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Résumé de l'article

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The Future is Now From Before: Youth Climate Activism and Intergenerational Justice

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This paper draws on data from a qualitative study of youth climate activists in Cyprus to explore the notion of temporality implied in how youth interrogate intergenerational relations in the context of their struggle against climate change and the tensions therein. Acknowledging the structural age inequalities that limit their actions, youth activists drew on multiple temporal frames of present, future, and past to delineate a sense of urgency for action to prevent an irreversible catastrophe in the future and to forge a future of hope. In the process, they invited other/older generations to the climate struggle, an opening that came with expressions of ambivalence among some activists.

Key words: *intergenerational justice; climate activism; youth; temporality*

The participation of youth in the struggle against human-induced climate change has seen a surge over recent years, inspired by Greta Thunberg's school strike outside the Swedish Parliament that set the scene for a global youth movement on climate change. Youths' motivations, feelings, and experiences of activism, and of climate activism in particular, have been explored from various angles looking, for example, at the broader issue of youth political participation (Kallio, 2015), at intergenerational relations in the context of social movements (Taft & Gordon, 2015) or at intergenerational climate justice and youths' education (Stapleton, 2019). The notion of time, usually in the sense of generational or future time, has been directly or indirectly engaged with in such endeavours. Yet how this notion can be made sense of and used by young activists in their struggle against climate change has been discussed less extensively. This paper draws on data from a qualitative study of young climate activists in Cyprus to explore the notion of temporality implied in how children and young people interrogated intergenerational relations in the context of their struggle against climate change, and the tensions and ambivalences therein.

Youth in our study spoke of the climate crisis as an intergenerational justice issue, often expressing feelings of

anger, frustration, and despair as they saw themselves bearing both the burden of past generations' choices and the weight of responsibility for taking action for the sake of generations to come. Acknowledging the structural age inequalities that limit their actions and have historically been used to delegitimize their voices, youth activists mobilized multiple temporalities that encapsulated notions of both continuity and terminality, and times of present, future, and past, to serve different purposes: disrupt adult climate narratives of denial, summon to action to avert an apocalyptic end of time, legitimize their stances as "future-makers" (Spyrou et al., 2021), and call for intergenerational justice.

Appropriating different temporalities and temporal conceptualizations was crucial to how the notion of intergenerational justice was mobilized among youth in our study to critically reassess generational relations. In calling on intergenerational solidarity young activists acknowledged the limits of their activism as well as the magnitude of a problem that they argued requires a global, intertemporal, intergenerational, and interspatial approach. Yet inviting other/older generations into the climate change struggle came with expressions of ambivalence among some young activists who, on the one hand, identified with their role as "custodians of sustainable futures" (Skillington, 2019, p. 8) who challenge social inequities and promote an alternative vision of the future, yet on the other hand acknowledged that the need to be open to forming alliances with other generations comes with gains, losses, and risks. In what follows we explore how youth activists in Cyprus navigated such tensions, ambivalences, and generational power differentials as part of their broader struggle for political participation by (re)appropriating traditional categories of adulthood and childhood and mobilizing multiple temporalities as they narrate themselves as young activists. We begin with a discussion of the theoretical concepts and ideas with which we engage. We then proceed to the methodological details of our study before discussing our findings in two broad sections and concluding with some thoughts on temporality and intergenerational climate justice.

Literature review

Anthropogenic climate change has been characterized as the greatest crisis humanity is facing and will need to face in coming decades. The gravity and extent of human intervention on the planet has led some to argue that we have entered a new geological time, the Anthropocene, defined by the (detrimental) effects of humans' choices on the climate and all of the planet's living creatures. Despite mounting social pressure and scientists' dire warnings, political efforts for a global alliance, such as the Paris Agreement in 2015, to slow down climate change and fend off its impacts have been accused of falling far short of meeting any objectives that could have a tangible effect on delaying the catastrophic course we are on (see Nguyen, 2020, for a discussion on the Paris Agreement and intergenerational justice). Amid rising general dissatisfaction with the way the political establishment has handled the climate crisis, the last few years have seen the mobilization of youth across the globe against climate change. Though youth participation in climate action is not new, the appearance on the scene of Greta Thunberg, who in 2018 as a young girl went on a "school strike for climate" outside the Swedish Parliament, inspired a global youth activist movement called Fridays for Future, which has seen young people all over the world rally to protest adult inaction and inertia with regard to the climate crisis (de Moor et al., 2020; Wahlström et al., 2019), raising questions of intergenerational equity (see Puaschunder, 2020) and intergenerational climate justice.

The arena of youth activism lends itself suitably for examining and interrogating adult-youth relationships (Taft & Gordon, 2015), potentially even destabilizing their inherent hierarchy, even if research has shown this can occur with questionable success. For example, Taft's (2015) study on the intergenerational movement of Peruvian working children shows that despite an overall positive outlook toward and appreciation of adult involvement in a youth social movement given that adults may provide structural infrastructure, access to authorities, and continuity in the movement, structural efforts to privilege youth "voice" and ownership of the movement are

not always enough to escape the age-stratified nature of adult-youth relationships. As Taft (2015) notes, despite a tradition of intergenerational dialogue, power struggles and tensions between youth and adult activists did in fact arise in ways that eventually constrained youth political activism.

When it comes to youth climate activism in particular, young people's claim to their right to be heard as equal interlocutors in the present but with a legitimate interest in their capacity as heirs to/of the future can be situated in a debate about intergenerational (climate) justice that has been growing over the past decades. Given that the kinds of future(s) generations-to-come can both envision and pursue highly depend on the kinds of decisions other generations make today and have made in the past, the debate on intergenerational justice is heightened by a grave concern that past and current generations' choices will soon / already have curtailed severely the ability of youth and future people to lead livable lives and forge futures of their own.

The question of temporal responsibility emerges as a significant ethical dimension in examining intergenerational issues, and there has been some discussion in the literature as to how existing generations could be encouraged to forge ethical links with future generations that will allow for the sustenance of environmental responsibility, particularly in the face of everyday pressures and competing moral responsibilities that may weaken such commitment (Shirani et al., 2013). A significant challenge to thinking intergenerationally comes from questions of rights and obligations that refer to multiple generations, not only of synchronous temporalities, but particularly in relation to those who belong to the distant future in terms of "how far obligations to future people reach, what can be done for their benefit without imposing excessive economizing on the generations alive today, and where the motivation comes from if there is no basis in social cooperation and practical accountability" (Diprose et al., 2017, p. 9).

Youth activism on climate change has tended to highlight a more collective or generational rights-based approach, envisioning a more just society and underlining the need for an intergenerational effort toward its creation (Skillington, 2019). In her analysis, Skillington (2019) argues that youth "emerge as societal carriers of alternative visions of climate justice" (p. 7) who call out the deeply seated social, temporal, and spatial inequalities in the course of humanity's path to "progress" The Western world's industrialization has historically led to the depletion of natural resources at the detrimental expense of those who contributed least to it in different times across generations of past and present and in different spaces as the rich North and West have reaped the material benefits of industrialization. Yet, the industrialized world has not been held accountable for the damning consequences both to the natural environment and with regard to the unequal distribution of the generated wealth. Youth, Skillington argues, dare to challenge these inequalities and have the audacity to propose an alternative vision of the future that requires an intergenerational partnership for democracy built on principles of (intergenerational) justice.

As children and youth are asked to bear the burden of past generations' choices, they are put in a rather precarious position: They are far more susceptible than adults to direct and indirect harmful effects of anthropogenic climate change given that, for example, their physiological defence systems are less able than adults' to deal with the direct consequences of droughts, natural disasters, and extreme heat, such as the increase in parasitic diseases that will result from warmer temperatures and environmental toxins (Sanson & Burke, 2020). They are also more vulnerable to indirect consequences of a psychosocial nature due to their dependency on adults, such as the rise of intergroup conflict due to increasing scarcity of food and natural resources and of economic and climate migration. The climate crisis also impacts their ability to dream and plan for the future (Sanson & Burke, 2020) and has been found to be associated with feelings of helplessness and hopelessness among children and young people (Ojala, 2012). Notably, these negative effects are not experienced by children equally; rather, they are suffered disproportionately

by those who are exposed to more risk factors and fewer means through which to protect themselves. All of the above, Sanson and Burke (2020) argue, highlight the urgency to approach the anthropogenic climate crisis as both an issue of intergenerational justice and an immediate threat to peace due to the risk of climate-related extreme violence.

Relatedly, looking at youth climate activism as part of the broader field of youth political participation, it is critical, Bartos (2015) argues, to understand that it is not the endeavour of the autonomous individual child whose voice commands attention but rather the project of intergenerational coalition. She reminds us that silencing or jettisoning adults does not necessarily lead to a more empowered child.

Understanding the criticality of the role of relationships for children (as well as adults) moves us away from the notion of the self-reliant autonomous individual to a conceptualization that highlights our interdependence as living beings with (other) humans (Bartos, 2015), other living creatures, and more-than-human others (Rooney, 2019). It also brings forth the temporal dimension of these relationships: As children transition in and through childhood toward other stages of their lives they are enmeshed in encounters with other beings, both human and more-than-human, and their times (Rooney, 2019), as both beings and becomings of/in the future (Bartos, 2015). As such beings and becomings, they/we are implicated in relationships of affect, affecting others (human and more-than-human) and being affected by them (Instone & Taylor, 2015). And with this mutual affect comes the question of inheritance, of how we came to be and have what we have, and how we pass it on to others to come, bringing us right back face to face with the issue of intergenerational climate justice. As Instone and Taylor (2015) put it, "geo-history is inheritance, and we are deeply implicated in the conditions of our common inheritance in personal, political and intellectual ways" (p. 140). We do not, in fact, exist outside of this inheritance for which we are accountable.

These dimensions of relationality and temporality are precisely what youth activists in our study highlighted as they discussed adult involvement in their movement and their visions of the future. They were also reminiscent of what Groves (2011) discussed as the *political imaginary of care* and the connected futures. This political imaginary of care is at times invoked in climate change discourse by reference to "our children" and the concern for their future. As Kverndokk (2020) argues, the mobilization of family cycles, namely "our children," to refer to generations in texts of interest she examines, effectively succeeds in reducing deep geologic time to the imminent future of the subsequent one or two generations. This reduction enables youth activists, she notes, to successfully reappropriate this trope as they claim their right to be heard as children and on behalf of the children of tomorrow (Kverndokk, 2020), very much like the participants in our study.

Children playing with the trope of children (Kverndokk, 2020) in climate discourse opens up the question of (generational) time and temporality, inviting us to rethink time(s) as plural. To accomplish the latter demands that we be attentive to (the time[s] of) others: to ice time and water time (Loveless, 2013), forest time, tree time, crow time (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Kummen, 2016), weather time (Rooney, 2019), and many other times, so that we "may orient [ourselves] into a different ecological accountability" (Loveless, 2013, p. 130). Drawing on scholars working in environmental humanities, Pacini-Ketchabaw and Kummen (2016) discuss the pedagogical implications of raising awareness on temporal diversity among young children to urge for the decentering of human time.

Following a similar train of thought, in her discussion on different conceptions of time and the implications for early childhood education, Farquhar (2016) challenges the notion of linear, teleological, and sequential time valued in early childhood education curricula to propose the reconceptualization and broadening of time to account for irregularities, inconsistencies, and overlaps in the concepts of disordered time and distended time, and the possibilities of alternative subjectivities in these alternate notions of time. Drawing on social analyses of time

emphasizing how the meaning and experience of time are socially ascribed, organized, and structured, Farquhar suggests an escape from linear time as reflecting and reflected in a teleological evolutionary route to modern "progress," to other times that allow us to reconfigure and negotiate other subjectivities with/in the world around us. She discusses the concept of disordered time as associated with chaos, messiness, and irregularity and distended time as more fluid, as "a formulation involving irregular patterns of memory (past) and expectation (future), both of which are interpreted in the present" (p. 416). Distended time thus "allows us to conceive of intergenerational projects, either historical or futuristic" (p. 416). Drawing on the work of philosophers such as Heidegger and Ricoeur, Farquhar argues that distended time destabilizes our understanding of time as fragmented, as distinct periods of time in the past, present, and future, and reconceptualizes them "as sometimes overlapping, sometimes co-present, and sometimes one subsumed within the other" (p. 410). This is precisely the generational time youth climate activists in our study used to challenge the temporal understanding of adults and claim their right to be heard in the now—but while calling out the past and into the future, subsuming one into the other to expand the sense of subjectivity that can be rendered possible in realizing our entanglements with worlds and times of humans and more-than-humans.

Methodology

This paper draws on data collected in the course of a qualitative project conducted between January 2020 and May 2021 on youth activism for climate change through the case study of Youth for Climate Cyprus (henceforth Y4C, an acronym activists themselves used for their group), which is a grassroots youth movement set up in 2019, run and organized by young people in Cyprus to fight against climate change. According to young activists, Y4C was inspired by the work of Greta Thunberg and has maintained ties to the global Fridays For Future (FFF) movement.

The project originally sought to explore, via the use of qualitative methods such as textual analysis, interviews, and observations (Creswell, 2013), how young people made meaning of their activism and the ways and forms in which they self-organized and operated. More specifically, a total of 20 individual interviews (an initial interview and a follow-up interview with each of 10 participants) and two focus group interviews (with 4 participants in each) were conducted with 18 young activists (13 girls and 5 boys) 14 to 22 years of age. Participants were recruited through the snowball method and were selected based on the criterion of having active involvement in Y4C, mostly in leadership positions. The first individual interview focused on young activists' experiences and meanings of climate activism. During the second interview, participants were asked to share and discuss photos they had taken themselves or of their choosing that exhibited their understanding of climate change activism and climate change in general. Likewise, the two focus group interviews were also conducted with the method of photo elicitation (Meo, 2010). Most of the interviews were conducted online due to social distancing measures precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the onset of which coincided with the period of data collection for the study. In addition to the interviews, a number of observations were originally planned of events organized by Y4C, such as protests and environmental awareness activities. However, only a very small number of these observations and events eventually materialized due to the pandemic.

The study obtained ethics approval from the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee, and all participants (as well as their parents/guardians, where applicable) provided their informed consent and/or assent prior to their participation in the study. All participants' names below have been replaced with pseudonyms.

Mobilizing time: Framing the fight against climate change as an intergenerational justice issue

In this first section of our findings we discuss how youth in our study introduced multiple temporalities in their discourse on climate change as a means of legitimizing their voice as political actors as well as destabilizing generational hierarchies.

Climate change as an intergenerational justice issue

To understand these young activists' fight against the climate crisis is to first and foremost acknowledge how they framed climate change primarily as a social issue rather than an environmental one. All of our participants provided a sophisticated understanding of the causes and ramifications—individual, structural, institutional, and social—of human-induced climate change, which have been contributing to it across space and time. More precisely, they saw human-driven climate change as (1) the outcome of choices being made since the industrialization period in the northern and western hemisphere aimed at maximizing profit in the name of progress and in the interest of "industries, corporations, the big funds" (Chara, aged 18), (2) the result of the prevalence of a consumerist lifestyle driven by the capitalist economic system that has permeated all facets of society, and (3) the outcome of decisions (or the lack thereof) of a political structure susceptible to corruption by the corporate world at both the national and the global level. As Mirto (aged 19) explained to us, a modernist way of life that is based on consumption (of food, material products, transportation vehicles, fuels, etc.) and driven by profit maximization makes it hard to point fingers and renders everybody an accomplice and a contributor to the problem. Yet, despite the almost universal contribution to the problem, young activists were eager to note that there are important disparities in the share of responsibility for the problem, in the distribution of its negative effects, and in the ability to deal with them.

The recognition of the complexity and historicity of related dimensions and factors is what prompted our participants to frame the climate crisis as primarily a social problem that is shouldered unequally across space, social groups, generations, and even species. They pointed to the unsustainable extractivist practices of international corporations that exploit the natural resources of poor countries. In reconceptualizing the climate crisis as a social issue, young activists were particularly concerned with how nations in less industrialized countries, which have historically contributed the least to climate change, will suffer and are already suffering the most from its adverse effects, with their populations experiencing dislocation, food and water shortages, and/or violence associated with climate change. Even in the industrialized world, youth stressed, people from the more socially and physically vulnerable social groups, including the poor, children, and the elderly, are already or will soon be less able to counter the negative consequences of climate change for their quality of life brought by, for instance, the impact of further rise in temperatures.

The rather apocalyptic scenes narrated by some of the young activists were often accompanied by feelings of anger and exasperation when they were invited to envision their futures. Addressing the politics of emotions is paramount to understanding the experiences of youth activism. Media representations of youth activists' emotions of anger or anxiety have been found elsewhere to maintain prevalent societal images of youth as "rebellious truants" or "anxious pawns" (Mayes & Hartup, 2021, p. 9), thereby trivializing youths' commitment to their social cause. Our participants were acutely attuned to such deficit representations of youth (see also Liou & Literat, 2020). Evi (aged 16), for example, said, "Yes, we are having a peace protest […] but you can tell how enraged we are with the way they deal with youth demonstrations. The fact that for some reason they think we are, that we will create chaos or that we will cause destruction all around us." Yet, bringing to the fore the expression of emotions such as anger, anxiety, fear, and hope, which the participants identified and named themselves, speaks to the ways in which

emotions critically shape youth activists' experiences on both personal and collective levels, as well as lays bare the inherent political and cultural nature of emotional repertoires that renders the expression of some emotions more appropriate or intelligible than others.

Most of our participants struggled to strike a delicate, if tense, balance between pessimism and optimism as they offered their predictions of a dire future, worried that the people of the future will be left to lead unlivable lives on account of the actions and inactions of past generations. A different value system was seen by young activists as a prerequisite for social and environmental change and the articulation of alternate futures (see Spyrou et al., 2021). Such shift in values would move away from a system of valorizing profit toward one of privileging intergenerational collaboration, equity, and interspecies and intergenerational respect as humans and the more-than-human become entangled in their mutual encounters across space and in "multispecies knots" of time (Rose, 2012). These are the values that Groves (2010) refers to when he speaks of "an ethics of global and intergenerational care [that] requires us to extend our circle of concern and connection out from our space and our time, to encompass those who we will never meet but whose fates are already inextricably bound up with our own" (p. 124).

> Well, my personal vision is basically a community that works together to not just fight climate change, but generally strives for something better and more towards a positive change. Sustainable. Same time, a community where there is respect between each other as well as of the environment, 'cause there's a lot of disrespect towards our environment in general. And basically respect between people, mainly between the generations, because it's very important because usually the old generation doesn't take us too seriously. (Louis, aged 22)

Chara elaborated on the notion of interconnectedness of people and nature as she spoke of the different ways in which humans and the more-than-human become entangled in multispecies temporal relationships:

> If we take into account Darwin's theory and biology in general, we know that organisms want some X time, time duration to adjust to changes, whatever these may be. And now that everything is happening so fast, it's very difficult for the food chain and biodiversity to adapt to this. It's a problem because it affects every aspect of the animal kingdom, the flora, the fauna, everything, the whole planet.... The ice could melt, the sea level could rise, and it sets everything into a chain reaction. If the sea level rises, other problems will come. If the ice melts, another [set of problems].... Precisely because the ice has melted which has been lying there frozen for so long, and we caused climate change and it melted, so many microorganisms will be released that we will have no idea as to how to deal with them because we have never lived with them before. I mean, the earth is so many billions of years old, humanity is a very small percentage of life on earth that has been living here.

Chara's words beg the decentering of humans / human time and allude to an ethical obligation that stems from acknowledging the ramifications of its oppressive dominance. Challenging anthropocentricity potentially opens up more egalitarian ways of relating with others, both human and more-than-human, as it calls into question the supremacy of the human species. Occupying but a small fraction of the time of the more-than-human on the planet, the tyranny of human time becomes apparent as the time of biodiversity, the time of water, the time of the ice, and the time of bacteria are forcibly expedited, compelled to shrink by/in the time of humans, setting every being on a course of collision. It is in/through youths' discussing of this complexity of multispecies entanglements, multispatial crossings, and multi/intergenerational inheritances (Rooney, 2019) that the ethical convolution of the ramifications of human-driven climate change becomes apparent.

The entanglement of entanglements (multispecies, multigenerational, and multispatial) is rendered visible at the backdrop of multitemporal frames that young activists in our study used to achieve different purposes. It is to this

mobilization by youth of time and its effects that we now turn.

Mobilizing time: Introducing time(s) in climate change discourse

In historically contextualizing the climate crisis as one whose root causes can be situated in the past and which has been slow in the making, youth operationalized the temporal notion of continuity to establish climate change as the outcome of practices of past generations and, therefore, as an essentially intergenerational issue.

At the same time, the use of the temporal notion of terminality acted to disrupt certain adult narratives of climate denial that often seek to normalize human-induced climate change as a repeated natural occurrence. References by young activists to "not much time left" worked to subsume the time of the (at-risk) future into the present in order to sensitize older generations to the severity of the situation and summon them/all to action:

> Yes, and even more burden if the youth don't do it, meanwhile also trying to awaken the more elderly people, older people, because we are running out of time too. We don't really have much time to undo many of the consequences. (Chara)

A discourse of urgency due to the imminent danger of an absolute and irreversible catastrophe functions to condense time: As deep time becomes collapsed in the time of one or two generations, it shrinks (see Kverndokk, 2020, for a similar effect of the trope "our children"). The dea(r)th of time becomes thus a vehicle for the introduction of multiple temporalities and youths' claiming of generational time. Introducing the latter enables young activists to transcend linear time, bringing in what Farquhar (2016) would call distended time. In doing so, youth lay claim concurrently to present time, future time, and the collapse of one into the other—the futuresent. The multiplicity of temporalities allows young activists to assert their right to save an/their endangered future and to act in a present that determines it. Temporality thus becomes a means for legitimizing youth voice and reconfiguring generational relations:

> We all are the future as young people and we also live in the present and we all would like to be able to enjoy many of the goods we enjoy today, but unfortunately if we keep up like this for another 11 years we won't be able to.... We are also the present because many times when we say we are the future we leave out a little bit the social responsibility a young person has to act now. (Erica, aged 18)

As young people striving to amend past errors in the present in their capacity as future heirs and future makers (Spyrou, 2020), young activists mobilized multiple temporalities instantaneously in such a way that the lines between past, present, and future become blurred as each penetrates decisively, even if subtly, the other. The subtle and very real permeation of multiple temporalities and historicities into one another enables youth activists to speak in the now as "custodians of sustainable futures" (Skillington, 2019, p. 8) on behalf of others to come who are in need of protection from the injustices of the past. In doing so, many of the young activists in our study succeeded in framing the climate crisis, not merely as an environmental, a social, or an intergenerational issue, but also as one of intergenerational justice:

> That sustainability is, let's say, looking into other generations and making sure that you're gonna have what you have, and we're completely disregarding that.... Nature is just the best thing in the world, literally. And we're just destroying it. Why? So, we too die after a while? ... These people, let's say, will die at some point and all of this that's already happened we will have to fix or be fixed now by us or by, by your generation and in this generation. So I feel it's a bit unfair what's going on in a sense. (Mirto)

Often reeling with feelings of anger and fear on the verge of despair, many of our participants spoke of how unfair it felt to be put in the position of shouldering the burden of past generations' bad choices without being allowed

to be part of the solution. Bleak visions of the future filled with climate anxiety were often expressed among young people who turned to activism to demand to be heard, to awaken older generations and hold them accountable for their actions. Raising awareness/awakeness and exerting pressure on politicians and the adult-led society, seeing themselves as "catalysts" for change (Louis), were the basic aims driving their social movement repertoire, which was quite variegated. Although activists commonly shared that activism was at heart a collective form of action (rather than an individual[istic] one), this expression took sundry different forms as different members of the group were comfortable with undertaking different forms of action. This repertoire ranged from street protests (e.g., a school strike and street protest leading to the headquarters of the Ministry of Energy, Commerce, and Industry on September 20, 2019), which was seen as the quintessential form of activism owing to its visibilizing and potentially disruptive effect, as well as satire and artistic forms of activism like role playing or silent protests (e.g., on May 3, 2019, outside the Parliament), to the deployment of awareness-raising campaigns that included the provision of training and educational seminars for schools or others, in addition to the collection and dissemination of scientific data on climate change through social media, to the organization of environmental actions such as beach-cleaning expeditions and clothes-exchange events (e.g., the fashion event co-organized with Μοτιβω, a self-described responsible fabric store, to celebrate the first year of Y4C on February 20, 2020). It also included forms of everyday activism, such as striking conversations with family members and friends on the issue, and adopting lifestyle choices which they saw as more eco-friendly, such as recycling, veganism, and a conscious effort to reduce consumerism and energy consumption at their home. The notion of time and its mobilization featured prominently in the slogans youth used, such as "11 years left listen to science"; "if you don't act now, this theatrical play will finish"; "your apathy towards *my future* scars me" (emphasis in the original); "you are stealing our future" [in red in the original]; "μέλλον ή μάλλCO2ν" (a word play using the words *future* [μέλλον], *maybe* [μάλλον], and *carbon dioxide* [CO2] meant to cast doubt on the future generation's survival). In all of these slogans, temporality was utilized to both highlight the intergenerational aspect of the issue manifested in the trope of "(my) future" used to signal both the personal and the generational future and to transmit a sense of urgency for action before the end(ing) of time, expressed in the words "now," "will finish," and "years left."

The absence of a tradition of public and civil protest, combined with the presence of entrenched ageism in Cypriot society that created hurdles in their dealings with authorities and the press, forced young activists to adopt mostly lower-profile forms of activism than, say, those of civil disobedience and opt for a more "gentle activism" as one of the participants put it, even though there were also voices who saw this gentler activism as ineffective in light of adults' evident unwillingness to listen. Hence, although they saw themselves as affiliated with the global FFF movement, these youth made a conscious effort to localize their strategy to respond to the particularities of Cypriot society. This effort points to the need for more nuanced and contextual approaches to how young activists understand and enact their activism locally as well as globally and what this might mean for collective intra-, intergenerational, and global youth solidarity and adult allyship, as socioeconomic and sociocultural factors nationally and globally may render some forms of activism more or less feasible, and the suffering caused by climate change harsher for some than for others (Walker, 2020).

For young participants in our study intergenerational injustice was linked with pervasive ageism, which they saw as a major structural obstacle to their political participation on equal footing. As young people narrated institutional, social, and interpersonal barriers in their pursuit of their right to everyday politics and/or more organized forms of collective action, ageism became in fact inseparable from intergenerational injustice. Many spoke of being treated with disdain by adult institutions and authorities such as the police, politicians, governmental authorities, and the press in their effort to gain presence in the public sphere such as when organizing public protests and strikes, and others recounted how family members discredited their efforts to be heard by naming their positions kid-talk.

Interestingly, in the face of ageism young activists seemed to (re)appropriate the category of the child (and thereby also of the adult) as a strategic means to counter it. Asked by us to comment on one of the banners used by Y4C in one of their protests, which read "If you don't act like adults, we will" next to the image of an ending hourglass that seemed like it was bleeding, focus group participants shared:

> Josie: I think this is a banner where we try to shame them. They are not acting as adults and they are making us, who in their eyes are babies [kids], do things they should be doing.
>
> Mariza: I think that they were supposed to have the responsibility to, the responsibility of different things, because like I said before, we are babies who do not have much freedom yet, our brain is not developed, all these things everyone is saying, and it's their job to protect the babies or to have various responsibilities like developed adults.

By calling out adults' irresponsible behaviour, young activists sought to highlight an inconsistency between the socially perceived role of adults (and therefore also of children) and their actual practices in order to achieve a delicate subversion of the adult-child hierarchy and, in the process, propose a reimagining of generational relationships on more egalitarian and relational grounds. Cognizant of the perils of such (re)appropriation, Mariza was quick to qualify her statement above, adding, "Okay, and we, I didn't say we have no brain, that we can't do anything." Nevertheless, young activists in our study strategically opted to (re)use the very same categories they wished to destabilize, in an effort to reconceptualize the category of the child from helpless to active(ist), from ward to custodian, from risk(y) to at risk, from knowledgeless to knowledgeable, from dependent to in(ter)dependent.

It was on the acknowledgment of this interdependence among generations (and species) that young activists founded their claims to intergenerational justice, seeing intergenerational (and interspecies) respect, solidarity, and relationality as avenues for dealing with the climate crisis and, importantly, as an ethical obligation of older generations to younger and future generations who are left with little to hope for. In the face of profit valorization manifested in the uncontrollable operations of the corporate world and attributed to a stance of presentism by past generations that has led to and still perpetuates the cementing of a series of injustices across time and space, generational time was mobilized to rupture the prevalence of linear, teleological time of capitalist modernity and to introduce alternative ways of conceptualizing time as a means of recasting generations as relationally connected (see Groves, 2011).

Nevertheless, the quest for intergenerational coalition was met with reluctance among some young activists who were concerned about the perils of abandoning the movement's generational character. We explore this tension in the final section of our discussion below.

Intergenerational solidarity and ambivalence

Calls for intergenerational solidarity and alliance were not expressed without ambivalence as intergenerational equity and collaboration can come with costs (Taft, 2015). In our conversations with young activists, it became apparent that despite a general wish for intergenerational collaboration, this brought up tensions within the movement as it touched on issues of Y4C's core identity. Young activists acknowledged the importance of adult contribution for the success and endurance of their collectively organized form. Youths' lack of political power, especially in the form of institutional political participation through voting, was a major instigator for seeking adult aid. Similarly, adult support in terms of resources, both material and symbolic such as in the form of knowledge transfer from adult activist organizations, was much appreciated by youth activists who made the strategic decision to forge collaborations to counter inequalities structured along age, and in so doing alleviating their political marginalization:

> Because we may be Youth for Climate, but we want to affect the opinions of our parents and our grandparents maybe.... [T]hey're the people who are voting, so they're the people who have actual power. But also because, especially in Cyprus, change is only being brought when we have a collective and unified front.... And we also want to target people other than the youth, because managing the climate crisis is all about changing the mentality. (Pandora, aged 17)

The importance of intergenerational alliance was also emphasized, not only between/for more organized forms of activism, but also in terms of the need to engage in everyday activism manifested in the mundane of individual choices and practices. Youth activists underlined the need for a "change in the mentality" that characterizes older generations, whom the youth see as more complacent, passive, and suffering from self-interested presentism. This is precisely the niche they saw for themselves as young activists: the duty to a/rise, awaken, sensitize, mobilize, and pressure. And, because the success of mounting pressure on the "right" kind of people, namely those in power to enforce change, depends on size, youth activists solicited intergenerational support, acknowledging the limits of their own activism in anticipation of their imminent political power as future voters:

> Of course, it's Youth for Climate. Youth.... But ... we don't believe that there is a difference, and that all ages and every person are welcome at a protest, an event by Youth for Climate. We just think that young people are an easier and more achievable target at this moment.... If young people show the politicians that look, we are the generation that will vote for you in two years, in a year, or now ... they will want to make us happy. (Erica)

Yet opening up the movement to older generations does not bring only benefits. This question has also led to some unease within the movement, as there were differing perspectives regarding how open, to whom, and for what Y4C should be. Hesitation was expressed by some young activists as to whether the participation of older generations would undermine the political legitimacy of a movement by young people for young people and ultimately work against establishing a niche for youth in the political sphere. Branding the movement as a youth movement was seen as important for legitimizing youth messages of change and future-making (see Spyrou, 2020; Spyrou et al., 2021) and for the movement's political identity locally and affiliation globally. It is this branding, in fact, that enabled youth to mobilize multiple temporalities to claim space and voice in a world dominated by adults:

> Well, I think it [Y4C] will lose its character if it opens up 'cause there are other movements, like Mothers Rise Up for like mothers which (sic) are the older, and it's how do we know we have a target audience of people, older people, but we want to focus on the youth because we identify the youth as the main driver for change. (Pandora)

A possible elimination of the movement's distinctly generational character would lead to the jettisoning of generational time and therefore the diminishment of youths' ability to claim political participation, destabilize adult power, and disrupt linear, teleological conceptions of time linked to adult-centered notions of capitalist modernity. This speaks to an inherent tension and dilemma youth activists are called on to resolve. On the one hand, conceding to multispecies and multispatial entanglements (Rooney, 2019; Rose, 2012) requires the pursuit of intergenerational respect and collaboration built on common interests that evade the socially imposed category of age. On the other hand, an intergenerational character to a youth climate movement undercuts young activists' deployment of time, manifested in the mobilization of multiple temporal frames, such as generational time, futuresent time, and condensed time, as a tool in their quest for intergenerational justice, political participation, and the reordering of generational relations.

Conclusion

In this paper we sought to explore how young activists brought multiple temporalities in their discourse on climate change as a tool through which to establish themselves as legitimate political actors, destabilize the hierarchical stratification of intergenerational relations, and claim their right to an alternative future of intergenerational and interspecies respect. Using multiple notions of time, such as generational time and condensed time, young activists framed climate change as an intergenerational justice issue that commands a radical shift in values. They argued that this necessitates a move from an individualistic valorization of profit of a presentist outlook to a future-oriented ethic of generational and multispecies responsibility premised on the recognition of multispecies, multispatial, and multigenerational relationality (Groves, 2011; Rooney, 2019; Rose, 2012). To avert dystopic futures, youth summoned older/all generations to action, acknowledging the limits of their activism in an age-stratified society.

In broadening the notion of time by using different temporalities of past, present, future, and futuresent, youth essentially introduced alternative ways of connecting to others, both human and more-than-human, and in doing so, opened up different possibilities for subjectivities. For these youth, destabilizing the centrality of human / human time was premised on the realization of multispecies and multigenerational entanglements in ways that bring to the fore the frailty of human existence as well as question the morality of its dominance. Acknowledging the time of others and other times opens up possibilities for new subjectivities of human decenteredness and possibly more egalitarian relationships of species interdependence. Time, thus, is political, and youth in our study were able to utilize the politicality of temporality in their quest for intergenerational justice as an act of subversion of the established generational order that operates to exclude them. Thus, one might say that mobilizing time serves as the quintessential manifestation of youth political participation.

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