

## **Adolescence between temporary crisis and breakdown evolution**

Luigi Pavan<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *University of Padova*

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**Summary.** Adolescence is a difficult and particular stage of life in which many changes occur, such as identity development, body and psychic changes, sexuality and gender identity discoveries, the entry into society living disappointments, conflicts and loss but also reaching adjustments and projects.

*Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Luigi Pavan, University of Padova (Italy), e-mail: luigi.pavan@unipd.it*

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From birth to death we all go through continuous transformations-transitions, mostly of them almost imperceptible to the subject.

During life, there are also psychic and bodily changes and accelerations that could be rapid and radical, for example when there are periods that are named ‘axial age’. In the individual’s life time one of these concerns adolescence in particular.

Adolescence is a process rather than a right age or a step of development. It is an organizer entity of mental functioning that begins from puberty with a transformation and ends with the maturation of a quiet defined identity (Pavan, 2014). The subject must leave the old, losing childhood and must separate from investments known and move towards the unknown and the new. In this extremely critical age, marked by restlessness and rebellion, the adolescent redefines his/her identity towards the parents and separates from them, in order to entry into society (Carbone, 2005).

This age is also dominated by uncertainty, doubt, research for gender identity and for a way to move in the world. Changing and tumultuous emotions, fantasies and reality may sometimes lead to

confusion, passions and enthusiasms may alternate with disappointments, joys, sorrows in a heartbreaking attendance that life begins. This is a difficult age but also rich in experiences and tasks including the meeting with sexuality. Aggressiveness is very present and is expressed in controversy, dispute, requests for autonomy, so that the subject matches and seeks for academic or sport competition. Sometimes aggressiveness becomes anger towards someone or towards the entire world and when anger becomes excessive, it may be difficult to live with it. Adolescents face the risk of the "absolute" or the idealization of a "pure" identity that excludes others. There is a risk of not having boundaries, of pretending to understand everything and everyone, of moving towards a hyper-identification with heroes -groups, crowds, up to a complete loss of identity.

The childhood's ghosts are reactivated and if the primary experiences regarding objective of love's loss, the fear of catastrophic experiences of detachment have been contained by a good emotional environment, the subject will go towards the creation of a new sense of own self, of his own life and existence.

The developmental tasks are various and complex and summarizing them, I would remember:

- Identification, as the achievement of a new self-image. The body changes and must have recognized, sexual identity must be achieved;
- Separation from parents and the entry into society;
- Ambivalence between imagination and reality; remaining a child and becoming an adult, between personality and rationality and still access the examination of reality;
- To recognize the limits, its borders (mind and body) mitigating narcissism;
- To regulating affect and impulsiveness and controlling ambivalence;
- To know how to relate affective states with past and present events;
- To directing its own growth plan and self experimenting ;
- To acquire an ethical conscience and own system of values;
- To build a social identity, a sense of belonging to, the capacity for empathy, solidarity and an assumption of responsibility.

If things go well, the subject learns to use his/her mind as a container of anguish and suffering that come from outside and from inside,

learns to tolerate frustration and loss and to control impulsiveness. Everything between inevitable experiences of crisis, more or less aware, when the affections are tested by depressive loss and anguish of the new.

If these processes, for various reasons (for a vulnerability, for a deficit of basic experiences or for any external circumstances) exceed the capacity of thought, manifestations of distress and even specific diseases, such as psychosis, depression, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, addictions, somatic complaints, bulimia, anorexia and suicidal behaviors could appear.

Sometimes the "crisis" may appear as a break-down in the evolutionary sense of Laufer (Laufer, 1986), as evolutionary impasse attributed to an unconscious rejection of the sexual body. This is not necessarily considered to be the beginning of a psychosis, but rather, those who have the misfortune of getting this condition may have the opportunity for a second chance if properly recognized and treated.

Adolescence never ends completely, so it should be expected that the adult maintains some childhood-adolescence traits.

Currently there is a worrying tendency to slip forward, so one continues to call a man over twenty-five years a "boy". It is known that some adolescents refuse to grow up and Peter-Pan, the figure of the early twentieth century literature still remains a fluttering and unstable model of this difficulty. At the same time, Harry Potter is a contemporary icon of the well-known serial and deals with the loss of parents. He accepts the ambivalence of feelings, in other words he knows the evil that is beside himself and represented by the main negative character, but also the evil that is inside him in the ability to defend himself and to hate. The character becomes an adult, like the protagonist of the film who now acts in other roles. In fact, this life time should end with a discreet structured identity and with a physiognomy that belongs to life and can even reach a dynamic resource, experiencing the fullness of being but also the empty, trouble, loneliness. Currently we encounter on the one hand a precocity, a puberty anticipation which, however, does not correspond to a social maturation because the young man feels trapped in a prolonged, discontinued adolescence, caught between a childhood that never ends and adulthood which is increasingly shifted forward.

### **Note**

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