, *Ciao Duemilauno* explained how *giovani* women tend to have ‘rapporti incompleti’ (Marino, 1969: 39) with men, so as to approach sex without the risk of becoming pregnant. The article also suggests that there may be geographical and social differences in approaches to sexuality in Italy:

Nei paesi nordici porsi il problema delle esperienze pre-matrimoniali non ha più senso, l’argomento è da tempo superato e le esperienze pre-matrimoniali sono entrate nella norma. Ma qual è la situazione in Italia? Abbiamo cercato di capirlo attraverso un incontro con un gruppo di ragazze che molto apertamente hanno esposto le loro idee e i loro comportamenti. Ne è venuto fuori il quadro di una gioventù italiana abbastanza disinvolta, c’è però un ma: le ragazze del dibattito sono quasi tutte settentrionali e vivono in una grande città. Che cosa sarebbe uscito

fuori se il dibattito si fosse svolto in un paese di provincia del nostro meridione?  
(ibid.: 38-39)

The journalist suggests that, despite being completely accepted in Northern Europe, female sexual liberation in Italy may be limited to major cities, as in the undeveloped South and in small villages young women's sexuality is still influenced by the permanence of discriminatory attitudes towards female emancipation. The contradictory approach to sexual liberation in magazines can thus be explained in the light of the geographical and social variance in attitudes towards this topic: as *giovani* magazines tended to unify the Italian *giovani*, they tried to simultaneously please both the most conservative and most liberated attitudes towards sex in Italian society.

A greater liberation in relationships between the sexes is demonstrated by how discourses around sexuality were included in popular culture in this period, for example in the way in which *giovane* dancing was perceived. During the *beat* period, *i giovani* demonstrated a difference from *gli adulti* through the adoption of dances that did not involve the couple, but were mainly group dances: the Shake, for example, was performed by the dancer alone in a social space, thus it was both an individual and a group dance. Even when in a couple, the potential seduction between partners was partly erased in these dances. During the *hippy* period, the existence of a *giovane* sexuality was translated into dances that reunited couples, even if in a modern way. This is how *Giovani* explains the 'Yum-Yum', a new dance invented in 1968:

In quattro giorni sono sparite tutte le gomme per bicicletta. E le gomme sono alla base dello "Yum-Yum", il "ballo elastico" per eccellenza, per garantire alle coppie la più completa elasticità di movimento. [...] Come si balla questa danza che viene a sostituire lo shake [...]? Non appena l'orchestra accenna il motivo, le coppie



saltano in sala dentro l'ormai famoso "tubolare". [...] Nel cerchio del "tubolare" ogni mossa è consentita. [...] Una danza, diciamolo subito, che riavvicina le coppie. Che nel modo più moderno, riporta i ballerini a stare uniti. A ritrovare il fascino del "ballo al buio". (Valleroni, 1968: 14)

The description of the dance insists on the fact that it brings the two partners close together, even closer than *gli adulti's* dances, because of the small space left for the dancers' movement that is limited by the bicycle tire. Moreover, the fact that the 'Yum-Yum' is said to be a 'ballo al buio', and thus it needs to be danced in semi-darkness, also adds a mysterious and potentially sexual aspect to the dance: when the light is off anything can happen between the two dancers. The same idea of the very possibility of a *giovane* sexuality was rendered in advertisements for young people such as Vespa's famous advert 'Chi Vespa... mangia le mele' (Piaggio, 1969: 11). This advert is still today considered one of the most successful in the history of Italian advertisements (Calabresi, 1996: 33), and not only because of the innovative language used in the slogan (the invention of the verb 'to Vespa' to indicate 'to buy a Vespa', or 'to drive a Vespa'). The reference to eating apples also clearly recalls the biblical story of Adam and Eve: Eve offers Adam an apple, symbolizing her body, and as he accepts he is marked with original sin. Similarly, by saying that those who use a Vespa can 'eat apples', the advertisement implies that young men who get Vespas will be able to have sexual experiences with young women: in this way, advertisers played on the new social acceptance of *giovane* sexuality. A direct consequence of the media recognition of female *giovane* sexuality was also the widespread presence of images of the naked female body in advertisements. Before 1969, images of naked bodies in *giovani* magazines were absent: advertisements never showed the entire naked female body, and the miniskirt was presented as a very

sexy outfit. From 1969 onwards, the representation of the female body suddenly changed, especially in the selling of products through advertisements. The naked female body was put in any possible context, to sell tights, soap, or deodorants, for example, as a way to increase the appeal of the product. Sometimes the images were also sexually inviting, as is the case with *Ciao Duemilauno*'s advertisement in the same magazine: the image chosen to advertise the magazine is the close-up of the mouth of a woman licking her lips with her tongue, saying 'buono eh?' (*Ciao Duemilauno*, 1969: 83).

However, female sexual emancipation was also the object of an increasing social anxiety towards changes in traditional gender roles. Young women's curiosity about sex, and a greater involvement in their own sexual life, was seen as a threat for men, who faced losing their dominance in romantic and social relationships. The following, for example, is taken from an article discussing the phenomenon of groupies:

le strane fanciulle inseguono sistematicamente ogni membro del complesso, lo accalappiano, e dopo averlo trascinato nelle alcove improvvisate sui furgoncini carichi di strumenti o nei meandri dei retrosala, lo mollano per balzare sul prossimo. [...] I musicisti, i cantanti, sia famosi che ignoti, si lasciano prendere con indifferenza, sembrerà incredibile ma è vero, l'ho constatato coi miei occhi in Italia [...]: questi giovani subiscono con indifferenza le attenzioni delle "groupies", [...] si lasciano sbalottare da un giaciglio all'altro, come se l'affare non li riguardasse, e questa loro misteriosa passività procura non poche, amare sorprese, che talvolta richiedono l'intervento del medico. (Cozzi, 1970: 14)

Here, the groupies, young women who try to have sex with as many musicians as possible, are represented as active figures, predators of men who cannot help but passively accept their role in the sexual encounter. The sexual emancipation of the

groupies is also presented as toxic, given that the article states that having sex with a groupie can lead to health issues. The issue of the toxicity of the sexually liberated woman will be discussed later in this chapter. However, it is significant to state how, in this quotation, active female sexuality is seen as a problem because it questions the power structures between genders, by giving women a stereotypically masculine role and therefore reducing men's control over women.

What is more, the 'masculinisation' of sexually liberated female *giovani* was also confirmed by their representation as androgynous figures, who by appropriating masculine behaviours became a threat to men and, consequently, to society as a whole. According to an article that presents Rada Rassimov, an Italian actress of Serbian origin featured in Mario Schifano's film *Umano Non Umano* (1969), the essential traits of the 'donna "fine del secolo ventesimo"' (Sabba, 1969: 41) are a mixture of a masculine appearance and feminine behaviour:

Capelli biondo tiziano; occhi verdi grigio; bocca taglio sottile, amaro; corpo dalla femminilità solo accennata, per quello che basta – una donna, dice Rada, non deve avere più bisogno dei seni e di altri evidenti attributi per conquistare il suo posto nel mondo. Carattere lunare, quindi mutevole, quindi anche femminile. Il regista [...] la definisce difficile, imprevedibile, un condensato di tutti gli aspetti positivi e negativi di una donna; alta uno e settanta, la vita non se l'è mai misurata; [...] Rada Rassimov che appare lungamente nuda sullo schermo, come personificazione appunto dell'erotismo di oggi. (ibid.: 41-42)

In this description, the *hippy* 'eroticism' in Rassimov's persona is represented by blond hair and the naked female body, which recalls sexual availability, but also by the mixture of supposedly masculine and feminine physical and behavioural features. According to

the quotation, the traditional female attributes of sexuality, namely the breasts and the hips, are unnecessary in 'erotismo [femminile] d'oggi', which is conversely found in a masculinised female body, tall and without body curves. However, in the actress' personality, there are traces of features stereotypically associated with women, such as the 'moody' and 'unstable' behaviour. The mixture between masculine and (misogynistically) feminine features in Rassimov's description functions to decrease the potential threat of the masculinised women, and therefore the threat of a change of the power structure between genders.

The imagery around female sexually-liberated *giovani* in *giovani* media often recalls traits through which twentieth century cinema has represented the *femme fatale*. As Clare Bielby has pointed out with regard to German cinema, in the Western cinematographic imagery the *femme fatale* is identified by some specific features, such as a 'masculinized and (pornographically) sexual' (Bielby, 2012: 121) attitude, an active role in making men sexually dependent on her (ibid.: 122), and a seductive appearance rendered through the use of strong make-up and bleached blond hair (ibid.: 133-134). The figure of the *femme fatale* in cinema usually represents the anxieties caused by forms of female emancipation: Mary Wood, analysing representations of women in Italian film noir, points out how the *femme fatale* can be analysed in 'her allure and threatening autonomy, and as a projection of male anxieties about the consequences of female economic and psychic independence' (Wood, 2010: 167).

Some of the aspects connecting the representation of sexually-liberated women in Italian *giovani* popular media with the image of the *femme fatale* have already been pointed out, namely the masculinization of appearance and behaviour (Rada Rassimov), and the active role in sexual intercourse (the groupies). These aspects also characterised

the media construction of the most iconic Italian *hippy* female singer, namely Patty Pravo. The nicknames used to describe the singer in magazines show how Patty Pravo's star persona was constructed around her sexual emancipation, and subsequently her dangerous allure: as early as 1967, in an article she was defined as 'la sirena dei capelloni' (Vitaliano, 1967: 38), clearly creating a comparison between Pravo and Ulysses' tempting sirens. Pravo was also described as 'la sacerdotessa del Piper' (ibid.), by referring to her position of power over the crowd when performing in the Piper club in Rome. Her sexiness, and an attempt at foreignisation through the use of English language, was emphasized in the nickname 'la sex-singer' (ibid.), while her dangerous allure was confirmed by the epithet 'il demonio biondo' (Sardi, 1967: 46). Most interestingly, in an article written in 1968, Patty Pravo was described as 'la Marlene Dietrich degli anni Sessanta' (Tumbarello, 1968: 18), thus connecting her star persona to Dietrich, the most iconic *femme fatale* of Western cinema. Analysing discourses around Patty Pravo's star persona, it is possible to observe the dangerousness emerging from descriptions of the sexually-emancipated female *giovane*, as well as the strategies used to recuperate the *hippy femme fatale*.

Patty Pravo (birth name Nicoletta Strambelli) succeeded Caterina Caselli and became *la ragazza del Piper*, the regular performer of the Piper club in Rome, in 1966 and 1967. Born in Venice, Pravo had become a representative of the Italian *beat* musical scene, but unlike her colleagues Caselli and Pavone, her popularity with the young audience continued during 1968 and in subsequent years.<sup>54</sup> As early as 1967, like Caselli and Pavone, Pravo represented her difference from *gli adulti* through her troubling gender

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<sup>54</sup> Although both Caselli and Pavone continued their careers as singers even after 1967, they stopped being considered *giovani*, as both stars got married and had children in the late 1960s. This observation shows how the *giovane* identity is based on practices as well as being *adulto*: wedding and pregnancy are two practices that can determine the 'growing up' of a woman.

identity; however, far from the absence of sexuality represented by the *beat* singers, Pravo embodied the sexually-liberated *giovane*, who was not afraid to talk about her sexual life and have several sexual partners, both in her performances and in accounts of her private life published in magazines. Her *femme fatale* persona was firstly constructed through her appearance: her hair was long and bleached blonde, and her makeup was often excessive, in this way representing an artificial and un-Italian femininity. Moreover, she usually wore a masculine style, such as trousers and suits, and despite being an attractive woman, her deep voice was often described as masculine. Her personality was thus presented as contradictory by magazines: ‘si sposa, non si sposa? Ama, non ama? È un uomo, una donna?’ (Scaccia, 1968b: 48). The mixture of masculine and feminine in Pravo’s star persona, in other words, gave her an allure of gender indeterminacy, which threw into question not only her sexual behaviour, but also her sexual and gender identity. Moreover, Pravo’s behaviour was presented as dangerous and threatening, for example in an article entitled ‘io i ragazzi li fumo come sigarette’ (Chi è Patty Pravo? I ragazzi io li fumo come sigarette, 1966: 55):

Patty mi guarda e sorride: capisce e gusta l’effetto delle sue parole. Di quelle che ha appena detto. “Io, i ragazzi me li fumo come sigarette”: queste le parole. [...]

Patty è la ragazza nuova della nostra canzone. L’hanno subito tutti ribattezzata Miss Piper, perché tutte le sere è nella grande bolgia del locale di via Tagliamento. E al Piper è sempre circondata da una piccola popolazione di gente di tutti i generi: ragazzi, uomini non più giovanissimi e persino qualcuno decisamente anziano. “è il fatto che io polarizzo l’attenzione – dice Patty – e solo difficilmente riesco a scrollarmi di dosso gli sguardi degli uomini”. (ibid.: 54-55)

Pravo is presented here as a *giovane* woman who is conscious of her power over men: she is aware of her provocative attitude, and she knows she is the constant object of the male gaze; what is more, the interview seems to suggest that she enjoys this role. Moreover, the idea of ‘smoking young men like cigarettes’ not only conveys the idea that Pravo has, and actively looks for, many different sexual partners: it also gives a toxic and dangerous allure to her sexual encounters, in this way constructing her as a *femme fatale*. In the quotation, Patty Pravo’s sexual appeal is presented as inescapable, as if every man who sees her could not help but be sexually attracted to her. Furthermore, in magazines, the sensational and unscrupulous declarations of the singer were equated with other declarations in which, for example, she expressed her interest in the contraceptive pill:

Poi ci sono le dichiarazioni fatte ai diversi rappresentanti della stampa: spregiudicatissime per quelli dei giornali scandalistici [...]: “Io prenderei la pillola, perché trovo molto civile avere un figlio soltanto quando si desidera, ma ancora non la uso perché voglio prima essere sicura che sia innocua”. E ancora: “prima di cantare, ho voglia di un bicchiere di whiskey e del mio ragazzo...”. (Dessy, 1967c: 84)

In this article, which appeared in *Ciao Big* in 1967, Pravo’s ‘spregiudicatissimo’ behaviour is represented not only by her desire for alcohol and sex (which recalls again the toxicity of the *femme fatale*), but also by her interest in contraceptive methods. In other words, sexual education (embodied here by discussion about the pill) is represented as being as threatening as the dangerous sexuality of the *femme fatale*, in this way reflecting social preoccupations about changes in traditional gender roles. Pravo also actually embodied the *femme fatale* in the television programme *Stasera Patty Pravo* (Falqui, 1969): in the show, Pravo performed her most famous song ‘La Bambola’

(Migliacci, Zambrini, Cini, 1968), that talks about a woman who asks her man to stop treating her ‘come fossi una bambola’. In the show, the song is initially arranged as a tango: the arrangement already sets the scene for Pravo’s performance dressed as a 1930s’ *femme fatale*, smoking and dancing with a male *corps de ballet*. In the second half of the performance the song retakes its original arrangement and Pravo appears dressed in 1960s’ style, in this way equating the *femme fatale* and the emancipated *hippy* woman. In Pravo’s construction as a *femme fatale*, transhistorical and transcultural references to 1930s film imagery acquire a new meaning, which is to equate the emancipated young woman to the dangerous cinema icon of the *femme fatale*, representing ‘a clear indication of the extent of the fears and anxieties prompted by shifts in the understanding of sexual difference’ (Doane, 1991: 1-2).

From 1969 onwards, however, Patty Pravo’s star persona was also the object of a media recuperation, which functioned to describe her *femme fatale* behaviour as inauthentic. This chapter has already pointed out how the concept of authenticity became fundamental in the definition of *hippy* stars; in Pravo’s case, authenticity was used in magazines to recuperate her potentially threatening femininity. A 1969 article explains how Pravo’s personality before that point was based on a provocative and exaggerated attitude:

Patty Pravo è nata come ragazza del Piper, emblema di un certo tipo di gioventù che tre anni fa cavalcava la tigre, disorientando un pubblico di adulti, a causa di certi atteggiamenti anticonformisti e volutamente provocatori. Nella prima intervista a un rotocalco sufficientemente spregiudicato, il biondo prodotto aveva addirittura proclamato a gran voce la sua “non illibatezza”. (Patty, che ti ri-Patty, 1969: 20)



The journalist here calls Pravo ‘il biondo prodotto’: the use of the term ‘product’ refers to the strong commercialization of Pravo’s *beat* star persona, and the link between the *giovane* star and the music industry emphasizes her ‘fake’ construction. Moreover, according to the excerpt above, Patty Pravo tended to express herself through shocking declarations mainly concerning her sexual life. However, this attitude is presented as inauthentic: magazines maintained that ‘con i quarantenni e con i conformisti fa la spregiudicata. Con quelli come lei è se stessa: una ragazza come te, con i tuoi pregi e i tuoi difetti’ (Dessy, 1967: 83). With *i giovani*, Pravo is authentic and real, while she adopts a provocative attitude to shock *gli adulti*.

From 1969, therefore, Patty Pravo changed her appearance: she ‘elimina le parrucche troppo grandi, che finivano col caricaturarla’ (Resta, 1969b: 20), and adopted a more stereotypically feminine style:

Di punto in bianco, quindi, ha deciso di cambiare tutto! Ha eliminato i vestiti stravaganti, ha regolato la sua vita, è diventata improvvisamente più femminile, romantica, docile, umile, modesta: cerca di cancellare dalla mente del pubblico l’immagine della ragazza del Piper. (Tumbarello, 1970: 41)

The quotation, taken from an article that appeared in *Giovani* in 1970, creates an artificial connection between a change in style and a transformation in Pravo’s personality and her behaviour towards her audience. The singer is said to have become more feminine and humble; as she abandons her *beat* style, she seems to also abandon her sexually-liberated attitude: ‘la “nuova” Patty Pravo sta conquistando tutti – “Lascerei subito la carriera per l’amore di un uomo, per una famiglia mia con tanti figli”’ (ibid.). In the quotation, Pravo’s updated star persona aligns with those practices recalling a more traditional and reassuring femininity, such as marriage and pregnancy.

In a period in which women were increasingly asking for sexual education and a recognition of their sexual emancipation, the above analysis of Patty Pravo's star persona demonstrates how Italian *giovani* popular media tried to recuperate troubling *giovani* femininities both by presenting them as potential dangers, and by insisting on the inauthenticity of their sexually-liberated attitude. However, these kinds of representations of the *hippy femme fatale* were not only beneficial for coming to terms with changes in the perception of *giovane* femininity and *giovane* female sexuality, as they can also be considered a strategy of dealing with the crisis of *giovani* masculinities, caused by the effeminisation of the male *giovane* style. This will be the object of the next sub-section that deals with the *hippy* redefinition of *giovani* masculinities.

### **3.3.2 Capelloni and beyond: towards a redefinition of giovane masculinity**

Chapter two showed how *i capelloni*'s long hair started to challenge traditional standards of masculinity, for it was considered to be evidence of the feminisation of *giovani* men's appearance. With the *hippy* trend, male fashion appropriated further elements that had previously been considered feminine, such as tunics, floral garments, and longer hairstyles. The new trend challenged two major taboos linked to Italian masculinity, namely the commercialisation of male appearance and the effemination of *giovani* masculinities, which exposed anxieties about male homosexuality. This subsection analyses how popular media discourses around these trends reveal an ideological recuperation of *giovani* masculinities, and a tendency to reaffirm the heterosexuality of *giovani hippy* men.

Since the end of 1967, the terms used in popular media to describe masculine attractive features started to suggest an appropriation of traits that were previously

considered feminine. For example, an article introduced Maurizio Arcieri, former lead singer of the band New Dada, as ‘il biondo, esile, dolce, fascinoso [...] Maurizio, ex New Dada’ (Paola, 1967b: 14). The singer’s attractiveness is described through aesthetic features that usually defined female stars, such as blondness and thinness. Maurizio Arcieri himself, in an interview, identified these features as feminine, and revealed that the emphasis on these features had been a deliberate choice to conform to the changing standards of male attractiveness:

“I primi passi li ho fatti perché proponevo, tre anni fa, un tipo nuovo di ragazzo: filante, timido, riservato con tanti capelli biondi. Credo di avere contribuito nel mio piccolo alla riforma del costume giovanile italiano... [...]. Piaccio alle ragazze: se vuoi un segreto, ti confesso che all’inizio, quando ero con i New Dada, accentuavo un poco quell’aspetto femminile che poteva essere suggerito dai miei capelli biondi, dagli occhi azzurri, dalla figura sottile. E funzionava: era il tempo dei tipi alla Mick Jagger, alla Paul Mac Cartney... [...]. E poi [ricevo] lettere frivole di uomini che mi chiedono da quale parrucchiere vado, e come faccio a mantenere sempre i capelli così morbidi e biondi...”. (Scaccia, 1968a: 36)

Arcieri’s words show how foreign male beauty standards, represented here by Mick Jagger and Paul McCartney, influenced the change in the perception of male attractiveness in Italy. This quotation also emphasizes the on-going male appropriation of another stereotypically feminine behaviour, namely the tendency to take care of one’s own body and appearance, by going to the hairdressers, to beauty salons, and by following beauty advice from magazines. Arcieri defines men writing to him as frivolous, because they care about their own appearance; however, this appropriation of feminine behaviour itself is not presented as a problematic feature. The media presentation of

changes in male standards of attractiveness, however, shows how the male appropriation of feminine features was less easily accepted than its opposite. Fred Davis, discussing the unisex fashion of the 1960s and 1970s, claims that androgynous fashion is always located ‘much more often on the male side of the gender division than on the female’ as Western society bears a ‘strong male gender barrier toward all paraphernalia evocative of femininity’ (ibid.: 37). Although the male appropriation of female features was present in popular media, some boundaries were delineated between feminine and masculine beauty practices.

This tendency is confirmed by the introduction in magazines such as *Ciao Big* of beauty columns specifically dedicated to men in 1967:

E adesso, qualche consiglio anche ai ragazzi, che poverini sono quasi sempre trascurati in questa mia rubrica. Anche per voi, cari giovanotti beat, hippy, ecc., l’aspetto fisico decente e gradevole è un dovere. Non vi consiglio cerone per il viso o smalto per le unghie (eppure, ne ho visto qualcuno in giro conciato così...) ma vi limito a darvi un paio di suggerimenti per la vostra capigliatura. (Nicky, 1967b: 54)

This quotation highlights how *giovani* men were required to maintain a ‘decente e gradevole’ appearance. However, beauty advice for men always tended to be limited to hairstyles, as a way of keeping a boundary between ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ practices. For example, the quotation still sees the use of make-up as unacceptable. An article discussing skincare for men and women also claimed:

spesso ci si chiede perché le ragazze possono curare la loro pelle e per mezzo di cure estetiche evitare punti neri [...] e gli uomini no. È forse il comedone virile? Secondo me togliersi i punti neri e curarsi i brufolotti è una questione di estetica e

di igiene. Perciò i ragazzi possono schiacciarsi sulla punta del naso quei fastidiosi puntini neri disinfettandosi poi con acqua di colonia e alcool [...]. E se l'acne prevalesses? Chiedete a vostra madre o vostra sorella di prendervi un appuntamento in un istituto di bellezza, andateci e fatevi curare. Magari entrando per le retrovie. (Lui e Lei allo Specchio, 1968: 81)

The article states that it is completely acceptable for a man to take care of his body, and therefore for example to get rid of blackheads. However, this activity is accepted insofar as it is considered more as a hygiene practice than a beauty practice, and therefore it does not effeminate men. Moreover, the article declares how the fact of being seen as performing practices related to beauty is still a taboo for *giovani* men. The article recommends to its *giovani* readers that direct contact with the beauty salon still has to be made by a female relative of the young man, and he is invited to enter the beauty salon 'via the backdoor', so that he does not show his participation in feminine practices.

The increasing male consumption of fashion and beauty care also signalled another problematic aspect of the construction of *giovani* masculinities, namely the role of men as consumers. While during the 1950s consumerism had always been reserved for women, who used to take care of the purchasing of household goods and family items, during the 1960s, men began to be considered as consuming subjects. The new function of young men as consumers, especially of products previously connected to an area of female consumption such as style and beauty products, produced preoccupations over the virility of Italian men. In particular, this loss of virility created anxieties towards young men's sexuality, as effeminacy was seen as a sign of homosexuality. The introductory chapter has already indicated that there is not a direct and natural relationship between effeminacy and homosexuality, but rather this relationship is the result of a social

construction that has been naturalised over time. In the context of Italian society of the 1960s, the naturalised equation between effeminate behaviours and homosexuality showed both a misogynistic and a homophobic attitude, for which the ‘decline of virility’ in Italian post-war society (Bellassai, 2011: 97) was connected to a loss of male power over women, that could potentially induce homosexuality. It must be pointed out that despite being legal, homosexuality was still a taboo in post-war Italian society, and it was often silenced in popular culture. *Giovani* magazines did not differ from this trend: during the period 1967-1970, the word homosexuality never appears in articles, and the sexuality of *i giovani* and *giovani* stars was always implicitly heterosexual. Moreover, despite the fact that magazines often discussed foreign politics, they did not cover news regarding the emergence of gay liberation movements in other Western countries. Anxieties about homosexuality, however, appear in discourses around masculinities and male beauty standards, where a continuous reaffirmation of heterosexual norms can be observed, and the division between ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ products was still strongly stressed. Media descriptions of the *giovane* style show how the image of the consuming, modern, and civilized man was recuperated through a de-feminization of male consumption, and reiterated through practices that could still retain the ideal of masculine naturalised power, such as the ideal of success (Bellassai: 118-119).

One of the strategies through which stereotypically feminine accessories were recuperated by male *giovane* fashion was by literally ‘masculinizing’ them. For example, the following quotation is taken from an article presenting a handbag for men, which was called the *borsetto*:

Il borsetto. Non è altro che una vera e propria borsetta, ma da uomo. Non c’è da scandalizzarsi, in fondo la borsetta da donna è nata da quella sacchetta che gli

uomini portavano piena di monete quando ancora non usavano le banconote di carta. Quindi non si fa che tornare alle origini. Il ritorno alla borsa da uomo sembra dovuto alla linea troppo aderente della nuova moda. (Arriva il Borsetto, 1968: 92)

The word *borsetta*, meaning handbag, in Italian has a feminine gender. In the quotation, the name of the accessory becomes masculine, in order to de-feminize the object advertised. Moreover, the article tries to emphasize how the handbag used by women was actually the adaptation of an historically masculine accessory, in this way creating an 'invented tradition' for the object and therefore legitimising its male use.

In addition, most of the advertisements for male clothing and beauty products used the naked female body to reassert the heterosexuality of male consumers, but also to reaffirm male domination over the sexed female body. An advertisement for HOM underwear, for example, used a picture of the lower part of a man's body in his underwear, next to which appeared a female leg. The caption says 'per gli uomini che sono veri uomini' (HOM, 1969: 22), in this way assuming that the 'true' man is necessarily heterosexual. The advertisement for the shaving foam Gillette does not even portray a man: the picture shows a picture of the face and shoulders of a naked woman, and the caption 'prendimi... e poi lasciami se ci riesci' (Gillette, 1969: 11) not only referring to the shaving foam itself, but carrying a sexual allusion. In fact, in Italian the verb 'prendere' not only means 'to catch', but can also be used to mean 'to possess someone sexually'. Vidal used an even stronger message to advertise a bathing foam: the image shows a boxing ring, with a close-up of the face of a man and, in the background, a crouched naked woman. The caption says 'mettila K.O.' (Vidal for Men, 1970: 6-7): here the image of the victory of the man over the naked woman also references rape imagery, and insists on the dominant role of the man over the naked woman. These advertisements

were not just published in *giovani* magazines, however, their presence here demonstrates how anxieties towards homosexuality and towards the sexual emancipation of women also concerned representations of *i giovani*.

Preoccupations towards homosexuality can also be read between the lines of those letters and articles describing the discrimination made by *adulti* of young men wearing effeminate clothes or with long hair. It is interesting to note how, in these letters, the heterosexuality of the *giovani* writers was always pointed out:

Lecco. [...] Pochi giorni fa, era molto caldo, io e la mia ragazza andammo in giro in “bermuda”, quei simpatici pantaloni estivi che arrivano poco sopra le ginocchia. Non riesco a descrivervi cosa è successo per strada, la gente ci guardava come fossimo extraterrestri, molti ci compativano, altri ridevano, alcuni non risparmiavano battute idiote e feroci. Ma è mai possibile che gli abitanti di questa provincia siano stupidi al punto di definire “invertito” un normalissimo ragazzo solo perché va in giro in “bermuda”? Ormai odio la mia città. (Mazzoleni, 1969: 61)

In this letter, for example, a young man complains about *gli adulti* criticising him and accusing him of being an ‘invert’ because he was wearing Bermuda shorts. The writer stresses the fact that he was walking with his girlfriend, in this way implicitly stating his heterosexuality. The same process emerges from an article about the *capelloni* in Sicily, who used to be called ‘fiminiedda’ – ‘little girl’ in Sicilian dialect – by the old men in the villages, because of their effeminate appearance.

La mia inchiesta è partita proprio da questa considerazione: perché, a differenza di quello che avviene nelle altre città d’Italia, i capelli lunghi non sono di moda in Sicilia? “Per una questione di orgoglio sessuale”, mi hanno risposto. [...] “Nella



mia città, sono stato uno dei primi a farmi crescere i capelli che sono biondissimi come del resto li hanno tanti siciliani di origine normanna. Bene, quando passeggiavo vedevo gli altri, soprattutto gli anziani, che mi guardavano con un riso sarcastico sulle labbra e qualcuno mi gridava dietro “fimminedda”, che vuol dire femminuccia [...]”. Ecco come gli anziani hanno frenato una esigenza giovanile: puntando sulla offesa gratuita, sul prestigio virile. E poco contava che i capelloni si facessero vedere insieme a belle ragazze: i frizzi erano ancora più feroci. (Veneroni, 1970: 9)

Here, the journalist speaks to a young Sicilian man who has long blond hair. The young man links the discrimination he received for his effeminate appearance with a question of ‘orgoglio sessuale’, of the (heterosexual) ‘virility’ of Sicilian men, that according to the interviewee is still predominant amongst the Sicilian population. However, the young man points out that, even in the presence of young women, the comments do not stop: again, this comment indirectly insists on the sexuality of *i capelloni*, who despite their appearance are said to be heterosexual.

This sub-section has shown how *giovani* media constructed a discourse around *giovani* masculinities that could at the same time present the changes in male fashion and dispel social anxieties that these changes brought with them. Despite an opening up towards new practices and the creation of new male beauty standards, in *giovani* magazines, gender hierarchies of power were reaffirmed and the effeminisation of male style was accepted, but only in so far as it did not question heterosexuality. The sexualised images of women that were starting to appear in *giovani* popular media were beneficial in reaffirming the virility and heterosexuality of *giovani* men; however, they also created anxieties concerning the morality of young women. This is why representations of

sexually active young women in popular media were often presented as either toxic and dangerous or inauthentic. The construction of *giovani* masculinities and femininities in Italian popular media, then, can be said to be influenced by social anxieties: potentially subversive discourses were introduced, but they were mediated and made safe through strategies that functioned to reaffirm the traditional construction of Italian gender identities and the division between masculinities and femininities.

On the television programme *Stasera Patty Pravo* (Falqui, 1969), while performing 'Yesterday' (Lennon, McCartney 1965), Patty Pravo's costumes recall different historical personas and ethnic trends, from the 1920s' silent film diva to the 1930s' smoking *femme fatale*, from the Cowgirl and Afro looks, to the futuristic and 'flower power' trends. This performance is particularly representative of the complex and often contradictory media definition of the *hippy* subject: media representations of the *hippy* style appropriated completely different influences and elements 'as if different cultural identities could be tried on like clothes' (Ashmore, 2010: 110). This chapter has presented the multiple, and often extremely different, trends that were portrayed and described in *giovani* media during the period 1967-70. These trends delineate some common traits of the media definition of the *hippy* identity.

The popular media definition of a homogenous style remained an element of identification for the community of *i giovani*. Magazines and television programmes contributed to the circulation of new shared features for *i giovani*: a bland politicisation, drawn from the global political activism of young people; a critical appraisal of capitalism and the industry, and of those stars created by the industry itself; the recognition of *giovane* female sexuality, and the on-going redefinition of gender identities. *I giovani* as a

collective identity was cemented through the invention of a tradition directly drawn from Hollywood imagery, that normalized and naturalized this construction; it also benefited from the fabrication of an 'authentic' *hippy* identity that emphasized the difference with past representations of young people and with *gli adulti*.

However, the way in which the new trends were represented was strongly influenced by the commercial aim of *giovani* media products, and by the persistence of discriminatory discourses around the 'other'. The anti-consumerist aim of *hippy* fashion was soon converted into a commercial trend, thus still constructing *i giovani* first and foremost as consumers. Italian media references to Afro fashions coming from the United States show how the emancipatory aim of this style was erased through reference to colonial and orientalist discourses, in this way showing the persistence of an old-fashioned description of the 'other', and contributing to the perpetuation of these discriminatory discourses. The persistence of such discourses also shows how the appropriation of global emancipatory movements did not completely take place, at least in *giovani* media: for example, interest in Martin Luther King, or American politics, in *giovani* magazines did not bring a change in the perception of the racialized 'other'. The same can be said about the absence of discourses on the homosexual 'other'. Moreover, the presentation of female emancipated subjects as *hippy femmes fatales* revealed the continuing reluctance to accept female sexual emancipation.

The media construction of the *giovane* style in the period 1967-70 also started to show how there were differences in the community of *i giovani*: despite the unified construct that *giovani* media were perpetuating, differences started to emerge in discourses around the Italian *giovane* community, for example in the opposition between (commercial) *beats* and (political) *hippies*. During the early 1970s, these differences

became increasingly present in *giovani* media, showing at the same time the disruption of the fictionally homogenous construction of *i giovani*, and the recognition of young people as social and political agents. This shift will be explored in Chapter four, which deals with the fragmentation of the community *i giovani* in 1970s' Italian popular media.

## Chapter 4

### Fragmented *giovani*, 1970-1975

Chapters two and three have analysed popular media representations of young people's style in order to delineate two main trends that characterised the popular media construction of the *giovane* identity during the second half of the 1960s: the *beats* and the *hippies*. This chapter takes into account a slightly longer time frame, namely the first half of the 1970s, in order to outline a significant change in the construction of *i giovani*: the emergence of an increasing fragmentation within the community of *i giovani* as represented in popular media. To do so, the chapter is structured in a different way to the previous two: additional space is devoted to the inclusion of identities previously discriminated against in the construction of Italian *giovani*, and a secondary concern is the incorporation of foreign elements in popular media representations of Italian young people. Indeed, during the 1970s, the role of Italian popular media in translating foreign influences became less evident. *Giovani* magazines and TV programmes increasingly featured foreign singers and bands; there were still Italian *giovani* stars, but none of the *giovani* singers of the early 1970s reached the same level of popularity as Rita Pavone, Caterina Caselli, or Patty Pravo. Moreover, unlike *Speciale per Voi*, where mostly Italian *giovani* bands performed in the studio, television programmes such as *Pop Studio* (Dama, 1971) and *Under 20* (Trapani, 1973) also broadcast recorded performances of foreign *giovani* stars such as David Bowie and John Lennon. Even the use of English words became more punctual in the early 1970s, probably as a consequence of a higher level of knowledge of the English language in the young Italian population. The contact between Italian young people and the influences coming from other countries, then, appeared to be

'less mediated' by popular media: there was no need to culturally 'translate' every star, word, trend, or song. This does not mean, however, that there were not substantial forms of incorporation of the 'foreign', nor that strategies of 'mirroring' and 'othering' were not put in place in *giovani* popular media. Media representations of the foreign 'other' are still significant in this chapter to signal the inspirations and potential anxieties connected to Italian young people, especially with regard to their sexual and gender identities.

In the early 1970s, the colourful and 'ethnic' features characterising Italian *hippies* were replaced by a 'normalisation' of the *giovane* style, which involved a toning down of some of the aspects that distinguished *i giovani* from *gli adulti*. Interestingly, this 'toning down' of style was represented as a political act, and it coincided with the emergence of representations of Italian young people as political subjects. Chapter two showed how discourses around the *beat* style functioned in popular media to limit the generational struggle to free-time activities, and therefore to de-politicise the *giovane* identity. Chapter three demonstrated that, despite the inclusion of countercultural discourses in the promotion of the *hippy* trend, the politicisation of Italian young people was 'othered' by referring to a foreign trend, while the events of the Italian *Sessantotto* were mainly silenced in *giovani* popular media. Section 4.1 discusses the recuperation of political *giovani* in popular media, by analysing the 'normalisation' of the *giovane* style in the light of the tense situation caused by terrorism, and the polarisation of Italian politics into extreme left and extreme right.

The second section concentrates on the fragmentation of the community of *i giovani* in popular media. Chapters two and three showed how, in constructing the *beat* and the *hippy*, popular media homogenised representations of young people, and constructed boundaries that could differentiate *i giovani* from *gli adulti* (and, in the case

of the *hippies*, from *gli adulti* and the *beats*). Popular media products tended to represent young people as an ‘imagined community’ where political, class, race, and gender differences were overcome by a greater sense of ‘generational’ belonging, which was constructed by referring to practices, objects, and signs. This did not mean that there were not differences amongst young people: most of the practices constructing *i giovani* in the 1960s did not apply to whole sections of Italy’s youth population, and in particular to people who were geographically, economically, and socially excluded from the modernisation of Italian society that was taking place during the 1960s. Section 4.2 examines how, during the early 1970s, the homogenised construction of *i giovani* started to disintegrate, by accounting for the working classes and young people from the South. Although this process became significant only in the early 1970s, in some cases – and especially for geographical belonging – the inclusion of ‘other’ identities had already started in the late 1960s. As a consequence, in this section some of the sources used were broadcast/published in 1968/69.

Section 4.3 concentrates on gender identities, and it shows the effects of the emerging feminist and gay rights movements on popular media representations of young people. From 1973-74, preoccupations towards *i giovani*’s sexual and gender identity were fostered by the emergence of emancipatory movements in Italy, as well as by *giovani* trends such as trousers for *giovani* women and glam music and style for *giovani* men. This section discusses how emancipatory discourses either transformed or inspired a reaction in popular media representations of discriminated identities such as women and homosexuals.

#### ***4.1 Italian giovani in the Anni di Piombo***

Chapter three highlighted how, during the Italian *Sessantotto* and the *Autunno Caldo*, media representations of the *hippies* functioned to incorporate the on-going politicisation of Italian young people. The *hippy* style embodied some of the social and political claims advocated by the Italian student and worker movements; however, these aspects were foreignised by referring to the hippies, while mentions of the actual social and political situation of Italy were lacking in popular media representations. During the early 1970s, two main events influenced the expanding popular media construction of political *giovani*. Firstly, young people became fully institutionalised in the Italian political system. In the early 1970s, political parties started to be increasingly interested in young voters, publishing advertisements in *giovani* magazines and creating slogans to attract *i giovani*. This was probably provoked by the debate around the proposed law that would lower the age of majority from 21 to 18 years old, which eventually passed in 1975. As a consequence of this law, an increasing number of young people would become part of the active electorate. However, the fact that political *giovani* were increasingly represented in popular media even before the law was passed also shows a process of gradual politicisation of Italian youth in popular media representations, regardless of their actual right to vote.

Secondly, the student and worker movements became institutionalized through the creation of political organisations – such as *Potere Operaio* in 1968 and *Lotta Continua* in 1969 – that did not condemn the use of violence to pursue social struggle. In 1970, some elements of these groups started to organise themselves into terrorist units such as the *Brigate Rosse* that, by using strong acts such as boycotting, kidnaps and eventually murders, became one of the symbols of the so-called *Anni di Piombo* (1969-1981)



(O’Leary, 2010: 244). The radicalisation of political struggle in Italian society during the *Anni di Piombo* influenced Italian society as a whole and thus also the social perception of youth, as most of the people participating in radical groups were of a young age. Alan O’Leary claims that over 14,000 terrorist attacks were committed in Italy in the years between 1969 and 1983, resulting in 374 deaths and 1170 injuries (ibid.). These terrorist acts were committed by both extreme right- and extreme left-wing organisations. The bombing of the Banca dell’Agricoltura in Piazza Fontana in Milan on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1969 inaugurated the so-called *strategia del terrore*; a series of terrorist attacks carried out by neo-fascist movements together with some members of the Italian secret services (Ginsborg 1990: 333-335). The increase in violent actions both from the extreme left and the extreme right brought about the revival of words like *fascista* and *comunista*, two terms that tended to stress the radicalisation of young people’s political positions.

This section explores how the media construction of political *giovani* in the early 1970s functioned on the one hand to moderate young people’s political positions, and, on the other hand, to pacify the on-going social trauma of Italian terrorism. Popular media representations tended to promote a ‘normalisation’ of the *giovane* style, where the abandoning of extravagant garments – such as those worn by the *hippies* – was presented as a political act. The ‘normalisation’ of the *giovane* style coincided with the recognition of *i giovani*’s political role, not only in *giovani* popular media, but also by Italian society and political movements, and especially by those political parties that, through advertisements in magazines, tended to connect the image of the modern *giovane* with political moderation. Moderation was also promoted by representing a reconciliation between *i giovani* and *gli adulti* in popular media products, which tended to lower the social tension caused by terrorism and the potential threat of political *giovani*.

#### ***4.1.1 The end of the hippy and the style of 1970s political giovani***

From 1971 onwards, the term *hippy* started to have pejorative connotations in *giovani* magazines. This process echoed the 1967 representation of the *beats*: the *hippy* style started to be criticised because of its widespread commercial adoption. Magazines tended to underline how the *hippy* style had been transformed into a commercial trend:

Anche l'hippy è stato strumentalizzato a fini economici. Interi empori di oggetti, ispirati al modo di vivere degli hippies, riempiono Broadway. Saloni immensi dove fanno bella mostra di sé i posters, i gioielli, gli arnesi e i gingilli più strani. Ciò che i bravi capelloni di Santa Maria di Trastevere creano con paziente ingegnosità qui è rigorosamente fabbricato in serie. L'artigianato ha ceduto il passo all'industria. E i giovani comprano. (Pubblicità e consumismo in U.S.A.: Ehi, vieni, comprami, ti prometto..., 1971: 34)

In this extract from a 1971 article that appeared in *Ciao Duemilauno*, a distinction is made between the (foreign) hippie and the (Italian) *capellone*. While the Italian *capelloni*'s lifestyle still represents anti-consumerism, the *hippy* (and in particular, in this case, the American hippie style) has become produced 'in serie'. In an article about Piccadilly Circus, the same is said of English *giovani*: the journalist stated that 'qui la rivoluzione si è ridotta ad un fiore sulla natica sinistra anzichè su quella destra [...]. Il qualunquismo impera, ormai la nostra contestazione è diventata un fenomeno folkloristico, gli hippies fanno parte del colore locale' (Sbrollini, 1973: 25). In other words, the commercial appropriation of the hippie style in foreign countries was said to lower the subversive potential of young people's protests. An article that describes *giovani* trends in Saint-Tropez in *Qui Giovani*, also emphasizes the shift in meaning of the word 'hippy':

La parola “hippy”, che ha fatto la sua prima comparsa alcuni anni fa per rappresentare un certo movimento giovanile sviluppatosi contemporaneamente in California e in Inghilterra, ha ormai perduto buona parte del suo significato [...]. Oggi “hippy” ha assunto un significato più largo, un significato che abbraccia la gioventù in genere ma in particolare la gioventù meno convenzionale, quella che si distingue per certi atteggiamenti e certe mode che magari non hanno proprio nulla a che fare con gli ideali “hippy” di tre o quattro anni fa. Per cui, trovandomi qui a Saint-Tropez e vedendo tanta gente vestita in modo strano, ritengo che la parola “hippy” sia più che valida. (Mascalero, 1971b: 28)

The journalist explains how the word ‘hippy’ has changed in meaning: during 1967-68, this term was used to describe ‘ideali’ and thus had a meaning which went beyond a mere fashion trend. Four years later, it has been depoliticised, and now only refers to leisure activities and implies wealth, as the setting (Saint-Tropez) suggests. Moreover, references to a foreign location again tended to externalise the commercial hippies, by distancing them from Italian *giovani*.

Not only were foreign hippies accused of being increasingly commercialised, they were also criticised for being drug addicts and degenerates. An article in *Qui Giovani* describes a commune of *giovani* living in a squat in Rome, called ‘Hotel Hilton’: the journalist explains how this name is ironic, because in the hotel ‘mancano i servizi igienici, la sporcizia regna sovrana, l’atmosfera è pesante [...]’ (Mancini, 1971: 37). Not only is the commune described as a place of dirt and degeneration, but the hippies are also presented as drug addicts: ‘Naturalmente la droga è di casa all’Hotel Hilton: anche se non era difficile immaginarlo [...]’ (ibid.). These features of hippies, however, are foreignised, by connecting them only with foreign young people. The article states that the hotel only

hosts ‘pochissimi ospiti italiani’ (ibid.). In other words, after the domestication of the *hippies* of the period 1967-70, in the early 1970s hippies became again a negative example for Italian youth, and they were presented as either commercial or dangerous.

*Hippies* were also said to have abandoned those places that they had previously appropriated, such as squares and public places. An article that appeared in *Ciao Duemilauno* in 1971 states that, for example, *hippies* and *beats* have abandoned Piazza Navona in Rome: it explains how the square ‘si va sempre più svuotando dai beats e dagli hippies che la popolavano un tempo’ (Marras, 1971: 20-21). Moreover, the article claims that the *beats* and the *hippies* have been confined ‘ai margini delle fontane, non più padroni, ma quasi bestie curiose in uno zoo, additate con curiosità dai passanti’ (ibid.): here, the animalisation of the *hippies* works to minimise their subversive image, which has just become an element of extravagance. The article also adds that it is possible to still see *hippies* walking ‘tristemente al guinzaglio di ben tenute signore quarantenni in caffetano che “fa tanto Katmandu”’ (ibid.): not only are *hippies* animalised here, but they are also said to use their extravagant style to please the exoticism of the adults, and therefore to withstand the authority of *gli adulti*. In this quotation, the abandonment of Piazza Navona by the *hippies* is connected to the depletion of the subversive potential of the *hippy* style, which, because it has been commercialised, has now lost any political meaning.

The three main features of the *giovane* style in the period 1970-1975 were the adoption of an ‘Americanised style’, the widespread adoption of trousers by women, and the so-called ‘ritorno al classico’ in men’s fashion, with a consequent ‘toning down’ of the *giovane* style, represented by the abandoning of long hair and of colourful, floral garments. The significance of these features in terms of a redefinition of gender roles will

be discussed in the last section of the chapter; it should be underlined here, however, how the style adopted by *i giovani* in the early 1970s – which was not identified with a specific name, unlike the two trends examined in the previous chapters – was presented as a sign of modernisation, political participation, and moderation.

The modernisation of the *giovane* style in the 1970s was connected in popular media with its ‘American’ inspiration. From 1973, a ‘casual’ style, characterised by the adoption of jeans and pull-overs for both *giovani* men and women, started to be advertised in magazines. The diffusion of this trend was represented as an appropriation of American culture:

Una bandiera a stelle e strisce, un berrettino di baseball, una bottiglietta di Pepsi-Cola, i pantaloni in tessuto jeans: ecco i simboli che gli Stati Uniti hanno ormai esportato in tutto il mondo. Ora, prendete tutti questi simboli, mescolateli con un po’ di allegria e un pizzico di follia e avrete una moda nuova. (Moda Stelle e Strisce, 1973: 55)

References to ‘America’ here clearly connect the *giovane* identity to consumerist goods, such as Pepsi and blue jeans. The article also talks about a ‘moda nuova’, thus underlining how the Americanised style represents a change from previous trends characterising the *giovane* fashion. Chapter three showed how the hippies’ fascination with the Orient resulted in a *hippy* style that was full of references to ‘other’ places and ‘other’ historical eras. Although, as the previous chapter demonstrated, references to ‘African’ cultures were ultimately a reappropriation of an American trend, the orientalist way in which they were described in *giovani* magazines emphasized the alleged backwardness of the non-Western ‘other’, while the American-ness of this trend was made invisible. The *hippy* style also reflected a celebration of the old, through references to the inter-war period and

the widespread use of vintage fashion. If we consider that, as David W. Elwood maintains, that the idea of ‘America plays a significant [...] role in Italy’s search for a modernity of its own’ (Elwood, 2006: 253), references to ‘America’ in early 1970s’ fashion can be seen as a strategy to bring the *giovane* identity back to the West and to the present, and to reaffirm an ideal of modernity in the construction of *il giovane*.

The *giovane* style of the early 1970s was also characterised by a ‘toning down’ of some of the features that were considered to be troubling in the late 1960s, such as long hairstyles, floral patterns, and extravagant colours. The alleged ‘normalisation’ of *giovani* trends during the early 1970s was presented as retaining strong political connotations, in contrast to the increasing commercialisation of the *hippy* style. For example, discussing short hair, an article on *Ciao Duemilauno* states that

Il ritorno al capello corto è [...] oggi uno dei simboli più appariscenti (e più superficiali) di una reazione giovanile alla sua nuova crisi di identità, la quale, a livello più profondo, riflette il disagio di aver visto il sistema, dopo Woodstock, recuperare e far ipocritamente propri, svuotandoli di significato, proprio quegli ideali alternativi per i quali si era fino ad ora combattuto. (Insolera, 1976: 45)

This quotation, taken from an article published in 1976, retrospectively reflects on the abandonment of long hairstyles for young people. According to the author, the adoption of short hair for men is a reflection of a ‘crisi d’identità’ caused by the appropriation of the *hippy* trend by the fashion industry. The change in style reflects a refusal of middle-class culture, as expressed by an interview with American political activist Abbie Hoffman, reported in *Ciao Duemilauno*:

“Questa stessa società che noi combattiamo si è appropriata di questo nostro modo di comportarci, ha rimaneggiato i nostri atteggiamenti e i nostri costumi, e li ha

riposti alle masse svuotati e snaturati del loro significato. Adesso hanno i capelli lunghi: i figli delle famiglie “bene” della borghesia [...]. Noi non vogliamo essere confusi con loro e, quindi, abbiamo deciso di tagliarci i capelli!”. “Ma in questo modo non rischiate di essere scambiati per tranquilli impiegati di banca?”. “No, perché il nostro taglio di capelli non è quello azzimato che portano i borghesi frustrati. Noi non andiamo certo dal parrucchiere, i capelli ce li tagliamo da soli, in qualche modo”. (Russell, 1971: 33)

In the interview, Hoffman expresses a critique of the widespread appropriation of the signs that used to characterise young people’s unrest. The quotation also suggests that the appropriation of an *adulto* sign such as short hair is political, because it is deprived of its commercial connotation. Hoffman explains how short hairstyles for *i giovani* are not created by hairdressers, and therefore still function to create a difference between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*.

The political meaning of the ‘normalisation’ of the *giovane* style is also visible in the discourses through which the style of young people involved in Italian political organisations is discussed in *giovani* magazines. From the end of the 1960s, the student and worker movements started to evolve into more coherent groups, which were gathered under the label ‘New Left’. ‘New Left’ groups visibly expressed their political affiliation by using a political *giovane* style: an article in *Ciao Duemilauno* discussed the so-called ‘cinesi’, groups inspired by Maoism, who are described as wearing ‘fazzoletto rosso al collo, libretto di Mao in pugno’ (Moroli & Del Giudice, 1969: 13). Mao’s book, in this article, almost becomes a fashion accessory used by *i giovani* to show their left-wing political belonging. Most interestingly, in the article members of the ‘New Left’ are said to have abandoned the *hippy* style for political reasons: the article explains how, before

entering the political movement, they ‘portavano i capelli lunghi, i ciondoli al collo, i pantaloni colorati. Le ragazze vestivano con le minigonne e insomma il loro aspetto era, più o meno, quello degli hippies e dei capelloni nostrani’ (ibid.: 17). After having entered the ‘quadri dirigenti del partito’, young people are said to wear short hairstyles and a ‘modesto e banale’ style. Abandoning the *hippy* style, here, coincides with the moment at which young people started to participate in institutionalised political movements: according to the article, it was when young people became actively involved in the leadership of movements that they decided to adopt a ‘normalised’ style to appeal to their target voters, namely the working classes. The article explains that the abandonment of the *hippy* style has political reasons:

Tra la gente di borgata e un hippy o un capellone non c’è dialogo: il capellone, infatti, è un classico prodotto borghese. [...] Il piccolo borghese che crede di ribellarsi facendosi crescere i capelli e mettendosi fiori in testa, in realtà opera una protesta completamente sterile, individualista, senza alternative. (ibid.: 17)

The discussion of the ‘political’ *giovane* style in this quotation shows how the adoption of a ‘normalised’ style here is said to be an effective strategy to communicate with the working classes, unlike wearing a *hippy* style, which identifies the *borghesi*: in this and the previous quotation the term *borghese* is used to describe middle-class young people, who do not actively participate in politics, pejoratively. In Italy, the term *borghese* had become extremely popular during and in the aftermath of the Italian *Sessantotto*, as a result of the increasing critique of bourgeois society and the middle class. The student movements identified the *borghesi* with the previous generation, namely that of their parents, against whom they were demonstrating. After 1968, however, the student movement itself started to be criticised because of its members’ bourgeois origins: those



participating in university and school occupations in 1968 were in fact the sons and daughters of the Italian middle classes. This process was identified by intellectuals such as Pier Paolo Pasolini, who, in the famous 1973 article ‘Il “discorso” dei capelli’ (Pasolini, 2013), connoted a style feature, namely ‘capelli lunghi’, with class belonging. Pasolini claimed that, if during 1968 long hair used to bear working-class and therefore left-wing connotations connected to student and workers’ protests, in 1973 long hair had become a *borghese*, and therefore right-wing sign, because of its commercial appropriation and its class connotation:

Che cosa dicevano questi loro capelli? Dicevano: “[...] Noi siamo impiegati di banca, studenti, figli di gente arricchita che lavora nelle società petrolifere [...]. Noi siamo dei borghesi: ed ecco qui i nostri capelli lunghi che testimoniano la nostra modernità internazionale di privilegiati!”. [...] Il ciclo si è compiuto. La sottocultura al potere ha assorbito la sottocultura all’opposizione e l’ha fatta propria: con diabolica abilità ne ha fatto pazientemente una moda che, se non si può proprio dire fascista nel senso classico della parola, è però di una “estrema destra” reale. (Pasolini, 2013: 9-10)

According to Pasolini, the widespread wearing of long hair in the early 1970s had become a sign of class privilege, and therefore did not express true protest against the world of capitalism; it had instead become the expression of a ‘neo-Fascism’ that he identified with neo-capitalism (Bondavalli, 2015: 201).

Unlike in the 1960s, then, the *giovane* style in the early 1970s was clearly connected to the political role of Italian young people, which was now accepted in popular media. This acceptance can be explained as a consequence of the increasing political role of young people in the social and political movements of the 1960s.

Moreover, young people became institutionalised as social and political subjects thanks to the 1975 law for the reduction of the age of majority from 21 to 18 years old, which gave the right to vote to a larger number of youths. Indeed, in this period young people were not only considered to be politically active in radical groups; they also became a target for institutional political parties. From 1972, advertisements for political parties started to appear in *giovani* magazines: the presence of these advertisements arguably signalled a desire to politically conduct *i giovani* to more moderate positions than the radical ‘New Left’ movements. Some advertisements centred on issues that could appeal to an audience of young people: for example, the *Partito Socialista Italiano* used the theme of school reforms to appeal to young voters. Moreover, other parties used the *giovane* style as a marker of neutrality and modernisation. The 1972 series of *Democrazia Cristiana* advertisements in *giovani* magazines is particularly significant, as it appropriated the *giovane* style in order to negate political radicalisation. The *Democrazia Cristiana* used discourses around the radicalisation of young people’s political choices to present itself as the bearer of a more moderate and therefore ‘modern’ politics. One advertisement depicts a stereotyped fascist *balilla*, with a black shirt and plus-fours trousers, and a communist soldier, with a maxi coat and a gun on his shoulder. Standing between the two is a modern *giovane*, wearing flared blue jeans, a white shirt, and a short hairstyle. The slogan reads:

Come sarà la moda l’estate prossima? Questa volta, sei tu che decidi. Non saranno i grandi creatori della moda a importi uno stile: la scelta sta a te. Sarai tu a decidere se dovrai metterti in camicia nera coi pantaloni alla zuava e fasce mollettiera, oppure in maxi-cappotto siberiano e parabellum. O se, invece, potrai continuare a vestirti alla tua maniera solita, coi tuoi blue-jeans e quella tua

camiciola di cotone che ti sta così comoda addosso! [...] Né fez né colbacchi.

Democrazia Cristiana: la libertà. (Democrazia Cristiana, 1972a: 76)

The advertisement uses certain narratives that had previously been used to promote *giovane* fashion, in particular the idea that *i giovani* are actively creating their style, and have the power to choose the fashion they adopt. However, *il giovane* depicted in the advertisement is wearing a fashionable outfit that recalls the commercial style presented in *giovani* magazines' fashion columns: American-inspired blue jeans, short hair, beards, and sunglasses define the potential voter of the *Democrazia Cristiana* (Democrazia Cristiana, 1972b: 70). Moreover, in order to emphasize the modernity of the Christian Democrat *giovane*, the extreme left and extreme right are represented in their stereotyped image – the 1930s' Fascist *balilla* and the 1920s' revolutionary communist – instead of the contemporary version of politically active *giovani* – those with Mao's book in their hand and a red scarf around the neck. Unlike the references to the 1930s made in 1968 – when the inter-war period was described as 'l'epoca giovane' – here, references to the past function to represent political radicalisation in its totalitarian examples, such as Fascist Italy and Communist Russia. By transferring these political ideas to the past, political radicalisation is distanced from the modern *giovane*, who, in order to be 'free', should vote for the *Democrazia Cristiana*. In the *Democrazia Cristiana* electoral advertisements, then, the translation of the concept of political freedom into 'the freedom to wear what you want' demonstrated how style was still fundamental in expressing the 'political' *giovane* identity in popular media.

#### **4.1.2 The reconciliation between i giovani and gli adulti**

The previous sub-section showed how the ‘normalisation’ of the *giovane* style was connected, in popular media, to the new political role of young people in Italian society. This ‘normalisation’ also functioned to corrode the boundaries between *i giovani* and *gli adulti*, who were previously constructed as opposed to *i giovani*. In the early 1970s, not only was *i giovani*’s style presented as more similar to that of *gli adulti*, but *gli adulti* were also said to appropriate certain features characterising *i giovani*. This appropriation had happened before, but it was presented in magazines as a usurpation: for example, in Chapter two, a quotation taken from an article written by Rita Pavone showed that she was shocked by the fact that some adult people had started to go to the Piper club in Rome. By contrast, from 1971, the appropriation of *giovani* features – such as style and music – by *gli adulti* was discussed in *giovani* media as a sign of a greater acceptance of *i giovani* in Italian society. A 1971 advertisement for Coca-Cola in *Ciao Duemilauno*, for example, described the adoption of some of the aspects of the *giovane* style by *gli adulti* as unavoidable:

Visto la camicia colorata che tuo padre ha comperato la settimana scorsa? Proprio lui che diceva che non se ne poteva più di sentir parlare dei giovani, della moda giovane? [...] Quelle che ieri erano idee esclusive dei giovani, oggi sempre più diventano idee accettate ed adottate anche da chi non ha più 18 anni. È che la gioventù è e rimarrà sempre la fonte di comportamenti nuovi, sempre più aderenti alle necessità dell’uomo nella società e nell’ambiente esterno in cui si muove. [...] Dopo i primi urli e stridori di denti, i benpensanti tradizionalisti si trovano, che lo vogliano o no, ad accettare (e magari anche ad apprezzare) molti dei comportamenti tipici dei giovani. (Coca Cola, 1971: 51)

The advertisement, presented with the layout of an article, discusses changes in the perception of *i giovani* in Italian society. It praises the appropriation of some features of the *giovane* style by *gli adulti*, in this way justifying the commercial incorporation of the *giovane* style by the industry. The appropriation of the *giovane* style is also presented as a sign of *gli adulti*'s greater acceptance of *i giovani*'s 'ideas', which were previously 'esclusive dei giovani'.

A similar discourse can be found in the 1971 *Carosello* for the ice cream Boomerang Algida. Since the early 1960s, the Algida *Caroselli* had always featured *giovani* stars such as the Rokes, Rita Pavone and, from 1967, Patty Pravo. The choice of testimonials and slogans – for example, 'il gelato giovane' – demonstrated that the brand's advertisement was directed to an audience of young people. The 1971 *Carosello*, however, featured as a main testimonial actor Nanni Loy, who was not a *giovane*, but an adult actor. The advert starts with the actor stopping traffic on a crossroad, by shouting: "Fermi tutti! Voglio protestare. Basta con questa moda di imitare i giovani. Tutti a correre sempre dietro ai giovani. Invece bisogna ascoltare i giovani, bisogna aprire un dialogo con loro. Protesto, sì, protesto!" (Carosello Algida Boomerang, 1971). The dynamics expressed by the advertisement are contradictory: the actor says that *gli adulti* should not imitate *i giovani*, but while doing so, he imitates a *giovane* practice, namely demonstrating. Demonstrating is not the only *giovane* practice that Loy imitates: at the end of the short advert, he enters a bar, where he orders Boomerang, 'il gelato dei giovani', thus he participates in the consumption of *giovani* goods. Considering that the advertisement was still directed at young people, it appears that popular media were facilitating the acceptance of the adoption of practices reserved to *i giovani* by *gli adulti* during the 1960s. This process also suggests that the opposition to *gli adulti* to define *i*

*giovani* was no longer needed: as young people were increasingly recognised as political and social subjects, the strong distinction between the two groups was becoming more blurred.

Another sign of the reconciliation between *i giovani* and *gli adulti* in popular media can be found in the attitude of the *giovane* television studio audience towards the main representative of *gli adulti* in Italian popular music, namely Claudio Villa. Villa, also known as *Il Reuccio*, was a singer and actor who, from the end of the 1950s, became the representative of the Italian sentimental *canzone*; as a consequence, especially in the late 1950s and early 1960s, he became the *adulto par excellence* in *giovani* media, in contrast to the *urlatori* and the *beat* singers. A parody of Claudio Villa can be found in the film *I ragazzi del Juke Box* (Fulci, 1959), where the *giovane* singer Adriano (Celentano) *il Molleggiato* confronts the traditional singer Appio Claudio, who is clearly a parodic imitation of Villa, evident both in the name and in the repertoire of songs he sings in the film. In 1970, Villa was a guest on the television programme *Speciale per voi*, where he sang 'Marina' (Granata, 1959), one of his most successful songs. Here, the singer was violently criticised: he could not even sing the song because his voice was covered by the audience's disapproving whistles and screams, and he was forced to stop singing in order to verbally answer the insults screamed at him (*Speciale per Voi*, episode 7, 26/05/1970). The entire scene was evidently staged; however, it shows the hostile attitude of *i giovani* towards this *adulto* singer. Unlike these representations, where Claudio Villa is first ridiculed and then criticised, in early 1970s the singer is represented as being accepted within the community of *i giovani*. Only two years after his performance in *Speciale per*

*Voi*, in 1972, Claudio Villa sang on the *giovane* programme *Tutto è pop* (Moretti, 1972).<sup>55</sup> Claudio Villa entered the stage in a *giovane* outfit and riding a motorcycle, and the *giovane* on-stage audience applauded him. Moreover, the singer was invited to sit on a throne, his nickname *il reuccio* being taken literally to mean he was the king of singers, including *giovani* singers. All the *giovani* singers that perform in the same episode, in fact, paid homage to Villa, in this way implicitly accepting his role as ‘king’ (*Tutto è Pop*, episode 7, 20/09/1972). In his appearance in *Tutto è Pop*, not only did *giovani* singers accept Villa’s appropriation of *giovani* practices, which here are not presented as a performance like Totò’s disguising as *giovane* in *Rita la Figlia Americana*, but they also accepted their subordinate position towards the singer, in this way implicitly recognising the position of power of *gli adulti* over *i giovani*.

The alleged reconciliation between *i giovani* and *gli adulti* represented in popular media can be read in the light of the delicate social situation of Italy in the early 1970s: the increase of violence in Italian society, caused by both left- and right-wing terrorism, was creating social tensions, especially towards young people who, because of their symbolic role in the Italian *Sessantotto*, seemed the most radical in their political position. As a consequence, the resolution of generational conflict in the early 1970s can be interpreted as a strategy to decrease the social tension via popular media representations: by representing a reconciliation between generations, popular media seemed to suggest a social compromise within Italian society. Just like the modern *giovani* depicted in the Democrazia Cristiana advertisements, the construction of *i giovani* as accepting *gli adulti*

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<sup>55</sup> The programme itself represents a certain reconciliation between *i giovani* and *gli adulti* as the host, Vittorio Salvetti, did not introduce himself as a *giovane* like Arbore; he was instead an *adulto*, and clearly distinguished from his audience by interpellating them with a ‘voi’.

– and, in some cases, their role of power – in television programmes and advertisements functioned to recuperate and moderate the image of political young people.

In the early 1970s, the increasing radicalisation of Italian politics and the tense social situation of the *Anni di Piombo* was dispelled in popular media by the recuperation of the political Italian *giovane*. The alleged ‘normalisation’ of the *giovane* style was also used by political parties to promote moderation, in a phase of Italian political history where young people were associated with right-wing and left-wing radicalisation. The attenuation of the generational conflict in popular media representations can also be seen as an attempt to resolve the social tension caused by the *Anni di Piombo*, and to advocate for a moderation of young people’s political positions in Italian society.

#### ***4.2 The fragmentation of the community and the emergence of giovani identities***

In the period 1970-1975, the ‘normalised’ style of *i giovani* in popular media presented above remained broadly standardised; however, new forms of opposition started to characterise the media construction of *i giovani*. Chapters two and three showed how, in the second half of the 1960s, *i giovani* were constructed in popular media as largely homogenised and in opposition to other identities. The construction of the *beats* and the *hippies* tended to erase any references to *i giovani*’s class belonging: in popular media representations, *i giovani* were represented as equally different from their *adulti* counterparts, no matter what their social and economic background was. However, on closer inspection, it is apparent that the practices through which *i giovani* were constructed were middle-class practices, in that the connection between *i giovani* and leisure activities such as attending concerts and buying records and fashion that defined being *giovane* required certain economic resources and so were not available to all Italian



young people in the 1960s. Moreover, the proliferation of references to school and universities confirmed that in popular media *il giovane* was a student by default, and therefore the working classes were excluded from this construction.

Similarly, the *giovane* identity represented in popular media in the period 1965-1970 was geographically undetermined: for example, *i giovani* who featured in early *Musicarelli* films did not show a regional origin. Despite the fact that most *Musicarelli* were set in Naples,<sup>56</sup> none of the *giovani* actors had a Neapolitan accent in the films, while *adulti* actors who played the roles of their parents often spoke with a strong accent or made large use of dialectal jargon. The transnational construction of *il giovane* also helped in representing youth as an international community, in which regional and national boundaries did not disrupt the supposed unity of *i giovani*. Moreover, when Southern *giovani* appeared in *giovani* magazines, they were represented as resisting the backwardness of the society they were living in (such as, for example, the *giovani beat* women with miniskirts in their bags presented in Chapter two), and therefore as opposing their own Southern-ness, instead of embracing it: in this sense, Southern-ness and a *giovane* identity were presented as mutually exclusive. However, the social and economic discrepancies between different parts of the Italian peninsula certainly affected young people's lives: the construction of *i giovani* was mainly representative of a limited section of youth, who lived in the big cities where *giovani* clubs and shops were or where concerts of *giovani* stars were taking place.

During the early 1970s, this homogenised media construction of *i giovani* started to fragment, and the presence of multiple *giovani* identities was revealed in popular

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<sup>56</sup> The choice of Naples as a common setting can be explained in the light of the relevance of the tradition of the *canzone napoletana* in Italian popular music. In the late 1950s, several Italian musical films centred on the *canzone napoletana* were also set in Naples (Buzzi, 2013: 68).

media. This process worked through two main discourses: discrimination and integration. On the one hand, a feeling of discrimination started to emerge in letters written by young people and published in *giovani* magazines. Young people writing to *giovani* magazines were feeling discriminated against both by other *giovani*, and by the representations that *giovani* popular media were offering of young people. On the other hand, those identities previously discriminated against started to feature in magazines, television programmes, and films, in this way showing that *i giovani* were not just different from *gli adulti* – in fact, as noticed previously, *gli adulti* could be *giovani* as well – but could also be different from other *giovani*. This process influenced constructions of *i giovani* that were more representative of society as a whole; however, these multiple identities still had a strong ideological function that in some cases tended to reaffirm dominant relations of power and to further discriminate against subordinate identities.

This section argues that the fragmentation of the ‘imagined community’ of Italian young people was influenced by popular culture’s appropriation of the emancipatory discourses circulating in Italian and other Western societies. Robert Lumley explains how, following the two-year period 1968-69, many different social and political movements emerged in Italy, which either maintained a connection with the previous social unrest, or broke away from it, by proposing new themes and modalities of protest. Workers and student movements rose up alongside, among others, countercultural youth movements, feminist and gay rights movements, regional and ethnic conflicts, and ecological and anti-consumerist organisations (Lumley, 1990: 273). This and the following section show how the emergence of issues regarding *i giovani*’s class, geographical belonging and gender identity in popular media products was influenced by the increasing circulation of emancipatory discourses. In particular, this section concentrates on issues pertaining to

class, politics and ethnicity, while the following section analyses the construction of *i giovani*'s gender and sexuality.

#### **4.2.1 Discrimination**

From the late 1960s, several letters written by young readers to *giovani* magazines highlighted the presence of political, class, and geographical differences within the 'imagined community' of young people. In these letters, young people were denouncing their feeling of being discriminated against by the community of *i giovani* described in popular media: these letters therefore demonstrate how a sense of community had been created in popular media during the 1960s, and how this construct in itself prescribed a preferred way of being young, which was middle-class and Northern.

In a letter to *Ciao Duemilauno*'s editor, a reader complained about the supposedly classist orientation of the magazine, which according to him had a *borghese* orientation. He then criticised the exclusion of a segment of young people from discussion within the magazine:

ma allora il vostro giornale è per un élite, per una classe, è classista, è borghese. [...] È possibile che non vi scriva mai un contadino, un operaio? Ed è possibile che faccia una lettera di esemplare lingua? Se è vero siete classisti, sennò siete bugiardi perché non fate vedere le cose come sono [...]. (Al Direttore, 1969: 4)

In this letter, class is discussed in terms of the level of education that the readers are expected to have, as indicated by the language used in the magazine. The reader wonders why 'nessuno [sbaglia] a scrivere, forse sono tutti istruiti, studenti, signori?' (ibid.). He then continues by accusing the magazine: either it is classist, by excluding some young people from accessing the contents of the magazine, or inauthentic, for editing the letters

of those young people who cannot write in correct Italian. This letter illustrates how *i giovani* constructed in popular media were often considered as students by default. Cecilia Cristofori discusses how in the mid-1960s young people were implicitly considered students, as a consequence of the increase in school attendance and of the emergence of student movements. Conversely, other categories of young people such as young workers disappeared from popular media representations:

L'immagine del giovane lavoratore [...] si va progressivamente eclissando nella seconda metà degli anni Sessanta. Quando [...] la scolarizzazione diventa di fatto un'esperienza condivisa dalla maggioranza dei ragazzi e delle ragazze, la sovrapposizione tra l'immagine giovanile e la condizione studentesca [...] rende disponibile una rappresentazione coerente e unitaria del mondo giovanile, al cui interno sempre meno appaiono come dotate di senso le apparenze descritte dalle posizioni occupate nell'organizzazione sociale. (Cristofori, 2002: 104)

Moreover, the identification between students and *borghesi* in the letter above signals how a high level of education was connected with middle-class belonging. The previous section has shown how class had become a significant identity feature for young people in the late 1960s, thanks to the Italian *Sessantotto*. The students' and workers' movements emerging during the late 1960s, which evolved into the 'New Left' movements, had a strong Marxist orientation. Paul Ginsborg (1990: 312) explains that when the student movement abandoned the universities and began picketing outside factories from the summer of 1968 onwards, students started to criticise their own middle-class origins in order to draw closer to the working classes. By doing so, students were also disseminating

Marxist ideology, giving workers a stronger class consciousness (Lumley 1990: 114).<sup>57</sup> The circulation of Marxist ideals popularised terms that were previously limited to intellectuals and politicians, such as *borghesi* and *proletari*, which from the late 1960s started also to appear in popular media discourse.

Young readers also started to denounce discrimination based on political orientation. A series of letters written by young neo-fascists accused *Ciao Duemilauno*'s editor of not representing them because of their radical political orientation. In one of these letters, a neo-fascist group stated that they were interested in the topics treated by the magazine, but they thought that views were expressed that were too distant from their own. Fascists were immediately identified with an extremely impolite and violent language:

Egregio direttore, noi fascisti non abbiamo ancora capito se lei ha paura dei nostri giudizi, e si, perché inviamo in continuazione lettere [...]. Lei cestini pure le nostre lettere, un giorno si troverà il fascismo sotto il letto! [...] Ripetete con noi: VIVA IL DUCE, VIVA IL FASCISMO! E: abbasso i calabresi, i negri, i siculi non fascisti, i sinistrati, il Vietnam comunista, i falliti, i drogati, noi fascisti siamo sempre qui, nelle nostre sedi, venite a trovarci, riceverete quello che vi meriterete [...]. (Lettere al direttore. Chi ha paura dei "Cavalieri del nulla"?, 1972: 5-6)

Although the letter is clearly racist and provocative, it is interesting to see how young people criticised the unitary view of *il giovane* as non-political (as the *beats*) or left-wing by default. The exclusion of right-wing young people from the media construction of *il giovane* criticised in the letter above demonstrates not only the attempts to moderate young people's political beliefs in popular media discourse explained earlier, but also how

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<sup>57</sup> Lumley (1990) explains in detail the reception of Marxist ideology in the Italian context, by students, workers, and feminist movements.

neo-fascism in popular media was completely invisible, arguably because of its direct connection to Fascism, and therefore to the traumas of the *Ventennio* and the Second World War.

Another element that created a fragmentation in the community *i giovani* in this period was the emergence of *i giovani* from the *Meridione* in popular media representations. During the mid-1960s, representations of Southern youth in popular media aimed at an audience of young people replicated those stereotypes of the South as ‘lacking’ in economic, social, and cultural resources that had always been central to the definition of a common Italian identity. After the Economic Miracle, the industrialized cities of the North of Italy were increasingly influenced by the social and economic models of Western capitalistic societies; conversely, the South and the rural areas of the North and the Centre experienced a decline, which was worsened by the migration of many *Meridionali* to the major cities in the North of Italy (and in particular Milan and Turin). As a consequence, while popular media represented Northern cities as reflecting the modernization of the Italian peninsula, the South was defined ‘by its lack of what the North possessed’ (Forgacs, 2014: 6): it was stereotypically presented as static, backward, economically underdeveloped and socially ignorant. As Jane Schneider (1998: 8) puts it, ‘Italy appear[ed] dragged down by its Southern half’. The cultural construction of the South thus often functioned to underline, through opposition, the increasing modernisation of the North and, as a consequence, of Italian society in general. This stereotyped representation of the South contrasted with the construction of *il giovane* as a transnational and inherently ‘modern’ identity: this is why the representations of Southern young people analysed in the previous chapters were characterised by their resistance to their own backward social context. Gabriella Gribaudo, however, notes how the social

difference between the two 'poles' of Italy has never been as neat as the discourse constructing it. Sexual taboos, the difficulties of communication between generations, the impossibility of going out in the evening for young women 'were probably common to the whole of Italy in a specific generation' (Gribaudo, 1996: 85). To identify the South as the backward part of Italy, then, was a strategy to emphasize through opposition the increasing modernisation of the North. The fictional division between North and South started to be pointed out in letters to *giovani* magazines: in a letter that appeared in 1970 in *Ciao Duemilauno*, the writer complained

quante volte nel settentrione ho sentito parlare male dei meridionali, e nessuno si è accorto che io lo ero. Sono state in Sicilia queste persone? NO! Certo che se poi vanno nello sperduto paesetto dell'Etna non troveranno benessere assoluto. Ma nel settentrione ci sono paesetti lontani dai grandi centri? SI! Ma noi giudichiamo il settentrione da città quali Milano, Genova. E perché non si giudica la Sicilia da città quali Catania, Siracusa e Messina? Perché criticare è divertente, ecco perché!

(Al Direttore, 1970: 4)

The letter criticizes the stereotypical representation of the backward South in opposition to the modern North, by stating that major cities in the South are not as backward as Northern people think they are. This letter, then, constitutes an interesting development of the dual construction of North-modern/South-backward: the Southern *giovane* here is not resisting his own backward society, but rather he is trying to oppose a stereotypical representation of the South. In this letter, moreover, the criticism is not directed to *giovani* magazines as it was in the two examples reported above, but it is addressed to young people. Thus letters sent to *giovani* magazines also started to delineate the presence of

discriminations within the community of *i giovani*, based on different social backgrounds, economic resources, and ethnicity.

For example, a Sardinian young woman living in Turin wrote to *Ciao Duemilauno* in 1970 to denounce her situation of discrimination, which was caused not so much by her position as a migrant, but by her job. In the letter, she defines herself as *giovane* by saying that she ‘am[a] la musica, il ballo, le pagine di 2001 e insomma tutte le cose piccole e grandi che amano le ragazze della mia età [...]’ (Cambula, 1970: 72), thus referencing those leisure activities – music, dance, the consumption of magazines – through which *i giovani* were constructed in popular media. However, she declares that she feels excluded by her peers, because she is a waitress, and as soon as she reveals this to other *giovani*, they discriminate against her. The fact of being a waitress shows her class inferiority, and that is the reason why other *giovani* exclude her, she deduces. In other words, the young woman writing is expressing her desire to belong to an ‘imagined community’ that she has seen represented in popular media, but that does not actually exist in the way in which it has been portrayed. She comments:

Da queste parti abbiamo tutti la pelle dello stesso colore, non è uno sforzo mostrarsi superiori davanti a un problema che non ci tocca; ma le cameriere qui in Italia esistono, ed io sono una di loro: una ragazza come tante altre, con un lavoro come tanti altri eppure sono vittima di uno stupido, inspiegabile razzismo, che relega la mia categoria nelle sottospecie da non frequentare, da non conoscere, da non salutare... da non amare. Ma perché succede questo? (ibid.)

Interestingly, the word used by the reader to express her class discrimination is ‘racism’, despite the fact that the discrimination described is not based on physical or ethnic features. The misuse of this word here signals that the vocabulary employed to describe



discrimination derived not only from the political discourse of the Italian student movements, but was also borrowed from foreign movements such as the American civil rights movements. In the letter, the reader claims that discriminations based on ethnicity do not exist in Italy; however, the alleged anti-racism of *i giovani* does not apply to class issues. Another letter described a similar episode by using the term 'racism' in order to explain the writer's feeling of discrimination. In the letter, which appeared in *Ciao Duemilauno*, a *giovane* woman identifies herself as being working class: she explains that 'compro un disco ogni 2 o 3 mesi con i miei esigui risparmi' (Lettere al direttore. *Razzismo alla rovescia*, 1972: 6), quantifying her wealth and thus social status with the quantity of music records she is able to buy. The writer describes how she has found a new group of friends, who are richer than her. She complains about the fact that her former friends now hate her, because they think that she is 'una che ama i soldi e la gente imbevuta di stupido borghesismo' (ibid.). The writer is rejected by her working-class friends because she has overcome class boundaries by going out with middle-class people; the vocabulary used by her friends, that she reports in the letter, shows the disregard that her working-class friends have towards the 'stupidi' *borghesi*. She comments at the end of her letter: 'Quello che voglio dire è, che ora stiamo esagerando con quest'idea del 'siamo tutti uguali'. Verissimo, ma si sta facendo del razzismo proprio da parte di chi lo combatte' (ibid.). The writer defines her situation of being rejected by her own working-class friends as a 'razzismo alla rovescia': here the use of the word 'racism' is not only employed to denounce a class issue, but it is also used to discuss different forms of discrimination within the community of *i giovani*.

The frequent use of the term 'racism' in letters of young Italians denouncing forms of discrimination shows how discourses around civil rights for American black people did

circulate in the Italian peninsula, and how they were appropriated by Italian young people. The term ‘racism’ became an empowering term used to describe discrimination despite the fact that such treatment was not based on race, nor on ethnicity. The use of this word out of context, however, was not always empowering: it was often employed without a complete understanding of the term itself, and sometimes its use supported racist claims. For example, in 1972 *Qui Giovani* published a debate between Adamo, a Somali young man who was studying in Italy, and Antonio, who moved from Lecce to the North of Italy. The theme discussed is whether ‘gli italiani sono razzisti’ (I nostri problemi, 1972: 42). Antonio, the young man from the South, maintains that in Italy, the *meridionali* experience more racism than people of colour.

ANTONIO: Il tuo [di Adamo] non mi sembra un caso particolare. Ho l’impressione che io, meridionale, venendo al nord ho incontrato difficoltà ancora maggiori: tutti quelli che mi sentivano parlare mi davano del “terrone”.

DOMANDA: Da dove vieni?

ANTONIO: Da Lecce. Ora mi sono abituato all’idea di essere chiamato “terrone” ma il primo anno, mi è stato molto difficile inserirmi nella società: e io ho la pelle bianca! [...] Adesso il negro va di moda [...] (ibid.)

The debate recounted in this interview shows again the significance of language in defining the forms of discrimination going on within *i giovani*. Firstly, Antonio explains how Northern people used to derogatorily call him ‘terrone’: this term, referring to the ‘terra’ Southern people used to cultivate, is the traditional epithet used by people from the North of Italy to offend people from the South. According to Antonio, the use of this derogatory term is widespread: this comment signals the presence of discrimination against people from the South in Northern cities. Secondly, Antonio claims that

discrimination against *meridionali* in Italy is worse than that against black people, as ‘adesso il negro va di moda’. Antonio’s observation probably refers to the popularity of the global trend of black music and the Afro style. However, this comment is also racist, as it implies an alleged hierarchy between those people discriminated against but still white such as the *meridionali*, and those who should be discriminated and are not, such as black people. In other words, this article shows that, despite the claims about the anti-racism of Italian *giovani* emerging from the letters above, discriminations based on ethnicity actually existed in Italian society, including within the community of *i giovani*.

The appearance of forms of discrimination within the community of *i giovani* demonstrates the emergence of discourses around class, political beliefs, and ethnicity in the media construction of *i giovani* in the late 1960s. In describing discrimination, young people often used terminology around racism: this linguistic appropriation demonstrates the circulation of emancipatory claims such as those of the Italian student movements and the American Civil Rights Movement and their inclusion in popular media discourse. The misuse of the term ‘racism’ in letters to *giovani* magazines, however, shows the lack of a complete understanding of the full implications of this term and of the movements with which it was associated.

#### **4.2.2 Inclusion**

The emergence of discriminated against identities in letters written by young people to *giovani* magazines coincided with the inclusion of class and geographic identity features in the media construction of *i giovani*. In the early 1970s, different *giovani* identities started to be represented in popular media products: these representations, however, were far from unproblematic, as they often tended to reproduce stereotypical views about

people from the South and working-class young people. Moreover, while the *meridionalità* of several *giovani* stars became widely accepted and celebrated, other identities – such as workers and right-wing militants – remained largely invisible from popular media representations.

From the end of the 1960s, *i giovani* from the South were not only increasingly represented in popular media as the agents of resistance against their own society, but also became the bearers of a cultural pride for their Southern origins, meaning that they no longer opposed their background, but rather celebrated it. *Giovani* popular media's recuperation of the South can be seen as a consequence of the new attention to rural popular culture that emerged in Italian society from the mid-1960s. In the 1960s and early 1970s, anthropologist Ernesto de Martino and ethnomusicologist Roberto Leydi started a rediscovery of Southern traditions, such as popular songs and oral narratives, with a specific political aim: to demonstrate that Southern society was underdeveloped because it had been exploited by the North, and to advocate for a future revolutionary process of transformation of Southern society.<sup>58</sup> David Forgacs underlines how De Martino's and Leydi's venture

was in no sense a nostalgic conservationist movement aimed at turning back the clock against “cultural modernization”. It was a combative, politicized movement, keenly aware of how the popular culture of rural areas was being broken apart by the expansion of capitalism and defining itself in opposition both to the cultures of capitalism and to the inert “reformism of the institutional left”. (Forgacs, 2014: 195)

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<sup>58</sup> On Ernesto De Martino, see Forgacs (2014: 172-179).

It was not only anthropologists who were interested in more peripheral areas of the country, but also musicians. During the early 1970s, there was a revival of Italian *musica popolare*<sup>59</sup> and especially Southern folk and traditional music, through cultural organizations such as the *Nuovo Canzoniere Italiano*.<sup>60</sup> Unlike other countries, where the ‘folk’ genre only concerned political songs, in Italy this term also identified the traditional, peasant music coming from peripheral areas of the peninsula, and especially the South.

The rediscovery of the South also concerned *giovani* popular media, which started to increasingly feature peripheral areas of the Italian peninsula. The television programme *Speciale Tre Milioni* (Nicotra, 1971), referring to the number of people aged 20 to 30 years in Italy at the time, brought *giovane* music to the South, through a series of episodes, each exploring a different theme.<sup>61</sup> This programme staged the performances of famous *giovani* singers and bands of the moment in places such as Campobasso in Molise, Viterbo in Campania, Sant’Agata in Apulia (but also other areas of the country, such as Marostica in the countryside in Veneto, and Sirolo in Marche). Through *Speciale Tre Milioni*, national television displayed peripheral Italian areas and presented performances of *giovane* music together with discussions of the problems experienced by the *meridionali*, therefore giving visibility to local youth communities. Similarly, some *giovani* singers started to be identified with specific geographic areas and therefore with

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<sup>59</sup> Alessandro Carrera, in his book about music and young audiences (1980), has described the revival of folk and peasant music in Italy in the early 1960s as an appropriation of traditions for political reasons (songs of protests that were soon appropriated by the student and worker movements). He also comments on foreign ‘folk’ (Dylan, Inti Illimani); interestingly, no space is given to the ‘pop’ appropriation of folk as represented by Orietta Berti, Al Bano, and Marcella Bella. See also Carrera’s chapter in Baranski & West (2001).

<sup>60</sup> On the revival of *musica popolare*, see Carrera (1980: 229-256).

<sup>61</sup> The only episode that has been digitised for the RAI archive (by February 2015) is the one about love, filmed in Campobasso and Viterbo and broadcast on 08/10/1971.

specific issues. For example, Neapolitan singer Edoardo Bennato is described in a 1975 article a ‘negro napoletano’ (Insolera, 1975: 13):

La strada originaria è quella di Napoli, sua città d’origine, e questo aggiunge altre particolari considerazioni: [...] Napoli come punto storico di focalizzazione della cultura, ma anche, purtroppo, della miseria del Sud; Napoli come centro orgasmico di tradizioni, di razze, di popoli [...]. Tutto questo marca un profondo riflesso nella musica di Edoardo, nella cui effervescente ispirazione il blues diventa il lamento del “negro napoletano”, il rock’n roll si italianizza ed esprime la rabbia di chi ama visceratamente la sua terra, e vuole far qualcosa, ad ogni costo, per aiutarla. (ibid.)

The article underlines how Bennato’s artistic production is inextricably linked to Naples, the city from which he comes and that he wants to help. Bennato’s engaged music production is said to be an ‘Italianised’ version of the blues used by American black people to express the discrimination they felt. This description of Bennato’s role as a musician well illustrates the process of ‘Italianisation’ of discourses around racial discrimination that have been described in the previous sub-section. However, again, Bennato’s Southern-ness here involves also racist references to a supposed ethnic difference of *meridionali*. Bennato’s given nickname, ‘negro napoletano’, equates geographical difference with ethnic difference, in this way reproducing a discriminatory discourse according to which people from the South are ethnically different from northerners.

Unlike Bennato’s ‘engaged’ representation, some other *giovani* singers, such as Mia Martini, Al Bano and Marcella Bella, also started to be clearly identified as *meridionali* in popular media. By looking at the media construction of these Southern

*giovani*'s star personas, we see how references to their Southern origins seem to be emphasized by the industry. These stars' Southern-ness, however, is not to be found in their musical repertoire, nor were they using their popularity to emphasise the difficult situation of the South. Their geographical determination can be seen rather as a strategy to captivate young Southern people without engaging with the political issues that the musical and anthropological revival of Southern traditions were implying.

The construction of Mia Martini's star persona, for example, shows how the media construction of *giovani* stars increasingly involved geographic belonging. During the first half of the 1970s, Mia Martini, stage name of Domenica Bertè, changed from being a *hippy* singer to becoming a Southern singer. An article in *Qui Giovani* described 'la novità Mia Martini' in 1971 as a *hippy* singer:

Bombetta in testa, trucco esasperato, tanti gioielli (anche al naso): così Mia Martini, quasi volesse mortificare la sua bellezza, ama abbigliarsi. Mia è nata a Bagnara Calabria, ma ha vissuto ad Ancona. Il suo vero nome è Domenica Bertè.  
(La Novità Mia Martini, 1971: 33)

Martini is immediately identified here by her *hippy* style, which in 1971 is already seen as 'esasperato': the singer is said to 'mortificare la sua bellezza' by adopting this style, therefore inherently criticising it. Moreover, the article gives us some personal details: the singer was born in Calabria, a region in the South-West of Italy, but she grew up in Ancona, a city in the centre of Italy. Only four years later, in the television programme *Mia* (Trapani, 1975), Martini defines herself as a 'donna del sud': her gender identity and her geographical belonging define her more than her being *giovane*. Martini's Southernness is emphasized in the programme by her adoption of a folk-inspired, gypsy style, characterised by long floral skirts and embroidered shawls. Her musical repertoire is also

geographically determined: in the last section of the show, Martini performs with Roman singer Gabriella Ferri several traditional Roman *stornelli*. However, references to Martini's Southern-ness seem questionable: although she had Southern origins, she never lived in the South, but in a city in the centre of Italy, Ancona, and she moved to Rome only in the late 1960s. Martini's Southern-ness, although slightly inaccurate, functioned to align her with a specific trend in popular music, that of folk/Southern music.

Al Bano, stage name of the singer, actor and TV personality Albano Carrisi, is also a popular singer who in the late 1960s and early 1970s was mainly represented by referring to his Southern origins. Al Bano hailed from Cellino San Marco in Apulia and moved to Rome, where he met Romina Power (daughter of actors Tyrone Power and Linda Christian) who became his wife and career partner. The couple featured in many late *Musicarelli* films: in these *Musicarelli*, it is evident that Al Bano's Southern-ness is not only shown, but also emphasized. For example, the film *L'oro del Mondo* (Grimaldi, 1968) is a story of love and betrayal between Carlo (Al Bano) and Lorena (Romina Power). The couple, and Lorena in particular, are constantly harassed by Giorgio Castelli (Carlo Giordana), a northerner and the son of a factory manager who wants to steal Lorena from Carlo. Blackmailed by Giorgio, Lorena breaks up with Carlo; but when Carlo discovers this, he beats Giorgio up (showing the Southern 'virility' that will be discussed in the last section of this chapter) and eventually marries Lorena. In this film, not only does Al Bano portray the *meridionale* who migrated to the city (Rome, in this case), he is also the working-class *giovane* who fights against the wealthy *giovane*, who uses his economic power to seduce the woman Carlo loves. Al Bano's character in the film shows how popular media started to include subordinate identities in the construction of *i giovani*: the hero in the story is the poor, Southern *giovane* who is exploited by his



rich, Northern peer. One of the most interesting scenes of the film, and one that shows a different representation of ‘the South’, is when Carlo decides to go back to his mother’s house in Apulia. The scene represents an archaic setting: Carlo’s mother is dressed in black, as was customary for widows in the South. Moreover, she lives in a country house surrounded by olive trees, a stereotypical representation of the Italian South. However, instead of looking backward, the South imagined in the film is more of an Arcadia, where nature and traditions are celebrated and not criticised. ‘The South’ is also defined as the place that Carlo has to abandon, but that he still considers his own. Carlo leaves his hometown as it is unavoidable if he wants to go back to the city, but he is still proudly connected to his past, as this scene in the film shows.

Another singer whose Southern origins became a central element of the media construction of her star persona is Marcella Bella, a Sicilian singer who became popular in the early 1970s. Like Al Bano, Bella is presented as a Southern singer, but her music is neither traditional nor peasant music, nor does the singer use dialect when she sings. Her origins are simply highlighted as part of her Southern identity: magazines, for example, recounted how her Sicilian accent used to be discriminated against before she came to success. *Ciao Duemilauno* explained how

[nel 1967], mentre partecipava ad uno spettacolo a Palermo, fu notata da un presentatore che la invitò ad andare a Milano per sostenere alcuni provini discografici. Ma nemmeno quella volta le andò bene: la colpa fu di quell’accento siciliano che si sentiva tanto, troppo... Nemmeno questa volta Marcella si perse di coraggio. Visto che la sua cadenza dialettale era stata la causa della bocciatura “discografica”, decise di mettersi a studiare dizione per perfezionare la sua pronuncia. (Regini, 1972: 74)

The article, written in 1972, highlights how in previous years, the fact of being a *meridionale* was an element that needed to be erased from Bella's star persona: the singer had to give up her Sicilian accent in order to be able to start a musical career. However, this erasure was no longer needed in the early 1970s, when her origins were instead highlighted. Marcella Bella was said to be a representative of 'Sicilia pop', thus showing how Southern young people became included in the *giovane* identity in the early 1970s.

Al Bano and Marcella Bella featured in the first episode of *Tutto è pop* in 1972, which discussed the emergence of 'Mediterranean pop' (*Tutto è pop*, episode 1, 03/08/1972). The term 'Mediterranean' here is used to describe different Southern European singers, most of whom were from the South of Italy. The fact that an entire episode was dedicated to Southern *giovani* demonstrates that this discourse had entered popular media by 1972; however, the programme shows how discourses around the South in *giovani* popular media did not offer a political or social standpoint; rather, they tended to broadcast a stereotypical representation of the South. In the episode, when the studio audience is asked what they think of the 'Mediterranean', they give very generalised answers: for them, the Mediterranean is the sun, the sea, and (for *giovani* men) the blonde and brunette women. No reference is given to the South as an area that needs emancipation. The word 'sun' is also largely used in the songs of Southern *giovani*, for example Al Bano's 'Nel Sole' (Carrisi, Massara & Pallavicini, 1967) and Bella's 'Sole che Nasce, sole che Muore' (Bella & Bigazzi, 1972). The lyrics of the song are not about the South; rather they concentrate on love stories. The identification of the South with 'the sun' seems to replicate a stereotypical view of the *Meridione*. The presence of Southern *giovani* in Italian popular media during the early 1970s thus shows that, although influenced by emancipatory claims, the inclusion of 'other' identities was not necessarily

emancipatory in itself, as it often replicated stereotypes, and did not denounce the problematic condition of Italy's Southern areas.

If the inclusion of the Southern 'other' was quite widespread in early 1970s popular media representations of *i giovani*, other groups were not included as easily. For example, *giovani* workers appeared only tangentially in popular media representations. Apart from Al Bano's character in *L'Oro del Mondo* mentioned above, the only case in the visual media in which an emphasis was given to *giovani* workers was in a 1970 episode of *Speciale Per Voi*, where Arbore underlined that the studio audience was made up of male and female factory workers coming from Pomezia, near Rome (*Speciale per voi*, episode 8, 02/06/1970). The inclusion of young workers in the programme is significant given that an article appeared in *Sorrisi e canzoni TV* in 1969 defined the late evening broadcasting of the show<sup>62</sup> 'una diga che impedisce a molti giovani lavoratori di avvicinarsi alla trasmissione' (A.B., 1969: 43). The article thus defines the *Speciale per Voi* young audience as an 'elite', as working-class young people were excluded from viewing it. Similarly, the *Speciale per Voi* studio audience is said to represent an 'elite' of Italian youth. In the same article, Arbore says: "Avevamo pensato di inserire anche voci diverse (gli operai, ad esempio) ma ci siamo trovati di fronte a difficoltà obiettive: timidezza, paura di non saper esprimere bene le proprie idee" (ibid.). Here, Arbore maintains that it is workers themselves who do not want to participate to the show, given their uneasiness in expressing their own ideas.

In the 1970 episode described above, then, working-class young people are included in the studio audience, yet their 'otherness' is emphasized: the audience of workers does not look different from the *giovane* audience featured in other episodes, as

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<sup>62</sup> In 1969, *Speciale per Voi* was broadcast at 10 pm on RAI's *Secondo Canale*.

they are wearing a *giovane* style; however, some dissimilarities can be seen in the vocabulary and the stronger accent used when they speak to the host (*Speciale per voi*, episode 8, 02/06/1970). Moreover, the fact that the host does not explain the composition of the audience in previous episodes, as if being a student and a *giovane* did not need to be pointed out, suggests *giovani* popular media were still establishing a hierarchy based on class, for which middle-class young students were more legitimately part of the community of *i giovani* than other young people.

No space at all, conversely, was given to right-wing political activists in the construction of *i giovani* in popular media. *Giovani* magazines did not give descriptions of the way in which extreme neo-fascist movements were emerging and becoming more visible. Although *i giovani* became increasingly political in popular media representations during the 1970s, then, there were political positions which were more accepted than others: as section 4.1 has shown, from the late 1960s popular media started to represent members of left-wing political movements, but the same did not happen for right-wing *giovani*. In 1977, *Ciao Duemilauno* also published a series of articles about the developments of the relationship between *i giovani* and politics. The first part deals with ‘the left’, the second part with ‘the centre’, but there is not a following part on ‘the right’.<sup>63</sup> The absence of neo-fascist groups in popular media representations of young people confirms John Foot’s assumption that right-wing activists are often the great absent in contemporary and today’s accounts of the 1960s and 1970s political movements (Foot 2011: 116).

The emergence of discourses around class, political, and geographical belonging in *giovani* popular media during the early 1970s suggests that before then *giovani*

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<sup>63</sup> See: Ruocco, 1977a: 21-22 and Ruocco, 1977b: 25-26.

magazines, films, and television programmes were constructing a preferential version of the *giovane* identity. In popular media, *il giovane* was someone who could adopt (and afford) a *giovane* style, and who could exercise *giovani* practices, and thus lived in a major Northern city. It was thanks to the proliferation of emancipatory discourses, including the domestication of foreign emancipatory claims such as those of the civil rights movements, that these subordinate identities could find the vocabulary and practices to express their own discrimination and therefore facilitate the inclusion of 'other' identities in the media construction of *i giovani*. The discrimination expressed in letters written to *giovani* magazines ultimately illustrates how the 'imagined community' of Italian young people was fragmented and far more complex than its popular media depiction. The inclusion of working-class people and *meridionali* in the media construction of the *giovane* identity, however, often had the effect of reiterating stereotypes about these categories instead of supporting the emancipatory claims of young people feeling discriminated against.

#### ***4.3 Giovani Femininities and Masculinities in the early 1970s: transformations and reactions***

The previous section illustrated how discourses used by political and civil rights movements entered popular media discourse and contributed to the inclusion of identities previously discriminated against, such as working-class and Southern young people, in the community of Italian *giovani*. This section analyses the extent to which the popular media construction of *i giovani* was influenced by the emergence of feminist and gay rights movements at the end of the 1960s, which questioned the dominant social role exercised by male and heterosexual subjects in Western societies. In the late 1960s,

gender differences within the community of *i giovani* tended not to be emphasized: *giovani* media did not distinguish between ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ *giovani* practices. In popular media construction, *giovani* men and women listened to the same music, danced in the same way, and met in the same places. Moreover, despite the tensions about homosexuality discussed in previous chapters, the implicit heterosexuality of both *giovani* women and men had never been questioned in popular media.

In the early 1970s, the emergence of feminist and gay rights movements in Italy increased the circulation of emancipatory ideals in Italian society and influenced the popular media construction of *giovani* gender identities. Perry Willson (2010: 151) claims that the ‘Manifesto of Rivolta Femminile’, described as one of the founding documents of Italian feminisms, was posted in the streets of Rome in 1970. Moreover, in the early 1970s, many collectives started to be formed in Italian cities such as Rome, Milan, and Padua, enhancing young women’s gender consciousness. Willson highlights how Italian ‘feminism clearly did help reinforce and accelerate the modernisation of social mores, [which had] begun in the period of the economic miracle’ (Willson, 2010: 167).<sup>64</sup> During the early 1970s, Italian feminist movements also started to promote a greater emancipation of women’s bodies, not only in terms of sexuality and reproduction, but also against the commercial use of the female body and the circulation of discriminatory beauty standards. According to Eugenia Paulicelli, during the 1970s certain feminist movements adopted a style that was not ‘feminine’, in order to assert an equality on style that recalled

their being on the same intellectual and social level as men. In so doing, the women's aim was to weaken and control the power of the male gaze, or the male

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<sup>64</sup> For an introduction on the political development of feminist movements in 1970s Italy, see also Lumley, 1990: 313-336.

symbolic order; by denying their femininity in dress, they would assert their own existence not as sexual or erotic bodies, but as men's intellectual equals. (Paulicelli, 1994: 176)

In other words, the rejection of 'feminine' garments was a way to engage with the global feminist claim that 'the personal is political'. For feminists, the body became a site of struggle where refusing to conform to standards of femininity would mean refusing to submit to the control of a patriarchal society and to the fashion industry's commodification and sexualisation of women's bodies. A less 'feminine' style was worn not only by women in feminist groups, but also by the majority of women, as during the early 1970s the wearing of trousers for women became a trend in the *giovane* mainstream fashion: the widespread appropriation of a traditionally 'masculine' garment for women, then, was not only a political sign, but it also became an element of fashion. Unlike the *hippy femmes fatales* of the late 1960s, then, in the early 1970s *giovani* women were seen as 'masculinised' not only for their behaviour, but also for the style they adopted, which was increasingly similar to that of their male counterparts.

Meanwhile, the first Italian gay rights movement, called F.U.O.R.I., acronym for 'Fronte Unitario Omosessuale Rivoluzionario Italiano', was formed in Turin in 1971 and started to publish a magazine with the same name. During the early 1970s, the political mobilisation and activism of F.U.O.R.I. influenced the emergence of numerous gay and trans rights movements (Pini, 2011). However, the visibility of gay rights movements in *giovani* popular media was substantially lower than that of feminist movements. Indeed, no mention of these movements was made in magazines or television programmes, and popular media often demonstrated a very cautious approach to matters concerning female and male homosexuals. This was arguably because homosexuality was still a taboo in

Italian society, which questioned the role of power and the alleged virility of Italian masculinities. However, images of homosexual, or allegedly homosexual stars, started to circulate in popular media, especially thanks to foreign trends such as glam, which increasingly featured in *giovani* magazines from 1973-74.

This section questions to what extent the movements mentioned above influenced the construction of *giovani* femininities and masculinities in Italian *giovani* popular media. It also explores the impact of the popular media in making emancipatory claims acceptable in Italian society. As this section demonstrates, the popular media construction of Italian masculinities and femininities was characterised both by progressive transformations and by a traditionalist reaction to such changes. If the circulation of feminist discourses increased the acceptability of *giovane* female sexuality, representations of emancipated women and homosexuals also reflected anxieties, especially evident in the construction of *giovani* masculinities. Christopher E. Forth underlines how the crisis of modern masculinities in Western countries represented ‘no doubt [...] a partial reaction to the modest gains made by women, homosexuals and people of color since the 1960s’ (Forth, 2008: 3). The following subsections analyse the construction of *giovani* femininities and masculinities respectively in the early 1970s: section 4.3.1 analyses the contradictory relationship between representations of women’s (sexual) freedom and women’s social emancipation. Section 4.3.2 evaluates the impact of the foreign trend glam rock in reshaping Italian masculinities and influencing the reaffirmation of the value of Italian virility.



### ***4.3.1 From young women's freedom to women's liberation***

The previous chapter showed how, between 1968-69, *giovani* magazines represented young women's requests for sexual education, whilst images of *giovani* female stars were increasingly sexualised in popular media. However, discourses around *giovani* femininities reflected a certain cautiousness in presenting female emancipation: sexually active *giovani* women in popular media recalled the image of the *femme fatale*, therefore female sexuality was foreignised and 'masculinised' in order to be presented as dangerous and disconnect it from Italian *giovani* women. In the early 1970s, popular media representations of young women were not only influenced by an increasing use of sexualised images of women's bodies, but also by the emergence of feminist movements. Stephen Gundle (2007: 193-194) points out how media representations of women during the 1970s were influenced by the centrality of the female body both in feminist discourse and in the increasing objectification of women in magazines, cinema, and television. This subsection concentrates on the often contradictory meaning given to concepts such as 'feminism', 'freedom', 'emancipation', and 'liberation' in *giovani* popular media, especially in discourses concerning style and the female body. Discourses around *giovani* women's style were connected to the pursuit of women's emancipation in two different and contradictory ways. Firstly, the establishment of trousers as a main feature in women's fashion created anxieties about the 'masculinisation' of women, which was itself connected to the emergence of feminism. Secondly, the theme of women's emancipation was used to justify an oversexualization of women's bodies, which was then externalised, as we will see in the case of African-American artist Tina Turner.

From the end of the 1960s, *giovani* women's fashion increasingly incorporated trousers, and by the early 1970s they were the unisex garment *par excellence*, extensively

worn by men and women. The female adoption of trousers, however, was seen as a sign of the ‘masculinisation’ of women: an article in *Qui Giovani* predicted the fashion of 1972, by explaining that women would dress ‘come i ragazzi’ (Calò, 1972: 58). The article explains how ‘la moda del nuovo anno avrà come punti base le camicie a uomo, le cravatte, i gilet, le giacche di taglio maschile e, soprattutto, i pantaloni’ (ibid.). From 1971, women’s trousers started to be produced and advertised in magazines. A 1971 article that appeared in *Qui Giovani* presents trousers as an enhancement of women’s freedom:

Perché libertà? Per due ragioni. Innanzitutto con i pantaloni si è sempre a proprio agio, non bisogna stare attente a dove ci si siede e a come ci si siede. E poi libertà perché mai come adesso i pantaloni hanno lasciato tanto spazio alla fantasia. È finita l’epoca dei pantaloni di taglio maschile, in tinta unita, dove l’unico dubbio era se fare o no i risvolti. Adesso non c’è che l’imbarazzo della scelta [...]. (Calò, 1971b: 54)

This article, like others, connects the adoption of trousers with an increase of women’s ‘libertà’. It can be argued that the choice of words here is not arbitrary, as during the early 1970s the word *liberazione* was used to comment on feminist claims for female emancipation. In articles that described the adoption of trousers in women’s fashion, the word ‘libertà’ was most often used to describe the enhancement that this specific garment would bring to women. However, it must be said that a direct link between freedom and liberation was never stated explicitly in magazines: in the article above, for example, ‘freedom’ is connected to the freedom of movement enabled by the adoption of trousers, that make life more comfortable; but trousers are also seen as a garment that de-sexualises women’s bodies, as a woman wearing trousers does not have to be careful about how she

sits down. In the quotation above, freedom is also connected to fantasy: trousers are de-masculinized, by saying that the appropriation of this garment has brought about the production of trousers specifically for women.

The attempt to feminise a typically male garment such as trousers signalled a certain concern about the then on-going ‘masculinisation’ of women, not only in fashion but also in behaviour. Most of the articles about women’s emancipation that appeared in *giovani* magazines during the early 1970s denounced the increasing masculinisation of women’s behaviour, and presented it as an unavoidable and undesirable consequence of women’s emancipation. For example, in a 1971 article that appeared in the section ‘Psicologia e psicanalisi’ in *Ciao Duemilauno*, female emancipation is said to be equivocal because it runs on a ‘doppio binario’ (Psicologia e psicanalisi: l’emancipazione femminile, 1971: 54). On the one hand, political, economic, and legal equality needs to be pursued. On the other hand, from a ‘dimensione istintivo-emotiva’, women are asking for equality by trying to erase their femininity and to be as similar to men as they can be. According to the journalist, the increasing masculinisation of women is then an unavoidable consequence of claims for women’s emancipation. The acceptance of their femininity – and thus their sexual passivity, the article implies – is nonetheless essential for women in order to be completely sexually satisfied, so the journalist claims, because men would always look for ‘femmine femmine’:

questo è l’assurdo della situazione femminile; per ribellarsi allo stato di cose – che è comunque turpe e intollerabile – deve essere quel tanto indipendente, libera, autonoma, che finisce per farla diventare mascolina – [...] in altre parole: se la donna vuole combattere proprio per rivendicare la sua libertà, la sua femminilità,

deve utilizzare energie che sono quelle di cui dispone e che sono sempre in qualche modo antimaschili, antisessuali, antierotiche. (ibid.)

Here, the 'de-feminisation' of women caused by women's emancipation is criticised: according to the journalist, emancipation makes women become 'antimaschili', therefore hostile, and also 'antisessuali' and 'antierotiche', therefore less desirable to men. Moreover, in another article that appeared in *Ciao Duemilauno*, women are warned not to 'confondersi' (Humphreys, 1971: 31) between social and political emancipation, and romantic and sexual emancipation from men:

La donna libera, femminile, moderna, è quella capace di accettare, anzi di desiderare, l'aggressività dell'uomo, che le porterà vigore, attività, intraprendenza. Ma accade ormai troppo spesso che la donna fuorviata da secoli di schiavitù emozionale, non riesca a dare un tono giusto al rifiuto della passività e finisca col confondersi. (ibid.)

In this and the previous quotation, women are always described in relation to men. If in the previous article emancipation was said to render women less attractive to men, here it is supposed that women should accept men's 'aggressività', which is described as a naturalised masculine feature. At the same time, 'passività' is naturalised as a female attribute. In other words, in descriptions of women's emancipation *giovani* magazines perpetuated the naturalised power dynamics between women and men. Despite the fact that *giovani* magazines endorsed social and political emancipation for women in theory, an alleged difference between men and women was constantly underlined in magazines articles, and women were ultimately recommended to accept their subordinate position.

Although *giovani* magazines maintained a traditionalist position about women's emancipation, they also gave space to ideas emerging from Italian (and foreign) feminist

movements. It was between 1973 and 1974, when, according to Willson, Italian feminism started to be more of a coherent mass movement (Willson 2010: 149-150), that Italian feminism as a topic increasingly featured in *giovani* popular media. Some space was given in magazines to columns and interviews about feminism, where it was seen as a positive enhancement for women in Italian society. Moreover, in the television programme *Under 20* (Trapani, 1973), a performance by the Italian *cantautore* Francesco Guccini was accompanied by images of a feminist demonstration in the background (*Under 20*, episode 2, 08/12/1973). Most importantly, *Qui Giovani* published a weekly section called ‘Ragioni e Ragionamenti del Femminismo’, in which feminism started to be explained to the *giovane* audience. The weekly section was first published in February 1973, and it continued until the end of the magazine’s publication in 1974. It was an anonymous section, thus not obviously affiliated to any specific feminist movement: as a result, information about feminism was often lacking or vague. However, the column functioned to challenge some of the stereotypes associated with the image of the ‘feminist’ at the time and it signalled not only the impact of feminism in 1970s’ Italy, but also the acceptance of the political involvement of *i giovani* – and, for once, not just of young men. The first column was dedicated to the stereotypes that surrounded the image of the ‘feminist’: the article countered the idea, asserted by ‘la maggior parte della gente’, that ‘il femminismo sia soprattutto un’unione di donne un po’ matte che organizzano roghi di reggipetti’ (Ragioni e Ragionamenti del Femminismo, 1973a: 25); it explained how this myth was derived from one episode in Washington, where an actual burning of bras was held as a symbolic demonstration against the objectification of women’s

bodies.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the column went against the stereotype of ‘the feminist’ as a masculinised figure who hates men:

L’altro luogo comune è che le femministe vogliono scaraventare gli uomini giù dalla finestra. Le femministe sono donne assolutamente identiche alle altre: qualcuna ha il marito, qualcuna il fidanzato, qualcuna figli. Qualcuna non ha proprio nessuno ed è felice lo stesso, certa com’è che per la sua personalità non conta essere signore o signorine, ha importanza essere una donna liberata da tanti complessi. Il femminismo insegna ad essere persone libere. (ibid.)

This statement can be interpreted as aiming to ‘normalise’ feminists: against the stereotype of the angry, ‘masculine’ feminist, the article underlines how feminists can be mothers, wives, and girlfriends. This image also perpetuates the heterosexual construction of *i giovani* at the time: although seeking emancipation, Italian feminists are portrayed as replicating the social roles traditionally reserved for women. It seems in fact that, although gay rights movements were also emerging in Italy in the early 1970s, popular media representations tended to still negate the existence of female homosexuality, at least in Italy. According to another article that appeared in the column, ‘le femministe omosessuali sono rare da noi. Meno rare negli Stati Uniti [...]’ (Ragioni e Ragionamenti del Femminismo, 1973b: 28). The strategy of foreignising homosexuality in this quotation functions to distance female homosexuality from Italian feminist movements and from Italian society as a whole. This attitude can perhaps be explained through the difficulty in accepting subversive femininities in Italian society, given the predominant role of Italian

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<sup>65</sup> This is a good example of the possible inaccuracy of the column: the columnist gives a historical explanation to the myth of feminists as ‘bra-burners’ and thus criticises this label; however, some scholars claim that there is no historical evidence of actual bra burnings in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. For example, Bonnie J. Dow maintains that ‘Radical feminists never publicly burned bras at all. Bra burning was a myth invented by the media [...]’ (Dow, 1999: 152).

women as wives and mothers constructed by the Fascist regime and the Catholic Church. A similar tendency has been highlighted in representations of Patty Pravo, whose sexually alluring behaviour was recuperated by presenting it as a sign of inauthenticity. It must be noted, however, that this attitude towards female homosexuality was not only present in popular media, but mirrored the difficult acceptance of female homosexuality even in Italian emancipatory movements. Perry Willson underlines that the gay rights movement F.U.O.R.I. was very male-dominated, and that ‘lesbians active in women’s movements often found little acceptance among heterosexual feminists’ (Willson 2010: 154).

A tendency to dispel anxieties towards female homosexuality can also be found in descriptions of new popular dances like the ‘Swichi-Swichi’, described in an article that appeared in *Qui Giovani* in 1971:

A poco a poco l’uomo viene esautorato da tutte le sue mansioni. Dopo aver assistito alla lenta ma decisa affermazione del sesso debole nelle attività che una volta erano riservate solo a lui, ora si vede escluso anche dalle piste da ballo. L’ultimissimo ballo lanciato a Parigi, infatti, si danza esclusivamente fra donne! Il nome è “swichi-swichi”, ma qualcuno l’ha subito, malignamente ribattezzato “Saffo 2000”. Le regole consistono nel tenersi uniti nella parte inferiore del corpo, molleggiandosi contemporaneamente nella parte superiore. [...] “Ma a questo punto”, ha commentato uno spettatore, “cosa siamo qui a fare? Fra poco le donne ci considereranno degli ingombranti soprammobili!”. (“Swichi-Swichi”: ballo per sole donne, 1971: 38)

The fact that this dance should be performed exclusively by women is directly connected to homosexuality, as the reference to Sappho in the nickname demonstrates. What is more, the comments made by the person interviewed clearly show anxieties about a

change in the dynamics of power between men and women: to exclude a man from a dance is perceived as an attempt to make men become ‘ingombranti soprammobili’. The constant heteronormative discourse emerging in popular media descriptions of Italian feminism, including the negative judgement of women’s masculinisation, reveals concerns about both female homosexuality, and the changing balance of power between the sexes.

The column ‘Ragioni e Ragionamenti del Femminismo’ also discussed the relationship between the media and the female body, and in particular the circulation of sexualised images of women in popular media that contributed to female oppression. For example, in 1973 the column explains that feminists criticise how

una delle funzioni della donna in questa società è di essere un attraente oggetto sessuale, quindi il vestiario e il trucco sono strumenti del mestiere. In questo caso – dicono le femministe – il vero consumatore è l’uomo che usa la donna come oggetto sessuale, perciò la moda e i cosmetici sono diretti più agli uomini che alle donne in quanto incoraggiano gli uomini ad aspettarsi che le donne sfoggino tutti gli ultimi dettami dello schiavismo sessuale. La moda dunque sfrutta la subordinazione della donna piuttosto che provocarla, e la donna si lascia sfruttare per sopravvivere. (Femminismo, 1973: 28)

According to the columnist, feminists think that the consumption of beauty and fashion goods is a means through which women are sexualised and thus objectified for the male gaze. Fashion in itself is not the cause of female subordination, but it is the vehicle through which women are objectified and enslaved to being a ‘oggetto sessuale’.

Although feminists’ claims on the objectification of women’s bodies were reported in *giovani* magazines, during the early 1970s images in magazines, films, and television



programmes continued to sexualise women's bodies.<sup>66</sup> The previous chapter started to show how, as part of the general liberalisation of the late 1960s, the naked female body became increasingly present in magazines, and was used in advertising products both for women and men. From the early 1970s, the sexualisation of women's bodies was also encouraged through the promotion of fashion trends such as hot pants. Fred Davis explains how, in the 1970s, blue jeans underwent a process of eroticisation, which 'contravened the unisex, de-gendered associations that the garment initially held for many' (Davis 1994: 75). In the case of women, this meant the creation of jeans specifically for women, but also the use of denim to create garments such as miniskirts and hot pants, that held a more sexy shape and length. Hot pants in particular showed a greater portion of women's legs, and they also emphasised women's curves. Accounts of the impact of this garment in Italian popular media describe it as a natural disaster, implicitly referring to the sexually inviting potential of the shorts. For example, a 1971 article which appeared in *Ciao Duemilauno* described the arrival of a group of English young women in hot pants on the Isle of Jersey: the British island is said to be 'scombussolata' by the 'devastanti' hotpants, which arrived like a 'terremoto' and created 'guai' (Gallo, 1971c: 17). The reference to hot pants as a natural calamity underlines their potential to shock people, especially for their extreme shortness – and thus for their sex appeal. It is interesting to point out that hot pants here are sexualised when a group of foreign women are wearing them. Again, active sexuality is detached from Italian women – even spatially, by confining it to a British island – even when it comes to wearing potentially sexy garments.

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<sup>66</sup> For further details on the eroticisation of female beauty standards in cinema in the 1970s-1990s, see Gundle, 2007: 191-222.

However, the confluence of sexualised images of women and of feminist claims in popular media in the early 1970s contributed to a ‘cultural appropriation and distortion of [feminists’] ideas on female sexuality’ (Gundle, 2007: 194) in popular media. For example, a 1971 advertisement of lingerie appearing in *Ciao Duemilauno* showed a close-up of a woman’s torso in lace lingerie, with the slogan ‘il potere della donna è nell’abbigliamento intimo’ (GranLine, 1971: 43). This advertisement clearly plays with the idea of feminine power, and states that the power of women over men stands in their sexiness and sexual availability. As Nina Rothenberg has pointed out, feminists’ claims for the liberation of the female body often became confused with the consumerist and hedonist appropriation of the eroticised female body, in this way spreading the image of women as sexual objects: ‘feminism was translated into a male version of women’s liberation that was very often interpreted in terms of sexualisation of film, television and the press. The female body became a symbol of sexual liberation and a sellable expression of modernisation and secularisation’ (Rothenberg, 2005 in Gundle, 2007: 194).

Descriptions of the African American singer Tina Turner show how discourses around emancipation, sexuality, and ethnicity were connected in popular media in a way that promoted the eroticisation of the female body:

A buona ragione Tina è stata descritta in America come l’esempio figurativo della liberazione della donna. All’Odeon di Londra ho visto un’immensa platea di giovani e vecchi, bianchi e negri che pendevano dalle sue labbra, dalle sue suggestive mosse sensuali e dal suo sfrenato ballo. È incredibile cosa possa fare accarezzando un microfono e quanti pensieri... cattivi faccia passare tra le menti degli spettatori pur rimanendo sempre ad un alto livello artistico. (Gallo, 1971b: 60)

Tina Turner is said here to be ‘l’esempio figurativo della liberazione della donna’, in this way connecting Turner’s star persona to the *liberazione* advocated by feminist movements. However, the only emancipation she represents in the article is her sexual freedom. The image of Tina Turner, in most of the articles dedicated to her in *giovani* magazines, is extremely objectified, and her sex appeal is the feature that defines her: the attention of the magazines is focused on her body (her lips and her moves, in the quotation above) and gestures (for example, the stroking of the microphone and her uncontrolled dance), more than on her singing. Moreover, emphasis is given to Turner’s power over the audience, which ‘[pende] dalle sue labbra’.

Tina Turner is a significant example of the process through which, during the early 1970s and especially with the disco music trend, sexiness was often connected to African American female singers. Chapter three has shown how, during the *hippy* period, discourses around ethnicity influenced the construction of *i giovani*, for the *hippy* trend was largely appropriating orientalist elements of fashion. However, the black ‘other’ did not tend to be represented as actively sexy, but rather as the object of subjugation by white men.<sup>67</sup> In the 1970s, not only was the eroticisation of women connected to female liberation, but it was also associated with ethnicity, and in particular with African American female stars. bell hooks analyses how the persona of Tina Turner as a representative of black female sexuality was constructed both by the media and by the singer herself: she explains how ‘the image that has been cultivated and commodified in popular culture is of [Tina Turner] as “hot” and highly sexed – the sexually ready and free black woman’ (bell hooks, 1992: 66). This construction was based on very explicit images that showed a ‘wild animalistic [sexual] lust’ (bell hooks, 1992: 67): the singer was

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<sup>67</sup> At the end of the 1960s, active sexuality was instead represented by figures such as Patty Pravo, the outrageous but ultimately ‘inauthentic’ Italian *femme fatale*.

notably named *leonessa*, or *pantera nera*, in this way adhering to the racist topos of the animalisation of black bodies.<sup>68</sup> The element of lust also emerges in the way she is described:

Carezza il microfono e inizia il suo lento, minuzioso lavoro di suggestione, di progressiva, presa di possesso del pubblico: creare il desiderio, risvegliare i sensi, offrirsi e non darsi, in una suprema e raffinata lusinga erotica. Tutto lo spettacolo è costruito intorno al desiderio che Tina deve far nascere, intorno a questa provocazione della donna nera, e allora non c'è da meravigliarsi se, diversamente dagli altri consueti pubblici di rhythm & blues, quello di Ike e Tina è essenzialmente bianco: l'erotismo perverso nasce dall'attrazione per la "sconosciuta", da ciò che è diverso, qui la donna nera nella sua rappresentazione erotica, con in più la cattiva coscienza dei "voyeurs", che per giustificarsi, parleranno di musica... (Ike e Tina Turner: Il ritmo del sesso, 1974: 12)

The description of Turner's movements in this article is borderline pornographic. The reference to the stroking of the microphone – that appears in both the quotations – recalls the act of a woman stroking a man's penis; the use of terms such as 'possesso', 'sensi', 'lusinga erotica', 'desiderio' create not only an allure of eroticism around the figure of Tina Turner, but also the image of a perverted sexuality, which in the quotation is attributed to the white men who attend her concerts. However, according to the quotation, Turner is not only the object of a passive gaze, but also the agent of her own eroticism. The representation of Tina Turner here is very similar to that of the *hippy femme fatale* outlined in the previous chapter, for Turner is also presented as bearing a dangerous

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<sup>68</sup> And also to the Italian tradition of naming female singers as felines, as is the case with Mina, *la tigre di Cremona*, and Milva, *la pantera di Goro*.

allure. Here, however, the whole representation is much more sexually explicit, possibly demonstrating a greater openness to discussing sex and sexual relationships in popular media in the early 1970s.

Turner's 'perverse allure' in the article above is also emphasised by her ethnic difference: Turner's erotic persona is aimed to appeal to an audience of white people, who potentially find her 'difference' more intriguing. According to bell hooks, Tina Turner's star persona was mainly constructed by her musical and romantic partner Ike, who was also reported to have repeatedly abused her during their relationship. The most significant aspect of bell hooks' analysis, however, lies in the fact that this pornographic image was acceptable within American society in the 1970s:

Ike's pornographic fantasy of the black female as wild sexual savage emerged from the impact of a white patriarchal controlled media shaping his perceptions of reality. His decision to create the wild black woman was perfectly compatible with prevailing representations of black female sexuality in a white supremacist society.  
(bell hooks, 1992: 67)

The reproduction of racial tropes such as the animalised and sexualised black woman in *giovani* magazines shows the permanence of discriminatory discourses, not only in American society, but also in Italy. The over-sexualisation of the black 'other', then, confirms the hidden racism in Italian society that was also discussed in the previous section. The acceptance of sexual liberation, in the form of the increasing sexualisation of women's bodies, was still foreignised, yet not completely condemned by *giovani* magazines. Italian *giovani* women were still largely de-sexualised, while sexuality in foreign women was often represented as pornographic and exaggerated.

African American singers were not the only category that was represented as overly sexualised. The description of Tina Turner's performances in the previous section and Amanda Lear's performances in the following quotation are very similar:

Non cantava ancora, ma già le dispute sulla sua sessualità appassionavano la stampa scandalistica: accanto a Bowie, l'uomo dal sesso ambiguo, c'era finalmente anche la donna dal sesso ambiguo [...]. Sono andato a godermi Amanda Lear dal vivo, qualche tempo fa, sotto un tendone da circo. Folla urlante: "nuda, nuda..."; ma ci vuol altro per impressionare la nostra eroina che vestita di quel poco che l'odierna congiuntura permette, scende tra il pubblico a dialogare. [...] Dopo aver dato fastidio a tutti gli uomini seduti in platea, Amanda torna sui suoi passi mostrando a tutti che dal fondoschiena, udite udite, le spunta una lunga coda tigrisca. (Ferranti, 1977: 43)

Amanda Lear, a French singer and model who built her star persona on her relationship with singer David Bowie, and on her sexual indeterminateness – her deep voice and her androgynous body instilled doubts not only about her sexuality, but also her sex – is described using some of the strategies used in Tina Turner's descriptions. Firstly, there is here a reference to animalisation: she is singing under a circus tent, and her costume has a tiger tail. Secondly, she is said to perform on stage an active borderline pornographic sexuality: she is barely dressed, she teases every male member of the audience, and is not frightened by the reaction of the sexually aroused audience shouting at her. The similar description of Tina Turner's and Amanda Lear's sexually inviting performances shows how, despite the increase in images of naked women's bodies, a strategy to limit the impact of sexuality for the Italian *giovane* audience was to transfer representations of an excessive sexuality on identities discriminated against, such as ethnic minorities in Tina

Turner's case, or people showing a gender/sex/sexuality ambiguity, such as Amanda Lear in the quotation above and, some years earlier, glam artists. The next sub-section discusses the presentation of glam musicians in Italian *giovani* magazines and the link between glam, excessive sexuality and homosexuality that was expressed in most of the accounts of glam performers. It also connects discourses around glam with the 'ritorno al classico' in men's *giovane* fashion, to show how the change in trend was also influenced by increasing concerns about homosexuality.

#### ***4.3.2 Glam and the perpetuation of Italian virility***

From 1973-74, discourses around gender bending, and its naturalised connection with homosexuality, coalesced around the increasing global popularity of British and American glam artists such as Elton John, Alice Cooper, Brian Eno, and David Bowie. In his study of British and American glam music, Philip Auslander highlights the importance of the body and the behaviour of glam performers over the music they were performing: 'glam rock was defined primarily by the performers' appearances and personae, the poses they struck rather than the music they played' (Auslander, 2006: 39-40). Glam artists played with costumes and make-up in order to create gender ambiguity, and an artificial identity that was based on an exaggerated sexuality. The previous chapter highlighted how male *hippies* adopted a style that was considered effeminate; however, Auslander delineates a difference between the meaning of effeminacy in representations of the *hippies* and of glam performers:

The gentle, introspective, passive male image portrayed in the hippie subculture of the 1960s was a feminized male image posited in specific opposition to a brand of aggressive masculinity thought to have underwritten the war in Vietnam.

However, [...] this soft masculinity was presumed to be heterosexual in nature; by contrast, glam masculinity [...] alluded to the possibility of homosexuality and bisexuality. [...] The gender-bending of glam challenged both the dominant culture's standards of masculinity and the androgyny favoured by the hippie counterculture, for glam did not posit androgyny as a "natural" state. To the contrary: glam rockers specifically foregrounded the constructedness of their effeminate or androgynous performing personae. (Auslander, 2006: 60-61)

In other words, according to Auslander, the effeminateness of the hippies did not function to destabilise the naturalisation of heterosexual desire. Similarly, the previous chapter has shown how in Italian *giovani* magazines letters written by young male *hippies* tended to constantly reaffirm these young men's heterosexuality. By contrast, glam artists represented an explicit and often undetermined sexuality: their moves and gestures frequently referred to sexual acts, and they remained vague when they were asked to define their sexuality.

This ambiguity in the definition of gender and sexuality generated much criticism around glam artists: according to Auslander, 'glam artists and their supporters, apparently experiencing a measure of homosexual panic, were at pains to insist that any tendency to dress lavishly and use makeup should not be taken as signs of sexual abnormality' (Auslander, 2006: 48-49). Discourses around glam performers were based on two discriminating stereotypes: on the one hand, the naturalisation of the connection between effeminacy and homosexuality; on the other, the identification of homosexuality as a form of excessive sexuality. Italian *giovani* magazines' accounts of glam artists, in fact, often featured homophobic comments and allusions to a deviant sexuality. Alice Cooper, in an interview titled 'Alice nel paese delle porcherie', explained glam singers' gender



indeterminacy by saying: “non vogliamo più essere considerati maschi o femmine, ma esseri umani, abitanti del pianeta terra” (Silvestro, 1972: 20). The choice of the term ‘porcheria’ in the title of the article connects glam with sexual deviance, and indirectly with homosexuality, as the singer declares that love does not make distinctions of sex (ibid.). David Bowie, in his Ziggy Stardust persona, is defined in an article as ‘il clown senza sesso’ (In. Ma., 1973: 45). The journalist says that Bowie’s show is not sexually explicit, and the singer is not said to be a sex-symbol: however, the alleged asexuality of the singer is also presented here as a form of deviation. The choice of using costumes and make-up is also commented upon in *giovani* magazines: Brian Eno, in an interview, explained how he has both ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ aspects, and he accepts both his personalities, and this is the reason why he wears make-up (Gentile, 1974: 15). Conversely, Elton John, called ‘il divo’ (and the choice of words is interesting, as usually the category of the ‘diva’ is feminine; the word becomes masculine in the case of John, but still recalls a ‘feminine’ concept), is said not to give to his style any ambiguous meaning (the singer had not declared his homosexuality at the time of the article): ‘tutti i suoi costumi ed i suoi maquillage sono per lui uno scherzo, nessun significato recondito’ (Caffarelli, 1973: 12).

Despite the differences in the construction of these glam stars, it is possible to note how the theme of gender indeterminacy became central in their construction. Conversely, those few Italian singers who replicated a glam style, such as singer and dancer Renato Zero, were clearly described as heterosexual, as in this article in *Ciao Duemilauno*:

Alto, magro come un’acciuga, passo da mannequin, [Zero] si dichiara pronto a colpire e ad accusare tutto e tutti: partitismo, militarismo, alienazione, ipocrisia, isterismo...; afferma di non essere omosessuale (tra l’altro ha una splendida

ragazza) e di amare il travestimento per esigenza intima, il piacere di truccarsi, di indossare abiti scintillanti, di creare un'alternativa ad un mondo in crisi. (M.L.G., 1974: 74)

Zero's reasons for cross-dressing as described in the article signal a subversive masculinity: the 'intimate' need for drag, the pleasures of make-up and shiny dresses indicate the singer's appropriation of stereotypically feminine practices. However, Zero's use of drag and make-up is explicitly disconnected from a possible homosexuality as the article clearly states that he not only is not a homosexual, but he also has a 'splendida' girlfriend. Similar to what happened with Italian feminists, the possibility of homosexuality is negated in the case of Italian stars. In the case of glam, this process was particularly easy as this was mainly a foreign musical genre and few Italian artists embraced it, at least in the early 1970s.

Although foreign and foreignised, glam had an impact on Italian young people as it opened up a discussion about sexualities and gender identities, given the complete absence of accounts of Italian gay rights movements in *giovani* magazines. Auslander claims, referring to the United Kingdom and the United States, that 'there is ample testimony that glam rock was important [...] to young people who were uncertain of their own sexual identities and in search of role models [...]. Glam provided such models by placing queer images in the public sphere' (Auslander, 2006: 228). In Italy, foreign popular music became a space of freedom for those *giovani* who were not aware of the emancipatory movements forming in major Northern cities. From the end of the 1960s, *giovani* magazines published letters written by young homosexuals. The letters, however, had the same structure, being written by a young person who was extremely ashamed of his/her homosexual experiences, and wanted to be 'cured' from what he/she felt was an

illness. The answers given by psychologists to young people declaring their homosexuality in magazines were also similar: homosexuality was presented as a limited phase of life that could be easily overcome, especially with the help of adults.<sup>69</sup> From the second half of the 1970s, however, while the answers of magazine editors remained more or less the same, young people started to use letters to indicate their desire for freedom to express their sexuality and to denounce the discrimination they were experiencing in Italian society. In a letter to *Ciao Duemilauno*, a homosexual young woman signed 'Lady Stardust' declares her love for a woman, and criticises the social construction of homosexuality as 'fuorilegge' (*Psicologia e Psicanalisi*, 1974: 51). Another letter from a young man describes his coming out as a 'scoperta dolcissima, direi poetica', and he claims to be happy to be 'una cosa intermedia, "strano essere del futuro"' (*Psicologia e Psicanalisi: una cosa Intermedia*, 1975: 30), perhaps referring to David Bowie's alien persona in the 1970s, Ziggy Stardust, but surely using a typically glam theme, that of the man from the future. In both cases, references to glam suggest that it was a significant element of identification for young non-heterosexuals, especially in a society where media references to both male and female homosexuality were rather absent. The glam trend was therefore presented in magazines as the representation of an outrageous sexuality, but it was also an inspiration for young people, and especially those who were induced to think that their sexual preference was 'against nature'. Although popular media tended to negate the existence of homosexuality in Italian society, readers' letters suggest that popular culture opened some spaces for *i giovani* to start to express their own sexuality.

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<sup>69</sup> See for example *Al direttore: credo di essere omosessuale*, 1970: 3 and *Psicologia e psicanalisi: la paura di essere anormale*, 1971: 59.

In contrast to the foreign glam models, new examples of masculinity also started to be presented in *giovani* media, through *giovani* Southern stars such as Adriano Pappalardo, a singer from Apulia. *Ciao Duemilauno* introduced him as follows in 1974:

E' strano, ma proprio in un momento come questo, in cui il rock ha raggiunto le punte massime della sua decadenza, in cui le "primedonne" alla Bowie fanno a gara nello sfoggiare abiti, trucchi, e movenze, il più ambigui possibile, è proprio in questo momento che "un uomo venuto dal sud", un giovane strappato alla sua campagna, alla natura, inserito, grazie alla propria volontà, ma soprattutto alla propria rabbia, a Milano, affermatosi "tra le belve" restando però miracolosamente "incontaminato" da tutto ciò che di evoluto, involuto, progressive, decadente o d'avanguardia avvenisse intorno a lui, fa un "suo" tipo di rock dove non solo mantiene intatta la propria rabbia e la propria "virilità", ma ne fa il motivo stesso della sua esistenza artistica. [...] Sì, Adriano Pappalardo è un genuino, un autentico istintivo, un "bucolico" che si trova bene nella sua scorza di terra cotta al sole. (Marengo, 1974: 81)

The direct contrast here between the Italian singer and glam artists functions to implicitly criticise the glam trend and celebrate the genuineness of the Italian singer, as well as his reassuring masculinity. Pappalardo is presented as a 'uomo venuto dal sud': his Southern origins are a trademark of his 'virilità'. The features that make him 'virile' recall a stereotypical representation of the *meridionale*: he is genuine, authentic, instinctive, full of rage and opposed to the 'decadenti' and 'primedonne' (again, the choice of describing glam artists as 'donne' is not casual) glam artists, whose sexuality is 'ambiguous'. Discourses around Pappalardo's Southern-ness become here a way to reaffirm the 'virility' of Italian *giovani*, in opposition to the effeminacy of foreign glam stars.

The dissemination of the concept of ‘virility’ in Italian *giovani* masculinities was not only found in the stereotypical representation of ‘the man from the South’, but was also present in discourses around the ‘ritorno al classico’ in men’s *giovane* fashion. During the early 1970s, those aspects previously appropriated from women’s fashion – such as floral prints, long hair, tunics – were abandoned, in order to promote a trend that left bright colours and oriental(ist) textiles behind in favour of more ‘traditional’ outfits:

Sembra che per gli uomini, dopo due anni di dimenticatoio, il vestito tradizionale con tanto di panciotto stia tornando di moda. [...] Le vendite di vestiti scuri a tre pezzi, pantaloni giacca e panciotto, sono aumentate del 25%. Le camicie ricamate e con ricerche floreali hanno visto un abbassamento di vendite per dar posto a magliette e maglioni a fasce colorate orizzontali [...]. (Gallo, 1971a: 53)

Here we see how floral shirts were substituted by suits and casual outfits. By using the term ‘tradizionale’, however, magazines were not describing outfits that were similar in shape and cut to men’s suits before the 1960s: for example, trousers, and jackets were much tighter than traditional suits. A column on male fashion in *Qui Giovani* explains that ‘la tendenza al classic’ is a ‘ritorno a forme e colori più “contenuti” e meno sfavillanti’ (Picollo, 1972a: 58): the return to a more ‘classic’ fashion, then, functioned to eliminate the extravagance and colourfulness of previous *giovani* styles, and to emphasize the increasing similarity of the *giovane* and the *adulto* style. Firstly, as highlighted in section 4.1, long hairstyles were abandoned: in 1971, *Qui Giovani* explained that

Sono ormai sei anni che gli uomini vogliono essere alla moda portando i capelli lunghi, con pettinature un po’ pazze, diciamo da artisti e sarebbe ormai giunto il momento di rinnovare questo “cliché”. In effetti in questi ultimi tempi abbiamo assistito a una specie di graduale uniformità nelle pettinature maschili: i capelli

molto lunghi sono in netta decadenza a vantaggio di pettinature più ordinate, di media lunghezza, dal tono romantico. Una via di mezzo che accontenta un po' tutti, sia i più conservatori, sia coloro che vogliono essere alla moda evitando però di cadere nell'eccessivo e nel ridicolo. (Calò, 1971a: 48)

Short hairstyles are said to be more 'ordinati' and more suitable for people who do not want to look excessive or ridiculous. This statement both discredits the previous *giovani* who adopted a long hairstyle, and expresses the idea of a modern *giovane* who does not need to be completely different from *gli adulti*, not only in hairstyle, but also in behaviours. The new style, in fact, is said to be 'misurato, disinvolto, ordinato (soprattutto) e adatto agli uomini di qualsiasi età' (Capelli lunghi basta!, 1971: 47). The new *giovane* men's style, then, reaffirmed the 'reconciliation' between *i giovani* and *gli adulti* described in the first section, and reduced the distance between these two previously opposing identities.

Despite being similar to *gli adulti*'s style, however, the new men's *giovane* style was said to be modern: 'la nuova linea maschile è stata creata ad immagine dell'uomo d'azione nel nostro tempo: un'immagine di equilibrio e di progresso' (ibid.). Short hairstyles, then, were presented as both classic and modern: by linking short hair with progress, the modern nature of *i giovani* was reasserted in *giovani* magazines. Conversely, references to tradition seem to have reaffirmed a stereotyped ideal of masculinity, which brought to mind an emphasised masculinity based on aggressiveness, and opposed to effemination. For example, *Qui Giovani* explains that the *giovane* men's style has declared 'guerra ai colori violenti, al folclore, alle stravaganze' (Piccolo, 1972b: 50): it is a war, a violent act against the former effemination of male style. Elements of style that could evoke effemination were 'virilised' in magazines:

Tacco alto: si ma quanto? [...] A chi contesta il tacco maschile, i creatori di questa moda rispondono che i gauchos e i cow-boys hanno sempre portato stivali con tacchi e nessuno ha mai messo in dubbio la loro virilità. Oltretutto, il tacco regala qualche centimetro in altezza, e rende l'andatura più forte e sicura. (Piccolo, 1972d: 58)

Similar to the discussion on the 'borsetto' in the previous chapter, the use of heels, that could recall women's fashion, is here connected to the heels worn by cowboys and gauchos, two groups of men whose virility, according to the article, has never been doubted. References to cowboys and gauchos also connect the *giovane* style to the United States, in this way reinforcing its 'American' connotations. Most importantly, then, the refusal of earlier *giovani* styles was linked in magazine articles to their alleged effemination: an article in *Qui Giovani* claimed 'Basta ai capelli lunghi, basta all'aspetto effeminato, basta agli abiti hippy! è ora di tornare [un uomo] piacevole da vedersi, senza nessuna frivolezza!' (Piccolo, 1972c: 65).

The 'virilisation' of *giovani* men was also reinforced by the permanence of images of the naked female body and sexual allusions in advertisements for men, often suggesting male domination. An advertisement for the deodorant Deodal portrayed a naked couple hugging, and the slogan reads 'Vidal prepara ai grandi incontri' (Vidal, 1971: 24-25). As with other Vidal advertisements of the late 1960s, the sexual encounter recalls a boxing match, thus bringing violence into sexual acts. An advertisement for men's briefs Hom, and specifically a new type of briefs that were invisible under tight trousers, shows a close-up of a man's torso and thighs wearing briefs; next to the pelvis, a woman is kneeling down, implicitly suggesting oral sex (HOM, 1971: 5). The 'ritorno al classico' in the *giovane* style, then, was recreating those boundaries between men's and women's

fashion that had become blurred during the 1960s. This process can be interpreted as a form of reaction to the ‘masculinisation’ of the female style described earlier, and therefore to the emergence of feminist movements.

In his study of Italian masculinities, Sandro Bellassai identifies the 1970s as the period of definitive crisis regarding the traditional conceptualisation of Italian virility: according to Bellassai, the emergence of feminist movements questioned and ultimately modified Italian masculinities to the extent that ‘gli uomini italiani non si identificavano più in una visione del mondo rigidamente patriarcale e tradizionalista’ (Bellassai 2011: 128). However, the analysis of the popular media construction of *giovani* masculinities shows that, more than a transformation, the perpetuation of Italian ‘virility’ in the early 1970s represented a reaction to the emergence of feminist movements, and the subsequent alleged ‘masculinisation’ of women. The ‘masculinisation’ of female style, and the ‘effeminisation’ of male fashion, created anxieties about both male and female homosexuality in Italian society. Subversive gender and sexual identities, then, were always presented cautiously, and in these representations heterosexuality tended to be reaffirmed. Otherwise, gender ambiguity was connected to exaggerated and therefore dangerous sexuality, in order to prevent the identification of the young audience with these troubling identities. More than recuperating traditional features of men’s fashion, the ‘ritorno al classico’ in *giovani* men’s fashion was used to reaffirm an ideal of ‘virility’ that drew on stereotypes of Italian (Southern) masculinities, such as violence, rage and domination and functioned to dispel anxieties towards homosexuality.

This chapter has explored the role of popular media in incorporating emancipatory claims through representations of the fragmentation of the community of *i giovani* and the



multiplication of *giovani* identities. Despite the permanence of certain homogenising features – the use of a rather standardised style, for example – it was during the first half of the 1970s that the *giovane* identity became more complex, and revealed internal patterns of discrimination as well as produced new identity features. Firstly, the emergence of political and class issues revealed the impact of the student and worker movements of the late 1960s on discourses about *i giovani* circulating in popular media. In the early 1970s, young people started to be increasingly represented as involved in politics; however, the construction of political *giovani* tended to promote moderation, in contrast to the radicalisation of political stances in the Italian society of the *Anni di Piombo*. The reconciliation between *i giovani* and *gli adulti* represented in popular media functioned to decrease not only the generational struggle that was central to the media construction of *i giovani* in the 1960s, but also social tension, by implicitly reaffirming the authority of *gli adulti* over *i giovani*. Secondly, the (mis-)use of terminology clearly borrowed from the American civil rights movements in describing *i giovani*'s own feelings of discrimination signals the global influence of emancipatory movements. However, the inclusion of previously discriminated identities such as Southern *giovani* often tended to reaffirm dominant stereotypes about the South of Italy. Thirdly, Italian feminism influenced the construction of *giovani* femininities and their style; representations of young women's 'liberation' in popular media nonetheless often functioned to justify a deliberate use of sexualised images of women. The connection between women's emancipation and the objectification of the female body was also a strategy to defuse the threat of feminism, and of a change in the power balance between men and women. Given the absence of popular media accounts of Italian gay rights movements, foreign popular culture – and in this case British and American glam – acted

as a subversive and emancipatory example for Italian young people. The construction of *giovani* identities in the early 1970s ultimately shows how the relationship between the popular media appropriation of emancipatory claims, emancipatory movements themselves, and popular culture is far from monolithic and unidirectional, but it often takes unexpected directions.

Other than establishing the features of the *giovane* identity during the early 1970s, this chapter has investigated the moment of transition between the 1960s, when *i giovani* in popular media tended to be represented as rather homogenous, and the second half of the 1970s, when the construction of the *giovane* identity started to be increasingly fragmented and diverse. During the second half of the 1970s, the global economic crisis caused a high rate of youth unemployment (Ginsborg 1990: 381), which also influenced popular media representations of *i giovani*. Italian popular media started to promote disco music and its culture as a way to encourage the escapism of young people from the tense social and economic situation of the country. Television programmes such as *Discoring* (Moretti, 1977-89) hosted by Gianni Boncompagni, *Discoteca Teen* (Pagano, 1977), and *Piccolo Slam* (Testa, 1977-1978) hosted by Stefania Rotolo and Sammy Barbot, show how, from 1975, the image of *i giovani* given by television tried to limit young people's social and political activism: *i giovani* in these programmes danced in discotheque-like studios and never spoke. The partial withdrawal from public spaces coincided with the appropriation from Italian *giovani* of spaces that were in themselves limited, namely discotheques, which were said by magazines to have become 'i nuovi Beatles' (Caffarelli, 1975: 32), and a space of disengagement where young people could 'ballare e dimenticare i loro problemi' (ibid.). At the same time, however, the political engagement of young people was promoted through a proliferation of popular media self-produced by young

people. For example, from 1975 some magazines such as *Re Nudo* and *Erba Voglio* developed a national readership (Lumley, 1990: 297-298). Although similar magazines existed even before 1975 – for example, the magazine *Mondo Beat* discussed in Chapter two – they had never achieved a large circulation. For young working-class people, these magazines were a substitute for the *giovani* media analysed in this thesis, as they offered the same aggregating function: they promoted their own festivals (such as the Parco Lambro festival in Milan in 1976) and initiatives such as squatting and self-reduction of pop concerts tickets. In some cases, such as in the *Re Nudo* article ‘Il Nudo e le Rose’ (1974: 12-13) published in 1974, the contents of these magazines actively criticised *giovani* magazines such as *Ciao Duemilauno* and *Qui Giovani* for their relatively moderate political positions, and their traditionalist stances on young people’s sexuality. Another interesting phenomenon taking place in the late 1970s was that of the free radio stations, in which many self-produced small radio stations started to be set up by Italian young people after the 1975 Constitutional Court’s ruling that declared the state monopoly of the airwaves illegal (Lumley, 1990: 304). The proliferation of *giovani* self-produced media contributed to the fragmentation of *i giovani*, as in these magazines and radio programmes young people had the possibility to criticise representations of young people made by adults in *giovani* media, and could therefore reinvent their own *giovane* identity. From 1975, then, the homogenised *giovane* identity that for ten years had undergone several transformations left room for the emergence of multiple *giovani* identities.

## Conclusion

*Noi, ragazzi di oggi, noi / Con tutto il mondo davanti a noi*

*Viviamo nel sogno di poi*

*Noi, siamo diversi ma tutti uguali / Abbiam bisogno di un paio d'ali*

*E stimoli eccezionali [...] Devi venire con noi.*

‘Noi, Ragazzi di Oggi’ (Minellono & Cutugno, 1985)

In response to the gaps outlined in Chapter one concerning the history of Italian youth, this thesis has investigated the role of popular media in the social construction of *i giovani* as a separate group in Italian society. In other words, it has explored how age became a fundamental identity feature in popular media representations from 1965 to 1975 in Italy. As Chapter one has shown, this process did not start in 1965; however, the creation of specific popular media products aimed at an audience of young people from 1965 onwards was fundamental to the creation of the ‘imagined community’ of Italian youth, and to overcoming the mere consideration of youth as a ‘problem’ to solve in Italian society. It is significant to stress again how age here is not intended as a biological datum, but rather as a performatively constructed identity feature: in popular media representations, being *giovane* was identified with specific practices, often connected to free-time activities and the consumption of specific goods. This is why the approach used in this thesis has been to analyse representations of young people’s style and bodily practices: my aim was to show how, behind discourses promoting consumption goods such as fashion and music, popular media contributed to ideologically construct *i giovani*.

Discourses around the *giovane* style and bodily practices reveal larger issues concerning Italian youth in this period, and they show the relevance of popular media in being a site of struggle in the definition of young people's identity.

The chronological analysis developed in Chapters two, three, and four has demonstrated that the construction of *i giovani* in Italian media was clearly influenced not only by normative and subversive discourses circulating in Italian society, but also by the global history of youth cultures during the 1960s and the 1970s. The constant media representation of young people in a group, as well as the definition of specific practices that could identify *i giovani* and distinguish them from other social categories, such as *gli adulti* in the period 1965-67 and the *beats* in 1967-70, contributed to the homogenisation of representations of Italian youth. The fragmentation of *i giovani* as represented in the first half of 1970s does not contradict this process: the inclusion of 'other' identities in the community of *i giovani* is not a signal of dissolution, but rather it confirms the solidity of the media construction of *i giovani* as an established group, which no longer needed strong boundaries in order to differentiate itself from 'others'. From the second half of 1975, popular media products for young people proliferated, and their contents diversified in order to appeal to young people of different political orientation, class belonging, nationality, and gender. This is the primary reason why this research terminates in the mid-1970s: from this moment onwards, to talk about a unitary *giovane* identity becomes more complicated, as it would involve the consideration of multiple popular media forms and multiple *giovani* identities.

However, the tendency of popular media products to homogenise *i giovani* under specific labels has not ceased during the last fifty years. The song 'Noi, Ragazzi di Oggi'

(1985)<sup>70</sup> shows how mainstream media discourse has still tended to construct *i giovani* through practices recalling leisure activities. Its lyrics, reported above, are very similar to those of the song ‘Noi Siamo i Giovani’ (1964) presented in the preface, despite the fact that ‘Noi, ragazzi di oggi’ was written more than twenty years later. In the song, the (foreign) singer still invites a person of young age to follow him, in order to join the community of *i ragazzi di oggi*. This community is described as made by people ‘diversi ma tutti uguali’: although a difference within members of the community of *i giovani* is now acknowledged, a certain homogenisation of *i giovani* is nevertheless underlined here, in the references to the similarity of young people’s lifestyles and desires. The methodology used in this work could therefore be applied to the exploration of the role of popular media in constructing discourses around youth in more recent times, and to the evaluation of the normative aim and subversive potential of the label ‘*i giovani*’.

This thesis has had three over-arching research themes: the performative construction of *i giovani* through style, bodily practices and the creation of a *giovane* star system, the transnational inspiration of the Italian *giovane* identity, and the media construction of *giovani* masculinities and femininities. The development of these three themes has not only described the changes in youth fashions and practices, but it has also highlighted three historical and cultural processes that influenced the construction of youth in Italy in the 1960s and the 1970s. Firstly, the analysis developed in this thesis has demonstrated the significance of the *giovane* style in being both a commercial element and a vehicle used by young people to express social and political meanings. The analysis of the media construction of Italian *giovani* through style has contributed to problematise the distinction between ‘youth-as-fun’ and ‘youth-as-danger’ that often appears in

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<sup>70</sup> The song was sung by the young Mexican singer Luis Miguel at Sanremo Festival in 1985 and ranked second.

accounts of post-war youth cultures. In particular, Chapter one discussed how previous analyses of Italian youth have tended to distinguish between the ‘*generazione leggera*’ of the period 1965-67 and the ‘*generazione politica*’ of the *Sessantotto* and the *Anni di Piombo*. Representations of young people’s style in popular media, however, show that this differentiation is not clear-cut, as the ‘commercial’ and the ‘political’ are often intertwined: although the *beats* of the period 1965-67 were represented through leisure goods, and the generational struggle tended to be softened in popular media representations, the *giovane* style often offered challenges to traditional gender roles and to the authority of *gli adulti* in determining *i giovani*’s generational identity. Latent criticisms of the commercialisation of the *giovane* style can be found in the habit of representing the *beat* identity as a performance, and therefore as a practice that could be easily adopted but also easily abandoned. Similarly, despite the anti-consumerist and anti-authoritarian inspiration of the *hippy* style, the trends advertised and discussed in *giovani* magazines in 1967-70 were ultimately determined by the fashion industry. Even the authenticity of *giovani* stars promoted by *giovani* magazines in this period was a fabrication of the music industry, which aimed to promote commercial products.

Discourses around the *giovane* style also indicate that, despite the preoccupations regarding young people as political subjects, a trend of increasing social acceptance of young people’s politicisation in popular media took place throughout the 1960s. If media representations of *i giovani* in the period 1965-67 tended to avoid, or ‘foreignise’, representations of politically active young people, then during the period 1967-70 discourses around the *giovane* style echoed the claims of political movements developing in Italy and abroad. The presence of advertisements for political parties in *giovani* magazines demonstrates how in the early 1970s the political participation of youth was

not only acknowledged, but also encouraged in popular media. In this process, the conflation between the ‘commercial’ and the ‘political’ is still noticeable: young people’s political moderation was promoted by connecting it with commercial goods such as fashion. The political participation of youth was nonetheless channelled to avoid radicalisation, arguably as a consequence of the preoccupations towards the radicalisation of political struggle during the *Anni di Piombo*.

Secondly, this thesis has shown how, despite the inherently transnational inspiration of Italian youth cultures, in the period 1965-1975 popular media constructed a specifically Italian version of youth culture. The influence of foreign trends on Italian youth that appears in popular media representations may suggest a cultural dependence on Western cultural trends, which were often seen as more ‘modern’ than those of other countries, including Italy itself. However, it would be a simplification to consider the youth culture represented in Italian television programmes, films, and magazines as ‘minor’ if compared to that of other Western countries. As Enrica Capussotti points out, ‘le espressioni culturali della gioventù italiana sono interpretate come “meno” ribelli di quelle statunitensi e inglesi, ma forse bisognerebbe dedicare maggiore attenzione al contesto in cui esse nascevano e contro il quale esse intrattenevano un rapporto polemico’ (Capussotti, 2010: 266). In Italian popular media, the domestication of Western trends was far from passive, and it reveals the complex relationship between the process of modernisation of Italian society and the permanence of traditional values and stereotypes. Chapter two has shown that trends coming from other Western countries were either ‘mirrored’ or ‘foreignised’. On the one hand, the ‘mirroring’ of the most commercial aspects of foreign youth cultures shows the increasing acceptance of the dynamics of capitalism and commercial globalisation. On the other hand, the ‘foreignisation’ of



aspects such as political participation and active sexuality demonstrates the permanence of stereotypical images of the foreign ‘other’, and the solidity of religious and social values in Italian society.

The process of appropriation of foreign trends also demonstrates how national and foreign discourses influenced each other in popular media representations of young people. For example, in the appropriation of the Afro style discussed in Chapter three, discourses around the Western/non-Western ‘other’ were determined by the permanence of colonialist and orientalist discourses that were circulating in Italian society. At the same time, representations of the emancipation of the internal ‘other’ – the working-class *giovani* and the *meridionali* – in the early 1970s were shaped by the claims of global movements such as the American civil rights movement, as the persistent use of the term ‘racism’ to deal with this theme demonstrates. In other words, although the foreign ‘other’ needs to be taken into consideration when looking at Italian youth cultures, one should not ignore the specificities of the context in which the domestication of the ‘other’ was taking place, and its effects on Italian society as a whole. The transnational inspiration of the *giovane* style ultimately reveals the instability of the notion of Italian-ness, and the contribution of discourses around Italian youth and global youth cultures to the changes in the construction of Italian identity in the 1960s and the 1970s.

Thirdly, this thesis has discussed how the emergence of global emancipatory movements in the 1960s clearly shaped popular media discourse around Italian young people: *i giovani* were constructed in opposition or in connection to ‘other’ social groups, and therefore their representation consolidated or contrasted with pre-existing stereotypes. In order to grasp the multiple influences of political and social movements, the analysis of popular media representations of young people has required an intersectional approach,

which has taken into consideration not only age, but also other identity features such as ethnicity, gender and sexuality. The effect of emancipatory movements on discourses around youth is often not evident: popular media tended not to discuss political issues directly, and some activist groups such as the American and Italian gay rights movements were completely absent from popular media accounts. However, emancipatory movements introduced discourses that increasingly shaped and modified popular culture, and therefore popular media representations. This is particularly evident in the construction of *giovani* gender identities, as the style and bodily practices promoted in *giovani* popular media products often offered a challenge to traditional gender roles and notions of respectability. *Giovani* trends, which often played with gender bending and the reconfiguration of gender-specific beauty standards, proposed new standards of femininity and masculinity to the young audience. This thesis has shown how popular media tended to maintain a very normative position when talking about *giovani* gender identities, which reflected the strong boundary between genders in Italian society. The main anxieties emerging from the media construction of *giovani* masculinities and femininities have been those concerning the maintenance of a demarcation between ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ practices, and those regarding the active sexuality of *giovani* women. However, popular culture offered numerous subversive representations to their audience. For instance, *giovani* stars often troubled gender norms – Rita Pavone and Caterina Caselli – and notions of female respectability – Patty Pravo – and virile masculinity – Shel Shapiro, Maurizio Arcieri, and Renato Zero. Similarly, popular dances and music genres – such as the Shake, the Yum-Yum, and glam – suggested challenges to traditional sexual norms, such as the disruption of the traditional couple, the sexualisation of relationships between young men and young women, and a tolerance of homosexuality.

A comment also needs to be made on the specific types of popular media taken into consideration. *Giovani* popular media offered multiple points of view regarding the construction of youth, which spoke not only to the target audience of these media forms, but influenced wider audiences as well. For young people, *giovani* popular media were useful in the construction of their own generational identity. *Giovani* magazines, films, and television programmes allowed both a virtual and real encounter amongst young people of differing backgrounds and geographical origin, for example through the organization of music festivals and meetings, and through the creation of virtual spaces for discussion, such as the correspondence columns published in magazines. Letters to *giovani* magazines functioned as instruments of emancipation for the young readers, as they allowed criticism to be broadcast of adults, the industry, and *giovani* popular media themselves. In this sense, the research undertaken in this thesis would be essential to further questioning the actual effect of the media construction of *i giovani* in determining Italian young people's generational identity during the 1960s and the 1970s. The significant role of popular media in creating an 'imagined community' of young people should be investigated by actively interviewing the readers and viewers of the magazines, TV programmes, and films about their consumption of popular media products. *Giovani* popular media, however, also had an impact on adults: while constructing *i giovani*, the adults who were producing these media products could 'invent a tradition' of their own youth, which had happened in most cases during the Fascist regime. In other words, the construction of *i giovani* also had a retrospective effect, which was beneficial for the adults to negotiate their own *giovane* identity in order to make it less traumatic.

Today, *i giovani degli anni Sessanta* have become themselves an established myth in Italian popular culture, arguably because today's cultural, social, and political ruling

class was in their youth during the period explored in this thesis. This myth has certainly influenced the construction of *i giovani* on the following generations of Italian youth, and the renegotiation of their own youth made by those who were young in the 1960s and 1970s. Further research would benefit from the findings presented here to analyse the extent to which *i giovani degli anni Sessanta* have become a ‘invented tradition’ for today’s youth, especially for those young people who consider themselves as ‘political’ and have to confront the legacy of *Sessantotto* and the multiple ways in which it has been constructed in the last fifty years. An analysis of how 1960s’ and 1970s’ *giovani* have renegotiated their own *giovane* identity would also be significant, particularly as some of them appear to still be *giovani* regardless of their actual age. Probably the most well-known example is Gianni Morandi, who still today is considered *l’eterno ragazzo della canzone italiana*. The absence of the ‘growing up’ of some of these stars signals the solidity of the myth of *i giovani degli anni Sessanta*, to which the media construction of *i giovani* has certainly contributed.

Besides its contribution to the history of Italian young people in the 1960s and the 1970s, this thesis has highlighted the significant role of popular culture in shaping and transforming identities and their relationships with the ‘other’ in Italian society. The analysis conducted here has demonstrated how to limit the impact of popular media products to a mere commercial and normative function overlooks their subversive potential. For example, popular media discourses around *i giovani* as a community have reinforced the desire of youth to speak up for themselves and challenge the disengaged representation that often emerges from depictions made by adults. The naturalisation of youth as a social category in popular media has allowed the creation of a reverse

discourse,<sup>71</sup> or ‘a point of resistance and the starting point for an opposing strategy’ (Foucault, 1978: 101), through which young people themselves have started to ask for their own legitimacy as a group. The reverse discourse used by young people to emancipate themselves, which was already present in letters written to *giovani* magazines before 1975, has increased thanks to the emergence of popular media self-produced by young people from the mid-1970s. However, its circulation could not have been possible without the proliferation of popular media discourses around youth in the period 1965-1975.

The subversive power of popular culture needs to be further recognised in the Italian studies context, where often a prejudice on the academic relevance of popular cultural forms prevents scholars from critically engaging with them. To this end, Umberto Eco’s suggestion to Italian intellectuals to undertake an ‘indagine costruttiva’ on mass culture, instead of hesitating ‘di fronte al prefigurarsi di un [...] panorama umano del quale è difficile individuare i confini, la forma, le tendenze di sviluppo’ (1999: 31) is still valuable today. This thesis has demonstrated how, far from being uniquely a repressive instrument, popular culture is a site of struggle, and it can shed light on the contradictory and multiple power relations between institutions, social groups, and individuals in Italian society.

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<sup>71</sup> Michel Foucault explains the concept of reverse discourse by referring to homosexuality: homosexual acts or behaviours are conveyed through discourse to construct the homosexual subject; in reverse, homosexual subjects can use the same identity-based category by which they were medically disqualified in order to be acknowledged and legitimised.

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- Io Bacio... Tu Baci* (1961) Directed by Piero Vivarelli [Film]. Lux Film.
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*Discoring* (1977) Directed by Antonio Moretti [TV Programme]. Primo canale.  
*Discoteca Teen* (1977) Written by Mario Pagano [TV Programme]. Primo canale.  
*E sottolineo yé* (1967) Directed by Vito Molinari [TV Programme]. Primo Canale.  
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