

Abstract - PhD project: Roncati, Rossella

The *Union of Italian Women* and the *All-China Democratic Women's Federation*: Exchanges and Networks in the Global Cold War (1949-1966)

In the aftermath of World War Second, and particularly during the 1950s, a worldwide network of relations among the main national leftist female associations developed. These relations were established under the broader net of an umbrella organization, the *Women International Democratic Federation* (WIDF). Within this context, the *Union of Italian Women* (UDI) and the People's Republic of China *All-China Women's Democratic Federation* (*Fulian*), also came into contact.

Overall, the transnational relations between Italy and the PRC developed within a broader network of informal exchanges between the *Chinese Communist Party* and the *Italian Communist Party*. Important moments for establishing a bilateral friendship, were cultural and political exchange travels of the party delegates. UDI and *Fulian*, were closely related to their own country's communist party and followed this model in setting up bilateral relations. Thus, principal moments of the two female realities' liaisons consisted in exchanges of delegations: UDI's women visited China in 1954 and 1955, and the Chinese federation delegates came to Italy in 1956.

Documental evidence of these travels are preserved in the archives of the two female associations. Adopting a transcultural and feminist critical approach, I will analyze the relations between Italian and Chinese women activists by comparing the archival documentation on these travels, with other primary sources, consisting in personal documents or qualitative interview to participants or to persons closely related to them.

In light of the academic literature around this theme – particularly the Global Socialist Feminism historiographical stream –, I aimed at exploring the female relations between the two countries, while putting them in dialogue with the broader international context of the so-called, post-World War Second generation of female movements. Overall, this work will add a piece to the complex puzzle of the socialist internationalism transnational relations, and will help to unearth the female/feminist reflexions of the early Cold War period.