

*Waves of Feminism in International Women's Day Celebration in Italy*

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Picture by Linda Giozza

## ***ABSTRACT***

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There are different ways in which women's activism in Western countries can be assessed over the time. One of the most common ways used by prominent scholars for defining movements' growth and decline is the wave narrative. This narrative has framed both academic and popular discussions on Western women's activism, but it is not free from critiques and concerns.

Recently, one of the most controversial point concerning the wave narrative in Western countries is the emergence of a new wave of feminism. Indeed, if many scholars claim that we are still living in the third wave of feminism, some of them are asserting that a fourth wave is delineating instead. This research wants to inquire whether it is possible to recognise the characteristics of a new wave of feminism in Italy. In order to do this, International Women's Day in the city of Rome has been selected as case study. In particular, 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 2017 has been analysed, in light of the great participation and mobilisation which it has raised this year.

Alongside with understanding whether Italy is experiencing a new wave of feminism, this research also wants to find out if the wave narrative can be applied to the Italian case, because there is few or none literature which is focusing on this topic in Italy. In order to do this, International Women's Day in 2017 will be compared to the ones in 1947, 1972 and 1989.

The analysis of the IWD celebration in 1947, 1972, 1989 and 2017 is based on a 2014 study by Knappe and Lang. According to the authors, each wave of feminism is characterised by specific issues, strategies of mobilisations and means of mobilisation. With this basis, this paper's research focused on these elements in order to analyse and compare the different ways International Women's Day has been celebrated in Italy. Moreover, the inquiry used the approach suggested by Evans and Chamberlain in "*Critical Waves: Exploring Feminist Identity, Discourse and Praxis in Western Feminism*" (2015). According to them, researchers should be engaged in a constant critical analysis of waves of feminism, focusing on continuity and similarities between them instead of considering them as detached phenomena.

In order to analyse the different celebrations, different methods have been used, which are non-participant observation, interviews and document analysis. In particular, the historical archive of the Unione delle Donne in Italia, in Rome, has been used in order to collect material from the past.

As it will be showed, this case study research has highlighted many interesting aspects on waves of feminism in Italy and on the development of women's activism in the country. These findings may pave the way to further studies on the topic.

**“Is it possible to recognise a new wave of feminism in Italy in 2017, when comparing the International Women’s Day celebration of 2017 with those from 1947, 1972 and 1989?”**

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## ***INTRODUCTION***

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*“The massive women’s marches on 21st January may mark the beginning of a new wave of militant feminist struggles”* (Fraser , et al., 2017). This is the beginning of an article-manifesto signed by several activists as Nancy Fraser and Angela Davis and published on *Viewpoint Magazine* after the Women’s March on Washington in 2017. On that occasion, more than 3 millions of people demonstrated in many countries in the aftermath of the election of the new U.S President Donald Trump (Serughetti, 2017, p. 175). The Women’s March is only one of the several women’s demonstrations which occurred in the last years. For example the “Black Monday” in Poland, when thousands of women went on strike against the abortion ban (BBC , 2016). Other examples are the protests in Ireland, still against the anti-abortion law (Foster, 2017), the marches against violence against women in Latin America (Agence France-Press, 2016), and the “Non Una di Meno” movement in Italy (Serughetti, 2017, p. 175). The global dimension of this movement appeared in its full extent on the occasion of the International Women’s Day, the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017, when women in many countries as Italy, Poland, Sweden, Ireland, UK, Germany, Slovenia and France took part in a global strike (Transnational Social Strike Platform, 2017). Therefore, as highlighted by the words of Fraser et al (2017) quoted above, it is possible to assume that a new wave of feminists’ struggles is emerging globally. However, when it comes to the wave narrative it is all but easy to draw conclusions. Indeed, even though today it exists a consistent literature which describes the evolution of feminism as developed in waves (Evans, 2016, p. 409), there is no agreement on several issues concerning the wave narrative (Rampton, 2015). For example, according to many scholars, we are experiencing a fourth wave of feminism, whilst others claim that we are still in the third one (Ibid.). Moreover, over the time the wave narrative has raised several critiques and it has been often questioned its usefulness and validity (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015, p. 396). Many consider it to be an unhelpful and divisive approach, because it sets up barriers between activists and because it privileges Western feminism (Ibid p. 397). Despite of this, it is undoubted the fact that narratives on feminism in the last decades are dominated by the symbol of the “wave”, which has come to frame both academic and popular discussions on Western feminist activism (Henry, 2004) (Evans, 2016, p. 409). With this basis, it is important to acknowledge both the limitations and opportunities of the wave narrative and to adopt a critical approach to this topic (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015, p. 397). This is the aim of this inquiry: to present a critical analysis of the current feminists’ struggles from a wave narrative perspective, in order to find out whether it is possible to recognize the characteristics of a new wave of feminism and, in this case, which wave we are talking about.

For this purpose, a specific country has been selected as main case study: Italy. What makes Italy interesting for this inquiry's purpose is the recent mobilisation which has characterised feminists' struggles in 2016 and 2017 in the country. Indeed, the newborn movement *Non Una di Meno* has organised several street protests, as the Women's Demonstration in November 2016 and the National Assembly in February 2017. The culmination of these demonstrations occurred on the occasion of the International Women's Day (Serughetti, 2017, p. 175). On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017, thousands of women in all the major cities in Italy went on strike and demonstrated against gender-based violence and discrimination. The International Women's Day this year has been defined as a "day of struggle" (Giornale di Brescia, 2017), a "day against violence against women and discrimination" (Il Post, 2017). It obtained great visibility and participation (Zamponi, 2017, p. 195). Consequently, the International Women's Day in Italy represents an interesting case for investigating the emergence of a new wave of feminism in current feminists' struggles. Moreover, it is a field which is relatively unexplored, not only because we are talking about a new phenomenon, but also because there are few or none studies which have investigated the wave narrative in Italy in general.

The fact that there is an absence of consistent literature on wave narrative in Italy means that, in order to investigate the emergence of a new wave in the country, it is firstly necessary to understand if women's activism in the country has experienced previous waves of feminism. This term, this paper will focus not only on the investigation of International Women's Day in 2017, but also on the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebrations in the past. It is possible to do this because this celebration has been actively celebrated in Italy since 1945 (Capomazza & Ombra, 2009). Moreover, during the 1970s and 1980s, it has been defined as "the moment of the year when women's movements have obtained more visibility" (Ibid. p.7). The fact that this Day has been celebrated since many decades makes it possible to compare the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 2017 with those in the past. This is another reason why International Women's Day celebration in Italy has been selected as a case study for this research.

The choice to include in our investigation also previous waves of feminism is justified also by the theories this research is based on. According to them, which will be presented in the following sections, waves of feminism have to be approached as "non linear phenomena than intersect between them" (Knappe & Lang, 2014, p. 363). Therefore, it is important to analyse them by putting the attention on the similarities and continuity between them, instead of considering them as detached phenomena (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015, p. 398). With this basis, to analyse and compare

International Women's Day celebration throughout the years is a necessary step in order to investigate the emergence of a new wave of feminism in 2017.

### **PROBLEM FORMULATION**

This introduction makes us formulating the following question:

***“Is it possible to recognise a new wave of feminism in Italy in 2017, when comparing the International Women's Day celebration of 2017 with those from 1947, 1972 and 1989?”***

The different years have been selected for specific reasons. First of all, each of them is included in a period of time which is associated to one of the four waves of feminism. Moreover, they represent important landmarks in the history of the International Women's Day, which will be explained in the next chapters.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The analysis of the International Women's Day celebration will be guided by few research questions, which are:

- 1. Which are the main issues addressed by the IWD in 2017?***
- 2. Do they differ from the ones addressed by the IWD in 1947, 1972 and 1989?***
- 3. Which are the main strategies and means/media of mobilisation used during the IWD in 2017?***
- 4. Do they differ from the ones used in the IWD in 1947, 1972 and 1989?***
- 5. If we apply the wave narrative, can we recognise any of the four waves of feminism that the researchers have identified so far?***

As it can be seen, the first four research questions refer to elements which have been used to define and distinguish the waves of feminism in Western European countries. Indeed, according to one of the study on wave narrative which has been selected in this research, each wave of feminism in Western Europe has been characterised by specific issues, strategies and means/media of mobilisations (Knappe and Lang, 2014). These characteristics will be explained further on.

The last research question was formulated in order to understand if the issues, strategies and means/media of mobilisation of the International Women's Day in Italy reflect those of any of the four waves of feminism. In this way we will be able to answer to this inquiry's main problem formulation.

## ***METHODOLOGY***

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### ***TYPE OF RESEARCH and APPROACH***

According to De Vaus (2001, p. 1), there are two main types of social research, the descriptive and the explanatory one. In our case, this social research can be considered as an **abstract descriptive one**, because we are investigating “what it is going on” (De Vaus, 2001, p. 1) in the International Women’s Day celebration in Italy. Even though some people dismiss descriptive research as mere description, (Ibid. p.2), they are fundamental to research enterprise and they have added immeasurably to our knowledge of the shape and nature of our society (Ibid.). Good descriptions provoke the “why” questions and explanatory researches (Ibid.).

In this paper, it will be investigated if it is possible to recognise a new wave of feminism in 2017 in Italy. The conclusions that will be drawn will possibly pave the way for further explanatory studies on the reasons why Italy is experiencing (or not) a new wave of feminism. Indeed, before questioning a social phenomenon, we must be sure about this phenomenon (Ibid.). If the basic premise is wrong, then attempts to explain a non-existent phenomenon are silly (Ibid., p.3). In other words, it is necessary to investigate if we are experiencing a new wave of feminism or not, before questioning the reasons of this phenomenon. In order to investigate this, a **theory- testing approach** will be used (Ibid., p.5). According to De Vaus:

*“This approach begins with a theory and uses theory to guide which observations to make. It moves from the general to the particular. The observations should provide a test of the worth of the theory.*

*Using **deductive reasoning** to derive a set of propositions from the theory does this. We need to develop these propositions so that if the theory is true, then certain things should follow in the real world. We then assess whether these predictions are correct. If they are correct the theory is supported. If they do not hold up then the theory needs to be either rejected or modified.”*

(Ibid., p.5)

This is the approach that will be used in this paper. Indeed, we have a well developed theory, which is the waves of feminism one. The aim is to understand if this theory can be applied to a specific case, Italy. In order to investigate this, a set of presuppositions, or hypotheses, will be developed. According to **deductive reasoning**, if these hypotheses are met, then the theory is supported. Therefore, in this case we could say that, according to our analysis, the wave narrative can be applied to the Italian case and that the country is experiencing a new wave of feminism. Otherwise, if the hypotheses are not met, we will conclude the opposite and the theory would need to be rejected or modified. In light of the fact that this inquiry’s hypotheses are related to the theory on waves of feminism and, in particular, to few studies which have been selected for this research, they will be presented in the next chapter.



### **DESIGN TYPE: CASE STUDY**

The research design is the strategy used to combine the data collected with the problem formulation, in order to fulfil the goal of the research (De Vaus, 2001, p. 8). There are several types of research design which can be used in order to do social research (Yin, 1994) (De Vaus, 2001, p. 8). In this inquiry, the design which will be applied in order to answer to the problem formulation is the **case study** one. According to Yin (1994, p.38) this is the better strategy when the focus is on contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts. Considering that this paper's goal is to find out if it is possible to recognise the emergence of a new wave of feminism nowadays and in a real-life context as the International Women's Day celebration, the case study research design seems to fit well the problem formulation. This term, the main case study will be the International Women's Day in Italy.

There are several types of case study. A first distinction is between single-case study design and multiple-case study design (Ibid., p.38). In our case, we will focus on a **single-case study design**, which is preferred in a set of circumstances. For example, when there is a well-formulated theory that has specified a set of propositions as well as the circumstances within which the prepositions are believed to be true (Ibid., p.39). In our case, we have a well-developed theory, the waves of feminism one. Moreover, we have selected a specific study, the one of Knappe and Lang (2014), which describes the characteristics of waves of feminism in Western European countries. According to this study, each wave of feminism has specific characteristics which, in our case, are a specific period of time, issues, strategies and means/media of mobilisation. In other words, we have the circumstances and the propositions in which the waves of feminism are supposed to be found. Therefore, a single-case study design will be preferred to a multiple-one for our purpose.

Another important distinction to be made is between holistic and embedded case study (Yin, 1994, p. 42). The first type is used when the global nature of a programme or organisation is examined. In the second type, on the other hand, the same case study involves more than a unit of analysis. In our case, we are not investigating the International Women's Day in Italy in a global or general perspective: we are focusing on this celebration in specific years, which are 1947, 1972, 1989 and 2017. Therefore, an **embedded case study** will be preferred to the holistic one.

## ***CASE SELECTION***

Unlike quantitative analysis, which observes patterns in data at the macro level on the basis of the frequency of occurrence of the phenomena being observed, case studies observe the data at the micro level (Zainal, 2007, p. 2). In other words, only a small geographical area or number of subjects of interest are examined in details (Ibid., p.3). As already explained in the introduction, this inquiry will focus on International Women's Day in a specific geographical area, Italy. Despite of this, considering the limited amount of time and space available for this paper's research, a further selection was necessary. Therefore, the city of Rome was chosen as main case study in order to investigate International Women's Day celebration in Italy.

With regards to the number of subjects of interest, there are different entities which could be included in the analysis of the International Women's Day, as for example media and political parties. In this inquiry, considering that we are investigating waves of feminism, the focus will be on women's activism. In this sense, a specification is required. International Women's Day organisation and celebration, in Rome as well as in the rest of the country, changed over the time. For example, in the 40s it was celebrated and organised mainly by one women's rights association, the Union of Women in Italy (UDI), while in the following decades different women's rights associations started to celebrate this day by manifesting in the streets (Capomazza & Ombra , 2009). In 2017, on the other hand, the women's rights associations and organisations cooperated and collaborated within the movement Non Una di Meno. To focus only on women's movements or, on the other hand, on women's rights associations, would mean to exclude important entities which played an essential role in the celebration of International Women's Day in Italy. Therefore, according to the year we are analysing, different entities will be included in the inquiry, being them women's rights associations or movements.

This inquiry's author is aware of the fact that in this analysis only a small part of all the women's rights associations and movements in Rome were included, which are those who have celebrated the International Women's Day across the time and who obtained visibility and raised participation from the public. There are many other entities which could be included in a research on 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in Rome. Not all the associations and organisations have celebrated the International Women's Day and some of them have raised concerns and critiques on this celebration throughout the years (Ibid., p.7). These entities were not included in this inquiry because the limited amount of time and space available required to focus only on a part of the subjects of interest. Moreover, as already mentioned, the aim of a case study research is to focus only on a small geographical area or number of subjects.

## ROME

Due to limited space and time, this analysis will focus only on the International Women's Day in one Italian city. Rome has been selected because it was the background of many events which played a pivotal role in the development of the International Women's Day in Italy, likely because of its role as Italian capital and venue of the national political institutions. First of all, the women's association named UDI (Unions of Italian Women) was born in Rome in September 1944 (Capomazza & Ombra, 2009, p. 28). UDI was the main organizer and promoter of the International Women's Day in Italy, which was celebrated for the first time the following year, in 1945 (Ibid., p. 29). The association had also an official newspaper, "Noi Donne" (Ibid., p.30). By means of this newspaper, UDI was able to spread the news on the International Women's Day and to include in the celebration women from all over Italy (Ibid.). Moreover, it was in Rome where, in February 1946, the International Women's Day Committee met together for the first time for the organisation of the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration. Furthermore, in 1947, the International Women's Day was presented and celebrated in a political institution, the Chamber of Deputies, which is based in the Italian capital. Another example of the pivotal role that Rome played in the history of the 8<sup>th</sup> March is the fact that it is in this city where, in 1972, Italian feminists demonstrate in the streets and squares, for the first time (Ibid.). On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017, moreover, it was organised a parade in the centre of Rome, where more than 20 thousands women marched across the streets of the city.

Other cities, as for example Bologna, Modena or Milano, had played an important role in promoting 8<sup>th</sup> March in Italy in specific periods of time (Ibid.). During the 70s, for example, Modena and Bologna were particularly active in streets protests and in the organisation of the International Women's Day (Grignola, 2017). Despite of this, Rome has been chosen because it maintained an important role in the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebrations throughout the years, since 1945 until 2017 (Capomazza & Ombra, 2009). Considering that we are making a longitudinal research, this was an important element which has been considered for the choice of the city to analyse. With this basis, this inquiry will focus on the 8<sup>th</sup> March in the city of Rome.

## 1947

1947 has been selected because it is included in the period of time which is normally associated to one of the four waves of feminism, in this case the first one. Therefore, it will enable us to investigate if it is possible to recognise the characteristics of the first wave of feminism in Italian International Women's Day celebrations.

In 1947, the International Women's Day was celebrated for the third time in Italian history. The main organiser of this celebration was the Unions of Italian Women (UDI), an association which was created in Rome in 1944 by a group of women which were part of few anti-fascist

organisations as the Centro Sud group, the Partito D'Azione and Sinistra Cristiana (Capomazza & Ombra , 2009, p. 30). One year later, these women celebrated the International Women's Day in all the Italian cities (Ibid., p.32). In light of this, to study the International Women's Day in its first years requires to focus mainly on the activities of the UDI. Indeed, as explained by Capomazza and Ombra in their book "8 Marzo: Una Storia Lunga un Secolo":

*"The history of the 8<sup>th</sup> March is closely connected to the one of UDI. Even though other entities as political parties, Unions and other women's rights associations have contributed to consolidate the tradition of the International Women's Day, in the aftermath of the Second World War it was the Unions of Italian Women the entity which started to celebrate it. 8<sup>th</sup> March was a very important moment for the UDI, because it was an occasion to discuss and present to the public the main issues and goals they were fighting for every year"* (Ibid.).

Therefore, the analysis of 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1947 is closely connected to the one of UDI.

In order to select the year to focus on, this inquiry's author had a long conversation with Ilaria Scalmani, member of the UDI "La Goccia" and archivist of this association's historical archive in Rome. According to Ilaria, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 is considered particularly important because it was the first time that the International Women's Day was recognised by political actors and celebrated in the Italian Chamber of Deputies (Gissi, 2010). Indeed, on this occasion two members of the Chamber, Ilaria Spano and Elisabetta Conci, made a speech to explain the reasons why it was important to celebrate the 8<sup>th</sup> March in Italy (Ibid.). This discourse is included within this analysis because Nadia Spano was one of the founders of the Union of Italian Women (UDI) (Capomazza & Ombra , 2009, p. 34). Therefore, her words are important to understand the point of view and goals of the women's rights associations and, in particular, UDI.

Moreover, in 1947, for the first time, the Prime Minister recommended that all the female deputies had the free day, in order to celebrate the International Women's Day (Gissi, 2010). The official and institutional character of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 marks an important step in the history of the International Women's Day in Italy. This year the International Women's Day experienced a moment of expansion and growth in the country (Ibid.).

## 1972

1972 is included in the period of time associated to the second wave of feminism. In 1972 the International Women's Day was celebrated for the 27<sup>th</sup> year and it had acquired great popularity and participation from the public (Capomazza & Ombra , 2009, p. 112). Unlike 1947, in 1972 many different women's rights associations and movements celebrated it (Ibid.). For example, in the city of Rome we can mention, together with the UDI, the Pompeo Magno movement, the group Fronte di Liberazione Femminile and Movimento di Liberazione della Donna, which were born between

the end of the 60s and the beginning of the 70s (Ibid.). Therefore, the analysis of the 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1972 will include several entities of women's activism alongside with UDI.

The reason why 1972 has been chosen is the fact that this year, for the first time, International Women's Day was characterised by street protests (Gissi, 2010). In Rome, this celebration was characterised by a clash between women's associations who were manifesting and the police, and by the presence of notorious people as the American actress Jane Fonda (Ibid.). For these reasons, the International Women's Day in 1972 is remembered as a stepping stone in the history of the 8<sup>th</sup> March in Italy (Ibid.).

## 1989

If the material on the International Women's Day between the 40s and the 80s is abundant, after 1980s it is difficult to find information on the 8<sup>th</sup> March in Italy. According to Capomazza and Ombra (2009, p. 161) after the 80s the International Women's Day did not experience any important changes. It can be supposed that this is the reason why, during preliminary researches, it was almost impossible to find information on 8<sup>th</sup> March celebrations between the end of the 1980s and 2017. It can be assumed that this is an evidence of the fact that in this period the 8th March celebration has come to a standstill. Despite of this, for this inquiry's aim it is important to focus on a specific year in order to be able to compare it with the other 8th March celebrations. Because of this, 1989 has been selected. Indeed, 1989 obtained a great visibility on the media and a great participation and mobilisation from Italian women, particularly in Rome. The mobilisation was such that media talked about the emerge of a new era of feminist struggles (Archivio U.D.I "La Goccia"). Moreover, despite the fact that this is a controversial issue, it is believed that the third wave of feminism started between the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (Knappe & Lang, 2014) (Cedroni & Calloni, 2012). Therefore, even though this selection process raised more doubts than the previous three, 1989 has been included in the analysis. The fact that, in 1989, the third wave of feminism was probably in an initial phase will be kept in consideration during the analysis and in the hypothesis formulation.

## 2017

As already mentioned in the introduction to this paper, to analyse International Women's Day in 2017 means to focus mainly on the activities of the movement Non Una Di Meno. The movement was created by three women's associations in Rome, which are UDI, Donne in Rete Contro la Violenza, which is formed by 77 women's crisis centres, and Io Decido, which is composed by



several feminists groups in the city of Rome (De Luca, 2016). The movement was born on Spring 2015. In November 2016 the Non Una di Meno movement organised a demonstration against violence against women and femicide in Rome (Ibid.). Since that moment, Non Una di Meno started a path which culminated in the organisation of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 global strike and parade in the centre of Rome. Since November until March 2017, many women's rights entities joined the movement (Ibid., p.3). The list of the realities which adhered to the movement is very long, and includes more than 100 associations, Onlus, ONG (Ibid., p.3).

The complete list of them can be found on the website of the movement, at the link: <https://nonunadimeno.wordpress.com/2016/10/27/ni-una-menos-non-una-di-meno/>. Among the others, we can mention the Casa Internazionale delle Donne, BeFree, Differenza Donna Onlus.

The analysis of the 2017 International Women's Day celebration will focus mainly on the Non Una Di Meno movement, its goals, issues strategies and means/media of mobilisations.

## ***METHODS***

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### ***QUALITATIVE RESEARCH***

If the research design is the logical structure of an inquiry, the method on the other hand is the mode of data collection and analysis (De Vaus, 2001). In this paper, **qualitative methods** will be used. Qualitative research is the strategy preferred when the field of study is yet relatively unexplored and when the field of study is multiple and complex and it is made up of cultural constructions (Pristed Nielsen , 2015). In our case, we are investigating a recent phenomenon, the emergence of a new wave of feminism in Italy in 2017, which consequently is a quite unexplored topic. Moreover, waves of feminism are broad phenomena which have been supported as well as criticised and which are “culturally specific” (Evans, 2016). This term, qualitative research seems to fit well the aim of this inquiry.

The qualitative researcher is expected to draw upon multiple sources of evidence, that is to seek convergence and corroboration through the use of different data sources and methods (Bowen, 2009). Moreover, the use of multiple sources of evidence is, according to Yin (1984:23), a characteristic of case study research design. Such sources include documents, interviews, participant or non-participant observations (Yin, 1994). The process of combining different qualitative research methods in the study of the same phenomenon is called **triangulation of data** (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). This process is helpful because it enables the researcher to guard against the accusation that a study’s findings are simply an artefact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator’s bias (Ibid.). In this paper, different qualitative methods will be combined in the analysis of the International Women’s Day in Italy. In particular, the methods adopt are analysis of documents, interviews and non-participant observation. Moreover, the IT tool for qualitative research NVivo will be used in the codification and analysis of the material collected.

### ***DOCUMENT ANALYSIS***

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic material (Bowen, 2009). Documents are “social facts, which are produced, shared and used in socially organised way” (Atkinson & Coffey, 1997). Therefore, document analysis requires that data are examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning and gain understanding (Bowen, 2009). Documents that may be used for the analysis take a variety of forms: advertisement, agendas, diaries and journals, newspapers, press releases, etc. (Ibid.). In this inquiry, different types of documents have been collected. For the International Women’s Day in 1947, 1972 and 1989, it

will be analysed mainly the material collected through the historical archive of UDI “La Goccia”, in Rome. As already mentioned, UDI played a pivotal role in the organisation of the first 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1945. Through its regional offices, this association collected information, speeches, letters, newspapers’ articles, all related to the International Women’s Day. The UDI “La Goccia” ’s historical archive in Rome has been essential for the development of this inquiry. Indeed, this archive has an entire section, divided per year, dedicated to the 8<sup>th</sup> March in Italy. Without this material, it would have been really difficult to collect detailed material regarding the International Women’s Day in 1947, 1972 and 1989.

Regarding the International Women’s Day in 2017, on the other hand, the documents have been collected mainly through online sources, as women’s rights organisations websites, social media, newspapers’ articles and through the author’s non-participant observation in the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration.

## *INTERVIEWS*

In order to understand if it is possible to recognise the characteristics of a new wave of feminism in the International Women’s Day in 2017, few interviews have been conducted. The aim is to interview activists or members of women’s rights associations who took part in the 8<sup>th</sup> March demonstration and strike in Rome. In order to select the interviewees, the author of this inquiry took part in some conferences organised in Rome after the 8<sup>th</sup> March. Then, after contacting the selected people by e-mail or telephone, individual semi-structured interviews have been made. Interviewing individuals is preferred when the aim is to have in-depth understanding of somebody’s experiences, and perspectives (Pristed Nielsen , 2015). In this study, personal experiences and opinions regarding the International Women’s Day in Rome can give us important information that are not found in the documentation collected online. Therefore, the individual interviews seem the most appropriate type for this research design.

In particular, four interviews have been conducted. The aim was to interview people from different types of associations, in order to include different points of view in the analysis. The first interview was conducted with a member of UDI, Anna Gnignola. She became a member of UDi in the end of the 60s, and she has been part the Board of Directors of the association for few years. She is now one of the oldest members of the association alive. In order to collect the most information as possible, the interview was divided in two parts. During the second part, other members of the association, who prefer to remain anonymous, took part in the interview, sharing with this research’s author their memories on International Women’s Day in the past. These interviews were conducted on May 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> at the Union of Italian Women “La Goccia”, in Rome.

With regards to 2017 International Women's Day celebration, few members of the movement were interviewed. One of them is Antonella Petricone, vice-president of BeFree, a cooperative for women's rights, which adhered to the movement Non Una Di Meno. The cooperative focuses particularly on violence against women, and is composed by six different women's crisis centres in Rome. Therefore, considering that gender-based violence is the main topic of this year 8<sup>th</sup> March, the information shared by Antonella Petricone was particularly helpful. Moreover, BeFree focuses also on helping immigrants women who experience violence and, therefore, Antonella works often with foreigner women. This term, she could offer her point of view on the participation and inclusion of immigrant women in 2017 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration. This interview was conducted on May 15<sup>th</sup> at the Casa Internazionale delle Donne in Rome.

Another interview conducted was the one with Simona A., who prefers to remain anonymous for privacy reasons. She is a member of the Io Decido association, which is one of the three organisations which created the movement Non Una di Meno. The interview with S. was conducted on May 5<sup>th</sup> at the Casa Internazionale delle Donne, in Rome.

In order to include different perspectives, an activist for LGBTQI rights was also interviewed. She is Ilaria G., queer person and active member of the Non Una di Meno movement. The interview with Ilaria was conducted on 12<sup>th</sup> May. It was particularly helpful as she allowed us to include in this research a different point of view on the 2017 International Women's Day celebration.

### **NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION**

*“Non-participant observation is a research technique whereby the researcher watches the subject of his/her study, with his/her knowledge, but without taking an active part in the situation under scrutiny”* (A Dictionary of Sociology, 1998). This approach will be applied because the researcher of this inquiry had the chance to participate in the 2017 International Women's Day celebration in Rome, even though it was only a non-participant observation because she did not take part in the organisation and coordination of this event. Moreover, this inquiry's author also participated as a non-participant observer in few conferences on the 2017 International Women's Day in Italy. One was held on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at the Casa Internazionale delle Donne, in Rome, and the other on the 4<sup>th</sup> May at Communia. The first one, whose title was “Which is the women's movements' future?” was organised by Riviste Alternative. Although the topic was on the future of women's movements, the conference focused mainly on the movement Non Una di Meno and, in particular, on the 8<sup>th</sup> March strike and parade organised in Rome. During the conference different scholars and members of the movement Non Una di Meno gave a speech or took part in the debate, as Teresa Di Martino,

Alfonso Gianni, Antonella Petricone, Bianca Pomeranzi, Norma Rangeri, Bia Sarasini, Giorgia Serughetti, Fausto Bertinotti, to name but a few.

The second conference the author took part in was organised by Non Una di Meno at Communia, in Rome, on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017. During the conference, many members of the movement shared their opinions on the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration and on the positive and negative outcomes of this event.

The non participant observation method allowed this inquiry's author to collect material as pictures, slogans, notes, and to make videos which are useful in order to analyse the way the 8<sup>th</sup> March was celebrated in Rome. This material was gathered via the application OneNote and was later analysed and coded through the NVivo tool.

### *NVIVO*

After having collected all the relevant material for answering the main problem formulation, it was coded and analysed via the IT tool NVivo.

NVivo is designed to facilitate qualitative techniques for organising and analysing data (QSR International, 2017). It does not favour a particular methodology and it can be used for the analysis of a wide range of different sources, including interviews, articles, pictures, social media contents (Ibid.). In light of the fact that the material has been collected by using a triangulation of data, this IT tool fits well this inquiry's research design.

First of all, the material was uploaded in the application. A folder was created for each of the different years selected: 1947, 1972, 1989 and 2017. After this, the sources related to each year were coded in "nodes" and "cases". "Nodes" are used to gather material about one topic (Ibid., p.22). They represent "ideas, themes, topics, concepts, opinions or experiences" (Ibid.). In this analysis, three nodes were created, which are the thematic areas we are going to analyse: issues, strategies and mean/media of mobilisation. "Cases", instead, represent the units of observation, which differ from nodes because it is possible to assign them attributes (Ibid.). Therefore, the "cases" are the ts of feminism. Each of them, as we have already mentioned, has specific attributes.

During the process of analysis of the sources through NVivo, when it was found an element which could be associated to a thematic area as issues, strategies and means/media of mobilisation, it was coded as the correspondent node. When this element, already coded as a "node", reflects a specific characteristic of one of the four waves of feminism, it was coded also as "case". After this codification, the results were compared and analysed. The aim of this process of codification and analysis was to understand if the issues, strategies and means/media of mobilisation of the different International Women's Day celebrations reflect those associated to the fourth waves of feminism or not, in order to answer the main problem formulation.



## ***THEORY***

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### ***WAVES OF FEMINISM***

As already mentioned, this research uses a deductive reasoning process, which begins with a theory and uses it to guide which observations to make (De Vaus, 2001, p. 7). The observations, or hypotheses, should provide a test of the worth of the theory (Ibid.). Indeed, if these hypotheses are correct, it can be assumed that the theory is supported. On the other hand, if they do not hold up then the theory needs to be either rejected or modified. (Ibid.).

This inquiry's aim is to find out whether it is possible to recognise a new wave of feminism in Italy, when comparing 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 1947, 1972, 1989 and 2017. Therefore, this inquiry will be based on the theory according to which women's activism over the time can be framed in waves of feminism. According to this theory, modern feminism can be divided into different phases, which are defined as "waves", in order to describe the "non-linear way" in which activism develops (Knappe & Lang , 2014). Even though the symbol of the wave has dominated the narratives of feminism in the last decades, there is little consensus on this narrative (Rampton, 2015). Indeed, even though many scholars consider it a useful way of understanding the chronological and ideological development of feminism, others question the narrative (Knappe & Lang , 2014). Those who oppose the use of the wave narrative fear the way it constructs generational divides and criticise the fact that it paralyses feminism, creating false dichotomies between generations of feminists and suggesting periods of inactivity (Ibid.).

According to scholars as Evans and Chamberlain (2015), to refuse the use of the wave narrative or, on the other hand, to accept without questioning its validity, is unhelpful. Indeed, feminists:

*"should engage in a constant critique of the discourses and implications surrounding the waves; an on-going critique that accepts both the limitations and the opportunities that the wave narrative offers"* (Ibid., p.396)

Moreover, Evans and Chamberlain encourage:

*"an inter-wave dialogue, which stresses the importance of continuity, inclusivity, and multiplicity"* (Ibid., p.397).

This inquiry will apply this approach to the wave narrative: recognising the limitations and opportunities of this narrative, it will be investigated if this theory can be applied to a specific case study, Italy. Moreover, in order to maintain a continuity and inter-wave dialogue, different years in the history of the International Women's Day will be analysed, in order to compare different waves of feminism between them and to find out if it is possible to recognise a new wave of feminism in 2017.

## ***WAVE NARRATIVE: HISTORY***

The narrative was coined in 1968 in U.S, when Marta Weinman Lear's article "The Second Feminist Wave" appeared in *The New York Time* (Napikoski, 2016). The narrative was intended to distinguish US, UK and European women's liberation movements from the campaigns for women's suffrage (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). Therefore, the term "second wave" was coined chronologically before the "first wave" one.

It is common to refer to the first wave feminism as to the extended period of time from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to about 1950s (Rampton, 2015), even though there are different opinions about its starting and ending moments. Indeed, according to some scholars, first wave of feminism started at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Cedroni & Calloni, 2012). According to others, it ended the first decades on the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when suffrage was achieved (Walby, 2011). It firstly started in the US and UK, but then it spread to most countries of the west (Ibid.). The main goal of this wave was to open up new opportunities for women, with a focus on the suffrage (Rampton, 2015).

Second wave feminism, on the other hand, refers to the period between 1960s and the 1980s (Ibid.). It claimed new public roles for women, presenting a critique of the invisibility of women in public life in theory and practice (Knappe & Lang, 2014). The most famous second wave's slogan was: "the personal is political", which underscores the connection between personal experiences and social and political structures (Cedroni & Calloni, 2012).

Even though some scholars claim that third wave feminism started at the end of the 1980s (Ibid.), the term was introduced in 1992 by the American writer Rebecca Walker, who published an article in *MS* magazine in which she proclaimed "*I am the Third Wave*" (Walker, 2011). In the article, Walker criticised the confirmation of the Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas after he was accused of sexually harassing an attorney he supervised in the past, named Anita Hill (Ibid.). Using this case as an example, Walker criticised the oppression of the female voice, calling for sisterhood between women who are often divided (Ibid.). With this basis, third wave feminism arose as a response to perceived failures of the second-wave, seeking to challenge the second wave's definition of femininity which, according to third wave feminists, was "*essentialist and over-emphasized the experience of upper middle-class white women*" (Gender and Water Network ).

Current literature on modern feminism normally speaks of three waves of feminism (Rampton, 2015). Despite of this, since 2005 a new silhouette is emerging on the horizon and taking the shape of a fourth wave of feminism (Ibid.). The first person to introduce the term was journalist Pythia Peay, in 2005, who argued for the existence of a fourth wave of feminism, associating justice with spirituality (Peay, 2005). This spiritual component is not present in most of the following

definitions of fourth wave of feminism, which focus instead on technology and on intersectionality and inclusiveness (Cochrane, 2013).

Considering this inquiry's aim, a study which is based on the assumption that Western European countries have experienced four waves of feminism, instead of three, will be applied. Indeed, this study enables us to formulate hypotheses on the fourth waves of feminism. This makes it possible to understand whether Italy is experiencing a new wave of feminism and, in this case, to understand if this is a third or a fourth wave. This study is presented in the following section.

### ***DEFINING THE FOUR WAVES OF FEMINISM***

There is little consensus on how to characterize the waves of feminism (Rampton, 2015). Indeed, scholars often attribute to each different features. In this paper, we will rely on their characterisation made by Knappe and Lang in their academic article "*Between Whisper and Voice: Online Women's Movement Outreach in the UK and Germany*", published by the European Journal of Women's Studies in 2014 and edited by Sage Publications. This article has been selected because, unlike most of the other reports written about this topic which describe wave narrative in Uk and USA, it focuses on the waves of feminism in Western European countries in general. This characteristic fits well with our case study, being Italy a Western European country.

According to the authors

*"each wave of women's activism in Western Europe has highlighted specific issues, strategies and means/media of mobilisation"* (Knappe & Lang , 2014).

With this basis, the comparison of the four International Women's Day celebrations in Italy will focus on these thematic areas.

The table below describes the main issues, strategies and means/media of mobilisations of the four waves of feminism. The characteristics associated to each of these four fields derive mainly by the Knappe and Lang (2014) and Evans and Chamberlain (2009) reports, but they have been complemented by other academic articles on wave narrative in Western European countries, which are quoted below. The aim is to offer a complete spectrum of the elements which are normally associated to the waves of feminism in the Western countries. In particular, with regards to the fourth wave of feminism, the 2013 book written by Cochrane, "All the Rebel Women" has been used. The reason of this is that most of the academic articles which claim the emergence of a new wave of feminism refer to this particular study in order to explain the characteristics associated to this wave.

<i>Wave of feminism</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Means and Media Mobilisation</i>
<b>First Wave</b>	- From late 19 <sup>th</sup> century to 1950s (Knappe & Lang , 2014).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education, legal rights, complementarity, women's inequality and new opportunities for women (Knappe &amp; Lang , 2014).</li> <li>- Access to good employment, equal pay, access to education, rejection of prostitution and human trafficking, legal personhood, married women's property rights, violence against women, legal separation and divorce (Walby, 2011).</li> </ul>	-Education, enlightenment (Knappe & Lang , 2014).	-Group building, pamphlets, newspapers, street protests (Knappe & Lang , 2014).
<b>Second Wave</b>	-From 1960s to 1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Legal rights, equality, autonomy, equal pay, right to determine the fate of their own body (Knappe &amp; Lang , 2014) (Evans &amp; Chamberlain, 2015).</li> <li>- New public roles for women, critique of the invisibility of women in public life in theory and practice (Knappe &amp; Lang , 2014)</li> <li>- The personal is political: highlight the impact of patriarchy on every aspect of women's life (Rampton, 2015).</li> <li>- Breaking down gender stereotypes: feminism important for both women and men (Rampton, 2015)</li> <li>- women as an homogeneous group: no attention to the differences (Rampton, 2015)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Occupying different public stages with physical protests, establishing voice through women's publications, providing communicative spaces for consciousness-raising (Knappe &amp; Lang , 2014).</li> <li>-Consciousness Raising, protests, civil disobediences (Knappe &amp; Lang , 2014).</li> </ul>	-Personal communication in women's groups and centres; magazines, street protests (Knappe & Lang , 2014).
<b>Second wave-late stage, Institutionalised</b>	1980s to 2000s	Legal rights; equality; representation	Institutional presence in women's policy agencies and through forming NGOs	Professionalised communication and information; member only newsletters; petitions
<b>Third Wave</b>	- Late 1980s to 2000s	-Critique the equality focus of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> wave	- Cultural activism; individual and personal	- Personalised communication via the

		(Knappe & Lang , 2014). - Focus on diversity; individual and global human rights (Knappe & Lang , 2014) (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). - Inclusivity, non-white issues, moving away from middle-class hegemony (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015).	expression (Knappe & Lang , 2014). - Protected or “special” spaces for women (Knappe & Lang , 2014). - Subversion to unsettle masculinism as opposed to straight political attack (Knappe & Lang , 2014). - Celebratory approach to femininity and individualism shifted feminism publics from the institutional spaces to social and cultural arenas: literature, music, bar streets (Knappe & Lang , 2014) (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015)	web; culture/music; occasional large scale events (Knappe & Lang , 2014).
<b>Fourth Wave</b>	- Mid-2000s to date	- Intersectionality and inclusion (LGTBQ, men, immigrants) (Cochrane, 2013). - Critique of the third-wave individualism and re-politicisation of equality (Knappe & Lang , 2014). - young women critique the lack of mobilisation around women’s issues (Knappe & Lang , 2014). - Rape culture (Cochrane, 2013)	-Refocusing on grassroots organising and protests (Knappe & Lang , 2014). - campaigns are often reactive, many activists are setting up single campaigns, taking on concerns that have affected them personally (Cochrane, 2013).	- Group communication via the web, social media, blog, crowd source events (Knappe & Lang , 2014).

## ***HYPOTHESES***

After having explained the period of time and the main features which characterize each wave of feminism, it is possible to formulate few hypotheses, which will be denied or confirmed by the analysis. The hypothesis are based on the assumption that the wave narrative can be applied to the Italian case and that it is possible to recognize these waves by the analysis of the International Women’s Day celebrations.

If 2017 and 1972 are years which can be collocated in the middle of the fourth and second wave, on the other hand 1947 and 1989 are collocated respectively in the final and initial period of the first and third wave. With this basis, it is possible to presume that:

*HP1- The analysis of the International Women’s Day in 2017 will highlight the characteristics of a fourth wave of feminism in Italy.*



*HP2- The analysis of the International Women's Day in 1947 will highlight few characteristics of the first wave of feminism, particularly those not related to the suffrage.*

*HP3- The analysis of the International Women's Day in 1972 will highlight the characteristics of the second wave of feminism in Italy.*

*HP4- The analysis of the International Women's Day in 1989 will highlight few characteristics of the third wave of feminism and, supposedly, will still present some of the second one (particularly its late, institutional stages).*

## *ANALYSIS*

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As explained in the previous chapters, in order to investigate if it is possible to recognise a new wave of feminism in the International Women's Day celebration in Italy, the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 celebration in Rome will be compared to the ones in 1947, 1972 and 1989. In particular, the comparison will focus on three aspects: issues, strategies and means/media of mobilisation. This term, the three first research questions will be answered:

- 1. *Which are the main issues addressed by the IWD in 2017?***
- 2. *Do they differ from the ones addressed by the IWD in 1949, 1972 and 1989?***
- 3. *Which are the main strategies and means/media of mobilisation used during the IWD in 2017?***
- 4. *Do they differ from the ones used in the IWD in 1949, 1972 and 1989?***

At the same time, the different elements will be analysed in order to try to understand if they reflect the characteristics of the fourth wave of feminism as defined by Knappe and Lang (2014) and the other articles mentioned in the chapter about the theories. This term, the last research question will be answered:

- 5. *If we apply the wave narrative, can we recognise any of the four waves of feminism that the researchers have identified so far?***

After this, the final discussion will present the results obtained. Within this section, the main problem formulation will be answered.

### *Which are the main issues addressed by the International Women's Day in 2017?*

Since its first celebration in 1945, every year the International Women's Day in Rome has focused on specific issues, or themes (Grignola, 2017). Indeed, this day was a moment of the year when women's rights associations' old and new goals met: in other words, it reassumed the goals they fought for in the previous months and those they would have seek in the following ones (Ibid.). Therefore, to highlight the main themes discussed during the International Women's Day means also to understand which were the topics they focused on during the rest of the year (Ibid.).

From the analysis of the material collected, it is possible to assume that this year the International Women's Day focused on several issues. Despite of this, they are all related to a main one: gender-based violence (Simona A., 2017). This is confirmed by the fact that if we look at the material collected on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 in Rome, the information coded under the node "issues" refers often to this theme. The report written after the national meeting organised by the movement Non Una di Meno on February 2017 in Rome claims that:

*“The issues to focus on during the International Women’s Day 2017 address the problem of gender based violence, in all its forms: oppression, exploitation, sexism, racism, homophobia and transphobia”* (Non Una di Meno, 2017). In other words, gender-based violence was addressed by trying to include every facet and feature of it. This focus on violence-related issues was confirmed by the words of two people interviewed, Antonella Petricone from BeFree and Simona A. from Io Decido. According to them, women’s crisis centres<sup>1</sup> played a pivotal role in the organisation of the 2017 International Women’s Day (Petricone, 2017) (Simona A., 2017). Moreover, they explained the fact that this issue was addressed in a more efficient way compared to the previous years (Petricone, 2017). Indeed, in Antonella Petricone’s words, gender-based violence must be addressed “transversally“, by focusing on the social and cultural factors which are the causes of the problem (Ibid.) According to her, this transversal approach to the gender-based violence problem was visible in the International Women’s Day celebration in 2017: for the first time, this “transversality” was applied, and gender-based violence was addressed in its different aspects (Ibid.). This transversality seems to suggest the fact that the International Women’s Day in 2017 is characterised by an intersectional approach. Indeed, to address different axes of oppression as “exploitation, sexism, racism, homophobia and transphobia” and to recognise that they intersect between them and are inextricably linked, are characteristics of intersectionality, which is, according to Cochrane, one of the defining frameworks of the fourth wave of feminism (Cochrane, 2013).

Eight different points were formulated during the Non Una di Meno national meeting in February, in order to address gender-based violence in the most complete way (Non Una di Meno, 2017). In order to answer the main problem formulation, these points will be analysed by using the wave narrative. In other words, they will be explained and, at the same time, it will be investigated whether they reflect the characteristics of any of the waves of feminism in Western European countries.

According to the analysis, the first point which was coded as “issue” or theme of 2017 International Women’s Day was the autonomy of women (Ibid.). In Non Una di Meno’s words this goal must be accomplished by strengthening the role and importance of spaces specifically for women, for example the women’s crisis centres, within Italian society (Ibid.). These are laic, autonomous and feminist places where cultural transformation processes take place and where it is possible to modify the structural differences which determine both male violence against women and gender-

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<sup>1</sup> In Italian language, these centres are called “centri anti-violenza”. They are places where women who have experienced any kind of violence are welcomed. They provide different facilities for victims of violence’s support. They differ from women’s shelters in that they do not always offer hospitality to women: they can provide counselling or phone help instead. In English, I found different terms which can be used to indicate these places. Among them, I think that “women’s crisis centres” is the one that better explains what are the “centri anti-violenza”.

based violence in general (Ibid.). It is possible to recognise a characteristic of the second wave of feminism in this point. Indeed, “autonomy of women” is one of the themes which can be associated to the second wave of feminism in Western European countries, according to Knappe and Lang (2015).

Three following points concern issues which, according to the description of the waves of feminism used in this paper, can be associated to the first and second waves of feminism. Indeed, second point addressed by 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 in Rome is about legal aspects and legal rights and, in particular, the “enforcement of the Istanbul Convention on violence against women, women’s access to the justice system and legal rights for wives who experience domestic violence” (Non Una di Meno, 2017). Women’s legal rights, in particular within the family life, were among the most important issues first and second waves of feminism activists fought for (Knappe & Lang, 2014) (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). Another point the International Women’s Day in 2017 focused on is related to “freedom to decide on anyone’s own body, health and self-determination” (Non Una di Meno, 2017). For example, freedom to decide on abortion and the abolition of conscientious objection (Ibid.). Moreover, Non Una di Meno claimed economic welfare for all women and, in particular, better working condition and salary (Ibid.). These two points can also be related to previous waves of feminism. Indeed, according to Knappe and Lang (2014) and Evans and Chamberlain (2015), right to determine the fate of their own body and freedom to decide on abortion were discussed during the second wave, while equal payment and access to good working conditions are goals which were pursued during both the first and second ones.

According to the scholars who support the idea of the emergence of a new wave of feminism, the fourth wave is drawing from the dialogue and activism encouraged by the new media and, in particular, internet and social networks (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). The language used by media is one of the issues addressed by 8<sup>th</sup> March in 2017. Indeed, according to Non Una di Meno, during the 8<sup>th</sup> March protests women have to protest against “sexist, misogynist, stereotyped and racist media language and representations” (Non Una di Meno, 2017). This point not only confirms the attention and importance which the media embody for nowadays feminists’ struggles in Italy, but it also seems to highlight another characteristic of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 which, together with intersectionality, is considered a defining characteristic of fourth wave of feminism: inclusiveness (Cochrane, 2013). Indeed, from the analysis of the International Women’s Day documents, it emerged the fact that it was given great importance to “breakdown barriers and obstacles which impede immigrants women to live in Italy and which reduce their rights” (Non Una di Meno, 2017). Moreover, according to the movement, Italian and foreign women should fight all together against inequalities and patriarchy during 8<sup>th</sup> March manifestations (Ibid.). Therefore, it can be said that

inclusiveness is another characteristic which emerged from the analysis of the International Women's Day in 2017.

Another element which seems to support this assumption is the wish to include LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersexual) people. Indeed, in the documents collected on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and published by the Non Una di Meno movement, it is often mentioned the importance of including trans, lesbian and queer women in the event (Ibid.). In particular, it is claimed the importance to “overcome gender binarism and to include needs of all LGBT individuals” in the celebration (Ibid.). For example, Antonella Petricone said that, during a meeting organised in Rome by the members of the movement, it emerged the necessity to use a LGBTQI-friendly terminology. They were referring to the use of words as “cis-gender”, “transsexual”, “lesbian and intersex women”, in order to recognise the differences between women and to include all of them in the event (Petricone, 2017).

Alongside with including LGBTQI people, the analysis of the documents collected highlighted an inclusive approach also in the fact that men were included in the International Women's Day celebration. Indeed, according to the articles written by Non Una di Meno and published on their website, it is necessary to extend feminist struggle to “everyone, not only women, because feminism is an everyone's responsibility” (Non Una di Meno, 2017). If we look at the several pictures and videos collected by the author during the 8<sup>th</sup> March main demonstration in Rome, and analysed via NVivo, it is possible to see that the International Women's Day in 2017 was celebrated by a very miscellaneous public. What is relevant in this case is the fact that a lot of men and boys took part in the event, as the pictures show. According to Lorenzo Zamponi (2017), activist and academic researcher, the high participation of men in the International Women's Day in Rome is significant, and it can be explained by the fact that the thematic issues this event focused on were central issues for everyone, not only for women, and they included aspects of everyone's life, despite of its biological sex (Ibid.).

Despite of this, Italian women's activism is still far from reaching full inclusivity. This emerged from the words of the LGBTQI activist interviewed by this research's author (LGBTQI Activist, 2017). For example, the interviewed explained the fact that the participation and inclusion of men in the organisation of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 was a very controversial issue (Ibid.). According to some members of the movement, indeed, Non Una di Meno should be composed only by women, excluding both men and transgender people (Ibid.). Because of this, they complained about the high number of men who took part in the International Women's Day parade in Rome (Ibid.).

Moreover, even though one of the main issues addressed by the International Women's Day in 2017 was immigration, only few immigrants took part in the organisation of the event and its celebration



(Petricone, 2017). This term, according to Petricone and Simona A., women's activists in Italy are only at the beginning of their work finalized to reach inclusivity (Petricone, 2017) (Simona A., 2017).

### *- Are they different than the ones addressed by the International Women's Day in 1949, 1972 and 1989?*

#### **1947**

The analysis of the documents on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 highlighted the fact that this celebration was strongly influenced by the historical situation which the country was facing at that time.

Indeed, in 1947 the Second World War and the Fascist regime were just ended. Moreover, since 1945, women obtained the right to vote in Italy. Therefore, the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 occurred in a moment particularly flourishing for Italian women's organisations, and this positive atmosphere emerged from this paper's analysis. In general, what emerged is a tendency to focus on future expectations and on positive results that women reached in the previous years, instead of on the importance of protesting against difficulties which women were experiencing. This is a first, clear difference between International Women's Day in 1947 and 2017.

A persistent theme in the analysis of the documentation collected on the 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1947 is related to the importance of maintaining peace in the country and of recovering from the difficult situation which Italy faced during the First and Second World Wars. This point emerged clearly from the analysis of the speech which Nadia Spano made at the Italian Chamber of Deputies on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 (Gissi, 2010). For example, Spano said that on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 women were asking for "a stable peace, brotherhood and harmony with foreign countries" (Spano, 1947). In this speech, it is said that "women deserve the rights they obtained in the last years because they took part with all the Italian people in the War which brought to the liberation of our country" (Ibid.). These words underline the fact that women played an essential role in sustaining men and children during the War and in the accomplishment of their "primary function: the maternity" (Ibid.), because by doing this they allowed men to fight for their country (Ibid.). Spano also claimed the necessity for a "reevaluation of women and their work within the family" (Ibid.). In other words, Spano was expressing the necessity for Italian women to have their role and work within the family recognised and celebrated by the society. Despite of this, these words do not question the fact that women's primary function was to take care of children and of the house. Moreover, Spano's words do not challenge the fact that men and women should have different and separate roles within the Italian society. Consequently, what emerges from this discourse is a focus

on “complementarity” between men and women instead of on “equality”. This aspect is significant for this inquiry’s purpose because “complementarity” is one of the issues which, according to Knappe and Lang (2014) can be found in first wave of feminism in Western European country.

What emerged from our analysis is the fact that the International Women’s Day in 1947 focused particularly on issues which were related not specifically to women but to the entire Italian society: good working conditions for everyone, social assistance for people who were in a difficult economic situation and to old people, attention and cure of the children, peace and stability. This is a difference from what emerged from the analysis of the IWD in 2017, where gender-based violence and women specific needs where the keywords.

8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 included also few women-specific issues. Despite of this, they seemed to be considered as secondary issues, “other than fundamental claims” (Spano, 1947). These women-related themes are “equal payment, working conditions and legal rights between men and women (Ibid.). In other words, they were mainly related to family and work. This is confirmed by the analysis of original posters which were published and spread by UDI in order to raise people’s participation for the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 (Archivio U.D.I "La Goccia"). Indeed, on these posters it was written that Italian women in Rome demanded “equal pay for equal work”, “access to all the work positions which men perform”, “the right for mothers to receive the full salary while they are on a maternity leave ”, and a “financial support for women whose husband died during the War” (Ibid.). Women’s inequality, equal pay and access to good employment are issues which are associated to first wave of feminism in Western European countries, particularly after that women obtained the right to vote in these countries (Knappe & Lang , 2014) (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). As already mentioned, better working conditions and salary for women have been found also in the analysis of International Women’s Day in 2017. Despite of this, women’s rights associations used a different approach in addressing these issues in 2017 compared to the one used in 2017. In 2017, these issues were included in the struggle against gender-based violence. Indeed, women’s access to a good employment and salary that may determine women’s financial independence is considered as a “solution for violence against women issue” (Non Una di Meno, 2017), because it can enable women to escape from a case of domestic violence (Ibid.). This term, as already highlighted, women’s rights associations in 2017 adopted a transversal and intersectional approach that did not emerge from the analysis of the International Women’s Day in 1947.

Alongside with intersectionality, women’s rights organisations in 2017 adopted an inclusive approach to the organisation of the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration. In particular, their aim was to include men, immigrants women and LGBTQI people. Unlike 2017, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 was addressed to Italian women, excluding immigrants or foreigners women in the country. For example, Spano and

Conci in their speech recognise the international scope of the event, saying that “all the women of the world are celebrating this day” (Spano, 1947). Despite of this, they also stated that they were doing this “in their respective countries” (Ibid.).

If, on one hand, International Women’s Day in 1947 seems to be addressed only to Italian women, it is possible to say that it was quite inclusive with regards to their economic and working condition. Indeed, the documents often mentioned the fact that this celebration included women of every social class: “young and old women, mothers, wives and girls, women from academic word, women from the working class, women who are peasants, women who are in difficult economic situations, women who are recovered” (Archivio U.D.I "La Goccia"). In this sense, it is possible to say that for 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 celebration, women’s rights associations partially adopted an inclusive and intersectional approach, but only with regards to the economic and working field.

## 1972

International Women’s Day in 1972 is the first 8<sup>th</sup> March when women’s rights organisations and movements started demonstrating in the streets (Capomazza & Ombra , 2009).

International Women’s Day in 1972 seems to reflect most of the themes or issues which have been associated to second wave of feminism. In particular, second wave feminism was characterised by a “criticism of the invisibility of women in public life, in theory and practice” and by a “criticism of the impact of patriarchy on every aspect of women’s life” (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). Focusing on the International Women’s Day in Rome in 1972, it is possible to recognize these characteristics. Indeed, women’s rights associations were not focusing specifically on economic issues or working conditions. They were instead asking for more visibility and importance within the Italian society (Rai television , 2012). As a matter of fact, a persistent theme which emerged from the analysis of the documents collected on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1972 is the critique of the marginalisation of Italian women in every aspect of Italian society, alongside with their will to reach emancipation. This is visible, for example, in a document from the UDI historical archive that collected a series of notes and advices on the main points to be addressed during the celebration for the 8<sup>th</sup> March (UDI "La Goccia", 1972). According to this document, the International Women’s Day is part of a “struggle to obtain women’s emancipation” (Ibid.). The goal of this struggle was to “fight the traditional marginalized role which have been assigned to women by the patriarchal society” and “make them active participants and protagonists within Italian society and its progress” (Ibid.).

In Rome, during the 8<sup>th</sup> March demonstrations, it was possible to read slogans as “We are more than half of the Italian population, and we count nothing”, to denounce the invisibility of women within Italian society (Rai television , 2012).

In Anna Grignola’s words, women felt that they were losing control on their personal life, particularly when, at the beginning of the 70s, it was announced a national referendum for abrogating the right to divorce (Gnignola, 2017). This decision was perceived by women’s rights associations and feminist movements as an obstacle to women’s freedom of decision on their life (Ibid.). “We generate ideas, not only children” or “We claim the right of property of our own body” were other slogans which confirm the main claims of women’s rights association in 1972, which were the right to determine the fate of their own life and body. They, according to Evans and Chamberlain (2015), are issues which can be associated to second wave feminism in Western European countries.

These themes have been found also in the analysis of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017, especially with regards to the right of abortion. Moreover, the 1972 criticism of Italian society seems to recall an aspect of 2017 manifestations already described. Indeed, in 2017 Non Una di Meno members claimed that Italian society needs to be changed in order to solve the gender-based violence issues (Non Una di Meno, 2017). 1972 slogans as “We are more than half of the population and what do we count?” and “If our lives do not count we go on strike” are all based on a critique of Italian society and of the marginalisation of women’s issues. In this sense, International Women’s Day in 2017 and 1972 are similar because they are both characterised by a strong criticism of Italian society.

Another element which emerged from the analysis of the documents related to 8<sup>th</sup> March 1972 is the claim that women’s issues are public issues. It is well explained by the words written on a slogan which was published and diffused by UDI and other women’s rights associations, on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1972:

*“We fight against traditions, we fight for being workers instead that housewives, we fight to claim that maternity is a social issue and value”* (UDI, 1972). In other words, women’s rights organisations were claiming that issues as maternity leave and the care of children are public and social issues, which must be discussed in public and in social debates. Indeed, as Anna Grignola explained in her interview, until the 70s, themes related to maternity and household were considered as “private” and they were hardly discussed in public. Women’s rights associations’ attempt to include women’s issues in public debates reflects one of the themes which has been often associated to second wave feminism, and which is well explained by the slogan: “the personal is political” (Cedroni & Calloni, 2012). It refers exactly to the second wave feminists’ will to include women’s issues within social debates.

Apparently, therefore, the main issues addressed by IWD in 1972 reflect those which have been associated to second wave of feminism. Despite of this, the analysis highlighted an element which should be mentioned. Indeed, according to Anna Grignola, it is important to distinguish between the issues addressed by old women's rights associations and new ones, because there are few differences. Despite the fact that they were all claiming the importance of women's emancipation and inclusion in Italian society, the former addressed also legislation and political issues, while the latter were more focused on fighting against patriarchy and women's marginalization (Grignola, 2017). Therefore, the analysis of the UDI documentation on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1972 shows a focus on themes as equal payment, better working conditions for women, legal rights, reforms and more social assistance for women and mothers (UDI "La Goccia"). According to Grignola, on the other hand, younger women's associations which manifested during 8<sup>th</sup> March this year did not address legal reforms, as they were more concentrated on criticising women's invisibility in Italian society and their de-marginalisation (Grignola, 2017).

According to Rampton (2015), compared to third and fourth wave of feminism, second wave of feminism tended to consider women as an homogeneous group, without paying attention to the differences. We have already underlined that, in this sense, International Women's Day in 2017 seems to give space to differences by adopting an intersectional and inclusive approach. Like 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947, the analysis of the documentation on the International Women's Day celebration in 1972 did not highlight references to differences between women. Immigrants or foreign women are not mentioned in the documents, and the issues addressed refer normally to biological women, without including LGBTQI people. Moreover, unlike 1947 celebration, men were not included in 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 1972. Furthermore, if the analysis of IWD in 1947 underlined attention to the economic situation of women, the one of the celebration in 1972 did not stress these aspects. This term, it could be asserted that women's rights associations in 1972 consider women as an homogeneous group. Moreover, it can be noticed that if we compared International Women's Day in 1972 and 2017, the latter shows a tendency toward inclusiveness and intersectionality which is not found in the former.

## 1989

As already mentioned at the beginning of this inquiry, 1989 is collocated in a period of time in between second and third waves of feminism. Therefore, we are expected to find characteristics which belong to both these waves. At the same time, we can also presume that it will not be possible to find clear references to one specific wave, as it was the case in the analysis of 1972 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration.

With regards to the main themes, this year women's rights associations in Rome addressed mainly two themes, which were violence against women and the right to abortion.

With regards to violence, the main focus was on rape. During the main manifestations organised in the centre of the city, for example, it was possible to read slogans saying that "sexual violence has nothing to do with sex", or "rape is a sadistic crime" (Unità, 1989). In particular, according to the articles published by newspapers as *La Repubblica* (1989), *L'Unità* (1989), *Il Corriere della Sera* (1989), women's rights associations in 1989 were asking for legislative changes and, in particular, for a tightening of the punishment for sexual assault and rape (Scirè, 2012).

Alongside with violence against women, the other theme which was mainly addressed by women's rights associations this year was the abortion. As it was the case for violence against women, the focus was on the legislative aspects of the issue. Indeed, in 1989, some political parties were pushing for the ban of the law 194 that granted women the right to abortion (Unità, 1989). Because of this, in 1989 women's rights associations were manifesting against these political parties and their attempt to ban the 194 law, claiming the importance of women's right to choose about their body.

The focus on women's legal rights, violence against women and women's right to determine the fate of their own body are issues which have been associated to first and second waves of feminism (Knappe & Lang, 2014) (Walby, 2011). Moreover, it can be assumed that the focus on legislative aspects and changes which emerged from the analysis of 1989 International Women's Day celebration reflects the characteristics which are associated to second wave of feminism in its late stage. Indeed, according to Knappe and Lang (2014), during the 1990s second wave of feminism became "institutionalised", in the sense that women started entering political institutions and adapting their strategies to norms and rules of political offers. To address issues as sexual violence and right to abortion from a legislative perspective means to accept and recognise the fact that legislation and politics have an important role in promoting women's emancipation and equality in Italian society. This was not the case in 1972 when, as already mentioned, the younger generations of women's rights associations were more focused on women's revolution and fighting against patriarchy instead of on politics and legislation (Grignola, 2017). With this basis, it can be assumed that this difference between the two celebrations reflects the fact that they are part of different stages of second wave of feminism. 1972 is part of the early stage while 1989 is entering in its "institutionalised" one.

Sexual violence and right to abortion emerged also from the analysis of 2017 International Women's Day. Despite of this, as already mentioned, in 2017 these issues were included in a wider

discussion on gender-based violence. It is a more transversal and intersectional approach which, on the other hand, is not found in the analysis of the themes addressed by 8<sup>th</sup> March 1989.

One element which marks another difference between 1989 and 1972 celebration concerns men's participation. This was a very debated issue in 1989 (Terracina, 1989). Indeed, on one side the youngest generations of feminists wanted to include men in the demonstration because, as explained by journalist Claudia Terracina in a 1989 article, boy who took part in the celebration felt that "women's freedom is also men's freedom" (Ibid.). On the other hand, old generations of feminists wanted to avoid male participation, as they did during the '70s (Ibid.). The result was that, despite of the opposition of the latter, many men took part in the celebration (Unità, 1989). This is, according to Anna Grignola, a big difference between International Women's Day in 1972 and 1989 (Grignola, 2017). By the way, the inclusion of men in the 8<sup>th</sup> March demonstration is, as emerged from the analysis of the IWD 2017, a topic which continues to be discussed and disputed today.

Third wave feminism is a very controversial topic (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). Indeed, unlike the other waves of feminism, it is not easy to define it because it developed in many different ways within Western countries (Ibid.). Despite of this, researchers identified its defining frameworks in the focus on diversity and in the inclusion of non-white issues (Knappe & Lang, 2014). Applying the wave narrative to 1989 International Women's Day celebration, it is possible to notice a slight tendency towards these elements. For example, according to journalists who described the 8<sup>th</sup> March demonstration in Rome, some foreigners women were included in the celebration. Claudia Terracina (1989), for example, described the presence of Eritrean women who played instruments during the parade in the centre of Rome. Moreover, during the main manifestation in the centre of the city, it was played the music of Tracy Chapman, famous song writer and activist for black people's rights (Ibid.). Furthermore, another article described the fact that a famous theatre in the centre of the city hosted a conference where women from developing countries talked about their experiences in Italy (Unità, 1989). In the feminist newspaper "Noi Donne" (1989) it is claimed that women were manifesting all together despite of the colour of their skin:

*"white skin women, black skin women, yellow skin women: they all have the same claims and they can enrich each other with their different cultures and experiences"* (Ibid.).

Therefore, unlike 1947 and 1972 celebrations, the analysis of the IWD in 1989 highlighted references to the participation of foreign women as well as elements which remind to cultures other than the Italian or European one. It can be supposed that these elements are signs of a slight opening towards diversity and non-white issues which are, as we have already mentioned, the elements which are associated to third wave of feminism in Western countries (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015).



This, together with the participation of men in the demonstration, marks also a slight similarity between International Women's Day in 1989 and 2017, with regards to inclusivity.

### *- Which are the main strategies and means/media of mobilisation used during the IWD in 2017?*

#### *Strategies of Mobilisation*

As already underlined, the organisation of the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 2017 was lead by the movement Non Una di Meno. It was the channel through which the different women's rights associations cooperated in order to organise the celebration. Antonella Petricone explained in her interview that, since the moment she started to be an activist for women's rights ten years ago, she had never experienced such a cooperation and collaboration between women's rights organisations as in 2017. According to Lorenzo Zamponi (2017), the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in Rome was one of the "few forms of collective action of the last years in Italy". Indeed, in the last years before 2017, the International Women's Day was celebrated as a traditional festivity, instead of as a moment of struggle for women's claims. It was celebrated by different women's rights associations in an individual way instead of in a collective one (Petricone, 2017). In 2017, on the contrary, different women's rights organisations and associations in Rome joined together in order to organise a collective celebration, despite of the controversies and divergent opinions they may had (Petricone, 2017) (Simona A., 2017). This term, International Women's Day in 2017 in Rome seems to break with third wave of feminism, because this wave traditionally focuses more on individualism and personal expression (Knappe & Lang , 2014). On the contrary, 2017 celebration seems to be characterised by a collective and aggregative spirit which reminds of the one of the women's rights associations' manifestations during the 70s in Italy (Petricone, 2017).

The main strategy used by women's rights associations in order to mobilize people on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 celebration was the strike. Indeed, on this occasion, Non Una di Meno launched a 24 hours strike (Non Una di Meno, 2017). The main slogan of the strike, which was written on many posters showed the parade in Rome, was: "If our lives do not count, we go on strike" (Ibid.).

Alongside with Italy, in 2016 and 2017 more than 50 countries in the world have launched a women's strike (Zamponi, 2017, p.191). This shows another characteristic of the 2017 International Women's Day in Italy, which is the "global character of the mobilization" (Ibid.). Despite of this, the strike had different outcomes in the different countries which took part in it. In countries like Iceland, the women' s strike raised a great mobilisation (Topping, 2017 ). On the other hand, in Italy this strategy was quite contested (Non Una di meno , 2017 ). For example, the Italian Minister of Education, Ms. Fedeli, criticised the strike saying that it "divided people instead than united

them” (La Repubblica, 2017). Moreover, while on one hand some Italian Unions supported it, others as CGIL (the main Italian Union) were calling for assemblies in the workplace, “in open antagonism with the strike” (Non Una di meno , 2017 ). Furthermore, the official data showed a low participation to the strike by dependent workers (Ibid.). The interviewed Antonella Petricone explained the fact that within the school system where she works, in Rome, only few colleagues adhered to the strike (Petricone, 2017).

If we apply the wave narrative, it is possible to say that the use of the strike can be associated to the feminist struggles in the 1970s and, consequently, to the second wave of feminism. It can be mentioned, for example, the first Icelandic Women’s Strike, in 1975, where about 90% of Icelandic people manifested for their rights instead of going to work (Pizzimenti, 2015). Another example is the strike organised by American women in 1970, when 50.000 women joined the Women’s Strike for Peace and Equality (Cohen, 2015). The fact that the use of the strike recalls previous periods of feminist struggles was confirmed also by the analysis of the documents collected. On an article published by Non Una di Meno, it is possible to read that “in the last decades the instrument of strike has lost meaning and effectiveness (...) The global women’s strike has given it new significance, bringing its original strength back” (Non Una di meno , 2017 ). Moreover, the articles also mentions the 1975 strike in Iceland, claiming that the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 celebration is “recovering the effectiveness of the Icelandic Women’s strike in 1975” (Ibid.). In light of this, it can be assumed that second wave of feminism has exerted a great influence on the strategies of mobilisation for 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

Alongside with the global strike, other strategies of mobilisation were adopted on the occasion of the International Women’s Day 2017 in Rome. Indeed, as already mentioned, the aim of women’s rights associations this year was to address different aspects of gender-based violence issue. Therefore, many manifestations were organised in order to raise people’s awareness on all of these aspects. Indeed, many public demonstrations and sit-ins were organised in different points of Rome (Dinamo, 2017). For example, women met in front of the call-centre Almaviva (Ibid.). They were protesting because in 2016 this place was closed, and consequently thousands of women who worked there before, in 2017 did not have a job anymore (Ibid.). Other sit-ins were organised in front of schools and universities, nursery schools, women’s crisis centres, political departments (Ibid.). All these manifestations shared similar goals, which were related to gender-based violence in its many aspects. Moreover, what characterised these manifestations is the fact that they were forms of street protest and that they involved occupation of public stages with physical protests. These are characteristics which, according to Knappe and Lang (2014) can be associated to the second wave of feminism. This similarity with second wave was highlighted also by many articles

where journalists recognised the analogy between the International Women's Day in 2017 and the feminists' struggles during the 70s in Italy (AffariItaliani , 2017) (News Biella , 2017).

All of these manifestations in Rome took place on 8<sup>th</sup> March, during the morning. Indeed, in the afternoon, they all merged in a big parade in the centre of the city (Dinamo, 2017). The parade started at 5 p.m in front of the Colosseo and moved to other parts of the city. Among all the manifestations organised on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 by Non Una di Meno, this was the one which raised most mobilisation and participation. Indeed, according to the data, more than 20 thousands of people took part in it, occupying an entire street in the city of Rome where the traffic was, consequently, completely blocked (Colotti, 2017). The parade reassumes the characteristics of the strategies of mobilisation of this International Women's Day: collective mobilisation and action, street protests and physical occupation of public spaces. These, as already underlined, are characteristics which immediately recall the 1970s and the second wave of feminism.

Another characteristic of the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration emerged during a conference at the Casa Internazionale delle Donne on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017. On this occasion, few members of Non Una di Meno in Rome explained the fact that the organisation of the International Women's Day happened locally as well as at the national level. At the national level, every big city in Italy had its own Non Una di Meno venue. They were headed by the venue in Rome and they all met several times in the capital city in order to coordinate their actions at the national level (Conferenza presso la Casa Internazionale delle Donne, 8 maggio 2017). Despite of this, every Non Una di Meno venue also works on people's mobilisation at the local level (Ibid.). This was possible because the movement was composed by many women's rights associations which could give their contribution in term of people's mobilisation at the local level (Ibid.).

Focusing on the movement in Rome, in order to raise people's awareness on 8<sup>th</sup> March strike and manifestations, Non Una di Meno organised many events and meetings in the different districts of Rome during the months before the International Women's Day (Conferenza presso la Casa Internazionale delle Donne, 8 maggio 2017). Indeed, it succeed in mobilising so many people mainly because of the fact that it worked locally (Ibid.). This aspect is particularly important for this inquiry's purpose, because it reflects a characteristic of the strategies of mobilisation of the fourth wave of feminism. According to Knappe and Lang (2014), indeed, fourth wave of feminism is characterised by a "focus on grassroots organising and protests" . This characteristic can be found also in the many manifestations and sit-ins which were organised in different districts of the city of Rome during the International Women's Day.

## Means of mobilisation

On one hand, the strategies of mobilisation of the International Women's Day 2017 in Rome seems to recall mainly the second wave of feminism. On the other hand, media/means of mobilisation reflect the characteristics which are associated to the fourth wave. Indeed, as we have underlined previously, the distinctive feature of the fourth wave of feminism is the use of internet, which has "enabled the shift from third-wave feminism to fourth wave feminism" (Munro, 2013).

The documents collected describe a massive use of the social media finalized to people's awareness-raising and mobilisation. This was confirmed by the conference at the Casa Internazionale delle Donne on May 8, 2017. Indeed, during this conference it emerged the fact that the use of new forms of online communication as social networks marked a difference between the celebration in 2017 and the ones in the past (Casa Internazionale delle Donne, 2017). Indeed, these new forms of communication offered possibilities that the traditional means of communication which women used in the past did not give. In a city as big as Rome it wouldn't be possible to mobilise so many people for the 8<sup>th</sup> March without using the social media and instant messaging systems (Ibid.). Through Non Una di Meno blog and social network accounts on Facebook and Twitter, people could stay updated on the development of the 8<sup>th</sup> March organisation (Petricone, 2017). Moreover, the possibility to publish live videos allowed people to feel part of the IWD organisation and celebration even without being physically present (Ibid.). For example, on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 it was launched a "Twitter storm", both at the global and national level (Non Una di Meno, 2017). At the national level, on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017 Non Una di Meno published on its website a list of sentences and "hashtags" that everyone could publish online to express support to the International Women's Day protests (Ibid.). Indeed, according to Non Una di Meno:

*"people can make their voice heard on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March in many ways. One of them implies that they share the International Women's Day feminists' claims on their social networks"* (Ibid.).

The internet has played an essential role not only in people's mobilisation, but also in coordinating the organisation of the celebration (Petricone, 2017). Indeed, the members of the movement Non Una di Meno used their Facebook accounts, instant messaging chats and newsletter system to communicate between them in order to organise and coordinate the different manifestations alongside with the strike (Ibid.).

All in all, the means and media of mobilisation used during this 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration have been mainly the internet and social networks. This perfectly reflects the characteristics which have been described as being the "main defining frameworks of the fourth wave of feminism" (Cochrane,

2013), which are “the use of the web for group communication, social media and blogs for organising crowd events” (Knappe & Lang , 2014).

*- Do they differ from the ones used in the IWD in 1949, 1972 and 1989?*

**1947**

### *Strategies of Mobilisation*

With regards to the strategies of mobilisation used on the occasion of the 8th March 1947, the analysis shows a clear difference with the ones used in 2017.

First of all, the women’s rights associations’ attitude toward the 8<sup>th</sup> March was, as already underlined, completely different than the one in 2017. Indeed, in 2017 women’s rights associations’ strategies were characterised by protests, sit-ins and physical occupations of public places. On the other hand, in 1947, 8<sup>th</sup> March was perceived as a celebration, an occasion for women to take a break from their work and for being celebrated by men (Gnignola, 2017). Anna Grignola (2017), in her interview, explained well this concept by saying that at that time “8<sup>th</sup> March was welcomed by women as a chance to go out alone, without the husband or children, to go dancing and to put on a nice dress”. These were all activities that women were not used to do, and therefore they perceived 8<sup>th</sup> March as a moment to break their daily routine (Ibid.).

According to a 8<sup>th</sup> March slogan, preserved in the U.D.I archives:

*“on this day men offer a present to women and they helped them with the housework; then, women in every district or village meet and they go all together to the cinema, theatres, bars, and they had fun”* (Archivio U.D.I "La Goccia").

Therefore, if in 2017 women’s rights associations organised public demonstrations and sit-ins, in 1947 they organised activities related to the celebration of women in a festive atmosphere. In the centre of Rome, women’s associations together with the main national newspaper’s agencies, organised few competitions which were reserved to women (Capomazza & Ombra , 2009). For example, it was organised the prize to award the “best female student in Rome”, or the “best grandmother in Rome”, or the “best wife” (Ibid.). These competitions reflect the spirit of festivity which characterised the International Women’s Day in 1947 (Ibid.).

Moreover, together with activities which allowed women to break their routine, the analysis highlighted the fact that women’s rights associations organised activities related to commemorate people who died during the World Wars, or to visit people hospitalized after the end of the Second World War (Archivio UDI “La Goccia”).

In light of these findings, it seems that the strategies of mobilisation used on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 did not really reflect the characteristics of the first wave of feminism. On the other hand, as it was the case with the issues/themes analysed in the previous chapter, the strategies seem to be more connected to the historical moment which the country was experiencing, after the Second World War.

Despite of this, the analysis of the strategies of mobilisation used in the city of Rome, which is our case study, highlighted an interesting aspect of this topic. Indeed, women's rights associations organised a big exhibition to celebrate women, which raised a great participation from the public (Archivio UDI "La Goccia"). In particular, for the first time in Italy the exhibition celebrated "women's intellectual activities and works" (Ibid.). Many important academics took part and gave a speech in this event, and, among the others, Giuseppe Ungaretti (Ibid.).

According to Knappe and Lang (2015), one of the characteristics of the strategies of mobilisation used by first wave feminists was the focus on "education and enlightenment". It can be assumed that the analysis of our case study reflects partially this characteristic.

### *Media/Mean of Mobilisation*

If we compare the International Women's Day in 1947 and 2017, the media and means of mobilisation used by women's rights associations are different. In 2017, our analysis underlined the fact that the main media used were social networks and the internet, while traditional ones as newspapers and TV were limitedly involved in the mobilisation. On the other hand, the analysis of the documents and articles collected on the International Women's Day in 1947 reveals that newspapers and radios had a very important role in promoting the celebration. Women's rights associations had their own newspapers and they used them to present the celebration and its keywords. For example, UDI's newspaper "Noi Donne" dedicated its first page and introduction to the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 (Noi Donne, 1947).

Moreover, in the historical archive of UDI it is possible to find letters which UDI exchanged with local newspapers and radios. In these letters, UDI asked them to publish slogans and articles which presented the main themes and issues of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947, together with a list of the main activities organised on that occasion (UDI "La Goccia", 1947). Other means of mobilisation which were very popular in 1947 were pamphlets or booklets where the associations presented the main women's claims for the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 (Ibid.).

If we apply the wave narrative, the means of mobilisation used by women's rights associations in 1947 seem to reflect partially the ones which characterised first wave of feminism, which are "pamphlets and newspapers" (Knappe & Lang, 2014). According to Knappe and Lang (2014), first

wave of feminism's means of mobilisations include also street protests. On the contrary, this strategy of mobilisation was not found in the analysis of the International Women's Day in 1947.

## 1972

Compared to 1947, in 1972 women's rights associations and movements showed a completely different attitude towards the organisation of the International Women's Day. First of all, the documents collected underlined that 8<sup>th</sup> March 1972 was perceived as a moment of struggle instead of festivity. Indeed, in almost all the slogans and documents collected, it is possible to read the word "struggle", "fight", "female claims" (UDI "La Goccia"). This is one of the reason why International Women's Day in 2017 is often compared to the one in 1972.

### *Strategies of Mobilisation*

According to Knappe and Lang (2014), second wave of feminism is characterised, with regards to strategies of mobilisation, by "occupation of different public stages with physical protests, consciousness-raising, civil disobedience" (Ibid.). These characteristics reflect the strategies of mobilisation used by women's rights associations on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1972. Indeed, this year for the first time in Italian history, 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in Rome was characterised by street protests (Capomazza & Ombra , 2009). The main manifestation was organised by the Pompeo Magno association in the Campo Dei Fiori square in the centre of the city (Ibid.). As it was the case for 2017, it was a parade (Ibid.). On that occasion, more than 20.000 women took part in the parade, using slogans and songs in order to promote their claims (Rai television , 2012). The parade obtained great participation of the public, but it also concerned the police (Ibid.). Indeed, being the first time that Italian women manifested in the streets, policemen attended the manifestation in order to be sure that it would not generate any problems (Ibid.). At the sight of some provocative slogans regarding abortion, prostitution and sexual freedom, they intervened for dispersing the crowd (Ibid.). Few people among the protesters tried to resist to policemen's intervention, and the result was that several people in the parade got arrested and injured (Capomazza & Ombra , 2009). Because of this, the 8<sup>th</sup> march 1972 is still remembered as an example of second wave of feminism' struggles in Italy (Ibid.).

Alongside with the parade, the analysis of the documents collected highlighted the fact that women's rights associations organised many other protests in Rome. In particular, in many cases they occupied workplaces, claiming better working conditions for women (Le Donne Protagoniste nella Lotta per il Rinnovamento della Società , 1972). Articles from 1972 newspapers mention at least four different factories which were occupied by women during the International Women's Day



(UDI “La Goccia”). The newspaper La Repubblica wrote that it was “*a day of struggle: this is what the many manifestations organised for the 8<sup>th</sup> March tell us about this year’s International Women’s Day*” (La Repubblica, 1972). The writer continued saying that “*women in Rome have shown that they are aware of the fact that the struggle for women’s rights is a necessary condition for a social and political renovation*” (Ibid.).

The use of protests as main strategies of mobilisation is confirmed also by many slogans or pamphlets which were spread by women’s rights associations in order to promote the manifestations, and which can be found in the UDI historical archive. A very explicative example is a pamphlet published by the Pompeo Magno association in order to raise mobilisation for the parade in the Campo dei Fiori square. It says:

*“In 1972 women are still slaves! Even if we work 90 or 40 hours at home, we are not paid and we are still considered unemployed!*

*If you are an employee and you are tired of being forced to be good looking at work,*

*If you are a teacher and you realised that this career is the only one possible for women who have studied,*

*If you are a mother and you didn’t have the right to decide when to have children....*

*If you are a woman, let’s fight together for our freedom!”* (Pompeo Magno, 1972).

This is one example of the many pamphlets and slogans with a very engaging and consciousness-raising content which were used in order to raise women’s participation for the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 1972, and which reflect once again the characteristics of second wave of feminism (Knappe & Lang , 2014).

The strategies highlighted so far seem to confirm a similarity between International Women’s Day in 1972 and 2017. Despite of this, our analysis reveals also differences between them. For example, it emerged from the interview with Anna Grignola the fact that in 1972 women’s rights associations in Rome were quite divided. In particular, the division involved new and old associations, because the old ones, like UDI, organised activities related mainly to occupation of workplace (Grignola, 2017). On the other hand, new ones like Pompeo Magno used street protests and manifestations as main strategy of mobilisation (Ibid.). This division was due to the fact that old associations thought that, in order to obtain more women’s rights, it was necessary to maintain a more moderate way of fighting (Ibid.). On the other hand, new associations believed that only the revolution in the street could allow them to reach their goals (Ibid.). This division marks an important difference between 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1972 and 2017. Indeed, unlike 1972, International Women’s Day in 2017 was characterised by a unitary and collective way of fighting. Indeed, as we have already underlined in

the previous chapters, a characteristic of the IWD organised by Non Una di Meno is the cooperation between different associations within one common movement (Petricone, 2017).

### *Means/Media of Mobilisation*

Means and media of mobilisation mark another difference between the 8<sup>th</sup> March in 2017 and 1972. Indeed, in this sense the International Women's Day in 1972 is more similar to the one in 1947, because, according to our analysis, newspapers and radios continued to be the main media of mobilisations, together with pamphlets and slogans published by the different women's rights associations.

Despite of this, a characteristic which emerged from the analysis of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1972 is the use of posters and signs with provocative and consciousness raising phrases. They were used during the manifestations and sit-ins (Rai television , 2012). The analysis of articles and videos from 1972 showed a massive use of them, which, as already mentioned, raised many concerns from the policemen during the Campo Dei Fiori protests (Ibid.). On the contrary, according to our analysis, they were not used in 1947 celebration.

## **1989**

As we have already mentioned, 1989, compared with 1972 and 2017, is included in a period of time in between second and third wave of feminism. Therefore, the hypothesis which has been formulated is that it presents characteristics of both second and third waves.

### *Strategies of Mobilisation*

With regards to the strategies of mobilisation, the analysis highlighted the fact that different strategies were used in 1989. Likewise 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1972 and 2017, many manifestations were organised in the city of Rome.

In particular, this year two big parades were organised (UDI "La Goccia"). The first one, in the morning, was organised by students, while the one in the afternoon by the women's rights associations (Ibid.). Both of them focused mainly on two issues, which have been already mentioned in the previous chapter: right to abortion and violence against women (La Repubblica, 1989). In both of the parades, more than 20 thousands women crossed the city of Rome with slogans, posters, songs, claiming women's right to abort and standing against violence against women (Ibid.). Because of this, newspapers compared this 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration to the ones from second wave of feminism (Ibid.). For example, La Repubblica described it as an "8<sup>th</sup> March of struggle, like during the 70s" (Ibid.). To compare the International Women's Day celebration to feminist struggles during the 70s in Italy is not a novelty in this paper's analysis. Indeed, it was

mentioned the fact that in 2017 the manifestations and sit-ins organised in Rome were compared by the media to feminist struggles during 1970s.

Despite of this, 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1989 presents also characteristics which distinguish it from the one in 1972. Indeed, we have mentioned the fact that in 1972 this day was characterised mainly by activities related to occupation of public spaces as workplace, street protests, and also episodes of civil disobedience. Moreover, 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 1972 was considered as a day of struggle for women's rights and female claims instead of a day of celebration and festivity as it was in 1947. On the other hand, the articles and documents collected on 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1989 in Rome do not mention any intervention of policemen or other similar episodes of civil disobedience. Moreover, in 1989 this Day was not described only as a day of struggle, but also as a day of festivity, of celebration of women. La Repubblica (1989), for example, called it a day of "struggle and mimosa", referring to the fact that this Day was also characterised by events to celebrate women without protesting or manifesting as it was in the 1970s.

In particular, the analysis of the documents collected in the historical archives of UDI, highlighted the fact the women's rights associations organised many cultural events on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1989, for example exhibitions, movie projections, public debates with academics (UDI "La Goccia"). Many women's rights associations, on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March, published collections of poems written by women or organised exhibitions which presented works of art made by women (Ibid.). This events were organised during the entire month of March, which was called "the women's month" (Ibid.). In Rome, for example, on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March it was published a book which contained twenty poems written by women, which was published by the International Graphic Centre of Rome and Venice with the support of local women's rights associations (Ibid.). The introduction of this book is explicative:

*"This book is published on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1989 because poetry is becoming the mean for women to express themselves, to communicate"* (Varie, 1989).

This sentence, together with the high number of cultural events organised on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1989, highlights one characteristic of this year's celebration which seems to reflect third wave of feminism. Indeed, according to Knappe and Lang (2014), third wave of feminism is characterised by strategies of mobilisations which imply "cultural activism", "personal expression", "cultural arenas as literature" (Ibid.). Therefore, despite of the fact that 8<sup>th</sup> March 1989 presents many similarities with second wave of feminism, it can be said that, in the analysis of the strategies of mobilisation in the city of Rome, elements which pertain to the third one can be found as well.

### *Means/Media of Mobilisation*

According to the analysis and codification of the documents collected, it seems that the means and media of mobilisation used by women's rights associations on the occasion of 8<sup>th</sup> March 1989 are similar to the ones used in 1947 and 1989. Newspapers, slogans and pamphlets continued to play an important role in mobilising women and raise awareness on specific themes and claims.

Despite of this, the analysis of 1989 celebration highlighted also the use of means of mobilisation related to literature and culture. Indeed, as already mentioned, in 1989 women's rights associations organised many cultural activities as exhibitions, movie nights, book publications. The aim was to celebrate women and to involve them in the 8<sup>th</sup> March celebrations (Gnignola, 2017). These characteristics, as already underlined, seem to reflect the ones of third wave of feminism, according to Knappe and Lang (2014).

Despite of this, Knappe and Lang (2014) also claim that third wave of feminism in Western European countries is characterised by personalised communications via the web. This is a characteristic which did not emerge at all from our analysis of International Women's Day in 1989. It can be assumed that it is due to the fact that 1989 is not completely part of the period of time which is normally associated to third wave of feminism.

## ***DISCUSSION***

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The purpose of this inquiry was to find out whether it is possible to recognize a new wave of feminism in 2017 in Italy, when comparing 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 2017 with the ones in the past. In order to answer to this question, the analysis focused on the comparison of 8<sup>th</sup> March in 2017, 1947, 1972 and 1989. This comparison included few elements, which were issues addressed, strategies and means/media of mobilisation used. Few research questions were formulated in order to guide this comparison:

- *Which are the main issues addressed by the IWD in 2017?*
- *Which are the ones addressed by the IWD in 1949, 1972 and 1989?*
- *Which are the main strategies and means/media of mobilisation used during the IWD in 2017?*
- *Which are the ones used in the IWD in 1949, 1972 and 1989?*

Alongside with the comparative analysis of the different celebrations, another research question was formulated:

- *If we apply the wave narrative, can we recognise any of the waves of feminism that the researchers have identified in global feminism so far?*

This question was included in this paper's inquiry because, in order to understand if a new wave of feminism is emerging in Italy nowadays, it is firstly necessary to understand which waves of feminism this country experienced in the past. Moreover, in the case it did experience previous waves of feminism, they have to be compared with the one it is facing in 2017, in order to find out whether they differ or not and, consequently, if it is possible to talk about a new wave of feminism.

By trying to answer to these research questions, this inquiry's analysis highlighted important findings.

Starting from 1947, the analysis of the issues, means and media of mobilisation did not highlight characteristics which can be clearly associated to the first wave of feminism. Indeed, it emerged that this year was particularly influenced by the historical situation which the country was facing, which is the aftermath of World War II. Indeed, the attention was more on peace and brotherhood, which are themes which concern the entire Italian society. 8<sup>th</sup> March was perceived as a moment to celebrate, a festivity, instead of a day for women's claims. Despite of this, the analysis of the issues revealed that women's rights associations, and in particular UDI, included in the celebration also few women's claims. For example, they discussed about women's working conditions and family rights. Moreover, it emerged a focus on complementarity between men and women. These elements seem to reflect the ones normally associated to first wave of feminism (Knappe and Lang, 2014). The analysis of the strategies and means of mobilisation used on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1947 seems to confirm this assumption. Indeed, only in the case of exhibitions which were organised in

Rome on the 8<sup>th</sup> March, in order to promote women's intellectual works, it is possible to find a characteristic of first wave of feminism' strategies of mobilisation. With regards to means and media of mobilisations, the use of pamphlets and newspapers reflects first wave of feminism's means of mobilisation, but the absence of street protests, on the other hand, do not.

All in all, the analysis of the 1947 celebration seems to confirm the hypothesis which was formulated at the beginning of this inquiry. Indeed, 1947 is located at the end of the period normally associated to first wave of feminism (Knappe & Lang , 2014). Therefore, it could be assumed that the fact that few elements seem to reflect the characteristics associated to this wave of feminism in Western European countries, may be caused by the fact that it was about to end. Moreover, this wave in Western countries focused mainly on obtaining women's right to vote (Walby, 2011). The fact that Italian women obtained the right to vote in 1945 could be an explanation to the fact that International Women's Day in 1947 was perceived as a festivity and a moment for celebrating women instead of fighting for their claims.

Unlike 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1947, 1972 seems to reflect the elements associated to second wave of feminism. Many aspects of the issues and strategies of mobilisation used by women's rights associations and movements this year coincide with the characteristics of this wave of feminism. Concerning the themes, this inquiry's analysis highlighted a focus on criticism of the invisibility and marginalisation of women in public life and of patriarchy in Italian society. It was underlined the attempt to include women's issues in public debates, which reflected the second wave feminism slogan "the personal is political" (Cedroni & Calloni, 2012). Alongside with issues addressed, the main strategies of mobilisation used this year were the same which are associated to second wave of feminism (Cedroni & Calloni, 2012) (Knappe & Lang , 2014) (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). It was the first time Italian women protested in the street, and this caused moments of civil disorder and fight between protesters and policemen. Consciousness raising, as underlined, was another strategy of mobilisation which emerged from the analysis and reflected second wave of feminism characteristics. Therefore, even in this second case it can be assumed that the analysis confirmed the hypothesis formulated on second wave of feminism. Indeed, 1972 is located in the moment of highest influence of second wave of feminism in Western European countries, and this clearly emerged by this inquiry's analysis.

Unlike 1972, 1989 is an year which is located between two waves of feminism: second wave of feminism, particularly its late, "institutional" stage and third wave of feminism. Even in this case, the analysis partially confirmed our hypothesis, especially with regards to issues and strategies of mobilisation. Indeed, the attention to legislative aspects as the 194 law and the implementation of

legislation against sexual violence, seems to reflect the characteristics of the institutional phase of second wave of feminism, which developed in Western European countries during the 90s.

At the same time, the street protests and parades organised in Rome recall the strategies of second wave of feminism during the 70s. This is the reason why many newspapers compared this celebration to the ones in the 70s in Italy. Despite of this, elements of third wave of feminism can be found as well. In particular, alongside with street protests, women's rights associations organised many cultural events as exhibitions, conferences with academics, book premiere, which seem to reflect the "cultural activism" and "shift to cultural arena" which, according to Knappe and Lang (2014) characterised strategies of mobilisation during the third wave of feminism in Western Europe.

All in all, the analysis of the International Women's Day in 1947, 1972 and 1989 seems to confirm the hypotheses formulated. In particular, according to this paper's findings, it possible to recognise clearly the characteristics of second wave of feminism in Italian women's activism. These characteristics can be found not only in 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1972, but also in the one in 1989.

Despite of that, with regards to first and third wave, it seems inappropriate to claim that it was possible to recognize clear signs of these waves in the analysis of 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration. It could be assumed that Italy experienced strongly second wave of feminism whilst, on the other hand, the other waves were experienced in a less intensely way.

After having discussed the previous waves of feminism as emerged by the analysis of 8<sup>th</sup> March celebrations, the focus will now shift to 2017 celebration.

From the analysis, it emerged the fact that many elements in this year's celebration in Rome recalled those of previous waves of feminism and, in particular, the second one. This is the reason why many newspapers compared International Women's Day in 2017 with the feminist struggles during the 70s in Italy. This seems to confirm once again the fact that second wave of feminism was experienced intensively in Italy.

With regards to the issues, among the several points addressed by this year's celebration, one was the autonomy of women. In particular, this point refers to the necessity to recognise the importance of places specifically for women, as the women's crisis centres, within Italian society. Another theme refers to the legal aspects and, specifically, legal rights and legal protection for women who experience violence. According to Knappe and Lang (2014) and Evans and Chamberlain (2015), both these themes are associated to second wave of feminism in Western European countries. Continuing the analysis of the issues addressed, the Non Una di Meno movement also included in 2017 themes for the International Women's Day the economic sphere and, in particular, women's



working conditions and economic independence. These are themes which can be found in both first and second waves of feminism (Knappe & Lang , 2014) (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015).

The analysis of the main strategies of mobilisation used by women's rights associations in Rome on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March confirmed the reference to second wave of feminism which emerged from the themes' investigation. Indeed, the International Women's Day this year was characterised by collective actions, sit-ins, occupations of working places, which are strategies which were used in 1972 mobilisation and that recall second wave of feminism. In particular, as already mentioned, the organisation of a strike can be associated to this wave of feminism.

According to these partial findings, it could be said that the analysis of the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 celebration in Rome seems to show that Italy is experiencing a return to second wave of feminism. Despite of this, other elements which emerged from the analysis seem to support the hypothesis on the emergence of a new wave of feminism. With regards to the issues, the investigation underlined a transversality in addressing the main theme of gender-based violence which was not found in previous 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration. It was said that this transversal approach reflect a characteristic of modern feminism: intersectionality. Indeed, gender-based violence was addressed by including different social categorisations such as race, sexual orientation and gender and this is, as already explained, the essence of intersectionality (Vidal, 2014). This is a characteristic which was not found in previous 8<sup>th</sup> March celebrations' analysis. Indeed, they addressed specific themes as violence against women, legal rights, women's marginalisation in the society, by they did not recognise the interconnection between these themes.

Moreover, another aspect which emerged from the analysis and which is closely connected to intersectionality, is a tendency towards inclusiveness. For example, 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration was characterised by the presence of many men and boys. This is a clear difference with International Women's Day in 1972, when women's rights associations and movements did not want to include men in their struggle against patriarchy (Grignola, 2017).

Moreover, Non Una di Meno was inclusive in the fact that they claimed the importance to include LGBTQI people and immigrants women in the struggle against gender-based violence. On the contrary, the analysis of 8<sup>th</sup> March in 1947, 1972 and 1989 did not highlight the attempt to include LGBTQI people and immigrants in the celebrations. Only in 1989 celebration it was possible to find references to 3<sup>rd</sup> World women, but only in very few occasions. Therefore, it can be said that inclusiveness and intersectionality are characteristics which mark a clear difference between International Women's Day in the past and in 2017. These characteristics have been defined by fourth wave of feminism scholars as the "defining frameworks" of this new wave (Cochrane, 2013). Despite of this, two clarifications have to be made. First of all, despite of the attention given to

inclusiveness and intersectionality, the people interviewed during this paper's research have underlined the fact that these approaches were not completely reached in practice. For example, it emerged the fact that immigrants women did not really took part in the movement and in the organisation of the 8<sup>th</sup> March, despite of the fact that immigrant women's rights were included among the issues to be addressed for the International Women's Day. Moreover, it was mentioned the fact that Non Una di Meno is divided on the issue related to men's participation in the movement. Indeed, part of the members of this movement do not want to include men or people who are not biological women in it, and they criticised men's participation in the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 parade. In Antonella Petricone's words, Italian women's activists are still far from reaching real inclusiveness and intersectionality.

Moreover, it has to be notified the fact that attention to the differences and diversity is not a characteristic only of fourth wave of feminism. Indeed, according to prominent scholars, third wave of feminism in Western world was characterised by a "focus on diversity" and on "non-white issues" (Knappe & Lang , 2014) (Evans & Chamberlain, 2015). This term, the characteristics of inclusiveness and intersectionality which emerged from the analysis of 8<sup>th</sup> March celebration in 2017 could be read as characteristics of third wave of feminism as well as of fourth one.

What marks a difference between these two waves of feminism, by the way, are means and media of mobilisation used by women's activists. Indeed, researchers who support the emergence of a fourth wave of feminism claim that "maybe the fourth wave of feminism is online" (Solomon, 2009). This characteristic clearly emerged from the analysis of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017, when social media and the internet played an essential role in mobilising people and in the organisation of the events. This marks a clear difference with International Women's Day in 1947, 1972 and 1989. In these years, means and media of mobilisation did not really differ, and in all the cases they were represented mainly by newspapers, radios, pamphlets and slogans.

All in all, this inquiry's findings make it possible to draw few conclusions.

First of all, a theoretical one. Indeed, they confirm the importance of applying an "inter-wave dialogue" in the investigation of waves of feminism (Evans and Chamberlain, 2015: 2). As emerged from the analysis of International Women's Day in Italy, waves intersect and influence each others, because they are "overlapping and intersecting periods of activism" (Knappe and Lang, 2014: 3). For example, International Women's Day celebration in 2017 in Rome has elements which can be associated to a new wave of feminism alongside with others which show similarities with second wave of feminism. In this sense, to apply wave narrative can be useful in order to stress the continuity of the feminist movement (Evans and Chamberlain, 2015: 3). This term, this inquiry

seems to suggest the importance of using the term wave in a “fluid way that privileges continuity, inclusivity and multiplicity (Ibid, p. 4).

The second conclusion that can be drawn refers to the main problem formulation. After having compared International Women’s Day celebration in Italy in different years, it is possible to say that 2017 celebration presents on one hand a close connection with second wave of feminism. On the other hand, it has elements which seem to confirm the emergence of a new wave of feminism. Indeed, they did not emerged from the analysis of previous 8<sup>th</sup> march celebrations. These elements are media of mobilisation used, in particular social networks and the internet, and the use of an inclusive and intersectional approach. Therefore, in light of these findings it can be assumed that Italian women’s rights associations are experiencing a new wave of feminism and, in particular, that they are facing a fourth, “online” one.

## *CONCLUSION*

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The analysis of the International Women's Day in Rome has highlighted interesting elements on women's activism in Italy, which have been explained in the final discussion.

As it was mentioned in the introduction to this inquiry, there is few literature which focuses on waves of feminism in Italy. This research's findings suggest that fact that some characteristics of the waves of feminism can be recognised in Italian feminism. In particular, although some elements in 2017 women's activism in Rome recall previous waves of feminism, there are characteristics which can not be found in 1947, 1972 and 1989 celebrations. They, consequently, seem to support the theories which claim the emergence of a new wave of feminism in Western European countries.

The results could paved the way for further studies on the subject. Indeed, as it is explained by De Vauss (2001, p. 2), descriptive researches are fundamental to research enterprise because they provoke the "why" questions. This term, it would be interesting to try to explain the reasons why, according to our analysis, some characteristics of the waves of feminism have been experienced more than others, as it was the case for second wave of feminism. This topic could be studied by different perspectives, for example by focusing on historical or political factors.

Waves of feminism in Italy could also be studied by using a different research design and methods. For example, a possible way to further analyse the topic is offered by the article written by Elizabeth Evans (2016). In this article titled "What makes a (third) wave?" the scholar analyses the results of interviews conducted to women's activists who were asked whether they identify themselves as third wave feminists or not. This method could be applied to the Italian case: it could be possible to ask Italian women's activists whether they identify themselves as third wave or fourth wave feminists. The results could offer an alternative perspective on this inquiry's topic, which is the emergence of a new wave of feminism in Italy.

To compare the International Women's Day celebration in different years has been useful not only for answering the main problem formulation. Indeed, it has also shown how this celebration has changed over the time and, consequently, how women's rights associations and movements in Rome have altered in the last 70 years, developing different issues, strategies of mobilisation and means/media of mobilisation throughout the time. This term, the analysis of the International Women's Day can be considered a useful case study for analysing the development of women's activism over the time. For this reason, this approach could be applied also to other countries. It would be possible, for example, to analyse how this celebration evolved in other Western European countries, as for example Denmark. Moreover, it would be interesting to adopt a comparative case

study research design, analysing how the International Women's Day was celebrated in Italy and Denmark, comparing the two case studies.

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