Emotional ambivalence is a psychological constituent of most human relationships, especially when in these relationships particularly complex aspects of reality are involved. Across the social sciences, this concept has long been studied with regard to its psychological implications, and its relation with social and political strategic action. The specific relationship between emotional ambivalence and individuals’ conceptualization of cultural diversity has not been, to our knowledge, sufficiently investigated. The paper aims to examine this relationship from an interdisciplinary perspective. We draw on qualitative research on youths’ conceptualizations about “multiculturalism” in Italy, in particular, on the analysis of anonymous open-ended essays written by Italian youths (aged 14-18) in some state high schools in Central Italy, and of some group interviews conducted in their schools. We present some extracts in which Italian youths express ambivalent feelings about immigration in Italy, feelings that are inextricably linked to various conflicting evaluations both about “Italians” and “immigrants”. Our suggestion is that emotional ambivalence can represent a compromise strategy through which these youths not only try to express personal feelings, but also try to make sense of different social categories, and to conform to mostly shared and favorable values of the larger society. Findings demonstrate that different levels of subjective integration and regulation of ambivalent emotions can lead to different, and at times more elaborated, representations of cultural diversity. This research contributes to understanding the interplay between affective, cognitive, and social processes in migration contexts. Moreover, the construct of “emotional ambivalence” can contribute to enriching the various conceptualizations regarding “complex thinking” and complexity theory in general in the social sciences, in particular in the study of humans’ relationship with diversity.