

Lorenza Perini

Giving Feminism a bad name: the uprising of the anti-feminism instances in times of populisms



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the uprising of the anti-feminism instances
in times of populisms

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Foreward – In a wild elsewhere

I want to dedicate this small essay of mine to my students at the University of Padua.

Up to now, my commitment as a professor of gender politics in this institution has always been a testing ground, where I've been able to experiment beliefs and theories in order to renew and refine my political culture and my posture as a white, female and feminist scholar.

Tackling an issue like “gender equality” implies considering a situation of unbalance and the attempt to repair the scene with tools like policies and practices, for example.

The feminist perspective, on the contrary, leads to consider a transformation, a completely new scenario, different from the one that has produced the unbalance.

The pro/contra, yes/no, equality/inequality logic, at best, leads to a static condition. The goal in the feminist perspective is, instead, open and fluid, balance is just a step towards something ahead, towards the goal of freedom and self-determination for all.

Something achievable only through a transformative process.

It is not repairing the wounds of the wounded, but moving forward.

Towards a wild elsewhere.

History proves it. It is demonstrated by current events, which increasingly bring to the forefront of the media a huge amount of cases of mortification of the dignity of human beings and in particular of women, who are not free to choose, who are not in the condition to be -as much as men are- free.

Every day their body is a bargaining chip, a reward, a battlefield and a weapon at the same time, and after decades of struggle, under certain perspectives, “freedom for all” still seems to be a distant goal.

Over time, scenarios may have changed, the legislative system kept pace with social change and some - many - stereotypes on the roles of sexes in society may have fallen under the weight of the continuous pressure of the feminist groups -together with the anti-discrimination forces and other so-

cial movements- and parts of this freedom have now been conquered, and not just for women.

Fortunately, the new generations seem at times to be much more sensible to inequality and abuses, and this is definitely a positive result of the patient and tenacious work of those who have always believed –now and in the past- in the patient and persistent dissemination of a culture of respect and equality for all.

Much remains to be done, the forms of concealment of freedom are increasingly hidden and camouflaged; new forms of slavery may even present themselves wearing the mask of freedom.

What type of weapon do we have at our disposal at this point?

In this scenario, what I want to address most, is precisely this: it is of crucial importance to pay a constant and continuous attention to the language we use to speak about “gender”, “women”, “feminism”.

Words build the world.

We can't get them wrong.

Do handle them with care.