

HISTORY OF EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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eum

A Renata Lollo (1942-2017) cattedratica di Storia della Letteratura per l'Infanzia e protagonista di una straordinaria stagione di studi e di iniziative culturali all'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano. *In memoriam.*

To Renata Lollo (1942-2017) full professor of History of Children's Literature and protagonist of an extraordinary period of studies and cultural initiatives at the Catholic University of Sacro Cuore of Milan. In memoriam

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Contents

Indice

«Educating for beauty the youth of the new Italy». Schooling, cultural heritage and building of the national identity from Unification until the post-Second World War period

edited by

Dorena Caroli and Elisabetta Patrizi

- 11 Dorena Caroli, Elisabetta Patrizi
Becoming Italians at school through the cultural and natural heritage
- 19 Elisabetta Patrizi
The representation of the cultural and natural heritage as a training tool of national consciousness in three classics of the Nineteenth century Italian school: *Giannetto*, *Il Bel Paese* and *Cuore*
- 53 Fabio Targhetta
The landscape as a means to nationalization: Italian heritage and national identity education in the 19th and 20th century
- 85 Roberto Sani
«Discovering the best and most ignored Italy». The regional Almanacs for the primary school introduced by the Gentile Reform and the use of the cultural and natural heritage for the promotion of a national identity and a sense of citizenship
- 115 Dorena Caroli
Images and imagery of «Europe's Garden». Cultural, artistic and natural heritage in reading books for the Italian schools abroad

- 157 Luigiaurelio Pomante
«Italy, the land of beauty and art». The Italian landscape and cultural heritage in the books and the primary school textbooks from the Fascist period to the II postwar period: between national identity and sense of citizenship
- 213 Anna Ascenzi
«Italian beauties». The Italian cultural heritage and its landscape and natural resources in the school exercise books from the Fascist period to the World War II

Essays and Researches
Saggi e Ricerche

- 251 Angelo Van Gorp, Frank Simon, Marc Depaepe
Frictions and fractions in the new education fellowship, 1920s-1930s: Montessori(ans) vs. Decroly(ans)
- 271 Juan González Ruiz
Memoria y gratitud: el reconocimiento de la docencia a través de escrituras expuestas
- 297 Adelina Arredondo, Carlos Capistrán-López
Pedagogy of death in popular traditions and in the institutionalization of the day of the dead in México
- 321 Vlasta Švogler
Zeitungen. Plattform für Debatten über die Modernisierung des kroatischen Schulwesens im 19. Jahrhundert
- 337 Marcus Levy Bencostta
Las fiestas escolares en Brasil (Curitiba, 1914-1971)
- 357 Shah Al Mamun Sarkar, Nirban Manna
Juvenile rights and politicization of childhood in colonial Bengal. A socio-literary panorama
- 377 Carmen López Esteban, Fernando Almaraz Menéndez, Alexander Maz Machado
Formación de Maestros en España en el periodo de entre siglos XIX y XX: la Aritmética y el Álgebra de José Dalmáu Carles

- 399 Anthony L. Smyrnaioi
An early controversy over educational innovation: Christos Evangelides vs. John Valettas in Syros (1851-1852)
- 415 Ismail Guven
Education as a power for constituting a new nation: the relations of power and education in Turkey from the Republican period (1923) until today
- 435 Luigiaurelio Pomante
«To bring our universities back to their former glory». The debate on the legal and economical *status* of university professors in the years after World War II on the pages of «L'Università italiana» (1946-1949)
- 465 András Németh
Die pädagogischen Bewegungen der «Neuen Erziehung» und die Universitätspädagogik in Ungarn (1920-1945)
- 483 Maria Teresa Trisciuzzi
Hayao Miyazaki. The kingdom of dreams and madness
- 507 Domenico Francesco Antonio Elia
Per una promozione dei mezzi di educazione di massa nella ginnastica: l'opera di Pietro Gallo (1841-1916)
- 527 Svetlana V. Ivanova
Children's periodical press during World War II (the Great Patriotic War) by the example of the magazine «Murzilka»
- 537 Ksenija Domiter Protner
Child abuse in the family environment in Slovenia in the first part of the 20th Century
- 555 Manuele Ambrosini
Il progetto di scuola media unica in Italia nei verbali del Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione (1958-1960)
- 575 Luciane Sgarbi Santos Grazziotin, Maria Helena Camara Bastos
To civilize for devotion. The cultural practice of holy cards in christian formation rituals (XXth century)
- 593 Serena Sani
Education and politics in Italy after the second World War

- 607 Luca Montecchi
Rural schools as a source of inspiration for urban schools.
The historic example of Montesca, Umbria and its model of
school gardening
- 615 Tiziana Pironi
Educating the European conscience in the correspondence
between Ellen Key and Romain Rolland (1911-1924)
- 633 Mirella D'Ascenzo
Collettive and public memory on the walls. School naming
as a resource in history of education

Critical Reviews and Bibliography

Rassegne critiche, Discussioni, Recensioni e Bibliografia

Critical Reviews / Rassegne critiche

- 663 Luigiaurelio Pomante
Le Scuole serali e festive superiori di Milano. A proposito di
una recente ricerca sull'istruzione post-elementare

Forum / Discussioni

- 673 Ornat Turin
How is the futuristic school imagined in science fiction
movies and literature?

- 699 Milena Bernardi
Poesie a memoria, poesie della memoria.
Affrancare l'infanzia dall'orfanezza poetica: una sfida per
l'educazione, per la letteratura per l'infanzia

Notices / Recensioni

- 711 Susanna Barsotti, *Bambine nel bosco: Cappuccetto Rosso e
il lupo fra passato e presente* (L. Cantatore)
- 713 Vladislav Rjéoutski (ed.), *Quand le français gouvernait la
Russie. L'éducation de la noblesse russe 1750-1880* (D. Caroli)
- 716 Elisa Marazzi (ed.), *Miei piccoli lettori... Letteratura e scienza
nel libro per ragazzi tra XIX e XX secolo* (G. Chiosso)

- 717 Walter E. Crivellin (ed.), *Istruzione e formazione. La Provincia Piemontese dei Fratelli delle scuole Cristiane*; Remo L. Guidi, *Uomini in cattedra non per mestiere ma per passione* (G. Chiosso)
- 718 Cristina Yanes Cabrera, Juri Meda, Antonio Viñao (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education* (D.F.A. Elia)
- 721 Rossella Raimondo, *Audaci filantrope e piccoli randagi. Il contributo di Lucy Bartlett, Alessandrina Ravizza e Bice Cammeo a favore dell'infanzia traviata e derelitta* (L. Magazzeni)
- 724 Leonardo Acone, *Le mille e una nota. Letteratura, musica, infanzia. Orizzonti interdisciplinari e pedagogici* (E. Mazzella)
- 726 Antonio Gibelli, *La scuola come maneggio del sistema. Breve storia di un manifesto antiautoritario* (J. Meda)
- 729 Carla Ida Salviati, Aldo Cecconi (edd.), *La Vita Scolastica. Settant'anni di una rivista per la scuola* (J. Meda)
- 731 Giulia Simone, Fabio Targhetta, *Sui banchi di scuola tra fascismo e Resistenza. Gli archivi scolastici padovani (1938-1945)* (J. Meda)
- 733 Giuseppe Zago (ed.), *Sguardi storici sull'educazione dell'infanzia. Studi in onore di Mirella Chiaranda* (M. Ostenc)
- 736 Marcella Bacigalupi, Piero Fossati, *Dal Ludimagister al maestro elementare. Le scuole in Liguria tra antico Regime e Unità d'Italia* (L. Pomante)
- 737 Agustín Escolano Benito, *La cultura empirica della scuola. Esperienza, memoria, archeologia* (L. Pomante)
- 740 Giordana Merlo, *Alle origini della favola in Italia. La letteratura per l'infanzia nel Veneto tra '700 e '800* (L. Pomante)
- 742 A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, *Tra disciplinamento sociale ed educazione alla cittadinanza. L'insegnamento dei Diritti e Doveri nelle scuole dell'Italia unita (1861-1900)* (F. Targhetta)
- 744 G. Gabrielli, *Il curriculum «razziale». La costruzione dell'alterità di «razza» e coloniale nella scuola italiana (1860-1950)* (F. Targhetta)

Scientific News and Activities of Research Centres
Cronache scientifiche e Attività degli istituti di ricerca

- 749 Juri Meda
 La letteratura per l'infanzia e la sua storia tra ricerca e didattica. A proposito di un importante seminario di studi

- 757 Milena Bernardi
Un laboratorio culturale e scientifico: il «Centro di ricerca
in letteratura per l'infanzia» dell'Università degli Studi di
Bologna
- 769 Marta Brunelli, Juri Meda, Luigiaurelio Pomante
Call for Papers «History of Education & Children's
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**«Educating for beauty the youth of the new Italy».
Schooling, cultural heritage and building of the
national identity
from Unification until the post-Second World War
period**

edited by
Dorena Caroli and Elisabetta Patrizi

Becoming Italians at school through the cultural and natural heritage*

Dorena Caroli
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism
University of Macerata (Italy)
dorena.caroli@unimc.it

Elisabetta Patrizi
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism,
University of Macerata (Italy)
elisabetta.patrizi@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: The present monographic issue collects articles aiming at highlighting the manner in which cultural and natural heritage has been transmitted at school and understanding if and how it has contributed to the definition of the idea of citizenship which has characterized Italian society during the first century of its history after national unification. The articles are guided by three thematic poles – school, cultural heritage and construction of the national identity – cover a wide chronological time span, comprised between the early post-unification period (1861) until the aftermath of the Second World War, and they concentrate on the elementary and popular school levels.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of School; Cultural heritage; Textbooks; XIX-XXth Centuries; Italy.

How have cultural and landscape heritages been used in classrooms to promote the national identity and the feeling of national belonging? This is the key question which is addressed by the essays presented in this special issue, which investigate – each one from a particular in-depth analytic perspective

* This special issue presents for the first time in English and in a revised version the articles published in the book edited by Dorena Caroli and Elisabetta Patrizi, «*Educare alla bellezza la gioventù della nuova Italia*». *Scuola, beni culturali e costruzione dell'identità nazionale dall'Unità al secondo dopoguerra*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2017. The translations of the articles have been made by the authors.

– the ways and the forms through which Italy’s cultural and natural heritage contributed to the promotion of the national identity and to the process of building and shaping the consciousness of citizenship among pupils in Italian schools during the second half of the Nineteenth century and the first half of the Twentieth century¹.

The topic of the building of the national sentiment and of the process of shaping the civic and political identity of the new generations has been deeply explored in studies carried out during recent years in the field of historical and educational research and constitutes by now a ‘well-established trend’ in research concerning the evolution of school textbooks and of educational publishers, as well as of the studies relating to the transformation process of the Italian school systems during the last two centuries². Nevertheless, while it is indisputable that the national identity question can certainly surely rely on a rich base of articles and papers, without doubt it is indeed very far from exhaustion and on the contrary, deserves to be explored through new levels of interpretation and historiographical paradigms. This is the purpose of the present issue, which aims at highlighting the manner in which cultural and natural heritage has been transmitted at school and understanding if and how it has contributed to the evolution process and a new definition of the idea of citizenship which has characterized Italian society during the first century of its history after national unification.

Indeed the articles proposed in the present collection cover a wide chronological time span, comprised between the early post-unification period (1861) until the aftermath of the Second World War, and they concentrate on the

¹ For a definition of cultural and landscape heritage, see the *Code of cultural and landscape heritage*, Law of January 22nd 2004, n. 42), which represents the main Italian legislative corpus on this topic and is fully available at the website <<http://www.normattiva.it/>> (last access: 22nd September, 2016). In this regard see also *infra* footnote n. 6.

² As examples, one can mention, concerning the body of Italian research, the works by: M. Bacigalupi, P. Fossati, *Da Plebe a popolo. L’educazione popolare nei libri di scuola dall’Unità d’Italia alla Repubblica*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1986; A. Ascenzi, *Tra educazione etico-civile e costruzione dell’identità nazionale. L’insegnamento della storia nelle scuole italiane dell’Ottocento*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2004; Ead., *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, Macerata, eum, 2009. Furthermore, an important contribution to the topic of the national identity has been presented in the articles collected in two monographic issues devoted to this topic: *Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century schools as a laboratory for the promotion of national identity and citizenship education*, edited by Roberto Sani and published on the review «History of Education & Children’s Literature» in 2015 (vol. 10), among which are noteworthy the articles by C. Ghizzoni, *Building the nation. Schools and Constitution Day in Milan in the aftermath of Italian Unification* (n. 1, pp. 23-46) and A. Barausse, *The construction of national identity in textbooks for Italian school abroad: the case of Brazil between the two World Wars* (n. 2, pp. 425-461) and the contribution in two parts by A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, *The teaching of Rights and Duties in the schools of united Italy: between ideological control, social discipline and citizenship education (1861-1900)* (n. 1, pp. 279-298; n. 2, pp. 241-275), now available also in Italian: A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, *Tra disciplinamento sociale ed educazione alla cittadinanza. L’insegnamento dei Diritti e dei Doveri nelle scuole dell’Italia unita (1861-1900)*, Macerata, eum, 2016.

elementary and popular school levels, that is the ‘school for all’ concept which – as has been rightly noted – «exercised, especially from the beginning of the 1900’s, and then in a more marked and organic manner in the period between the two World Wars, an undisputed and fundamental process of homogenizing and transmitting the fundamental values and the behavioral models which came from them, operating not so much in function of the gradual overcoming of the circumscribed micro-belongings (family, community etc.), in as much as making it possible to cohabit (or at least avoiding the confrontation) of these last ones with the more general national identity»³.

From the methodological point of view, the contributions presented in this special issue analyze what have now become classical sources of history of school, such as reading books and auxiliary textbooks (in Italian *sussidiari*) for primary schools and school exercise books, and furthermore, they deal with particularly original but yet considered ‘unsounded’ sources, with regards to the relation between the national and the local dimensions, such as the school almanacs (in Italian *almanacchi*). But the lowest common denominator that ties all the articles collected in this issue is precisely represented by the completely new perspective through which these sources have been analyzed. Indeed, if during the recent years, a rich historiography about history of education, which carried to the definition and categorization of the cultural heritage of the school⁴, has been developed in a national and international context, the aspect of the representation of the cultural and landscape heritage provided *tout court*

³ Ascenzi, *Education and metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, cit., p. 10.

⁴ A precise categorisation of the cultural heritage in schools has been proposed by Juri Meda in the article: *Musei della scuola e dell'educazione. Ipotesi progettuale per una sistematizzazione delle iniziative di raccolta, conservazione e valorizzazione dei beni culturali delle scuole*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 5, n. 2, 2010, pp. 489-501 and, more recently, in another contribution by the same Author, *La conservazione del patrimonio storico educativo*, in J. Meda, A. Badanelli (edd.), *La historia de la cultura escolar en Italia y en Espana: presupuestos y perspectivas. Actas del I workshop Italo-Espanol de Historia de la Cultura Escolar (Berlanga de Duero, 14-16 de noviembre de 2011)*, Macerata, eum, 2013, pp. 167-198. An interesting synthesis of the studies relating the studies on cultural heritage of schools and the problems connected with the cataloguing and the juridical recognition of this particular category of cultural heritage has been presented by M. Brunelli, in H.A. Cavallera (ed.), *La ricerca storico-educativa oggi. Un confronto da metodi, modelli e programmi di ricerca*, Lecce, Pensa multimedia, 2013, vol. 1, pp. 193-218. At the international level the debate on the cultural heritage of schools underwent a significant development in the field of the so-called ‘material history of the school’, which registered a particular interest among English, Belgian and Spanish scholars. In this regard, one can mention the more recent publications: M. Lawn, I. Grosvenor (edd.), *Materialities of Schooling: Design, Technology, Objects, Routines, Symposium Books*, Oxford, Simposium Books, 2005; A. Escolano (ed.), *La cultura material de la escuela. En el centenario de la JAE, 1907-2007*, Berlanga de Duero, CEINCE, 2007; C. Yanes Cabrera, *El patrimonio educativo inmaterial: propuestas para su recuperacion y salvaguardia*, in J. Ruiz Berrio (ed.), *El patrimonio histórico-educativo. Su conservación y estudio*, Madrid, Editorial Biblioteca Nueva, 2010, pp. 63-90; S. Braster, I. Grosvenor, M.M. Del Pozo Andrés (edd.), *The Black Box of Schooling. A cultural History of the Classroom*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2011; A. Viñao Frago, *La historia material e inmaterial de la escuela: memoria, patrimonio y educación*, «Educação», vol. 35, n. 1, 2012, pp. 7-17.

by the school and in the school of different historical periods seems to have been neglected⁵.

The starting point of this issue is precisely the desire to fill this gap, providing an original and articulated panorama of the school utilization of the cultural and landscape heritage, that is of the evidences that «present artistic, historical, archaeological, ethno-anthropological, archival and bibliographical interest» and that result in repositories of «historical, cultural, natural, morphological and aesthetic values of the land»⁶, promoted during the post-unification periods and in the aftermath of the two World Wars.

The first contribution of this special issue by Elisabetta Patrizi, *The representation of the cultural and natural heritage as a training tool of national consciousness in three classics of the nineteenth century Italian school*: Giannetto, *Il Bel Paese* and *Cuore*, examines three famous and successful reading books: *Giannetto* by Luigi Alessandro Parravicini (1837), *Il Bel Paese* by Antonio Stoppani (1876) and *Cuore* by Edmondo De Amicis (1886). This Author offers a new and original vision of the three bestsellers of Italian educational literature of the Nineteenth century, from which it is possible to grasp that these three works, although adopting different perspectives, provide an approach to the landscape and historical and artistic beauties of the peninsula, which can be completely placed within the whole of behaviors, values and contents promoted by the school in the post-unification period in order to shape the identity consciousness of Italian citizens.

⁵ An approach to the study of landscape heritage as a tools for the construction of patriotic sentiment has been proposed by Fabio Targhetta in an article which appeared in an already mentioned special issue of the review «History of Education & Children's literature» of 2015 (see *supra* footnote n. 2): F. Targhetta, «*The beloved face of the fatherland*». *The role of the landscape into the processes of national identity building*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 139-155 and in part. pp. 139-141. At international level, it is interesting to mention that there has been support for specific investigations, relating to the presence of images concerning monuments, works of art and landscapes, contained in French and German school textbooks. By way of example we recall the contributions collected in the volume edited by C. Heinze, E. Matthes (edd.), *Das Bild im Schulbuch*, Bad Heilbrunn, Verlag Julius Klinkhardt, 2010.

⁶ Quotations from the *Code of cultural Heritage and Landscape* (Law of January 22th 2004, n. 42), which in the First part (*General provisions*), art. 2 (*Cultural Heritage*) states: «1. The cultural heritage consists of cultural property and landscape assets. 2. Cultural property consists of immovable and movable things, which, pursuant to article 10 and 11, present artistic, historical, archaeological, ethno-anthropological, archival and bibliographical interest, and of any other thing identified by law or in accordance with the law as testifying to the values of civilization. 3. Landscape assets consist of the buildings and areas indicated in article 134, which are the expression of historical, cultural, natural, morphological and aesthetic values of the land, and any other assets identified by law or in accordance with the law. 4. Cultural heritage property belonging to the government shall be designated for public enjoyment, compatibly with the needs of government uses and on condition that no protection reasons to the contrary persist», <http://www.unesco.org/culture/natlaws/media/pdf/italy/it_cult_landscapeheritge2004_engtof.pdf> (last access: 24th September, 2016).

The question of the existing connection between cultural and landscape heritage in the process of construction of the national identity is further investigated, with respect to the school culture of the sixty year period after Italian national unification, by Fabio Targhetta in his contribution, *The landscape as a means to nationalization: Italian heritage and national identity education in the 19th and 20th century*. In particular, Targhetta's research takes into consideration three different analysis perspectives, corresponding to three precise meanings of cultural and landscape heritage: the 'recounted heritage', that is the one proposed by the reading books; the 'represented heritage', that is the one represented in the images accompanying educational and school literature and presented in the wall panels (*quadri murali*), but also in the educational cinema; and, finally, the 'experienced heritage', that is the one directly experienced by the pupils through the first school tourism excursions. Each of these dimensions is examined carefully on the basis of specific documentary sources: from the school textbooks to children's literature, from normative acts to didactical aids, from the analysis of the activity of associations such as the *Touring Club Italiano* and the *Club Alpino Italiano*, which worked in strict cooperation with the schools, to the educational cinema, which played a leading role in the promotion of the love for works of national beauty among the Italian population, in particular during the fascist *Ventennio* (i.e. 20 year of the fascist regime).

A different historical phase, corresponding to the first years of the fascist period, is the background of Roberto Sani and Dorena Caroli's articles, which propose two different, but strictly complementary, focus points concerning the typology of utilisation of the cultural and landscape heritage that the Italian schools at home and abroad encouraged in the first phase of the fascist *Ventennio* in order to shape the civic and national consciousness of the new generations.

In particular Roberto Sani's article, «*Discovering the best and most ignored Italy*». *The regional Almanacs for the primary school introduced by the Gentile's Reform and the use of the cultural and natural heritage for the promotion of a national identity and a sense of citizenship*, are examined a particular typology of reading book for primary school, that is the regional almanacs or aid books (*almanacchi regionali o libri sussidiari*) according to regional culture and various notions. These regional almanacs became compulsory according to the Gentile's Reform of 1923 and were used in Italian schools until 1927; they were objects of a precise educational strategy, aimed at enhancing the local cultural heritage, through an appeal to local artistic and architectural assets on, as well as to the manifold natural and landscape beauties of the country, in order to promote among the Italian youth of school age, a feeling of belonging and love for the Motherland, that was considered an indispensable ingredient to the outstanding mission of the school, that is the one of 'making Italians'.

A particular point of view on this topic is proposed by Dorena Caroli's article, *Images and imagery of the «Garden of Europe»: Cultural, artistic and natural heritage in reading books for the Italian schools abroad*. Caroli's work, indeed, takes into consideration the reality of Italian schools abroad, founded in the Twenties and the Thirties of the Twentieth century in the countries, that became destinations of massive Italian migration, such as Brazil and Argentina, but also in the Italian colonies. In particular, the author analyses the reading books adopted in the primary classes of the Italian schools abroad, showing how descriptions and images concerning natural and artistic beauty changed significantly, mostly after the introduction of the State Schoolbook (*testo unico di Stato*) for primary schools, established by the Law of 7th January 1929, absorbing the 'dogmas' of fascist ideology, that transformed schools (including the Italian schools abroad) into authentic instruments of fascist propaganda.

Luigiaurelio Pomante's contribution, *«Italy, the land of beauty and art». The Italian landscape and cultural heritage in the books and the primary school textbooks from the Fascist period to the aftermath of World War II: between national identity and sense of citizenship*, analyses a complex historical period, that covers about thirty years of Italian history, marked by the advent of fascism and by the difficult phase of reconstruction following the Second World War. Through the perusal and analysis of an extremely wide and significant sample of reading books and auxiliary books (*sussidiari*) adopted in the elementary school between the 1923 and 1955, Luigiaurelio Pomante traces the different perspectives with which the cultural and landscape heritage was proposed in the elementary schools during the fascist period and later, during the democratic and republican period, transmitting models of citizenship having very different features.

In the last contribution, Anna Ascenzi contextualises her research, *«Italian beauties». The Italian cultural heritage and its landscape and natural resources in the school exercise books from the Fascist period to the World War II*, along the same time span taken into consideration by Pomante, but with the help of particularly charming sources, full of insights, namely the school exercise books. Substantially freed from the prejudicial classification as 'minor sources' and simple supports to the teaching activity, school exercise books are now widely regarded as privileged tools for the investigation of the school life experience and the didactic practices that characterized schooling in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries. Anna Ascenzi focuses on the iconic and verbal messages of the school exercise book covers, showing how they are custodians of a precise idea of citizenship, which undergoes drastic changes during the period of the fascist period, and that is completely deconstructed during the Second World War aftermath, when the national identity question seems to fragment into many streams, which reveal the lack of a shared project, capable of conveying through the school a common sense of democratic citizenship.

In summary, the articles collected in the present issue are guided by three thematic poles: *school, cultural heritage and construction of the national identity*. Certainly there could be many ways of undertaking an in-depth analysis of the links between these themes. In fact, far from claiming to be exhaustive, the present issue proposes to inaugurate a new field of research, which seems to be particularly fertile and rich its implications concerning a critical actual reality, in which schools and society as a whole are called upon to implement education programmes on heritage in a perspective which is not mono-cultural but cross-cultural, that is, aimed at the construction of inclusive citizenship, founded on mutual recognition of diverse linguistic, cultural and identity affiliations that coexist in the same geographical area⁷. Aware that historical investigation should also be mandated to provide analytic tools for interpreting the present, we trust that the texts presented here can offer a contribution which shall enable new strategies and educational practices, based on a sound understanding of the past ones.

⁷ In this regard, we acknowledge as particularly interesting, for example, the research undertaken at European level on education of citizenship awareness: W. Schiffauer, G. Baumann, R. Kastroryano, S. Vetovec (edd.), *Civil Enculturation. Nation-State, Schools and Ethnic Difference in four European countries*, New York-Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2004.

The representation of the cultural and natural heritage as a training tool of national consciousness in three classics of the Nineteenth century Italian school: *Giannetto*, *Il Bel Paese* and *Cuore*

Elisabetta Patrizi
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism,
University of Macerata (Italy)
elisabetta.patrizi@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: The article aims to explore the theme of cultural and landscape heritage in the Nineteenth century through the analysis of primary school textbooks. In particular, the A. focuses the attention on three well-known and very successful reading books: *Giannetto* by Luigi Alessandro Parravicini (1837), *Il Bel Paese* by Antonio Stoppani (1876) and *Cuore* by Edmondo De Amicis (1886). The A., through a detailed analysis of content and using the most reliable bibliography of historical-educational and historical-literary field, shows that, although with different perspectives, these three classics of Nineteenth century educational literature fit perfectly in the large debate that, in the decades following the Italian Unity, was the central theme of the construction of national identity. Therefore, the article aims to provide a new and original reading of these three long-sellers, which shows that in the three works – certainly with different approaches, symptomatic of the historical moment and the author's cultural background – the reference to the natural and historic-artistic beauties of the Italian Peninsula is part of the set of behaviours, values, and content deemed essential to build the Italian identity.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Children's literature; Readings books; Natural and cultural heritage; Parravicini; Stoppani; De Amicis; Italy; XIXth Century.

Introduction

Matching the discourse on developing the cultural and natural heritage with that relating to school teaching/learning practices may seem almost obvious if you refer this to today's school. School, in the collective imagination, is considered as the educational agency, invested – among other things – with the task of educating the new generations to love and respect cultural and natural assets, through a gradual process of knowledge of the multiple forms in which this heritage is declined both in near and far places.

This impression changes when we decide to adopt a diachronic perspective, asking ourselves a few simple questions, such as: how have cultural and natural assets entered the Italian school? How have they been presented? And, again, how have they been received and studied?

The most interesting answers to these questions come from the analysis of textbooks, because these sources, more than any other used in the study of school life (from the more traditionally legislative types to the most recent and innovative ones related to the so-called material history of education), allow us a direct knowledge of the values and contents actually taught at school and acquired by the generations educated in the past. However, the world of textbooks is very articulate, ranging from primers (or spelling books) to reading books, right up to the various disciplinary manuals¹.

Within this multi-faceted and complex reality, we believe that the type of textbook that best lends itself to deepening the combination between the cultural and natural heritage and education is that of reading books, due to the peculiar characteristics of these texts. In fact, under the category “reading books”, especially during the first phase of the Italian post-unification period, narrative books aimed at youth or with a popular connotation (we can think, for example, of self-help literature that is inspired by the Scottish writer Samuel Smiles, whose work *Self-Help* of 1859 was translated into Italian in 1865) often appeared, usually entering the school as prize-giving books or as a support to school textbooks. Reading books therefore, occur more often as ‘boundary books’ between the worlds of

¹ For a definition of the school book and an overview of the various types of books for school use adopted during the Nineteenth century, with reference to school book publishing and market events: G. Chiosso, *Il libro di scuola tra editoria e pedagogia nell'Ottocento*, in L. Braida, M. Infelise (edd.), *Libri per tutti. Generi editoriali di larga circolazione tra antico regime ed età contemporanea*, Torino, Utet, 2010, pp. 200-226. For the evolution which involved reading books during the Nineteenth century, see: G. Chiosso, «Formar l'uomo eminentemente morale ed abile». *Il libro di lettura dopo l'unità*, «Esperienze letterarie», n. 25, 2010, pp. 17-35. On the importance of the school book as a source for historical-educational research, refer to the reflections of: A. Choppin, *L'histoire des manuels scolaires: une approche globale*, «Histoire de l'Education», n. 9, 1980, pp. 1-25; P. Bianchini, *Una fonte per la storia dell'istruzione e dell'editoria in Italia: il libro scolastico*, «Contemporanea», n. 1, 2000, pp. 175-182; A. Escolano, *La codificación de la primera manualística*, in Id. (ed.), *Historia ilustrada de la escuela en España: dos siglos de perspectiva histórica*, Madrid, Fundación German Sánchez Ruipérez, 2006, pp. 219-240.

school and non-school, often focusing on two categories of interlocutors long combined during the Italian history of education: young people in school age and ‘children’ being educated². The examples to be considered may be many, but for the purposes of this article we consider it appropriate to focus on three long sellers of Italian school textbook publishing, which had a large circulation, marking the individual and collective imagination of several generations. We refer to *Il Giannetto* (Little John) by Parravicini, *Il Bel Paese* (The Beautiful Country) by Abbot Stoppani and *Cuore* (Heart) by De Amicis.

1. *The Ideal Country*

Reading books played a nodal role in the project of civil and political renewal of the Italian people. After the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy and for much of the subsequent period, the school made use of texts written in decades prior to the Unity and, among the good books that appeared suitable to serve the cause of ethical and civic education of the Italian people, a very special place was reserved to the first bestseller of Nineteenth century national educational literature: *Giannetto* by the Lombard pedagogue Luigi Alessandro Parravicini (1799-1880)³. The book was the winner of the competition held in 1835 by the Florentine Society for spreading the mutual teaching method, in order to promote the writing of «an original Italian work, to be at the same time a reading exercise and a moral education for children». The Florentine Society competition notice explicitly mentioned the need to promote the «cognition» of all those duties which «a good man» has to fulfil during his «life progress» in school-age youths, using «novelty and truth» and drawing on facts derived «from Italian history and biography»⁴. In fact, as is known, the first edition of

² For reading books see: M. Bacigalupi, P. Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo: l'educazione popolare nei libri di scuola dall'unità d'Italia alla repubblica*, Rist. anast., Milano, I.S.U. Università Cattolica, 2000, p. 23; L. Rambelli, *La letteratura educativa per i giovani e per il popolo*, «Problemi», maggio-agosto, 1991, p. 70.

³ On the biography, the pedagogical conception and the literary production by Luigi Alessandro Parravicini (Milano 1799 - Vittorio Veneto 1880) see A. Michieli, *Luigi A. Parravicini*, Firenze, Le Monnier, 1960. The dynamics that opposed Parravicini to Niccolò Tommaseo are reconstructed in the famous essay by Marino Berengo [*Appunti su Luigi Alessandro Parravicini. La metodica austriaca della Restaurazione*, in A. Mastrocinque (ed.), *Omaggio a Piero Treves*, Padova, Antenore, 1981, pp. 1-17], which – by resuming some steps of the biography of the Lombard educator – sheds a light on the author's political position, putting forward the thesis of Parravicini's political ambiguity, caught between a liberal culture background and loyalty to the Austrian government. A rich and clear bio-bibliographic entry about the author, which queries Berengo's judgment on Parravicini's political policy, is available, signed by Davide Montino in G. Chiosso, R. Sani (edd.), *DBE: Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione, 1800-2000*, 2 vols., Milano, Bibliografica, 2013, vol. 2, pp. 289-290.

⁴ The quotations are taken from the call for competition organized by the Florentine Society for

the competition promoted by the intellectuals of the Florentine circle centred around Gian Pietro Vieusseux, had been issued in 1833, but none of the five manuscripts received had met the favour of the evaluation committee. One of these was also the work by Parravicini which, changed according to the committee's indications, was resubmitted to the new edition of the competition, winning the prize.

Parravicini had revised the original manuscript, handing down to posterity a «good elementary book» – as the examining committee chaired by Gino Capponi stressed when conferring the award – which was intended «to equally evolve the two divine sisters, the education of the intellect and that of the soul, for this purpose making use of those forms, which were designed to give more enticements, and choosing within the vast field of human knowledge the most important themes, and those most suitable to profitably enhance the development of the human person and of the sociable man». The author, in essence, presented a novel capable of educating the heart and the mind; a work that was able «to meet the need of elementary readings for children and the population, universally felt in Italy»⁵.

The work *Giannetto* was published for the first time in 1837, by the publisher from Como Pietro Ostinelli and was a great success until the end of the Nineteenth century⁶. Overall, the work responded perfectly to that design of «civilizing the lower classes», which the Florentine Society aimed towards and was much more than just a book to be read, as it appeared to be a kind of encyclopaedia, a handbook of diverse knowledge, ranging from morals to anatomy, from geography to natural sciences, up to history. The wealth of content work reflected the canons of nineteenth-century educational literature intended for children, which required the mediation of adults in order to be suitably approached. Behind this there was of course the will to also reach the adult audience of teachers and parents through the children. It has been noted that *Giannetto* is «a popular culture text which took on the character of an out-and-out “nationalistic” book thanks to its dissemination and endurance»⁷.

spreading the mutual teaching method, reported in the various editions of *Giannetto*. In this case, we refer to the 1849 Neapolitan edition: L.A. Parravicini, *Giannetto, opera che ottenne il premio promesso dalla Società formata in Firenze per la diffusione del metodo di reciproco insegnamento all'autore del più bel libro di lettura morale ad uso de' fanciulli. Dichiarata e postillata nello studio di B. Puoti con la giunta di un compendio di storia sul Regno delle due Sicilie*, Napoli, Libreria e Tipografia Simoniana, 1849, pp. VII-VIII. For a comment on the call for competition, please refer to the article by Rambelli, *La letteratura educativa per i giovani e per il popolo*, cit., pp. 169-170.

⁵ The prize awarding report is generally given in the various editions of *Giannetto*. It is dated December 28, 1836 and bears the names of all members of the reviewing committee: Gino Capponi, Neri Corsini, Luigi Tempi, Napoleone Pini and Luigi Serristori. The quotes are always taken from the 1849 edition of *Giannetto*, published by the Libreria e Tipografia Simoniana, pp. XV-XVI.

⁶ On the publisher Ostinelli see the entry by R. Sani in G. Chiosso (ed.), *TESEO. Tipografi e editori scolastico-educativi dell'Ottocento*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2003, pp. 405-407.

⁷ See L. Pazzaglia, *I libri di testo: il caso del Giannetto di Parravicini*, in P.L. Ballini, G. Pécout (edd.), *Scuola e nazione in Italia e in Francia nell'Ottocento. Modelli, pratiche, eredità nuovi*

The work appears constructed with content blocks, held together by a simple narrative framework, whose protagonists are the schoolboy *Giannetto* and his family. The book offers a comprehensive set of notions. The first part (*The man, his needs, his duties*) focuses on the human body and human behaviour, the second (*Professions, Mechanical Arts, Fine Arts, Science*) on working activities and the patron saints of the various professions, the third (*Geographical, physical and natural history notions*) on physical and political geography, the fourth (*Novel on the duties of children*) on the life of *Giannetto* at school and at home. Between the third and fourth part there is a section entitled *The winter evenings*, dedicated to the three kingdoms of nature (animal, vegetable and mineral); while the fifth and final part offers (*Moral stories from the history of Italy*), organized over twenty-seven days. It is interesting to note that the technical and scientific knowledge in *Giannetto* also contributes to the improvement and progress of man, and in this respect the work has been singled out as the forerunner of *Il Bel Paese* by Stoppani, to which – albeit with a different intonation and structure – it is united by the «desire to popularize science»⁸.

The work structure, already very articulate, was further enhanced in the subsequent editions, which were revised by the author himself until his death (1880) and, later, by other editors, among whom the Florentine Augusto Alfani stood out⁹. However, despite the extensions made in the new editions, the general structure of the text and the background purposes remained unchanged. The young *Giannetto* learns not only to be a diligent scholar and a devoted son, but also to adapt his behaviour to a pattern of life centred on the three aspects «family-work-morality». The son of Antonio Masini, a grocer and haberdasher completely addicted to work, and of a humble woman of the people, entirely devoted to the home and to charity, named Gioconda, *Giannetto* lives in a village near the town with his parents, a sister and three brothers. His family

percorsi di ricerca comparata, Venezia, Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2007, pp. 141-186 and pp. 156, 165 for the quotations.

⁸ Michieli, Luigi A. *Parravicini*, cit., p. 93.

⁹ Between 1837 and 1910, the year of the last edition, *Giannetto* had as many as 69 editions printed. The work was adopted in gymnasiums in 1875, among the books approved for elementary school in 1896-1900 and in 1905, and among the books approved for secondary and normal education institutions in 1896. See *Il libro per la scuola dall'Unità al Fascismo. La normativa sui libri di testo dalla Legge Casati alla Riforma Gentile (1861-1922)*, 2 vols., Macerata, Alfabetica, 2008, vol. 1, pp. 119, 235, 239, 282, 318, 375, 436, 446; vol. 2, pp. 764, 766. A review of both positive and critical opinions aroused by *Giannetto* between the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries is given by: N. Del Corno, *Alle origini del long-seller: Il Giannetto del Parravicini*, in L. Finocchi, A. Gigli Marchetti (edd.), *Editori e piccoli lettori tra Otto e Novecento*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2004, pp. 47-60. For a comparison between the content variations introduced in the numerous editions of *Giannetto* curated directly by the author, with specific reference to the parts of historical content, see Pazzaglia, *I libri di testo: il caso del Giannetto di Parravicini*, cit., pp. 161-186. While for a linguistic analysis of the first edition and the changes introduced in the 1862 edition, see S. Ballante, *Il Giannetto del Parravicini: osservazioni linguistiche*, in Finocchi, Gigli Marchetti (edd.), *Editori e piccoli lettori tra Otto e Novecento*, cit., pp. 341-354.

represents exactly those people that the bourgeois classes of the Risorgimento and post-unification period want to ‘dirozzare’, i.e. to civilize through an educational program in which moral education is intertwined with family values and work¹⁰. In the book we follow the growth path of *Giannetto*, who from a child being trained, not without small flaws and caprices, becomes an honest and sensible man, good at his work and benevolent towards his neighbours. From a shop assistant *Giannetto* becomes a haberdasher and an industrialist, reaching the top of the social ladder by virtue of the educational action of school and family, as well as of his commitment and work, also becoming a philanthropist of his native village, where he founds a school of agriculture, arts and crafts for «orphans and wayward children», and introduces state-of-the-art machines to improve the textile production. *Giannetto* has been defined as «an early example of Italian self-help», because, thanks to his perseverance and the educational work carried on by the environment that surrounds him, he becomes a wealthy, respected and socially committed man¹¹.

Giannetto is a boy of the people, to whom a child of the Nineteenth century, especially if from the same social background, could certainly relate, but he is basically a «waxwork», who doesn’t have the characteristics of a flesh and blood child. The village where *Giannetto* lives and grows is also a kind of picture-postcard place, a pleasant countryside location surrounded by a lovely and lush nature, skilfully tamed over the centuries by the patient work of man¹². Parravicini provides an idyllic description of this corner of paradise in the fourth part of his work, when he introduces the chapter on the autumn holidays of *Giannetto*:

The clear sky and the earth no longer scorched invited citizens to go to the villa to breathe the pure air of the open countryside. The farmers scattered everywhere in small farms appeared delighted with the labours over the last months, because they were rewarded by copious harvests. The peasant women sang on the green hills until sunset; and then, when the baskets of millet and feed were brought to the yard, boys and girls hopped around this to the sound of the guitar, as long as the moon shone. This was one of *Giannetto*’s most cherished pastimes. During the day he had fun, either by helping the day labourers to harvest the grapes, or by visiting some distant forests with his father, or by staying with some relatives in the middle of the mountain, where he had as much cream and milk as he wanted¹³.

Giannetto’s village is dotted with fields cared for as gardens, it is populated by gentle and hardworking people and animated by the festive images of

¹⁰ In this regard and for the quotation see: Iermano, *Da Parravicini a De Amicis: considerazioni sulla letteratura per l’infanzia tra Risorgimento e Italia umbertina*, «Studi Piemontesi», vol. 29, n. 2, 2000, pp. 347-348. A summary of the plot of *Giannetto*, with reference to the first edition of work, is submitted in Michieli, *Luigi A. Parravicini*, cit., pp. 51-73.

¹¹ Montino, *Parravicini Luigi Alessandro*, cit., p. 289. For an overview on the canons of self-help literature in Italy: Chiosso, «*Formar l’uomo eminentemente morale ed abile*», cit., pp. 30-35.

¹² Michieli, *Luigi A. Parravicini*, cit., pp. 75, 84-85, 100.

¹³ Parravicini, *Giannetto* (edizione del 1849), cit., parte IV, p. 27.

industrious children. These bucolic scenes make up the image of that ideal country in which the author would like every growing youth to be educated because he attributes to the environment – in all its dimensions (family, school, surrounding social and economic context) – an essential function in determining the individual's future. That feeling of attachment and love for his land that accompanies all *Giannetto's* growth path also stems from here, and which, returning from the trip to the city made with his father (a trip during which he visited his hapless compatriot Franceschino, who had ended up in jail), makes him exclaim: «those palaces, those avenues, those workshops, those so elegant clothes may be beautiful! But what I love the most is to see my mom, run on the grass, enter our church, converse with my friends, ride the miller's donkey»¹⁴. Parravicini makes *Giannetto* pronounce words of sincere attachment for familiar things and places and for the people he loves. The author invests in the boy's knowledge and love for everyday life, in order to prepare him to greater duties and feelings, which also include the love for his country. A love which is clearly expressed in the pages dedicated to the *Duties towards the homeland*.

In the first part of the work, Parravicini introduces a series of stories concerning these duties, meant to be read and discussed in class with the support of the teacher. In particular, the story about the *Duties toward the homeland* is designed in order to be adapted to the geographical location of the different classes that will read the book.

Son, the place where you were born or where you live, is called N. – N. is located in a vast Province called A. and this is located in Italy.

Your birthplace is N.; your homeland is Italy. You must glory in being an Italian man, because Italy is one of the most pleasant, richest and most beautiful countries in the world. Italy lacks nothing in order to be strong, respected and happy. In times past, Italians with their virtues and arms have mastered the land and the seas; nowadays no other nation surpasses Italy in the study of the arts and sciences [...].

The fertile soil of your land produces wheat, so you have bread to feed you and the fruits which hold out sweet refreshments, its good air and pleasant places restore you; the laws and the beautiful traditions of Italy defend you; its great name honours you, and you do not love it? Who would not love our dear homeland, which includes parents, brothers, relatives, benefactors, friends, judges, the prince? This love encloses all the affections of a good citizen; and each one is obliged to love his homeland in the way he loves his mother. God Himself has imprinted this holy love in the human heart: everyone is aware of it when, sent to a far and foreign country, he wants to hear his language, he desires the family home, the hugs of parents and friends, and with tenderness he remembers the sky, the waters, the huts of the beloved hometown. Thousands of men have died for love of their homeland¹⁵.

In this passage, from which De Amicis in *Cuore* – as we shall see – took inspiration for his 'hymn to the fatherland' (whilst removing any reference to the religious element), the link between the «dear hometown» and the

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, parte IV, pp. 37-38.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, parte I, pp. 97-98.

homeland is made explicit. One is the place of fond feelings, of beloved tastes and landscapes, the other is the place of civil identity, of the glorious past, of the future progress and, last but not least, of beauty, understood both in a naturalistic and an historic-artistic manner. These are the elements which Parravicini considers the basis of the love/duty towards the homeland and he returns to them especially in the last part of his work, dedicated to the *Moral stories from Italian history*.

The author uses the narrative device of the story, which will then also be widely exploited by Stoppani in *Il Bel Paese. Giannetto*, now an adult, decides to engage the free time of the young people of his village, by narrating «holiday after holiday the most important things which occurred in Italy»¹⁶. The country's history is traced, day after day, paying particular attention to the deeds of the great men of the past. The eminently educational purpose that animates the stories is revealed by *Giannetto* himself on the eighteenth day, when addressing his young listeners he says: «knowing your beautiful soul, I expect that such noble examples should stir up in you a hotter love of the homeland, and a greater desire to honour it with virtuous deeds and intellectual efforts»¹⁷. *Giannetto* presents the fathers of the Italian language to his selected audience, Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio; he celebrates the great artists, such as Brunelleschi, Michelangelo and Raphael; he sings the praises of a great explorer like Christopher Columbus and of forward-thinking scientists like Galileo Galilei. Between one portrait and the next of these Italian glories, he inserts the main events of the country's history, stuffing them with moral teachings, sayings and warnings for the future. However, the real essence of these days, or rather the thread that holds them together and exalts them, emerges with all its intensity in the post-unification editions of *Giannetto*, those in which – as the political framework of the peninsula had been reconstructed – it is finally possible to talk about the recent history of a united Italy.

So the personalities who materially constituted Italy, first of all King Carlo Alberto, King Vittorio Emanuele II and Cavour, are added to the gallery of Italian celebrities. The story of the Italian Risorgimento favours the initiatives undertaken by the House of Savoy¹⁸. The names of Mazzini and Cattaneo are excluded. There is just a brief reference to Garibaldi, while a particular attention is reserved to Daniele Manin, the protagonist of the struggle for independence of

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, parte IV, p. 60.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, parte V, p. 166.

¹⁸ In the story of *Giannetto* concerning the history of Italy there is no trace of the tensions between the different currents of the Risorgimento. The figure of Garibaldi and his ventures are presented in the name of a convergence of intentions with the Savoy monarchy. On this topic see Pazzaglia, *I libri di testo: il caso del Giannetto di Parravicini*, cit., pp. 176-186 and, for a general framework on the interpretation of the Risorgimento in the history books of the years immediately following the unification: A. Ascenzi, *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, Macerata, eum, 2009, pp. 19-39.

Veneto, a region which the author held very dear¹⁹. The story of the death and exile of the Venetian patriot is impressive above all, it is closed by the description of the inauguration ceremony of the monument dedicated to him, which was built in Turin and made by the sculptor Vincenzo Vela. The author reports the vibrant speech which the mayor of the first capital of Italy held on that occasion:

This monument erected to the great Venetian outside his hometown will not be useless. This monument, rising in the midst of these long-standing plants [...]; in this part of the city now destined to social gatherings, the amusements of childhood, will be a perennial teaching to future generations. The child who looks at it will ask his mother many times who is the great lady with the forehead crowned with towers; who is held up by her hand. The mother will lovingly say: 'Child, that great woman is Italy, it is your and my homeland which you must love as of now, which you will have the honour of serving one day and which you must always respect. That which Italy supports with her left hand was a great man and, what is more important, an honest man. You will learn over time what he has done and how he suffered for his homeland. You'll hear how he died in exile, comforted by the beautiful welcome, by the kind and compassionate offices of other brothers [i.e. the French people] which he found beyond those mountains, which from here you can admire covered with eternal snows'²⁰.

The monuments, especially those dedicated to people who have honoured the homeland through their actions or genius, have an important educational mission for Parravicini; they are silent witnesses of the past, which defy the passing of the centuries to remind posterity of the life models on which the small and large glories of the individual and of the nation should be built. This concept is also clearly expressed by the author in the short chapter reserved to *The annual celebration of the Charter of the Kingdom of Italy*, where he observes:

The People visit the graves of the heroes who died for freedom; they admire the statues erected to our fathers who became famous because of civil virtues or intellectual works in the science, letters, arts fields. In the presence of these monuments the hearts are moved, and burn with love for Italy, the strong, munificent, and glorious mother of so many brave and wise children²¹.

The long line of illustrious men presented by the author in the last part of *Giannetto* looks just like a kind of gallery, decorated with the statues and

¹⁹ Parravicini spent most of his life in Veneto. He arrived here in 1840 to fill the post of director of the technical school of Venice, which he held until 1848, and remained in this region until 1880, the year of his death. See Montino, *Parravicini Luigi Alessandro*, cit.

²⁰ L.A. Parravicini, *Giannetto, opera che in Firenze ottenne il premio promesso al più bel libro di lettura ad uso de' fanciulli, e che è adottata come premio e come libro di lettura nelle scuole elementari d'Italia, utilissima per le scuole serali, festive, e le biblioteche popolari. Edizione 57^a stereotipata aumentata dall'Autore colle più recenti nozioni di geografia e geologia coll'aggiunta di Racconti storici, di accenti per la retta pronunzia, raccomandazioni sulla morale e di note sui dialetti, di avvertenze pei Maestri, per le Maestre e le madri che educano i propri figli*, Milano, V. Maisner e compagnia, editori librai, 1874, parte VI, pp. 428-429.

²¹ *Ibid.*, parte I, p. 103.

paintings of men who honoured Italy with their civil passion, and with the greatness of their feats. In the post-unity editions of the work, this series of portraits culminates with the celebration of *Merits and Glories of Italy*, where the magnificent natural and historic-artistic context which housed the exploits of so many distinguished representatives of the ‘Italic genius’ is finally described:

Italy is the land of wonders. Perched on the more fertile and civilized flap of southern European, it serves as an emporium between this, Africa and the Orient: its coasts are scattered with sumptuous cities with safe and large ports, which receive thousands of ships. Precious woods and the highest mountains of Europe are set in the Alps which crown Italy; that is, the Mont Blanc, the Monte Rosa, the San Gottardo and others, whose peaks are covered with perennial ice which becomes the source of fertilizing waters for the vast plains: the volcanoes of Pietramala, Vesuvius and Etna are in the Apennines and occasionally erupt flames, putting on a tremendous show. Near the Vesuvius, entire cities, buried by ashes and lava are being discovered which show us the houses and customs, utensils, pomp and fine arts of the thriving people who lived here 2,000 years ago²².

Just a few lines to give us that image of Italy as the ‘Beautiful Country’, which then will be enhanced by Stoppani. From the natural beauties that cross the peninsula from north to south, we move on to those of the archaeological sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum, to then continue with the description of the countless wonders of the capital of the Kingdom: Rome.

Rome rises in the middle of the peninsula. This old lady of the Earth became rich with the precious spoils conquered in Italy, Greece, Gaul, Spain, Africa and Asia. The raised arches of Titus, Septimius Severus, Constantine, the tall stained columns erected to Trajan and Antoninus Pius, hand down the exploits and triumphs of those emperors to posterity. The temples of the Pantheon and of other pagan deities turned into Christian churches are superb buildings: the tomb of Hadrian, transformed by the popes in Castel Sant’Angelo, is a wonder amongst the tombs.

Rome is the metropolis of the Catholic world. Among its churches, the following are stunning: St. Peter in the Vatican, famous above all others of Christianity for the breadth, the architecture, the treasures that it contains such as tombs, statues, altars, mosaics and ornaments: we admire the magnificence of the churches of St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, St. Maria above Minerva, St. Peter in Chains for the statue of Moses sculpted by Michelangelo, St. Maria della Pace for Raphael’s frescoes, St. Mary in Ara Coeli built on the ruins of the famous temple of Jupiter in the Capitoline hill, and the basilica of St. Paul outside the Walls [...].

The catacombs, or vast caverns, which seem mazes, are famous, here the Christians persecuted from paganism lived and were buried; from here many holy relics were taken. Among so many ruinous Roman constructions, the Coliseum, an amphitheatre which contained 100,000 spectators, is famous.

The most impressive buildings are those of the Vatican and the Quirinal.

The Vatican, the residence of the Supreme Pontiff, is composed of other beautiful buildings totalling in all more than ten thousand rooms. There is a rich library of precious manuscripts and books; there are galleries of Italian and Greek statues; Egyptian sculptures; altars,

²² *Ibid.*, parte VI, p. 457.

paintings and entire walls painted by Raphael and Michelangelo and other famous painters, these things are part of a collection of fine art masterpieces which cannot be seen in any other city. The Quirinal Palace with its sumptuous apartments, large courtyard and garden, is the worthy palace of Victor Emanuel II.

The gallery of statues in the Palazzo de' Conservatori on Capitol Hill, many other superb public and private buildings contain many collections of statues, paintings and fine art objects, of which one only would be enough to honour any city. This is the reason the insuperable models of sculpture, painting, architecture which can be seen in the Vatican, in the churches, squares, palaces galleries, excavations and ruins of Rome are diligently studied by artists who come from all over Europe, America and Asia [...].

The glorious feats of the ancient Romans, the virtues of the early Christians, the venerable see of the Catholic religion, the historical monuments, the sublime works of the immortal artists call to Rome men from every part of the world, who feel the love for the homeland, for the true god, the military glory, the Fine arts and the wise antiquities²³.

Rome is described as a huge open-air museum, filled with treasures admired and emulated around the world. Parravicini offers a sort of small art-historical guide of the City, through which he intends to bring out the newfound capital in all its radiant beauty, certain that this city, which «was called in ancient times Caput Mundi, [...] will return soon to shine among the first cities on earth»²⁴. After eulogizing the beauties of the capital, the author proposes small cameos of the most famous cities of the peninsula:

Naples, populated by about 500,000 inhabitants, is reflected in the most pleasant Gulf of Europe, and is surrounded by Capuan fields, famous throughout the ages for the fertility and the delights of nature. Palermo sitting by the sea, in the middle of a green valley which was called the Gold Basin, site of the first kings of Sicily, is renowned for its riches, magnificent churches, opulent palaces and pleasant holidays.

In the Adriatic lagoons, defended by embankments which hold back the stormy waves, there are a hundred ornate palaces, vague architectures of all times, beginning with the ninth century, and churches encrusted with mosaics and rich monuments, which rise from the water; and tell us how Venice ruled over Cyprus and Candia, Morea and Constantinople; and how it once took its goods and the terror of its arms to the most remote beaches²⁵.

After Venice, for which Parravicini reserves particular attention, so much so that he also describes the glories of its present (the naval dockyard, the new naval station, the railway, «the high schools and trade companies», the maritime contacts with Egypt and the Red Sea) in addition to those of the lagoon city's past, the author extols the virtues of other major Italian cities:

Florence, built vaguely on the Arno river, at the foot of Apennines, crowned with olive trees, flowers and vegetables, heir of the Etruscan civilization, holds in its magnificent churches

²³ *Ibid.*, parte VI, pp. 457-458.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, parte VI, p. 459.

and galleries the masterpieces of Etruscan, Greek and Italian artists; and speaks with the utmost elegance the clearest, most majestic and poetic language among the living. It was the provisional capital of the Kingdom of Italy for four years, and does not cease to be embellished and made larger.

Genoa, superb for its grand palaces, wealth, intrepid sailors who are waving the banners of its thousand ships in the vicinity of the antipodes of America, extends the arms of its port into the sea and those of its railways onto dry land, in order to commercially connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Adriatic Sea and the great Ocean.

Milan's beautiful cathedral is one of the wonders of the Middle Ages, and the Arch of Sempione another from modern times. It is a rich city for the agricultural industry, for manufacturing, for the navigation on the artificial canals, which carry the products of Lake Como to Milan, crowned by palaces and lovely gardens, and Lake Maggiore where the enchanted Borromeo Islands are located.

Turin, clean, uniform and aligned as a phalanx, full of generous spirits, public life; splendid for its weapons, growing in wealth, safeguards the arcane monuments of ancient Egypt and proudly displays those of the dukes of Savoy, the princes of Piedmont and the kings of Sardinia. We salute Turin where our independence and freedom were reborn!²⁶

Rome, Naples, Palermo, Venice, Florence, Genoa, Milan and Turin are indicated by Parravicini simply as examples of the many cities which adorn the Italian peninsula like many precious gems: «One hundred beautiful cities are the hundred jewels of the crown which Italy has placed on the head of its king; in all you can admire churches or paintings or statues or monuments of value, religion, piety, wisdom of the Italians»²⁷. In this last chapter of *Giannetto*, the author's love for his homeland, which in pre-unification editions appeared relegated almost exclusively to the pages of *Duties for the homeland*, explodes²⁸. This love song which Parravicini devoted to the just-unified Italy crowns the theory of endeavours and illustrious men declaimed in the last part of the work and focuses on the natural and architectural beauties of the country. This rapid fresco of the Italian natural, historical and artistic heritage serves as a backdrop to the author, is – in essence – the scenery suitable for the final entrance of the gallery of those famous people, widely represented in the latter part of the work, to which he returns in the last part of the text, in order to deliver to the reader the image of a united Italy, strong with its glorious past and projected towards a bright future:

²⁶ *Ibid.*, parte VI, pp. 459-460.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 460.

²⁸ In the first edition of *Giannetto* (1837) and in those which preceded the annexation of Veneto (1866) the author, as a subject of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, avoids expressing too explicit political judgments. After 1866 he begins to review his work, to enrich it with pages and references capable of bringing out his patriotic convictions. The turning point is the edition of 1868, which will serve as a reference point for subsequent editions, in which the author emphasizes patriotic ideals. Important new elements were introduced in the editions that followed the fall of Rome. Pazzaglia, *I libri di testo: il caso del Giannetto di Parravicini*, cit., pp. 176-177, 183.

It is impossible to recount here all the advantages of this earth favoured by every gift of heaven, mother of heroes and sublime genius, which would always have been feared and revered, if the old disagreements had not torn and divided it. The Romans conquered Europe and parts of Asia and Africa; the Venetians and Genoese were lords of the seas in the Middle Ages. No other nation has two splendid literatures, Latin and Italian; no other has twice spread fine arts and civilization throughout Europe. Italy is the land of genius! The first poet of the modern nations is Dante; the first lyrical poet is Petrarca; the most eloquent and diverse novelist Boccaccio; the most sublime sculptors are Buonarrotti and Canova; the greatest painter Raphael; the first politician Machiavelli; the greatest physicist Galileo. Columbus, the discoverer of America, is Italian; Ariosto, the prince of the great poets, is Italian; Volta, the inventor of the battery, from which the electric telegraph derives, is Italian. Caesar and Bonaparte, the most famous commanders of the world are Italian and Count Benso di Cavour, a great Minister of State is also Italian.

Italy has risen again! The kingdom of Italy now contains twenty-seven million inhabitants. For twenty years his sons scorned death on the battlefield, amid the horrors of war, famine, plague, in the inhospitable lands of the Crimea, in horrible prisons and gallows; they were crushed by numerous enemies everywhere, were buried alive in the deep sea; but with the firm desire to be free, with the offerings of gold and blood, they overcome the adverse fortune, and conquered the Country. To the voice of the fair and warrior king, soldiers and national guards together would raise today a million swords, spears, bayonets. In every battle, in every population, in every scuffle with tyrants, the soldiers and the people showed they were the worthy bloodline of the ancient Romans lords of the Earth, the worthy grandchildren of the Venetians and Genoese lords of the seas.

We agree: Italy will once again be a Great and powerful nation!²⁹

These final stages, full of expectations for the future destinies of Italy, seem to echo the hope with which Parravicini closes the exceptional story of *Giannetto*, where he indicates the hero's ideal country as a model for the new-born Italian State under construction:

The beautiful teachings of *Giannetto* quickly made the people of this so lucky province happy. The farmers were respectable and cultivated the land with such diligence that they seemed gardens; the prisons were empty; the people appeared educated, hard-working, honest, courteous and well-off. Everyone then held *Giannetto* in the palm of their hands; they blessed his name and claimed with reason, that if there were a *Giannetto* in each of our provinces, Italy would soon become an earthly paradise³⁰.

2. *The myth of the Beautiful Country*

A fundamental book «for acquiring knowledge of the Italian landscape, happily thought and rightly widely read» this is how Giulio Caprin in *Città e campagna* (City and countryside), another children's book on Italian natural

²⁹ Parravicini, *Giannetto* (edizione del 1874), cit., parte VI, pp. 461-462.

³⁰ Id., *Giannetto* (edizione del 1849), cit., parte V, p. 240.

heritage, published in the 1950s, presents *Il Bel Paese* by Antonio Stoppani, seventy years after its first edition³¹. The work by this renowned abbot and geologist from Lecco, who had been one of the first professors of the prestigious Polytechnic of Milan, was published first by instalments in several magazines for boys and later in its full version for the first time in 1876, by the Milan publisher Giacomo Agnelli, experiencing a great success over the years³². In fact, at the end of the Nineteenth century, *Il Bel Paese* was the third book for number of editions devoted to schools, immediately after *I Promessi sposi* (The Betrothed) by the Italian writer Alessandro Manzoni and *Cuore* by De Amicis³³.

³¹ This information concerning the lengthy success of the masterpiece by Stoppani is deduced by L. Clerici, *Introduzione*, in A. Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, Torino, Arago, 2009, p. XI. For a first biographical profile of Antonio Stoppani (Lecco 1824 - Milano 1891), see the entry by Elena Marescotti in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE: Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 547-548. For an in-depth analysis on the figure and work of the author see A.M. Cornelio, *Vita di Antonio Stoppani*, Torino, Unione Tipografica Editrice, 1898 and R. Tomaselli, *Antonio Stoppani*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1948. Interesting insights into the political and cultural context in which the work was written are in M.G. Pala, *Antonio Stoppani scienziato e scrittore*, in *Letteratura e scienza nella storia della cultura italiana*, Palermo, Manfredi, 1978, pp. 720-731; A. Bellio, *Letteratura e scienza in Antonio Stoppani*, in L. Caramel (ed.), *Arte, letteratura, società*, Milano, Mazzotta, 1988; E. Zanoni, *Scienza patria religione: Antonio Stoppani e la cultura italiana dell'Ottocento*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2014. For an overview of works by and about Stoppani: E. Marescotti, *Antonio Stoppani (1824-1891): un aggiornamento bibliografico su un personaggio dimenticato*, «Bollettino CIRSE», n. 37, 2000, pp. 53-60.

³² Several conjectures have been formulated in the past concerning the work *princeps* date by Stoppani. For a long time, two date hypotheses circulated: 1873, the year that is shown at the end of the foreword *To the teachers* in the 1920- edition of the work; and 1875, the year of issue indicated by Stoppani's first biographer, his nephew Angelo Maria Cornelio, and by Stoppani himself in his unpublished *Cenni autobiografici* (Autobiographical memories). However, as pointed out by Luca Clerici, Anna Shepherd and more recently by Paolo Traniello, the oldest copies of the work that have reached us date back to 1876 and are published by the Milanese publisher Giacomo Agnelli, whilst other date assumptions have no basis. For a panorama on the editorial history of the work, see Clerici, *Introduzione*, cit., pp. LVIII-LXIII and P. Traniello, *Il Bel Paese: un cammino editoriale nell'Italia in cammino*, in P. Redondi (ed.), *Un best-seller per l'Italia unita. Il Bel Paese di Antonio Stoppani, con documenti annessi*, Milano, Edizioni Angelo Guerrini e Associati, 2012, pp. 59-81. A detailed reconstruction of the editorial history of the work (with reference to the first releases in well-known periodicals for boys like «La Prima Età» and «Le Prime Letture»), of the debate concerning the first edition, and a census of the editions reviewed by the author during his life, followed by a critical edition of the *Serata I*, based on a comparison between the text published in the periodicals and the one which appeared in the volume, are proposed by A. Pastore, *Il «Bel Paese» di Antonio Stoppani: «Serata I»*, «Rivista di letteratura italiana», vol. 18, nn. 2-3, 2000, pp. 293-309. Of the rich bibliography on the best known work by Stoppani, we point out E. Marescotti, *Il Bel Paese di don Antonio Stoppani: educazione e conoscenza scientifica dell'ambiente*, in G. Genovesi (ed.), *Formazione nell'Italia unita: strumenti, propaganda, miti*, 5 vols., Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2002, vol. 1, pp. 71-88; S. Baffi, *Fare gli italiani. Il Bel Paese d'Antonio Stoppani*, «Italiens», n. 6, 2002, pp. 277-300; and the contribution gathered by Redondi (ed.), *Un best-seller per l'Italia unita*, cit. Sull'editore Agnelli si veda: R. Lollo, *Editori a Milano: la famiglia Agnelli*, «Annali di Storia dell'Educazione e delle Istituzioni Scolastiche», vol. 4, 1997, pp. 33-52.

³³ This prominent position of the work was confirmed by the Hoepli-Fumagalli investigation, entitled *The best Italian books, recommended by a hundred illustrious contemporaries*, published in 1892 by Hoepli, where *Il Bel Paese* stands alongside the great classics of Italian literature, such

In 1891, the year of Stoppani's death, the publisher Agnelli re-proposed various works by the writer and the advertising poster included two editions of his masterpiece: a «Fourth Deluxe Edition» and a new «popular Edition». In addition, in the poster, he promoted the work with an impressive presentation caption, which declaimed the smashing success of the text precisely in schools:

Many educational institutes and school boards have already adopted it as a textbook; others as a prize-giving book. The 5th, 6th and 7th edition of 3,000 copies each were sold out in less than 8 months. Now we publish the stereotyped 8th edition, with tonic accents on the words, for use by schools and foreigners, convinced that it will increasingly be diffused with a real benefit to the studious youth³⁴.

The impact given by this work was so great that in 1906 Egidio Galbani did not hesitate to call his new cheese with the name of 'Bel Paese', completing his homage with a nice portrait of Antonio Stoppani on the product label. Indeed the text had been in the Italian classrooms for almost forty years and the 'myth of the Beautiful Country of Italy' was firmly rooted in the population. An indirect confirmation of the conquest process of the collective imaginary produced by the work is in the author's *Cenni autobiografici* (Autobiographical Notes). In these unpublished memoirs Stoppani noted:

I wrote many articles in the form of conversation about natural beauties, geology and the physical geography of Italy, which I gathered and published in 1875 in a volume entitled *The Beautiful Country*. This educational work, subsequently rewarded by the Royal Lombard Institute of Science and Letters, achieved a resounding success in Italy, thereby reaching four editions, for a total of about twenty thousand copies. At the moment, *The Beautiful Country* is adopted as a prize-giving book and a reading book in many schools and many public and private institutions. The subject of this book was particularly provided by the many trips I made during this time in Italy and in Switzerland³⁵.

as Dante and Manzoni. G. Ragone, *La letteratura e il consumo: un profilo dei generi e dei modelli nell'editoria italiana*, in A. Asor Rosa (ed.), *Letteratura italiana*, Torino, Einaudi, 1983. vol. 2: *Produzione e consumo*, pp. 687-772 and in partic. 739-740. On the success of *Il Bel Paese* as a school book: E. Marescotti, *Dall'unità a "Il Bel Paese"*, in L. Bellatalla, G. Genovesi, E. Marescotti (edd.), *La scuola nell'Italia unita. 150 anni di storia*, Padova, Cleup, 2012, pp. 79-80. The work is also included in the lists of textbooks approved in 1898 and in 1900 for «independent (home) reading, for school libraries and for prizes» in the primary school and among the books approved for secondary schools for the school year 1914-1915. See Barausse, *Il libro per la scuola dall'Unità al Fascismo*, cit., pp. 346, 407, 475, 1039, 1163, 1186, 1263.

³⁴ The poster is preserved in the Stoppani Fund of the Museum of Lecco and was published in the volume of studies dedicated to the writer on the centenary of his death: G. Pinna, *Antonio Stoppani e l'evoluzione*, in G.L. Daccò (ed.), *Antonio Stoppani tra scienza e letteratura. Atti del Convegno nazionale di Studi (Lecco, 29-30 novembre 1991)*, Oggiono-Lecco, Paolo Cattaneo Grafiche, 1993, p. 90.

³⁵ The quote from *Autobiographical notes* by Stoppani is taken from Clerici. The passage refers to the prize awarded in 1877 to the work by Stoppani, *ex aequo* with the work *Attenzione!* by Cesare Cantu, from the Royal Lombard Institute of Science and Letters. In this respect see P. Redondi, *La genesi del Bel Paese nei documenti relativi al concorso dell'Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere "Il miglior libro di lettura per il popolo italiano"*, 1871-1877, in Id. (ed.), *Un*

This educational work, as Stoppani himself defined it, had hundreds of editions and reprints, showing a constant interest by the Italian public at least until the 1960s³⁶. The reasons for this long success are certainly varied, but can be traced mainly to the educational and ethical-civil purposes that characterize the draft project of Stoppani's masterpiece.

The knowledge of the physical world feeds the wisdom of nations and is necessary for the «progress of a civilized people». This is the assumption from which *Il Bel Paese* by Antonio Stoppani moves and of which the author provides a broad argument in the work premise, directed not by chance *Agli istitutori* (To educators). We are not in front of a scientific romance modulated on those by Jules Verne, played on that «monstrous mixture of true and false», which for Stoppani has the sole purpose of «delighting the imagination», and certainly not that – far greater – «of enriching the mind»³⁷. Stoppani is not interested in the credible, he only looks at truth. The only fictional elements which he accepts are those related to the narrative framework³⁸.

In fact, to make the text more pleasant and «suited [...] to its educational purpose», he plays the role of the «naturalist uncle» who³⁹, in the winter of 1871-72, for 29 evenings (corresponding to the chapters of the book), entertains a lively band of grandchildren, accompanied by their parents and acquaintances, with the natural beauties and business of Italian industry⁴⁰. However, in terms

best-seller per l'Italia unita, cit., pp. 171-234.

³⁶ In 1969 the Roman edition of *Il Bel Paese* was published by Fratelli Albanese Editore. In the foreword the publisher confirmed the still keen interest in the work, pointing out however that at that time the work was almost impossible to find. In fact, the last complete edition of *Il Bel Paese* dated back to 1939 (Milano, Vallardi). Since the Nineties only some reproductions and reprints of old editions of the work have been published. After reprinting an anastatic 1881 edition (Lecco, Stefanoni, 1991), the facsimile edition of 1876 (Pordenone, Edizioni Studio Tesi, 1995) and the edition of 1883 (Lampi, 2005), the edition of the *princeps* in the version edited by Luca Clerici (Torino, Aragno, 2009) was published. The verbatim quotations in this article are drawn from this edition. You can find an example of the lengthy duration of the work, approached differently according to the historical periods, by reading two articles, one by Luigi Freddi written during the full fascist era (*Conoscere "Il Bel Paese"*, «Il Popolo d'Italia», 30 luglio 1929, p. 3) and the other written by Angelo Sacchi in the immediate post-war period (*Un maestro di turismo nell'Ottocento. "Il Bel Paese" di Antonio Stoppani*, «Le vie d'Italia», marzo, vol. LIII, n. 3, 1947, pp. 237-242). For an overall discussion on the motives of the success of *Il Bel Paese*, see: P. Redondi, *Best-seller si nasce o si diventa?*, in Id. (ed.), *Un best-seller per l'Italia unita*, cit., pp. 10-37.

³⁷ Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, cit., p. 6.

³⁸ In Italy, as in France, a heated debate had begun between supporters of the scientific literature for children and youth, which opposed those who believed it was important to ensure the high quality of the information provided, without compromises with a wonderful language with those who promoted a literature capable of teaching through enjoyment, allowing space for imagination. In this regard, see: E. Zanoni, *Dietro le Quinte del Bel Paese. Intenzioni e strategie d'autore in una corrispondenza inedita di Antonio Stoppani*, in Redondi (ed.), *Un best-seller per l'Italia unita*, cit., pp. 94-95.

³⁹ Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, cit., p. 7.

⁴⁰ It should be noted that 5 evenings were added to the 29 evenings of the previous editions in the third edition published in 1883. Marescotti, *Il Bel Paese di don Antonio Stoppani*, cit., p. 79.

of the content of the stories, he does not differ from the truth, basing the text on tours, experiences and studies he experienced personally. «Fidelity to the truth» is an inviolable dogma for Stoppani, as the success of his work depends on this principle, and – we might say in modern terms – the educational program, concluded by the author with his readers is based on this. The same stylistic solution of ‘the story in the story’, stated in the work’s subtitle (*Conversations on the natural beauties, geology and physical geography of Italy*), draws on the author’s experience, a long-time speaker, not only accustomed to holding those popular science lectures for the general public which were very much in vogue at that time, but also to delight his family and friendship circle with his travel stories⁴¹. In fact, the oral dimension is very present in *Il Bel Paese* and passes through a well thought out dialogical structure, able to meet the variety of characters and interests of his audience, composed by grandchildren of different ages and attentive parents, ready to pose questions and to express their opinion on the proposed subject. Stoppani manages to transpose the immediacy of oral exchange to the written page, giving – in this way – more impact to the rich gallery of geological monuments, naturalistic frescoes and scientific and industrial enterprises outlined in the work.

It has rightly been observed how in *Il Bel Paese* «the tradition of the naturalistic-iterant exploration of eighteenth-century matrix is interwoven with the adventurous and ‘fictional’ journey memoirs, in vogue in the late Nineteenth century»⁴², within a fresh and engaging storyline, which arouses feelings of admiration, wonder, pride and love of the described beauties, not only with the imaginary audience who shares the stage with the narrator, but also and above all in the real one consisting of the audience of readers. With *Il Bel Paese*, Stoppani demonstrates that even the physical world can cause intense emotions with a high educational potential, claiming the right of citizenship on this aspect also for natural sciences. In this regard, in an initial step of the work’s foreword, he observed:

All the charms of nature are not worth an affection; all science is not worth a generous act. Lucia kneeling at the foot of the Innominato (the Nameless); a mother who, holding out her arms, abandons the body of her little girl in the arms of a monatto (the person appointed

⁴¹ The first Stoppani biographer, his nephew Angelo Maria Cornelio, informs us of the great popularizing activity conducted by his uncle at the Civic Museum of Natural History in Milan which he directed and at the Hall of the public gardens in the city, focusing on the wide interest aroused by these initiatives, especially among women. Cornelio also reports that the lectures given by the abbot were paid and allowed making a profit, which was committed to charitable purposes or for implementing scientific projects. The lessons held by Stoppani between winter and spring of 1873 were published as *La purezza del mare e dell’atmosfera fin dai primordi del mondo animato* (The purity of the sea and the atmosphere since the beginning of the animated world, Milano, Hoepli, 1875), which earned the author the praise of Pope Leo XIII. See Cornelio, *Vita di Antonio Stoppani*, cit., p. 18.

⁴² Clerici, *Introduzione*, cit., p. XXIX.

by municipalities to transport the sick and the dead to the Lazzaretto), will always make a greater impression than the most beautiful descriptions of the universe: the painting of the Lazaretto (leper hospital) will always hit more than all Humboldt's paintings put together. But what consequences can be deduced? That natural sciences, whose importance nobody rejects, cannot be used in popular literature? That they are not called in their turn to complete the full awareness that a people must have of itself?⁴³

The author closed his argument with a series of rhetorical questions, which were intended to claim a leading role for natural sciences in building the patriotic spirit. On the other hand, *Il Bel Paese* came to light in the years immediately after the Capture of Rome (Breccia di Porta Pia), which marked a milestone in the process of national unification. Italy was almost done, but the challenge of 'making the Italians' was still open and a work of popular science aimed at schools, such as *Il Bel Paese*, could represent an important opportunity to stimulate the process of building a unity consciousness. That this was the primary goal of the work is certainly not a mystery⁴⁴. In another key step of the foreword devoted *To the preceptors*, in fact, the author remarked bitterly:

In the political conditions that made Italians foreigners in Italy for so long, precisely at a time when natural sciences (specifically geology and physics of the earth) had increased so much outside, we have reached the point that Italians know the physical structure of other countries much better than that of their own country. It is not necessary to deal with the common people to persuade ourselves; whilst even the more educated people often fail the most basic notions concerning physical conditions, geological phenomena, natural beauties, scientific wealth and industrial enterprises of the country, as soon as we go beyond the boundaries of the region from which they draw their name, that too often is used to replace the one of Italian⁴⁵.

Stoppani denounced the scandal of widespread ignorance in natural sciences, which made Italy alien to Italians, even within the most cultured and educated sections of the population, often more ready to discuss the natural beauty of others' countries than to debate their own. As proof of the high educational value assigned to the knowledge of Italian natural and landscape heritage, the writer and patriot from Lecco did not hesitate to place the following words in the mouth of one of the fathers who participated in the first of the family evenings dedicated to the *Bel Paese* cycle:

⁴³ Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, cit., p. 3.

⁴⁴ The topic was then particularly developed by Sandro Baffi in the article *Fare gli italiani*, cit. and in the essay *Il Bel Paese e la costruzione dell'identità nazionale*, in Redondi (ed.), *Un best-seller per l'Italia unita*, cit., pp. 39-57.

⁴⁵ Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, cit., p. 4.

You are only fond of wonderful things, of things from another world, and it seems to you that there is nothing beautiful and good in anything which derives from our nation. Meanwhile, we grow up without knowing anything about our country, worse than if we were strangers who arrived the other day. Nothing is known either about the natural beauties that our Italy has, while we rejoice to hear her called a garden; or of anything of those infinite varieties of physical conditions which immensely affect science; or of anything that the several advantages that Italy offers its industry, which we describe to foreigners as lazy, backward and tax-burdened [...]⁴⁶.

The author's intent is clear. Once the educational value of the scientific knowledge of the environment was stated, the role of the national scientific popular literature needed to be explained, as this could and should be a major means of transmission and dissemination of that value for Italians. An entirely new task for the Italian framework needed to be accomplished, which had become more urgent than ever in the author's eyes because of its educational and ethical implications. Italy needed an educational work on the «physical and natural history» of the country, able to contribute to defining an identity path for the Italian people, which for the priest from Lecco originated from the ancient and essential ethical imperative of *Nosce te ipsum*.

Other countries had demonstrated admirable evidence on this front, and Switzerland, in particular, had distinguished itself above all. *Les Alpes Suisses* by Eugène Rambert, *Les Alpes* by Hermann Alexander von Berlepsch and *Das Thierleben der Alpenwelt* by Friedrich von Tschüdi, were for Stoppani the most shining examples of this Swiss scientific literature, worthy of «cultivating, including from the point of view of the descriptive beauty and of the scientific riches, the national sentiment». Stoppani paid homage to these masterpieces of Swiss literature in the introduction to *Il Bel Paese*, confident in the progress of a literary genre that in Italy had every reason to open towards a bright future, given the unrivalled geographical and geological wealth of the Peninsula. «Italy – the author stated with pride and emotion – is almost (I do not stammer when I say this) a summary of the physical world» and *Il Bel Paese* intended to lead Italians in exploring this vast natural and cultural heritage at the same time, through a path designed to «delight and instruct» combining «the useful with the sweet». An authentically educational work therefore, certainly written as a reading book for «primary and teacher training schools», but aimed more generally to all Italians, and guided by the desire to promote knowledge of the natural treasures of the country and, through these, to offer «food for the heart and a push for the moral improvement» of its inhabitants. Hence the hope with which the author took his leave from readers, hoping that *Il Bel Paese* could «leave the confines of city schools, in order to spread to the countryside, within the Alps, in the Apennine Mountains, at the foot of Vesuvius and of Etna, [...]

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Serata I, p. 13.

teaching] the inhabitants of those regions to appreciate challenges a bit better, which nature was not stingy with for the different provinces of Italy»⁴⁷.

Although it doesn't have the structure and the prose of a scientific treatise, *Il Bel Paese* appears in fact as a work of encyclopaedic character, developed through a novel plot in which the travel story alternates with domestic environments and, not infrequently communicates with drawings and maps appropriately placed in the book's pages. The set of accompanying notes is very rich and clarifies in each instance the meaning of technical words and concepts, recalling that scientific rigor which the work – although adequately shaped for an audience of non-specialists – doesn't renounce. The end result is, as Zannoni observed in 1925, «a clear, bright and limpid display of the natural beauty, geology and physical geography of Italy, given in the form of conversations»⁴⁸, in which the narrating uncle outlines with vivid brushstrokes the magnificence of the alpine and subalpine panoramas (first eight evenings), the «delightful hills» of the Marche and the «steep and barren hills» of the Abruzzi (evenings IX, p. 166 and XIII, p. 246), the «great performances»⁴⁹ of the sea between Liguria and Tuscany (evenings X and XI), the «moral and physical sketches»⁵⁰ of Lombardy and Emilia (XIV-XXI evenings) and the Apuan Alps (evenings XXII-XXIII), ending with the majestic frescoes of Vesuvius and Etna (last five evenings). All without forgetting to accompany the geological and geographical descriptions with interesting brackets on the flora and fauna of the Peninsula, annotations on the various habits and traditions of Italians and passionate reports on national businesses and infrastructures. We can find excellent examples of the admixture of these elements in every chapter of the book. It appears useful, however, to dwell on the analysis of a particular evening, in order to highlight the interplay between the various educational plans developed within each of the stories that make up the work. We will focus, therefore, on an evening a little neglected by the literature commenting the work by Stoppani and particularly dear to me. This is the ninth evening, dedicated to the sea and the town of Loreto. The evening begins with a description of the greatest wonder of the Apennines, the element that makes them unique compared to the Alps and pre-Alps, which the narrator Stoppani, teasing the imagination of the audience, presents in these terms:

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴⁸ The comment is taken from the biographical note on Stoppani by Ugo Zannoni, *La moderna letteratura per l'infanzia e la giovinezza*, Bologna, Cappelli, 1925, pp. 74-78, quoted in Marescotti, *Antonio Stoppani (1824-1891) un aggiornamento bibliografico su un personaggio dimenticato*, cit., pp. 54-55.

⁴⁹ Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, cit., p. 6.

⁵⁰ This was the subtitle with which some parts of the work were published by Stoppani in 1870 with the title *Le serate dello zio* (Evenings with uncle). See Zanoni, *Scienza patria religione*, cit., p. 152.

The southern Italian railway from Ancona to Brindisi, perhaps the most pleasant among the railways of Europe, borders the Adriatic Sea for 15 hours of furious travel. Pleasant hills, fantastic cliffs, picturesque castles, historical ruins, delightful cities parade assiduously and with perennial enchantment under the eyes of the traveller, who covers, with great steam, one of the great sides of this lovely garden which is called Italy. But what do you want? The gaze is always on the sea. One wave presses on the next, and this is under threat from a thousand, and all, one by one, with equal measure, with monotonous cadence, come to the shore, they creep on it and cover it with foam, and go back and get lost under the incoming waves. But the gaze is still on the sea, held there by a feeling which is perpetual like the waves, big like the sea. It is a Godly feeling, which invades us even unknowingly and unintentionally each time that nature shows us what is its greatest in heaven or on earth⁵¹.

Starting from the enchanting frame of the Adriatic coast, seen from a train window, Stoppani introduced the protagonist of this landscape, the sea, the quintessence of the wonders of nature and – at the same time – the divine greatness. In this passage, you can catch the intensity of the ‘visual and sensory immersion process’ on which the stories of *Il Bel Paese* are based the blunt and rhythmic phrasing not only allows the reader to recreate the scenarios in his mind, but also to feel an active part of them, a direct witness of an experience lived through the evocative power of a word that can stimulate the imagination and through this, the feeling of attachment and love for the beauty of the homeland. But Stoppani’s descriptions hold more. There is always that yearning for the infinite that for the author is inherent in every man, and that, in front of the magnificence of nature, elevates towards God, especially in the presence of stunning performances, such as the rising of the sun⁵².

It was a beautiful morning: one of those mornings that even in the most peaceful regions of Italy can be counted. The stars had almost all disappeared, only the brightest still sparkled, changing colour and trembling, almost drops of dew, beaten by the sun, hanging from a blade of grass, agitated by zephyrs; They appeared and disappeared like a wink, with the convulsive flicker of a wick that goes out. The immense horizon had turned from black to ashen; then white; and was reflected in the vast sea, which I saw unwind from the foot of the humid hills up there, where the eye was lost between sea and sky, looking to the east, a large halo could be seen, almost an immense blood red half-moon, as of fire, which passed with callous strength, in croceo (i.e. saffron-yellow), and was lost in the uniform white of the sky [...]. The sky was so limpid, the air so pure and clear, that from the top of the hill the eye, across the expanse of the Adriatic just ruffled by a fresh, slight, thin breeze, went to rest on the mountainous islands of Dalmatia. Those nude peaks, although rising at least 150 km away, were seen well-defined, clear-cut, like the tops of the Resegone seen from the Eastern Gate bastion on a windy day.

⁵¹ Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, cit., Serata IX, p. 166.

⁵² For Stoppani, the study of natural sciences is an instrument for man to approach God, as it allows understanding the design embossed by God in the creation. In this regard, see: *Scienza, patria, religione*, cit., pp. 159-161.

As I watched, almost in a trance, in the midst of that solemn calm; a bright spot, a fiery ray, like an arrow, like a rocket, was lit over the Far East, within that blood halo, almost a spark that suddenly comes off from a charcoal nugget. [...] That darting point gets larger; its light, of an indescribable blue, already pronounces and its base marks the boundary between the sea and the sky ... and grows ... and takes the form of a very pure steel disc, half immersed in the wave, from which it rises, under a sky which has become blue, facing that earth, where the light seems to rain in ever increasing waves. The blazing disc rises, rises ... now it does not touch the sea other than at a single point ... then it takes off ... its sharp lip seems to drip; and the drops of so pure a bowl, seem, falling back to the sea, as drops of fire, which dilate, chase, and flow along one wave after the other to then shatter and die against the beach⁵³.

Stoppani reproduces, frame by frame, the grand scene of the sun's rising, in front of which, even a man of science such as he, reveals that he finds the ancient Greek mythological tales about the god Apollo's chariot credible. It is through the grandeur of images like these that *Il Bel Paese* wants to educate Italians to nationalistic feelings. Paths of aesthetic education are put on stage, in order to 'fill the soul', to sense the immensity of the universe and at the same time to become building tools of a shared collective identity, based on the appreciation of the natural treasures preserved in the homeland. In this way, the external landscape becomes a landscape of the soul, not only of the individual but of an entire population being educated⁵⁴.

In the heart of the ninth evening, between the sublime images of the sea, Stoppani offers a picturesque description of Loreto and of the Marian Shrine, focusing on its devotional traditions. The report given concerning visits to the Holy House of the Virgin, enclosed, as «within a magnificent tabernacle», inside the Shrine is particularly juicy:

When I was at the entrance door of the devotional room, I saw it occupied by a crowd of pilgrims, so stowed, so in one piece, that there was twice its capacity. A much larger crowd was in front of the door, like those swarms of bees, which are seen stuck hanging from the mouth of the hive, when they are waiting for the new queen to give the signal to emigrate. Two soldiers were guarding it, one at the entrance and the other at the exit door, made in the two opposite sides of the monument.

The good Piedmontese (man from Piedmont), who watched the entrance, saw me, and judging my appearance better than that of the other pilgrims, believing me to be some important person how should I know? ... a deputy, a minister, he strove to make me a bit of space within that human conglomerate [...]. I took advantage of that kindness; but as soon as I put my head within the sacred cell, and seeing myself between two human walls, one solidly inside, the other threatening ruin outside, I thought that I could do my little bit of good even outside [...]. So I took off, and became a spectator of a sufficiently bizarre scene, and also, let's face it, a little bit touching.

⁵³ Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, cit., Serata IX, pp. 179-180.

⁵⁴ This concept is well expressed by F. Targhetta, «*The beloved face of the fatherland*». *The role of the landscape into the processes of national identity building*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 139-155 and in part. pp. 139-141.

It was the moment when the pilgrims had to rotate. I believe that the good Piedmontese was in worse trouble here, that at the battles of San Martino or of the Madonna della Scoperta, which he certainly was present at. He ordered those inside to get out, to leave the place to those outside.

But yes! ... wait a little ... the crowd remains motionless, as if nothing had happened. The soldier raises his voice: he threatens, but to no avail. Those Romans with a loud and pointed language surely believed themselves dispensed from understanding the Arabic or Chinese of their subalpine brother. Action was necessary; and some y hand pushes, some very moderate bumps with the rifle butt were better than words. That immobile crowd began to stir, to tingle, to go out, until slowly the cell was empty⁵⁵.

Stoppani lays his benevolent and paternal look on the crowd of devotees. He narrates all the momentum of an ancient cult, whose management was now entrusted to the Piedmont government of the new-born Kingdom of Italy, still made up of many people with different traditions and languages, unknown to each other. It is evident that the author doesn't identify himself with this kind of devotion, but he doesn't condemn, inviting the Milan society audience and all the reading public to understand. Although he is unflinching in his condemnation of a practice that he considers shameful and barbaric, such as that of devotional tattoos, which was widespread precisely in the Loreto area, in general he urges tolerance and respect for local customs, even if expressed in the form of particularly animated dances and songs, such as those performed in front of the shrine of Loreto to the rhythmic sound of the harpsichord. In fact, he addressed these words to the lively grandchildren who had listened carefully to their uncle's Marche adventure story:

[...] keep in mind, my grandchildren: you can never make a right judgment of what is human if you don't take into account the times, the places, the people's character, and many other things; sometimes what at first was judged bad may be good, and evil what was believed good. Not everyone has the same mode of expression. When the feeling is good, it will not cease to be so because there is exuberance in its manifestations. These are shaped by the different temperaments of individuals and populations⁵⁶.

Stoppani considers knowledge as the only tool which allows you to form balanced judgments on everything around us, whether due to the action of man or of nature and in his book the author focuses on knowledge in order to offer his personal contribution to the unification process of the Country.

⁵⁵ Stoppani, *Il Bel Paese*, cit., Serata IX, pp. 169-170.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 170-171.

3. *The Land of feelings*

Dear Mrs. Emilia, this night at midnight, after seven months of continuous work, I have written the last word of a children's book, entitled *Cuore* (Heart); and my thoughts immediately ran to you, my dear mother, to whom I would be so happy to say in person, like the other times: "I have finished".

With these words, on 1st June 1886, Edmondo De Amicis announced to the Marquise and Florentine friend Emilia Peruzzi the end of his masterpiece: *Cuore*⁵⁷. The writer from Oneglia had devoted himself with great commitment to this work for children, even interrupting the writing of *Il romanzo d'un maestro* (The novel of a schoolmaster), a book complaining about the condition of the class of schoolmasters in the newly formed Italian State, which he would only complete in 1890⁵⁸. De Amicis wanted to give Italy an educational work, solid and full of feelings, capable of accompanying the education of the Italian youth, inculcating in them a vivid sense of unity, fraternity and patriotism. The success of *Cuore*, as is known, was immediate and overwhelming. In the first year alone, the work had forty editions and by eighteen years later, three hundred. In terms of circulation we can simply remember that in 1906 330,000 copies were sold, in 1923 this had reached the incredible milestone of one million copies, not counting those relating to the numerous translations of the work, placed on the market immediately after the publication of the first Italian edition in 1886⁵⁹. That success was also facilitated by the involvement of an

⁵⁷ For an initial panorama on the life and literary production by Edmondo De Amicis (...) see the entry by Pino Boero in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE: Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 438-439, from which the quotation of the letter to Emilia Peruzzi, preserved in the Peruzzi Fund of National Library of Florence, is taken. On the correspondence between De Amicis and the Florentine noblewoman, see S. Spandre, *Le lettere di Edmondo De Amicis a Emilia Peruzzi: l'evoluzione di un rapporto e di una personalità*, «Studi Piemontesi», vol. 19, 1990, pp. 31-49. On the context of the Peruzzi salon and of the Florentine apprenticeship by De Amicis: M. Dillon Wanke, *De Amicis, il salotto Peruzzi e le lettere ad Emilia*, in F. Contorbis (ed.), *Edmondo De Amicis. Atti del convegno nazionale di studi (Imperia, 30 aprile-3 maggio 1981)*, Milano, Garzanti, 1985, pp. 55-75. Also noteworthy is the publication of the letters by De Amicis' mother, Teresa Bussetti, addressed to the writer's 'second mother', the one who represented his teacher of language and style, Emilia Peruzzi: L. Tamburini, *Confidenze tra signore: lettere inedite di Teresa Bussetti De Amicis a Emilia Peruzzi*, «Studi Piemontesi», vol. 21, n. 2, 1992, pp. 485-510.

⁵⁸ For a parallel analysis of the two works by De Amicis: R. Bertacchini, *Pubblicistica educativa e tecniche del racconto in Cuore e nel Romanzo d'un maestro*, in Contorbis (ed.), *Edmondo De Amicis*, cit., pp. 293-316.

⁵⁹ It is interesting to juxtapose the observations by Iermano on the success of *Cuore*, with those by Mario Ricciardi on the «literary misfortune» of the De Amicis writer. According to Ricciardi,

insightful and authoritative publisher such as Emilio Treves from Milan, to whom De Amicis, already in 1878, announced the project of a book inspired by reading *L'Amour* by Jules Michelet, with these words:

The work would be made by observations, sketches, all coordinated with the subject, as in the book *Amour*, family and society scenes, anonymous characters who appear and disappear, in all things the inspiration and emotion, the youthful freshness of a frank soul, a big book but short, an extreme simplicity, not a novel, not a treatise, not a philosophical book, a work for all, with an irresistible sincerity, full of consolation, teachings and emotions, which makes you cry, that calms you down and gives you strength, an indisputable argument, which must inevitably be undergone by all⁶⁰.

The project seduced the Publisher Treves immediately, but despite his repeated requests, De Amicis only developed it several years later, after a difficult and long convalescence from a serious illness, in November 1885, while remaining true to the primitive intuition shared with the Milanese publisher⁶¹.

De Amicis chooses to speak to the 'average reader', adopting a reduced and simplified realism, «which decreed his fortune among the general reading public, but at the same time condemns him to be branded as a mediocre writer within the world of literary critique». Iermano, *Da Parravicini a De Amicis*, cit., pp. 359-360; M. Ricciardi, *Un realismo di stile mediocre, in Cent'anni di Cuore. Contributi per la rilettura del libro*, Torino, Allemandi, 1986, pp. 81-92 and pp. 81-82 for the quotations. A deep reflection on the history of the *Cuore* fortunes during the twentieth century is offered in the well-known essay by L. Tamburini, *Peripezie d'un cuore sui banchi di scuola del Novecento*, in Contorbio (ed.), *Edmondo De Amicis*, cit., pp. 317-355. Concerning the work's translations, Mimi Mosso observed: «at the end of the same year 1886, the book record was beaten with 41 editions and 18 requests for translations in just two and a half months of life, among which those in English, French, Spanish, German, Croatian, Hungarian and Polish were already begun»; and later she added, speaking of the beginnings of the Twentieth century: «the translations of *Cuore* from European became worldwide, so much so that today there are translations of our famous book also in Japanese and Indian». M. Mosso, *I tempi del cuore. Vita e lettere di Edmondo De Amicis ed Emilio Treves*, Milano, Mondadori, 1925, pp. 370-371. For a profile on the publisher Treves see the entry by Roberto Sani in Chiosso (ed.), *TESEO*, cit., pp. 597-600. An interesting overview on the success of *Cuore* in Brazil is offered by M.H. Camara Bastos, *Educação do caráter nacional: leituras de formação*, «Revista Educação & Filosofia», vol. 12, n. 23, 1998, pp. 31-50. An expanded and updated version in English of this article is in press and will be published in the journal «History of Education & Children's Literature». We thank the author for the preview reading of the article.

⁶⁰ On the close and lasting professional relationship and friendship that bound De Amicis to the publisher Treves, the book by the Treves' grand-daughter, Mimi Mosso is fundamental. M. Mosso, *I tempi di cuore*, cit.; for the mention letter, dated 2 February 1878, pp. 39-40.

⁶¹ A reconstruction of the troubled composition path of *Cuore* is given by Luciano Tamburini in the famous comment *Cuore riletto*, which appeared in the edition of De Amicis' masterpiece edited by Tamburini and published with an essay by Umberto Eco (Torino, Einaudi, 2007). The quotations that are in the present article are taken from this edition, drawn from the copy of the first impression of the work preserved in the National Library in Rome.

Cuore combines several literary genres: that of the school diary kept by Enrico Bottini, a fourth grade class student, coming from a wealthy Turin family; the epistolary one, developed through the letters of Enrico's family, especially from his father, Alberto Bottini, who constantly reminds his son of patriotic ideals, urging him to the spirit of sacrifice and solidarity towards others; and that of the monthly stories read at school, all characterized by an intense emotional charge. This mixture of genres is happily blended in the text and set between episodes of school and family life that mark the ten months of school recounted by Enrico in his diary: from Monday, October 17, 1881, the first day of school, to Monday, July 10, 1882, the day of exams. The author presents the work as a book for boys, at least so the text says and, in this regard, in the debut pages, De Amicis himself clarified:

This book is particularly dedicated to elementary school children, who are between nine and thirteen, and could be entitled: *History of a school year, written by a student of the 3rd grade, of a municipal school in Italy*. - Saying written by a 3rd grade student, I do not mean that he actually wrote it... at the end of the year, his father corrected those notes⁶².

But *Cuore* is much more than a *Book for boys*. It entered the school first as a prize-giving book in 1923, thanks to the favourable judgments expressed by the Central Commission for examining textbooks chaired by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice, as a reading book, the work soon became a classic of literature for children and «one of the most popular books ever written in Italy», marking the growth path of generations of Italians⁶³.

We are not simply in front of a work that belongs to the memory of so many Italians, but of one of the most representative texts of that painstaking process of cultural and social unification which, begun in the aftermath of the proclamation of political unity, found its most important testing ground in classrooms. «*Cuore* – said Giuseppe Zaccaria – plans building a new society, one that has arisen from the ashes of the old regional states and which must universalize the triumph of bourgeois right». In the universe of De Amicis, everything converges towards a peaceful synthesis, devoid of conflicts and tensions. In this regard,

⁶² De Amicis, *Cuore*, cit., p. 3.

⁶³ For the quotations see Iermano, *Da Parravicini a De Amicis*, cit., p. 360; on the reception of *Cuore* at schools see Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 107-108. The work is one of the «Recommended books for independent (home) reading, school libraries and for prizes» at primary schools in the years 1898-1900, is included among the reading books for primary school approved for the provinces of Potenza, Lecce and Rovigo in 1905, among the reading books approved by the boards for teachers of secondary schools for the school year 1914-1915. See Barausse, *Il libro per la scuola dall'Unità al Fascismo*, cit., pp. 52, 345, 401, 468, 562, 682, 846, 1031, 1093, 1123, 1126, 1162, 1184, 1235, 1295, 1301. On the revitalization of *Cuore* carried out by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice as chairman of the Central Commission for approval of textbooks for the elementary school, see: A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo. L'opera della Commissione centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo da Giuseppe Lombardo Radice ad Alessandro Melchiori (1923-1928)*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2005, pp. 14-15.

the same Zaccaria stressed that «in this light, the political differences of the past disappear (see the medallions of Victor Emmanuel II, Cavour, Mazzini and Garibaldi) in this work, in the same way that social conflicts are resolved in the national union brotherhood and in solidarity between the classes (essential, in this regard, the preparatory function of the school: in the *Relatives of the boys*, “the school seems to make them all equal and all friends”)»⁶⁴. It is in this reassuring design, devoid of shadows and fights, «where inter-classist intersections, paths, exchanges and hugs are always graciously planned from the top and received from the bottom – as an unexpected and not due grace – with astonished humility and gratitude», that the strength and good fortune of *Cuore* lie⁶⁵. The orderly world of De Amicis is supported by a solid network of values, feelings and moral principles, which certainly reflect the positions of the ruling class of that time, but which are driven primarily by a sincere educational goal, namely that of proposing a precise model of society, which the new generations must look to and the school must prepare for⁶⁶.

The central function of the school as a place of building the development of peoples is constantly exalted in *Cuore*⁶⁷. One of the pages that best expresses the important task entrusted to the school, is signed by Enrico’s father, who says in the letter written to encourage the child to take his study duties with commitment and dedication:

Think in the morning when you go out, that at that very moment, in your own town, another thirty thousand boys like you go for three hours in a room to study. Think of the countless boys who pretty much at that hour go to school in all the countries; see them with your imagination, when they go through the alleys of quiet villages, on the streets of noisy cities, along the shores of seas and lakes, under a blazing sun, in the fog, by boat in countries intersected by canals, on horseback through the great plains, by sleigh over the snow, through valleys and hills, through woods and streams, on lonely mountain paths, alone, in pairs, in groups, in long rows, all with books under their arms, dressed in a thousand ways, speaking a thousand languages, from the last schools of Russia almost lost in the ice to the

⁶⁴ G. Zaccaria, *Un «Cuore» d’appendice?*, in Ricciardi, Tamburini (edd.), *Cent’anni di cuore*, cit., pp. 108-109.

⁶⁵ E. Soletti, «*E il pianger m’è sì caro, che di pianto sol nutro il cor*», in Ricciardi, Tamburini (edd.), *Cent’anni di cuore*, cit., p. 113.

⁶⁶ On the pedagogical function of *Cuore*, see the reflections by A. Asor Rosa *Introduzione*, in Contorbia (ed.), *Edmondo De Amicis*, cit., pp. 5-13. In this regard, the observations on the teaching vocation of De Amicis by Bini are also interesting: G. Bini, *De Amicis e la scuola: ideologia e realtà*, in Contorbia (ed.), *Edmondo De Amicis*, cit., pp. 251-256.

⁶⁷ According to Antonio Faeti De Amicis has a «radical trust» in the institution of school, which he puts forward as a sort of «happy island», opposed to the crucible of suffering, injustice and ugliness that characterized Italian society of the late Nineteenth. See A. Faeti, «*Cuore*», in M. Isnenghi, *I luoghi della memoria. Personaggi e date dell’Italia unita*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1997, pp. 103-109.

last schools of Arabia shaded by palm trees, millions and millions, all going to learn the same things in hundreds of different ways; imagine this immense movement of which you are part, and think: – If this movement ceased, humanity would fall back into barbarism; this movement is progress, the hope, the glory of the world⁶⁸.

At the conclusion of this narrative full of pathos, Enrico's father could only urge his son to become a part of this vast army of children that every day, all over the world, go to school to participate in the battle for the «victory of civilization».

The school in *Cuore* is an instrument of emancipation of society and a cornerstone of the social fabric in which the little soldiers of humanity must become an active part, but the school is also and above all a tool for constructing the national identity. In the pages of Enrico's school chronicle there are two episodes in particular which inflame the feeling of unity through reference to the different regions of the Peninsula, as expressions of particular identities which all together help to create the spirit of the new Italy. We refer to the famous story of the arrival of the pupil from Calabria and to that of the award ceremony of the primary schools in Turin.

As regards the first one, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the words used by teacher Perboni to present the Calabrian boy to the rest of the classroom:

Then the teacher took his hand, and said to the class: - You must be happy. Today a little Italian born in Reggio Calabria, more than five hundred miles from here, enters the school. Love your brother who comes from afar. He was born in a glorious land, which gave illustrious men to Italy, and which gives it strong workers and brave soldiers; in one of the most beautiful lands of our country, where there are large forests and high mountains, inhabited by a talented and courageous people. Please, love him, so that he does not realize he is far from the city where he was born; show him that an Italian boy finds brothers in any Italian school he sets foot in. – That said, he got up and marked on the wall map of Italy the point where Reggio Calabria is. Then he called loudly: – Ernesto Derossi! – the one who always wins first prize. Derossi stood up. – Come here – the teacher said. Derossi came out from the desk and went next to the table, facing the Calabrian boy. – As the best in the school – the teacher said him – give the welcoming embrace on behalf of the whole class to the new mate; the embrace of the children of Piedmont to the son of Calabria. – Derossi embraced the Calabrian boy, saying in his clear voice: – Welcome! – And the latter kissed him on both cheeks, impetuously. All clapped their hands⁶⁹.

In the embrace between Piedmont and Calabria you can find all the patriotic feeling that De Amicis intends to celebrate with this story. The brief geography lesson prepared by teacher Perboni masterfully introduces the meeting between the two opposite poles of the united Italy. The Calabrian boy is the 'personification' of his region: «a very brown face, with black hair, with big and black eyes, with thick eyebrows and joined on the forehead», as the blond Derossi is the image

⁶⁸ De Amicis, *Cuore*, cit., 28 ottobre, pp. 23-24.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 22 ottobre, pp. 14-15.

of 'noble' Piedmont, the protagonist of the unification process of the country. The anthropological element is not secondary in the development of the episode and represents the cultural characteristics of lands once separate, which now constitute a single Nation, united under the same flag⁷⁰.

The topic of exalting national unity through the representation of the different Italian regions, is repeated with the school awards ceremony on March 14th, 1882, which is presented to the children in Enrico's class by the Director of their school with these words:

The town hall, this year, wanted that the ten or twelve boys who hand out the prizes should be kids from all parts of Italy, chosen from the various sections of the public schools. [...] Your brothers from all parts of Italy will give you the prizes. Mind you: they will appear on the stage all twelve together. Welcome them with a big round of applause. They are kids; but they represent the country as if they were men: a small tricolour flag is the symbol of Italy just as a great flag is, is it not? Applaud them warmly, then. Show that even your little hearts are kindled, that even your ten-year-old souls are exalted in front of the holy image of the homeland⁷¹.

The many faces of Italy take on the guise of small pupils gathered in the same place to celebrate their homeland through the school, a point of convergence and of initiation to that heritage of ethical and civic values essential to cement the 'spirit of the nation'⁷².

The nine monthly stories included in the book also stem from the desire to spread a shared image of the new Italy among the youngsters, founded on: the Risorgimento ideals, dedication to the motherland, sense of duty, vocation to work and fraternity. It is significant that the protagonists come from different regions of the peninsula: *Il piccolo patriota padovano* (The little Paduan patriot), *La piccola vedetta lombarda* (The small Lombard lookout), *Il piccolo scrivano fiorentino* (The little Florentine scribe), *Il tamburino sardo* (The Sardinian drummer boy), *L'infermiere di Tata* (The Nurse of Tata, coming from a small town just outside Naples), *Sangue romagnolo* (Romagna Blood), *Valor civile* (Civil Value, the protagonist is a boy from Turin), *Dagli Appennini alle Ande* (From the Apennines to the Andes, the protagonist is a boy from

⁷⁰ Tamburini identifies the literary source of the story of the small Calabrian boy by De Amicis in *La Mecca d'Italia* by Roberto Sacchetti, a work set in 1858, but written in 1880. Although the episode of the Calabrian boy is inserted within a school setting in both works, Tamburini highlights the different physical and temperamental characteristics attributed to this character by the two authors. L. Tamburini, *Un piccolo calabrese per De Amicis*, «Almanacco Piemontese», 2001, pp. 94-97; recently republished «In...Forma!», 2008, n. 2, pp. 8-10.

⁷¹ De Amicis, *Cuore*, cit., *La vigilia del 14 marzo* (*The eve of March 14th*), p. 167.

⁷² Scaraffia and Tobias have rightly pointed out, using Hobsbawm (*The Invention of Tradition*), the importance of ceremony in the construction process of the Italian national consciousness, as a symbolic instrument of cohesion among the peoples of the Peninsula, suitable to promote the «unifying myth» of the Risorgimento. L. Scaraffia, B. Tobias, «Cuore» di E. De Amicis (1886) e la costruzione dell'identità nazionale, «Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica», n. 2, 1988, pp. 103-130 and in partic. pp. 103-104, 111-112, p. 116 for the quotation.

Genoa), *Naufragio* (Shipwreck, the main character is a Sicilian castaway). The landscape element enters predominantly in the longer of the book's stories, *Dagli Appennini alle Ande*. The odyssey of young Marco who travels in search of his mother, is accompanied by spaces that expand and amplify the narrative suspense. After leaving his Genoa, the intrepid boy crosses the ocean, flanks tropical rivers, travels through arid and desolate expanses, admires the endless grandeur of the Andes, passes through towns pulled up quickly and apparently all the same. The urban and natural environments that accompany Marco's adventure have as background a topic very dear to De Amicis, that of emigration, of the distance from native land and family⁷³. The landscapes, in particular, are characterized by a sentimental colouring, which emphasizes the recurring motif of the missed encounter between the protagonist and his mother. So it is also for the landscape that accompanies Marco during the night which precedes the coveted embrace with the parent:

It was midnight; and [...] Marco, after spending many hours on the bank of a ditch, worn out, walked through a vast forest of giant trees, monsters of vegetation with huge trunks like cathedral pillars, whose enormous foliage was woven at a wonderful height, and silvered by the moon. In the half darkness, he vaguely saw myriads of trunks of all shapes, straight, tilted, contorted, crossed in strange attitudes of threat and fight; some lay on the ground, like towers fallen all in one piece, and covered with a dense and confused vegetation, which seemed an angry crowd which disturbed them inch by inch; other were in large groups, vertical and tight like bundles of titanic spears, whose tips touched the clouds; a superb grandeur, a prodigious disorder of colossal forms, the most majestically terrible spectacle that the vegetable nature had ever offered him. But his soul is immediately launched towards his mother. He was exhausted, his feet bled, alone in this formidable forest, where he saw small human dwellings only at long intervals, which at the foot of those trees appeared like nests of ants, and some buffalos asleep along the way; he was exhausted, but did not feel the fatigue; he was alone and had no fear. The greatness of the forest magnified his soul; his mother's nearness gave him the strength and the boldness of a man; the memory of the ocean, of the dismay, of the pains undergone and overcome, of the long-lasting labours, of the iron proved constancy, made him raise his forehead; all his strong and noble Genoese blood flowed back to his heart in a wave of fiery pride and audacity⁷⁴.

The threatening forest of Tucuman does not deter the intrepid Marco, sustained by the certainty of having reached the end of his long trip and the long-awaited meeting with his mother, after which he knows that a much sweeter trip awaits him: that of returning to his homeland.

Homeland: this is the word that recurs most often in the pages of *Cuore*, a word full of meaning, in which the key message of the work is condensed, well

⁷³ These topics are the basis of the work *Sull'Oceano*, published in 1889, but the result of a trip made by the author in 1884, which allowed De Amicis to verify personally the terrible conditions of those forced to emigrate for necessity. G. Bertone, *Tra Cuore e Primo Maggio*, in Contorbina (ed.), *Edmondo De Amicis*, cit., p. 371.

⁷⁴ See the *Racconto di maggio* (May novel) by De Amicis, *Cuore*, cit., pp. 266-267.

summed up – once again – by the voice of Enrico’s father, who leaves his son a sort of secular prayer, to be recited during the major national solemnities, to celebrate all of Italy, with its natural beauty, its monuments, its glorious history and its bright present:

Salute the homeland thus on feast days. Italy, my country, noble and beloved land, where my father and my mother were born and will be buried, where I hope to live and die, where my children will grow up and die; beautiful Italy, great and glorious for many centuries, united and free for only a few years; which spread so much divine intellect light upon the world, and for which so many brave people died in the fields and so many heroes on the gallows; august mother of three hundred cities and thirty million sons; I, a child, who do not yet understand you and do not wholly know you, I venerate and love you with all my soul, and I am proud of having been born to you, and to call myself your son. I love your beautiful seas and your sublime Alps, I love your solemn monuments and your immortal memories, I love your glory and your beauty; I love and revere you all like that dear part of you, where for the first time I saw the sun, and understood your name. I love you all with one affection and equal gratitude, valiant Turin, proud Genoa, scholarly Bologna, enchanting Venice, mighty Milan, I love you with the equal reverence of a son, kind Florence and terrible Palermo, immense and beautiful Naples, wonderful and eternal Rome. I love you sacred homeland! And I swear I will always love all your sons as brothers; I will always honour in my heart your great living and your great dead; I will be an industrious and honest citizen, I will constantly seek to improve myself, to make myself worthy of you, to contribute with my small force to ensure that one day misery, ignorance, injustice, crime will disappear from your face, and that you may live and grow peacefully within the majesty of your right and your strength. I swear that I will serve you humbly and boldly, as I will be allowed, with ingenuity, arms, heart; and that if there will come a day when I must give you my blood and my life, I will give my blood and die, shouting thy holy name to the heavens and sending my last kiss to your blessed flag⁷⁵.

This hymn to the beautiful and strong Italy contains the whole sense of pride of being Italian towards which De Amicis wants to drive all his readers, young and old, so as to tie them to an indissoluble oath of eternal love and fidelity to the homeland, presented as a true bond of union and brotherhood among all Italians.

This intention emerges well in the page where Enrico’s father explains the meaning of the concept of patriotism to his son:

Since the story of the Tamburino (the drummer boy) shook your heart, it must have been easy, this morning, to write a good exam essay: – *Why do you love Italy*. Why do I love Italy? Did not a hundred responses occur immediately? I love Italy, because my mother is Italian, because the blood that flows in my veins is Italian, because the land where the dead who my mother cries for and my father worships are buried is Italian, because the city where I was born, the language that I speak, the books that educate me, because my brother, my sister, my schoolmates, and the great people in the midst of which I live, and the beautiful nature that surrounds me, and everything that I see, love, study, admire is Italian. Oh, you cannot still hear this entire affection! You’ll feel it when you’re a man, when returning from a long trip, after a long absence, looking one morning from the railing of the ship, you will

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 14 giugno, pp. 288-289.

see on the horizon the great blue mountains of your country; you will feel it then in the impetuous wave of tenderness which will fill your eyes with tears and tear a cry from the heart. You'll feel it in some big city far away, in the impulse of the soul that will push you in the unknown crowd to an unknown worker, from whom you will have heard, passing beside him, a word in your language. You'll feel it in the painful and superb disdain that your blood will send to your forehead, when you hear the mouth of a foreigner revile your country. You'll feel it more violently and more proudly on the day when the threat of an enemy people will raise a storm of fire towards your country, and you will see weapons rustling everywhere, young people rushing in their legions, fathers kissing their children, saying: – Courage! – and mothers saying goodbye to the youths, shouting: – Win! – You'll feel it like a divine joy if you are lucky enough to see the thinned out, tired, ragged, terrible regiments returning to your city, with the splendour of victory in their eyes and torn flags lacerated by cannonballs, followed by an endless convoy of brave men who will raise up their bandaged heads and stumps, in the midst of a crazy crowd that will cover them with flowers, blessings and kisses. Then, you will understand the love of homeland, then you will feel your country, Enrico⁷⁶.

The desire of De Amicis to feed, as had been done by one of his models, namely *Giannetto* by Parravicini, that patriotic sentimentality built on the allegory of Italy as a flourishing land, on the bond of family ties, on that natural impulse of brotherhood sprung from speaking the same language, on the sense of honour and of yearning for freedom, is evident. The «great and sacred» homeland is defined in this text as the most precious common good for every citizen, a good whose value you can perceive, and whose characteristics you will recognize and learn whilst growing up until you will project them into the depths of your being, so as to perceive yourselves as part of a much larger reality than the family and community of origin; a reality consisting of an entire people, united by a visceral love for the same homeland before that of its borders.

Conclusion

During the course of this article we have proposed three different images of Italy. We started from the «Ideal Country» of *Giannetto* by Parravicini, to move to the «Beautiful Country» of *Il Bel Paese* by Stoppani, finishing our excursus with the «Country of the feelings» of *Cuore* by De Amicis. These three masterpieces of nineteenth-century educational literature have showed different approaches to the Italian cultural and landscape heritage. In Parravicini there is a constant yearning towards the ideal plan, which he identifies with the great events and people of the past, distant and recent, given as examples for regenerating the country. In Stoppani, nature dominates the scene, the performances that it puts on are a source of constant education and

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 24 gennaio, pp. 106-107.

it is through these that the author intends to educate the Italian people's love for their land. De Amicis, finally, relies entirely on feelings, on strong emotions that are reflected in the surrounding environment, helping to nourish the hearts of the children with that love for the homeland that must accompany every moment of the individual's growth, particularly within the family and at school.

In the reading books examined there isn't an explicit formulation of the concept of a cultural and environmental heritage, but it emerges as a consequence, reading between the lines of the edifying biographical medallions of *Giannetto*, in the evocative descriptions of geological, physical and zoological phenomena of the Peninsula in *Il Bel Paese*, in the intense pages of the letters that Alberto Bottini addresses to his son Enrico and in the monthly stories that the young protagonist of *Cuore* listens to in class with his schoolmates. The beauty of the pleasant Italian landscapes, of the monuments and buildings that narrate the glories and the native genius returns in all the three works considered. It is a beauty that has the task of educating the younger generations to love for their country and to contribute to that work of unification that, once it was physically implemented, needed contents on which to build, which could offer support to the arduous mission of 'making Italians', entrusted primarily to the school. The three best-sellers analysed here are much more than simple reading books, they are works nourished by a high educational and moral purpose, namely that of spreading, not only among school children, but also for the entire Italian people, a code of behaviour, values and knowledge, constituting a national identity, able to teach Italians to love and appreciate their Country, as a common heritage to be defended and to be made prosperous.

The landscape as a means to nationalization: Italian heritage and national identity education in the 19th and 20th century

Fabio Targhetta
Department of Philosophy, Sociology,
Education and Applied Psychology
(FISPPA)
University of Padua (Italy)
fabio.targhetta@unipd.it

ABSTRACT: This paper investigates the role of the urban and natural landscape in building the Italian national identity across the 19th and the 20th century, using the culture of education as a medium connecting the two elements. As for methodology, the issue is addressed from three distinct yet intertwined perspectives: the narrated landscape (mainly in reading books for primary school); the represented landscape (images accompanying the stories, wall charts, but also educational films); the perceived landscape (through the practice of school trips). For each perspective, the paper draws from a variety of specific sources: from schoolbooks to teaching aids, from laws to materials documenting the activities of associations that worked closely with schools (Touring Club, the Italian Alpine Club).

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Landscape; National Identity; Primary School; Italy; XIX-XXth Centuries.

1. *Cultural and natural heritage / urban and natural landscape*

The aim of this paper is to investigate the role of the urban and natural landscape in building the Italian national identity across the 19th and the 20th century, using the culture of education as a medium connecting the two elements.

First, it is necessary to clarify some of the words used, concerning the subject of this research. 'Urban landscape' refers to *heritage*, that is, the set of products (artworks, monuments, buildings, manufactures, oral histories, songs, legends, traditions, etc.) that a community (such as a city, a region or, as in the present work, a nation) creates at a specific moment in history by following specific

enhancement criteria. Indeed, the study of the reasons for choosing these parameters and analyzing the unique heritage of a given community allows us to understand how this community wants to be represented. Moreover, «by activating different forms of power, tensions of memory and plans for the future, [heritage] gives an extraordinary contribution to the processes and the policies of identity education»¹.

The Italian researcher Simona Troilo has thoroughly examined the link between cultural heritage and identity construction², investigating how the national heritage has been used for political purposes. «Interrogating the heritage means questioning the nature of objects and habits that contribute to the development of identity practices»³. These are processes related to a given context and specific actors, and thus intended to evolve in time and space. During the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, they acquired a relevant role in the building of identity and, later, in the spread of nationalism:

Seen as a space for knowledge, social practice and field of power, heritage has long been a visible and tangible symbol of a country to claim, of sovereignty to aspire and to fight for, of a nation to grow and to support. A conceptual resource with great emotional impact, heritage has legitimized latent and resistant nationalisms, ensuring their success and affirming the natural and original character of the identity represented⁴.

However, the present essay will not make reference to the whole artistic and cultural heritage of Italy, a very broad subject. To limit the scope of research, it will focus on a specific aspect of cultural heritage, intended as monuments, buildings, streets, and so on – in short, on the so-called monumental (or urban) landscape.

Another object of research will be natural heritage in its wider meaning of landscape. According to the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 1972, ‘natural heritage’ refers to natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view; geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation; natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty. They are, in short, specific areas

¹ S. Troilo, *La patria e la memoria. Tutela e patrimonio culturale nell'Italia unita*, Milano, Electa, 2005, p. 16. All the translations from Italian into English are by author.

² See S. Troilo, *Sul patrimonio storico-artistico e la nazione nel XIX secolo*, «Storica», n. 23, 2002, pp. 147-177; Ead., *Patrie. Il bene storico-artistico e l'identità locale tra Otto e Novecento*, «Memoria e ricerca», n. 14, 2003, pp. 159-176.

³ Ead., *Sul patrimonio storico-artistico e la nazione nel XIX secolo*, cit., p. 150.

⁴ Ead., *La patria e la memoria*, cit., p. 18.

that are to be enhanced for their high aesthetic or scientific significance, or protected as under threat. This definition has been recently revised and adapted to a more inclusive meaning. Article 2 of the European Landscape Convention, undersigned in Florence in 2000, establishes that the definition must include «landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as every day or degraded landscapes»⁵.

Therefore, the urban and natural landscapes are nothing but two specific aspects of cultural heritage, which include the whole reference context and not confined to the most beautiful places. According to Article 2 of the new Italian Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape, issued in January 2004, the nation's cultural heritage consists not only of monuments, but also of all the assets which constitute the cultural and landscape heritage. The second paragraph of Article 1 is even clearer and it makes explicit reference to the link between landscape and identity: «the protection and promotion of cultural heritage contribute to preserving the memory of the national community and of its territory and to promote the development of culture»⁶. In addition, this document contributes to overcoming definitely the idea of landscape simply as a beautiful view, referring to «higher range factors, such as history, natural environment and sedimented collective values»⁷.

As for methodology, the issue is addressed from three distinct yet intertwined perspectives: the narrated landscape (mainly in reading books for primary school); the represented landscape (images accompanying the stories, wall charts, but also educational films); the perceived landscape (through the practice of school trips). For each perspective, the paper draws from a variety of specific sources: from schoolbooks to teaching aids, from laws to materials documenting the activities of associations that worked closely with schools (Touring Club, the Italian Alpine Club).

2. *What is the landscape?*

Before going any further information it is necessary to explain the meaning of landscape. Is it a physical space, perhaps a particularly evocative one? Or is it instead an imaginary place, confined to the perception or the memory of the beholder? In short, is it something objective, given and unchangeable, or something subjective, whose meaning changes depending on the historical

⁵ See: <<http://www.convenzioneeuropeapaesaggio.beniculturali.it/index.php?id=2&lang=it>> (last access: June 10th, 2016).

⁶ See <<http://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legislativo:2004-01-22;42@originale>> (last access: June 10th, 2016).

⁷ C. Tosco, *Il paesaggio come storia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2007, p. 8.

and cultural background of the viewer? The answer is twofold, as both interpretations are partly correct. Indeed, recent studies have reconstructed the evolution of meaning of the word landscape itself in the last centuries, discovering its polysemous meaning.

According to its original meaning deriving from artistic culture, 'landscape' was generally intended as a depiction of unspoiled spaces, nature, bucolic countryside, snowy hills, and so on. Later on, the definition became part of common usage and came to signify a view or scenario, always accompanied by an evocative or romantic connotation. Thinking about a landscape necessarily brings to mind beautiful images.

In the attempt to define the landscape, today's scholars make reference both to the physical space and to the domain of perception, opening up to a complex and articulated definition from a cultural and sensorial viewpoint⁸. A suitable one is given by Giuliana Andreotti when trying to distinguish the territory from the landscape. She defines the landscape as the «superior system» of the physical place, something alive and pulsating with a memory and a language «acquired through the long sediment of processes of interaction between man and environment»⁹.

The landscape is therefore the result of such relationship, an arithmetic operation which requires the presence of both factors. Article 1 of the European Landscape Convention also reiterates this concept: «Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors».

The immediate consequence is that the idea of landscape becomes malleable, sometimes artfully pliable. In this sense, the landscape is full of meanings, expectations and non-neutral projections, also used for ideological and/or identity purposes. One of the results is the possibility to investigate the political use that the ruling classes have made of the landscape over the decades and the ways in which they educated the citizens to the national identity.

'Landscape' does not refer to the natural environment, or 'wilderness' as defined in the Anglo-Saxon culture, but to the idea of landscape that has been passed through the filter of specific teaching and cultural practices: readings and letters in textbooks¹⁰, pages dedicated to the teaching of geography, specific teaching aids such as atlases and wall charts, children's novels, illustrated albums, postcards and so on. It is from the interaction of the real space and the imagined/described space that the modern landscape construction¹¹ and its use

⁸ L. Scazzosi, *Limits to Transformation in Places' Identity: Theoretical and Methodological Questions*, in Z. Roca, P. Claval, J. Agnew (edd.), *Landscapes, Identities and Development*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011, pp. 9-24.

⁹ G. Andreotti, *Riscontri di geografia culturale*, Trento, Valentina Trentini Editore, 2011 (I ed. 2005), p. 116.

¹⁰ See F. Targhetta, *Paesaggio e identità nazionale nelle lettere esemplari dal Belpaese*, «Ricerche Pedagogiche», n. 191, 2014, pp. 27-32.

¹¹ D. Blackbourn, *The conquest of Nature. Water, landscape and the making of modern*

in an educational key were born. They are two complementary meanings – one that refers to the physical reality made up of mountains, lakes, rivers, islands, and so on, and the other given by the cultural construct of those who describe the landscape, i.e. the observers-authors of fictional books for young students, animated by educational purposes. As an example, consider the role played by Rousseau in renewing the image of the Alps, presented as the supreme refuge of freedom and honesty.

Moreover, man is capable not only of shaping the landscape. In fact, he can also educate younger generations, native populations, or even strangers to recognize the landscape, to protect it, to internalize it, to enhance it, and to love it. And it is this educational purpose that interests us mostly; a project not always, or not only, conveyed in a political or ideological way, but also more simply in an aesthetic or artistic one. Just think of the role played by tourist guides, especially the famous Baedeker guides, and their ability to create a preliminary gaze, «imposing the “curiosities” that deserve to be seen according to the rules of good taste»¹². What emerges is a kind of education to national tourism which passed through the guides, but also through travel, excursions, school trips organized by institutions and associations.

3. *Urban space and toponymy*

As is well known, Italy's reunification in 1861 brought about the need to build a national identity for millions of new citizens who, although they belonged to the Italian kingdom, were nearly strangers from several perspectives, at least until the end of the century¹³. Schools, and in particular primary schools, took on this delicate matter, hence becoming the transmission belt of a shared cultural background and of a new national ethos. Recreating a nation required not only to build a pantheon of national heroes – first of all king Vittorio Emanuele II and Cavour, followed by Garibaldi and, much later, Mazzini – and to borrow Catholic values as a collective ethical foundation of the fledging nation-state¹⁴. It also implied to take possession of the territory and to reshape the physical space, made of streets, cities, railroads, ports, and so on. In this

Germany, New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 2006.

¹² A. Rauch, *Le vacanze e la rivisitazione della natura (1830-1939)*, in A. Corbin (ed.), *L'invenzione del tempo libero 1850-1960*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1996, pp. 85-122, in part. p. 100.

¹³ See, for example, S. Soldani, G. Turi (edd.), *Fare gli italiani. Scuola e cultura nell'Italia contemporanea*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1993 and R. Sani, «Refining the masses to build the Nation». *National schooling and education in the first four decades post-unification*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 7, n. 2, 2012, pp. 79-96.

¹⁴ F. Traniello, *Religione cattolica e Stato nazionale. Dal Risorgimento al secondo dopoguerra*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2007, pp. 193-219.

sense, the relationship between nature and nation was not univocal, but rather mutually interdependent¹⁵.

In the process of building national identity, the interpretation, or reinterpretation, of history and culture also plays a pivotal role. Indeed, the narrative of a nation must be enriched by the presence of heroes, shared values and traditions. They can build a national consciousness on the basis of feelings such as the sense of belonging, pride, and loyalty, to name but a few¹⁶. Hence the need for the ruling class of the new-born Italian state to construct a national story of greatness based on history and culture – two precious weapons in this battle – which required various channels to be transmitted: books, newspapers, political speeches, and so on.

Another significant contribution to the education to patriotism came from toponymy. Toponymy is the set of names of streets, squares, alleys of an urban center and its historical and linguistic study¹⁷. In 1866 a law was issued that assigned citizens' registry duties to the municipalities and resulted in a rewriting of the toponymy in many Italian cities and towns¹⁸. As part of a larger project which aimed to use the urban spaces for a patriotic education, many municipalities removed the existing references to religion, trades and the symbolism of places to make room for national heroes and all those names that could evoke the *Risorgimento* and cement the citizens' love for the country¹⁹.

A clear example of the pedagogical use of toponymy comes from the pages of one of the most popular travel fiction books for children: the novel *Viaggio per l'Italia di Giannettino* (*The trip to Italy of Giannettino*), written by Collodi between 1880 and 1886²⁰. The author often describes the name of the streets while also highlighting some changes that occurred over time. For example, in

¹⁵ M. Armiero, M. Hall, *Il Bel Paese. An introduction*, in M. Armiero, M. Hall (edd.), *Nature and history in modern Italy*, Athens, Ohio University press, 2010, pp. 1-11 and in particular p. 2.

¹⁶ E. Hobsbawm, T. Ranger (edd.), *L'invenzione della tradizione*, Torino, Einaudi, 1994.

¹⁷ S. Raffaelli, *I nomi delle vie*, in M. Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Simboli e miti dell'Italia unita*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1996, pp. 217-242; S. Pivato, *Il nome e la storia. Onomastica e religioni politiche nell'Italia contemporanea*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1999; M. Morandi, *Lo spazio urbano*, in A. Arisi Rota, M. Ferrari, M. Morandi (edd.), *Patrioti si diventa. Luoghi e linguaggi di pedagogia patriottica nell'Italia unita*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2009, pp. 61-70.

¹⁸ See, for example, M. Morandi, *La costruzione dell'identità locale: Cremona e Mantova nell'onomastica del secondo Ottocento*, «Memoria e ricerca», n. 20, 2005, pp. 133-146; R. Balzani, *Quando le parole sono pietre. Toponomastica urbana, politica e memoria culturale nella Romagna fin de siècle*, in M.G. Muzzarelli (ed.), *Neomedievalismi. Recuperi, evocazioni, invenzioni nelle città dell'Emilia Romagna*, Bologna, Clueb, 2007, pp. 39-60.

¹⁹ B. Tobia, *Una patria per gli italiani. Spazi, itinerari, monumenti nell'Italia unita (1870-1900)*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1991, p. 95.

²⁰ The Florentine publisher Felice Paggi printed three books: *Italia superiore* (1880), *Italia centrale* (1883) and *Italia meridionale* (1886), then collected in a single book. For the most recent bibliography on Collodi see the biographical profile by A. Ascenzi in G. Chiosso, R. Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2013, vol. 2, pp. 50-52.

Palermo «the most beautiful, the noblest, the most populous street [...] is Corso Vittorio Emanuele. This street, before 1860, was named Via Toledo, baptized with this name by Don Garcia of Toledo, the Spanish viceroy»²¹. In the Sicilian capital town, there is also a «wide square called Fieravecchia by the people and after 1860 renamed *Piazza della Rivoluzione (Revolution Square)*. [...] There Garibaldi, entering from the door of Termini, made a first stop, in order to resume more vigorously his fight against the enemies of freedom»²². The protagonist of these pages experiences the continuous re-enactments of homeland battles by visiting evocative places or reading tombstones and inscriptions. In Palermo, in particular, he retraces what Claudio Mancuso has recently defined «the urban axis of memory, which, starting from Corso dei Mille, joins, through what was once the port of Termini (later called Porta Garibaldi), Via Garibaldi and ends in the glorious Revolution Square, a real temple of memory and synthesis of the deepest and most hidden national identity of Palermo»²³.

The naming of the streets to the heroes of the Risorgimento, together with the dissemination of epigraphs and commemorative plaques across the city walls, had precisely the task of spreading the cult of the homeland and of those who gave their life in order to unify the country. This was almost perceived as a pedagogical duty for the liberal ruling class of that time, as confirmed by the work by Felice Venosta dedicated to *Milano e le sue vie (Milan and its streets)*, output in 1867 in the *Collezione di opere istruttive e morali per la gioventù (Collection of educational and moral works for Youth)*. Venosta retraces the work of the municipal commission established in Milan in 1866 and charged with the reorganization of toponymy, and highlights its explicit educational aim. Indeed, naming the streets after the great patriots was an «easy way to educate, to disseminate news and useful knowledge among youth and the people»²⁴.

Not only did the remodelling of urban space policies change the names of the streets, but also gave new names to public and social spaces such as theatres, schools, barracks and hospitals, turning them into potential amplifiers of patriotism²⁵.

²¹ C. Collodi, *Il viaggio per l'Italia di Giannettino. Italia Settentrionale, Centrale e Meridionale Sicilia e Sardegna. Riordinato in un solo volume da Ferronio. Nuova edizione con vignette ed oltre 100 fototipie, 10ª ristampa*, Firenze, Bemporad, 1906, p. 241.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 356.

²³ C. Mancuso, *Miti del Risorgimento a Palermo. Spazi urbani e simbologie patriottiche (1860-1911)*, «Mediterranea», n. 11, 2007, pp. 545-576, for the quotation pp. 549-550.

²⁴ Quoted in Tobia, *Una patria per gli italiani*, cit., p. 96.

²⁵ See M. Isnenghi, *Le guerre degli italiani. Parole, immagini, ricordi 1848-1945*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2005, p. 329; M. Morandi, Local e nation building *nelle targhe degli istituti scolastici postunitari. Un percorso di ricerca*, in M. Ferrari, M. Morandi (edd.), *Documenti della scuola tra passato e presente. Problemi ed esperienze di ricerca per un'analisi tipologica delle fonti*, Azzano San Paolo (BG), Junior, 2007, pp. 41-53; Id., *Scuola è un nome femminile. Riflessioni intorno alle scelte denominative delle scuole normali in età liberale*, in C. Ghizzoni, S. Polenghi (edd.), *L'altra metà della scuola. Educazione e lavoro delle donne tra Otto e Novecento*, Torino, Sei, 2008, pp. 123-133.

4. *Monumental cities*

The redefinition of the urban fabric as a visual representation of patriotism and vehicle of identity reached its climax with the *monumentalization* of the urban space. After reaching Italy's unification and conquering the new capital (Rome), the ruling classes reached what Bruno Tobia called a «consensus made of stone, monuments and ceremonies»²⁶, with a significant acceleration during the last decade of the 19th Century.

The political use of commemorative monuments was closely linked to the liberal class' willingness to start a process of cultural nationalization to accompany the newly achieved unification²⁷. In this context, the monuments dedicated to the heroes and the events of the Risorgimento «had a very high symbolic value»: as well as giving political legitimacy to the new institutions, they contributed to «strengthening the sense of belonging to the nation around the values of a new secular religion»²⁸.

Take the emblematic case of the Dante statue erected in 1896 in Trento, which at that time was still under the Austrian rule. The statue became the symbol of the province, reproduced on every advertisement of the territory and on all tourist guides. Its use was not dictated by its particular artistic value, but by a political ideal, turning it into the symbol of the whole Italian region²⁹. Many readings published in the textbooks of that time mimicked the shrewd political use of the monument to Dante made by guidebooks. In the descriptions of Trento, there was always a mention of the statue of the 'divine poet', called «flame of patriotism, that people from Trentino always kept lit in their hearts»³⁰. It was thus not only the natural landscape, but also the urban one, to be used as a means to build the national identity. Monuments, statues, memorial stones, war cemeteries, but also cathedrals and churches were subject to «a process of nationalization, a process of symbolic possession and assignment of imaginary meanings, essential for the development of identity»³¹.

²⁶ Tobia, *Una patria per gli italiani*, cit., p. 163.

²⁷ On the promotion of national identity through education in the late Nineteenth century see G. Chiosso, *Nazionalità ed educazione degli Italiani nel secondo Ottocento*, «Pedagogia e Vita», n. 4, 1987, pp. 421-440 and A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, *Tra disciplinamento sociale ed educazione alla cittadinanza. L'insegnamento dei Diritti e Doveri nelle scuole dell'Italia unita (1861-1900)*, Macerata, eum, 2016.

²⁸ M. Baioni, *La politica monumentale nella Roma postunitaria*, «Passato e presente», n. 48, 1999, pp. 133-145, in particular p. 134.

²⁹ Cfr. D. Bagnaresi, *Editoria turistica e irredentismo. La statua di Dante a Trento tra rappresentazione e gite patriottiche (1896-1927)*, «Storia e Futuro», n. 23, 2010 (online journal).

³⁰ L. Alfieri, *Fanciulli d'Italia. Corso di letture per le scuole elementari maschili e femminili, Voci del lavoro per le V classe*, Milano, Trevisini, s.d., p. 314. See also M.C. Portoghese, *Pagine scelte. Letture educative ad uso della quarta classe maschile e femminile delle scuole elementari urbane e suburbane, XXV ristampa*, Palermo, Biondo, 1920, p. 124.

³¹ D. Bagnaresi, M. Wedekind, *Turisti per cosa? Nazionalismo e turismo prima della Grande Guerra*, in C. Ambrosi, M. Wedekind (edd.), *Turisti di truppa. Vacanze, nazionalismo e potere*,

Primary school readings were a fundamental instrument to spread this nationalist reinterpretation of the urban landscape, as the trend increased since the late 19th century. In this regard, the children's book *Viaggio per l'Italia di Giannettino* is once again emblematic. There is no destination of Giannettino's wanderings that did not include a reference to the Risorgimento in terms of the places visited (often epic battlefields) or the famous monuments quoted:

Perhaps there is not another city in Italy as Turin which has on its streets and public squares as many memorials and many inscriptions and many statues of great men. [...] Wandering around the city, I remember to have seen many of these statues: the bronze statue of Massimo d'Azeglio, at the Porta Nuova station: the equestrian statue, also of bronze, of the Duke of Genoa, on Piazza Solferino: the statue of Duke Amedeo d'Aosta, brother of Umberto I, the statues of Brofferio writer and journalist, of the engineer Paleocapa, of the mathematician Lagrange, of the historian Cesare Balbo, of the Neapolitan general Guglielmo Pepe, of Daniele Manin, dictator in Venice; the memorial spire of 1821, on Viale Valentino, in remembrance that in that year and in that place was made the solemn oath to liberate Italy³².

This excerpt immediately brings to mind the biographical methodology recommended by school programs until the late 19th century in primary schools, but also in normal schools (the schools for future teachers), technical institutes and the gymnasium³³. The page is also a celebration of the educational and moral function of this teaching, to be delivered through the biographies of famous men.

In 1888, the same primary-level school programs summarized the concept of the educational purpose of a subject, stressing the need for teachers to refer to local monuments in their lessons:

If the municipality in which the school is located is adorned with historic monuments, has given birth to some illustrious men, or will be home to memorable events, the teacher shall remember them. He should also keep in mind that, especially in the elementary grades, the teaching of history must have as its main goal to inspire pupils by example regarding the sense of duty, the devotion to the public good and the love for the country³⁴.

The reference to local remains became even more explicit with the programs approved by Minister Baccelli in 1894:

It will be greatly beneficial for the entire group of students is taken out of the class to become familiar with what is more deserving of our attention and study in nature, the arts, the industry and monuments. No literary work boasts such powerful language as the spectacle of

Trento, Fondazione Museo Storico del Trentino, 2012, pp. 11-58, in part. p. 13.

³² Collodi, *Il viaggio per l'Italia di Giannettino*, cit., pp. 74-75.

³³ On the teaching of history in the Nineteenth century see the work of A. Ascenzi, *Tra educazione etico-civile e costruzione dell'identità nazionale. L'insegnamento della storia nelle scuole italiane dell'Ottocento*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2004.

³⁴ M. Civra, *I programmi della scuola elementare dall'Unità d'Italia al 2000*, Torino, Marco Valerio Editore, 2002, p. 200.

nature; no poetry speaks to the imagination and to the heart as strongly as the one that rouses spontaneously from monuments and re-enacts the sufferings and the glories of the ancestors³⁵.

The gradual patriotic character of the school programs for primary schools should also be emphasized, together with the recommendation to refer to the landscape and to the artistic and cultural heritage in history teachings³⁶. The aim was to foster the love for the country, describing it as the heir of a glorious history, populated by distinguished personalities in all fields and, above all, as a magnificent place, blessed from nature.

Schoolbooks for the primary school quickly incorporated the growing patriotism, and helped to spread the stereotype of Italy as the most beautiful country in the world, blessed by God and universally admired while offering an idealized representation of Italy aimed at increasing the emotional attachment to the country³⁷. Schoolbooks, history and geography booklets of became instrumental in showcasing and enhancing the treasures of Italy:

This is Italy, our homeland – says Baldini in his textbook *Piccola geografia per gli alunni e le alunne della quarta classe elementare* (*Small geography for pupils of the fourth grade class*) – one of the most beautiful countries in Europe and among the most illustrious in the history of civilization. [...] The capital city of Italy is Rome. [...] Thanks to its monuments, temples, sumptuous palaces, pleasant villas, delightful gardens, spacious streets, fountains etc. and for its history, Rome can be described as the first city in the world³⁸.

Another book – *Cominciamo la vita!* (*We begin life!*) by Giovanni Soli – tells the story of Sandrino, a young boy who wanted to visit the one hundred Italian cities, «because he had heard that nowhere in the world there are so many beauties»³⁹. He was echoed by another child, who stated that «Italy has large and beautiful cities, full of palaces, churches, monuments, squares and gardens»⁴⁰.

Such a rich heritage attracted many foreign tourists every year, fascinated – as Silvestri emphasized in his *Il secondo anno di scuola della bambina*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

³⁶ T. Bertilotti, «Una ragionevole compiacenza di appartenere a una gran nazione». *Insegnamento della storia e valorizzazione dei patrimoni locali nella scuola elementare (1860-1923)*, «Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome», n. 2, 2001, pp. 789-801 and in particular p. 795.

³⁷ M. Colin, *Amor di patria e sentimento nazionale: letture per la scuola elementare nell'età liberale*, in L. Bellatalla, G. Genovesi, E. Marescotti (edd.), *La scuola nell'Italia unita. 150 anni di storia*, Padova, Cleup, 2012, pp. 107-115 and in particular p. 111.

³⁸ F. Baldini, *Piccola geografia per gli alunni e le alunne della quarta classe elementare*, Pitigliano, Tipografia editrice della lente di Osvaldo Paggi, 1894, pp. 17-18, 24.

³⁹ G. Soli, *Cominciamo la vita! Libro di lettura per la III classe elementare maschile colle occasioni per lo svolgimento del programma governativo 29 novembre 1894. Approvato dal Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, ventesima ristampa*, Milano, Trevisini, 1902, p. 98.

⁴⁰ G. Sabattini Giolli, G. Fracchia, *Al lavoro bimbi emiliani! Letture educative ad uso delle scuole elementari maschili e femminili della regione emiliana. In conformità dei Programmi e delle Istruzioni ufficiali del 29 gennaio 1905. Classe I, compimento del Sillabario*, Palermo, Sandron, 1908, pp. 53-54.

italiana (*The second year of the school of Italian little girl*) – by the «rich and magnificent palaces, the beautiful monuments, the long and wide streets, the spacious squares, the beautiful shops and the superb churches»⁴¹. The same tone was used some years later by another author of textbooks, Teresa Trento, who argued that «there is not in the world a most beautiful country. [...] A trip to Italy is the sigh of all foreigners; for all Italians it should be a duty»⁴².

In this regard, in his schoolbook *In cammino fanciulli!* (*On the way, boys!*), Guido Antonio Marcati invited to respect foreign travellers, perhaps dressed in styles so different from those in use in Italy:

We have to celebrate and to be kind to these good people, who come from far away to see, and admire the beauty of our country, our art monuments, the remains of our past glories. And we must ensure that, upon their return, they bring a grateful remembrance of our country; and that they incite and persuade others to visit Italy; and that they contribute to increasing the love and honour for our country⁴³.

This insistence on national beauties – natural or artistic – is part of a precise plan which aims to make heritage (cultural and natural) the point of contact between tourism and nationalist impulses. National monuments are often more than simple artefacts with a strong cultural value, but they are depicted as part of a view that includes natural surroundings. And ‘natural monuments’, often used to attract tourists, they «are another way to make nature a part of a nation’s cultural inventory»⁴⁴. So landscape – natural and cultural – becomes part of a larger plan which aims to construct national identity.

5. *The teaching of geography and patriotic education*

In the 19th century schoolbooks, as we have seen, all the Italian cities are described as beautiful, «built on the banks of rivers, in pleasant plains, over fertile hills, at the foot of high mountains or on the seashore. They are populated by thousands of people, all citizens of the same country»⁴⁵.

⁴¹ G.A. Silvestri, *Il secondo anno di scuola della bambina italiana. Letture per la seconda classe elementare, XXXII edizione*, Torino, Direzione del giornale l’Unione dei maestri e G.B. Paravia, s.a., p. 157.

⁴² T. Trento, *Albo di scienze*, in *Tutti i sussidiari*, classe IV, Firenze, Bemporad, 1925, p. 61.

⁴³ G.A. Marcati, *In cammino, fanciulli! Libro di lettura per la classe III elementare maschile e femminile con poesie originali di Pina Marcati e 160 illustrazioni, 30° migliaio*, Roma, Libreria scolastica nazionale, 1911, p. 157.

⁴⁴ V. Winiwarter, *Nationalized Nature on Picture Postcards: Subtext of Tourism from an Environmental Perspective*, «Global Environment», n. 1, 2008, pp. 192-215, in part. p. 204.

⁴⁵ Silvestri, *Il secondo anno di scuola della bambina italiana*, cit., p. 157.

The conclusion of the quote, taken from the previously mentioned Silvestri's book *Il secondo anno di scuola della bambina italiana*, is especially significant since it allows the reader to understand the reasons of the insistence on the wide range of Italian cities depicted in numerous tales. In addition to trim down the pride of belonging, those references were used with the purpose of ideally building a bridge linking the birthplace to the motherland. In fact, explaining an abstract concept such as the homeland to such a young and heterogeneous audience has been a problem for school authors of the late 19th century.

The programs of 1888, adopted in the middle of positivism, resolved the issue. Indeed, teachers had to start from the reality close to students and then expand the discussion to broader concepts, proceeding from the simple to the complex, from the known to the unknown. As a result, the homeland, at least until the end of the century, was often represented as an extension of the family and of the native village. The homeland – as an experience characterized by a strong emotional element – was more easily associated with the community of belonging, thanks to its shared features like the language, habits, and traditions. By contrary, it was rarely linked to the historical, political and ideological element characterizing the modern idea of nation⁴⁶.

A valid proof of this teaching method came from a dialogue titled *Homeland* and published in a collection (*Virtue and homeland*) edited by Pasquale Fornari, a well-known author of textbooks⁴⁷. Giuseppina responds to Elisa's doubt about the homeland by indicating «the country where one was born, [that] for us is Italy, *il Belpaese (the Beautiful country)*». Giuseppina's considerations in support of her thesis were the traditional ones used during the romantic repertoire (unity of language, culture, habits). They were expressed with such an intensity as to persuade her sceptical friends. Even the final appeal would warm the hearts of the readers:

Don't you feel that the country is not the short circle of your native village? Don't you hear your heart beat fast between the Alps and the Sea? Don't you consider brothers all those who live with us under the same sky, who breathe the same air, who enjoy the fruits of the same hills, who feel, think, talk, smile like us, like us they cry for the same reasons, and they are proud of the same glories? ... Say, say, don't you love your homeland⁴⁸?

In other books – the same poem appeared in a schoolbook in the early 1920s – the authors used the image of the train that runs through cities, towns,

⁴⁶ G. Chiosso, «*Formare l'uomo eminentemente morale ed abile*». *Il libro di lettura dopo l'Unità*, «Esperienze letterarie», n. 3, 2010, pp. 17-35.

⁴⁷ See the biographical profile by Roberto Sani in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 268-269.

⁴⁸ *Virtù e patria. Dialoghi educativi ed istruttivi proposti per lettura ed esercizio di composizione e recitazione nelle scuole e nelle famiglie da P. Fornari*, Milano, Fratelli Rechiedei editori, 1872, pp. 79-85, p. 85 for the quotation.

villages, ideally unifying the country in order to «[create] that nation called Italy»⁴⁹.

Another character often used is the mother. She was evoked, as in this case, to embody the far homeland for a chimney sweep forced to leave his alpine valley in order to follow his father in Milan during the winter season. In the vast city of Lombardy the boy was fascinated by the sight of «the great Galleria Vittorio Emanuele – here comes the toponymy! –, made of marble, reach of statues, friezes, paintings, and all covered in crystals, [...] standing in awe of those magnificent shops full of many beauties»⁵⁰.

However, more often, the pattern replicated in reading books was the following:

The home where we were born and where we live with our relatives is very special to us. Each family lives in an accommodation, which is part of a house. Many houses together forms a city. Few houses create a village, a hamlet. We live in ...; but this country is part of a wider land, called the district of ...; which belongs to an area even larger, called the province of ... This, in turn, is part of a nation called Italy. Italy is our beloved homeland⁵¹.

In this kind of texts the positivistic method which goes from the known to the unknown becomes explicit, as well as the extension of the viewpoint from the small village to the vast homeland. They fulfil the task that in 1888 Gabelli assigned to the teaching of geography. Indeed geography had to reinforce the awareness of belonging to a respected and wonderful nation and, as a consequence, the attachment to it. Hence, it was recognised disciplinary autonomy to the teaching of geography in primary schools (it was finally separated from that of history), further to starting appreciating its utility (practical and ideological)⁵².

During the last ten years of the 19th century the project of bending geographical teaching to ideological aims, and not just educational, reached full development. To facilitate this process it was carry out a constant reference to cartography, ensuring a higher level of students' attention, acting more

⁴⁹ G. Soli, *Cominciamo la vita. Libro di lettura per la II classe elementare femminile*, XXIII ristampa, Milano, Trevisini, 1904, p. 122.

⁵⁰ *Parte seconda delle Letture graduate al fanciullo italiano disposte nell'ordine progressivo intellettuale, morale e linguistico e ad avviamento al comporre dal Cav.re Sac.te Giulio Tarra*, XXVII edizione, diligentemente riveduta con aggiunta di un breve studio intorno alle fondamentali e più necessarie norme di prosodia e di retta pronunzia della lingua italiana per cura del Cav. Prof. Giuseppe Soldatini, Milano, Tip. Di G. Battista Messaggi, 1892, p. 133.

⁵¹ Silvestri, *Il secondo anno di scuola della bambina italiana*, cit., p. 155.

⁵² G. Bandini, *Rappresentazioni della nazione e razzismo nella geografia scolastica tra Otto e Novecento*, in Id. (ed.), *Manuali, sussidi e didattica della geografia. Una prospettiva storica*, Firenze, Firenze University Press, 2012, pp. 53-70, in particular pp. 57-58. In the same book see also S. Oliviero, *Domenico e Luigi Gianni Trapani geografi per la scuola*, pp. 95-102, in particular. p. 97. On the teaching of geography see E. Squarcina (ed.), *Didattica critica della geografia. Libri di testo, mappe, discorso geopolitico*, Milano, Unicopli, 2009.

effectively in their imagination. It is not a coincidence that those were also the years when the Italian cartographic tradition has begun to perfect itself⁵³. The famous geographer and teacher Arcangelo Ghisleri produced the first valid school atlases⁵⁴, driven by the belief that it was wrong to continue studying on German atlases⁵⁵.

In his thinking one could understand the cultural battle aimed at providing Italian students with teaching aids like: wall paintings, historical and geographical atlases, iconographic items in textbooks, that were beneficial to the goal of dissemination and strengthening of the patriotic ideal. The evocative power of an image published in an atlas was able to remain etched in the collective memory for years. That is why it has always been paid attention to this kind of publications and to their way of representing the world (dimensions of the various countries, perspectives, strategic positioning of the countries on the tables, etc.)⁵⁶.

Taking into consideration wall maps, one of the first things that comes up is the portion of land represented, including also a part of the neighbouring countries, normally marked by a different colour and by a clear and colourful dividing line: the border. This is an important issue in the school of the late 19th century, which combines patriotic rhetoric with the identification of natural borders. The latter, seen as immutable and assigned by a natural order, not only visually determined the actual width of the nation, but also they implicitly evoked the expected developments, the 'natural' destiny of the country⁵⁷.

A classical scheme translating in educational terms these concepts was the requirement of distinguishing between the Kingdom of Italy and Italy in geography books. For this reason, in the work *Piccola geografia per gli alunni e le alunne della quarta classe elementare* published in 1894 by Francesco Baldini, in addition to the presentation of the national state he could dwell upon the description of the *French Italy* («France used to own in Italy the island of Corsica, the principality of Monaco and Nice»), of the *Swiss Italy* (Canton Ticino), of the *Austro-Hungarian Italy* («the Austro-Hungarian Empire owned:

⁵³ F. Targhetta, *Tra sussidi didattici e libri di testo: gli atlanti storici dall'Unità al fascismo*, in P. Bianchini (ed.), *Le origini delle materie. Discipline, programmi e manuali scolastici in Italia*, Torino, SEI, 2010, pp. 95-110.

⁵⁴ R. Maffei, *Alle origini della produzione manualistica di Arcangelo Ghisleri. Dal Piccolo manuale di geografia storica al Testo-atlante di geografia storica*, in Bandini, *Manuali, sussidi e didattica della geografia*, cit., pp. 71-82.

⁵⁵ A. Ghisleri, *Testo-Atlante di geografia storica generale e d'Italia in particolare. Evo moderno e contemporaneo dal 1492 al 1924. Fascicolo unico per la III classe delle scuole normali e degli istituti tecnici*, III ristampa, Bergamo, Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1924, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁶ See E. Boria, *Cartografia e potere: segni e rappresentazioni negli atlanti italiani del Novecento*, Torino, UTET, 2007; M. Rossi, *La geografia serve a fare la guerra? Riflessioni intorno a una mostra*, Treviso, Fondazione Benetton Studi e Ricerche - Antiga Edizioni, 2016.

⁵⁷ Bandini, *Rappresentazioni della nazione e razzismo nella geografia scolastica tra Otto e Novecento*, cit., p. 59. On borders as natural barriers see A. Pastore (ed.), *Confini e frontiere nell'età moderna: un confronto fra discipline*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2007.

Trentino and the *Coast*. *Trentino* had as capital the city of Trento, and then the small town of Rovereto, Bressanone and Bolzano. The *Coast* was that part of Italy beyond the river Isonzo, which flows on the east coast of the Adriatic to the city of Fiume. The main part was the Istrian peninsula and the most important city was *Trieste*») and of the *English Italy* (Malta)⁵⁸.

It was a model that has remained unchanged over time. The successful book of Guido Antonio Marcati *In cammino, fanciulli!*, reports an interesting conversation on the subject. Leafing through the album of views of the main Italian cities sent to him by a friend of his father, Giannino bumped into the representation of Trento and Trieste:

They are two beautiful Italian cities; but, – added Mrs. Luisa [Giannino's mother] with a sigh, – the Austrians still rule there! Other Italian lands are not part of the Kingdom of Italy: *Nice*, Garibaldi's home, *Savoy* and the *Island of Corsica* which belong to France; the *Island of Malta* which is British, and the *Canton Ticino* is part of the Swiss Republic. – And when will we take command of those lands? – asked Giannino pouting a bit. – When? Who knows, son!... When Italy will be stronger. And it is your duty to make that happen⁵⁹.

The text literally talked of 'Italian lands that are not part of the Kingdom of Italy'. Also in this case the natural boundaries merged with the cultural ones: the membership to a nation did not necessarily meant belonging to the State that governed the properties in that particular historical moment.

This vision lasted, without substantial changes, until the fascist era. A fourth class primary school textbook, published in 1925, clarified this distinction: «Italy is little larger than the Italian kingdom and includes this [the Italian Kingdom], and those neighbouring countries where Italians – subjects of foreign governments – live»⁶⁰. From the territorial unity as an expression of the cultural unity – the Romantic legacy – to people self-determination advocated by the League of Nations, the heart of the matter remained the same in the Italian textbooks.

6. *Educational landscapes and patriotism in the letters for children*

During the 19th century, the steady references to the community of origin in the textbooks, allowed the child to identify himself with his role in daily life and to assimilate the behaviours useful to the strengthening of the community. Moreover, it was an expedient used by the authors to solve the evident problem of disseminating the patriotic ideal. In this particular literature for school, the concept of homeland was a major obstacle for authors and publishers, unable

⁵⁸ Baldini, *Piccola geografia per gli alunni e le alunne della quarta classe elementare*, cit., p. 26.

⁵⁹ Marcati, *In cammino, fanciulli!*, 1911, cit., pp. 231-233.

⁶⁰ Trento, *Albo di scienze*, cit., p. 4.

to devise a narrative expedient that would inspire in young children the cult for an entity fundamentally new, often distant, especially abstract.

The solution to the problem was found at the beginning of the 20th century, when the theme of travelling was included in schoolbooks, starting a model meant to be replicated for half a century. Thanks to the opportunities of faster movements and to the phenomenon of internal migration, it was deemed necessary to render concrete the idea of homeland by raising awareness on the national beauties and the local places of interest. The native land would be loved only if known, according to the education project that would see the discipline of geography essential in order to reinforce both national unity and identity. It was a reinterpretation, in a national key, of the 19th century model represented by the native village, the hamlet. Yet, in this case, the focus was not on the surrounding community, but on the representation of a reality still unknown. A reality to be discovered through the descriptions of those who had the opportunity to travel and thanks to the diffusion of letters and postcards. It is not a narrow perspective and it implies the need to open the population's mind, especially the mentality of those living in the rural area.

Since the first decade of the 20th century, the scholarly literature has been more and more affected by travel journalism. At that time it was addressed to a small number of Italians belonging to the middle/upper bourgeoisie who could afford to travel by car or by train and discover the national beauties. It was indeed the transportation by train, thanks to the great development of the railway network in the late 19th century (from 2100 km in 1861 to 16000 km in 1900), that decisively promoted the growth of the domestic tourism. Nevertheless the clerical workers – and to a lesser extent the working class – had to wait many years before being able to access this kind of entertainment. Besides the moving across the border faced by migrants – travels were mainly caused by professional reasons. Indeed, the industrial take-off at the beginning of the century was attracting labour forces from neighbouring regions close to the emerging factories. This often implied transfers within the same region, even the same province, according to the model of urbanization linked to the industrialization.

Both business travels and tourism, as previously mentioned, affected the production for schools. Until the 20th century, the exemplar letters, reproduced in the textbooks for primary education, were the perfect terrain in which authors could combine the love for the country, the teaching about landscape and the passion for tourism⁶¹. In fact, the epistolary style was a narrative style particularly suitable for the use of the Italian landscape in a nationalistic key. The moving of a young student with his family would allow the author to start an epistolary relationship between the student and the former classmates. It was an efficient expedient allowing the author to enrich the content of the letters

⁶¹ F. Targhetta, «*Signor Maestro Onorandissimo*». *Imparare a scrivere lettere nella scuola italiana tra Otto e Novecento*, Torino, SEI, 2013.

with useful knowledge conveyed by the child, who got to know a different reality, where he had the opportunity to try new habits and visit different places.

In the microcosm shaped by the exemplar letters of early 20th century it is also possible to find a more refined kind of tourism. The archetype was represented by a child travelling with his uncle, engaged in what might be called a modern *Grand tour* through the most significant cities of the Italian Peninsula: Venice, Rome, Naples, Palermo. The images were stereotyped, like a postcard: Venice with gondolas and the lagoon; Milan with the *Madonnina* over the Duomo; the church of Santa Maria del Fiore and Giotto's bell tower, «all made of white marble», in Florence; and then the Pincio in Rome, the Vesuvius in Naples, the leaning towers in Bologna, the Alps and the «chocolate candy Gianduia» in Turin⁶².

Within a few years the model was refined, bringing greater vividness in the reports about the cities visited:

If you could be next to me – and I wished it would be like that! – we would have visited together the *Quirinale* which is the king's palace, the *Vatican* that is the Pope's mansion, the *Campidoglio* which is the office of the Municipality, the monument dedicated to Vittorio Emanuele II, the one of Garibaldi in the Janiculum, and the immense and numerous basilicas, and the beautiful promenade long the Pincio and Villa Borghese, where the Roman people used to – among the spacious and shady avenues – breathe in large gulps the oxygenated air of this great lung of the Eternal city⁶³.

A new qualification for Milan and Turin was then added to the classical adjectives associated with the main tourist centres, describing their traditional monuments and cathedrals. If Milan was called «full of industrious people, of laboratories, of great and rich shops»⁶⁴, Turin «became an industrial city as well, where people would work on airplanes, automobiles, bicycles and all kind of machineries; the city of chocolates and candies that were the best in the world»⁶⁵. It was the mirror of a society and of an entire country in evolution. The exemplar letters gave the reader the image of a country scenically and architecturally wonderful, the cradle of classical and Renaissance art. Yet, a modern and industrious country at the same time, where a growing space was reserved to the description of the factories in Milan, Turin and Genoa, the triangle representing the beginning of the industrial era.

The descriptions of Italian cities and regions, enriched with their imageries, constituted a surrogate of geography lessons, that was surely on the one hand more modest but on the other hand it resulted more attractive.

⁶² See, for example, A. Cuman Pertile, *Godi e imparà. Libro di lettura per la Seconda Classe elementare*, IV ed., Firenze, R. Bemporad e figlio Editori, 1912, pp. 136-144.

⁶³ G.A. Marcati, *Fra campi e borghi. Corso di letture per le scuole rurali. Letture per le scuole di campagna con poesie originali di Pina Marcati. Classe IV, 50° migliaio*, Milano, Mondadori, 1923, pp. 198-199.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

It was geography but also history. Indeed, the construction of national identity was created around the concepts of time and space: the ability to identify places that combined both of those dimensions with the purpose of defining the identity became crucial. And what a better scenario than the Risorgimento's uprisings, still alive in the people's memory and in the public discussion (suffice it to think about the interventionist propaganda and the fourth war of independence). In the years of the World War I and those immediately following, it occurred a further development in this particular production. The first model – that included postcards and letters from Italian cities in order to spread some useful knowledge of geography and to convey, indirectly, feelings of love for the homeland – changed in a new scheme, tinged with a deep patriotism.

In the classic list of destinations to visit in order to complete the ideal training for a young Italian boy there was Caprera, in honor of Giuseppe Garibaldi. Furthermore, there were the landmarks of the Risorgimento wars, further to Trento and Trieste, the lands to be redeemed according to the irredentist propaganda. These were the typical narratives of each process of Nation building⁶⁶.

A significant aspect of this production was the correlation (sometimes a parallelism, other times an ideal continuation) between Risorgimento and the First World War – being both two founding moments of the Italian Nation-building process⁶⁷.

In this new 'national education' even the reports from the cities were updated: the characters and the moments that had contributed to the Italian unification replaced the description of the artistic and architectural heritage. As a result, schoolbooks started illustrating the monuments to Vittorio Emanuele II and Garibaldi, the Pantheon and Porta Pia when talking about Rome; they would remember the Castello Sforzesco, Arco Sempione and «a building with three balls into the wall fired by Austrian soldiers during the five days of the Revolution in March 1848» for Milan⁶⁸. Turin would be represented by the Pietro Micca's sacrifice and the Basilica of Superga, «sacred monument»⁶⁹ in which was buried the royalty belonging to the Royal House of Savoy; Palermo by Gibilrossa, where «Garibaldi attacked the city»⁷⁰; Venice was depicted by the verses of the poet Fusinato and by the «Piombi, the prison of Silvio Pellico,

⁶⁶ On the role played by national narratives in schoolbooks see G. Procacci, *Carte d'identità. Revisionismi, nazionalismi e fondamentalismi nei manuali di storia*, Roma, Carocci, 2005; H. Schissler, Y. Nuhoglu Soysal (edd.), *The Nation Europe and the world. Textbooks and curricula in transition*, New York – Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2005. As regards the Italian case, see M.C. Morandini, *Scuola e Nazione. Maestri e istruzione popolare nella costruzione dello Stato unitario (1848-1861)*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2003 and Ascenzi, *Tra educazione etico-civile e costruzione dell'identità nazionale*, cit.

⁶⁷ This is a matter that will be similar in the post-war textbooks. See D. Montino, *La storia nei libri scolastici elementari del dopoguerra*, in Bianchini, *Le origini delle materie*, cit., pp. 217-246.

⁶⁸ Marcati, *Fra campi e borghi*, cit., p. 210.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

the author of the famous book *Mie prigionie!*»⁷¹. Hence, during the first years of the 20th century the landscapes described in the textbooks were not the most scenic, but certainly the most representative of the recent national history. The aim was to make them the symbols of the unitary process. The ruling class wanted to build the national identity and to promote the love for the homeland through those symbols.

A considerable space was also given to the celebration of heroes, initiating the cult of the fallen soldiers, essential to the process of ‘nationalization of the youth’. This system, started after the war and lasted until the Thirties, projected the Italian people in a collective ceremony of sacralizing the death⁷². Thus, for example, in the text of Marcati *Fra campi e borghi* (Between fields and villages), one reads:

I visited the battlefield of Magenta, fertilized by the blood of many brave Italians and Frenchs. I picked a flower that perhaps was grown over the corpse of an hero and I send it to you with a kiss⁷³.

I visited with respect the place of execution of Guglielmo Oberdan. This martyr of the Austrian ferocity, will certainly greet with joy the freedom and independence of the city which he died for⁷⁴.

Often, were the young soldiers, called to the military service, that officiated this liturgy of celebration of the slain and worship of heroes. The young tourist, protagonist of many travel stories reproduced in textbooks during the first decade of the 20th century, grew up after the war becoming a travelling soldier. He was entrusted with the task of explaining to young readers the beauty of the Peninsula in order to instil in them the love for the country: «How beautiful you are, Italy! How much I love you throughout with the same affection, and how I would be ready to sacrifice my life for a spot of you!»⁷⁵.

Only at the end of the Twenties patriotism transformed itself into nationalism, even in the exemplar letters. It was especially the idolatry for Mussolini to make further changes to what I have called the epistolary *Grand tour*: to the classic landmarks were added the hometowns of Mussolini and in particular the Romagna region, «one of the most beautiful and strongest regions of Italy»⁷⁶. What also changed were the sights and monuments worthy to be mentioned in the reports to the family. In Milan, for example, the new itinerary included the *casa del fascio* (local headquarter of fascist organisation) and, above all, the headquarter of «Il Popolo d’Italia», Mussolini’s newspaper⁷⁷. The most

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁷² A. Gibelli, *Il popolo bambino. Infanzia e nazione dalla Grande Guerra a Salò*, Torino, Einaudi, 2005, p. 200.

⁷³ Marcati, *Fra campi e borghi*, cit., p. 210.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

⁷⁶ R. Forges Davanzati, *Il balilla Vittorio*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1930, p. 134.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 325.

important corners of the *Belpaese* became places of pilgrimage promoted by the school readings, in order to construct the identity of thousands of young ‘balilla’, the famous paramilitary youth organization. Pivotal was Predappio (Mussolini’s birthplace). It was represented countless times in the textbooks as symbolic place embodying the fascist genesis.

The landscape (both urban and natural) of the touristic destinations mentioned in the exemplar letters changed during the first three decades of the century according to the succession of times and ideologies. Initially, the trips through Italy were conceived as a modality of transmission of the love for the homeland. Whereas during the following decades they became a mirror of the cultural and ideological changes of the country. The young tourist accompanied by his uncle through the traditional stages of the *Grand Tour* was replaced by at first the conscript, who would wander around the barracks of the Peninsula, and then by the ‘balilla’, a sort of new pilgrim engaged in the search for the origins of the fascist movement.

7. Views and images: the represented landscape

As already mentioned, often the exemplar letters referred to a collection of postcards: which were surprising and ‘exotic’ representations (at least for the lower classes) deserving to be immortalized in «album of folk customs and views of cities and countries»⁷⁸. At the beginning of the century, schoolbooks started telling about the art of sending postcards with the reproductions of the major monuments erected in the Italian cities. These postcards were collected in a scrapbook, a precious collection to preserve jealously and to be proudly showed to friends and family⁷⁹. Illustrations were specifically intended to compensate for the poverty of the mere words, a visual accompaniment intended to produce lasting effects in the children’s imagination.

The aim of the numerous references to postcards collection was also to spread an habit linked to an educational hobby as collecting, especially in culturally underprivileged classes, for whom the textbook would probably be the only reading. In fact, in *Godi e impara* (Enjoy and learn), one reads: «I’m glad you became a ‘collector’. Dad says that this is the best way to get an education spending little money; not everyone can travel; don’t you think so?»⁸⁰.

This way, textbooks were enriched with photographs of the main Italian monuments and panoramas of the cities. The spread of images was facilitated by the technical progress in the typographical field, which allowed to supply the

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Marcati, *In cammino, fanciulli!*, 1911, cit., p. 238.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

textbooks with illustrations, sometimes in colour, without affecting too much the price of the book.

The scenic views reproduced in the textbooks and in children's literature followed the path traced by travel books. Even though the representations would be of a more modest quality, they ended up contributing to the same goal: propagate a specific pedagogy to the landscape. They would not only depict a region, but also shape it. Suffice it to take as example the case of the travel guides, compiled by the Italian Touring Club (TCI) after 1918, on the 'unredeemed lands' (the lands near Trento and Trieste), still poorly known by the majority the Italian population. The TCI, describing for the first time the new provinces of Istria and Tyrol, «it defined almost permanently their appearance. Indeed, in many cases it built their appearance artificially»⁸¹, for example by giving the places new names.

During those years there were several publishing initiatives worth mentioning. It must be at least pointed out two late 19th century journals, «Il giornale illustrato dei viaggi» (The illustrated travel journal), published by Sonzogno, and «Il giornale popolare dei viaggi» (The popular travel journal), published by Treves. The two famous publishers became also promoters of various series which, along with the illustrated magazines, helped to create a specific visual code, and to fuel the imagination of readers.

They offered a canon of interpretation of the landscape in a way similar to what was done, through the pictures, by the photographers Alinari in Florence⁸². This was fundamental to the Italian population, mostly completely illiterate on this topic. It was the spread of images – via tourism leaflets, newspapers and magazines, guides, postcards and, finally, thanks to the fictional books for children and textbooks – that helped to create stereotypes and to fix, in the imagination of a growing number of Italians, monuments and squares, making them symbols of cities and regions. It was through this intense and vast divulgation of the national artistic and landscape heritage that the middle class learned «not only to know its country to an extent until then totally unknown, but also to attribute a value to the monumental ruins, to the artistic or natural objects and beauties representing the history of the country»⁸³.

It was a project of «early literacy to landscape» involving different social classes of the population, reached via tailored tools according to their class. The intellectual class and the middle class by means of guides, illustrated periodicals, series of travel fiction and the first movie experiences; the petty bourgeoisie and the working class through popular books and, above all, through the

⁸¹ L. Di Mauro, *L'Italia e le guide turistiche dall'Unità ad oggi*, in C. De Seta (ed.), *Il paesaggio*, in *Storia d'Italia*, Annali 5, Torino, Einaudi, 1982, pp. 369-428 and pp. 402-403 for the quotation.

⁸² F. Zevi, *Le altre città e il paesaggio italiano*, in W. Settimelli, F. Zevi (edd.), *Gli Alinari fotografi a Firenze 1852-1920*, Firenze, Alinari, 1977, pp. 247-255.

⁸³ L. Piccioni, *Il volto amato della Patria. Il primo movimento per la protezione della natura in Italia 1880-1934*, Camerino, Università degli Studi, 1999, p. 68.

textbooks for primary school. The common element among the different tools was the tendency of stereotyping the landscape, which was functional to the geographical literacy. «It was necessary to develop a broader knowledge of the city and the monuments that were contributing to make greater the Italian heritage, ensuring the dissemination of a basic unifying knowledge»⁸⁴.

8. *Light projections and educational film: the projected landscape*

Thinking about the «landscape as a symbolic form through which a culture expresses itself»⁸⁵, it is interesting to analyse how this was represented in the first three decades of the 20th century in Italian movies. Cinema – and in particular the educational one – played a significant role in the education to landscape.

As of the first decade of the 20th century the attention of cameramen focused, as far as the Italian context was considered, on the most famous views of the major cities (Rome, Naples, Venice, Florence, and so on), helping to disseminate the cliché images of national monuments. The national beauties were admired to the point to become the subject of a large number of filming carried out by foreign cameramen. In addition to the Lumière's views, one may remember the *Tour in Italy*, launched by Pathé in 1904 as a number of separate shots, similar to postcards, (including Venice, Rome, Naples and Vesuvius, Genoa, a journey through the Alps and Lucerne), which was followed by similar projects.

The analogy between the static nature and the use of stereotypes conveyed through the postcards lasted years. At the early stage that combination appeared almost natural; over the decades it became an outdated reiteration of the old cliché on landscape, instead. In the late Thirties, movie magazines triggered a widespread debate on the theme of landscape. Among many reviewers who railed against the stereotypical images of many films of the time there was also Ennio Flaiano. He noted with disappointment how, even Italy, would be «viewed with the criterion of the guides and «resulting in postcards»⁸⁶. Critics blamed postcards of creating many standardized cinematic visions, guilty of having had an excessive influence on cinema⁸⁷.

Travel movies, reserving a significant space in static pictures of monuments, would as well owe to postcards its style. They were called *travelogues*, which during the first decade of 20th century had a decent success in Italy. Their peculiarity was the attention paid also to those landscapes usually less

⁸⁴ Troilo, *La patria e la memoria*, cit., p. 173.

⁸⁵ S. Bernardi, *Il paesaggio nel cinema italiano*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2002, p. 31.

⁸⁶ E. Flaiano, *Le ispirazioni sbagliate*, «Cinema», vol. 4, n. 61, 10 gennaio 1939, pp. 10-11, cit. in D. Toschi, *Il paesaggio rurale. Cinema e cultura contadina nell'Italia fascista*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2009, p. 7.

⁸⁷ G. Pellegrini, *Cartoline colpevoli*, «Cinema», vol. 6, n. 122, 25 luglio 1941, p. 92, cit. in *ibid.*

celebrated by the movies of that time, like: smaller towns, mountains, lakes, rivers and beaches⁸⁸. Therefore, they represented a first attempt of overcoming the stereotypes that were spreading very rapidly.

Travelogues, and even more the films shot in famous cities, were the direct successors of that tradition that included the panoramas (urban and natural) among the most viewed scenes⁸⁹.

Except for specific cases, it was not possible yet to talk of explicit use of the landscape for patriotic purposes or for promoting the development of the national identity. Those movies rather helped to determine the tastes and the expectations of Italians, by shaping their imagination and helping to spread the love for travelling and the sensitivity to the landscape. They were interesting documents in order to grasp the change in tastes and, above all, the changes taking place in Italy.

By contrary, explicitly educative were the film projections – using motion or fixed images – directed to schools and the lower classes⁹⁰. During the first years of the 20th century, while other channels of dissemination of the landscape representations were developing, the light projections began to be used for educational purposes on a regular basis. Indeed, as the first associations were established in Turin, Milan and, since 1911, in Rome⁹¹.

Ever since the beginning this tool was used for patriotic purposes: supporting the Libyan invasion, complaining about the unredeemed lands or the strengthening of national cohesion during the WWI. In fact, the Ministry of Education, was well aware of the considerable impression left in minds of the children by the new teaching tools. Hence, it decided to resort to them soon after the defeat of Caporetto, one of the most dramatic moment of the recent Italian history. Thanks to a circular letter issued on the last day of the year 1917, the Ministry launched a series of weekly lectures on the ongoing conflict, aiming at «rendering even more alive and stronger the patriotism of the Italian school»⁹². Topic of the conference had to be the «reasons for our war», and in particular the «great economic, political, military, and moral

⁸⁸ I. Blom, “*Travelogues*” italiani: un genere da riscoprire, in M. Canosa (ed.), *A nuova luce. Cinema muto italiano. Atti del convegno internazionale (Bologna 12-13 novembre 1999)*, Bologna, Clueb, 2001, pp. 63-73 and in particular pp. 72-73.

⁸⁹ M. Bertozzi, *Giardini al nitrato. Il paesaggio nel cinema muto italiano*, in Canosa, *A nuova luce. Cinema muto italiano*, cit., pp. 75-87, p. 77 for the quotation.

⁹⁰ On the spread in Italian schools of a ‘pedagogy for images’ see F. Targhetta, *Teaching with Images Between 19th and 20th Centuries: the Case of the Italian School Publisher Paravia*, «*Strenae*», n. 8, 2015 [online].

⁹¹ L. Lombardi, *Il metodo visivo in Italia. Le proiezioni luminose nella scuola elementare italiana (1908-1930)*, «History of Education & Children’s Literature», vol. 5, n. 2, 2010, pp. 149-172; Ead., *Le proiezioni luminose nella scuola italiana del primo Novecento*, in Bianchini, *Le origini delle materie*, cit., pp. 166-190. For a bibliography on this topic see S. Agosti, *Immagini luminose a scuola. Tra proposte teoriche ed esperienze a Pordenone nella prima metà del Novecento*, Pordenone, Istituto Provinciale per la storia del movimento di liberazione e dell’età contemporanea, 2005.

⁹² C.M. 31 dicembre 1917, n. 2.

problems connected to it». As teaching tools for the patriotic lessons, over 500 slides were prepared, 50 of which were dedicated to «the Italian identity of Trieste and Dalmatia». A significant importance was especially reserved to the illustration and the protection of cultural heritage, once again elevated to the highest expression of the Italian beauty and national unifying element («Italian monuments in Trentino – 40 slides; Defence of our monuments – 180 slides»⁹³).

In the new century wall charts began to be replaced by light projections of fixed and in motion images, considered particularly suitable for exciting the hearts of pupils and teach them to love the Country. The most represented subjects were the national beauties, monuments and artworks of hundreds of Italian cities⁹⁴. Also the Ministry of Education, started using modernized teaching tools. In 1919, it warmly invited to mix the ‘represented landscape’ and the ‘perceived landscape’:

Thanks to film projections and the description made by the teachers during frequent and appropriate visits to museums, galleries and monuments consecrated to the homelands memories, the admiration of children and the imagination of young people with regard to the characters and to the historical events were significantly facilitated⁹⁵.

In 1923, as ultimate confirmation of the ministerial plan it was issued a ministerial decree to regulate the use of light screening at school⁹⁶ and the programs for the primary school prescribed the duty – largely ignored – for each school management to purchase a machine for film projection⁹⁷. The decree, divided into 8 sections, invited the directors of education to emulate the activism on the subject registered in the Trentino region, which had more than one hundred municipalities owning machines for broadcasting images, further to 10.000 slides.

The undersecretary Dario Lupi, signatory of the circular, on the opportunity to choose between fixed light projections or educational cinema, suggested to opt for a Solomonic solution: using both. The decree would then go on describing many technical details on the screen size, the tools to prefer, the sources of lighting, etc. Finally suggesting to rely on the Istituto Italiano Proiezioni Luminose for the rental of the slides. This institute, based in Milan

⁹³ C.M. 12 novembre 1918, n. 59. The slides were divided into six series: 1) Our war (100 slides); 2) Italian monuments in Trentino (40); 3) Our Navy (90); 4) The art in the countries behind Isonzo (50); 5) Italian identity of Trieste and Dalmatia (50); 6) Defense of our monuments (180).

⁹⁴ See, for example, the experiences started in 1915 in Lombardy, where some municipalities organized the projection of slides on the natural and artistic beauties of Italy. Toschi, *Il paesaggio rurale. Cinema e cultura contadina nell'Italia fascista*, cit., p. 74.

⁹⁵ C.M. 15 ottobre 1919, n. 71.

⁹⁶ C.M. 1 dicembre 1923, n. 105, «Bollettino Ufficiale del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione» [here and after BUMPI], 1923, n. 55, pp. 4904-4923. See also C.M. 13 settembre 1927, n. 87, BUMPI, 1927, n. 37, pp. 3056-3154.

⁹⁷ *Orari, programmi e prescrizioni didattiche per le scuole elementari, in applicazione del R.D. 1° ottobre 1923, n. 2185*, BUMPI, n. 51, 1923, pp. 4590-4627.

and in Turin, was founded in 1919. It was initially created in order to give «adequate development to educational cinematography»⁹⁸, then it soon became the referral agency for the Ministry.

In the Twenties, as a State-controlled institute, the Istituto Italiano Proiezioni Luminose achieved a growing influence on the educational policies to which however did not always correspond – due to the high costs – a homogeneous diffusion in the Italian schools. As of 1924, the line dictated by the government was not to relegate only to school the work of the Institute. Mussolini himself pointed out two aims: the promotion of the image of Italy abroad⁹⁹ and the consolidation of the national identity within the borders of the country.

The strengthening of the national identity (in Italy and abroad), the patriotic propaganda and tourism's promotion merged into a unique project that focused on the 'education through images'. Films of landscape for touristic purposes were produced, meetings and conferences for the screening of slides illustrating the national beauties were organized and finally regional territories were described using pictures¹⁰⁰. To achieve these aims the Istituto Italiano Proiezioni Luminose made some agreement with Enit (Ente Nazionale Industrie Turistiche)¹⁰¹, and the Italian Touring Club¹⁰².

The agreement with the TCI established that it should made available to the Istituto Italiano Proiezioni Luminose its rich iconographic heritage collected showed in its magazines. The first pictures to be transferred into slides were those relating to the caves of Postojna and Škocjan¹⁰³. Then there would be the recovery from the TCI archives of all the images regarding the Italian geography, which amounted to 138 series for a total of about 5500 slides depicting the territories and the major Italian cities, including Fiume and Dalmatia¹⁰⁴.

Thanks to these operations, the development of a modality to pass on the national identity through the teaching of landscape in the Italian schools,

⁹⁸ L. Lombardi, *Istituto Italiano Proiezioni Luminose*, in G. Chiosso (ed.), *TESEO '900. Editori scolastici educativi del primo Novecento*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2008, pp. 271-272.

⁹⁹ *L'interessamento del Presidente Mussolini per il nostro Istituto*, «Proiezioni luminose», a. III, n. 2, 1924, pp. 19-21.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, A.C., *L'illustrazione geografica dell'Italia colle diapositive dell'Istituto*, «Proiezioni luminose», III, n. 4, 1924, pp. 27-29; G. Criocioni, *Le proiezioni luminose e la cultura regionale*, «Proiezioni luminose», a. IV, n. 4, 1925, pp. 97-99.

¹⁰¹ A. Oberdorfer, *Proiezioni e turismo*, «Proiezioni luminose», a. III, n. 4, 1924, pp. 3-6.

¹⁰² *L'Italia illustrata con diapositive*, «Proiezioni luminose», a. I, n. 4, 1922, pp. 12; *Lo sviluppo delle proiezioni luminose e delle cinematografie educative in Italia*, «Vie d'Italia», a. XXX, n. 1, 1924, pp. 89-90; *Un importante accordo tra il T.C.I. e il nostro Istituto*, «La parola e il libro», a. VII, n. 6, 1924, p. 189.

¹⁰³ *Un importante accordo tra il T.C.I. e il nostro Istituto*, «La parola e il libro», a. VII, n. 6, 1924, p. 189.

¹⁰⁴ *L'illustrazione geografica d'Italia colle diapositive dell'Istituto*, «Proiezioni luminose», a. III, n. 4, 1924, p. 27; «La parola e il libro», a. VII, n. 11, 1924, p. 288. See Toschi, *Il paesaggio rurale. Cinema e cultura contadina nell'Italia fascista*, cit., p. 105.

reached its peak. It was transformed from the written word (in reading books, in booklets of geography, in fiction for children) to the first images (wall charts, illustrations in books and magazines), before moving to a more sophisticated use of the visual tools (light projections, educational films). The final step that completed this process was to facilitate the direct access – so no more mediation through the written words or the images – to the landscape. This development was reached via school trips.

9. *Another way to educate to landscape: the school tourism*

The role of the Italian Touring Club (TCI) was not limited to the screening of filmstrips¹⁰⁵ and slides, and to the collaboration with the Istituto Italiano Proiezioni Luminose. Established in 1894 in Milan, the TCI had clear from the beginning the patriotic ideal, and it aimed at this ideal by merging it with the nascent passion for hiking of the emerging middle class. To reveal Italy to the Italians, was its stated intention ever since the beginning. Disseminate a sound understanding of Italy in order to make Italians fall in love with their country¹⁰⁶.

The TCI with its first initiatives contributed to utterly change the way people would travel and, above all, the way people would look at Italy¹⁰⁷. The battles fought for the construction of a modern transport network, the commitment to provide detailed maps, and finally, the guides, distributed to the TCI members for free, made the association not only the most important agency for the promotion of tourism, but also the main promoter of an education to the national landscape.

The TCI, together with the Italian Alpine Club (CAI), played a decisive role in the organisation of school trips, aiming at making the geographic space an instrument towards the nationalization. They would go under the name of school trips or patriotic trips. They resulted being fundamental in order to nationalize Italians by tourism: «learning about Italy meant becoming aware of the geographical and symbolic space of the country, interiorise the external landscape as part of a collective identity»¹⁰⁸.

The «Rivista Mensile» (Monthly Magazine) of the TCI contained numerous reports of these journeys, often organized in symbolic places for the Italian unification process in order to reinforce the consciousness of national identity.

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, the experiences described by M. Tedeschi, *Le serate cinematografiche educative della commissione del Touring per il turismo scolastico nella provincia di Milano*, «Proiezioni Luminose», vol. 1, n. 4, 1922, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ G. Vota (ed.), *I sessant'anni del Touring Club Italiano. 1894-1954*, Milano, Touring Club Italiano, 1954, p. 69.

¹⁰⁷ S. Pivato, *Il Touring Club Italiano*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2006, p. 30.

¹⁰⁸ M. Armiero, *Le montagne della patria. Natura e nazione nella storia d'Italia. Secoli XIX e XX*, Torino, Einaudi, 2013, p. 44.

It is not by chance that the most successful trips were those to Curtatone and Montanara, Custoza, Solferino and San Martino (famous battles of Risorgimento, August 1902) and the journey organized for the anniversary of the Garibaldi's Expedition (from Genoa to Palermo).

Hiking in the mountains was the kind of trip loaded with more patriotic emphasis. It was originated not only by the desire of promoting a healthy use of leisure time or with the scope of strengthening the spirit through demanding physical activities. The excursions to the top of the mountains, particularly those organized in the eastern Alps and the Tyrol's peaks, had since their start the meaning of a political pilgrimage¹⁰⁹. The 'cycling in the unredeemed lands', the meetings, conferences, trips to Trieste and Trento (with the last stop under the statue of Dante), acquired the meaning of symbolically owning the geographical spaces occupied in reality by the foreigner.

These raids on foreign soil – characterized by a precise liturgy, as well as by a strong emotional charge – were not motivated by a mere playful inspiration. By contrary, they were animated by patriotic purposes¹¹⁰. The rituality of these walks, often considered almost like small raids, was characterised by practices like: the ostentation of a daisy, flower symbol of the Queen of Italy; the singing of chants dedicated to Garibaldi and Italy under the windows of the Austro-Hungarian embassy; the playing of patriotic marches by the bands on boats sailing away from the Garda Lake, and so on.

The end of World War I emphasised the tendency of politically using tourism and saw the organization of many excursions on the lands where the main battles had been fought, in particular those that had been the backdrop of the 'white war'¹¹¹. The CAI and the TCI were still the most active associations in the field of nationalist propaganda. In fact, they were both very active in promoting a «patriotic tourism that chooses the mountain to retrace the paths of the soldiers, that foster the visits of the areas where the battle took place and war museums»¹¹². The TCI published a series of guides regarding the places of the 'Great War'. Furthermore, the guide on the eastern Dolomites by Antonio Berti, considered the alpinism bible for generations of climbers, was published in an extensively revised edition, in light of the dramatic events of the war. In this sense, tourism, «far from being shaped as a mere practice of free time, became a way of education aimed at moulding the Italians»¹¹³.

¹⁰⁹ M. Cuaz, *Le Alpi*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2005, p. 54.

¹¹⁰ Bagnaresi, Wedekind, *Turisti per cosa? Nazionalismo e turismo prima della Grande Guerra*, cit., p. 33.

¹¹¹ On "open air Museums" see E. Camanni, *Il fuoco e il gelo. La Grande Guerra sulle montagne*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2014, pp. 72-77.

¹¹² P. Battilani, *Vacanze di pochi vacanze di tutti. L'evoluzione del turismo europeo*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2001, p. 295.

¹¹³ Pivato, *Il Touring Club Italiano*, cit., p. 32.

After years of forced interruption due to the conflict, the relationship between the Touring Club and schools was intensified. It started in 1913 and it marked the onset of the practice of school tourism thanks to pedagogues like Giovanni Marchesini, who saw in the school overload one of the main errors in education¹¹⁴. It was also established the National Committee for school tourism, chaired by the General Director of the TCI, that, in collaboration with the education authorities, began to promote various initiatives, such as visits to monuments and cities, mountain hikes, and so on¹¹⁵. The activity was accompanied by the publication of a monthly magazine of school tourism, entitled «La Sorgente» (The Source – 1917/1928).

The cultural and patriotic tourism of the first post-war period¹¹⁶, together with recreation practices in mountain (camping, hiking, scouting, etc.), helped to strengthen the relationship between the homeland and the landscape, between nature and nation¹¹⁷. George Mosse argues that this rediscovery of nature was functional to alleviate the emotional impact of a tragic event like the World War I¹¹⁸: naturalizing the death and nationalizing the mourning. Activities like the war tourism, the commemoration of the heroes, the pilgrimages, dropping off flower wreaths on the fields of the holy battles, helped creating the cult of the dead. This reinforced the Italian identity, transforming the war from a senseless event to a sacred one¹¹⁹. The repercussions were evident even in the transformation of the landscape, where were set up war cemeteries, memorials, monuments to the Unknown Soldier, parks of Remembrance, and so on. They populated the landscape with new meanings, combining nature with memory. It was the presence of these elements, able to open one's vision to a sacred dimension, that transformed the landscape into an 'ethnoscape'¹²⁰.

The school, as anticipated, was directly involved in this work of ideological repossession of the landscape. Between 1922 and 1923 the Ministry of Public Education issued three circular letters entitled, respectively: *National pilgrimage of the students through the places of Martyrdom and Glory*, *Pilgrimage to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier* and *Pilgrimage of the pupils to the tomb of the Unknown Soldier*¹²¹. Those were topics soon resumed by the authors of

¹¹⁴ G. Marchesini, *Il sopraccarico nelle Scuole medie*, Milano-Roma-Napoli, Società editrice Dante Alighieri di Albrighi, Segati e C., 1913, p. 13.

¹¹⁵ Pivato, *Il Touring Club Italiano*, cit., p. 128.

¹¹⁶ A. Pastore, *Alpinismo e storia d'Italia. Dall'Unità alla Resistenza*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2003, pp. 103-116.

¹¹⁷ G. Zanetto, F. Vallerani, S. Soriani (edd.), *Nature, environment, landscape: European attitudes and discourses in the modern period the Italian case, 1920-1970*, Padova, Università di Padova, 1996, p. 3.

¹¹⁸ G. Mosse, *Le guerre mondiali: dalla tragedia al mito dei caduti*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2005.

¹¹⁹ Cuaz, *Le Alpi*, cit., p. 87.

¹²⁰ Cfr. A. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999.

¹²¹ C.M. 13/3/1922, n. 23; C.M. 23/4/1923, n. 36; C.M. 5/6/1923, n. 46.

textbooks: the trip to the tomb of the Unknown Soldier reached a huge success in the Twenties and Thirties¹²².

Textbooks authors quite quickly acknowledged the change in sensitivity and as a consequence in the strategies of nationalization of the Italian people. Indeed, soon the descriptions were dedicated to school visits to the major landmarks of the recent victory, starting right from the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, «the humble and unknown soldier, the symbol of the great Italian people, who won the war»¹²³. Another textbook described the school trip to the House of Veterans, where young students had the opportunity to meet «the veterans of the nation's battles»¹²⁴. Elsewhere, a chestnut trees forest was the beautiful background of «a solemn Mass to commemorate the fallen soldiers». The scenery was characterised by those elements which, after the war, profoundly changed the alpine landscape: a marble memorial stone, a «big picture with the name of the slain», flags that «would fly pure and glorious in the wind thanks to all those who sanctified them with their blood»¹²⁵.

The recurring reference to flags in the textbooks of that time, was functional to the consolidation of the national identity. Training and strengthening a sense of self-consciousness as a nation is one of the aim of the process of national identity building. To this scope a symbol, an emblem, a flag, an anthem became strong elements in which people could identify themselves¹²⁶:

With vibrant voice the colonel told the story of that poor ripped flag. [...] It was under the shadow of that flag, through glorious battles, that during the last war our soldiers, after Vittorio Veneto liberated Trento and Trieste. Hail to thee, oh flag, formed by a thousand of bullets, imbued with blood, flying over the most glorious fields of Italy! Hail to thee, that flutter free on a hundred cities! I respectfully bow to your beautiful colours. Fly always free and glorious in the world and hold up, in front of the enemy, in the name and for the glory of the Fatherland¹²⁷.

Prime example were the changes made in Trentino after the conclusion of the conflict and the annexation. The names of the peaks, as well as the names of the mountain huts and of the trails, were modified and those signs and flags that could recall the Austrian domination were removed. This renaming must

¹²² See the story titled *I Balilla all'Altare della Patria* published in the fascist schoolbook: F. Saponi, *Amor di Patria, il libro della quinta classe*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1935, pp. 176-178.

¹²³ Alfieri, *Fanciulli d'Italia*, cit., p. 190. See also the visit of Paolo, with his father, to the «body of the Unknown Soldier» in L. Barbier, *La Geografia del Bambino*, Firenze, Salani, 1923, p. 7.

¹²⁴ G. Fabiani, *Casa mia! Patria mia! Libro di Lettura secondo i vigenti programmi ministeriali con illustrazioni del pittore E. Malerba, e molte fotografie. V classe elementare maschile e mista (corso popolare), novissima edizione arricchita d'una breve antologia*, Milano, Antonio Vallardi, 1924, pp. 273-274.

¹²⁵ A. and C. Plata, *Freschi sorrisi. Corso di letture per le scuole elementari maschili e femminili, classe III*, Palermo, Sandron, 1925, pp. 24-25.

¹²⁶ S. Pitchford, *Identity Tourism: Imaging and Imagining the Nation*, Bingley, Emerald, 2008, p. 43.

¹²⁷ Marcati, *Fra campi e borghi*, cit., p. 181.

be attributed to a process of gradual politicization of the Alpine region, as confirmed by the choice for the new names of cities and personalities that «evoke strong memories of the homeland»¹²⁸. Consequently the young characters of a story published in a textbook in 1925 climbed to the hut called *Italia*¹²⁹. That is why it is also possible to explain the insistence – in a textbook for the second class published after the war by a group of teachers from Trentino – on the flag, which «recalls the braves who died on the battlefields, when Italy was not free. I love my flag, because I love my country»¹³⁰.

In the borderlands or in those lands of fresh (re)conquest an evocative name, a flag, a memorial plaque, were very important in order to suggest that a new national entity existed and to encourage residents, hikers and tourists to identify with it. Emblematic is the case of the *Great Map of Italy* published by TCI. In fact, in the program drawn up in the early years of the 20th century, it already contemplated the Trentino region (even though it was still under the Austro Hungarian empire). As a result, the transition occurred from a cultural belonging to the Peninsula to a political and institutional belonging to the Kingdom of Italy¹³¹, according to that concept of labile boundaries previously explained in this paper.

Conclusions

In recent years, the education to landscape has experienced a busy season; it was widely cited as a remedy to the progressive indifference of man towards environmental and ecological issues. Passing down to younger generations a certain aesthetic code, getting them used to recognise a landscape and to assess the cultural, historical, naturalistic references, should help them strengthen the desire to protect that rich heritage.

These considerations were largely ignored a century ago, with the exception of the first movements born for the protection of the Italian natural heritage. Between the 19th and the 20th centuries, more than education to the landscape aimed at protecting the natural heritage, it is appropriate to talk about 'educational landscapes'. They were used as a particular type of patriotic education which had in the promotion of cultural and natural heritage an effective means to build the national identity and to convey a sense of growing patriotism.

¹²⁸ Pastore, *Alpinismo e storia d'Italia. Dall'Unità alla Resistenza*, cit., p. 69.

¹²⁹ A. and C. Plata, *Freschi sorrisi*, cit., pp. 12-13.

¹³⁰ *Libro di lettura per la seconda classe maschile e femminile. Compilato da alcuni insegnanti trentini*, cit., pp. 67-68. See also pp. 43-44.

¹³¹ C. Ambrosi, *Italiani di carta: la pre-annessione del Trentino ad opera del Touring club italiano*, in Ambrosi, Wedekind (edd.), *Turisti di truppa. Vacanze, nazionalismo e potere*, cit., pp. 61-72 and in particular p. 68.

School – especially the primary one – was directly involved in this project of ‘nationalization through the landscape’. Schoolbooks, children’s fiction, wall charts, atlases, light projections, educational films, school trips, were different ways to achieve the same goal: get the Italians acquainted with the cultural and natural heritage and make them love the motherland.

It was not a static description, true to unchanging descriptive codes. By contrary, it was a narrative that was adapted to ongoing changes. In fact, the urban and natural landscape was – and still is – constantly evolving. The changes in the names of roads of many cities, the Italianization of the names of mountains, regions and mountain huts, the creation of memorials, the dissemination of memorial stones and commemorating plaques, the birth of war cemeteries and parks of remembrance, the creation of paths of memory through the places of the homelands battles, and so on, they all significantly contributed to the strengthening of identity. Again, the school – through readings, images and trips – was in charge of transmitting the suitable changes to the landscape and, with them, to explain the reasons and purposes why they were realized.

«Discovering the best and most ignored Italy». The regional Almanacs for the primary school introduced by the Gentile Reform and the use of the cultural and natural heritage for the promotion of a national identity and a sense of citizenship

Roberto Sani
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism,
University of Macerata (Italy)
roberto.sani@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: This article focuses on the forms and ways in which the regional Almanacs, or primary school textbooks for the regional culture and various notions, introduced among the compulsory readings for the primary course in the aftermath of the Gentile Reform of 1923, have used the cultural and natural heritage of our country for the education of the civic and national consciousness of the younger generations.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Regional Almanacs; Cultural heritage; Natural heritage; National identity; Fascism; Italy; XXth Century.

Introduction

The promotion of a national identity and a sense of citizenship in the schools by means of the cultural and natural heritage¹, i.e. through the reference to and the enhancement of monuments, archaeological sites and different types of artistic and architectural heritage, as well as of landscapes and many other

¹ See *Orientation devant guider la mise en oeuvre de la Convention du patrimoine mondial*, Paris, Centre du Patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco, 1999; M. Jadé, *Patrimoine immatériel. Perspectives d'interprétation du concept de patrimoine*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2006.

natural beauties typically Italian, have been already widely practiced since the decades following the national unification², but finds in the so-called *regional almanacs*, or *primary school textbooks for the regional culture and various notions*, introduced among the compulsory readings of the primary course after the Gentile Reform in 1923, an original and important instrument. This is due to the peculiar centrality given by such textbooks to the detailed study of the regional and local dimension and, in particular, to their specific nature of works that promote a «more intimate relationship between the children's soul and the spiritual and traditional life of their country and region, for the purpose of their «civil growth» and «national education»³.

This contribution, in this regard, is aimed at focusing on the ways in which this particular type of books for the primary school – the *regional almanacs* or *primary school textbooks for the regional culture and the various notions* – used the cultural and natural heritage of our country for the development of younger generation's civic and national consciousness.

The R.D. 1st October 1923, n. 2185, by which the Minister of Education, Giovanni Gentile, introduced the new *Organization of school levels and of teaching programs for primary education*, established that the so-called «various notions» should have been given by the primary teacher in the different classes of primary school, within which a special attention should have been paid to the «knowledge of the works of art, memories and monuments»⁴.

After a few weeks, with the Ministerial Decree 11th November 1923, n. 250 «relating to the timetables, programs and educational rules established implementing the Royal Decree 1st October 1923, n. 2158», the minister Gentile, when referring to prescribed or permitted textbooks for each class of primary school, introduced for the first time the «Primary school textbooks for the regional culture and the various notions», «the same for all the classes, from the third to the fifth». It, as stated by the Ministerial Decree, «will be an almanac containing, in addition to the national historic calendar, references to the festivals, fairs, markets in the region, with hints of regional economic geography, descriptions of small trips, various stories taken from the local tradition, dialect

² See, in particular, the recent: F. Targhetta, «*The beloved face of the fatherland*». *The role of the landscape into the processes of National identity building*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 139-155.

³ *Relazione della Commissione ministeriale per l'esame dei libri di testo da adottarsi nelle scuole elementari* [Commissione Vidari], «Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Bollettino Ufficiale», 23 February 1926, n. 8, pp. 616-759; re-published in A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo. L'opera della Commissione centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo da Giuseppe Lombardo Radice ad Alessandro Melchiori 1923-1928*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2005, pp. 429-573.

⁴ R.D. 1st October 1923, n. 2185 – *Ordinamento dei gradi scolastici e dei programmi didattici dell'istruzione elementare*, «Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno d'Italia», 24 October 1923, n. 250, pp. 3843-3851.

poems, proverbs and advice concerning, in particular, agriculture, health propaganda pages, pages of useful information, postal and telegraph rates»⁵.

The *regional almanacs* were the expression of Giuseppe Lombardo Radice's intuitions and proposals – as the valuable and documented research carried out in recent years by Michela D'Alessio and Alberto Barausse have highlighted, focusing on the impact in schools of the debate on the relationship between dialects and national language and on school manuals for the teaching of the Italian language between the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries. In fact, they were the most lively and original expressions of the new course given by the Gentile Reform to primary and popular education, in order to «develop a sense of national belonging among the lower classes, [...] cultivating the linguistic unification» and «to promote the cultural heritage and local traditions»⁶. In this respect, they can be considered a type of books for primary schools designed to give «new dignity to the regional and popular culture in order to arouse the sense of national belonging»⁷.

But, in order to fully understand the underlying reasons of the importance of the *regional almanacs* to the enhancement and promotion of the cultural and natural heritage of Italy, i.e. to fully assess the considerable space given by this type of reading books to the Italian monuments and the different types of its artistic and architectural heritage, as well to its landscapes and various natural beauties, it is worth examining the operational guidelines and the evaluations made during the three-year period 1924-1926, from the *Central Commission for the examination of textbooks to be used in primary schools*, established by the Minister of Education Giovanni Gentile with Royal Decree 11st March, 1923, n. 737⁸.

The *Central Commission* was established in 1923, chaired by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice. It published, the following year, the *final report on textbooks for the primary school*, in which a particular attention was reserved to the first generation of «primary school textbooks for the regional culture» presented by different authors and publishers for approval. In it, Lombardo Radice, referring precisely to the space given to the Italian cultural and natural heritage and to its use for educational purposes of the Italian young people, stated:

⁵ Ministerial Decree 11st November 1923, n. 250 – *Relativa agli orari, ai programmi e alle prescrizioni didattiche, in applicazione del Regio Decreto 1° ottobre 1923, n. 2185*, «Bollettino Ufficiale del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione», 22 novembre 1923, n. 51, pp. 4590-4627.

⁶ Barausse, D'Alessio, «*Dalla piccola alla grande patria*», cit., pp. XXXV-XXXVI.

⁷ M. Galfré, *Il regime degli editori. Libri, scuola e fascismo*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2005, p. 22. See also F. Dimpfleier, *Vivere la regione per vivere la nazione. La valorizzazione del patrimonio locale nei sussidiari per le culture regionali*, in S. Aru, V. De Plano (edd.), *Costruire una nazione. Politiche, discorsi e rappresentazioni che hanno fatto l'Italia*, Verona, Ombre Corte, 2013, pp. 92-106.

⁸ R.D. 11 March 1923, n. 737 – *Norme per l'adozione dei libri di testo nelle scuole elementari e popolari pubbliche e private*, «Bollettino Ufficiale del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione», 1923, n. 18, pp. 1404-1407.

The almanac of the region is the real people's and the child's book. It satisfies all their curiosities. There is everything is needed; [...] There is the history of the region, preparatory to the history of the fatherland; [...] There are elements for art education and elements of history of art, [...] beautiful illustrations of landscapes, monuments, masterpieces of painting. [...] Everything in short; but not in a nutshell as happened in the old textbooks. The great variety of elements which form a region are unified by the love for the native land, the liking for the serious life of the most familiar people, the pride to know that this people is worthy of the homeland and similar in merits to any other people of Italy.

After having further analyzed the characteristics and advantages of this particular type of reading books for the primary school, the educator from Catania concluded:

The future is for this kind of books, in which the Italians can discover the best and most ignored Italy: not literary but truly poetic; not conventional rhetoric, and sometimes tragic, but a healthy, balanced, strong, serene Italy. We can say only good things of the primary school textbooks for the regional culture we have examined (so far twenty-eight). Even those that we found a bit cold, with features of a handbook, are infinitely superior to the old primary school textbooks⁹.

Also the following *Central Commission for the examination of textbooks to be adopted in primary schools*, established in 1925 and chaired by Giovanni Vidari, pointed out the many advantages of the *regional almanacs* introduced by the Gentile Reform for the purpose of the civil and patriotic education of younger generations, emphasizing the close relationship between the discovery and the analysis of the cultural and natural heritage of the region of origin and the development, in the students, of a more authentic and deep sense of belonging to the local and national community¹⁰. As Vidari wrote:

A happy innovation of the existing programs is, without doubt, to have suggested and imposed [...] a more intimate relationship between the children's soul and the spiritual and traditional life of the country and the region they belong to. It is after all, always, the same old pedagogical principle to strike the pupils' consciousness with a new way of thinking, to open their souls to higher horizons, using what the soul itself offers in terms of feelings, memories, in relations of more immediate interest. But literary, philosophical and even patriotic prejudices prevented turning the attention [...] to the region, that seemed to contradict the concept of the unified country. But now, they have understood that the dialect

⁹ Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione - Direzione Generale dell'Istruzione Elementare, *Relazioni sui libri di testo per le scuole elementari ed elenco dei libri approvati e dei libri respinti*. IX. *Relazione finale della Commissione ed elenco dei libri esaminati nelle sessioni di agosto e settembre 1924*, Roma, Libreria dello Stato, 1925; now re-published in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 359- 380.

¹⁰ On the difficult relation between *region* and *nation* and on the debate on the role of the neo-regionalism in order to develop a national identity, see: S. Cavazza, *Piccole patrie. Feste popolari tra regione e nazione durante il fascismo*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1997.

and the region, relived in their most spontaneous, beautiful and lively aspects, fit well the national and human education of the child, arousing vibrant emotions and beloved images and providing a spiritual nourishment, that the intelligent teacher can and should address towards the highest aims for the students' complete education.

He also added:

Now, in this new kind of book production there is a noble competition between regions. There is, indeed, still a lot of uncertainty for what concerns the choice of the material, which is not always refined and elegant; [...] but, in compensation, in these books, old and new poetic compositions, tales of local life full of religious or patriotic or human interest find their space: while, in regional calendars, the artistic monuments, the beauties of the landscape, [...] the typical customs, are illustrated with a tender and gentle care that reveals a heart in love with its land and willing to transmit to other people this sweet passion¹¹.

A similar stance characterized also the *Central Commission for the examination of textbooks to be adopted in primary schools* established in 1926 and chaired by Balbino Giuliano, former Director of Education of Lombardy and Deputy secretary of Education under the Minister Alessandro Casati, who¹², previously, had on several occasions expressed a favorable opinion on the 'regionalist' approach by Lombardo-Radice¹³. According to Balbino Giuliano, it was necessary to be vigilant to avoid the risk that a very useful teaching tool, such as the *Regional Almanac*, for the negligence or ineptitude of the authors and teachers using it, ended to «betray the spirit of the school reform and of its author», for a sort of heterogenesis of aims:

The Gentile Reform – he stated – was clearly aimed to educate the Italian people to feel the unity of their nation and national history even in its local life and its smaller local stories, and to refresh the feeling of beauty and human truth, through the pure source of dialect literature and the tradition of popular experience. But it is clear that if the authors and teacher do not possess the capacity of the highest intellects, to see the value in the humblest forms, then the teaching of regional life becomes heavy erudition and, far from educating young people to understand more deeply the life of the nation, produces again the old conflict between the region and the nation that Fascism has now definitely overcome¹⁴.

¹¹ *Relazione della Commissione ministeriale per l'esame dei libri di testo da adottarsi nelle scuole elementari* [Commissione Vidari], cit., pp. 616-759.

¹² On Balbino Giuliano's figure and works, see, in particular: M. Ostenc, *Una tappa della fascistizzazione: la scuola e la politica dal 1925 al 1928*, «Storia Contemporanea», vol. 4, n. 4, 1973, pp. 481-505; J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime (1922-1943)*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1994, pp. 212-214.

¹³ In 1924, for example, the future Minister of National Education stated: «Even for the more fervent nationalist the region is a reality, you can't and you must not deny it absolutely. But we have to deny it when it is opposed to the idea of national unity. But you may love the region, its history and its particular soul, when you feel that in it there is a concrete expression of the nation, and of the national history and soul» (B. Giuliano, *La politica scolastica del governo nazionale*, Milano, Alpes, 1924, p. 105).

¹⁴ *Relazione della Commissione Ministeriale per l'esame dei libri di testo da adottarsi nelle scuole elementari e nei corsi integrativi d'avviamento professionale* [Commissione Giuliano],

To sum up, the numerous of *almanacs* devoted to the various regions of Italy¹⁵ and published in the three years 1924-1926 from different scholastic publishers¹⁶, sometimes in special series whose direction was entrusted to specialists and intellectuals¹⁷, should facilitate the development of a new national concept of education, in which the knowledge and enhancement of the cultural and natural heritage of the different regional and local realities, far from denying or diminishing the true centrality of the «feeling that ties all the Italians to their fatherland», would have made possible the development of a broader and more mature awareness «of the greatness of the Nation».

Finally, in the introductory note of the almanac *Il Marchigiano. Sussidiario di Cultura regionale e Nozioni varie* (The native of Marches. Primary school book of regional culture and various notions, 1925), it was stressed emphatically: «Know that the love for your country must teach you the love for our Homeland which is Italy»¹⁸.

Similarly, in *L'Abruzzo, Libro sussidiario di Cultura regionale e Nozioni varie* (The Abruzzi. Primary school book of regional culture and various notions, 1924), the author recommends to his young readers: «Cultivate with

«Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Bollettino Ufficiale», 2st December 1926, 51, pp. 3208-3313; now re-published in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 577- 583.

¹⁵ See the complete list of the *regional almanacs* approved between 1924 and 1926 in *Elenco dei libri di lettura approvati dalla Commissione centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo e da adottarsi nelle scuole elementari per l'anno scolastico 1924-25*, in Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione – Direzione Generale dell'Istruzione Elementare, *Elenchi per la scelta dei libri di testo*, Roma, Libreria dello Stato, November 1924; now re-published in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 381-426; *Relazione della Commissione ministeriale per l'esame dei libri di testo da adottarsi nelle scuole elementari* [Commissione Vidari], cit., pp. 728-742; *Relazione della Commissione Ministeriale per l'esame dei libri di testo da adottarsi nelle scuole elementari e nei corsi integrativi d'avviamento professionale* [Commissione Giuliano], cit., pp. 3296-3304.

¹⁶ Between the Italian school publishers that produced regional almanacs between the years 1924 and 1926, we remember: Santi Andò (Palermo), Bemporad (Florence), Carabba (Lanciano), IRES – Industrie Riunite Editoriali Siciliane (Palermo), Istituto Editoriale Cisalpino (Varese), La Editoriale Libreria (Trieste-Milano), Mondadori (Milan), Paravia (Turin), Sandron (Palermo), SEI – Società Editrice Internazionale (Turin), Trevisini (Milan), Vallardi (Milan) and Vallecchi (Florence). For those published by Mondadori see: E. Marazzi, *Editoria scolastica e cultura regionale: la «Collezione Mondadori Almanacchi Regionali» (1924-1926)*, «ACME. Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università degli Studi di Milano», vol. 61, n. 3, 2008, pp. 239-269.

¹⁷ See, in particular, the «Collezione di Almanacchi di Cultura Regionale», directed by the geographer Roberto Almagià for the publishing house Paravia; the «Collezione Bemporad di libri sussidiari per la cultura regionale e le nozioni varie», entrusted to Olinto Marinelli and Averardo de' Negri; the «Collana Almanacchi Regionali» edited by the Publisher Vallardi in Milan; and the «Collezione Mondadori di Almanacchi Regionali» by the homonymous Lombard publishing company.

¹⁸ I. Drago, L. Cesaretti, *Il Marchigiano. Sussidiario di Cultura regionale e Nozioni varie*, Palermo, Sandron, 1925, p. 4.

loving care the flower bed that is entrusted to us, this fertile land of our strong and gentle region, so that it worthily enhances the beauty and greatness of the Fatherland»¹⁹.

1. *To know and love a «great country that has given art, culture, genius to the entire world as anyone else»: the almanacs and trips to discover the cultural and natural heritage of the regions*

In most *almanacs* published since 1924 the description of the cultural and natural heritage of the different areas of the peninsula was entrusted to a series of travel stories whose route included the major cities and the most picturesque and representative villages of each region. These are imaginary journeys made by individual children with their parents or by entire classes with their teachers; more rarely by small groups of boys with their relatives or adult guides. The ‘travels’ to discover their region were carried out using sometimes the train, sometimes the car, more rarely, by bus, or using various means of transport²⁰.

The ‘travels’ described in the *almanacs* are considered as travels of knowledge, study, or as awards for academic merits, in which – in a form that has its roots in the reading and fiction books for children of the Nineteenth century²¹ – the chosen itineraries are aimed at a deep understanding of the various urban and rural places of their region.

The landscape beauties and the architectural and cultural heritage play a role of primary importance in this respect, considered as the natural and cultural heritage in its broadest sense, and regarded as the foundation of the regional identity, itself considered as an essential component of the national identity. Not surprisingly, in highlighting the true centrality of art and cultural traditions in order to determine the peculiar regional identity of Umbria, Carlo Faina stated:

¹⁹ A. Silveri, *L’Abruzzo. Libro Sussidiario di Cultura regionale e Nozioni varie. Volume unico per la 3^a, 4^a e 5^a Classe Elementare*, Palermo, Industrie Riunite Editoriali Siciliane, 1924.

²⁰ See, for example, the series of articles entitled *Viaggiando*, in G. Mercurio, *Echi e sorrisi in terra di Campania. Sussidiario di cultura regionale e nozioni varie. Volume unico per la 3^a, 4^a e 5^a Classe Elementare*, Palermo, Industrie Riunite Editoriali Siciliane, 1924, pp. 56-59, 75-78, 92-97, 112-116, 131-135, 202-206 and 219-224; the series of articles entitled *Un viaggio*, in G. Magnoni, *Almanacco Regionale per il Piemonte. Libro sussidiario di cultura regionale e nozioni varie per gli alunni di 3^a, 4^a e 5^a classe delle scuole elementari maschili e femminili*, Milano, Vallardi, 1925, pp. 25-26, 60-63, 105-107, 123-124, 169-170, 182-183, 193-194 and 207-208; the one entitled *Viaggiando*, in A. Piccioni (*Momus*), *Le nostre Marche. Almanacco regionale illustrato conforme ai nuovi programmi per le classi II, IV e V elementari*, Milano, Trevisini, 1925, pp. 86-89, 121-127, 133-135 and 176-184; the one called *I nostri viaggi negli Abruzzi*, in L. Mastronardi, *L’Abruzzo. Libro sussidiario di cultura regionale e nozioni varie per gli alunni di III^a, IV^a e V^a classe delle scuole elementari*, Milano, Trevisini, 1925, pp. 36-40, 308-311 and 313-316.

²¹ See C. Collodi, *Il viaggio per l’Italia di Giannettino*, Firenze, Paggi, 1880-1886, 3 voll.

Wherever you go in the course of your life, whatever the work you do, whether you cross the mountains and the seas of distant nations, or you stay in your country to cultivate the soil, whether you devote yourself to the noble efforts of the study and intellectual work or simply work in the fields, whether you are poor or rich, fortunate or unfortunate, always remember, above all else, to be Italian; be proud of being born in this great country that has given to the entire world art, civilizations, genius as anyone else. [...] But do not even forget, *secondarily*, to be Umbrians; certainly not to arouse rivalries or disagreements with our brothers of other regions; (the period of the struggles and antagonisms between the Italians is luckily over and will never return), but only because we Umbrians ought to be conscious of being born in a region that is not rich, but that is infinitely beautiful and has [...] a bright past in the field of art and civilization. Umbria has 30 centuries of history and every Umbrian should feel the honor and the burden of such a legacy!

And then:

Always remember that our region is worthy of study and respect for its great past, while its endless and extremely varied beauties of nature, make it worthy of the admiration of every noble and sensitive soul. Therefore, love Umbria, learn to know it and let it know²².

Faina was echoed, among others, by Icilio Missiroli, the writer of an almanac about Romagna, who, in highlighting the importance of the natural beauties and art monuments in cities and towns of the region, stated:

I want to talk to you now, my child, about our little homeland [the Romagna], that let us love, with the sweetness it emanates, the greatest country: Italy. [...] Come with me to our blessed region, small Romagna boy. Now learn to know your land, love it and honestly work in its name, so that it becomes more and more renowned, and pay homage to Italy²³.

The presentation – through the metaphor of the ‘journey of discovery of their region’ – of the cultural and natural heritage for the purpose of the consolidation of the national identity and the promotion of a stronger sense of citizenship among the young generations was the basis, for example, of a series of articles published in the two almanacs dedicated to Tuscany by Arturo Avelardi and Plinio Pratesi.

The former, in the text entitled *Toscana. Almanacco regionale* (1925)²⁴, after having underlined that «one of the greatest glories of Tuscany» was «the supremacy that it has always had in the fine arts»²⁵, through a series of short but complete presentations of the main cities in the region, enriched with many beautiful illustrations of squares, historic buildings and various monuments,

²² C. Faina, *L'Italia e l'Umbria*, in Id., *Umbria verde. Almanacco regionale*, Torino, Paravia, 1925, pp. 259-260.

²³ I. Missiroli, *Terra romagnola*, in Id., *Romagna. Almanacco regionale*, Firenze, Bemporad, 1924, p. 166.

²⁴ A. Avelardi, *Toscana. Almanacco regionale*, Torino, Paravia, 1925.

²⁵ Id., *L'arte in Toscana*, in Id., *Toscana. Almanacco regionale*, cit., p. 338.

gave to its young readers an effective framework of the many «artistic beauties» that characterized it. So, speaking of Pisa, Avelardi noted;

Travel along the long and straight Via Solferino, or rather along the wide and winding Via S. Maria, and here, at the end of them: a miraculous vision. In a green meadow, with a tall and soft grass, where every noise is softened and the silence of this extremely quiet town increases, you can see before you the great marble mass of the Duomo, with the Baptistery and leaning Bell Tower, of a unique beauty in the world. [...] And, in addition, in that same square, in the background of the three aforesaid monuments, there is the Cemetery, [...] that Giovanni Pisano surrounded with marble arches, and that a great number of distinguished artists adorned internally with paintings and sculptures that transformed that place of death in one of the most precious art galleries in Italy and in the World. The frescoes of the ‘Triumph of Death’, of the ‘Last Judgment’, and those by Benozzo Gozzoli, illustrating scenes from the Old Testament, are invaluable treasures. If then you cross the most ancient streets and visit the Museums, you will see countless towers, palaces, churches, artworks – just think to the torre degli Upezzinghi, the torre del Campano, the Palazzo dei Lanfreducci ‘Alla Giornata’, the Palazzo della Carovana Lanfreducci, the churches of San Paolo a Ripa d’Arno, of S. Frediano, S. Caterina, S. Francesco – of this city that, after being a Greek colony and then a significant Etruscan and Roman marketplace, reached its maximum power as a maritime republic²⁶.

The picture of Siena and Arezzo was also rich and detailed, and particularly full of news and evocative memories. About the former of the two cities, the author wrote:

The medieval city welcomes you: the one that has remained far from the troubles of modern life to let you daydream and relive the greatness of the past. Here, you will feel the Middle Ages. [...] Here, neither the names nor the time of the Magnificent Pandolfo Petrucci and Enea Silvio Piccolomini will not seem so far, because stones, marbles and paintings praise them continuously, and you will feel as being a contemporary of St. Catherine, whose house you can visit, or S. Bernardino, whose witty eloquence you will regret not being able to listen to. [...] Come in Piazza del Campo, unique in the world, with the Gothic magnificence of the great Palazzo Pretorio, with its Torre del Mangia, standing out against the sky for more than a hundred meters, as agile as a lily stem, all crowned with brattices, while in the middle of the square you can admire the marble embroideries of Fonte Gaia and the round row of reddish buildings, that seem to embrace you. [...] such as in San Francesco, in San Domenico, in San Giovanni, come down among the people of Fontebranda, cross the ways where the Gothic palaces of Tolomei, Piccolomini, Saraceni, of the Capitan di Giustizia, of the Magnificent Petrucci attest the art and the prosperity of the past. Pause before the marbles and bronzes by Iacopo della Quercia and in front of the boards on which Duccio di Boninsegna, the great Duccio who was a contemporary of Cimabue and surpassed him in the art, or Simone Martini, or some other citizen of Siena had reproduced the inimitable sweetness of the faces of their Madonnas and their Saints. Admire everywhere, in churches, palaces and streets, the sense of art of the people of Siena, perfectly evident²⁷.

For what concerns Arezzo, Arturo Avelardi stated:

²⁶ Id., *Pisa*, in *ibid.*, pp. 16-19.

²⁷ Id., *Siena*, in *ibid.*, pp. 232-237.

Arezzo seems beautiful, even from the first sight. [...] It is beautiful and severe at the same time, crowned by the Cathedral. It is the city founded by the Etruscans and where the art of sculpture reached its peak, because, digging in it, the two most superb Etruscan bronzes that can be seen today in the Museo Fiorentino were discovered: the statue of Minerva and the Chimera. [...] Arezzo carries the signs of its greatness and power in its buildings. The Church of Santa Maria della Pieve is beautiful and majestic with the characteristic tower bell 'dalle cento buche', the monumental temple with the Romanesque facade, built in the years before one thousand A.D. The Church of San Francesco is severe in its appearance but its choir miraculously preserved the treasure of the famous frescoes of Piero della Francesca, representing some of the stories of the Old Testament and the triumph of Christianity. And the cathedral, high over the city like a fortress, is to give an idea of this noble and, at the same time, refined Arezzo, thanks to its art. [...] The palazzo della Fraternità dei Laici, is not less elegant, as well as, if you go down, a bit out of the city, that miracle of S. Maria delle Grazie, with its wonderful porch by Benedetto da Maiano, which makes you understand how the proud city was able to be open to the Florentine Renaissance²⁸.

The description of the «artistic beauties» contained in the real «open air museum» represented by the county town of the region is longer and more complex:

It is appropriate, for who has never seen Florence, to arrive to it from via Valdarno in San Donato. Suddenly, [...] before your eyes, the unexpected, massive, enormous dome of the Cathedral, overlooking a forest of towers and bell towers, miracles of art and beauty, and palaces and houses, among tufts of grass, and, in the middle, the stream of the Arno, crossed by white bridges. So, Florence is offered in the fullness of its sweet beauty, surrounded by gentle hills, but lied down in the plain. But, if you arrive to it by rail, you can not enjoy immediately this magnificent city, but you are thrown, it can be said, suddenly in the middle of it, in front of the majestic greatness of Santa Maria Novella, and just five minutes from the square where there are the Cathedral, the bell tower and the baptistery. [...] Here, there is the Palace of the government: Palazzo Vecchio, a fortress, if you well observe it: squared, crenellated, castellated. [...] And here there is the Palazzo del Podestà, which now houses the National Museum, here the buildings of the guilds: the one of the Art of the wool, the remains of the one that was once of the silk, and the recently restored palace, the Palazzo di Parte Guelfa: strong and gentle. And here there are the ancient loggias: the Signoria, the miracle of Orcagna which today contains a "people" of statues, as once the princes that spoke to the people, that of Or San Michele, once closed around its Gothic tabernacle, that, when the plague of 1348 ceased, the Florentines raised to God for thanksgiving, and the world-famous Uffizi, whose upper floors contain the richest gallery of paintings and sculptures that exists in the world. [...] Here, there is the palace of the Davanzati, of the Fourteenth century, and those of the Medici of the Fifteenth century (now Riccardi, seat of the Prefecture) and the ones of the Strozzi, those of the Rucellai, of the Pitti, and of many other illustrious families: old buildings which knew the long resistances and the assaults of the Ghibellines and Guelphs, of Whites and Blacks, of Palleschi e Piagnoni, and then, suppressed these bloody struggles, knew the luxury, the pomp and the competitions of the artists who turned them into elegant and artistic royal places. [...] Look at the churches: the immense Cathedral next to Giotto's Bell Tower, the Baptistery, built on the ruins of an old pagan temple sacred to Mars, and Santa Maria Novella frescoed of ancient paintings, and

²⁸ Id., *Arezzo*, in *ibid.*, pp. 70-73.

the Carmine where Masaccio painted, the precursor of modern painting, and Santo Spirito and S. Marco, and a hundred other churches, and that miraculous temple of Santa Croce, under whose naves Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Galileo, Canova, Alfieri, 'Italian glories', as Foscolo sang, are buried.

And again, in an evocative crescendo, so that the young readers can appreciate the many expressions and evidences of the artistic and cultural heritage preserved in the Tuscan capital:

As in the galleries and museums. Here there are memories of the history of Florence, of its strength, of its magnificence in the Museum of the Bargello, of S. Marco, of the Cathedral, of Santa Croce. Here there are the majolica, here there are the ancient tapestries of its factories, here its gold treasures, its carved stones, its inlays in the Pitti gallery; in the Uffizi, there are the best paintings in the world, collected here from Florentine churches and palaces. And do you want to know anything about the passion for the studies the Renaissance transmitted to Dante's city? Here there are its libraries: the Riccardiana, the Marucelliana, the Laurenziana, linked to the glory of names such as Cosimo il Vecchio dei Medici, Lorenzo il Magnifico, the friars of San Marco and the Grand Duke Cosimo I, who managed to collocate it in its current seat of S. Lorenzo, and, the largest of all, the Nazionale, collecting volumes of various bequests, and containing copies of printing material in Italy. And here there is also the Istituto di Studi Superiori [Institute of High Studies], originated from the ancient Florentine studio of the Renaissance, and today recognized, unanimously, as a universal study center, or university, as it is commonly said. [...] Florence lives its modern life and, being remembered for its activities in its centuries-old tradition of art, possesses an artistic and cultural supremacy on all its sisters of Italy²⁹.

The information about the major artistic and architectural monuments that characterized Massa Carrara, Grosseto, Livorno, Lucca and other smaller towns of Tuscany were shorter, but not less lively³⁰.

Compared to the great space given by Arturo Avelardi's *almanac* to the artistic and cultural heritage of Tuscany, the one published by Plinio Pratesi with the title *Almanacco Toscano. Libro sussidiario di cultura regionale e nozioni varie* (Tuscan almanac. Primary school book of regional culture and various notions, 1925)³¹, without forgetting the art and monuments³², reserved a special attention to the natural beauty of the region. In a long and detailed contribution entitled *Toscana a colpo d'occhio* (Tuscany at a glance), for

²⁹ Id., *Firenze*, in *ibid.*, pp. 87-94 e 101-103.

³⁰ See, in this perspective: A. Avelardi, *Massa e Carrara*, in *ibid.*, pp. 151-153; Id., *Da Cecina a Volterra*, *ibid.*, pp. 166-167; Id., *Grosseto*, *ibid.*, pp. 169-172; Id., *Livorno*, *ibid.*, pp. 194-198; Id., *Lucca*, *ibid.*, pp. 260-264.

³¹ P. Pratesi, *Almanacco Toscano. Libro sussidiario di cultura regionale e nozioni varie per le classi 3^a, 4^a e 5^a e superiori elementari e per le scuole popolari e complementari della Toscana*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1925.

³² For what concerns the illustration of the monuments and artistic beauties of the country town and other cities of the region, see: P. Pratesi, *Un viaggio in Toscana*, in Id., *Almanacco Toscano*, cit., pp. 137-211.

example, Pratesi speaks about the isles of the Tuscan archipelago, offering a precise description of it and, at the same time, not without lyrical ideas:

The islands of Giannutri and Giglio are in the south-west of the Monte Argentario, 11 km away: the former very small, the other bigger and 498 meters high. They are the advanced sentinels of the Tuscan *Archipelago*, which, as a fleet defending the coast of the region, stretch until reaching Livorno, surrounding it for about 70 kilometers. The other island of Montecristo is to the west of the Giglio, far 44 km and high 648 meters above the sea; and, at 55 kilometers, you can see the mountainous profile of the largest island, the *Elbe*, the former *Ilva*, wooded, or *Elalia*, sooty, so named for producing and casting iron from ancient times. It is 10 kilometers from the shore, among its six little sisters it seems a flagship among smaller ships, emerging from the sea like a giant whale with a hammer-shaped head turned to the east. [...] Two other small islands surround the Elbe: the low and small Pianosa, 14 kilometers to Ostrolibuccio, and the steep Capraia, 35 km to Mistral and high 447 meters. The last and smallest is Gorgona, 72 kilometers to Tramontane, it seems the extreme sentinel of the archipelago³³.

But these enthusiastic descriptions of the cultural and natural heritage refer not only to regions such as Tuscany or Umbria, which, far more than others, have a «bright past in the field of art and civilization» and a true record from the point of view of the cultural heritage and natural and landscape beauties. Similar references can be found in all the *regional almanacs* published in this period³⁴, among which we only recall, as an example, those given to the press by Ferdinando Caioli and Otto Cima and respectively about Sicily and Lombardy.

In the one published by Caioli and entitled *Almanacco Siciliano. Sussidiario per la Coltura Regionale e le Nozioni Varie* (Sicilian almanac. Primary school book of regional culture and various notions, 1925)³⁵, for example, after urging young readers to contribute «with the Sicilian splendor of their intelligence to the increasing greatness of Italy, of which Sicily is a worthy daughter»³⁶, the author invited them to undertake an «imaginary journey» among the «beauties»

³³ Id., *La Toscana a colpo d'occhio*, in *ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

³⁴ See, for example, similar descriptions in: M. Pasqualis, *La Venezia Giulia. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, Milano, Mondadori, 1925; M.D. Maroni, *La nostra contrada. Almanacco Regionale per la Lombardia, Libro sussidiario di cultura regionale e nozioni varie per gli alunni di 3^a, 4^a e 5^a classe delle scuole elementari maschili e femminili*, Milano, Vallardi, 1924; O. Moraglia, *San Giorgio. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale. Almanacco della Liguria*, Palermo, Sandron, 1926; G. Nanni, «*Romagna solatia, dolce paese...*». *Libro sussidiario di Cultura regionale e Nozioni varie. Volume unico per la 3^a, 4^a e 5^a Classe Elementare*, Palermo, Industrie Riunite Editoriali Siciliane, 1924; O. Musacchio, *La Campania. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, Milano, Mondadori, 1925; N. Sbvaglia, *Apulia. Dal Fortore a Leuca, Almanacco di cultura regionale e nozioni varie per le classi III – IV – V e pei corsi integrativi della Regione Pugliese*, Palermo, Sandron, 1926; C. Perricone Siracusa, *Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale e le nozioni varie per la 3^a, 4^a e 5^a elementari della Sicilia*, Palermo, Santi Andò, 1925; R. Pirodda, S. Pirodda, *La Sardegna. Almanacco regionale*, Milano, Mondadori, 1925.

³⁵ F. Caioli, *Almanacco Siciliano. Sussidiario per la Coltura Regionale e le Nozioni Varie*, Trieste-Milano, La Editoriale Libreria, 1925.

³⁶ Id., *Sicilia*, in *ibid.*, p. 3.

of Sicily, «a wonderful land, the Island of the sun, the Island of the fire, the granary of Italy, and many other beautiful things»; and the journey was the one carried out by Guido, a «very intelligent and lively boy», the son of a «Roman industrialist», whose father had decided to have him as a travel companion in a business trip to Sicily»³⁷.

The description of Guido's trip to Sicily is divided into several installments, that cover a total of more than the two-thirds of the *almanac*, alternating brilliant descriptions of the natural beauties of the island and precise and effective descriptions of the architectural and artistic heritage of its major urban centers. The same *ferry-boat* crossing of the Strait of Messina by Guido and his father Roberto at the beginning of the story, for example, offered the author an opportunity to highlight the peculiarities of the mountain range of northern Sicily:

As the ferry approached, the land profile was outlined more clearly and the lines of the mountains were showed in their precision. My father opened a coffee-colored leather-bound paperback book. It was a guidebook of Sicily. He opened it, in fact, and after a little reading, pointing the places, he said to his son: – See, those are the mountains of northern Sicily. From that point, which is Cape Pelorus, a long chain of mountains starts, running almost parallel to the Tyrrhenian Sea and ending at Termini Imerese. The first series of this chain consists of the Peloritani Mountains. [...] The shape of the mountains, as you can see, is thin and sharp. [...] Further, after the Peloritani, there are the *Nebrodi Mountains*, less sharp, but often soft and sweet: unlike the former, they have woody traits. [...] The *Madonie* are similar to the *Nebrodi*, even further: their highest point is Pizzo Carbonara at 1977 meters; the woods are more numerous. In the *Madonie* there is also, at the height of m. 385, the Scillato source that provides the city of Palermo with water³⁸.

In terms of the architectural and artistic beauties of Sicily, the story of Guido and his father's stay in Palermo was particularly interesting:

In the letter written last month to the mother, Guido expressed his lively emotion for the arrival at Palermo Station. Guido got rightly excited: Palermo is a great and noble city, full of streets and wide and regular squares, important monuments, lovely public gardens, famous temples. [...] Taking Via Maqueda, you come to the Town Hall in Piazza Pretoria, with the Sixteenth century fountain; nearby, Bellini Square with the church of *Santa Caterina* where you can admire a painting, The Van Dyck's *Madonna with Child* and the Holy statue by Antonello Gagini. But here's the Martorana, a typical and suggestive temple of Norman architecture of 1143, full of architectural works of art and fine mosaics depicting religious scenes and biblical episodes of the twelfth century. Other important churches are: that *Casa Professa*, dated back to the eighteenth century, large, with a great library of ancient works: *San Giuseppe dei Teatini*, of the seventeenth century, with frescoes by Tancredi from Messina, and by Borremans, Valenti's stuccos and bas-reliefs Siragusa and Pennino, as well as a painting by P. Novelli; *San Gaetano*; the Arab-Norman *San Giovanni degli Eremiti*, almost fantastic, with decorations and a very nice cloister; *Sant'Agostino* of the

³⁷ Id., *Il viaggio di Guido*, in *ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

³⁸ Id., *I monti della Sicilia settentrionale*, in *ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

XIII century, with a portal by Gagini and fine stuccos by Serpotta; *San Domenico*, of the Fourteenth century; [...] *Santa Zita*, with a marble altar by Antonello Gagini; *San Francesco d'Assisi*; l'*Oratorio di San Lorenzo* with the little angels by Giacomo Serpotta; *La Gancia* [...] and many others.

And then

The great *Cathedral* of Palermo is a superb construction that includes the Arab, Norman and even the Eighteenth century styles. It has an unusual and striking appearance reminiscent of medieval castles with their crenellated towers. It includes many works of art: architecture, sculpture, paintings, by excellent artists, in almost all cases from Palermo. Here there are the bas-reliefs by Fazio and Vincenzo Gagini, the ones of the magnificent gates, and the works by Antonello Gagini, Antonio Gambara, Francesco Miranda, as well as the royal tombs of the century XII (Ruggero) and XIII (Federigo II). The National Museum, formerly the City Museum, is very important for the richness of its historical, artistic and archaeological collections. It contains marble sarcophagi, mosaics, statues and torsos of all ages, bronzes, bones, ivory objects, alabasters, glasses, Greek and Etruscan vases, stuccos, majolicas, coins, jewelry, embroideries, carved pieces of wood of inestimable value: the whole history of Sicily and Palermo, all civilizations is represented here, in a dazzling and fantastic show. [...] The Gallery of Modern Art, at the Politeama Garibaldi, is less magnificent but very interesting, too. The Zisa is a majestic castle [built at the beginning of XII century], of Arab-Sicilian style, full of mosaics; another similar one, and equally beautiful, is the building of the Cuba. Remember that jewel of art and splendor that is the Palatine Chapel, with marble and fine mosaics, adjacent to the Royal Palace³⁹.

The description of the local cultural and natural heritage proposed in the work by Otto Cima, *La Lombardia. Almanacco regionale* (1925)⁴⁰ is equally well-structured and detailed. Again, the author used a series of 'imaginary journeys' (or, more simply, 'out of town' trips) made by two teenagers to illustrate the landscape and natural beauties – mountain ranges, hill areas, the main lakes etc. – of the territory of Lombardy. With reference to the Lake of Como, for example, Otto Cima wrote:

It was a long time since the two teenagers had decided to do together a trip on the Lake of Como, but when it was the time to organize it, Giovannino proposed to take the boat in Como while Renato in Lecco; [...] they would then meet in *Bellagio*, to continue together to Colico. Renato, once arrived in Lecco, embarked on the boat and, since it was a beautiful day, he started enjoying the view of that large town that, according to Manzoni's prediction in *The Betrothed*, has become a city of various industries whose boundaries would be difficult to establish, because while, on one side, it widens towards the Adda, which descends

³⁹ Id., *Il soggiorno di Guido a Palermo*, in *ibid.*, pp. 65-73. With regard to the other centers of the Island, see also: Id., *Guido a Messina*, *ibid.*, pp. 26-30; Id., *Il viaggio di Guido, da Messina a Palermo*, *ibid.*, pp. 49-52; Id., *Monreale*, *ibid.*, pp. 76-78; Id., *Guido a Trapani*, *ibid.*, pp. 116-121; Id., *Guido a Girgenti*, *ibid.*, pp. 189-193; Id., *Guido a Catania*, *ibid.*, pp. 259-265; Id., *Verso Siracusa*, *ibid.*, pp. 274-279.

⁴⁰ O. Cima, *La Lombardia. Almanacco regionale*, Firenze, Bemporad, 1925.

majestically to the plain, on the other it rises to the Valsassina, one of the loveliest valleys of the Lombard Prealps. The Resegone, that stays over it with its barren and steep cliffs; San Martino, that threateningly dominates it, and the Canzo's Horns, that seem to guard it from the other shore of the lake, complete this beautiful picture.

And then:

When, at noon, Giovannino and Renato met on Bellagio's pier [...] had so much to say, so many impressions to be exchanged! [...] And when the alarm of the boat to Colico rang, the two adolescents were the first to board. Oh the wonderful journey! That was the widest point of the lake, which is over four kilometers and has for background the snowy mountains of the Valtellina. [...] Colico is the last lake station. This is a great district where the railway forks to Chiavenna and Sondrio, and where all the foreigners pass from the Engadine and Alto Adige to the passes of the Spluga, Maloja, Bernina and Stelvio. [...] But here there is a new siren sound: it is the boat that returns to the route already travelled. Soon! On board and on deck to enjoy the last effects of the magnificent sunset! The mountains on the left are on fire, while those on the right are mixed in a single dark, purple line. The lake sparkles like an anvil beaten by the hammer; here and there the first lights in the houses on the edge of the woods are turned on, and a light mist rises from the bottom of the valleys⁴¹.

The pages dedicated by the author to the monuments and the artistic and architectural heritage of the Lombard cities were equally evocative and rich in historical and literary references, as evidenced by the synthetic but effective pages on the regional capital:

Milan is not rich in ancient and important buildings, victims of the enemies' fury. On the other hand, it is rich in architecture, because of the presence of some towers of the first wall of the republican Rome; of the Columns of St. Lawrence, remains of the Maximian Baths, of the Imperial Rome; and of some churches that preserve the imprint of the first Christian buildings, while its historical basilicas are in the glorious Lombard style that can be recognized especially for the extensive use of terra cotta. The Basilica of St. Ambrogio was founded in 386 by Ambrogio himself who wanted to be buried with the martyrs Gervasio and Protasio and was rebuilt in the ninth century by the archbishop Angilberto. It had a commanding position respect to all the others, with its square towers, its atrium, and the golden altar of Volvinio; then there is St. Eustorgio where the legendary relics of the Magi are preserved, stolen by Rainaldo, Archbishop of Cologne, and where the Torriani and Visconti had their tombs; San Smpliciano, from whose altar the doves – that in the day of Legnano were steady on the cross of the Carroccio until the victory was accomplished – took flight; San Lorenzo, rebuilt almost entirely at the end of the sixteenth century; San Sepolcro, San Satiro and others.

And then:

The arches of Porta Nuova and the Palazzo della Ragione, built around 1230, in the middle of the Piazza dei Mercanti by the podestà Oldrado from Tresseno, belong to the municipal

⁴¹ Id., *Il viaggio dell'inverno. Sul lago di Como*, in *ibid.*, pp. 104-111. See also Id., *Il viaggio autunnale. Varese e il Lago Maggiore*, *ibid.*, pp. 49-54.

age, while the Loggia degli Osii belong to the age of Visconti, built a century later by Matteo Visconti, with the church of San Gottardo of which all that remains is the wonderful bell Tower of Azzone and finally the Duomo. This wonderful marble dream, created by the will and sacrifice of the people of Milan who wanted to rebuild their cathedral, whose bell tower was the highest in Italy, was begun in 1386. [...] The Castle, rebuilt in 1451 by the Duke Francesco on the ruins of a fortress; the Maggiore Hospital, founded by Sforza to gather in it twenty smaller hospitals throughout the city; [...] Santa Maria delle Grazie, which Ludovico il Moro destined as a tomb to his wife Beatrice, and in whose convent Leonardo's Last Supper is preserved; the Maggiore Monastery, painted by Bernardino Luini; Santa Maria at San Celso, masterpiece of Dolcebuono who was then succeeded by Galeazzo Alessi etc are all of the Sforza age. Then, in a chronological order, starting from the middle of the magnificent Sixteenth century, there are: the Palazzo Marino, now location of the town-hall, and that of Giureconsulti, raised by Pope Pius IV of Milan; the Palatine Schools, in Piazza dei Mercanti; the church of San Fedele, those of San Lorenzo and of the Passion, whose convent now houses the Conservatory of Music; the Brera Palace, built by Richini for the Jesuits and now seat of the Library, the Art Gallery, the Academy of Fine Arts and the Astronomical Observatory; the Opera House La Scala, built in 1776 by Piermarini⁴².

2. *Cathedrals, shrines, monasteries and religious traditions of the peninsula: the discovery «of the most authentic and lively expressions of the sincere faith of the Italian people»*

We have to point out that, in the context of the development and promotion of the Italian cultural heritage carried out by *regional almanacs*, the artistic and architectural ecclesiastical and religious heritage is particularly relevant (cathedrals, shrines, monasteries, charitable institutions etc.). as well as the rich and overall structure of local religious traditions (festivals, pilgrimages, processions, sacred representations etc.), confirming the particular identity connotation given to different expressions and manifestations of the Catholic presence in the peninsula.

In *La Basilicata. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale* (Basilicata. Primary school book for regional culture, 1924) by Lelio Giannantonio⁴³, for example, the various mountain shrines of the region, destination of pilgrimages and traditional places of popular spirituality were remembered, not without a certain emphasis:

⁴² Id., *Qua e là per la Lombardia. Milano*, in *ibid.*, pp. 64-67. With regard to the other towns of Lombardia, see: Id., *Qua e là per la Lombardia. Pavia*, *ibid.*, pp. 94-96; Id., *Qua e là per la Lombardia. Bergamo e le sue valli*, *ibid.*, pp. 116-118; Id., *Qua e là per la Lombardia. Cremona*, *ibid.*, pp. 129-131; Id., *Qua e là per la Lombardia. Brescia*, *ibid.*, pp. 141-143; Id., *Qua e là per la Lombardia. Voghera e l'Oltrepò pavese*, *ibid.*, pp. 176-177.

⁴³ L. Giannantonio, *La Basilicata. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, Milano, Mondadori, 1924.

On the mountains of Basilicata, a cross often rises among the almost eternal whiteness of their summits: the sublime symbol of Christ. There, in the closest point to the sky, between peaks that seem sometimes the teeth of a huge saw, that glorious sign is like an advanced sentinel protecting the countries from the surprises of the mountain. Not infrequently, such as on the Mount *Viggiano* and *Sirino*, the cross indicates a sanctuary. They are the ancient *Santuari della neve* (*Shrines of Snow*), built with the participation of all the people. [...] The most beautiful expression of the sincere faith of the people of Basilicata is in the rude simplicity of these buildings. The Sanctuary of Sirino, 1906 meters high, is a modest little church built in 1629. Each year, Our Lady, *Santa Maria del Sirino*, is carried on the shoulders to it at the beginning of winter, and then brought back to Lagonegro at the beginning of summer. A winding and steep path indicates to the believers the long road to follow: but the faith gives strength to muscles and the hard work is overcome effortlessly. Holy hymns rise between the earth and the sky from the people's soul, that climb faithfully this mountain!⁴⁴

Giannantonio's reflections on the sanctuaries were paralleled with Eugenio Cirese's ones on one of the oldest and most celebrated religious traditions of Molise: the Procession of the Mysteries of Campobasso. In *Gente buona. Libro sussidiario per le scuole del Molise* (Good people. Primary school book for Molise's schools, 1925)⁴⁵, in this regard, Cirese described with various details this ancient devotional practice, emphasizing in particular the strong evocative charge of the event and its roots in the religious consciousness of the clergy and of the people of the entire region:

The traditional procession of the Mysteries takes place through all the streets of Campobasso on the day of Corpus Christi. Children, young girls and men dressed as angels, saints and even devils are arranged in artistic poses and graceful attitudes on iron machines of various heights. Each group wants to represent a *Biblical fact*, or a miracle of a saint. [...] The Mysteries have their origin from the ancient *Sacred representations* that were celebrated in many towns with great religious fervor, and of which few traces remain in some ceremonies of the Holy Week. The groups were twenty-four, but over the centuries they were reduced; at the moment, they are twelve and represent: the Sacrifice of Abraham; the Immaculate Conception; Mary Magdalene; the Assumption; St. Gennaro; St. Crispino; St. Michael; St. Isidoro; St. Antonio Abate; St. Leonardo; St. Nicholas; S. Rocco. [...] All the people of Campobasso, who loves these mysteries, follow the long procession, cover with flowers the groups, carried on the shoulders of strong men, and address to heaven their vows, prayers and songs⁴⁶.

Ugo Aggarbati's and Cesira Fiori's works were very similar. In fact, in *Lazio. Almanacco regionale* (1926)⁴⁷ and in *Terra latina. Almanacco regionale per il Lazio e la Sabina* (Latin land. Regional almanac for Lazio and Sanina, 1925)⁴⁸, they gave a great space to the description of the main ecclesiastical and religious monuments and the most important manifestations of popular piety

⁴⁴ Id., *I santuari della neve*, in *ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

⁴⁵ E. Cirese, *Gente buona. Libro sussidiario per le scuole del Molise*, Lanciano, Carabba, 1925.

⁴⁶ Id., *I Misteri*, in *ibid.*, pp. 181-182.

⁴⁷ U. Aggarbati, *Lazio. Almanacco regionale*, Torino, Paravia, 1926.

⁴⁸ C. Fiori, *Terra latina. Almanacco regionale per il Lazio e la Sabina*, Milano Mondadori, 1925.

in the region. Thus, for example, Aggarbati wrote about the famous abbeys of Casamari and Fossanova:

The Abbey of Casamari is majestic, but more similar to a fortress than to a convent. It is on a little uneven floor, at the slope of several hills. To the north there are the mountains of Trisulti, to the east the high peaks of the central Apennines, and to the south the Amaseno valley. [...] The blessed Abbot Benedetto, a disciple of St. Dominic, founded the abbey in 1006. However, it was only in 1035 or 1036 that several people met there under the Benedictine rule and elected the first abbot. In 1151 Eugenio consecrated the basilica and conceded it to the Cistercian Fathers, from which it passed, in 1717, to the strict rule of the Trappist monks. [...] The cloister, superb architectural monument, is squared, and includes sixteen rooms, in the form of balconies, which serve to illuminate it, arranged four by four in the Gothic way, with three rows of beautiful columns, all different in their carving and with a magnificent foliage. [...] The Church has the same architecture of that of Fossanuova. The style is Gothic, of the beginning of the Thirteenth century, the architecture is harmonic. The entrance majestic. The interior has three naves. [...] On the front there is a beautiful rose window from which the light enters.

And then:

The abbey of Fossanuova is one of the most famous monuments of the Roman province. [...] Since ancient times, the Abbey was owned by the Benedictine monks, including Gregory IV, who became Pope in 827. In 1274 Saint Thomas Aquinas increased the splendor of this place, spending there his life. It was declared a national monument, after 1870. The temple is one of the most beautiful, built under Federico II's auspices. The façade is majestic, with a beautiful rose window that lights up the whole church and a magnificent Gothic door, of carved stone. The interior has three magnificent naves⁴⁹.

Cesira Fiori, with reference to the oldest and most celebrated religious traditions in Lazio, published excerpts from Gregorovius' *Passeggiate romane* (Roman walks), as for the pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Genazzano:

The pilgrims begin to arrive on the eve of the feast and the air echoes the singing of their litanies. They come from Abruzzo, from Sora, and from the countryside. As they enter the territory they go down on their knees. [...] They walk in groups of ten, twenty; there are of all ages: old people supported by their walking stick for the thirtieth time; grandmothers with grandchildren, young girls and even babies carried by their mothers on the head. [...] they come from Frosinone, Anagni, Veroli, Arpino, Anticoli, Ceprano, wearing the costumes of their mountains and their valleys, beautiful villages of wild mountains. [...] Once at the destination, everyone seems to have forgotten all weariness. They prostrate themselves before the doors of the church and go up the stairs on their knees. The following morning the feast begins with the solemn Mass. [...] They leave again singing [...] When they reach the point where they see the country for the last time, they kneel with their forehead turned to the Shrine, and say a silent farewell prayer⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ E. Abbate, *Abbazia di Casamari*, in Aggarbati, *Lazio. Almanacco regionale*, cit., pp. 112-114; E. Abbate, *Abbazia di Fossanuova*, *ibid.*, pp. 139-140. But see also C. Fiori, *La celebre Abbazia di Farfa*, in Ead., *Terra latina. Almanacco regionale per il Lazio e la Sabina*, cit., pp. 231-232.

⁵⁰ F. Gregorovius, *Il pellegrinaggio alla Madonna di Genazzano*, in C. Fiori, *Terra latina*.

In other cases, the author herself offered evocative accounts of some important religious events, such as the Festival of Santa Rosa in Viterbo, of which not only the religious and devotional aspects, but also the ceremonial and folkloristic ones, were effectively analyzed:

Since the eve of the event, the crowd fills the streets, near the church consecrated to the Saint, around the urn in which her blackened body rests, among the flowers. [...] When the night fully arrives, a picturesque and characteristic ceremony takes place. At the porta Romana, not far from S. Sisto, there is an immense monument made of carved wood and painted cardboard in the form of a tower and tall 17 meters. In addition to the group of the upper part representing St. Rosa and the maiden with the broken bucket, the car is decorated with various statues of angels and saints and paintings representing the Saint's story. Two hundred and fifty candles with glass globes and 100 light bulbs illuminate it, showing all its contours: this is the triumphant St. Rosa's car. At a given signal 60 porters, strong and well trained men, raise upon their shoulders the heavy monument. Thus, it advances majestically through the streets with daylight, preceded by music and followed by a multitude of people. When the machine arrives to the Town Hall Square, all the people clapped. After a short stop, the carriers started walking again and, through the most important streets of the city, the monument is carried to the square next to the church of St. Rosa where it remains all the following day. September 4th is a bustle, a continuous coming and going of pilgrims⁵¹.

From Piedmont to Sicily⁵², in the *almanacs* on the various Italian regions, the artistic and architectural heritage of ecclesiastical and religious nature (cathedrals, shrines, monasteries etc.) and the various local religious traditions (pilgrimages, processions, sacred representations etc.) received, as already mentioned, a constant and detailed discussion. In this sense, the *primary school textbooks of regional culture* about Veneto, Umbria, Emilia, Marche and Tuscany were particularly important.

In the textbook *Il Veneto. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale* (Veneto. Primary school book for regional culture, 1925)⁵³, for example, Giuseppe Masali and Giovanni Zambonin devoted a long chapter to the description of the main Venetian churches, pointing out how these monuments, with their precious collections of memories and works of art of the homeland, constituted the highest and most significant expression of the religious, but also civil and patriotic, identity of the population, and the most authentic manifestation of the intense life of piety which had characterized the lagoon for centuries:

Almanacco regionale per il Lazio e la Sabina, cit., pp. 166-167.

⁵¹ C. Fiori, *La festa di S. Rosa di Viterbo (4 settembre)*, in Ead., *Terra latina*, cit., pp. 173-174.

⁵² See, for example: L. Ambrosini, C. Prospero, *La Sagra di S. Michele*, in Idd., *Piemonte. Almanacco regionale*, Torino, Paravia, 1925, pp. 219-221; F. Caioli, *Il Santuario dell'Annunziata (Trapani)*, in Id., *Almanacco Siciliano. Sussidiario per la Cultura Regionale e le Nozioni Varie*, cit. pp. 117-118; L. Natoli, *La leggenda di santa Rosalia*, in Id., *Almanacco del fanciullo siciliano. Libro sussidiario di cultura regionale e di nozioni varie per le 3^e, 4^e e 5^e classi elementari*, Palermo, Industrie Riunite Editoriali Siciliane, 1924, pp. 140-143.

⁵³ G. Masali, G. Zambonin, *Il Veneto. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, Milano, Mondadori, 1925.

The church of the Saints Giovanni and Paolo, known in the vernacular as *San Zanipolo*, is a magnificent temple declared a national monument. It is a superb work of art, rich in oriental marble columns and valuable paintings and sculptures. But what makes it more popular is the great number of tombs. They are monuments of Doges, Senators, Generals, famous people of the Venetian Republic. [...] The Church of St. Zanipolo would deserve for this reason, and rightly, the name of the *Venetian Pantheon*. *Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari* for its grandeur, its historical memories, its works of art is one of the most remarkable churches in Venice. It is full of beautifully crafted tombs, of which two were raised to the memory of Tiziano Vecellio and Antonio Canova; it has admirable paintings including the *Assunta* by Tiziano and the *Madonna* by Casa Pesaro. But the church has a place in our Italian hearts also because it guards the bones of Angelo Scarsellini, Bernardo Canali and Giovanni Zambelli, hanged by the Austrian on the 7th of December 1852 in Belfiore, near Mantua⁵⁴.

On the profound connotation of identity of the monuments and of the existing religious traditions in the peninsula also several other writers of *regional almanacs* insisted. In the previously mentioned *Umbria verde. Almanacco regionale* (Green Umbria. Regional almanac, 1925)⁵⁵, in this regard, Carlo Faina gave an interesting presentation of one of the oldest and most famous religious events in the region, the Festa dei Ceri in Gubbio:

The meaning of the Festival of the “Ceri” is to glorify and honor the Blessed Ubaldo, that is, the patron Saint of Gubbio. He was the bishop of the city and, after seven centuries or so since the day of his death, he is still remembered with reverence by the citizens of Gubbio for his excellent and noble virtues and especially for having freed Gubbio, heroically leading his fellow citizens in the battle, from a long siege threatening it; with him, the city recovered complete freedom and new splendors, renewing its former grandeur in the field of arts, letters and warfare. On the 15th of May, each year, there is the festival in Gubbio and thousands of visitors come from neighboring towns to enjoy a show that is exceptional, especially in the fact that you took part in a festival to which the entire people of Gubbio and its suburbs participate, without distinction; on that day there are no distinctions of parties and classes, there are no more rancor nor hatred, nor material worries; rich and poor, peasants and artisans, nobles and commoners abandon their usual effort and run, in a spontaneous impulse of fraternity and love, to pay homage to the great saint⁵⁶.

Equally interesting were the pages dedicated by Aldo Andreoli, in his *Emilia. Almanacco di coltura regionale* (Emilia. Almanac of regional culture, 1925), to the cathedrals and major churches in the region, in which the extensive and detailed references to the artistic and cultural qualities of the structures were joined to the claim about the civil role of religion in the past centuries. So, for example, with reference to the basilicas of St. Dominic and St. Francis in Bologna, it was pointed out:

⁵⁴ Idd., *Le chiese di S. Giovanni e Paolo, di S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari e di S. Maria della Salute*, in Idd., *Il Veneto. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, cit., pp. 134-135.

⁵⁵ C. Faina, *Umbria verde. Almanacco regionale*, cit.

⁵⁶ Id., *I «Ceri» di Gubbio*, in Id., *Umbria verde. Almanacco regionale*, cit., pp. 96-98. See also: M. Maurizi, N. Beccafichi, *La storia del perdono di Assisi*, in Idd., *Umbria, cuore d'Italia. Libro di cultura regionale*, Firenze, Bemporad, 1926, pp. 246-248.

When the Church in the Middle Ages was torn by heresies and Europe was stained with the blood of the partisan wars, God created two industrious and great saints. They were Francis of Assisi and Dominic de Guzmán who founded two religious orders, the Friars Minor and the Preachers, who were like a double army arose in support of Catholicism. St. Dominic, after a very active and prodigious life, all devoted to the good of humanity and the defense of the Church, stopped in Bologna, which was then already a famous city for studies, and here the Saint died on 6th of August 1221. A large church consecrated to him was built, and in a special chapel a resplendent grave was erected⁵⁷.

And then:

The other great saint, Francis of Assisi, contemporary of St. Dominic, was in Bologna and addressed to the people his words inflamed of fraternal charity in the place where now there is temple dedicated to him is. This, especially in the apses and the two bell towers, is of an amazing, original, majestic beauty⁵⁸.

Similarly, Gildo Gavasci, in his *Terra Picena. Libro sussidiario di cultura regionale* (Picena earth. Primary school book of regional culture, 1925), described the artistic beauties and the particular religious significance of two of the most holy places dear to popular devotion of the Marche populations, the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Macereto, in the province of Macerata, and that of Nostra Signora dell'Ambro, in the territory of Ascoli. About the first, the author wrote:

In 1539, in Macereto, 1047 meters above the sea, the Virgin had her temple which is octagonal, in Bramante's style. The interior has a Greek cross with each arms finishing with a niche. The chapel of the Virgin, white and naked inside and decorated outside with beautiful pillars, stands in the middle of the church, like that of Loreto. The Madonna's miracles increased the fame of the white sanctuary, on the plateau of Macereto crowned with rocky mountains, and gave a halo of sanctity to the alpine location, summoning crowds of believers from all sides, for years and years⁵⁹.

For what concerns the Shrine of Nostra Signora dell'Ambro, Gavasci stated:

The sanctuary of Nostra Signora dell'Ambro is among the rocks of the Sibillini mountains, in Montefortino. [...] The people who has not visited the shrine of the Ambro in the good season, can not get an idea of the effect produced by the multitude of the believers who go to worship under the altar of the Virgin. The temple is all white, lit by numerous votive lamps. Walls and pillars near the high altar, are covered with crowns, small paintings, *ex voto* in

⁵⁷ A. Andreoli, *La tomba di San Domenico a Bologna*, in Id., *Emilia. Almanacco di coltura regionale*, cit., pp. 120-121.

⁵⁸ Id., *La chiesa di San Francesco a Bologna*, in *ibid.*, pp. 121-122.

⁵⁹ G. Gavasci, *La miracolosa Vergine di Macereto*, in Id., *Terra Picena. Libro sussidiario di cultura regionale*, Lanciano, Carabba, 1925, pp. 174-175.

which the Virgin's miracles are celebrated. The pilgrims come from near and far country, singing the hymn of love and faith: Long live Mary / And who created her. They rush to the door and, pushing and bumping one another, enter in the temple with their eyes fixed on the top, on the statue of the Virgin glittering of precious votive gifts⁶⁰.

Finally, the already mentioned Arturo Avelardi, in his almanac dedicated to Tuscany, devoted a considerable attention to the major sacred monuments and the oldest and most celebrated religious events in the region, not failing to note the strong identity impact of the faith and Catholic traditions on people's lives. So, speaking of the Sanctuary of the Madonna di Montenero, near Livorno, he wrote:

Seven kilometers from Livorno, on the beautiful hill of Montenero, the most famous shrine of Tuscany lies. How many pious souls, in search of a consolation that the world can not give, prostrate themselves every day in front of the sacred image of Mary, in the beautiful temple all adorned with marbles! And how many of them climb the mountain on a pilgrimage on the 8th of September, the day in which the Madonna is celebrated. On that day, the characteristic caravans of farmers ascend to the shrine, villagers and mountain people came from all the parts of Tuscany⁶¹.

3. *The face of the peninsula between nature and culture: on the trail of the secular activity of the ancient Italic peoples on the territory*

In the description and promotion of the cultural and natural heritage of the different areas of the peninsula carried out by the *regional almanacs* introduced in primary schools by the Gentile Reform of 1923, a special attention was paid to the traces and evidence of the presence and the activity carried on by the old Italic peoples in the area.

We refer not only the numerous and very valuable archaeological sites in the various regions, that were the subject of an extensive and accurate analysis in all the *almanacs*⁶², but rather, to a more complex and elusive reality, i.e. to the alterations of the rural and urban landscape carried out by men.

⁶⁰ Id., *Nostra Signora dell'Ambro*, in *ibid.*, pp. 185-186. See also: A. Piccioni (*Momus*), *Santuario di Loreto*, in Id., *Le nostre Marche. Almanacco regionale illustrato conforme ai nuovi programmi per le classi II, IV e V elementari*, cit., pp. 79-83.

⁶¹ Avelardi, *Toscana. Almanacco regionale*, cit.

⁶² As an example, we refer to: U. Aggarbati, *Roma illustrata. Colosseo, Foro Romano, Campidoglio*, in Id., *Lazio. Almanacco regionale*, cit., pp. 129-139; C. Fiori, *Un viaggio a Roma. La città dei Cesari*, in Ead., *Terra latina. Almanacco regionale per il Lazio e la Sabina*, cit., pp. 11-27; O. Musacchio, *Pompei*, in Ead., *La Campania. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, cit., pp. 64-66; M. Pasqualis, *Le rovine di Aquileia*, in Id., *La Venezia Giulia. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, cit., pp. 34-36; U. Postiglione, *La civiltà romana*, in Id., *La terra d'Abruzzo e la sua gente*, Torino, Paravia, 1825, pp. 184-186.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning the wide space given by Eugenio Cirese, in his *Gente buona. Libro sussidiario per le scuole del Molise* (1925), to a particular reality such as that of the *tratturi*, testimony not only of the pastoral traditions and of the rural identity of Molise, but also, more generally, of the common history and common destiny that had characterized for centuries the life of the Italian people:

Thousands of years ago [...] the shepherds and flocks left for different routes, and the Lord opened for them a wide grassy path between the fields and the vineyards, through the forests and the gorges of the mountains. [...] One morning they all came to the Land of the Sun, no winter, and the flock found abundant pasture in the immense plain. In spring, the grass of the plain turned yellow, and the shepherds and flocks found their roads again and returned to the green mountains. So, in this way, each year for many centuries, until today: the winter to the plain, the summer to the mountain. And the Lord, every year, covers the large paths of tender grass, which the passing flock graze⁶³.

But not only the *tratturi* and the ancient paths followed by shepherds and flocks. The *consular roads* too, the highest expression of man's ability to change the landscape and to establish connections and links between different populations and different areas of the peninsula, were considered by the *regional almanacs* among the expressions of the Italian cultural heritage deserving an accurate discussion.

It is not a coincidence that Mario Pasqualis, in his *La Venezia Giulia. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale* (Venezia Giulia. Primary school book for regional culture, 1925), considered the ancient roads built in Roman times as a proof of the historical continuity that bound the Italian peoples and, at the same time, as a real source of identity:

From the Castle of Udine you can see white streets unfolding across the plain, lined by rows of mulberry trees and vines, ditches crossed clear running waters, flowering of heavenly myosotes and yellow irises. Those are the roads for which the phalanges of the heroes of our redemption flowed to the Karst and the Julian and Carnic Alps. But those are also the roads where the Roman legions passed to conquer our region and the Danubian provinces: those are also the same streets on which hordes of barbarian invaders rushed to conquer Italy. These roads can tell us our whole history, that is the history of Rome and Italy. No better way to get to know the history of our Friuli, so, that to cross them⁶⁴.

Finally, among the main traces and evidences of the presence and the activity of the ancient Italic peoples in the area, those related to the rural landscape, as it had been modified by the human work, were particularly important. So, in

⁶³ E. Cirese, *Le vie degli antichi pastori. I tratturi*, in Id., *Gente buona. Libro sussidiario per le scuole del Molise*, cit., pp. 115-117.

⁶⁴ M. Pasqualis, *Attraverso il Friuli. Le strade romane*, in Id., *La Venezia Giulia. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, cit., pp. 124-125. See also: Id., *Sulla via Emilia*, *ibid.*, pp. 125-127; Id., *Sulla via Postumia*, *ibid.*, pp. 136-138. Similar considerations can also be found in: U. Aggarbati, *Le vie consolari*, in Id., *Lazio. Almanacco regionale*, cit., pp. 249-251.

his *La Basilicata. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale* (Basilicata. Primary school book of regional culture, 1924), Lelio Giannantonio described in detail the peculiar reality of the caves at various locations in the region and their ancient inhabitants:

No one can specify how long our region exists. It is, however, from several and several million of years. Nevertheless, the first men who lived there left their homes and their belongings ... They were able to resist the destructive fury of the time because they were built with... very hard stone. In certain caves – the houses of our oldest ancestors – in fact, stone tools were found; and with them, very big bones of animals and men. Different interesting specimens of these caves exist in Basilicata. In Matera, in the *grotta dei pipistrelli* (cave of the bats), so much material was found to create a museum. [...] In *Accettura*, in the district of *Gallipoli*, a true prehistoric town was found. Other famous caves are in *Lagonegro*⁶⁵.

The description of the towns in the Italian Riviera by Libero Talocchini in *La Liguria. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale* (Liguria. Primary school book for the regional culture, 1925) was really evocative:

A description, even if well done, can give only a faint idea of the beauty of these towns, all shining in the white light of the sun and constantly laughing under a blue sky. The endless sea, with its coves and its jugged colorful coastline, full of houses and little villas; the perpetually blooming gardens, the disheveled palm trees shaking in the wind their artistic tufts, and a whole African vegetation, increase the beauty and charm of our towns⁶⁶.

The image of the cultivated fields and the beautiful, rural surroundings of Perugia described by Carlo Faina in his *Umbria verde. Almanacco regionale* (1925) was equally impressive:

From the dark walls, where the surviving towers and slender bell towers raise to the clear sky, the very steep hill slopes through the pale olive groves and the green gardens, the fertile plain, rich of crops and of fruitful rows, is greened by the elms and mulberry trees and silvered by the white poplars, shaded by oaks here and there. The hillocks and mounds are full of olive trees or vineyards, or occasionally bare or covered by a soft meadow [...] On the coasts, there are the small villages, on the summits of the less steep slopes, bordered by dry streams and white high roads: they are brown and wild, as to seem sculptured in the rock, often still surrounded by walls and ruined fortresses, but they seem to be milder and whiter around the bell tower, almost pleading the health of the faith. In the calm summer evenings, especially, a sweet sadness poured out from the pleasant countryside, instilling in the soul a sweet sense of melancholy poetry⁶⁷.

⁶⁵ L. Giannantonio, *Gli abitatori delle grotte*, in Id., *La Basilicata. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, Milano, Mondadori, 1924, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁶ L. Talocchini, *Bordighera*, in Id., *La Liguria. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, Milano, Mondadori, 1925, pp. 161-162.

⁶⁷ R.A. Gallenga Stuart, *Il panorama di Perugia*, in C. Faina, *Umbria verde. Almanacco regionale*, cit., pp. 29-32.

The remembrance of the Sannio valleys by Giuseppe Mercurio in his *Echi e sorrisi in terra di Campania. Sussidiario di cultura regionale e nozioni varie* (Echoes and smiles in the land of Campania. Primary school book of regional culture and various notions, 1924) is not less effective and fascinating:

Those who follow the course of the Calore, from the point of its confluence with the waters of the Volturno, and follows the development of the railway line from Terra di Lavoro to Benevento, enters the fertile lands of the Sannio. And this is a region where the mountainous aspect dominates, but the landscape is full of a thousand different crops. The woods are bushy towards the tops of the hills, while their slopes are full of plantations of olive trees, vineyards and orchards, among which there are villages, scattered like grazing sheep. There are also vast plains where fields of hay or grain, hemp or flax, smile to the sun, among the gurgles of rivers and streams; and in the gentle undulations of the ground, among the farmhouses scattered through the fields, intense cultivation of vegetables and tobacco. [...] A fertile and well cultivated country, situated at the crossing of railway tracks that branch off to the Molise, Puglia, Irpinia and Caserta⁶⁸.

4. *Museums, art galleries, libraries and archives, «places where the centuries-old historical and artistic heritage of our country is kept», and the «heart of the Italian identity» is preserved*

In the already mentioned *Emilia. Almanacco di coltura regionale* (1925), Aldo Andreoli draw the attention of his young readers on the growing fascination over the centuries of the Italian artistic treasures on foreign populations and, conversely, on the little interest in this field traditionally manifested by the «Italic people», distracted heirs of such beauties, among which they lived without showing any real awareness of the real condition of privilege they enjoyed:

I know several people – he wrote – that live far away, among the Northern mists, and that, every two or five or ten years come to Italy: Germans, Danes, Norwegians. They are not rich people! Some are modest employees, others are simple workers. [...] And they are so prepared! They studied books and guides, and here they seem to be perfectly at ease: they know that in a certain city there are certain old and beautiful churches, that in another there is the famous painting by Raphael, and so on. They know the history of our regions and cities by heart, so that they seem talking books. [...] Tell me: and us? do not we want to learn to know our Italy? do not we want to know its history full of teachings that even the young Japanese boys study at schools, do not we see and understand the artistic beauties hat open the divine gates of paradise to mortal eyes?⁶⁹

⁶⁸ G. Mercurio, *Fra le terre del Sannio*, in Id., *Echi e sorrisi in terra di Campania*, cit., pp. 75-78.

⁶⁹ A. Andreoli, *L'Italia maestra d'arte, di sapienza e di cortesia al mondo*, in Id., *Emilia. Almanacco di coltura regionale*, Torino, Paravia, 1925, pp. 109-110.

In his respect, the attention given by all the almanacs to places such as museums, art galleries, libraries, archives and so on, in which the cultural heritage of different Italian regions is preserved, is not a surprise. Its enhancement was considered extraordinarily important – and in some ways crucial – for the formation of a civic and national consciousness of the younger generations.

So, Plinio Pratesi, speaking about the museums and art galleries in Florence, after having underlined that the Uffizi preserves «a Gallery that is among the best in the world» and the «State Archive», with its extraordinary collection of documents relating to the centuries-old history of the city and the region, provided a broad description of the «world famous museums» in the Tuscan capital, such as «the Archeological Museum, the National, the Museum of ancient Florence, the Historical-topographic museum, that of the Risorgimento, that of natural History etc.». Then, the author's attention was focused on the «main libraries» and the most famous academies and cultural institutions of the city:

The Florentine libraries are also notable: the Laurentian and that of the Medici, the richest in Europe of ancient manuscripts; the National, formerly Magliabechiana, with more than a half million volumes; the Riccardiana, the Marucelliana etc. [...] The Institute of Higher Studies, and those of Social Sciences, of Education and Fine Arts [...] make Florence one of the cities where the knowledge is cultivated more. Its Academies contribute to this aim, too, that of Georgofili, of agriculture, the Colombaria which is among the most respected academies of archeology, and the Accademia della Crusca concerned with the conservation and enhancement of the Italian language, that has its natural home in Dante's land⁷⁰.

Olga Musacchio was on the same wavelength. In fact, while describing the main monuments of Naples, she drew the attention of her young readers on the importance of the National Museum of the capital of Campania, a real «treasure chest of the artistic beauties of the city» and symbol of the cultural revival of the entire «Southern Italy»:

Various ancient and modern collections were gathered there, that, in the course of time had become property of the royal family of Naples, and then the items that were found during the excavations in Cuma, Stabia and Ercolano Pompeii were added to them. A summary description of the artistic treasures and historical monuments, which are neatly arranged in the halls of the National Museum, is impossible; as well as of those in the Vatican Museum, the number of the objects is so great, that the mind remains oppressed and confused, and a choice is not easy. From the halls of the Pompeian frescoes you can pass to the lapidary gallery and from this to the marble sculptures and bronzes, to the collection of the objects of the sixteenth century, the old glasses, the crockery, the papyri, the engravings, the paintings, and then to the library, the precious objects, the medals, to return again among the paintings and then to finish with the collection of vases⁷¹.

⁷⁰ P. Pratesi, *Firenze*, in Id., *Almanacco Toscano*, cit., pp. 155, 161-162.

⁷¹ O. Musacchio, *Il Museo Nazionale*, in Ead., *La Campania. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, cit., pp. 43-45.

The description of the Pinacoteca di Bologna was very similar. It was proposed in the *regional almanac* by Aldo Andreoli, who wrote:

Have you ever been to see a picture gallery? Maybe no: but there are several of them in our region, and in each one there are many beautiful paintings, that would give you pleasure to see them. Let's see together that of Bologna. It's very wide, and many, many hours are not enough to look at everything carefully. But we will stop to observe only the works of some of the greatest artists who lived and worked in Bologna.

And, after having reviewed and described briefly, but with undoubted efficacy, the works by *Francia* (Francesco Raibolini), by Ludovico, Agostino and Annibale Carracci, by Guido Reni, Francesco Albani, Domenico Zampieri called *Domenichino*, Alessandro Tiarini, Giovanni Barbieri da Cento, known as *Guercino*, and Raffaello Sanzio, concluded as follows:

And we leave, after this, the Art Gallery. There is the risk that nothing remains in the mind if we want to do too much at once, as if we squeeze too many things into the hands, so that we lose all of them. Come back to it several times, as well as to the art gallery, to the museums, and the beautiful churches, there are a lot of them all over Italy, and you will gradually learn to understand and to enjoy the many admirable things they contain⁷².

Eugenio Cirese, in *Gente buona. Libro sussidiario per le scuole del Molise*, described the Museum Sannitico of Campobasso with a strong identity connotation. He took the cue from an imaginary visit at this same museum by the pupils of a primary school located in a small town in the province:

At 15 o'clock, they visited the Museum Sannitico and the provincial library containing over 15,000 volumes, some of which are rare and very valuable. The Director of the Museum led the students through the various rooms and gave useful historical explanations. The children and the teachers stayed a long time before the fragments of *Roman inscriptions*, the collections of *vases*, of *weapons*, *jewelry*, *coins* minted in ancient ages, in Isernia, Larino, Boiano, Trivento, Campobasso. The remains of the grandeur of the Sunni people reveal to the children a past full of glories, work and civilization, almost ignored and not well defined through the few historical concepts learned at school. The solemn and admonitory voice of the true history rose from those items, which gave thrills to the pupils' small souls and lit their eyes with lights of thought. They wanted to do a thousand questions, but the teachers had said: – Be contented with what you will listen to, and above all, *look* in order to be able to communicate your impressions to your classmates. At school you will know more. [...] The children had acquired new knowledge and felt that they love more the homeland, for its past strength and for its present work⁷³.

⁷² A. Andreoli, *Una visita alla Pinacoteca di Bologna*, in Id., *Emilia. Almanacco di coltura regionale*, cit., pp. 88-92.

⁷³ E. Cirese, *Al Museo Sannitico*, in Id., *Gente buona. Libro sussidiario per le scuole del Molise*, cit., pp. 166-167, 170.

The description of the Aquileia museum in *La Venezia Giulia. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale* by Mario Pasqualis was equally impressive – and aimed to reinforce, through the reference to the glories of the past, the patriotism and the identification with the Roman Empire – («The inscriptions, sculptures, coins, mosaics, home and personal belongings, work tools and weapons gathered in the Museum of the rural village, which today is around the great basilica and the bell tower, tell us what the Roman Aquileia was»)⁷⁴. The same can be said of the description of the archeological museum of Taranto offered by Saverio La Sorsa in the already mentioned *L'Appulo. Libro sussidiario di cultura della regione pugliese* (The Apulian inhabitant. Primary school book of Apulian regional culture), on whose pages the author underlined:

Taranto has an Archaeological Museum which is rich in fragments, mosaics, Greek vases and urns; it also contains coins, statues, weapons and various other antiquities, which, with their artistic beauty, attest the highest degree reached by the civilization of Taranto, and the greatness of the Italian traditions⁷⁵.

The effective description by Rosalia and Sebastiano Pirodda in *La Sardegna. Almanacco regionale* (Sardinia. Regional almanac), of the University Library of Cagliari University, also deserves to be mentioned. It «contained more than 100,000 volumes, 20,000 pamphlets and 370 manuscripts», thus being one of the main scientific and cultural centers of the island and, at the same time, one of the most shining examples of the contribution given by the Sardinia to the advancement of studies in Italy⁷⁶.

Conclusions

The efforts made by the *regional almanacs* to promote, after the Gentile Reform of 1923, the national identity and the sense of citizenship in the school by means of the cultural and natural heritage, i.e. through the reference and enhancement of monuments, archaeological sites and different types of artistic and architectural heritage, as well as of the landscapes and the many natural beauties characteristic of the peninsula, was destined to be traumatically interrupted in the second half of the Twenties, following the elimination of the *regional almanacs* or *primary school textbooks for the regional culture and various notions* from the lists of the books approved in 1927 by the *Central*

⁷⁴ M. Pasqualis, *Le rovine di Aquileia*, in Id., *La Venezia Giulia. Libro sussidiario per la cultura regionale*, cit., pp. 34-35.

⁷⁵ S. La Sorsa, *Taranto*, in Id., *L'Appulo. Libro sussidiario di cultura della regione pugliese*, cit., pp. 214-218.

⁷⁶ R. Pirodda, S. Pirodda, *Cagliari*, in Id., *La Sardegna. Almanacco regionale*, cit., pp. 68-69.

Commission for the examination of the textbooks to be adopted in primary schools chaired by Michele Romano and confirmed a year later by the one chaired by Alessandro Melchiori.

A similar decision, in fact, was justified by Michele Romano by the impression of «lack of measure, freshness, attractive and interesting variety» noticed by the Central Commission during the exam of «the primary school books for the regional culture and the various notions»⁷⁷, and then was confirmed, in 1928, by Alessandro Melchiori on the basis that these texts presented «lacks or very serious deficiencies» and did not seem to «satisfy the historical, political, legal and economic demands developed from the 28th October 1922 onwards»⁷⁸. This choice actually revealed nationalist instances within Mussolini's regime, that have been always strongly hostile to the opening to regional cultures operated by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice⁷⁹ and, more generally, by the centralist logic in matters of textbooks control that, shortly thereafter, at the beginning of the Thirties years, would have led to the introduction of the State unique textbook in primary schools⁸⁰.

The abolition of the *regional almanacs* introduced by Gentile Reform of 1923 marked, in fact, the final abandonment of the aim of promoting among young people the national identity and the feeling of citizenship by means of education, enhancing the region's cultural heritage and cultivating local traditions. Soon after, in fact, with the introduction of the State unique text, the 'regional dimension', dismissed contemptuously as a complete expression of the «divisions and particularisms of the old Italy», would be replaced by the ultra-nationalistic one, intended to represent (and to enhance), in a completely different way, the role of the cultural and natural heritage of the peninsula.

⁷⁷ *Relazione della Commissione ministeriale centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo da adottarsi nelle scuole elementari e nei corsi integrativi di avviamento professionale* [Commissione Romano], «Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Bollettino Ufficiale», 4th October 1927, first part, n. 40, pp. 3333-3336; now re-published in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 665-668.

⁷⁸ *Relazione della Commissione per l'esame dei libri di testo da adottarsi nelle scuole elementari e nei corsi integrativi di avviamento professionale* [Commissione Melchiori], «Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione. Bollettino Ufficiale», 18th September 1928, first part, n. 38, pp. 3160-3162; now re-published in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 701-702.

⁷⁹ See Barausse, D'Alessio, «*Dalla piccola alla grande patria*», cit., pp. LIII-LIV; in particular M. D'Alessio, *A scuola fra casa e patria*, cit., pp. 212-226.

⁸⁰ See A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, *Dalla «epurazione della letteratura didattica» all'approvazione del testo unico di Stato. L'opera della Commissione centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo*, in Idd. (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 29-31.

Images and imagery of «Europe's Garden». Cultural, artistic and natural heritage in reading books for the Italian schools abroad

Dorena Caroli
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism,
University of Macerata (Italy)
dorena.caroli@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: The present essay aims to analyze the evolution of the representation of the cultural, artistic and natural heritage in the reading books published for the Italian schools abroad in the Twenties and Thirties of the XXth century and how it relates to the attempt to build a new concept of Italian citizenship. The introduction will outline certain aspects of the history of Italian schools abroad, which were set up not only in countries with a high density of emigrants (such as Brazil and Argentina) but also in the Italian colonies. It will also examine some methodological considerations about the analysis of school textbooks of this period under the fascist regime. The two main parts, subdivided into two sections will analyze respectively the features of the readings presented in the reading books for the 1st-3rd classes and 4th-5th classes of the primary school published prior to the Law of January 7th, 1929 about State schoolbooks, paying particular attention to the so-called process of fascistization which occurred after 1925. The second part will present, in two sections, the textbooks for the 1st-3rd classes and 4th-5th classes published after this same law which introduced a unique school book in order to demonstrate the different image that the fascist regime wanted to present of the country's cultural, artistic and natural heritage.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of the School; History of Education; School textbooks; Emigration; Italy; XXth Century.

Introduction

This paper aims to analyze a broad selection of reading books for the Italian schools abroad, which were published between the early twenties and the mid thirties of the twentieth century. In the chronological period covered these particular school textbooks underwent major changes, reflecting the more

general path of evolution experienced by Italian schools abroad, as well as that of the school textbooks, that, after the advent of fascism, was characterized by various phases, marked firstly by the process of fascistization of schools started in the mid-twenties and, secondly, by the publication of the State schoolbooks after 1929.

The reading books, as ‘educational media’ were not only to impart general culture to young Italian citizens, ensuring the preservation of the mother tongue as «part of the cultural policy specific to a nation state»¹, but they also served to instill a love of homeland mixed with national pride, which in the cultural, artistic and natural heritage found an important source of cultural identity and a national consciousness for a possible return of emigrants. For the Italians abroad, forced to leave the country for work or to seek their fortune, these reading books helped to convey an imagined reality of cities, monuments, works of art and landscapes that helped establish an unbreakable bond with the mother country².

The first Italian schools abroad arose in a particular time and were founded after the Unification of Italy for the children of technicians and engineers who had emigrated to contribute to the economic development of the country during their stay abroad³. Later these schools were open to the children of Italians who were emigrating to escape poverty. The paper deals with a type of school that, in many ways, represented, according to Gerd Baumann and Thijl Sunier, «a social space», quite different from that of national schools, which offered schoolchildren an education about their country of origin thus providing a context in which it was possible for civil society to have a strong influence⁴.

Italian schools abroad were regulated for the first time by the Crispi Law of 1889, later by the Tittoni Law of 1910 and later still by the Gentile reform of 1923⁵. Their history and evolution have been extensively reconstructed by contemporary historiography, with particular focus given to their typology

¹ T. Sunier, *National Language and Mother Tongue*, in W. Schiffauer, G. Baumann, R. Kastoryano, S. Vertovec (edd.), *Civil Enculturation. Nation-State, Schools and Ethnic Difference in four European Countries*, New York-Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2004, pp. 147-163.

² The fascist regime amplified the process of nationalization of the cultural heritage, although some countries put an end to the diffusion of Italian culture, such as in Brazil where the cultural politics started by the fascist Getúlio Vargas (1882-1954) ratified the prohibition of books in foreign languages, see M.H. Bastos Camara, *Scuole italiane all'estero: manuali di educazione morale e civile nella scuola elementare italiana all'estero*, forthcoming.

³ The Italian schools abroad emerged before, for example, the schools founded for Russian emigrés in the twenties and in the thirties. See D. Caroli, *Russian Schools Abroad. National identities, Soviet reforms and cosmopolitan education by Sergey I. Hessen (1887-1950)*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 10, n. 1, 2015, pp. 527-553.

⁴ G. Baumann, T. Sunier, *The School as a Place in its Social Space*, in Schiffauer, Baumann, Kastoryano, Vertovec (edd.), *Civil Enculturation*, cit., pp. 21-32.

⁵ G. Floriani, *Scuole italiane all'estero. Cento anni di storia*, Roma, Armando, 1974; P. Salvetti, *Le scuole italiane all'estero*, in P. Bevilacqua, A. De Clementi, E. Franzina (edd.), *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana: Arrivi*, Roma, Donzelli, 2002, pp. 535-549, particularly p. 535.

(including government schools and private schools subsidized by the Italian Government), to the debate on their secular or religious character, to their relations with the Dante Alighieri Society and finally to the role of the ‘master-agent’ «whose economic conditions and legal treatment were finally improved: the teachers were going to take on larger tasks, which were not limited only to teaching, but also covered a form of assistance to emigrants by providing them with news and advice and by sometimes carrying out the functions of consular officers»⁶.

The historian Patrizia Salvetti, who has devoted a study to the vicissitudes of Italian schools abroad, argues that,

the new nationalistic Crispian conception saw emigration as a potential factor in the nation’s strength, and as an element able to contribute to the development of foreign trade and thus also of Italian exports, primarily in the Americas. Within the framework of these expansionist and nationalistic purposes the function of Italian schools abroad, as “cradles of national education and patriotic sentiment”, placed under the direction and control of the Italian State, went beyond the primary objective of the simple basic education of emigrants and their children to take on a more political meaning: the preservation of the Italian language as a means of both maintaining strong ties between the migrant subjects and the motherland and also the education of Italian immigrants as a means of cultural and political influence and commercial development⁷.

In order to analyze the textbooks published for the exclusive use of these schools, which in the course of twenty years reached 120,000 pupils (children of migrant families in particular at the beginning of the century)⁸, it should be emphasized that the content and structure of reading books reflect not only the debates that marked the events of these schools about the teaching of religion and the relationship between church and state, but also the very idea of the Italian nation⁹, conceived as heir to the ancient Roman civilization and the birthplace of writers, travelers and heroes who had sacrificed their lives for its unification.

The pedagogical project underlying the readings contained in the reading books of the twenties and thirties, in fact, was intended not only to shape national sentiment, as has been observed for school manuals published since the unification of Italy, but also as an idea of the nation in which different political trends of liberal Italy were reflected: the nation as birthplace of civilization and of historic figures and great ideals of freedom. Put another way: the images of cities and Italian landscapes and the reproductions of works of art were an important aspect of knowledge about the national culture, which had to

⁶ Salvetti, *Le scuole italiane all'estero*, cit., pp. 546-547.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 535.

⁸ M. Pretelli, *Il ruolo della storia nei libri di lettura per le scuole italiane all'estero durante il fascismo*, «Storia e problemi contemporanei», n. 40, 2005, pp. 37-56.

⁹ See the consideration elaborated by Schiffauer, Sunier, *Representing the Nation in History Textbooks*, in Schiffauer, Baumann, Kastoryano, Vertovec (edd.), *Civil Enculturation*, cit., pp. 33-59.

cultivate the memory of the past, recent and remote, imbued with a symbolism that could strengthen both the national consciousness of distant Italians, but also citizens of one of the youngest countries in Europe, which with the Great War had crowned the unification process.

These schools, being under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the first decades of their organization, were marked predominantly by secular principles. The Gentile reform of 1923 introduced the mandatory teaching of religion in the primary schools¹⁰, without, however, the contents of reading books initially transmitting the image of ‘an Italian identity’ or Italianness (the so called *italianità*) which coincided with the Catholic civilization of which Italy was the cradle. This feature was more evident after the publication of the State schoolbook (1929) and, furthermore, the Lateran Treaty, since the contents concerned an Italian culture imbued with religious and patriotic values, which were increasingly interpreted according to the canons of fascist ideology¹¹.

Into the rediscovering of ancient Rome one should, in fact, read an ideology that aimed at political legitimacy, inevitably focusing attention on the historical, artistic and of course, archaeological heritage of ancient Rome. To this reading was entrusted the task of telling the history of a nation that was predestined to so-called great achievements¹², whose exploits were immortalized in reading and schoolbooks.

Compared to the authoritative studies of two Italian historians, Matteo Pretelli and Alberto Barausse, who examined respectively the history books of fascism and those used in particular in Brazil¹³, the purpose of this article is to analyze the representation of the Italian artistic, cultural and natural heritage before and after the publication of the State school textbook, from a perspective that reflects the evolution of this representation that progressively established the concept of ‘Italian identity’ (Italianness, *italianità*): no country in the world

¹⁰ Floriani, *Scuole italiane all'estero*, cit.; Salvetti, *Le scuole italiane all'estero*, cit., p. 548.

¹¹ M. Bacigalupi, P. Fossati, *Da Plebe a Popolo. L'educazione popolare nei libri di scuola dall'Unità d'Italia alla Repubblica*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1986, pp. 191-231; J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime (1922-1943)*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1994, pp. 393-417; A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo. L'opera della Commissione centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo da Giuseppe Lombardo Radice ad Alessandro Melchiori 1923-1928*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2005, pp. 3-32; A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista. La normativa sui libri di testo dalla riforma Gentile alla fine della Seconda guerra mondiale (1923-1945)*, Macerata, Alfabetica, 2009, pp. 11-52; M. Colin, *I bambini di Mussolini. Letteratura, libri, letture per l'infanzia sotto il fascismo*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2012, pp. 79-103, 225-260.

¹² D. Caroli, *L'insegnamento della storia antica e medievale nelle scuole fasciste e sovietiche fra le due guerre mondiali: manuali di scuola a confronto*, «Historia y memoria de la educación», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 321-352.

¹³ Pretelli, *Il ruolo della storia nei libri di lettura per le scuole italiane all'estero durante il fascismo*, cit., pp. 37-56; A. Barausse, *The construction of national identity in textbooks for Italian school abroad: the case of Brazil between the two World Wars*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 425-461.

had such a mass of vestiges of the past and a heritage similar to the one found in the national territory of Italy, which appeared in the eyes of the entire country to have been chosen to transmit a universal culture for posterity.

From a methodological point of view, the essay intends to adopt two approaches of interpretation concerning school textbooks. The first is aimed at the hermeneutical analysis of the content of the school books edited under fascism¹⁴, that is, the analysis of the description of cultural heritage from a hermeneutic point of view focusing on their meaning as value and symbols of 'Italianness' and the other, connected with 'iconic literacy'¹⁵, focusing on the iconographic culture which would provide pupils far from the homeland with hard facts and images.

As regards the first aspect, it should be specified that the analysis of the contents has to take into consideration also the narrative form of these reading books, which sometimes present themselves as anthologies in which tracts from Italian classical authors also converge (of different genres), sometimes as collections of passages written *ad hoc*. In the latter case three main narrative forms can be observed, inspired mainly by the Italian writer Edmondo de Amicis (though not always faithful to the original model), including: 1) the school story focusing on the narrative of the teacher that offers a frame to the images; 2) the family story in many voices, where it is mainly the parents and family who teach children knowledge of their birthplace but which are very significant for the story of the nation; 3) the device of correspondence, letters and postcards, formalized in scholastic manuals of the late nineteenth century¹⁶, very often in passages on native countries.

Concerning the second issue, the iconographical aspect, it should be noted that the images are mainly reproductions taken from the huge collection of famous Italian photographs belonging to the Alinari brothers, but also from the catalogues of the Florentine photographer Giacomo Brogi (1822-1881), who specialized in works of art¹⁷.

This multitude of readings about the country's history, its cities, monuments and illustrious Italian figures, enriched by a large set of photographic images,

¹⁴ From the methodological point of view see for example C. Rittelmeyer, M. Parmentier, *Einführung in die pädagogische Hermeneutik*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2001; and J.P. Gee, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, London, Routledge, 2014.

¹⁵ C. Heinze, *Das Bild im Schulbuch. Zur Einführung*, in C. Heinze, E. Matthes (edd.), *Das Bild im Schulbuch*, Bad Heilbrunn, Verlag Julius Klinkhardt, 2010, pp. 9-13.

¹⁶ F. Targhetta, *The beloved face of the fatherland». The role of the landscape into the processes of national identity building*, «History of Education and Children's Literature», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 139-155, p. 149.

¹⁷ See for example A.C. Quintavalle, M. Maffioli (edd.), *Fratelli Alinari, Fotografie in Firenze: 150 anni che illustrarono il mondo, 1852-2002*, Firenze, Alinari, 2003; G. Brogi, *Firenze e Toscana: pitture, vedute, sculture, ecc.: catalogo delle fotografie*, Firenze, Ditta Giacomo Brogi fotografo editore, Stabilimento editoriale, 1932.

greatly refreshed the content of nineteenth-century textbooks, that were based on teaching by example, self-help culture inspired by the Scottish writer Samuel Smiles (1812-1904), and ‘good manners’¹⁸. The reading books, in fact, became interpreters of a ‘secular religion of the homeland’¹⁹ which found its source in the inexhaustible cultural heritage held within the confines of the nation State. New examples to be emulated by the Italian youth were contained in the descriptions of the vestiges of a glorious past, the deeds of travelers and the artistic works of writers, painters and musicians.

Of course, these particular school textbooks, presenting different levels of difficulty depending on the classes to which they were assigned (from the 1st to 6th class of primary school), contained a wide choice of tracts that will be discussed here, as far as possible in chronological order, with particular attention paid to cultural heritage. Therefore, with no claim to being an exhaustive treatment²⁰, this article is divided into four parts which respectively analyze the reading books for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes and the 4th, 5th and 6th classes of the primary school before and after the introduction of the Law on State schoolbook (1929), so as to highlight the narrative forms of these texts which weave in different aspects of Italian culture that cultivated the feelings of ‘italianness’ understood as national identity, the fascist process and the different symbolism attributed by fascism to cultural heritage.

1.1. *Cities, historic monuments and Italian culture in reading books for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes of the primary school in the early Twenties*

To encourage the production of new reading books for the Italian schools abroad, on June 12th 1922 a competition notice was published, but only some of the books presented were approved by the Evaluation Committee during the following year²¹. In general, the structure and the contents of reading books corresponded to a gradual curriculum. In the readings of the first primary books, descriptions of landscapes were very simple and aimed at the geographical knowledge of the native country because, in the early Twenties, the political messages were less intrusive, since it had a purpose similar to that of so much

¹⁸ Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da Plebe a Popolo*, cit., pp. 36-42, 58-60.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

²⁰ Among the school textbooks printed for the Italian schools abroad, some did not present iconographical sets of cultural heritage such as ones by: P. Monelli, *La tua patria. Disegni e copertina di P. Morbiducci*, Roma, Segreteria Generale dei Fasci all'estero, 1929; Scuole italiane all'estero, *Sole d'Italia. Letture Classe V*, Roma, Libreria dello Stato, 1931.

²¹ See the report to the Ministry of Foreign affairs, *I. Commissione giudicatrice del concorso per un libro di Lettura destinato alle scuole all'estero*, in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 715-723.

advertising, such as tourism, which aimed at consolidating the national identity that was based on ‘a mythical image’ of the homeland²².

From the 3rd class on, in fact, the narrative form of reading books (stories and poems) – which became real anthologies after the publication of State school textbooks – mainly resorted to the narrative form of the school novel, or to the device of correspondence or to the family story, where parents and relatives recount the Italian historical events that served as backdrop to images of cultural heritage. For the authors of the books of emigration schools, usually the school was the main socializing space according to the tradition dear to the followers of the famous novel *Cuore* (*Heart*, 1886) by Edmondo de Amicis (1846-1908)²³, since it had to educate the hearts and minds of the children of immigrants from different social backgrounds: school recreated the supportive environment of the novel *Cuore*, while largely reflecting the point of view of the white-collar middle class and of the Italian industrialist engaged in overseas migrant countries. Whilst the teacher sought to make cohesive so many readings that became a sort of narrative of historic national unity, it was also the family that, by means of a ‘polyphonic’ narrative through the mouth of the father, uncle or grandmother, transformed everyone into members of the great Italian family.

Among the first reading books published, *Cuor Lontano* (*Far Heart*) by Pasciuti Francesco and Giovanni Di Giusto (1922) for the 3rd class, is very significant²⁴. Divided into three parts (two volumes were destined for the 4th, 5th and 6th classes), the textbook contained, in addition to passages of different genres, readings describing some Italian cities such as Bologna, Venice, Milan and Rome. The authors employ the device of letters to dwell on the city and, in particular, the exchange of letters and picture postcards or simple postcards between the teacher and the students, but there are also family conversations during meals, all concluding with short passages about the Great War, accompanied by the image of monuments which have become a symbol of Italian cities.

To describe *Bologna la dotta!* (Bologna the learned!), accompanied by a picture of the two towers, the teacher reads a farewell letter sent by the pupil Robustelli, who moved with his family to Bologna, where his father worked as a postal clerk. In the letter we read the following:

I enclose two picture postcards: one is San Petronio and the other two towers of the learned Bologna. “Come Miss, and tell something to our little Italians. Today Bologna is at the

²² Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da Plebe a Popolo*, cit., p. 102; Targhetta, *The beloved face of the fatherland*», cit., pp. 139-155.

²³ Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da Plebe a Popolo*, cit., pp. 112-130; G. Genovesi, *Ragioni e articolazioni di un saggio su De Amicis e la scuola e Cuore: un’utopia perduta tra successo e critiche*, in P. Boero, G. Genovesi, *Cuore. De Amicis tra critica e utopia*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2009, pp. 12-14, 71-80.

²⁴ F. Pasciuti, G. Di Giusto, *Cuor lontano. Corso di letture ad uso delle scuole italiane all’estero. Libro per la 3^a Classe Elementare. Illustrazioni di C. Romanelli e F. Fabbi*, Firenze, R. Bemporad e Figlio Editori, 1922.

heart of the terrible war that is fought on the Isonzo, the Karst and the Alps. Here the correspondence of more than four million fighters is concentrated, and here one can feel more strongly the love for our Great Italy. Here, Miss, we have the impression that Italy is truly great and that through the clash of arms it is ascending towards its highest destiny”²⁵.

Milan’s description was given at table by the father to his children, Bobino and Olga. The householder outlines the framework of an industrious city with beautiful monuments and the brave inhabitants, who drove the Austrians from the city during the days of the 18th to 22nd March, 1848. The reading was accompanied by a picture of the Duomo in profile and planes that flew over the city during the Great War:

Milan is the biggest city in Lombardy, indeed it is called “Italy’s moral capital”, because it is a cultured, progressive, industrious and rich city. There is always a lively ferment of ideas: the contrasts are always vivid [...] Really Milan has more than one beautiful spot [...] The central station and the Sforza’s Castle, for example; there is also the Piazza del Duomo, which is the central point of the city. The Cathedral is the most outstanding monument of Gothic art that we have in Italy: it’s all an embroidery; its scattered spires and statues lend the structure an extraordinary sense of movement [...]”²⁶.

The teacher then went on to describe the other cities using the picture postcards. Those of Venice reproduced the Palazzo Ducale, the Porta della Carta (Door of the Charter) and the famous Loggetta. Describing the statue of Giuseppe Garibaldi in Rome, the teacher pointed out the view visible from the Janiculum, with all the most important monuments:

The monument to Garibaldi was placed on the Janiculum, because on that sacred hill he defended in 1849 the Roman Republic against the French. They called him the Hero of Two Worlds, because a few years before he had fought in South America in Montevideo. Afterwards there was no war for the Italian independence in which he did not take part. Memorable among all his exploits was that for the liberation of the Kingdom of Naples from the Bourbon misrule [...]”²⁷.

The description of the city and of the most important monuments was a key element of the new Italian post-unification’s pedagogy, which aimed to standardize the image of the nation in the name of a nationalization project that reached its peak with fascism. Until the publication of specific primers and reading books for Italian schools abroad, manuals found in all Italian schools were used²⁸. The first book of specific reading for the 1st and 2nd class

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-55.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-106, 116-119.

²⁸ A. Barausse, *Learning to read and write in Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century. Primers and reading exercise booklets: publications, ministerial control and teaching (1861-1898)*, in D. Caroli, A. Salmikova (edd.), *Primers, culture(s), of childhood and educational models in Europe (XVI-XX centuries)*, «History of Education & Children’s Literature», vol. 9, n. 2, 2014, pp. 109-149.

was only published in 1927 by Giulio Marchi and Vincenzina Battistelli²⁹ with a metaphorical title on travel and emigration, *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero. Sillabario e prime letture per la prima classe elementare e Classe seconda* (*Like the Swallows. Reading Course for Italian Schools Abroad. Syllabary and First Readings for the First and Second Classes*)³⁰. It was made up of two volumes, which proposed a basic geographical knowledge of the city and then moved on to a true story about the life of the Italian colony, which offered a pretext for talking about the past of the migrants and their hometowns. In the first volume, after the alphabet table, the authors present the letters of the alphabet accompanied by increasingly detailed captions, followed by images (similar to lithography ink drawings) of places, monuments and landscapes, which identify the different Italian cities: one begins with a 'swallow-flight' from Siena heading to the south then coming back up and finishing in the north with Trento and Trieste. Milan, for example, is represented by the Cathedral and the Galleria Umberto, Rome by the Colosseum and Castel Sant'Angelo, Naples by the Gulf and the Royal Palace and Ancona, Naples, Bari and Palermo by their ports³¹.

A more few lines are dedicated to Genoa for being the hometown of the young Balilla, the model for the fascist regime youth: «also Genoa is a gem of the Italian seaside. Genoa is the city of Balilla. All Italian children love Italy as Balilla did. "Hooray for Balilla!"»³². Florence instead is viewed from above: «Florence is called the city of flowers for her beauty and her kindness. It is completely surrounded by gardens and villas», whilst «Venice is one of the most beautiful cities not only in Italy but in the world. It consists of many small islands between which flows the sea. In its channels gondolas pass back and forth»³³.

Then come other images accompanied by short descriptions of Cagliari with its port and two images of people in Sardinian costume; Potenza and L'Aquila, surrounded by mountains³⁴. There is no mistaking Bologna with the view of the two towers. «The sight of this tower is intimidating. It looks like it's about to fall on us! But the person who had built it was a great joker and a great scholar who

²⁹ Giulio Marchi was a teacher, essayist and politician (1885-1951). For a bio-bibliographical profile of Vincenzina Battistelli and a reconstruction of her teaching activities, see the article edited by Luciana Bellatalla, *Vincenzina Battistelli*, in G. Chiosso, R. Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, 2 vols., Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2013, vol. 1, p. 116.

³⁰ G. Marchi, V. Battistelli, *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero. Sillabario e prime letture per la prima classe elementare*, Firenze, R. Bemporad e F., 1927; Idd., *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le Scuole italiane all'estero. Classe seconda*, with illustrations in black and prints in colour, C. Romanelli, Firenze, R. Bemporad e Figlio, 1927.

³¹ Marchi, Battistelli, *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero. Sillabario e prime letture per la prima classe elementare*, cit., pp. 30, 35, 48-49, 51, 57-60, 89.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 92-93.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 108-112, 124.

knew his stuff. Bologna is large, rich in monuments and porticoes»³⁵. Trento and Trieste are followed by readings linked to the events of World War I: «The Italians have suffered a lot and fought valiantly to free Trento from the enemies of Italy and make it the capital of the Tridentine Venice»; «Even Trieste was conquered by Italian soldiers during the last war, at the cost of much sacrifice and a lot of blood. It is a beautiful city visited by all Italians who know how to travel»³⁶. Finally there is an interesting geographical map with the new Italian borders, followed by an educational game for school children: «Look out for the cities you know and in your own time go from one to the other. Make a mark, even better draw a tricolor flag next to your favourite city»³⁷.

The reading book of the 2nd class, *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le Scuole italiane all'estero. Classe seconda (Like the Swallows. Reading Course for Italian Schools Abroad. Second Class)*³⁸ is a true story, in four parts, which tells the story of Pasquale, an old émigré, to a colony (unidentified), who works as a tailor and together with his wife Betty make friends with a group of Italian boys who help him with the grape harvest and during the wheat harvest. The entire story is imbued with feelings of solidarity among immigrants who are headed to the elderly tailor. The origins and the life story of children around him all refer to different Italian cities, whose symbols are presented in the first part of the book. The story ends with the episode of the 'House of Wonders', a little red house donated by a wealthy emigrant as a place for games and reading for boys, of which the old Pasquale becomes governor. The illustrations are mostly reproductions of paintings and photographs from the Alinari collection, in some cases from the Brogi catalogue (specializing in works of art).

The children helping Pasquale in the harvest are the protagonists of the story; they are also called 'seven swallows' because the old tailor dreams that they «like the swallows will return one day to their nests in the laughter-filled Italian towns from which they come», despite the sense of solidarity that they show him. The illustrations in this passage that describes the children's efforts in the vineyards, include the harvest with a reproduction of the eponymous painting by Francesco Gioli (1846-1922; Brogi's photo)³⁹.

After the harvest, Pasquale, during lunch, presents the stories of his friends, accompanied by the images symbolic of their cities of origin: the Venetian Marta, the Neapolitan Cicillo, Gigetto, known as the *Romanino*, Liuzza the Sicilian and Giovanni the Toscanino. The readings, therefore, deal with emigration stories of families in settlements with no breadwinner (having died during the First World War) like those of Marta and Cicillo, outlined with Italian regional

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

³⁸ Marchi, Battistelli, *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le Scuole italiane all'estero. Classe seconda*, cit.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

character stereotypes. The story of Cicillo, orphaned at four, who lives with his brother Carmelo in the colony, is followed by the image of Panorama of Naples (photograph by the Alinari brothers)⁴⁰.

Gigetto the *Romanino* learns that his father was born in the province of Rome; his history is followed by the image of the panorama of St. Peter's Dome: «he speaks of Rome as of his home; and he is very pleased with his nickname *Romanino*»⁴¹. Liuzza the Sicilian, in contrast to her seemingly arrogant character (with the image of the Monte Pellegrino, Alinari's photography) actually «visits, consoles, tells stories, even becomes a doctor because her father is, in fact, the most respected doctor in the colony, the good doctor of all the poorest emigrants»⁴². In the 'flock of swallows' there is also Giovanni the Toscanino with his sister, who acts as a teacher to the others (accompanied by the image of panoramas of Florence, the Cupola of Brunelleschi, the Palazzo della Signoria and Santa Croce, all photographed by Alinari)⁴³. Balilla the Genovese (with a picture of the port of Genoa, photographed by Alinari), son of a baker, becomes the captain of the company of guys to whom he always offers sweets. Splendour, Ciccillo's dog, completes the group of Italian boys⁴⁴.

All the guys work on Gigetto's father's farm (with a reproduction of Giovanni Malesci, *L'aratura* t.i. *Ploughing*), the latter having a younger brother, Michelino⁴⁵. Also a visit to the barn to see a newborn calf is an opportunity to refer to the reproduction of the painting by Fausto Zonar *Maternal Love* (*Amore materno*, Alinari's photography)⁴⁶, which allusively compare maternal and animal love. In this part there are also readings about Ciccillo's dream, as a metaphor for what one misses from the past and in the homeland⁴⁷, on the commemoration of the dead (November, 2nd) and so-called Victory Day (November, 4th), celebrated in old Pasquale's home (in support of the latter, there are two images of Monte Grappa seen from Bassano⁴⁸ and the Italian King at the front).

The third part describes the house of Pasquale, which has become the exclusive place for after-school activities of the seven boys, the 'Seven Joys' as Pasquale calls them; they are also noticed by another elder of the colony. Into the estate of this old immigrant, nicknamed Whitebeard, the children sneak intrigued by the 'House of wonders' and its rich library. During a visit of Michelino to Pasquale, the old man shows the boy the plants, the butterflies

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 22.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-29.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 33-35.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-39.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-45.

⁴⁵ *The Ploughing* (*L'aratura*), by Giovanni Malesci (1884-1969).

⁴⁶ The Painter is Fausto Zonaro (1854-1929), emigrated at the Imperial Constantinople court.

⁴⁷ Marchi, Battistelli, *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le Scuole italiane all'estero. Classe seconda*, cit., pp. 56-75.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 83-85.

and the flowers; the passage is followed by the reproduction of a painting by Luigi Bechi (1830-1919), *Nonno, dammi un soldo* (*Grandfather, give me a penny*), a symbol of the moral wealth donated by old Pasquale to the young immigrant⁴⁹.

On the occasion of the election of the governor of the ‘House of wonders’, accompanied by the image of the painting *Ai campi* (*In the fields*), by Egisto Ferroni (1835-1912; Alinari’s photography)⁵⁰, there is a presentation of ‘speeches’ about Italy, that the boys declaim in public. Each boy reads the speech about his hometown, enriched with amusing anecdotes. Gigetto’s speech about Rome is accompanied by the image of the Colosseum and the monument to Vittorio Emanuele II (Alinari’s photo):

Italy lies on the sea like a queen secure in her own strength. She has on her head a crown of snowy mountains and another chain of mountains forms her backbone. Her veins are the rivers and railways via which Italian life goes to and from. Her heart is Rome. Rome! Anywhere in the world this name resounds, the listener is moved. There is no person in the world who does not want to see Rome. And, in fact, that beautiful and great city, the capital of our Italy, teeming with strangers... I have not seen it yet, but my father knows it well; and he often has spoken of the beautiful church of San Pietro, of the immense Dome, in front of which lies the beautiful square with the large portico with columns, the two fountains and the obelisk in the middle; he has often spoken to me about the Capitol (Campidoglio) where the emperors of Rome dictated the law to all the peoples of the Earth because Rome in ancient times was the heart not only of Italy, but of the world; and he let me admire the staircase of the church which is located next to the Capitol, not only because it is majestic, but because all the Roman people contributed and worked to build it. He showed me many photographs and prints of the grandiose monument to the first king of Italy Vittorio Emanuele II, the grandfather of our current King. The history of Rome is the most beautiful of any wonderful story. My dad knows and tells me, but I do not know it yet well enough to be able to tell it to you.

One thing I want to say is that in Rome even the geese are smart. In fact, once, in ancient times, the geese, which were kept in the Capitol in honor of a goddess, realized that Rome was about to be taken by the enemy while the Roman soldiers were sleeping; and they honked so much that the soldiers were forced to wake up and were able to defend themselves. If the geese are so smart, in Rome, imagine what the Romans were like!⁵¹

Giovanni’s speech about Florence, accompanied by pictures of Palazzo Vecchio, the Loggia dei Lanzi and the Cathedral, has a different tone (Alinari’s photographs):

– Because of the fact that Gigetto spoke to the heart of Italy [...] I will speak about the language you need to express all the affections of the heart. The father of the Italian language was

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 109-148, p. 140 for the quotation.

⁵⁰ On the subject of Egisto Ferroni (1835-1912).

⁵¹ Marchi, Battistelli, *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le Scuole italiane all'estero. Classe seconda*, cit., pp. 160-164.

Dante Alighieri, a Florentine; he, with his great poem, *The Divine Comedy*, that everyone wanted to read because it is a masterpiece of poetry and truth, made the Italians realize that, besides the dialects of the various regions, one should have one language to understand each other better, to love each other more. He pressed them to each other as true brothers [...]⁵².

Next, the speech by the boy from Genova, also called Balilla, concerned Christopher Columbus and the young Genovese patriot Balilla. The boy's words were accompanied by pictures of the monuments dedicated to these two illustrious Genoese (Brogi's photography). As to the second person the boy refers to what his father told him: «In each Italian child there is a bit of Balilla's soul». Speaking about Balilla, he reported the incident of the stoning of the Austrians who oppressed Genoa, stating: «And do you know why the other Italians did as he did? Because Balilla had not been afraid, he had offered up his life for Italy and he had taught everyone how you should act!»⁵³.

Cicillo's speech, finally, with an image of the Panorama of the Bay of Naples with Vesuvius and the Theatre San Carlo (Alinari's photographs), is based on his brother Carmelo's stories:

I can't say anything about the artistic beauties of Italy, or of great Italian men. I only know why Carmelo always talks about them and makes me remember the lives of fishermen and poor people... And it is simple: the poor people work, help each other, and sing to forget all misery!⁵⁴

The story ends with the election of Pasquale as governor with a speech on the flag, about which, turning to his wife, he proclaims⁵⁵:

So you suppose maybe the flag can't make the speech herself? [...] the White is the snow of her Alps, the green is the carpet of their her valleys and the tops of her olive groves, and the red is the flame of the Italian heart? [...]? And also... (Who doesn't know it, Betty?) it is the blood of all Italians who died to free their country!».

Pasquale closes the speech with the following words: «Need I say how to show respect to our flag and to make sure it is respected? Everyone knows how to do this: by studying and working, proving with facts, that Italy is a land of honest men»⁵⁶. The boys chorused in reply «Long live the Italian flag!».

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 164-167.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 167-172.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 172-174.

⁵⁵ Marchi, Battistelli, *Come le rondini. Corso di letture per le Scuole italiane all'estero. Classe seconda*, cit., p. 155.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-183 (pp. 182-183).

1.2. *The «treasures of Italy» in reading books for 4th and 5th classes of the primary school before 1929*

Among the most widely used reading books in Italian schools abroad, for the 4th and 5th classes, there were *O patria Mia... «degnu nutrice delle chiare genti»* (*Oh My homeland ...*) in three volumes (1922-1924) by Luigi Bertelli/Vamba (1858-1920); *Sanguie italiano* (*Italian Blood*, early twenties) by L.C. Guelfi; *Cuor lontano* (*Distant Heart*, in two volumes, 1921) by Francesco and Giovanni Di Giusto Pasciuti⁵⁷; *Italia lontana* (*Distant Italy*, 1925) by Alarico Buonaiuti; and finally, *Voci della patria lontana* (*Voices of the Distant Homeland*, in two volumes, 1928) by Giuseppe Locatelli and Arturo Mondovi.

All these reading books offer narrative forms about the school and family stories and it is usually the teacher, the father of the family, or educated migrants from the colonies who recount the many epic stories of the nation that frame the images of its art treasures and ancient history, now enclosed within the boundaries of the Italian national state. The value of the love of country is linked to both the principle of sacredness that involves sacrifice and also national pride, which has to instill momentum in building the country, by projecting into the future the memory of the past.

The first of these manuals and the most interesting, *Oh My Homeland ...* in three volumes (1922-1924) by Luigi Bertelli/Vamba (1858-1920), was written after the war and published posthumously by the writer's family⁵⁸. This work is presented as an Italian story told by Giovanni Pontini, father of a family with Mazzinian faith, and his wife Elvira to their three children Michelino, Marietta and Guido. The Italian history was also reflected in the life of the Pontini family. Giovanni Pontini was from Lucca, lost his father, emigrated to South America, in a colony of the province of Santa Fe (Argentine Republic), known as 'Esperanza', to work as a street vendor of plaster figurines. Giovanni meets Elvira during an altercation with a street musician, defends her and joins with her in marriage. In the story the parents trace the whole history of Italy and of the Italian culture from Dante to the First World War, with an epilogue on the return of the Pontini family to Italy. The work (judging by the age of

⁵⁷ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Giovanni Di Giusto and a presentation of his teaching activities, see the article by Alberto Barausse, Giovanni Di Giusto, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione*, cit., vol. 1, p. 487.

⁵⁸ L. Bertelli (Vamba), *O patria mia... «degnu nutrice delle chiare genti»*, first volume, illustrated with 74 pictures and reproductions of artworks, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figli, 1922-1923; second volume illustrated with 92 pictures reproductions of artworks, 1922-1923; third volume illustrated with 88 pictures and reproductions of artworks, 1923-1924. From a list reproduced on the cover of the volume by Buonaiuti, *Italia lontana* (1925) vol. 1 (see *infra*, footnote n. 91), it turns out to be a work published posthumously by Bertelli's family, under Ermenegildo Pistelli's direction and Ferruccio Orsi's collaboration, with 150 cartoons, portraits and reproduction of works of art. This work, *O patria mia... «degnu nutrice delle chiare genti»*, was winner of the Great Prize (Gran Premio) «Gara» for a book for young Italians.

the eldest son may have been suited to the 4th and 5th classes) consists of three parts, each corresponding to a precise historical period: from the time of Dante to the Sixteenth century; from the late Sixteenth century to the early Eighteenth century; from 1858 to World War I, in which – among other things – Guido, the youngest son, participates.

In the first part, the text is constantly accompanied by fine art reproductions that are meant to emphasize the importance of the culture and art of Italy of which all Italians abroad, adults and children alike, had to be proud, to become, in their turn, an educational model of national sentiment for other migrants. In the first part the narrative deals with some historical events, literature (in particular relating to the writers Petrarch and Boccaccio), interspersed with those of the history of art of Giotto, Leonardo da Vinci and Leon Battista Alberti and of culture in general. The two parents teach their children to read Dante so that they learn and retain the Italian language and defend the ideals of Mazzini (there are the images of the Loggia del Bigallo in Florence and a painting by Giotto, Dante and Beatrice)⁵⁹:

From Dante to Mazzini the fulfillment of the glorious destiny of our land opens and begins: Dante gives us a language that has become famous throughout the world; Mazzini stirs up the whole world, so that this language may assume a position of which it is worthy, as free and as great as Dante had dreamed it. And in Mazzini's prophecy, that I've read, it says: there will come a day when Italian mothers will tell their children about Dante's life, there will be a great wave of poetry and love, in which the Italian soul sublimely purifies itself in the three names that are sweetest for her: the Homeland, the Mother, Dante⁶⁰.

In the second part, which begins with the story about Galileo and ends with the Risorgimento and its protagonists, the father Giovanni reveals his faith and says of Mazzini:

Although he wrote about literature and with rare insight and deep knowledge of the state of literature of all Europe; he also used literature whenever and however he could to awaken political consciousness in Italians [...] *Yes, I'm like Mazzini*, in that, as a man and as a citizen, I have complied my conscience with the morality of his teaching⁶¹.

In the chapter dedicated to «an invincible army of books and pamphlets», the father takes up the story, stating that

⁵⁹ Concerning these aspects see the detailed chapter by A. Ascenzi, *Per educare la gioventù della nuova Italia. Luigi Bertelli/Vamba tra eredità risorgimentale e costruzione di una nuova coscienza etico-civile*, in Ead., *Metamorfosi della cittadinanza. Studi e ricerche su insegnamento della storia, educazione civile e identità nazionale in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, Macerata, eum, 2009, pp. 181-217.

⁶⁰ Bertelli, *O patria mia*, cit., vol. 1, p. 13.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 181, 182-183.

In the XIX century Italy also had many men of great intellect, of great learning and great virtue, able to make us believe in a miraculous predisposition to the fulfillment of her destiny [...]. Do you see this book? It is the *Primato italiano (Italian Primacy)* by Vincenzo Gioberti, a book that rallied many to fight for Italy but on a field opposed to that from which Giuseppe Mazzini rallied them with his writings. The latter was the head of rapid reaction forces, believing that Italy had to get out of the revolution. Gioberti was at the head of the cautious faction which considered a peaceful preparation necessary in the belief that Italy could rise again through the reconciliation between the People and its Rulers, except, of course, Austria⁶².

The political and leading figures of the Risorgimento are followed by biographies of the musicians of the nineteenth century, about whom the mother Elvira and the children sing some arias; there is then the description of the role of Garibaldi accused by the reactionaries of strangling Anita, the events of the Roman Republic and the fall of the Venetian Republic. The reproduction of portraits of famous men serve to give a face to the protagonists of the Risorgimento (although the author does not indicate the original source).

The third part of the narrative, often in the form of a dialogue between father and children, covers the period between 1859 up to and including the First World War (since the Pontini family receives the letters of their son Guido from the front). In the part dedicated to the events of the ‘Thousand’, there are some images of the assault on the Gancia convent, the departure of Garibaldi from Quarto and the landing at Marsala, and one of Nino Bixio. With the help of postcards that arrived from Italy, Giovanni continues the narrative until the late nineteenth century dwelling on the death of Vittorio Emanuele, the Gentleman King, on the tombs of Vittorio Emanuele II, of Mazzini and Garibaldi, on the monuments of Garibaldi and Vittorio Emanuele in Rome, on the Aspromonte, on the debate on the fall of Rome, on Sixty-six and the breach of Porta Pia.

References to unified Italy are presented in a chapter entitled *The Strong shoulders and backbone of Italy (Le forti spalle e la spina dorsale d’Italia)*, which describes the creations of some of Giovanni’s children from a kind of clay from the vegetable garden, that had the effect of an embossed paper, with the mountain ranges of the Alps and Apennines, and an exact hydrographic reproduction of the sea, springs, rivers and lakes. The city names are marked with chalk discs scattered on this particular embossed paper. After finishing the work, his daughter Marietta, says:

– In short our Italy is not lacking any natural beauty. Italy, if it has not always been happy, if it has not always been prosperous, it has always been beautiful!– And its natural beauty lies precisely in a certain kind of harmony, balance and elegance that shows itself in all things. It does not have the colossal mountains of Asia and America; but the Alps’ majestic horizons and vast glaciers are by no means inferior to the Himalayas or the Andes. It has no large rivers that other nations possess; but the poetry inspired by the banks of the Arno

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 201-212.

and the Po could not be found elsewhere. It does not offer immense forests; but its beautiful pine forests, the graceful line of her slender cypresses and magnificent orange groves are a completely peculiar to Italy. What are the lakes of the peninsula in comparison with those vast ones in North America? Yet in their relative smallness they possess a charm that others with their vastness do not have. Italy is the *Bel paese* (*Beautiful Country*) and to her all people of the world must look, who are unsure as to the nature of grace and majesty, in their various and most sublime forms –!⁶³

The representation of Italy was adorned with gypsum discs with the inscription of the name of ‘one hundred cities’. The description is accompanied by pictures of the most representative monuments: the Mole Antonelliana in Turin, the Duomo of Milan and the monument to Dante in Trento (also presented with its panorama), the view of Venice with the Doge’s Palace, the view of Trieste and the San Giusto hill, the view of Genoa, the towers of Asinelli and Garisenda (Bologna), the Florence Cathedral and the Piazza del Duomo of Pisa. Italy is visited by other Italians on the ranch who offer tips for improvement (such as the proposed construction of a railroad), interspersed with reflections and comments.

Describing Tuscany, and Lucca, his native land, for example, the father Giovanni exclaims:

In Lucchesia there is spirit of initiative, and those born in that land have no fear of the world. In fact you will find Lucchesi in every part of the world. In fact you will find Lucchesi in every part of the globe, working other people’s land, as I’m doing, or selling plaster figurines like I did in the past... and everyone then returns home with their savings, as I hope to too!⁶⁴

Of course the discs are a pretext to tell the story of the city and the very presence of a rat digging tunnels beneath the capital, is interpreted by his father as a political metaphor, «the excavation of our rat, as I said, could be the perfidious actions of those who to satisfy unjust ambitions, are working to undermine the foundations of the national building erected with so much effort, so much bloodshed»⁶⁵.

The so-called Michelino’s Italy becomes a destination for emigrants’ Sunday excursions⁶⁶, who, at first sight, celebrate with a spontaneous concert, feeling ennobled by the idea of a homeland that has become a nation thanks to the quality of Italians, no longer described as a ‘rabble to be civilized’⁶⁷, but as good honest workers, ready to sacrifice themselves for the distant family.

The Italian is generally restrained and tends to save, which prevents him from spoiling in rioting what he can earn. He is a loving family man, and periodically sends them his savings,

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 152-153.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 189-190.

⁶⁷ Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da Plebe a Popolo*, cit., pp. 49-57.

when he finds himself living alone in a foreign country. He is as laborious and resistant to fatigue as the worker from any other country, and perhaps more so, although he eats much less. He easily bears all climates, from the torrid heat of the equator to the extreme cold in northern parts. He is easily content, he feels at home everywhere, and always preserves the memory of the Fatherland, knows how to become attached to a new land in which he works and earns, and is able to show himself a worthy citizen. And I insist on these details for you, folks, because more than once you may happen to hear or read a joke or words of contempt for the Italians, slander owing to the envy of some foreigners unable to surpass us by lawful and honest means. And you will hear Italians being taken for knife-wielders, for lazy, superstitious and ignorant people.... Well, to set the slanderers straight you should respond without fear that no other people could have, like ours, preserved all their good qualities and traditional energies through so many centuries of servitude; no other people could have so quickly brought themselves back up to the level of the most advanced nations, and in many ways overtaken them [...] ⁶⁸.

A visit to Michelino's Italy is not the only important cultural moment, but also to the so-called Pontini's gallery with its portraits of famous Italians and the Sunday school for illiterate immigrants (opened in 1911) which are an opportunity for countrymen to meet.

After the description of the activities that took place there, partly on the initiative of the Dante Alighieri Society, aimed to nurture the Italian culture and the love of country, the Pontini family returns to Naples. The father leaves for Tripoli, where he then participates in the defense of the city during the Turkish attack, described by letters sent by the father to his children between October 15th to September 20th from Libya. Giovanni then returns to Naples and moves with the family to the new political-colonial Office in Tripoli, who then have to leave because of the outbreak of war. Giovanni and his son Guido, respectively fighting on the Carso and Trentino, continue to send letters to the family. Giovanni returns from the war on October, 12th, 1919, crippled in one leg, while Guido returns on March 17th, 1921 after the Rijeka's Action undertaking. The Pontini family decides to reside in Naples to send their younger children to school ⁶⁹.

Almost contemporary with Vambas' work, but of a different kind, on a literary and political level, one of the early reading books for the 4th class, is a very particular text by L.C. Guelfi, *Sangue italiano. Corso di letture speciali per le Scuole italiane all'estero e nelle nuove terre redente* [Italian Blood. Course of Special Readings for Italian Schools Abroad and in the New Redeemed Lands] (probably published between 1918-1920) ⁷⁰, which helps to spread the values

⁶⁸ Bertelli, *O patria mia*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 229-230.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 357-364.

⁷⁰ L.C. Guelfi, *Sangue italiano. Corso di letture speciali per le Scuole italiane all'estero e nelle nuove terre redente per la 4^a Classe elementare maschile e femminile e per le Scuole serali e festive*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio, s.d. The book, whose year of publication is unknown, was published very probably at the beginning of the Twenties because according to the Reports about school textbooks for primary schools and the list of approved and rejected books (August 1924), it numbers among the «books judged from some points of view good but which, nevertheless, can't be adopted by schools, even in a provisional manner, because of some serious omissions or errors»,

of patriotic education, making use of a discourse that emphasizes the good character traits of Italians with the dual aim of nationalizing Italians abroad and de-nationalizing minorities in the redeemed lands⁷¹. The narrative is structured in five parts that follow, through passages of different genres, the following cycles of readings: *Gems of the Body*, *Poetry History of Rome* and *Ancient Geography and Italy*. The last part presents the readings about Italy and its colonies and on the continents to conclude with a passage on the ‘five races’⁷².

The first part presents tales told by a father to his two sons, Antonio and Enrichetta, and begins with a cross-country trip by the father with his children. Overcome with nostalgia, the father Antonio never fails to describe the native land and acts of heroism of the Italian people. Originally from Piedmont, Antonio says he emigrated to find better employment prospects but also expresses an increasingly strong desire to come back and buy a little house in his native land (a photographic image of the Alps follows, which by now have become a symbol of national borders)⁷³.

The descriptions of the father about the city are intertwined with images and episodes of heroism (similar to the monthly reports of *Cuore*) as in the case of the legend of the *Figli Pii* (*Pious Sons*) of Catania during the eruption of Etna, who rescued two elderly parents (accompanied with images of Etna with snow and the view of Catania)⁷⁴. In a tale about a relic, however, the grandmother describes to the grandchildren the contents of a box containing a wad of white threads (part of a canvas she had woven in her youth) and tells the story of the Five Days of Milan, during which she had treated the wounded soldiers. The grandchildren would receive as an inheritance the ‘relic’ of the pad that was used to cure their grandfather. The story is completed by two images of the Milan Cathedral (ink drawing) and a landscape, as well as by a reproduction of a painting on the *Cinque giornate di Milano* (*Five Days of Milan*)⁷⁵.

Among other stories of the Grandmother, in the second part, there is one *Le gemme del corpo* (*The gems of the body*) about the eyes, defined in a real and metaphorical sense because they allow us to see and appreciate the value of the homeland. The first of the stories concerns an episode of an orphaned child, working on a ship, the ‘Scilla’ (anchored in the lagoon of Venice) who became blind following a quarrel between comrades. The second tells about the Italian patriot Silvio Pellico, who was deprived of sight (and more precisely of his glasses in the Spielberg fortress) in order to hinder his reading and the

but that can be presented again next year, Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., p. 301.

⁷¹ E. De Fort, *La scuola elementare dall’Unità alla caduta del fascismo*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1997, pp. 372-377.

⁷² Guelfi, *Sangue italiano*, cit., pp. 211-245.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-25.

continuation of the political struggle. The episodes were very different but linked by the common thread of patriotism in which the orphans on the ship, 'Scilla' were also educated⁷⁶.

Even at the cinema, in the presence of another influential immigrant, Mr. Renzi, the sons of Antonio were able to see a documentary about the city of Rome with all its ancient and modern monuments:

the vast crowded squares, streets full of movement, the bridges over the Tiber, from which you could see the water running in the river; the Montecitorio palace with the release of the deputies, after a session of the Chamber; the beautiful Piazza del Quirinale, with its ancient fountains, and the king crossing it in a car with the Queen, amidst a cheering crowd; the beautiful gardens of the Vatican, behind the church of San Pietro, where the Pope can enjoy a panorama of the city. The children really had the impression they were in Rome, walking among the different people, amongst whom you could notice, by their dress, strangers from all parts of the world, and the peasants of the Roman countryside dressed in colorful costumes. In the second part of the show, one could see the monuments of ancient Rome, or the remains of those magnificent buildings that time and barbaric conquerors spoiled for the most part, without destroying them entirely. What majesty in those ruins! The *Roman Forum*, with its ruins of temples, theatres and imperial palaces appeared on the white canvas; stained columns, erected by the ancient emperors in memory of battles won, the walls, the tombs of the *Via Appia*, and finally, the *Colosseum*, the huge arena that was used for public performances. The Romans had more than one arena or circus, where gladiators fought each other, or slaves and Christians fought animals. How could they have enjoyed such a cruel spectacle?⁷⁷

The explanations of Mr. Renzi about Rome are followed by four pictures. In another episode that takes place in the library of Uncle Alberto, grandchildren open a book of fine art with portraits of great artists:

Italy gave the world the greatest number of artists. Just remember; for poetry *Dante*, who wrote *The Divine Comedy*, and he is regarded as the greatest poet who ever lived; for sculpture *Michelangelo*, for painting *Raphael* and *Leonardo da Vinci* unsurpassed in their art; for music *Giuseppe Verdi*. Italy had, in every period, famous artists, who earned her the name of the land of genius⁷⁸.

In the story of a school day, the teacher announces the earthquake in Reggio Calabria, followed by two images of the ruins in the city and asks for donations to be sent to their compatriots⁷⁹.

The parts richest with illustrations are the last two and relate to the history of Rome and of ancient Italy and geography. The part about the history of Rome and ancient Italy followed the narration of a book given by the uncle to Enrichetta that dealt with the life, customs and the history of the first inhabitants

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-80.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 105-107.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-124.

of Italy, starting from the foundation of Rome to the fall of the Roman Empire and the Middle Ages. The images framed in the narrative of the history of ancient Rome were reproductions of paintings (The Oath of the Horatii with three swords) and of statue busts (from Lucius Junius Brutus, Scipio, Julius Caesar, Octavian and Nero up until Constantine)⁸⁰.

This book ends with a part about geography that, in addition to the description of the configuration of the territory, also has a section on Italian history accompanied by illustrations of Turin, Naples, Florence and Bologna (probably postcards) with a paragraph on the Italian political situation that presents the portraits of Vittorio Emanuele III and his wife Queen Elena, Princess of Montenegro, followed by other paragraphs on the Italian colonies in Eritrea, Somalia and Benadir, followed by Europe and the continents and a final chapter on the different ‘races’⁸¹.

Amongst the readings for 4th, 5th and 6th classes there are also the two school books *Cuor Lontano (Far Heart)* by F. Pasciuti and G. Di Giusto (both of 1921)⁸², which use different style forms such as the choral narrative and the epistolary device. Again, the choral narration of the teacher, of parents and relatives recreates the atmosphere of the school as a ‘space’ of discussion and communion between different social classes, typical of De Amicis’s novel *Cuore*⁸³. The readings on the cities, in the reading book for the 4th class, describe the cities with their monuments as home to relatives or famous men, taking their cue from the place of birth–homeland of an Italian, sometimes a relative, sometimes a writer or a patriot such as Torquato Tasso or Macedonio Melloni.

An example about Mount Vesuvius is very typical. In the passage of *Le bellezze naturali dell’Italia. Napoli e il Vesuvio [The natural beauty of Italy. Naples and Mount Vesuvius]*, a lawyer from the colony, Franci, tells his sons the story of the illustrious physicist Macedonio Melloni (1798-1854), whose reputation was such that he received a letter from Abraham Lincoln. Exiled for his patriotic feelings, he finds refuge in Naples, where he persuaded the government of the usefulness of a geodynamic observatory on Vesuvius, whose direction is entrusted to another physicist, then Senator of Italy, Luigi Palmieri (1807-1896):

Vesuvius, as I told you, is a volcano in constant activity: it always smokes and at intervals of several years erupts incandescent lava, but more often lapilli and ash. The eruption that

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 154-202.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-245.

⁸² F. Pasciuti, G. Di Giusto, *Cuor lontano. Corso di letture ad uso delle scuole italiane all'estero. Libro per la 4^a Classe Elementare*, illustrations by G. Rondini, Firenze, R. Bemporad e Figlio Editori, 1921; Idd., *Cuor lontano. Corso di letture ad uso delle scuole italiane all'estero. Libro per la 5^a e la 6^a Classe Elementare*, illustrations by G. Rondini, Firenze, R. Bemporad e Figlio Editori, 1921.

⁸³ Pasciuti, Di Giusto, *Cuor lontano. Corso di letture ad uso delle scuole italiane all'estero. Libro per la 4^a Classe Elementare*, cit., p. 10.

took place in Pliny's time is still famous because two magnificent cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum were buried under lava and under a layer of about twenty meters of ash and lapilli. We'll call them magnificent cities because they have proven to be so during the excavations and disinterments, that are still on-going. Pompeii, especially, appears incomparably rich. The last eruption of Vesuvius occurred a few decades ago [...] The top of Vesuvius enjoys a view which is enchanting. The entire breadth of the gulf of Naples was visible, with the islands of Capri and Ischia, which seem to block the port in the distance⁸⁴.

Among the book readings for the 5th-6th classes there is a series entitled *Visioni di bellezze e di Gloria della patria lontana* [Visions of beauty and Glory in the far homeland]⁸⁵ which uses the device of correspondence, canonical for these types of description⁸⁶. The letters and postcards sent for example by some scholars of Florence, by the students of the popular course of the School of Oristano and the pupils of the popular course in Naples, are then read during the meeting of compatriots in the reading room of the Italian Union club by some influential expats such as the lawyer Franks, Barini, president of the Italian community and Colli the female teacher of the popular course in girls' schools.

The readings on the cities, which provide a frame to the monuments' illustrations, were actually a pretext to present the biographies of famous men, who had fought heroically there or who had been born there, as in the case of the city of Bari, Lecce, Cosenza, Taranto, Catanzaro and Antrodoco, modern Cagliari, Guardiagrele, Ravenna, L'Aquila, Trieste and Lacedonia.

Let us deal first with Bari, then some of the others:

Just look at the square in the middle of which the imposing Theatre (Politeama) Petruzzelli stands: this really monumental theatre is a very audacious modern construction, and worthy of a great and civilized city [...] The Castle is a very solid construction with various buildings with inner and outer ramparts. On the west side it has two large square towers as last redoubts [...]. Bari is superb for two other distinguished art monuments. The church of St. Nicholas, built in the eleventh century, has kept as a whole and in its details, a most beautiful Gothic line. Its inside is similar to the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi. This wonderful Umbrian cultural monument has three floors: the Church of St. Nicolò – more commonly known as St. Nichola – has two floors [...]. The cathedral, which was originally built according to the precepts of the Gothic style; in 1745, in restoring it, baroque additions were made which have disfigured it⁸⁷.

We read about Antrodoco in the province of L'Aquila, of which historical moments are narrated, including the betrayal of Guglielmo Pepe, sent by the Carbonari in the Naples area to face the Austrian army:

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-56.

⁸⁵ Pasciuti, Di Giusto, *Cuor lontano. Corso di letture ad uso delle scuole italiane all'estero. Libro per la 5^a e la 6^a Classe Elementare*, pp. 54-57, 62-64, 74-78, 87-91.

⁸⁶ Targhetta, *The beloved face of the fatherland*, cit., p. 149.

⁸⁷ Pasciuti, Di Giusto, *Cuor lontano. Corso di letture ad uso delle scuole italiane all'estero. Libro per la 5^a e la 6^a Classe Elementare*, cit., pp. 104-105.

From the Valley of San Quirico is glimpsed, perched on the slopes, a hill covered in very thick and luxuriant vegetation: at the bottom Monte Terminillo sits majestically, 2215 meters high. To this same chain as Terminillo – which is the secondary one of the Apennines – also belongs Monte Velino, which together with the Maiella, crown the Gran Sasso, and form, in the heart of Italy, the Altipiano of L’Aquila⁸⁸.

And the description of the city of Favignana on the Cilento, by a schoolboy, combines historical past and present economic development and, in particular, the Florio industry for the processing of tuna with the historical memory of the patriots Ottavio Tupputi (1791-1865) and Giovanni Nicotera (1828-1894), whom the schoolboy discovered under his father’s guidance:

One day I went up on the mountain where there is a fortress that the Bourbons, as usual, used as a prison for political prisoners and, accompanied by my father, I went down to the caves, where they locked up the persecuted patriots. The fortress is called Castello di Santa Caterina: on the rock were written in blood the names that my father read to me by the light of a match: – Tupputi – Nicòtera. As you can imagine, I did not give my father a moment’s rest and badgered him with questions [...]⁸⁹.

The father recounted to his son the historical memory of two more or less well-known patriots: Tupputi was the head of the Neapolitan revolution of May, 15th 1848 and died in the cave after ten years of imprisonment; Nicotera was in charge of some patriots, who had landed in Ponza to free the prisoners with whom they then landed in the Gulf of Policastro (Cilento)⁹⁰.

In the reading books published since the mid-twenties, as a result of the fascistization process, a very noticeable trend emerges of celebrating the protagonists of the Risorgimento and the Great War with a focus on public events and rituals that ensued from these historical events. The reading book by Alarico Buonaiuti, *Italia Lontana. Libro di lettura per le classi superiori delle scuole elementari italiane all'estero* [Far Italy. Reading Book for the Upper Classes of Italian Primary Schools Abroad] consists of two volumes⁹¹, which are both presented as a school story, structured in cycles of readings, which has much in common with the model of the novel *Cuore* by De Amicis, with its ‘fraternal promise’ to the two new pupils who arrive from Tunis⁹².

The protagonist is the teacher Giusto Carlini who arrives in Tunis after having taught in the school of Montevideo, to perform its patriotic educational mission as evidenced by his question asked to a schoolchild who was in Montevideo about the visit of the Garibaldi monument (this passage was accompanied

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 168-170.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 172-175.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

⁹¹ A. Buonaiuti, *Italia Lontana. Libro di lettura per le classi superiori delle scuole elementari italiane all'estero, premiato e approvato dal Ministero degli Affari Esteri. 55 photographic illustrations*, 2 vols., Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1925.

⁹² *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 7.

by the image of the famous monument of Garibaldi in Rome)⁹³. The teacher Carlini says afterwards that «here in these schools far from Italy, the teacher is for you more than a teacher and a father; he is the priest of a faith, he is the one who every day, through his words, brings you the voice of the Fatherland [...]. Love him and try to be worthy of him»⁹⁴.

His patriotic message is the thread of very different reading cycles that connect the various aspects of history and Italian culture with the history of emigration. On the page dedicated to the anniversary of the founding of Rome, the image of the Campidoglio (without indicating the source), is accompanied by a reading on the most glorious martyr of Brazilian independence, Tiradentes (1746-1872), because the same day marks the anniversary of the hanging of this heroic patriot «in the school the greatest hero of the friendly nation was commemorated, who, as a martyr of freedom belongs to all nations. But Rome was foremost in the minds of Italian pupils who felt more than ever the pride of their origins»⁹⁵. On the anniversary of April, 21st, the day of Rome's foundation and the death of a national hero, in the imagination of emigrants' their distant origins and memories of illustrious men were indissolubly united. Not only migrations of Italians in foreign places were described, but also of foreigners coming from countries of the former Roman Empire, as in the case of a Romanian who came to Rome to visit the Traian colony, as he called it, – «mama Roma, Tata Traian»⁹⁶ –, facing very tiring travelling conditions. On the history of Rome and in particular the Empire, there is just a mosaic portrait of Virgil found in Tunisia⁹⁷, to symbolically indicate the extent of the imperial borders.

The teacher then recalled the journey of Christopher Columbus, followed by Pedro Alvarez Cabral (1467/68-1520), who discovered Brazil, with images of Rio representing the host country. Descriptions of Italian cities are interwoven with the emigration countries, in particular Brazil, where Garibaldi comes at the age of thirty in 1837 to fight both in this country and in Uruguay by appealing to the Italians, and leaves for the defense of the Republic of Rome in 1848⁹⁸. The narrative continues with stories of families who have emigrated to America, for example, from Genoa, accompanied by the images of their hometown⁹⁹.

The image of the Italo-Brazilian Institute «Dante Alighieri» is placed alongside some tales of schoolchildren with brothers killed during the War¹⁰⁰. The story

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-39.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 206-208.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-57.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-61.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-79.

about November, the 4th is accompanied by the image of the monument to Victor Emmanuel II with the tomb of the unknown soldier at his feet:

We are not, today, with the people of Rome, prostrate on those sacred stones. Nor are we with our brothers from other cities, where in some other form, but with the same religion, we remember the sacrifice of our fallen and the victory of our Army. But why cannot we raise our spirits as high as our compatriots of the Kingdom¹⁰¹?

The readings on art, which are given special attention, frame portraits and reproductions of paintings by Raphael, Michelangelo and Botticelli¹⁰². Very particular is the reading of *San Francesco e il Sultano* [St. Francis and the Sultan], which dealt with the Mohammedans conversion by St. Francis of Assisi, who had gone specially to the East (followed by Alinari's reproduction of a fresco by Simone Martini, 1284-1344)¹⁰³.

Italy is then also described as the home of musicians:

The Italians have music in their blood. The tune of a song is ever on the lips of the labourer intent on his work. The street kid, who with his hands in his pocket, hops from one pavement to the other along the road, whistling his mischievous air. The fishermen sing along the seashore, while from the solid trawlers they pour into round baskets piles of fish shimmering in the sun, the farmers sing in the furrows and the women at the fountains¹⁰⁴.

In the reading, which also contains reproductions of portraits of Gioacchino Rossini and Giuseppe Verdi, the most famous Italian theaters are enumerated including the Teatro Massimo in Palermo whose image is presented¹⁰⁵. A description of industrialized Italy concludes the book and most likely the school year: «Italy is not just a country of unsurpassed arts and noble memories, but it is also a nation of fervent work, and, with a few others, leads the civilized world today». Among the various industries, there are automotive and the iron ones with a view of the factories of Fiat, of the Terni steelworks and the electric furnace for melting of metals at Officine Ansaldo¹⁰⁶.

The second volume of the reading book by Buonaiuti, *Italia Lontana. Libro di lettura per le classi superiori delle scuole elementari italiane all'estero* [Distant Italy. Reading Book for the Upper Classes of Italian Primary Schools Abroad]¹⁰⁷, begins the narrative with the start of the new school year. The class composition has changed: two companions, the brothers Berti, have returned to Rome and then traveled to New York, where they are enrolled at «Alessandro

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 99-106.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-25.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 219-221.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 225-229.

¹⁰⁷ Buonaiuti, *Italia Lontana*, vol. 2, cit.

Manzoni» school¹⁰⁸. Again, the readings of cycles required by the teacher has recourse to the device of correspondence and, after some introductory passages on emigration geography, there is a reading about the day of the Milite Ignoto (*Unknown Soldier*) accompanied by the image of the tomb, with following words as commentary: «the memory of the martyrs sacrificed for the greatness of the nation should not nurture in us an empty feeling, but, passing in our minds, it should be like a flame that illuminates and urges us on to the most noble enterprises. The homeland is like a living body»¹⁰⁹. This passage is followed by the biography of Vittorio Emanuele III with his portrait, with whom «lies the unsurpassed glory of having accomplished the independence and unity of the country, freeing from the yoke of the older and more formidable empire those Italian provinces that were still enslaved»¹¹⁰.

In this text, the readings dedicated to Italy are more extensive and intertwine the history of city, culture, historical memory and war. Pictures of the Duomo and of the Castello Sforzesco and the portrait of Alessandro Manzoni are presented about Milan. The images of the Alpine landscape and the Passo di Buole in Lagarina Valley illustrate the story of the uncle of a schoolmate, and in those places he had gone blind. At Christmas time, celebrated in the church of St. Anthony of Padua, there is the image of the *Adorazione dei Magi* by Gentile da Fabriano (1370 ca-1427)¹¹¹. The biographies of famous men are interspersed for example with a reproduction of Dante's by the Alinari brothers. About Garibaldi we read that after the fall of the Roman Republic, the hero left for Gibraltar, Tangier, Liverpool and finally New York. In 1882 his house was donated to the Italians; in front of it, the classmate Antonio Berti bared his head as before an altar¹¹².

In this book there is a particular focus on art and artists: Leonardo with his portrait and reproductions of the paintings of the *Ultima Cena* [Last Supper] and the *Mona Lisa* (only the latter is a photograph by Alinari):

In Milan, his attentions were focused on the *Cenacolo* (*Upper Room*), that he started painting in the refectory of the Convento della Madonna delle Grazie (Convent of Our Lady of Grace). The *Last Supper* of the Divine Master with the Apostles, the most significant drama of love and pain! And this sublime drama, the art of Leonardo, was represented in forms of such striking beauty and perfect truth, you could not imagine anything worthier of such a lofty subject¹¹³.

Next to the *Discorso della Montagna* [Sermon on the Mount], is placed the image of the painting by Titian *Il Redentore* [The Redeemer]; Cristoforo

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 81-85, 88-91, 92-101.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 116-118.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

Colombo with his «wonderful story of faith»¹¹⁴; the great navigators (Amerigo Vespucci with portrait), Giovanni and Sebastiano Caboto (with statues of father and son) and, finally, the portrait of Giovanni da Verrazzano (1485-1528), who explored the Atlantic coast to extend French trade routes¹¹⁵.

Among the readings on the major anniversaries is that of Christmas in Rome offering several images:

The large vaults of the arches open onto the house of triumphs, with square and unshakable foundations, the Roman victories over the most diverse peoples carved on their facades. And when we sit down at the first ancient stone that we chance upon, and we close for a moment our eyes tired from too much seeing, the city of the Caesars rises again, in our imagination, the whiteness of marble and the cheering of trophies, and we seem to feel around us the heartbeat of a world obedient and devoted to the wisdom of Rome¹¹⁶.

Then follow the pictures of the Colosseum, the Pantheon, the Palatine-Avanzi and the walls of Romulus (the latter, photographed by Alinari), Pope Pius XI, the Square and the Basilica of St. Peter (the second photograph Alinari), the *Disputa del SS. Sacramento* [Dispute of the SS. Sacramento] by Raffaello, the *Mosè* by Michelangelo and Castel Sant'Angelo:

The three Romes intersect, intermingle and mix up. It is Rome, always Rome, reigning immortal in its unique civilization, made of strength, wisdom and goodness. Emperors, Popes, Kings succeed with providential pace in the government of the beautiful city, absorbing gradually from others the elements of its greatness and its eternity¹¹⁷.

It proposes a description of ancient history, which goes up to the present day:

And today the monument to Vittorio Emanuele, that holds the Altar of the Fatherland and the remains of the *Milite ignoto* (*Unknown Soldier*), and is located between the pagan Campidoglio and Christian Palace of the Republic of Venice, is the gigantic marble symbol of this mighty history and of this civilization, in which the divine and the human intertwine themselves, and that is ever more unshakable as it incorporates into the vigorous race new inspiration from flourishing youth and each new era¹¹⁸.

The descriptions of Genoa and Venice frame the images of the Grand Canal, the Doge's Palace and St. Marco Basilica¹¹⁹; Florence is represented by the Palazzo della Signoria, Naples by the Castel Sant'Elmo, Bologna by the two towers (Brogi's photography), Pisa by the Campanile pendent, Palermo by the Norman cathedral, Turin by the Mole Antonelliana (the latter, photography

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 109-11, 116-119, 120-124, 133-135, 140-142.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-204.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 177-184, p. 182 for the quotation.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 189-195.

Alinari), Turin by the Castello del Valentino (Sommer's photography) and by the Royal Palace (both Alinari's photographs)¹²⁰.

Among the final readings one is dedicated to distant teachers, and in particular to the teacher Plinio, who has been in New York for six years, where he had moved after ten years of teaching in Egypt:

but the name of Italy was still alive and sweet on his lips as one of the most cherished and unforgettable people. Concerning Italianness (*italianità*), he was in no way less versed than the teachers Antonio met in Tunis and Sao Paulo. All were equal, those patient sowers of the name, the language, the thought of Italy, across borders and across the seas of the Fatherland! All faithful, all enthusiasts alike! They had something of the apostle and the priest [...] They spoke of the Fatherland as something otherworldly and it seemed that, at any moment, they should kneel in adoration. Their voices thick in grief, and sometimes their eyes moistened. It was an ardent love but contained by a great sadness, the love of the exile, even though for them one should not speak of exile¹²¹.

A gallery of portraits of men of today's Italy, Alessandro Volta, the Duke of the Abruzzi, Luigi di Savoia, Carducci, Giovanni Pascoli, Gabriele D'Annunzio and a panorama of the city of Fiume, of which the latter is described as a liberator, conclude the volume¹²².

The teacher ended the tale with references to the present day and to the list of 'distant pupils', drawn up to allow pupils who returned to Italy to maintain contact with those from 'far away Italy' in the emigrant countries¹²³.

The reading book by Giuseppe Locatelli and Arturo Mondovì, *Voci dalla patria lontana. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero* [Voices from the distant homeland. Reading course for Italian Schools Abroad]¹²⁴ in two volumes for the 4th and 5th classes (for boys and girls), with a cover of the triumphal arch, is the one that most reflects the fascistization process of the readings, which introduced the recent events regarding the heroes of the Great War, the diary pages of Mussolini and images of the March on Rome. Both volumes present images accompanying the readings, depicting views of Italian cities, proposed as sites of historical memory of the Italian nation.

The text for the 4th class (for boys and girls) presents selected readings of Italian authors, with a strong love of country. Among the first reading, the one by Edmondo De Amicis, *Saluto all'Italia* [A Salute to Italy], sacralized the patriotic sentiment in an especially particular rhetorical vein:

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 219-225. It deals with Giorgio Sommer (1934-1914), the Italian-German photographer.

¹²¹ Buonaiuti, *Italia Lontana...*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 227.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp. 278-293.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 283-286.

¹²⁴ G. Locatelli, A. Mondovì, *Voci dalla patria lontana. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero. Volume per la quarta classe maschile e femminile*, Milano, A. Mondadori, 1928; Idd., *Voci dalla patria lontana. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero. Volume per la quinta classe maschile e femminile*, Milano, A. Mondadori, 1928.

I love your beautiful seas and your sublime Alps, I love your solemn monuments and their immortal memories, I love your glory and your beauty: I love and revere you all like that dear part of you, where for the first time I saw the sun, and understood your name. I love you all and with one affection and equal gratitude; brave Turin, superb Genoa, learned Bologna, enchanting Venice, mighty Milan. I love you with equal reverence of a son, gentle Florence and terrific Palermo, immense and beautiful Naples, marvelous and eternal Rome. I love you, the sacred Homeland! And I swear that I will love all your children as brothers: always in my heart will I honor your great living and your mighty dead: I shall be an industrious and honest citizen, constantly seeking my nobler self, to make myself worthy of you, to strive with my meagre efforts to ensure that one day misery, ignorance, injustice, crime disappear from your face, and that you may live and prosper in the majesty of your rightness and your strength [...]¹²⁵.

The reproduction of the monument to Vittorio Emanuele II accompanies the reading of the Italian general and Marshal Armando Diaz (1861-1928) about what was then defined as Victory Day (on November, 4th, 1918), while that of the monument to Balilla in Zadar is in support of a reading on *Antichi eroi* [Ancient Heroes] and about *Le fatiche di Ercole* [The Labors of Hercules] by E. Gorini¹²⁶. In the reading *Dal diario di un bimbo* [From the Diary of a Child], a schoolboy writes that his father made him a member of the prestigious association, Touring Club Italiano, founded in the late nineteenth century for the promotion of tourism, by Luigi Vittorio Bertarelli (1859-1926), which counted already three hundred and eighty thousand members:

I came to know the Touring through the publication of its beautiful magazines that illustrate every beauty, every profession, every industry, every advance, every work of our Italian project, but I did not know that it was very effective propaganda abroad for Italianness [...]; I can embellish my library with a collection of the guides to all the regions of Italy, and read them to carefully learn about my great motherland, to learn to love it more and more¹²⁷.

The readings were followed by images relevant to the topic described, although in some cases they allude to a more complex symbolism that needed further explanation by the teacher: the reading of *The zoo animals*: by V. Brocchi *Gli animali del giardino zoologico* [The Animals of the zoological garden] is accompanied by a reproduction of *L'adorazione dei pastori* [Adoration of the Shepherds] by Domenico Ghirlandaio of the Church of the Holy Trinity (in Florence), *Il Gran San Bernardo* by Giuseppe Cesare Abba (1838-1910) by the Mont Blanc seen from Prà Neiron (Piedmont); the one about the *Quattro signori del mondo* [The four masters of the world] by the reproduction of Christopher Columbus's monument in Genoa; the one about *Antichi eroi* [Ancient heroes] by the one of the fresco from the Palazzo Ducale in Mantua,

¹²⁵ Locatelli, Mondovì, *Voci dalla patria lontana. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero. Volume per la quarta classe maschile e femminile*, cit., pp. 2-3.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 27-29, 31-33.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

the well-known Palace of Gonzaga, *Tetide che consegna ad Achille le armi fabbricate da Vulcano* [Tethys delivering Achilles weapons manufactured by Vulcan]; the passage *Il cuore del nostro re* [The heart of our king] was followed by a view of Florence; Edmondo De Amicis's reading *San Pietro*, by the image of Rome with the Castel Sant'Angelo bridge. Finally, the reading on Naples (followed by an image of the landscape) also contains a nice description of Capri «between the two young saplings the heart raced at the divine spectacle of an immense city nestled on the slopes, lying upstream around the gulf, facing the sea of a deep blue light shimmering with gold, on which Capri seemed to sail, serene like turquoise»¹²⁸.

The reading on the Ligurian coast, by the writer and patriot Giovanni Ruffini (1807-1881), is also characterized by lyrical descriptions of typical Italian landscapes of fascism:

[There are] few more beautiful roads in Europe than these between Nice and Genoa; and few, like this, gather together three elements of natural beauty: the Mediterranean on one side, on the other the Apennines and above the pure sky of Italy. Above all, man's industry has made every effort, if not to overcome, at least not to remain inferior to nature. A succession of cities and little villages, some nicely laid out on the shore, their feet bathed by the silver waves, others scattered like a herd of white lambs on the mountainside, or picturesquely perched on top of a chain of lofty mountains [...] In short, everywhere touched by human hand, shows the hard work and industry of a race of vigorous and gentle people [...]¹²⁹.

Among the most significant readings of the book for the 5th class of primary school by Giuseppe Locatelli, Arturo Mondovì, *Voci dalla patria lontana. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero* [Voices from the Distant Homeland. Course Readings for Italian Schools Abroad]¹³⁰, 1928, is the one written by the same Locatelli, *L'arte italiana (Italian art)*, which exalts the Italian aptitude for art:

Wherever in the world destiny has brought you unexpectedly, you will feel a natural and spontaneous admiration for beautiful things, because the Italian soul worships the arts naturally spontaneously. Our Italy is homeland of beauty: you certainly do not know it because you were born far away, or you left too young to remember her, but your father and your mom will often have the vision in their eyes of some of the serene landscape of the region that they saw being created and some great masterpiece of art and beauty that abound in your Italy.

Do you want to come with me, on an imaginary journey, on a aircraft that crosses the sea, or the plains or the mountains that divide you from the Homeland? And from up high you will notice the land of sun, flowers and smiles they call "the garden of Europe". You will see the cloister of very high mountains that enclose it from the north, from the white spires of snow on their outside, full of impressive glaciers; you will see the beauty of its deep and green valleys, rich in meadows and shady forests: the expanse of its golden fields, when the ears

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61, 75-77, 130-132, 153-155.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-166.

¹³⁰ Locatelli, Mondovì, *Voci dalla patria lontana. Corso di letture per le scuole italiane all'estero. Volume per la quinta classe maschile e femminile*, cit.

of wheat sway in the sun; and its sonorous rivers that give life to many powerful industrial machines. Look, italic boy that you have in your eyes other skies, other visions of countries maybe completely different from ours; here is your beautiful land stretched between the azure seas. The picture now changes: on the Apennines sloping towards the waves, olive tree grows, conifers rise up, oranges scent the air, and beautiful gardens, full of palm trees and flowers, stretch along the seashore¹³¹.

The Locatelli description continues with the Italian cities of Genoa, Trieste and Venice to Rome:

We are in Rome, where every stone, every monument, every hill sings of a story of immortal greatness. Entering in this wonderful house of God, fixing your eyes on her endless chapels, or raising them up to the superb dome that seems to break through to the sky, let us bend our knees in ecstatic admiration. The columns, chapels, statues, altars, paintings, mosaics, furniture, everything around is a work of art that challenges the centuries: countless masterpieces will eternalize the name of the chief sculptors, painters and architects. And here we are in Milan, in front of the Duomo, which was called the eighth wonder of the world. And all in marble, it raises the dense forest of its endless spires and its pinnacles adorned with statues and embroidered stone up into the blue sky of Lombardy. And upon entering, a mystical feeling assails you as you pass under the towering Gothic arches, while the light reaches you through the large, artfully stained windows. In Venice, in the enchanting city on the lagoon, here is the Church of St. Mark: an oriental dream, full of alabaster, porphyry, with precious marble, adorned with ancient mosaics, with Byzantine interior heavens, and a gold background. In Florence, where everything is a hymn to art, we will enter the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore. Oh, if only you could enter, just for an instant, the beautiful Gothic temple designed by Brunelleschi, “wonder of beautiful things” – as it was called by another great, Benvenuto Cellini! If you could see its graceful bell tower, which immortalized the name of Giotto!... And the beautiful Baptistery, with Ghiberti’s doors, of which Dante sang in his eternal poem! But all, all Italic towns have churches, palaces and cultural monuments, which they jealously preserve, and are their greatest boast¹³².

In general, the historical readings are characterized by a marked intention to render the homeland sacred, while the readings on Italian culture aim to instill a strong sense of national pride even in the natural and hydrological heritage. This is especially so in readings by Giuseppe Pennesi (1854-1909), *La Cascata delle Marmore* [The Marmore Falls], where one reads:

It is one of the most picturesque, wonderful and impressive spectacles of nature to be seen not only in Umbria, but throughout the whole of Italy and perhaps in Europe [...] During the great flood and the maximum capacity of the Velino, it seems, in fact, that it really wants to justify the “water hell” expression with which the English poet Byron once had stupendously to greet her; a hell of murky yellowish waters, which, by pulverising themselves as we said, wrap everything around in thick fog, and making a rumbling roar which even further away than usual, presages the terrible and sublime grandeur of the spectacle¹³³.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 132-134.

The ideological elements that characterized the readings just examined became more and more marked in the printed textbooks from the late twenties on. These reading books were undoubtedly used in the expectation that the new ones would also be printed and distributed in the countries of emigration.

2.1. *The «Italic beauties» in Fascist State schoolbooks for the 2nd and 3rd classes of primary school*

After the introduction of the law on the single State schoolbook of January 7th, 1929 special reading books were published for the Italian schools abroad, two in this case, one for the 2nd class and one for the 3rd class which went to print respectively in 1932 and 1929. Of course, in the first of these two texts, the presence of religious readings was more frequent than the latter, since it was published after the Lateranensian Treaty (Patti Lateranensi, February, 11th 1929).

Let's start with the book *Letture. Classe seconda* [Readings. Second Class], 1932, compiled by Clementina Bagagli (and illustrated by Angelo della Torre)¹³⁴, which reveals a change of style and form in line with the rhetoric of the regime but without devoting so much attention to the Italian cultural heritage. Among the propagandistic readings on April 21st, on the power of Rome and Mussolini, some relate to the seasons, the work of the courts and nature, ending with a thanksgiving to God and for «all creatures of the earth and the sky»¹³⁵, an important element in the Gentile school reform that had made religion the basis of school education¹³⁶.

As to the description of mountain ranges, the narrative interweaves nature and history, because the mountain ranges are also a national border to defend from possible enemies:

Italy has a wonderful ring of high mountains, which rise to the sky with peaks covered by snow and ice. These mountains form a long chain, the Alpine chain, which like a giant wall separates Italy from other countries. On the high mountains the Italian soldiers keep watch. Anyone who wanted to pass them as an enemy would find our brave alpiners ready to defend them to the death¹³⁷.

Among the final stories, the passage about *Gli italiani nel mondo* [The Italians in the world] offers a pretext for describing the adventurous and fearless character of the Italians with their hardworking nature, that new generations, united by the feeling of love of country, are called to emulate:

¹³⁴ *Letture. Classe seconda. Compilato da C. Bagagli. Illustrato da A. Della Torre*, Milano, Direzione Generale delle scuole italiane all'estero, 1932.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

¹³⁶ Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola*, cit., pp. 98-100.

¹³⁷ *Letture. Classe seconda*, cit., p. 96.

But the Italians have never been afraid of anything and, as your fathers did, have always gone far in the world to work or to get to know new countries. They have never been afraid of stormy seas, the fiery deserts, impenetrable forests, and wherever they have sweated and toiled, the uncultivated lands have bloomed, the fields have given harvests and the hills were covered by grapevines and olive trees. They dug mines to tear from the earth its treasures, built bridges and crossed the great rivers, they built palaces and factories, created whole cities. There is no country in the world where the Italians have not brought the wealth of their work [...] The Italians, living as neighbours in the same neighbourhood, feel less distant from the Homeland¹³⁸.

Among the songs collected in the textbook *Lettura. Classe terza* [Readings. Third class]¹³⁹, 1929, which contain more complex descriptions of nature and of Italian cities, there is one entitled *Le Alpi* [The Alps], followed by a Grafia's reproduction of Lavaredo Peaks. The naturalistic narration, which concerns the changing seasons and the lives of men, ends with the statement that men who climb the mountains «feel closer to the sun and to God», in a clear allusion to religious education upon which primary school teaching was centered after Gentile's 1923 reform¹⁴⁰.

Other geographic descriptions concern the seas and coasts, such as the following:

No Country ever had so much sea inside its borders. The coasts of Italy are bent here and there in a round arch, as around Genoa and Venice, Naples and Salerno. They have bold and gentle scalloping, as along Tuscany and Calabria. They have long smooth marine roads, as along the Adriatic, from Ravenna to the extreme Capo d'Otranto. Only a flower could boast so imprecise a design for its fine petals. The line between land and water is a restless border of white lace¹⁴¹.

A tale of an elderly man, describing to his nephew Bruno his return home, offered the opportunity to comment on some of the natural and artistic beauties of Tuscany – «one of the most varied and picturesque regions» –: «There are the Apuan Alps, and certainly they are a treasure trove because from their sides is drawn the whitest and finest marble that there is in the world»; and where you encounter historic cities, jealous guardians of centuries-old treasures, such as Pisa, in which the grandfather pointed out on returning to Pisa, «you could see the leaning Campanile, the Cathedral, the Baptistery, all white, like lace, on the beautiful green lawn»¹⁴².

Among the geographical stories, some concern the islands, from the larger ones, like Corsica, Sicily and Sardinia, to lesser ones, such as Elba and

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-104.

¹³⁹ Scuole italiane all'estero, *Lettura. Classe terza*, Roma, Libreria dello Stato, 1929.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-35.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 56.

Lampedusa (with images of the tip of Sardinia, from Alinari's photographs)¹⁴³. About the *Tre coppe azzurre* (*Three Blue Trophy Cups*) i.e. the Lake Maggiore, Lake Como and Lake Garda, with the Isola Bella on Lake Maggiore, we read:

People from around the world come to these blue cups, eager to enjoy the magical serenity. Boats with agile oars and square sails, white vapors plumed with smoke pass along the coasts and islands, through the clear waves, from country to country. High up on the slopes, other towns facing each other with rows of black houses; from there, in recent times, other people left to find work in the world; from those towns migrated the Alpini who defended and conquered all of our mountains¹⁴⁴.

This passage is followed by a poem called *Paese mio* [My Country] with a verse of «My country so far, I do not know if I will ever go back. But I know in my heart I feel Italian, and I know that I will never forget you. And if I'm striving to study with all my heart, believe me, it is because I want to honour you»¹⁴⁵, and other propagandist passages which present, firstly, Vittorio Emanuele II and, then, the benefits bestowed on Italian families by Mussolini.

Speaking about gardens, many in Italy, rich in vegetation such as Villa d'Este, Boboli, Caserta and Poggio a Caiano, a passage evokes the memories of the garden at home, in contrast to the more famous places: «some cities, as though they were a single magnificent palace, have their huge park: Rome has Villa Borghese, Florence has the Cascine»¹⁴⁶.

The description of the Apennines is geographical, whilst the one about the Tiber evokes the past, «The water, which has seen so much history in tens of centuries, still reflects, nearby, the Mole of Hadrian and the Cupola of San Pietro (accompanied by Alinari's photographs of the Tiber with the Castel Sant'Angelo)»¹⁴⁷. Another recurring passage is the one about *Le cento città* [Hundred cities] (a famous collection of illustrated monographs, edited by Sonzogno, 1924-1929) with the description that begins with Torino and moves to Genoa, Milan, Venice, Naples and Palermo arriving in Rome, the primacy of whose ancient civilization is emphasized:

But the heart of Italy is Rome; between its infinite houses are the homes of the Pontifex, of the King and of the Duce. And if every country has many beautiful cities, no one has the Urbe (*from latin Urbs, t.i. Rom*). Until now, by the seven hills, Rome raises the glories of the sword and the cross, of the human and divine law; the stones of the Colosseum and the columns of the Forum endure the passing centuries; Michelangelo's Cupola binds the earth and the sky. Rome, the head of the world, has found her way to be once again truly *first* in the history of civilization¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-66.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 125-126.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 137-139.

2.2. *The representation of cultural heritage in the fascist State schoolbook for 4th and 5th classes of the primary school*

The textbook for the 4th class, *Lettura. Classe IV* [Readings. Class IV], is an anthology of works by Italian classics of different topics, geographical, natural and mythological and of Greek and Roman history (that frame the reproduction of portraits of Homer and Julius Caesar). There are also lectures on agriculture and Mussolini¹⁴⁹. In general, the readings, which do not retain the narrative devices used in reading books, are pervaded by a feeling of love of country described with a lyricism typical of schoolbooks published after the law on state schoolbooks of 1929, such as the following passage:

Another road runs through Italy from top to bottom, from the Alps to the very top of Sicily: it is the mountain chain of the Apennines, and no country in the world has the same. We can cast our eyes lovingly over it. Genoa is the center of the arch: lying on the sea with the arms of its crowded docks out, its splendid marble palaces rising high in the air, its spacious terraces plumed by green until the fawn hump of Righi, that touches the bright clouds¹⁵⁰.

The reading *La grande pianura* [The great plain] describes the Padan valley crossed by the river Po, with its cities and lakes, down to the lagoon of Venice (with an image of Venice, from Grafia's reproduction). It is followed by a geographical description of Emilia whose renowned fertility is praised:

Towards the north and to the east, beyond the Modenese Apennine foothills, lies the whole plain of Emilia, between the line of the Po and the Adriatic. Where the water was driven back by force, carpets of lush green hemp, large wheat fields, rows of Lambrusco and squares of tall maize, bless this rich land¹⁵¹.

Speaking of Tuscany, a very detailed description is offered:

This is the ancient Etruria, the glorious Tuscany, where God created in a short space of time something that recalls the beauty of the whole of Italy. Here are high mountains covered with ancient forests: the Vallombrosa, the cool Casentino, the Falterona, father of the Arno and the Tevere; and it is only round Amiata, that among the roots of his chestnuts keeps cinnabar hidden... But amongst so many flowers, in which fields and gardens rejoice, there is one that rises pure and serene as a lily, in the city of the lily: the Tower of Giotto, near the Brunelleschi Dome. Florence, lying in the sun between the green of its flowering hills, along the slow river, greets you with that same sky blue lily. But grace and strength go hand in hand, because near to the Campanile is the iron Tower of Arnolfo steadfast against all winds [...]. Everywhere there is a neighbourhood, a village, a town at hand and nearby is a city:

¹⁴⁹ Scuole Italiane all'estero, *Lettura. Classe IV*, Roma, Libreria dello Stato, 1929.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-32, 42.

both turreted Siena, Lucca garlanded with tall trees, and also Livorno open to the southwest wind and to the seething sea wave. Pass between fields and villas, gardens and cities, the roads leading to Rome [followed by the reproduction of a photograph entitled *Tuscany ... a smiling and thoughtful grace (Toscana... una grazia sorridente e pensosa)* by Graphia]¹⁵².

The description of the city alternates with that of the regions, described in great detail. In the passage *Dolce Umbria* [Umbria Sweet] the Marche region is described, very similar to Umbria for the shape of its territory:

All Umbria is here: blanketed in emerald green, rich in running water and fountains, scattered with towns and shrines. Its smile has the light of the Saints who were born here, and from here they left to light the world. Before casting our eye over the Tyrrhenian sea, a glory even without sunsets, let us turn again to the Levantine Sea, to the dawn sea and we will see the whole Marca, sloping up the hill of Loreto, where the Santa Casa shines between the torches, to the promontory of Ancona, where the Cathedral of San Ciriaco sits high upon the waves, like the spur of a victorious ship returned to port [followed by the photographs of Umbria titled: *Ricca di acque, sparsa di paesi e santuari (Rich in water, scattered with towns and shrines)*]¹⁵³.

The reading about the Roman countryside (with the image of the Appian Way) is followed by a poem about Rome and a drawing of the St. Peter Cupola:

The pious and solemn ground covers an ancient road. The new men come with ploughs, and along the furrows discover weapons red with rust, and with the hoe heroes' empty helmets resound once more. And here, like strong words imprinted in the air, the arches of the aqueducts, which race away high up only to stop suddenly; and here among the grass arise the vast carved tombs, and the square stones of the legionary's roads. Here is the white Basilica, at the very place where Saint Paul suffered his torment. And all the Urbs, from the seven hills, the world's port, raises up the glory of the sword and of the Cross, the glory of human law and divine mercy to heaven. Each land has its beautiful cities, no country has the Urbe¹⁵⁴.

In the reading about Rome, attuned to the cult of the Roman civilization from which the regime drew its political symbolism¹⁵⁵, the imperial period is dotted with its ancient bodies of government:

The palace of Emperor Augustus – the *Domus Augustana* – stood on the Palatine, before the Circo Massimo, with its facade following the curve of the Imperial stage box, from which the emperor could attend the games. On either side of the doors are two green laurels,

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 53-55.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

¹⁵⁵ Caroli, *L'insegnamento della storia antica e medievale nelle scuole fasciste e sovietiche fra le due guerre mondiali*, cit., pp. 321-352.

planted on the order of the Senate to symbolize the victories of Augustus. The peristyle had fifty marble columns, which opened all around onto sumptuous rooms. At every hour of the day judges, generals, envoys of the provinces came to the Palazzo, as if the golden mile were on the Palatine and no longer in the Fôro, where all the world's roads converged¹⁵⁶.

In a passage about Christianity, a painting by Gherardo delle Notti (Gerhard van Honthorst, 1592-1656), *L'adorazione dei pastori* [The Adoration of the Shepherds, in a Alinari's reproduction], follows the story of the birth of Christianity that, as per providence, used Rome for its diffusion and consolidation:

Prudencio Clemente, Iberian poet of the IV century, in his poem *Peristephanion*, said that the union of so many different peoples under the same laws of Rome, was "intended so that Christian righteousness could better tie together in a unique constraint every plague upon the earth". In the V century, the glorious Pope Leo Magno, in a sermon for the feast of Saints Peter and Paul declared: "Divine Providence has prepared the Roman Empire so that the grace of Redemption may propagate its effects throughout the world; and its development has been so extensive, that all the nations gathered seemed confused in her womb. For it was part of the divine plan that a large number of kingdoms be confused in one empire, and that Christian preaching, finding the roads open to it, should quickly reach all the peoples subject to the laws of a single city". This same idea had, as advocate, the greatest Christian poet, who was also one of the greatest Italians, Dante¹⁵⁷.

The book contains readings of poets, artists and musicians among whom we find Giotto (with a reproduction of the fresco *San Francesco predica agli uccelli* [Saint Francis Preaching to the Birds, Alinari's photography, and portrait by G. Dupre], Michelangelo (with a reproduction of *David*, photography and portrait by Alinari) and Verdi with the *Canzone eroica ai bambini d'Italia* [Heroic Song to the Children of Italy] about Giulio Giuseppe Lavezzari (1849-1915), Garibaldi's Legionnaires (with portrait and an image of the latter in a red shirt), who fell heroically on the Podgora during the Great War. It is also worth dwelling on Dante about whom the rhetoric of the regime provides a picture in ideological terms, full of patriotic elements:

Dante Alighieri had a very keen sense of Romanness; as much as he deplored the municipal divisions of his time and fervently wished for the restoration of the Roman universal monarchy, where Italy was like the beautiful garden of the Empire [...] This worship of the ancient world did not prevent Dante from becoming the greatest Christian poet, and fervent supporter of our people's faith; neither did his enthusiasm for universal empire impede a tender and intense love for Florence and Italy¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵⁶ Scuole Italiane all'estero, *Lecture. Classe IV*, cit., p. 97.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

In a final reading on *Il volto della Patria* [The face of the country], there is a patriotic feeling full of emotion¹⁵⁹, which leads to identifying the face of the mother country with the mother:

It is with us always, like a mother's face; and it reveals itself in the deep shadow in our hearts, above all when we go beyond the circle of mountainous giants, or sail beyond our seas. What unites all these aspects comes not only from our love. It also resides in things. We see and love a single face, because the mountains of the Alps and the plane of Apulia, and the Lombard Lake and Calabria Forest, populous countryside of Tuscany and the lonely valley of Basilicata bear a sign of equal nobility. This face has the beauty of a proud and gentle queen, which was a gift from God in the early days, a reflection of human souls, here open to all to love and hope for during countless days¹⁶⁰.

Published in 1929, the textbook *Lettura. Classe V* [Readings. Class V] contains some new features compared to the other reading books and uses mainly Alinari's photographs to illustrate the passages collected. Again this is a kind of anthology, which offers a wide variety of readings on very different themes of well-known Italian authors. It opens with a first passage which relates a Mussolini speech on the celebratory role of school followed by readings of Italian authors of a historical, literary and poetic character. Unlike other reading books, this looks like a rich anthology which alternates between passages of literature and poetry of various kinds about the cities and biographies of writers, artists and navigators¹⁶¹.

Among the first readings, there is a passage by Giuseppe Mazzini, *L'Italia*, in which the politician stresses that the municipalities have contributed to the affirmation of the «republican freedom of man and citizen» and the beauty that made Italy «Europe's Garden» is described in depth:

Images of beauty and strength alternate themselves in an unusual way on this soil, where the sun lights up volcanoes, and that men call the Garden of Europe. Nature smiles at you with a woman's smile. The disease-stricken come from the northern mists to revive themselves in the balsamic breezes of your meadows under your deep blue skies.

The eternal Alps look solemnly upon your land faraway as though saying to you: Be great! [...] Be Beautiful as though the stars in your serene skies were your own works of genius: be beautiful in thought and deed, so that only you might know how to unite both in beautiful harmony. Europe was – beyond the borders of your sister, Greece, – semi-barbarous, when your eagles strolled from triumph to triumph over it: and you taught the conquered people the wisdom of laws that last, however they may be revered, about the comforts of civilian life, and that unifying tendency that prepared the world for Jesus [...] Genius, strength, nature of unsurpassed beauty and fruitful too, a concert of breezes and heaven's ineffable smile, God gave you everything¹⁶².

¹⁵⁹ Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da Plebe a Popolo*, cit., p. 101.

¹⁶⁰ Scuole Italiane all'estero, *Lettura. Classe IV*, cit., p. 147.

¹⁶¹ Scuole italiane all'estero, *Lettura. Classe V*, Roma, Libreria dello Stato, 1929.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.

One also notices other elements related to the patriotic education with its sources found in the inexhaustible Italian cultural heritage: a focus dedicated to Rome and Roman culture, mirror image of the myth of Rome cultivated by the regime, and of its monuments (accompanied by the reproduction of the Septimius Severus's arch, Alinari's photo)¹⁶³. Biographies of Leonardo and Raphael are accompanied by reproductions of their works respectively, *La Vergine, il Bambino Gesù e Sant'Anna* [The Virgin and Child Jesus and St. Anne] and by the *La Madonna del Granduca* [The Madonna del Granduca] (both Alinari's photographs)¹⁶⁴. The readings also dwell on scientists like Galileo Galilei and Guglielmo Marconi, whose biographical profiles appear with a veiled intent of awakening a technical and scientific interest in the context of contemporary modernization, especially after the school reform initiated by Belluzzo in 1928, that arrogated to the State technical and vocational schools, re-evaluating a part of the education system neglected by the Casati law and Gentile Reforms¹⁶⁵.

To some cities including Genoa, Venice and Florence poems are dedicated by Diego Valeri (1887-1976). The poetry of Genoa (accompanied by the reproduction of Alinari's photograph), deals with two famous figures historically distant from each other, Colombo and Balilla, but also dwells on other aspects:

Genova, luminosa come l'or
sul cupo azzurro della tua marina
eretto il fiero capo di regina
sul porto tripudiante di lavoro [...]

tu che infondesti al cuore di Mazzini
tanta fiamma di fede e di riscossa
e i mille eroi dalla camicia rossa
lanciasti verso i mitici destini¹⁶⁶.

Genova, bright as gold
on the dark blue of your marina,
erected the proud head of the Queen
in a port exulting in industry [...]

you who kindled in the heart of Mazzini
so mighty a flame of faith and reawakening
and the thousand heroes in red shirts
you impelled towards their mythical destinies.

The poetry of Venice described the city as «a vision from deep within the heart»:

avviluppata in un roseo velo,
sta con sue chiese palazzi giardini
tutta sospesa tra due turchini,
quello del mare, quello del cielo [...]

Cosa di sogno, vaga e leggera;
eppure porta mill'anni di storia,
e si corona della gloria
d'una grande vita guerriera

wrapped in a pink veil
It stands with its gardens palaces churches
all suspended between two Azures,
one of the sea, and the other of the sky [...]

stuff of dreams, hazy and light;
yet brings a thousand years of history,
and is crowned by the glory
of a great warrior life

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-31, 41-44, 46-48.

¹⁶⁴ Scuole italiane all'estero, *Letture. Classe V*, cit., pp. 81-83, 87-89.

¹⁶⁵ Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola*, cit., pp. 249-262.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-77.

Cuore di leonessa, viso che ammalia
o tu, Venezia, due volte sovrana
pianta di forte virtù romana
fior di tutta la grazia d'Italia¹⁶⁷.

Heart of lioness, face that captivates,
oh you, Venice, twice sovereign:
plant of strong Roman virtue
flower of all the grace of Italy.

The poetry of Florence, that with Dante's language and its painting had laid the foundations of Italian culture, is accompanied by the reproduction of the panorama with the church of the Monte alle Croci, known as the 'Bella Villanella', so called by Michelangelo (Alinari's Photo):

Erano i giorni della primavera
Di nostra gente; e tu fiorivi, fiore
Di sangue etrusco e di latin valore,
città di Dante, soave e severa [...]

Those were the days of spring
Of our people; and you bloomed, flower
of Etruscan blood and latin valour,
the city of Dante, gentle yet severe [...].

E dai colli scendeano dentro un fiotto
di bianco sole,
fra il tenero argento degli ulivi,
con l'ali aperte al vento

And down from the hills they came within a
shaft of white sunlight,
between the soft silver of the olive trees,
with wings open to the wind,

Dolci e possenti, gli angeli di Giotto [...].
In un sogno d'amore egli chiudeva
l'universo e l'eterno. Nel profondo
del suo pensiero si formava un mondo;
e l'Italia, l'Italia, ecco, nasceva¹⁶⁸.

Sweet and mighty, Giotto's angels [...].
In a dream of love he closed
The universe and the eternal. In the depths
of his thought he was forming a world;
and Italy, Italy, here, was born.

And finally, to the Chianti wine, which took its name from a river, the anthology devoted a story by the writer Giuseppe Fanciulli (1881-1951), who described the reputation of good wine and the harvest (accompanied by an image of the Castle Sezzate in Chianti, Alinari's photo):

[...] But above all the vineyards dominate; tall carpets, light in spring and dark in summer, stretched down the backs of the hills, covering the hard, pale marl, ready for the wine festival [...]. White and rejoicing amidst so much wealth are to be found the towns: San Polo and Greve, Radda, Gaiole, Castellina... We go there to see up close these famous vineyards. The first bounty lies in the land, dry but not infertile; and the second in the sun that gazes upon the hills with its large golden eye. The vines, selected over many generations, are cared for at the right time with copper sulfate and sulfur. Then, when the cluster grows, air is allowed to flow round it, and gradually the vine leaves are removed with fingers – as Virgil had already advised – so that the strength of the sun is free to reach the grapes [...]. Men and girls, scattered along the rows, detach from the canes beautiful black bunches that have nearly already dried, and throw them into containers; the baskets are emptied gradually

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 105-107.

in tubs. Occasionally a cart pulled by oxen brings the tubs to the fermentation room. The wagon creaks hesitantly up along the little road; some grapes falling from buckets tumble on the grass; and the guys are always ready to gather them up, and not to return them. The tubs pour out their mass of clusters into black vats.

In the evening the peasants have dinner together in the great earthy kitchen. Then the choruses sing out. An old man plays the accordion and the youth dance. There will be another party in twenty days when, ready for racking, the new ruby coloured wine will burst forth from the vats, and the opinion of connoisseurs will be sought [...].

In many villages of the Chianti grandiose factories were established, that produce the famous wine for consumption in Italy and for export. A large amount of grapes are harvested on those hills, but the must comes from other regions; and skillful blends – which is what the mixtures are called – always give a unique type of wine, which is sweet and strong at the same time, with a slight scent of violets and the sun's heat¹⁶⁹.

In the final part of the anthology readings are also presented on the «Works of the New Italy» (*Opere dell'Italia Nuova*) of the Fascist regime, which symbolically represents the new landscape of modern civilization. Among the works worthy of emulation from the past were the 2,500 km Apulian Aqueduct, the power plants of the Tirso and of the Coghinas (Sardinia), the marble quarries of Terni, and *ENIT* and *Cit* charged with encouraging tourism in Italy¹⁷⁰. These were emblems of a new civilization which, in the ideological operation underlying this narrative, was rooted in a centuries-old cultural heritage and which fascism used to invent a tradition *sui generis* with its mythologies and its imaginary power and imperialism.

Conclusions

The analysis of a wide range of passages in reading books for Italian schools abroad published in the twenties and early thirties lets us observe the evolution of and the methods by which the cultural, artistic and natural heritage was represented, in this period of time.

This representation of the cultural, artistic and naturalistic heritage of Italy reflects the process of its nationalization that was started after the Unification of Italy (1861), and was prosecuted under fascism in the name of imperialist and nationalist politics. Its evolution can be divided into two main phases, which are marked above all by the law on State schoolbook of 7th January 1929, although the fascistization process is visible after 1925, with particular reference to conferring importance upon 'places of memory' of the Risorgimento and the Great War.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 205-208.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 272-277. It is the photograph Mario Pes (1887-1963), Sardinian, antifascist, not yet investigated, who also photographs Mussolini at several important events.

In the earlier phase, with regard to the strictly formal aspects, these reading books, reproduce the narrative canons formalized in the nineteenth-century textbooks (the school story, the chronicle of the family and the device of the correspondence), while in the second phase, these special textbooks become real anthologies of readings, full of content and ideological references, presenting the values and symbolism of the regime in a nationalistic key.

The patriotic education is, in fact, the common thread of all the narratives of reading books that sought to form a solid national identity not only amongst the early Italian immigrants, citizens of a young State that was still confronted with problems in the process of national unification, but also in those who emigrated at the beginning of the twentieth century. The strong sense of national belonging, thanks to the enhancement of regional culture, together with the values of family, home and the Catholic religion (especially after 1929), make these books a very incisive 'educational medium' for the promotion of so-called 'Italianness', or Italian identity, not only among the citizens residing abroad, but also for the purpose of indoctrination of new generations in the Fascist period.

«Italy, the land of beauty and art». The Italian landscape and cultural heritage in the books and the primary school textbooks from the Fascist period to the II postwar period: between national identity and sense of citizenship

Luigiaurelio Pomante
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism,
University of Macerata (Italy)
luigiaurelio.pomante@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: This essay aims to place its focus on the ways through which the primary school textbooks have resorted to the Italian cultural and natural heritage, in order to promote national identity and sense of citizenship among younger generation, with specific reference to the period between the twenty years of Fascism and the II post-war period. The author, in his research, examines over a hundred texts from reading books, primary school textbooks of History and Geography and geographical albums, among the ones more used in the Italian schools, from the first until the fifth final class, between 1923 and 1955.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Reading books; Primary school textbooks; Cultural and environmental heritage; Citizenship; Fascism; Italy; XXth Century.

Introduction

This paper aims at examining the ways through which the primary school textbooks used the Italian natural and cultural heritage with the specific aim of promoting the national identity and the feeling of citizenship among the younger generations, with reference to the period between the twenty years

of Fascism and the II post-war period¹. The present research explores over a hundred texts from reading books, primary school textbooks of History and Geography and geographical albums, among the ones more used in the Italian schools (from the first until the fifth final class) between 1923 and 1955.

Therefore, this substantial sample allowed him to make an analysis that, while not discussing in a fully exhaustive way the subject in question, provides useful information to understand how the reference to and the promotion of the Italian artistic and architectural heritage, as well as of its various landscapes and natural beauties, have found in school books (primary school textbooks or reading books) a very suitable and widely used place. Moreover, the historiography in the historical and educational field has seen in recent years a renewed interest in the rediscovery of the educational books for children, of the authors committed in the dark work of writing manuals and in the one, certainly more pleasant, of the recreational narrative, as well as of the publishers taking charge of the printing and circulation of texts². As Giorgio

¹ On the different aspects of the discourse on the national identity and on the ethical-civic and political education projects developed during the Nineteenth and the Twentieth centuries, see especially Anna Ascenzi's studies, *Tra educazione etico-civile e costruzione dell'identità nazionale. L'insegnamento della storia nelle scuole italiane dell'Ottocento*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2004 and *Metamorfosi della cittadinanza. Studi e ricerche su insegnamento della storia, educazione civile e identità nazionale in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, Macerata, eum, 2009 [available also in English: *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, Macerata, eum, 2009]. The quotations present in this article are taken from the English version of volume.

² See, in particular: M. Raicich, *Di Grammatica in Retorica. Lingua, scuola, editoria nella Terza Italia*, Roma, Archivio Guido Izzi, 1996 (the book re-publishes some essays published in the early Eighties); I. Porciani, *Il libro di testo come oggetto di ricerca: i manuali scolastici nell'Italia postunitaria*, in *Storia della scuola e storia d'Italia dall'Unità ad oggi*, Bari, De Donato, 1982, pp. 237-271; M. Bacigalupi, P. Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo. L'educazione popolare nei libri di scuola dall'Unità d'Italia alla Repubblica*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1986; *Editoria, educazione e scuola fra '800 e '900*, «Annali di Storia dell'Educazione e delle Istituzioni Scolastiche», n. 4, 1997 (monographic issue), pp. 9-165; P. Bianchini, *Una fonte per la storia dell'istruzione e dell'editoria in Italia: il libro scolastico*, «Contemporanea», vol. 3, n. 1, 2000, pp. 175-182; G. Chiosso (ed.), *Il libro per la scuola tra Sette e Ottocento*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2000; Id. (ed.), *Teseo. Tipografia e editori scolastico-educativi dell'Ottocento*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2003; C. Betti (ed.), *Percorsi del libro per la scuola fra Otto e Novecento. La tradizione toscana e le nuove realtà del primo Novecento in Italia*, Firenze, Pagnini, 2004; A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo. L'opera della Commissione centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo da Giuseppe Lombardo Radice ad Alessandro Melchiori (1923-1928)*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2005; A. Barausse (ed.), *Il libro per la scuola dall'Unità al fascismo. La normativa sui libri di testo dalla legge Casati alla riforma Gentile (1861-1922)*, 2 vols., Macerata, Alfabetica Edizioni, 2008; G. Chiosso (ed.), *Teseo '900: editori scolastico-educativi del primo Novecento*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2008; A. Ascenzi, R. Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista. La normativa sui libri di testo dalla riforma Gentile alla fine della seconda guerra mondiale (1923-1945)*, Macerata, Alfabetica Edizioni, 2009; M. Colin, *Amor di patria e sentimento nazionale: letture per la scuola elementare nell'età liberale*, in L. Bellatalla, G. Genovesi, E. Marescotti (edd.), *La scuola nell'Italia unita. 150 anni di storia*, Padova, Cleup, 2012, pp. 107-115. For further bibliographical information, see A. Ascenzi, *The history of school manuals and textbooks in Italy. An evaluation and new research perspectives*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 6, n. 2, 2011, pp. 405-423.

Chiosso appropriately pointed out, such educational publications have always been «a real mine of information, a crossroads where the cultural history and that of the teaching practices are interwoven» and, above all, an essential point of reference to fully grasp «the control of political power» over the society and «the world of the values experienced»³ by the affiliates. Hence, much more recently, some scholars have developed an interest in trying to understand how the use and description, within the school books, of the Italian cultural and environmental heritage – always been considered the cradle of art and culture – has acquired a leading role in the process of creating a common national feeling since the years immediately following the Unification⁴.

The starting point of the research is represented by a specific moment in the educational and cultural history in Italy: the years of the development and implementation of the Gentile Reform. Among the first initiatives related to the legislative measures of the 1923 there was also the effort to renovate school textbooks. In order to achieve this objective the action carried out by the Central Commission for the examination of textbooks chaired by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice⁵ was strategic. It was interested not only in «the purge of the educational literature» (as defined by Lombardo Radice), but also in directing at all levels, «the production and enjoyment of the schoolbooks and in imposing a new type of texts which contains not only the pedagogical and educational addresses and the ideal of primary school which were at the base of the Gentile Reform of 1923, but also the new concept of childhood and youth proposed in some of the most significant literary works published in the first two decades of the Twentieth century»⁶. It was the well-know R.D. 11th March, 1923 to establish that the textbooks for the primary school had to be judged by regional Commissions and approved by the respective Directors of Education. As a transitional measure, however, a central commission appointed by the Minister of Education would have to approve the lists of texts for the school years 1923-1924 and 1924-1925⁷. The question of the books to be used at school was not

³ F. Susi, G. Chiosso, C. Ghizzoni, *L'opera della Commissione centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo da Lombardo Radice a Melchiori (1923-1928). A proposito di una recente pubblicazione*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 2, n. 1, 2007, pp. 395-409 (p. 399 for the quotation).

⁴ In particular, see the recent: F. Targhetta, *The beloved face of the fatherland». The role of the landscape into the processes of national identity building*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 139-155.

⁵ On the work of the Commission chaired by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice see, in particular, along with the already mentioned books edited by Anna Ascenzi and Roberto Sani, the interesting writings by M. Galfré, *La disciplina della libertà. Sull'adozione dei testi nella scuola fascista*, «Italia Contemporanea», n. 228, 2002, pp. 407-438 and by G. Chiosso, *Il rinnovamento del libro scolastico nelle esperienze di Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e dei «lombardiani»*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 1, n. 1, 2006, pp. 127-139.

⁶ See Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., p. 7.

⁷ R.D. 11th March 1923, n. 737 – *Norme per l'adozione dei libri di testo nelle scuole elementari e popolari pubbliche e private*, «Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno d'Italia» (GU hereafter), 20th April

of little value in a reform that had profoundly changed the number and type of school textbooks. For this reason, the work of the Central Commission began with great determination, were carried out with extreme precision and were completed in a period of fourteen months⁸.

Without here analysing the work carried out by the Commission chaired by Lombardo Radice nor the work of the four following ministerial committees that operated during the twenties, for which we suggest the reading of more or less recent valuable and comprehensive articles⁹, it should be underlined that one of the criteria that prevailed over others in the evaluation of textbooks, in the Commission chaired by Lombardo Radice but even more in the others, was the presence in these same texts of the patriotic ideal and of the topic of national education¹⁰. Especially the books of History and Geography and the reading books were judged more or less positively according to this criterion: in fact, they used more than others the cultural and natural heritage of our country with the aim of educating the civic and national consciousness of the younger generations.

On the other hand, it was the new Gentile's legislation to push teachers to pay attention to the Italian architectural monuments, works of art and natural beauties. The Article 8 of the R.D. 1st October 1923, n. 2185, by which the Minister of Education Giovanni Gentile promulgated the new *Ordinamento dei gradi scolastici e dei programmi didattici dell'istruzione elementare* (Organization of the school levels and teaching programs of primary education), in fact, established that, in the different classes of primary school, each teacher

1923, n. 93; published again also in «Bollettino Ufficiale del Ministero dell'Istruzione Pubblica» (BUMIP hereafter), 3rd May 1923, n. 18, pp. 1404-1407.

⁸ On the work and the results obtained by the Commission chaired by Lombardo Radice see: Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione – Direzione Generale dell'Istruzione Elementare, *Relazioni sui libri di testo per le scuole elementari ed elenco dei libri approvati e dei libri respinti. IX Relazione finale ed elenco dei libri esaminati nelle sessioni di agosto e settembre 1924*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, May 1925, now re-published in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 359-380. For the critical analysis of the contents of this report, please refer to *ibid.*, pp. 3-21.

⁹ The Commissions that operated in the twenties were a total of five. The first, already mentioned, was chaired by Giuseppe Lombardo Radice in 1923 and finished its work in 1924; the second was chaired by the philosopher and educator Giovanni Vidari in 1925 and its final report was published on February 23rd, 1926; the third of 1926 was chaired by the former Minister Balbino Giuliano in 1926 and its report was published on December 21st, 1926; the fourth, was chaired by Michele Romano, Secretary for Education in 1927 and its report was published on October 4th, 1927; and the fifth, and final, was chaired by Alessandro Melchiori in 1928. In this last case the report was published on September 18th, 1928 while the list of thereading books, unedited, was published on April 9th of the next year. On the work of the four committees following the one chaired by Lombardo Radice, see especially: Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 161-171, Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 21-32 e Idd. (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista*, cit. pp. 17-31.

¹⁰ See Susi, Chiosso, Ghizzoni, *L'opera della Commissione centrale per l'esame dei libri di testo da Lombardo Radice a Melchiori (1923-1928). A proposito di una recente pubblicazione*, cit., p. 407.

would have to give the so-called «various notions», among which a particular interest would be reserved «to the knowledge of the works of art, memories and monuments»¹¹.

The following month, with the Ministerial Decree 11th November 1923, n. 250 «related to the timetables, programs and educational regulations established following the Royal Decree 1st October 1923, n. 2158», the minister Gentile, in indicating «the Table of the furniture and equipment required in the various classes for being used by the pupils and at disposal of the schools», invited the schools to use «some reproductions of masterpieces by Italian artists, especially in the region» and images or reproductions of «national monuments that are located in different cities than the one where the school is located», as well as «a few photographs of large public works, built by the State or by local public institutions».

The same ministerial decree also provided detailed information about the «prescribed or permitted textbooks for the different classes» of primary school. Among them, there was the adoption, «for each class above the second» of a geographic album characterized by «a large collection, graduated according to the program, of good and clear engravings and various suggestive representations of geographic, economic and demographic phenomena, accompanied by very brief explanations».

Each teacher, then, should match the collection of illustrations with «a simple anthology of geographical readings»¹². As the Commission explained in the final report produced in August-September 1924, in the «new» school advocated by Giovanni Gentile, in order to enhance the Italian cultural and environmental heritage and to develop a sense of national belonging among the lower classes, Geography books or geographical reading books should be avoided, because they simply contains «the arid enumerations, the lists of names and numbers to forget, the cartographic scrawls, the confusing descriptions», in favour, instead, of texts characterized by «rich and suggestive illustrations» and a «simple but attractive exposition»¹³, qualities that would facilitate the final objective.

In order to help the teachers to carry out «the innovative work commissioned by the government in primary education», the magazine «I diritti della scuola», directed by prof. Annibale Tona and expression of the Unione Magistrale Nazionale, published in the spring of 1924 the volume *Un anno di scuola: guida per il maestro nell'applicazione della Riforma Didattica della scuola*

¹¹ R.D. 1st October 1923, n. 2185 – *Ordinamento dei gradi scolastici e dei programmi didattici dell'istruzione elementare*, «GU», 24 October 1923, n. 250, pp. 3843-3851.

¹² Ministerial Decree 11th November 1923, n. 250 – *Relativa agli orari, ai programmi e alle prescrizioni didattiche, emanate in applicazione del Regio Decreto 1° October 1923, n. 2185*, «BUMIP», 22nd November 1923, n. 51, pp. 4590-4627.

¹³ See Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 360-361.

*elementare*¹⁴. It offered to teachers a series of useful tips to achieve the objectives set by the Gentile Reform, both for what concerns the daily management of the pupils and the adoption of the textbooks indicated by the ministry, as well as for what concerns the implementation of the programs established for the different classes. What affirmed about the teaching of Geography by the then school inspector Giorgio Gabrielli¹⁵, in his *Considerazioni generali* (General Considerations), is well connected to the ministerial regulations of 1923 and, above all very functional to our discourse on the enhancement of the cultural and landscape heritage of the Italian territory in the school:

The basis of each geographical knowledge – Gabrielli wrote – must always be Italy, the spiritual center of the life of the child, to which all its historical and geographical knowledge must refer to, for obvious reasons. The true patriotism, which is a deep love for your country, is built not on the words and on the rhetoric of the sentences, but on the knowledge of the native land, of its beauty, of its wealth, of its glories and its importance in relation to other nations.

Therefore, according to the Sicilian pedagogue, it is essential to abolish in the classroom «the geographical definitions and lists of names or figures to be learned by heart»; on the contrary, the teacher would have to provide his students «with a good album, good maps, a booklet with information and interesting and varied graphics» and, above all, «excellent geographical readings», contained within primary school books, albums or reading books. Precisely those «too neglected» readings, would arouse the interest of young students and satisfy their desire to know the world and, even more, «their wonderful land»¹⁶.

In those same years, another important pedagogue, Giovanni Modugno¹⁷, was on the same wavelength of Gabrielli. In fact, in a publication of published and unpublished writings on the reform of the school, entitled *Per la riforma interiore della scuola elementare e per l'attuazione dei nuovi programmi* [For an internal reform of the primary school and for the application of new programs]¹⁸, put all his experience as an educator at the service of the teachers, providing concrete suggestions on how to «implement» the new laws

¹⁴ *Un anno di scuola: guida per il maestro nell'applicazione della Riforma Didattica della scuola elementare*, Roma, I diritti della scuola, 1924.

¹⁵ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Gabrielli and for a reconstruction of his activity in the educational field, see, *Gabrielli Giorgio*, by L. Cantatore in G. Chiosso, R. Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, 2 vols., Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2013, vol. 1, pp. 598-599.

¹⁶ See *Un anno di scuola: guida per il maestro nell'applicazione della Riforma Didattica della scuola elementare*, cit., pp. 76-78.

¹⁷ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Modugno and for a reconstruction of his activity in the educational field, see, *Modugno Giovanni*, by Rossella Andreassi in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 179-180.

¹⁸ G. Modugno, *Per la riforma interiore della scuola elementare e per l'attuazione dei nuovi programmi*, Venezia, La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1927.

on primary education and interesting «ideas and exhortations» on how to make every teaching effective. With specific reference to the enhancement and promotion of the cultural and landscape heritage of the territory, Modugno's thought was not very different from that of Gabrielli. The teacher, studying the most valuable books and organizing «educational school walks», would have allowed his students to observe and appreciate their own city or the neighbouring ones, the most beautiful monuments, the main roads, the more significant historical buildings, so that to develop a sense of belonging, first of all, to a narrow community (perhaps a national or regional one) and then, to a larger one (and therefore national):

Let's start – explained Modugno – exploring our city, small or large. And so we begin the study of Geography [...]. With appropriate questions and conversations we raise in the pupils' minds the many problems about our city. What are the main ways? How are the streets kept? What are the most important public buildings, the most beautiful monuments, the most beautiful churches? What are the buildings that you like the most? [...]. How many things to discover! [...]. Both in its natural appearance and in human terms, the children will look all the beauties of their city with filial affection, and even with a feeling of admiration. And the beautiful public garden and the school edifice and the city palace and the churches will be part of his character of small ...citizen [...] And now I think it's useless to say that the children should be guided with this same attitude, with this same aim, especially in the fourth class – when the geography of Italy is studied – in order to let them know the whole of which they are part and which gradually extends to the district, the province, the region, the Nation. In this way, the study of Geography, even if very primary, will be alive and effective and will become a valuable means of national education¹⁹.

Modugno's words and especially his 'conclusion' were very clear and seemed to leave no space for dubious interpretations: the identity and national education, the sense of belonging to a specific community and the love for their homeland had to be promoted, even among younger pupils, through the knowledge and enhancement of that cultural, artistic and natural heritage that in the course of the centuries had made Italy, «the beautiful garden of Europe», the object of desire of many foreign peoples. The textbooks of History and Geography adopted in primary schools, or the reading books, would have used different forms and ways to accomplish this «mission».

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 199-201.

1. *Discovering the «largest museum and the most beautiful garden in the world». Italy in the reading books, primary school textbooks and Geography books approved by the ministerial commission for the examination of textbooks introduced by the Fascist regime (1923-1928)*

Oronzina Quercia Tanzarella, important school inspector during the Fascist period²⁰, was one of the first authors of books to receive the consent of the Commission headed by Lombardo Radice for her book *Vivere* (*Live*, 1923), published by the publisher Mondadori and for all the classes of primary school (from the first to the sixth)²¹. Her book, included in the exclusive group of texts «worthy of praise for their artistic and educational value and that are well in line with the spirit of the new programs»²², was also among the first of the Fascist period to use and promote the Italian cultural and natural heritage to develop in young pupils a strong sense of belonging to their land, a close link with their homeland and thus to foster that sense of national identity that will become a very important issue in Mussolini's regime. The short but effective reading *Italia bella* (*Beautiful Italy*), proposed to the third class, offered a very impressive panoramic description of our territory:

Your home is the beautiful Italy. It stretches far into the sea and embraces and surrounds it. High mountains and white snows encircle it, dividing it from other lands. No other country in the world is more beautiful. Its cities have been living for thousands years, and their wonderful monuments have no equal on the face of the earth. Its mountains and plains are populated of villages and villas where a frugal and industrious people live, among the most beautiful views in the world. [...] And its blue sky is the purest that the human eye has ever contemplated²³.

The city of Rome was the symbol par excellence of the «Italic beauties» with «its nobility, its great civilization, its glories of the past»²⁴. In the volume for the fourth class there were numerous readings about the Capitoline city. Some passages by Aristide Gabelli, from the work *Roma e i Romani* (*Rome and the Romans*) of 1881²⁵, were proposed, which, from the «terrace of the Pincio»,

²⁰ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Tanzarella and for a reconstruction of her activity in the educational field, see, *Tanzarella Quercia Oronzina*, by Anna Ascenzi, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 559-560.

²¹ O. Quercia Tanzarella, *Vivere*, Milano-Roma, Mondadori, 1922-1923.

²² See Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., p. 292. Quercia Tanzarella, in addition, will also write some consolidation acts in the Thirties. For an analysis of the main topics discussed by this author in her texts see Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 181-187.

²³ See *Italia bella*, in O. Quercia Tanzarella, *Vivere. Volume per la terza classe maschile e femminile*, Milano-Roma, Mondadori, 1922, p. 164.

²⁴ *Roma*, *ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

²⁵ A. Gabelli, *Roma e i romani: prefazione alla monografia statistica di Roma e campagna romana, pubblicata dalla Direzione della Statistica generale del Regno*, Roma, Tipografia Elzeviriana, 1881.

charming hill of the capital, offered a view of Rome in all its splendor, with a typically nineteenth-century rhetoric and emphasis:

Rome has a real charm on the imagination, because it contains the worldly glory, memories, the art, the austere beauty of nature, everything that exalts and delights the human soul. [...] The terrace of the Pincio looks like a stage erected by the hand of the grateful man, to admire the most magnificent show that a loving God can give to His creatures. Yes, my God, you gave us this vast ocean of light, this air full of the perfume of flowers, this infinite richness of color and forms in which our soul hears you and adores you! There is no language that can express what the Pincio is in the moment in which the giant shadow of St. Peter and the Vatican is painted on the orange colour. It is a delight, an ecstasy, a dream; it is a confused bustle of immense thoughts, a turmoil of great memories and arcane hopes, in which the mind is lost as in a boundless sea²⁶.

If the Rome of the Pincio, Monte Mario, the Colosseum, the Janiculum, the Imperial Forums, the Palace of the Caesars and the Catacombs²⁷ appeared as a World Heritage of outstanding beauty «emblem of the history of all civilizations»²⁸, another symbol of the peninsula and its history that should be an element of cohesion among all Italians was the mountain range of the Alps, «sublime frontispiece of Italy». The words of the ancient patriot Cesare Correnti and now Minister of Education, helped Tanzarella to present another «precious piece» of the environmental heritage of their country:

The Alps, for as the travelers testify, win the comparison of beauty and majesty respect to all the other mountains of the globe. [...] The immensity of their size is added to the great variety of their forms. [...] The Alps, seeming almost a creation of a noble and fruitful imagination, now raise their acute speaks to the sky, like that of Monviso, now break into ridges that seem succeeding waves of a stormy sea, now tower with their huge ice pyramids, on which the light and transparent clouds stretch out, even in the clearer days, like a virginal veil; now they draw crenellated cliffs and capricious ridges, that the intact snows decorate as a silver crown. [...] If you can, visit the Alps, these guardians of our land, these nurses of our rivers, this homeland of our winds, this shelter of our thoughts, these geniuses of our sky. Visit the Alps, and from up there, look at Italy. [...] No Italian who is in a foreign land can see the top of a mountain, without thinking of his Alps. There the soul of the Nation is kept²⁹.

²⁶ See *Dal Pincio*, in O. Quercia Tanzarella, *Vivere. Volume per la quarta classe maschile e femminile*, Milano-Roma, Mondadori, 1923, pp. 209-210.

²⁷ In Tanzarella's book for the fourth class, the readings about Rome and its cultural and natural heritage were numerous, among which we remember in particular: *La risposta del maestro*, *ibid.*, p. 211; *Le catacombe*, *ibid.*, pp. 211-216; *Dal Campidoglio*, *ibid.*, p. 216.

²⁸ See *Dal Pincio*, *cit.*, p. 210.

²⁹ See *Le Alpi*, in Quercia Tanzarella, *Vivere. Volume per la terza classe maschile e femminile*, *cit.*, pp. 172-174. This Nineteenth century work by Cesare Correnti will have a considerable fortune over the years so as to be reproduced, even if in a greatly reduced version, in numerous primary school books and reading books both of the Fascist period and of the Second post war period (in particular, among others, see the primary school book L. Colombo, L. Re, *Piccole faville. Sussidiari riuniti per la classe quarta*, Milano, Consorzio Editoriale A.L.F.A., 1947, p. 43).

Another reading book for all the primary classes, particularly appreciated by the Commission Lombardo Radice, was entitled *Il giardino* (The garden)³⁰, already widely used in the classrooms before the Fascist period (the first edition was dated back to 1915) and edited by two prominent authors such as Luigi Bertelli (Vamba) and Giuseppe Fanciulli (the Mastro Sapone of the «Il giornalino della Domenica»)³¹. This book devoted to Italy, «the most beautiful of all the homelands», a very significant passage describing «the greatest museum and the most beautiful garden in the world», loved by its inhabitants but now in the heart of every «educated man of all the other nations»:

All the civilized nations love their homeland, whatever it is – Vamba, author of the passage, wrote. But we must love even more our nation, because it has incomparable advantages [...] and this is recognized also by the strangers of every nation that we see around the streets of our city, with their nose in the air and their mouth wide open, admiring the art masterpieces throughout the whole Italy, and enjoying the blue of its beautiful sky and the light of its beautiful sun. [...] The nature has transmitted all the variety of its treasures to our country, adorning it with majestic mountains, fertile valleys, pretty hills, green meadows, clear lakes and shady woods, in order to offer visitors the most picturesque sights, satisfying the most different tastes. And our country has given birth to great artists who have enriched it with the most marvelous works of architecture, sculpture, painting [...] This is why the educated men of all the other nations, along with the love for their homeland, always feel the love for ours, a love made of gratitude, because their countries were initiated by ours towards the civil progress; love made of study because our country is the depository of the most important works and the most important documents of human knowledge; a love made of admiration, because our country has gathered the rarest qualities of grace and beauty. [...] And if any stranger, in addition to his homeland, love ours, how should an educated Italian love Italy? He should love it twice [...] because everyone in the world have the duty to love the land where they were born: but we, for the great virtues of our land, we must love it twice as mother and teacher, since it open us not only the sources of life but also those of the intellect³².

If Oronzina Quercia Tanzarella considered Rome as the Italian art city par excellence, Bertelli and Fanciulli, instead, shifted their attention on Venice. The detailed description of the Venetian capital was entrusted to the simple but very evocative words of one of the protagonists of the reading book for the fourth class, Giovannino, who, through the classic literary device of the letter

³⁰ L. Bertelli, G. Fanciulli, *Il Giardino. Letture educative per le Scuole Elementari Maschili e Femminili*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1923-1924. On the different «fortune» that such volume had in the judgment of the various committees of the twenties, see Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 169-171. See also Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 292, 445.

³¹ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Bertelli and Fanciulli and for a reconstruction of their activities in the educational field, see, respectively *Bertelli Luigi*, by Anna Ascenzi, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 147-148 and *Fanciulli Giuseppe*, by Davide Montino, *ibid.*, pp. 519-520.

³² See *La Patria*, in L. Bertelli, G. Fanciulli, *Il Giardino. Letture educative per le Scuole Elementari Maschili e Femminili per la quinta classe*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1924, pp. 167-169.

of correspondence, wrote to his friend Tullio and invited him to join him for the Easter holidays in Venice so that to visit and admire it in all its beauty:

Ah what a wonderful city! All other seaside towns have the sea on only one side, that is, along the beach; but here the sea is everywhere. All major roads are the sea, with marble palaces plunged into the water. [...] And I do not tell you anything about the monuments, churches and palaces. The Piazza San Marco, with its marble floor, surrounded by arcades, seems a ballroom with the sea at its bottom. The Palazzo Ducale is all of pierced a pink and white marble; it looks like a lace, or one of those works of sugar you see on pianos, at Christmas. You can go to the Lido, with the steamer, which is an island at the bottom of the lagoon, all full of villas, cottages and hotels in the green of the wide avenues. [...] When you come back from the Lido in the evening, at sunset, from the steamer you can see all Venice in the red light, it is so beautiful to seem a dream³³.

The troubled history of Italy, the different suffered foreign domination, the fierce battles fought by its people to gain independence were also the focus of Giulia Varisco's³⁴ attention and of her reading book for the third class of the rural primary school, *Il granello di senape* [*The mustard seed*, 1924]³⁵. It was among the texts adopted for the 1924-1925 school year, but the first edition of can be dated back to 1908³⁶, and it gave the occasion to the author to praise Italy, the homeland «to be loved with the work and virtue» and very rich of «natural and artistic beauties». The story *La nostra bella Italia* [*Our beautiful Italy*], so, contained a crescendo of descriptions and emotions in order to have the young readers to appreciate the artistic and cultural heritage preserved throughout the peninsula, which had always had a certain fascination over foreign peoples: a reason more to have the Italian population, especially the younger one, to fully understand the importance of appreciating and enhancing everything beautiful and valuable there is in Italy:

Strangers come from all over the world in order to admire them, and they would do everything to have the possibility to take them to their house. We should love all these antiquities, protect and maintain them, in order to avoid their deterioration. There are many beautiful churches and towers even in Venice, Florence, Bologna, Siena, Pisa, Umbria and Lombardy. If you have any money, rather than waste it in delicacies, buy some postcards of

³³ See *Venezia*, in L. Bertelli, G. Fanciulli, *Il Giardino. Letture educative per le Scuole Elementari Maschili e Femminili per la quarta classe*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1923, pp. 111-112.

³⁴ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Varisco and a reconstruction of her educational activities, see *Varisco Veronica Giulia*, by Sabrina Fava, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 628-629.

³⁵ G. Varisco, *Il granello di senape. Libro di lettura per la classe terza rurale*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1924.

³⁶ On the changing editorial success of this volume, see Ascenzi, Sani (edd.) *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 298, 390.

the various Italian cities, of the most beautiful old paintings, and create a nice art collection. So, if one day you'll have to go there, you already know something before; and if you will not have to go, you know at least a little bit of our beautiful Italy. Isn't it a shame that the foreigners know it more than its children?³⁷

Patriotic sentiment and refined descriptions of the Italian cities and beauties were also peculiar elements of the work *Cieli serene* [*Clear skies*]³⁸, considered by Marcella Bacigalupi and Piero Fossati «among the most significant of the sensitivity of the Gentile's Reform»³⁹ and particularly appreciated by the Commission Vidari of the 1925⁴⁰. The series of reading books for the male and female classes, edited by Bianca Lena Pistamiglio and Francesco Carcò, first published in 1923, and re-published in 1925 and still on the scene after the World War II, contained, especially the text for the fourth class, a section entitled *Osservando* [*Observing*] in which the cultural and natural heritage of the different areas of the peninsula was the protagonist. Pistamiglio and Carcò's book, after proposing in the opening pages of the book one of the most classic patriotic passage from the book *Cuore* [*Heart*] by Edmondo De Amicis, *Italia*⁴¹, a real hymn to the homeland very often used in the textbooks of the Fascist period to «inflammate the young pupils' heartstrings»⁴², presented a series of particularly original readings that, one after the other, focused on the main elements of the natural landscape and urban heritage of the national territory. Thus, for example, in the readings *I giardini* [*The gardens*] and *Per l'Italia* (*For Italy*), the green spaces and the flower-filled corners were elements that decorated the Italian land, making it unique; the gardens became «the beauty and health of the city, and the eye rests when it encounters, among the great multitude of houses, the dusty streets and the bustling crowd of people, green plants that move their leafy foliage»⁴³. The presence of numerous and well-

³⁷ See *La nostra bella Italia*, in Varisco, *Il granello di senape. Libro di lettura per la classe terza rurale*, cit., pp. 129-134 (the quote is on p. 134).

³⁸ B.L. Pistamiglio, F. Carcò, *Cieli sereni. Corso di letture per le classi elementari maschili e femminili*, Milano, Mondadori, 1923-1925.

³⁹ See Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 168-169, 233.

⁴⁰ The Commission of Vidari used particularly flattering words to judge the work by Pistamiglio and Carcò: «Great series in a beautiful, richly and appropriately illustrated edition. The attractive and pleasant work is pervaded by a sense of quiet serenity. The admiration for nature, the patriotic and religious feelings dominate and animate all the volumes. The knowledge is transmitted with warmly, there is nothing concealed about modern activities, there are a lot of historical information and beautiful descriptions of the cities of Italy» [see Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., p. 485].

⁴¹ *Italia*, in B.L. Pistamiglio, F. Carcò, *Cieli sereni. Letture per classe quarta maschile e femminile*, Milano, Mondadori, 1925, pp. 46-47.

⁴² The same passage, for example, is reproduced in the above mentioned Quercia Tanzarella, *Vivere. Volume per la quarta classe maschile e femminile*, cit., p. 227 but also in G. Capodivacca, *La giovine aurora. Libro di lettura per la terza classe elementare rurale maschile e femminile*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1924, pp. 161-163.

⁴³ See *I giardini*, in Pistamiglio, Carcò, *Cieli sereni. Letture per classe quarta maschile e*

finished green areas, which served as the setting for marvelous monuments and works of art from different historical ages and different artistic movements, was considered as a common feature of all the major Italian cities (from Turin to Florence to Rome) and, for this reason, were even more valuable than many other foreign locations⁴⁴. Not only the flowered gardens and the large wooded spaces had to be a reason of pride for the «child who goes to school», but also the streets of Italy, «long, straight, smooth, lined with houses, sometimes winding, sometimes a bit dark and narrow that they are lost among ancient buildings». They exude Italian history and national sentiment, because «they have the names of saints, great heroes, martyrs of faith and illustrious men of our country, the names of the cities and rivers of our land, that you can't read without a glorious and proud memory of the Italian history, that makes our hearts tremble»⁴⁵. Again every city and every region had its own streets, each of which (from the Via Emilia to the Appia up to those of the mountainous villages) is well integrated in a different historical and cultural context, in that *unicum* becoming a heritage to thoroughly safeguard⁴⁶.

Bianca Lena Pistamiglio and Francesco Carcò's itinerary among the beauties of Italy, however, did not stop here. After the discovery of the gardens and roads, that of the «blue and endless» seas around the peninsula, the «lively and populated» beaches and «joyous and famous» coastal cities⁴⁷, the more specific reference to the artistic and architectural heritage of Italy, the land of beauty and art, was indispensable, in which «every city has so many treasures of wonderful memories thanks to its artists and scientists that a single volume would not be enough to mention them all»⁴⁸:

In your own town – we read in the reading *L'Arte* – as in most of Italy, you can admire works of art made by immortal artists. When in the big churches, the sweet faces of the Madonnas and the saints smile, as statues that seems could descend from their pedestal to meet you, you stay still and you wonder: how could a man do something so beautiful? Here, in the beautiful Venice and Umbria, there are the paintings by Titian, Veronese, Leonardo da Vinci, Tintoretto. Here, in Florence and in Rome, there are the sweet paintings by Guido Reni, Giorgione, the divine Raphael. Here, there are the statues of Michelangelo, Giotto's bell tower which rises like a tracery of lace, on the blue Florentine sky. The dome of the Duomo of Florence which is a miracle of architecture, the bronze doors which were called the gates of Paradise!⁴⁹

A quick but exciting overview of the most significant and appreciated Italian artistic and architectural heritage, as well as of the best known landscapes of

femminile, cit., pp. 49-50.

⁴⁴ *Per l'Italia, ibid.*, pp. 50-52.

⁴⁵ See *Le vie, ibid.*, pp. 59-61.

⁴⁶ *Strade d'Italia, ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

⁴⁷ See *Lungo i mari d'Italia, ibid.*, pp. 316-317.

⁴⁸ See *Nella vita, ibid.*, pp. 245-247.

⁴⁹ See *L'Arte, ibid.*, p. 245.

Italy, was also the object of interest of the reading book *Primi voli* [*First flight*]⁵⁰, widespread in the Italian schools in the second decade of the Twentieth century. It, although received a severe rejection by the Commission Lombardo Radice, got the approval, after an extensive revision of the content, by the Commission Vidari in 1925⁵¹. The author of this book for the third class of the primary school, was the teacher from Vicenza, Arpalice Cuman Pertile⁵². In some of its readings, the book used the expedient of the imaginary journey that the school children, led by their teacher, were called to perform with the fantasy «from a beach to another» to «discover their dear and beautiful country» so that to find «moving memories all over»⁵³. Just like a bird⁵⁴ that, with its wings «goes throughout the world, far from land to land, from beach to beach»⁵⁵, so the young children, on the wings of thought, had the opportunity to start a journey of knowledge that would have led them to discover and appreciate the cultural and natural heritage of their land as the foundation of their national identity:

Let's go everywhere in Italy, sons! And so, on the wings of thought, we fly on the high Alps, where chamois and ibex jump, where the eagles have their nest, and on the deep sea, where all of the rivers that descend from the mountains arrive. We can see in a moment and without effort the beautiful cities of our country: Rome, Naples, Palermo, Florence, Genoa, Bologna, Ancona, Milan and Turin, Venice, Trieste. What wonderful palaces and churches, monuments and gardens! And how many memories of men and glorious deeds! [...] Or, if you want, we can visit the museums and the great libraries, where we can read the history of Italy, and preserve the sacred memories of its famous scientists and poets, of the martyrs and the heroes who fought for freedom. And we can also greet your friends in the Italian schools who, like you, are prepared to become honest and educated workers, good and strong citizens⁵⁶.

Larger space was devoted to the Italian cultural and environmental heritage in the volume *L'Antologia dei fanciulli. Corso completo di letture per le classi*

⁵⁰ A. Cuman Pertile, *Primi voli. Corso completo di letture* Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1925-1928.

⁵¹ On the changing editorial success of this book see Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 301, 454.

⁵² For a bio- bibliographical profile of Cuman Pertile and a reconstruction of her educative activity, see *Cuman Pertile Arpalice*, by Fabio Targhetta, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 418-419.

⁵³ See *Da un lido all'altro*, in A. Cuman Pertile, *Primi voli. Libro di lettura per la terza classe elementare. Nuova edizione rivista in conformità dei nuovi Programmi Scolastici*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1925, pp. 138-140.

⁵⁴ The literary device of the bird that flies in the skies of Italy to appreciate its artistic and natural beauties is also used in another well-known text of that period, i.e. A. Zaccaria, *Albe radiose. Libro di lettura per gli alunni e le alunne della quinta classe elementare*, Torino-Milano-Firenze-Roma-Napoli-Palermo, Paravia, 1924. In particular, in the passage *In viaggio* (pp. 134-136), there is a swallow flying «in the clear skies of Italy».

⁵⁵ See *Di lido in lido*, in Cuman Pertile, *Primi voli. Libro di lettura per la terza classe elementare. Nuova edizione rivista in conformità dei nuovi Programmi Scolastici*, cit., pp. 125-127.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

elementari e integrative [*The Anthology of children. Full course of lectures for primary and supplementary classes*]⁵⁷ by the two educators and pedagogues from Puglia Modugno Giovanni and Giuseppe Petraglione⁵⁸, first published in 1925 but later re-published various times, even with different names, especially after World War II⁵⁹. The Fourth Part of the text for the fourth class, entitled *Italia*, offered to the pupils numerous readings, largely taken from the texts of the nineteenth-century authors, or from already well known books in the Italian school, where there are detailed descriptions, even if sometimes very rhetorical, of the artistic and landscape heritage of the peninsula.

In the *Antologia*, along with solemn declarations of love to the homeland⁶⁰, the indelible memory of some illustrious patriots and the exaltation of key figures in the process of national unification⁶¹, space was also given to many other enthusiastic descriptions of the cultural and natural heritage of the various Italian regions, in addition to the already mentioned plastic representations of the Alps by Cesare Correnti and of the fascinating Rome from the Pincio terrace by Aristide Gabelli⁶².

So the lakes of the peninsula became the protagonists of the passage *I laghi d'Italia* [*The lakes of Italy*]⁶³, taken from the famous work *Il Bel Paese* [*The Beautiful Country*] by Antonio Stoppani⁶⁴ while the writer and patriot from Genoa, Giovanni Ruffini⁶⁵, described one of the most fervent descriptions of

⁵⁷ G. Modugno, G. Petraglione, *L'Antologia dei fanciulli. Corso completo di letture per le classi elementari e integrative*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1925-1926.

⁵⁸ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Modugno and Petraglione and for a reconstruction of their activity in the educational field, see respectively *Modugno Giovanni*, by Rossella Andreassi, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 179-180; and *Petraglione Giuseppe* by Alberto Barausse, *ibid.*, p. 326.

⁵⁹ On the re-publishing of the text in the second post-war period, see in particular Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 249-253.

⁶⁰ *Italia*, in G. Modugno, G. Petraglione, *L'Antologia dei fanciulli. Corso completo di letture per le classi elementari e integrative. Volume primo per la quarta classe elementare*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1925, p. 131; *La patria italiana*, *ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

⁶¹ *Carbonaro a sette anni*, *ibid.*, pp. 136-138; *Il fascino di Garibaldi*, *ibid.*, pp. 138-140; *Nazario Sauro alla moglie e al figlio*, *ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

⁶² *Le Alpi*, *ibid.*, pp. 144-145 and *Roma dal Pincio*, *ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

⁶³ *I laghi d'Italia*, *ibid.*, pp. 145-147. Among the described lakes there isn't the Trasimeno to which an interesting reading is devoted, *Il Trasimeno*, proposed in another school text of the 1920s: A. Vertua Gentile, *Un'allegria nidata. Libro di lettura per la quinta classe maschile e femminile*, Lanciano, Carabba, 1924, pp. 114-115.

⁶⁴ For a critical analysis of the description and promotion of the Italian cultural and environmental heritage in *Il Bel Paese* di Antonio Stoppani, see, within the present issue: E. Patrizi, *The representation of the cultural and natural heritage as a training tool of national consciousness in three classics of the Nineteenth century Italian school*: Giannetto, *Il Bel Paese and Cuore*; see also: M. Armiero, M. Hall, *Il Bel Paese. An introduction*, in Idd. (edd.), *Nature and history in modern Italy*, Athens, Ohio University Press, 2010, pp. 1-11.

⁶⁵ Giovanni Ruffini was the author of the volume: *Il dottor Antonio*, published in English in 1855 (J. Ruffini, *Doctor Antonio*, Edinburgh-London, Thomas Constable and Co.-Hamilton Adams and Co. 1855). Thanks to this text the entire Ligurian region and, in particular, the province

the charming Ligurian Riviera, where the natural magnificence of the place and the intervention of the human intelligence had blended perfectly for a final result of «rare and priceless beauty» worthy of a «vigorous» people such as the Italian one:

Few streets are more beautiful of it, in Europe; and certainly few, like this, contain three conditions of natural beauty: the Mediterranean on one side, on the other the Apennines, and above the pure sky of Italy. And, in addition, the man industry has struggled, if not to overcome, at least not to remain inferior to nature. A following of cities and little villages, some nicely laid out on the shore, wet by the silvery waves; others scattered like a flock of white lambs on the mountainside, or picturesquely high on the top of a chain of mountains; here and there, a sanctuary suspended high above a rock wet by the sea, or almost lost on the hillside between the green of the forest: marble palaces, and painted villas between vineyards, flowery gardens, and groves of oranges and lemons; [...] In short, everything created by the human hand, shows the hard work and industry of a race of vigorous and gentle people⁶⁶.

And then the city of Turin, described by Edmondo De Amicis, with its Superga hill from which it was possible to enjoy a show «even bigger and more beautiful of its fame», which would transmit to any visitor «a state of mind favorable to the stranger city»:

An Italian who come here with the idea of finding [...] a large village, a lot of convents and barracks, can experience a pleasant disappointment, out of the station of Porta Nuova, in a beautiful spring morning. At the sight of this great avenue, as long as the Champs Elysees of Paris, with the Alps to the left, and the hill to the right, of the countless squares, of the porches, of the lush green, of the cheerful panorama, full of light and work, one must exclaim: it's nice! Or at least one must breathe deeply, which is equivalent to a word of admiration⁶⁷.

An Italy, then, that became a source of pleasant surprises even for its own inhabitants. However, Modugno and Petraglione did not describe, to the young pupils of primary classes, only the north as a land rich in natural and artistic beauties⁶⁸, but also «their» south too often forgotten. The smoking Vesuvius, «naked giant, black as a large pile of coal, hard as a bronze mountain»⁶⁹; Palermo, from its fashionable districts and lively streets that exude «glorious history of centuries», unique city that «confuse the head, contrast of joy and fury, fatigue and fun, luxury and poverty»⁷⁰; Sassari with its «narrow and badly

of Imperia and its picturesque landscape began, after the mid-800, to become a favorite destination of British tourism.

⁶⁶ See *La strada della cornice*, in Modugno, Petraglione, *L'Antologia dei fanciulli. Corso completo di letture per le classi elementari e integrative. Volume primo per la quarta classe elementare*, cit., pp. 151-153.

⁶⁷ See *Torino*, *ibid.*, pp. 148-150.

⁶⁸ Among the readings that had as its protagonist the cities and the artistic and architectural monuments of Northern Italy we remember in particular the one dedicated to Venice *L'amica dei colombi*, *ibid.*, pp. 155-156 and the one to Florence, *La città dei fiori*, *ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

⁶⁹ See *Un'ascensione al Vesuvio*, *ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

⁷⁰ See *Palermo*, *ibid.*, pp. 167-168.

paved black streets», animated by «*pizzinni-pizzoni* playing the *marracula* in the middle of the road»⁷¹; to the picturesque Calabria, whose beauty, «does not miss in any season» and where «the landscape from the sea to the mountains, and from one to the other of the various vegetation zones is [...] gradually picturesque», as the Calabria itself⁷².

Two cities of southern Italy, Naples and Palermo, covered a major role in another reading book in vogue in the late twenties. It was the text *Primavera fascista. Letture per le scuole elementari urbane* [*Fascist spring. Readings for urban elementary schools*]⁷³, edited by Asvero Gravelli⁷⁴, approved by the Ministerial Committee for textbooks chaired by Alessandro Melchiori⁷⁵. The dominant tone in the text was the historical-patriotic, due to the war to which large space was given. The editor, however, added to stories, anecdotes and passages of authors who largely resumed educational topics of the previous century, also some readings aimed at enhancing the artistic and natural beauty of the Italian territory, the birthplace of Mussolini, and so «worthy» of further admiration. Along with an original and almost symbolic and romantic representation of the Milanese sunsets described by Antonio Stoppani⁷⁶, the focus were mainly, as anticipated, the cities of Palermo and Naples. The show offered by the town of the Campania was «wonderful»: it was «the typical and characteristic city par excellence, for this reason it may be considered the first city in Italy», faithful representation of a «happy people»:

From the top of Posillipo in Torre Annunziata, there are a lot of roads, you can travel by tram, in a few hours, and the districts of La Maddalena, Portici, Resina, Torre del Greco, Torre Annunziata form a big way, with admirable gardens, country houses, and the magnificent bay as horizon, the islands and the panorama of Naples, the large noisy city stretched in an amphitheater on its hills and on its Vomero mountain⁷⁷.

⁷¹ See *Nei vicoli di Sassari*, *ibid.*, pp. 168-171.

⁷² See *Calabria pittoresca*, *ibid.*, pp. 173-174. The passage is by Giuseppe Isnardi, who, during the first half of the Twentieth century, had a leading role in the fight against illiteracy in the southern regions. Isnardi also collaborated with the Treccani *Enciclopedia Italiana* for the Geography of Calabria.

⁷³ A. Gravelli, *Primavera fascista. Letture per le scuole elementari urbane*, Milano, Mondadori, 1929.

⁷⁴ A prominent figure of the thirties of fascism, Gravelli was also national deputy secretary of the Fascist Youth and author in 1927 of the text *Ai Balilla delle nuove generazioni*, volume of disclosure of the Fascist doctrine.

⁷⁵ See Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 179-181.

⁷⁶ *I tramonti di Milano*, in A. Gravelli, *Primavera fascista. Letture per le scuole elementari urbane. Classe quinta*, Milano, Mondadori, 1929, pp. 184-187. This passage, from *Il Bel Paese* by Stoppani will be used also in the post war period, *Un tramonto a Milano*, in A. Lenzi, *La conchiglia. Letture per la quinta classe elementare*, Torino, Paravia, 1949, pp. 54-55.

⁷⁷ See *Napoli*, in Gravelli, *Primavera fascista. Letture per le scuole elementari urbane. Classe quinta*, cit., pp. 119-120.

The «postcard» of Palermo was not less incisive and dynamic, it was so «nice, clean, orderly, civil, artistic, ancient and modern at the same time» that «if you look at the complex of all that form and distinguished it, it is the most beautiful city of Italy» because «no other brings together many qualities at once», located in «a lovely Gulf» with «public gardens of rare magnificence and eternally green»:

Let us say that Palermo is a fascinating town and that the Italians are wrong not to go more numerous to visit it, not to organise, in the summer, pleasure trips at lowered prices, not to really return the exquisite courtesy of the citizens of Palermo⁷⁸.

Like the reading books, also the textbooks in use in primary schools in the early years of the Fascist period were used to reserve a certain space to the promotion of the cultural and natural Italian heritage, especially to transmit to young schoolchildren useful information to better understand the territory of their country and its countless riches, thus promoting the national identity and citizenship feeling. Primo Guadagno's book should be surely included among the authors of the most popular textbooks appreciated by the Central Commission chaired by Lombardo Radice. His textbook *Il mio sapere* [*My Knowledge*, 1924]⁷⁹, became one of the first to receive ministerial approval⁸⁰. And if the volume for the third class, in accordance with the already mentioned ministerial programs, provided only very synthetic and essential «various notions» on the Italian physical and political Geography⁸¹, it was primarily in the text for the fifth class that the author, in about twenty pages, and following a pattern proposed by Lombardo Radice's Commission and that would be common to almost all the textbooks of the Fascist period⁸², offered a very extensive and detailed description of each of the eighteen Italian regions⁸³. For each of them, the most important cities, the main monuments, the most significant historical events related to the individual provinces and a number of information related to crafts, industry, commerce, fishing, traditions, the

⁷⁸ See *Palermo*, in *ibid.*, pp. 142-144.

⁷⁹ P. Guadagno, *Il mio sapere. Libro sussidiario unico comprendente tutte le materie per le Scuole Elementari*, Palermo-Roma, Sandron, 1924.

⁸⁰ See Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola tra idealismo e fascismo*, cit., pp. 231-232.

⁸¹ P. Guadagno, *Il mio sapere. Libro sussidiario unico comprendente tutte le materie per le Scuole Elementari. Classe Terza*, Palermo-Roma, Sandron, 1924, pp. 82-89 (the part on geography is from p. 74 to p. 101).

⁸² See for example the pattern followed in *Il Fascio. Nuovissimo Sussidiario Completo Bemporad* and particular, for what concerns the part about the Geography: D. Giannitrapani, *Albo geografico e letture di Geografia. Per la Terza classe elementare*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1928 and Id., *Albo geografico e letture di Geografia. Per la Quarta classe elementare*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1928.

⁸³ P. Guadagno, *Il mio sapere. Libro sussidiario unico comprendente tutte le materie per le Scuole Elementari. Classe Quinta*, Palermo-Roma, Sandron, 1924, pp. 259-276 (the pages on Geography are pp. 230-309).

religion, folklore, characterizing and distinguishing each center, were listed and described. The description offered by Guadagno was further enriched by a large number of photos and drawings that combined various artistic techniques reproducing the main places, the famous monuments and the panoramas of the Italian locations. For example, it is sufficient to refer to the pages dedicated to the Lombardy:

The richest Italian region for its agricultural products, for its businesses and for the flourishing of industries. It has 8 provinces: Milan, Como, Bergamo, Brescia, Sondrio, Pavia, Cremona, Mantua. The Capital of Lombardy is Milan, famous for its resistance to Frederick Barbarossa and the Five Days; today it is a big, beautiful and populous city with numerous monuments and artistic buildings among which we mention the magnificent Duomo. Milan can be considered the most important Italian Center for industries and commerce. Lombardy produces excellent cheeses, raises the silkworm and has also plenty of rice⁸⁴.

Or the equally interesting presentation of a smaller region like Umbria with the province of Perugia:

Perugia is the regional capital city, it is rich in sacred and profane monuments and it also houses the University. Other notable cities: Orvieto, famous for its magnificent cathedral; Assisi, birthplace of St. Francis and Terni, famous for its steelworks, great factories that receive the driving force from the waters of the Velino where it forms the Marmore Falls. The Umbria, famous for its historical and artistic importance, is a mountainous region, rich in marvelous landscapes and produces wines and cereals⁸⁵.

If the textbooks in use in primary classes were forced, for obvious needs of educational character, to concentrate in a reduced number of pages the space devoted to Geography and then to the artistic, architectural and Italian landscape heritage, the situation of the Geographic was really different, precisely because of the already mentioned Ministerial Order of 11 November 1923, in which they were considered fundamental and essential tools both for the teacher and for the students. Among those approved by the Commission Lombardo Radice which had greater spread in the Italian classrooms are to be included *l'Albo di Geografia ad uso delle scuole elementari* [*Geographical album for primary schools*], 1924, edited by Teresa Trento⁸⁶ and *l'Albo di Geografia* [*Geographical album*], 1925, by Augusto Sichirollo⁸⁷, both already published before the fascism but then suitably modified, supplemented and revised in accordance with ministry guidelines. The volumes for the fourth class were very similar in the internal structure (the first part was devoted to physical Geography, the

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

⁸⁶ T. Trento, *Albo di Geografia ad uso della quarta classe elementare maschile e femminile. Nuova edizione 1924-1925 conformata ai nuovi Programmi Ministeriali*, Firenze, R. Bemporad & Figlio Editori, 1924.

⁸⁷ A. Sichirollo, *Albo di Geografia per la classe quarta elementare*, Milano, Mondadori, 1925.

second part to the political one), and with a about the same total number of pages (about ninety). They focused their attention on Italy, «our homeland and the most beautiful country in the world [...] sigh for all foreigners»⁸⁸, described very thoroughly, even with the aid of numerous photographs and appropriate maps. The passages in the *Albo* by Sichirollo are very numerous, long and emotionally engaging, and allowed the reader to take a real trip from North to South, from West to East, among the «Beauties of Italy», ranging from an ecstatic attitude in front of the unspoiled landscapes surrounding mountains, volcanoes, rivers and lakes⁸⁹ up to the enraptured gaze of the foreign or Italian tourists, in front of the valuable works of art all over the Peninsula⁹⁰. Next to the most famous places and monuments, already «praised» by the most popular nineteenth-century authors, however, there was «glory» also for less known or less «exploited corners» of Italy but equally charming and able to arouse in the reader a fulfilling sense of connection with the land and the homeland. As, for example, in the case of the cities of Trentino, including Trento, «full of noble architecture» or Rovereto, «the richest, from a cultural point of view»⁹¹, or the areas surrounding Val di Sole, that is, those «outer *Giudicarie*, small, peaceful, ignored and unsuspected by most of the people»⁹². Instead, the porticoes were typical of Emilia Romagna and particularly appreciated by foreign tourists. They were an architectural feature characteristic of those areas, the historical symbol of the «supremacy of Bologna» over the neighboring territories as well as «the living room of all» and the citizens' meeting place par excellence⁹³. It is worth mentioning also the artistic and architectural heritage of ecclesiastical and religious nature such as churches, sanctuaries and abbeys, and the presence of strong traditions and devotional practices such as pilgrimages, processions and mystery plays, that meant that the Umbria, «green» region to par excellence⁹⁴, also had a new connotation, becoming the «holy Umbria»⁹⁵.

⁸⁸ *La carta d'Italia*, in Trento, *Albo di Geografia ad uso della quarta classe elementare maschile e femminile. Nuova edizione 1924-1925 conformata ai nuovi Programmi Ministeriali*, cit., pp. 70-71. In Trento's textbook, for example, the passage *Nazione, patria, amor di patria*, *ibid.*, p. 71 was devoted to Italy, as long as the poem *Lo Stivale*, *ibid.*, p. 72.

⁸⁹ Among the numerous readings in Sichirollo's text, we remember in particular: *Le Alpi e gli Appennini*, in Sichirollo, *Albo di Geografia per la classe quarta elementare*, cit., p. 18; *Il mare d'Italia*, *ibid.*, pp. 18-19; *Il Po*, *ibid.*, pp. 19-20; *La campagna emiliana*, *ibid.*, pp. 45-46; *La pianura campana*, *ibid.*, p. 62; *Visioni della Basilicata*, *ibid.*, p. 66; *La Sila*, *ibid.*, p. 67; *Il panorama dall'Etna*, *ibid.*, p. 70.

⁹⁰ *I tesori di Roma*, *ibid.*, p. 55.

⁹¹ See *Le città del Trentino*, *ibid.*, p. 32.

⁹² See *Bellezze del Trentino*, *ibid.*, p. 32.

⁹³ See *I portici di Bologna*, *ibid.*, p. 45.

⁹⁴ Remember in particular the reading *Umbria verde* in the already mentioned Modugno, Petraglione, *L'Antologia dei fanciulli. Corso completo di letture per le classi elementari e integrative. Volume primo per la quarta classe elementare*, cit., pp. 158-159.

⁹⁵ See *L'Umbria santa*, in Sichirollo, *Albo di Geografia per la classe quarta elementare*, cit., p. 51.

Finally, among the expressions of the Italian cultural heritage worthy of adequate and in-depth discussion, the *Albo* by Sichirolo introduced, taking an already widespread practice in the regional Almanacs for the primary school⁹⁶, even a work that was exclusively the result of the man's activity, that is the Apulian aqueduct built mostly in the first two decades of the Twentieth century and then completed under Mussolini's regime with the clear intention to solve the thousand-year old problem of water shortage in the region. This «gigantic work» was nothing more than the manifestation of man's ability to change the landscape to establish links among the population and improve their living conditions. The young primary school student also in this case, as in front of the natural scenery of the massif of the Sila⁹⁷ or of «the breathtaking view of the Conca d'Oro of Palermo»⁹⁸, at the reading of the passage, should appreciate enthusiastically the majestic work, fruit of the man's intellect and strength, recognizing it «as the biggest thing ever attempted not only in Europe but around the ancient and modern world; and for the third Italy, the most solemn monument of its prosperity and civilization at the beginning of the Twentieth century»⁹⁹.

2. «*The views of the main Italian cities, with all the wonders they talk a lot about*». *The Italian cultural and environmental heritage in the State schoolbook (1929-1943)*

Law n. 5 of 7th January 1929, *Norme per la compilazione e l'adozione del testo unico di Stato per le singole classi elementari* [Regulations on drawing up and adoption of the State schoolbook for the primary grades], introduced in primary schools the State schoolbook starting from the school year 1930-1931¹⁰⁰. The measure, signed by the Minister Giuseppe Belluzzo, on one

⁹⁶ On the regional almanacs see: A. Barausse, M. D'Alessio, «*Dalla piccola alla grande patria*». *Libri dialettali e almanacchi regionali per la scuola elementare*, in Chiosso (ed.), *Teseo '900: editori scolastico-educativi del primo Novecento*, cit., pp. XXXI-LIV; M. D'Alessio, *A scuola fra casa e patria. Dialetto e cultura regionale nei libri di testo durante il fascismo*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2013; F. Dimpflmeier, *Vivere la regione per vivere la nazione. La valorizzazione del patrimonio locale nei sussidiari per le culture regionali*, in S. Aru, V. De Plano (edd.), *Costruire una nazione. Politiche, discorsi e rappresentazioni che hanno fatto l'Italia*, Verona, Ombre Corte, 2013, pp. 92-106. Finally, for a critical analysis of the description and promotion of the Italian cultural and environmental heritage in the regional almanacs for primary school, see, within this same issue, Sani's «*Discovering the best and most ignored Italy*». *The regional Almanacs for the primary school introduced by the Gentile Reform and the use of the cultural and natural heritage for the promotion of a national identity and a sense of citizenship*.

⁹⁷ *La Sila*, in Sichirolo, *Albo di Geografia per la classe quarta elementare*, cit., p. 67.

⁹⁸ *La Conca d'Oro*, *ibid.*, p. 70.

⁹⁹ See *Un'opera da ciclopi*, *ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

¹⁰⁰ Law of 7th January 1929, n. 5 – *Norme per la compilazione e l'adozione del testo unico di Stato per le singole classi elementari*, «GU», 12 January 1929, n. 10; reproduced also in «*Bollettino*

hand stopped the activity of the Central Commission for the examination of textbooks started six years before within the framework of the reform of the Italian school prepared by Giovanni Gentile¹⁰¹, on the other realized a real «temptation that characterized the Italian School since its beginning»¹⁰², i.e. that to have a true, direct and exclusive control by the central authority on school journalism¹⁰³. A Control that, however, had already begun with the creation of the State Central Commission and that was only partially mitigated by the presence, at least in 1923-1924 (Commission-Lombardo Radice) and in 1925 (Commission Vidari) of talented educators, school men and experts in education and youth literature¹⁰⁴.

In fact, especially with the birth of the State schoolbook, Mussolini's regime could, in the name of the needs of the «Educator State», impose its own idea of the textbook as a vehicle for ideological and political propaganda and as a means, as the minister Belluzzo said, for «shaping the new Italian type, i.e. the full fascist»¹⁰⁵. Fascism liked the uniformity of the message transmitted by the State schoolbook, that was now more effective than the one allowed by the old commissions of the twenties. As in fact, Marcella Bacigalupi and Piero Fossati underlined, «even if the members of the Committees were people undoubtedly reliable from a political point of view, the texts, approved, even following strong pedagogical criteria, had disappointed the expectations of the regime»¹⁰⁶.

The speech on the enhancement of the monuments, the archaeological sites and the different types of architectural and artistic heritage, as well as the landscapes and the many natural beauties of the peninsula, with the aim to promote the concept of national identity or, more simply, to arouse, as wanted by fascism, a deep love of the country and a visceral connection with their homeland, was further amplified by the adoption of the State schoolbook and

Ufficiale del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione» (hereafter BUMPI), 22 January 1929, I, n. 4, pp. 226-227. On the redaction and publication of the State schoolbook for the different classes of primary school, see Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 164-231; J. Charnitzky, *Fascismo e scuola. La politica scolastica del regime (1922-1943)*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1994, pp. 393-408; G. Ricuperati, *La scuola italiana durante il fascismo*, in L. Pazzaglia, R. Sani (edd.), *Scuola e società nell'Italia unita. Dalla Legge Casati al Centro-Sinistra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2001, pp. 264-269.

¹⁰¹ See G. Gentile, *Il fascismo al governo della scuola (novembre '22 – aprile '24). Discorsi e interviste raccolti e ordinati da Ferruccio Boffi*, Palermo, Sandron, 1924; G. Lombardo Radice, *La riforma della scuola elementare. Scuole, maestri e libri. Raccolta di indagini essenziali*, Palermo, Sandron, 1926.

¹⁰² See Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., p. 191.

¹⁰³ Mussolini himself prepared the State schoolbook «so that he also participated in the choice of the authors». See R. De Felice, *Mussolini il Duce. Gli anni del consenso 1929-1936*, Torino, Einaudi, 1974, p. 190.

¹⁰⁴ See in this sense Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista*, cit., pp. 28-29.

¹⁰⁵ The minister Giuseppe Belluzzo spoke in this way during the Ministers' Council on the 25th September 1928, in Archivio Centrale dello Stato, *Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri*, busta 100, fasc. 26.

¹⁰⁶ See Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., p. 195.

therefore found a very fertile ground in the Thirties in the texts in use in the various primary classes.

Angiolo Silvio Novaro¹⁰⁷, considered among the prestigious authors of the single textbook of the Fascist State, was the editor of *Il Libro per la Quarta classe elementare. Letture* [*The Book for the fourth grade class. Readings*]¹⁰⁸, volume where it is possible to find some particularly original passages in which the protagonists are Italian painters, sculptors and architects, the ‘producers’ par excellence of the cultural heritage of the peninsula to be preserved and promoted. The literary device used by the author to let the young students know the famous characters of our country is particularly interesting. One of the main characters in the book, Grandpa Barbagrìgia, that was a publisher, led, in fact, his grandchildren Puccetto, Fioccorosso and Losò, «in one beautiful spring Sunday», in some residential areas of the city, to show them, one by one, the streets named after «some men who honored Italy with their works»¹⁰⁹. Starting from the name of each street, he had the opportunity to remember and celebrate the most distinguished artists and to offer the reader a quick but effective overview of the works of art and the most famous monuments of the peninsula. They were very often kept abroad, and, for this reason, they should be further boasted by the Italian people:

One Sunday, the grandfather led his grandchildren in a neighborhood where all the streets had the names of immortal authors, painters, sculptors and architects. [...] In these beautiful and clean roads – said the grandfather – and among the charming villas, the art, which has the mission to brighten the spirit, is in its element. Here we are, to begin with, in via Giotto. Who was this Giotto? A famous and great painter [...] whose pictures you can admire also today, especially in the famous church of Assisi, where there are thirty-two frescoes depicting St. Francis’s life and miracles. [...] And then via Filippo Brunelleschi. He was an architect, one of those magicians who imagined in their designs beautiful buildings that every foreigner admires in our cities. The one who gave a new spirit to the architects was precisely Brunelleschi, who helped his own inspiration investigating the ruins of Rome and learning to revive the forms of the ancient architecture. The buildings and the churches he invented can be admired in Florence, where, among other things, there is the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore.

And then:

Here the gentlemen are required to remove their hats, because these four roads are dedicated to four giants: Michelangelo Buonarroti, Leonardo Da Vinci, Raffaello Sanzio and Tiziano Vecellio. In my opinion, the human genius has not conceived until today nothing better of the works of these great men of the 1500s. Michelangelo, as Leonardo and Raffaello, was

¹⁰⁷ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Novaro and a reconstruction of his educational activity, see *Novaro Angiolo Silvio* by Davide Montino, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell’Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 246-247.

¹⁰⁸ A.S. Novaro, *Il libro della quarta classe elementare. Letture*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1931. For an analysis of the contents of Novaro’s works see: Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 201-204.

¹⁰⁹ *I nomi delle strade*, in Novaro, *Il libro della quarta classe elementare. Letture*, cit., pp. 160-161.

not only a painter, nor just an architect, not only a sculptor but practiced all these arts together, insuperably. The dome of St. Peter in Rome, the largest temple of Christianity, was one of his works, as well as the statue of the *Pietà* in St. Peter, the *Mosè* on Pope Julius II's tomb, the frescoes of the *Cappella Sistina* and the *Giudizio Universale*, both in Vatican in Rome. Leonardo can be considered a magician, because he composed verses and music, invented machines, buildings and canals, he built, carved and painted. Of what he painted [...] you can see the famous *Cenacolo* in Milan, already a bit disfigured by time [...]. Raffaello Sanzio lived only thirty-seven years, but if I were to mention you all his works of architecture, one by one, and especially the paintings, I would be embarrassed, as they are numerous. His main paintings are in Rome, in the Stanze Vaticane, where he worked for almost ten years. But his works can also be seen elsewhere [...]. Neither the memory would be better, if I had to name all the works by Tiziano, the immortal Venetian of the XVI century, because we can affirm that there was no prince, in a time when every town had its own, that did not pose for him. You can find his paintings, however, especially in the churches of Venice: the Frari church, for example, where is the famous *Assunta*¹¹⁰.

Il Balilla Vittorio. Il Libro della quinta classe elementare [*The Balilla Vittorio. The book for the fifth primary grade class*]¹¹¹ by Roberto Forges Davanzati was even more well known and appreciated than Angiolo Silvio Novaro's book. It was one of the leading exponents of the Fascist intransigency, journalist and senator of the Kingdom in the mid-thirties¹¹². The State schoolbook he edited, chosen for the final class from the school year 1930-1931 to 1938-1939¹¹³, as Bacigalupi and Fossati underlined, perhaps «not equaled the Fascist model, but it is the one closest to it, among all the reading books»¹¹⁴. It could not be a coincidence that *Il Balilla Vittorio* was remembered as the book that, for better or for worse, has left the most significant traces in the memory of the pupils of that time. Structurally, it looks like a long story, a kind of novel in which the protagonist, the balilla Vittorio, has his family life, his friends, his world full of experiences and different emotional situations, all set both in the country (Castelsangiorgio)¹¹⁵ where Vittorio was born (and where he will return), and in Rome, where the family moved, and he attends the fifth class. Even in Forges Davanzati's book it is possible to find a lot of detailed and touching descriptions of the Italian landscape and cultural heritage particularly valued,

¹¹⁰ *I pittori, gli scultori, gli architetti, ibid.*, pp. 161-164.

¹¹¹ R. Forges Davanzati, *Il libro della quinta classe elementare. Il Balilla Vittorio racconto di Roberto Forges Davanzati*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1930. For an analysis of the contents of Forges Davanzati's book see Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 207-212.

¹¹² For a bio-biographical profile of Forges Davanzati, see *Forges Davanzati, Roberto*, edited by Silvana Casimirri, in F. Bartoccini, M. Caravale (edd.), *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Roma, Istituto della Enciclopedia Treccani, 1960-2015, vol. 48 (1997), pp. 807-811.

¹¹³ For a detailed list of the authors and the titles of the State schoolbook, above all for the textbooks from 1930-1931 to 1944-1945 see the tables in Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 196-197.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 207.

¹¹⁵ In Forges Davanzati's book the expression Castelsangiorgio is always used, while today, to refer to the little town in the province of Terni, we use Castel Giorgio.

if not celebrated, with the objective of consolidating national identity but also of promoting a strong sense of citizenship among the younger generation. The promotion of the artistic beauty of Italy was for the fascism a further recognition of the prestige of the regime and the territory. In the text, the description of the cultural and natural heritage of the different areas of the peninsula was entrusted to a series of travel stories made mainly by the protagonist Vittorio who, on several occasions, made trips or lived adventures that allowed the reader to know better the different locations and the most important Italian artistic and landscape heritage. Thus, for example, the opening story of *Il Balilla Vittorio* told the trip made by the protagonist with his uncles in Bolsena, a small town a few kilometers from Viterbo famous for being called «The city of the Eucharistic miracle»¹¹⁶, from which the solemnity of the *Corpus Domini* was then extended to the whole Church.

A quiet family day, so, became the occasion to discover, on the one hand, an «artistic pearl of Italy» almost hidden, or at least less known than others, on the other hand, to offer the teacher the opportunity to revive an episode of the religious tradition of many centuries ago virtually unknown to the young pupils of the time¹¹⁷. The Orvieto Cathedral, only mentioned in the opening passage of *Il Balilla Vittorio*, a very appreciated monument during the Fascist period, became instead the protagonist of two narrations of the text edited by Forges Davanzati¹¹⁸. This time Vittorio was accompanied in a real school trip in Orvieto no longer by his uncles but by his teacher and classmates of the small village of Castelgiorgio. The departure at the early hours of dawn, the enthusiasm of the young travelers for a day different to any other, the arrival in the historic center of Orvieto and the first steps among the «narrow streets and the ancient brownstone houses» of the Umbrian town, only served to make the atmosphere particularly evocative, in an ascending climax of considerable rhetoric that prepared to the view of the Duomo, whose beauty aroused amazement and unusual wonder among young visitors:

In the square of the war memorial, open towards the wide valley of Paglia, they were organized in groups of three people and marched for the course. [...] He saw the theater with its columns, the high black tower, with the clock. Now he turns to one side and the street moves among the houses and palaces like a tail; beside there is the Cathedral, standing out against the blue sky with its tall spires of the yellow and pink marble facade, with its

¹¹⁶ The eucharistic miracle of Bolsena took place in this town in 1263: while a priest was celebrating Mass, at the moment of consecration the host, it bled. See F. Gentili, *Il miracolo eucaristico di Bolsena*, Torino, Elledici, 2003.

¹¹⁷ *La gita a Bolsena*, in Forges Davanzati, *Il libro della quinta classe elementare. Il Balilla Vittorio racconto di Roberto Forges Davanzati*, cit., pp. 5-8.

¹¹⁸ «Sono quelli di Castelgiorgio», *ibid.*, pp. 27-30; *Il Duomo di Orvieto*, *ibid.*, pp. 30-32. Actually Orvieto was described also in a third passage, entitled *Bolsena e Orvieto*, more descriptive and almost notional, in the *Appendix* of the volume on pp. 335-337. On the value of the *Appendix* in the various editions of *Il Balilla Vittorio* see Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., p. 207.

large, strong and beautiful body of brownstone. The Cathedral is on the plain opened to the hills, and how much light there is on its columns, on the rose window, on the heads of saints, on the statues, the mosaics! Everyone looks at it as if it were the first time. Vittorio would be one of those pigeons seated on a spire, or lurked in an arch between two columns. He would know closely all those figures that perhaps speak when it is night; he would go up to the highest spires where you can see the whole countryside to Castelgiorgio and farther!¹¹⁹

Such a precious monument, whose construction had requested the economic and personal sacrifices of generations of Orvieto people and the «hard-working genius» of the best artists, could only be «the pride of Orvieto and of all of Italy». For this reason, it was considered a heritage to treasure. And if the outside facade of the Cathedral, one of the greatest masterpieces of the Italian gothic art, enchanted Vittorio and his classmates, the interior of the Cathedral were not inferior:

Once they entered, passing from the solar glow to the scarce light of the aisles, the church seemed to them even wider and barer. Vittorio and his classmates felt to become smaller [...]. To the left the huge organ, full of gold, colors, columns, angels, up to the ceiling, made him feel lost; but when, on the opposite bare wall, he discovered two large painted angels standing on the bow, and once the Mass ended, he went with friends to the chapel, wide as a church, and saw the damned and the fire of the end of the world and the prophets and sages, he thought that the painter of all those figures, Luca Signorelli, had to be at his time an extraordinary man, able to see demons and angels together¹²⁰.

Vittorio left his native country and moved to Rome and so he had the chance to see for the first time the «eternal city», with its art works, its monuments, its landscapes difficult to find elsewhere. From the moment the young Fascist boy arrived in the capital city, each song marking the rhythms of Vittorio's daily life simultaneously offered the opportunity to give an alluring description of the rich cultural and environmental heritage of the capital, full of centuries of history like no other locations in the peninsula. Thus, for example, the march «in rhythm with the sound of the drums» performed by the cohort Vittorio belonged to, allowed the reader to make a quick but effective imaginary journey among the most important streets and places symbol of the historic center of the capital (from the Porta Pinciana to the Arco di Costantino through the Colosseum and the Roman Forum), invaded by young fascists cheered by the crowds¹²¹.

A description of the «great Roman artistic beauty», however, could not ignore the Vatican area and particularly St. Peter's Square and its imposing Basilica¹²². The show before Vittorio's eyes was definitely majestic, intended

¹¹⁹ See «Sono quelli di Castelgiorgio», in Forges Davanzati, *Il libro della quinta classe elementare. Il Balilla Vittorio racconto di Roberto Forges Davanzati*, cit., pp. 29-30.

¹²⁰ See *Il Duomo di Orvieto*, *ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

¹²¹ *A passo di balilla*, *ibid.*, pp. 88-90. Ma anche *Marcia in città*, *ibid.*, pp. 278-280 and *Il Campidoglio*, *ibid.*, pp. 280-281.

¹²² Among the various passages dedicated to the Vatican City and its artistic beauty we

to remain in the mind of a young Fascist boy from a small provincial town. It seemed not to enter in a square, «but in the heart of a world, because St. Peter is the Italian and Roman heart of the Catholic world». And especially inside the elegant and sumptuous Basilica, all the strength and power of the Catholic Church exploded with virulence, almost to welcome, but at the same time to «trap», the protagonist of the story and his travelling companions¹²³.

The city of Rome was not, however, the only one described by Forges Davanzati. Also two prestigious centers such as Naples and Milan, in fact, were extremely relevant Italian reality for Vittorio whose historical importance and whose artistic and landscape beauty were a source of pride for every Italian citizen who was bound to his homeland. Of course the two centers, that of Campania and the Lombard one, being very far culturally and historically, were presented in a very different way, each with those qualities typical also of their population. And so if Napoli, cheerful and bright, was considered the «affectionate and friendly city even for those visiting it for the first time», in which «various people live, that, fast or slow, stop in front of the windows shops or walk through the narrow streets, and has an appearance of human intimacy»¹²⁴. Milan is sober and more elegant, and appeared as the city in which «if one wanted to be idle it would be a great shame» and from which it seems that we can't turn away, because the desire to participate in its activities without rest [...] is so great and because there are people who work and do not waste time and seem always willing to do more»¹²⁵.

If the volume *Il Balilla Vittorio* was the text on which the male and female students of the fifth class of the Fascist school of the thirties were educated, *Amor di patria. Il libro della quinta classe*¹²⁶, can be considered the State schoolbook par excellence in relation to female education, having been adopted for four years (1935-1936 to 1938-1939)¹²⁷, as a volume for the education of the Fascist young female pupils of the final year of primary school. Edited by Francesco Saponi, a fervent promoter of Fascist culture and university professor of Art History¹²⁸, and published for the first time in 1935 but immediately

remember *A San Pietro*, *ibid.*, pp. 106-109; *Una grande opera*, *ibid.*, pp. 110-111; *Il latino della fede*, *ibid.*, pp. 112-114. Also in the State schoolbook edited by Grazia Deledda, *Il libro della terza classe elementare. Letture*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1930, it is possible to find numerous readings dedicated to the territories of the Papal States. In particular, we remember *La Città del Vaticano*, *ibid.*, pp. 133-134; *Oltre Santa Marta*, *ibid.*, pp. 134-136; *Una strana condizione*, *ibid.*, p. 136; *L'incontro al Laterano*, *ibid.*, p. 137.

¹²³ *A San Pietro*, *cit.*, pp. 106-109.

¹²⁴ See *Nelle strade di Napoli*, in Forges Davanzati, *Il libro della quinta classe elementare. Il Balilla Vittorio racconto di Roberto Forges Davanzati*, *cit.*, pp. 203-205. Also the passage *Il porto*, *ibid.*, pp. 205-207, had Naples as protagonist.

¹²⁵ See *Lettera da Milano*, *ibid.*, pp. 327-329.

¹²⁶ F. Saponi, *Il libro della quinta classe. Testo di letture per alunne. Amor di patria*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1936.

¹²⁷ See Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, *cit.*, p. 200.

¹²⁸ Francesco Saponi was a man of many interests. Novelist, journalist, art critic and exhibition

revised and reissued the following year¹²⁹, the text is an exemplary case of a work devoted primarily to the divulgation and promotion of the Italian artistic and natural heritage. This peculiarity is essentially due to two reasons: the first relating to the fact that the author was keen on art history and for this reason he had also had certain prestigious administrative positions during the Fascist period¹³⁰; the second refers to the fact that, being Saponi's book a text for female pupils, it was aimed to make art history a key element in the education of those who were then young pupils but sooner future mothers, so that they could transmit to their children an authentic and passionate love for everything that could follow the Italian cultural heritage in order to promote national identity and the close ties with their homeland.

For this reason *Amor di patria* [*Love of country*] seems to be a real lively succession of descriptions, often very rhetoric, which have as their privileged subjects towns, various monuments, paintings and precious statues, squares and historic buildings. As an example, we could remember, among others, the passage with the eternal city as protagonist, a real triumph for the art in all its multiple meanings and a show for «the eyes of its lovers»:

Rome: it is the queen of the universe, of the last two thousand years and forever. The lifetime, for long and complicated it is, is not enough to discover and celebrate it. The apostle St. Peter is on the top of the noblest honorary column that exists. This column describes, in its spiral bas-reliefs, Trajan's triumphs in the wars against the Dacians. From there, the twin domes of Santa Maria di Loreto and of the Nome di Maria raise their roof lanterns. On the pyramid-shaped bell tower of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, a bell, called la Sperduta, tolls every night after the Angelus. [...] Among the incomparable Via dell'Impero and the fateful Via dei Trionfi, the massive Colosseum survives. In the Forum, where the invincible Julius Caesar was killed, the Arch of Titus recalls the destruction of Jerusalem. On the Piazza Capitolina, the naked and athletic Dioscuri stand. [...] Among the porphyry columns and the granite obelisks, next to the facades of blond travertine and the fantastic processions of statues, the pines have their crowns, the palm trees bear bunch of fruits. A radiant happiness spreads over the honey-colored city¹³¹.

Or, again, the effective and cultured description of the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence, among the highest achievements of the Gothic art in Italy, and the *Monumento alla Madre* [*Monument to the Mother*] preserved in it. What Ugo

organizer, was appointed in 1927 Commissioner of the *Sindacato fascista romano degli autori e scrittori* (*Roman Fascist Union of authors and writers*). He held many important positions at national level in the field of arts and culture, as he was the director of the Galleries of Rome and taught Art History at the University of Rome.

¹²⁹ Between the edition of 1935 and that of 1936 is not possible to find significant changes, except for the accentuation of the military tone and for the increasing adhesion to the expansionist initiatives of the empire.

¹³⁰ Including the already mentioned office as director of the Galleries of Rome.

¹³¹ See *Panorama di Roma*, in Saponi, *Il libro della quinta classe. Testo di letture per alunne. Amor di patria*, cit., pp. 14-17.

Foscolo called the «Temple of Italian glories»¹³² for the numerous tombs of great artists, writers and scientists that encloses, was in fact considered by the Fascist regime, and here in particular by Saponi, one of the «pieces of fine art» of Florence as well as one of the main symbols of the everlasting glory of the whole country and of the strong and powerful bond of the people to the homeland:

This austere and solemn temple is dedicated to the greatness of Italy from centuries. There various mausoleums are kept: that of Dante Alighieri, the divine poet and almost father of the humankind; of Michelangelo Buonarroti, painful genius; of Niccolò Machiavelli, acute historian and diplomat, who showed the way to follow to the Italian princes; of Galileo Galilei, who investigated the worlds between which our planet moves; of Vittorio Alfieri, who roared in verse, like a caged lion, the lust for freedom for his country. Such a glory! But there is no human genius who was not born from a woman. Virgin Mary praying at the foot of the Cross, or holding the dead Christ on her knees, gathers all the sorrows of the earth and gives them to Heaven awaiting resurrection. So the mothers of those who left their lives in the Great War, summarize the sacrifice of thousands and thousands of young lives. The need to build a *Pietà* on one of the altars of Santa Croce was therefore felt. In it, everyone can see the dedication of the Italian woman to the Motherland and the consecration of the maternal pain¹³³.

In *Amor di patria*, not only the biggest cities as Venice¹³⁴ or Naples with its Gulf, «Morgan Le Fay's prodigy»¹³⁵, and real «miracle of nature», or places with less inhabitants but still generally known, such as Messina, «the dead and then risen city»¹³⁶, and Trento with its «dark castle del Buon Consiglio»¹³⁷, were worthy of attention but also the smaller towns, including the characteristic Positano, «yearned subject for the painters from all over Europe frameworks»:

In the mid way, between Sorrento and Amalfi, on the most beautiful coast of Italy, there is Positano. [...] The mountains surrounding it as an amphitheater are the highest of the range of mountains that extends from the promontory of Campania to Salerno. The road that goes through the village, carved in the rock, required five hundred pounds of gunpowder. The boulders among which it fits in and winds resemble pyramids, castles, colonnades. The gorges overlook caves; stalactites hang in a fantastic way. The mountains of Positano have two views: the barren precipice on the one hand; on the other, the slope flowering of waters, fruit trees, vineyards, olive trees. Monte Sant'Angelo dominates them, rising up from the sea above the village, at a thousand and four hundred meters¹³⁸.

¹³² Foscolo used this expression in his poem *Dei Sepolcri* in 1807.

¹³³ See *Monumento alla Madre in Santa Croce*, in Saponi, *Il libro della quinta classe. Testo di letture per alunne. Amor di patria*, cit., pp. 134-137. Florence is also the subject of the passage *Nel giardino di Boboli*, *ibid.*, pp. 200-203.

¹³⁴ *Con Tiziano a Venezia*, *ibid.*, pp. 231-232.

¹³⁵ See *Sul Golfo di Napoli*, *ibid.*, pp. 142-144.

¹³⁶ See *Tra Scilla e Cariddi*, *ibid.*, pp. 95-97.

¹³⁷ See *Una giornata a Trento*, *ibid.*, pp. 127-130.

¹³⁸ See *Panorama di Positano*, *ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

Or even entire regions with their artistic beauties, their cultural traditions, their historical memories and the very strong literary echoes that recalled. Not far from Umbria and the already mentioned and repeatedly magnified Cathedral of Orvieto, whose facade was in Sapori's eyes as «the vision of a contemplative hermit, the story of a knight of Christ [...], rare and harmonious witness of Beauty»¹³⁹, it was possible to find for example the Marches, characterized by «naive cordiality», the «real and strong religiosity» and the birthplace of unforgettable artists such as Raphael and Giacomo Leopardi¹⁴⁰.

The Italian high-altitude landscapes between towering hills, verdant and flowery plains, shimmering lakes, long and clear rivers and a very diverse flora were also fascinating and full of suggestions. The area of the Rhaetian Alps, for example, was typical mountainous, on the border between Italy and Austria, where some of the most beautiful Italian lakes «dwell», including the Lake of Muta, «the most lovable of Val Venosta»¹⁴¹. And if the lake di Carezza of Val d'Ega had, according to Sapori, the peculiarity to rise just inside the forest, between the peaks of the Dolomites, «castles and cathedrals of nature, with towers, bell towers and spires [...] huge amphitheater that recalls the apotheosis of the Italian heroism»¹⁴², it was primarily from the Val Fiscalina, wonderful area the Alta Pusteria characterized by «colorful carpets of flowers» and by dense forests, traditional huts and rocky cliffs, that it was possible to see clearly some of the highest peaks of the Italian mountains, theater of bloody battles during the Great War¹⁴³.

The book *Amor di patria*, in this particular aim to present, explain and make the best of the Italian artistic and landscape heritage in order to promote the national identity and the connection of the young pupils of the fifth class with their homeland, dealt also with another aspect that deserves to be highlighted, namely the inclusion in the concept of art also of the typical artisan traditions of some Italian regions. And so, if Genoa was a leader in the filigrees, Perugia in jewelry, while cradles and dresses with blue and white veils are made in Forlì and Rimini»¹⁴⁴, the small village of Castelli, in the province of Teramo, surely was one of the most appreciated Italian excellence in terms of craftsmanship and more specifically for its precious and ancient production of majolica known throughout the peninsula. Sapori, in order to allow the readers to immerse themselves fully in the charming atmosphere linked to a centuries-old tradition, first presented the enchanting geographical scenario where the little Abruzzo town was, creating a framework of nature worthy of the best Italian tradition of painting:

¹³⁹ See *La facciata del Duomo di Orvieto*, *ibid.*, pp. 234-237.

¹⁴⁰ See *Da Urbino a Recanati*, *ibid.*, pp. 162-163.

¹⁴¹ See *Nell'Alpi Retiche*, *ibid.*, pp. 246-248.

¹⁴² See *Lago di Carezza*, *ibid.*, pp. 252-255.

¹⁴³ See *In val Fiscalina*, *ibid.*, pp. 270-272.

¹⁴⁴ See *Al telaio*, *ibid.*, pp. 144-147.

Who wants to enjoy a wild spectacle, in the scenery of the mountains culminating in the Gran Sasso, should go, from Teramo, up there, among the poor houses and hovels suspended in the rock, where people do not do but dishes and mugs, in the mud up to the eyes, while the factory ovens smoke in a row. Along the road, all full of views of mountains and forested gorges, you can see clay pits of a bluish gray, basins of yellowish clay marl, from which the people of Castelli choose the dirt for their works. Perpendicularly steep, the walls seem to protect the country, with the snowy peaks up to two thousand five hundred meters high. Lower down, there are the peak of Pietralunga and the ruins of the hexagonal tower of Pagiara, with the cave of the Devil who holds a legendary treasure. Behind them the pyramid of the Grande Corno stands; on its side Piccolo Corno, similar to a giant sleeping face.

In this typical mountain landscape dominated by the imposing Gran Sasso, «among the dazzling whiteness of the snow», the industrious life of the entire community of Castelli was spent, entirely devoted to the wise processing of ceramics, following a tradition transmitted from one generation to another and that the Fascist regime was determined to preserve and develop as an expression of the whole country:

In the meanwhile, in Castelli, the people work. A family intimacy goes from door to door, as an exhortation to the effort that is a lot, to the earnings that are little. [...] The men spend nine hours a day in that humidity, mixing the dirt, as in the days of Holy Scripture, and passing it to the lathe swinging unsteadily on the axis. The women carry firewood on their heads, put the dishes out to dry before baking them, help their men for what is needed. In this country the children learn to knead and to sift the dirt. Even the rich people, who have to reign over the things of the City, paint some tile, and they say this with pride¹⁴⁵.

If Roberto Forges Davanzati's book, like Francesco Saporì's one, were addressed to male and female students of the fifth class, the enhancement of the cultural and environmental heritage of the peninsula as a tool for promoting national identity, was during Fascism, and especially during the thirties, the aim of the reading books for under-age pupils. So, it seems appropriate, for example, to speak, above all, about the volume of readings published for the first time in 1936, entitled *L'italiano nuovo*¹⁴⁶, for children of the second class¹⁴⁷, and edited by Alfredo Petrucci, author of a series readings in the twenties and drafter in 1939 of another State schoolbook for the third class of primary school¹⁴⁸. He,

¹⁴⁵ See *Maioliche di Castelli*, *ibid.*, pp. 130-134.

¹⁴⁶ A. Petrucci, *Il libro della seconda classe. L'italiano nuovo. Letture della seconda classe elementare*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1936.

¹⁴⁷ Among the State schoolbook for the children of the second class attempting a promotion of the Italian cultural and environmental heritage with the aim of promoting the national identity it is worth mentioning also *Il libro della seconda classe. Scuole rurali*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1933, within which some interesting readings can be found, including *Patria*, pp. 119-122; *Il viaggio di Marco*, *ibid.*, pp. 123-124; *Il Mare*, *ibid.*, pp. 124-126; *La visione di Marco*, *ibid.*, pp. 126-129; *Italia! Italia!*, *ibid.*, pp. 130-132. In these passages, even if in a summary and often perhaps too brief form, the main artistic and natural beauty of the peninsula were examined with the clear intent to arouse patriotic feelings in the young student.

¹⁴⁸ On Petrucci's production for the school in the 1920s and 1930s see: Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da*

by using a simpler and more straightforward language than the one chosen by Saponi, but undoubtedly more suited to the age of the readers, enabled young students to carry out a real journey among the cities of Italy and their beauties. A nice night at the cinema with the classmates and a crowded cinema show¹⁴⁹ thus became the perfect opportunity to show the younger generations «the panoramas of the main cities of Italy, with all the wonders that they have heard so often to talk about», in a kind of quick but complete and pleasant tourist route «among the Italian beauties»¹⁵⁰. According to the Fascist regime, whose thought was well interpreted by Petrucci, to know better and admire so many and such Italian cities full of centuries-old history, art and culture would only increase in young students the «desire to belong to Italy», a real «gem of the world», whose prestige and whose power will greatly transcend the purely geographical boundaries:

Vittorio e Lunella know that from the Alps to the sea, and for one hundred countries similar to theirs, and one hundred cities more beautiful than the other, as far as we speak the same language, up to there, there is Italy. But Italy is also beyond our seas, in the colonies of Libya, Eritrea, Somalia, on the Aegean islands, that we are fertilizing with our work. [...] Italy is in the heart of all the Italians scattered through the world. They are ten million, and carry everywhere the light of their genius, the productive power of their arms, the sign of the ancient Roman civilization¹⁵¹.

A very special and extremely original description of the Italian cities was also the one offered by the writer, director of studies, and then central inspector at the Ministry of National Education, Piero Bargellini¹⁵², in its *Lecture per la quinta classe dei centri urbani* [*Readings for the fifth class of urban centers*], adopted as a single State schoolbook from the school year 1942-1943 for the schools in urban centers¹⁵³. In this volume, unlike other State schoolbook, the passages and the traditional narrations that present and magnify the artistic and natural beauties of the single regions could not be found, but some refined readings focusing on the identification of the common and peculiar characters of the urban realities of Italy. In this sense, the passage *Viali* was very incisive, being an elegant description, in an atmosphere suspended between past and present, of the urban structure of a typical Italian city, a narrative procedure enhanced

plebe a popolo, cit., pp. 216-218.

¹⁴⁹ *Il giro del mondo di Luciana*, in Petrucci, *Il libro della seconda classe. L'italiano nuovo. Lecture della seconda classe elementare*, cit., pp. 96-98.

¹⁵⁰ See *Le città d'Italia*, *ibid.*, pp. 98-100.

¹⁵¹ See *Italia gemma del mondo*, *ibid.*, pp. 101-102.

¹⁵² For a bio-bibliographical profile of Bargellini and a reconstruction of his educational activity, see *Bargellini Piero* edited by Renata Lollo, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 102-103.

¹⁵³ P. Bargellini, *Lecture per la quinta classe dei centri urbani*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1942.

by the 'happy pen' of the author and rarely found in other contemporary State schoolbook:

In the city center, there are usually narrow streets from which you can see just at the top, a glimmer of the sky, between the jutting gutters. We are in the oldest district in the heart of the city, but as you move away from the center, the streets are wider. Finally, you arrive in the shady avenues with a double row of trees, and lined by houses among the green gardens. These avenues are at most one hundred years old. They are young compared to other streets. Usually, they turn where once the ancient walls or the bastions of defense stood. In some cities, they run on the sidelines of the not demolished walls. The avenues form a green and fresh wreath around the ancient and severe face of the city. They are urban streets, but still have something of country roads¹⁵⁴.

Italy and its cultural and natural heritage covered an important role not only in the reading books chosen as State schoolbook but also in the primary school textbooks used in the different primary classes. It is sufficient here to recall *Il libro della terza classe elementare* [*The book of the third grade class*] and *Il libro della quarta classe elementare* [*The book of the fourth grade class*]¹⁵⁵, whose section on Geography was edited by prof. Luigi De Marchi. These texts offered their young readers a comprehensive and effective framework of the many artistic and environmental beauties characterizing the individual areas of the peninsula, through a series of more or less short but surely complete presentations of the major cities of the region, enriched by various beautiful illustrations of historic buildings, squares and various monuments as well as places of natural interest. Moreover, Italy, was «not only beautiful but also great», it possesses «the most beautiful buildings, the most majestic and famous churches, to which pilgrims come from all over the world» and it is admired «by everyone for the most large collections (museums) of beautiful statues and beautiful paintings, and the many signs of its glorious history: towers, walls, castles, palaces, aqueducts, ruins of ancient cities, reminiscent of the times in which it dominated the whole known world». For this Italy, a real open-air museum, «Fascism strives, in order to make it greatest and greatest»¹⁵⁶. Certainly, the descriptions offered are longer and more complex and depending on the class to which the textbook was addressed. Thus, for example, *Il libro della terza classe elementare* offered a comprehensive narrative of the various parts of Italy, «the most beautiful country in the world», but it did not give too

¹⁵⁴ See Viali, *ibid.*, pp. 97-98. Within the same textbook we also indicate the readings *Città marinare*, *ibid.*, p. 21, devoted to the identification and description of the peculiar characteristics of the seaside Italian city and *La città sui tetti*, p. 73, in which the protagonist is a «typical» imaginary Italian city seen from above.

¹⁵⁵ L. De Marchi, *Il libro della terza classe elementare. Geografia*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1935, pp. 179-221 and Id., *Il libro della quarta classe elementare. Geografia*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1936, pp. 153-287.

¹⁵⁶ See *L'Italia grande*, in De Marchi, *Il libro della terza classe elementare. Geografia*, cit., pp. 219-221.

much specific details, without however renouncing to the linguistic redundancy and the hyperbolic rhetoric exaltation of the homeland typically Fascist in describing the «mighty Milan» or the «charming and populous Napoli»¹⁵⁷. *Il libro della quarta classe elementare*, instead, described «our homeland» for over one hundred pages in a very detailed and careful way, with reference to the physical Italy (the seas, mountain ranges, lakes, rivers) and the political one (regions and cities), also mentioning the Italian works of art and enchanting landscapes that «enhance its value in the eyes of the whole world». As an example, some passages from the pages about Tuscany, «one of the most beautiful regions of Italy»:

Tuscany is stretched in the south of Emilia, beyond the Apennines and up to the Tyrrhenian Sea, in the form of a triangle. [...] It is mostly a hilly region, because it was occupied by the Apennine branches and three independent groups of mountains: the *monti Apuani* in the north, the *colline del Chianti* and those called *metallifere* [rich in iron] in the center. From the *monti Apuani*, the famous Carrara marble is obtained. The Chianti hills give a superb wine. [...] But there are also vast plains along the coast and the rivers, especially the main two, Arno and Ombrone, who embrace the chain *metallifera*. The plains of the coasts were very marshy, but now are largely reclaimed, and will be soon entirely reclaimed by the work of the Fascist Government.

And then:

Tuscany, with its hills full of houses [...] can be said to be the cradle of the Italian language and literature, and was the homeland of some of the greatest geniuses of Italy and of the world: *Dante*, *Leonardo*, *Michelangelo*, *Galileo*. How many works of art in the city and in the villas in Tuscany! *Florence*, on the Arno River, has the Piazza della Signoria, Santa Maria del Fiore, Giotto's bell tower, the Baptistery with its famous bronze doors by Ghiberti, and palaces and churches and museums that make it one of the jewels of Italy. *Pisa* has the Piazza del Duomo, where, around to the artistic Church, in the quiet lawn, the beautiful Baptistery, the famous Leaning Tower, and the large cemetery with famous paintings rise. *Siena* has a large square dominated by the Tower called *del Mangia*, 102 meters high, and a beautiful cathedral and many artistic buildings. *Arezzo* and *Pistoia* are remarkable for their ancient cathedrals¹⁵⁸.

Another primary school textbook of the Fascist era, *Il libro della terza classe elementare*¹⁵⁹, offered accurate and evocative descriptions. It was used as a State schoolbook from the school year 1939-1940 and edited almost entirely by Ezio Bonomi¹⁶⁰ that, in the second post war period, was also the lucky author

¹⁵⁷ See *L'Italia bella*, *ibid.*, pp. 212-218.

¹⁵⁸ *Toscana*, in De Marchi, *Il libro della quarta classe elementare. Geografia*, cit., pp. 214-219.

¹⁵⁹ E. Bonomi, *Il libro della terza classe elementare. Religione, Grammatica, Storia, Geografia, Aritmetica*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1940 (the part about Geography is from p. 129 to p. 174).

¹⁶⁰ Only the part about Religion was not edited by Ezio Bonomi, but by Mons. Angelo Zammarchi and Reverend Cesare Angelini.

of several reading books¹⁶¹. «Our home», Italy, favorite destination for foreign tourists and that «looks like a lovely garden to the thousands and thousands of strangers who, from the foggy and cold northern countries, come annually among us»¹⁶², was thus presented:

Writers and poets have always called Italy with the sweetest names: the *Beautiful Country*, the *Garden of Europe*, the *land of songs and sounds*. All of Italy is beautiful and charming. [...] It was the cradle of fine arts: painting, sculpture, architecture. In every city, in every country, sometimes even in remote villages, there are wonderful monuments, ancient churches, museums full of paintings and statues that are miracles of beauty. Which city in the world keeps so many memories of a glorious past and so many impressive modern works such as the Eternal City, the imperial Rome? Which city has more works of art than Florence? Which city is the most picturesque of Venice, in the lagoon? Of Genoa, with its port? Of Naples, with the smoking Vesuvius background? Of Palermo, in the center of the Conca d'Oro? But we can not remember all the cities of Italy: they are all beautiful for one aspect or another¹⁶³.

Among the primary school textbooks of the last period of the Fascist regime that deserve a special mention with regard to the promotion of the Italian cultural and natural heritage but also for its educational originality there is surely *Il libro della quarta classe elementare*¹⁶⁴, used as State schoolbook from the school year 1941-1942 and edited, for the part related to Geography (*Il mio Paese/My Country, la mia Patria/My homeland, l'Impero/The Empire*)¹⁶⁵, by prof. Armando Armando, Roman professor and well-known and appreciated intellectual after World War II¹⁶⁶. Since the introductory part of the book, in which the author specified that the primary purpose of the book was «to help the reader to learn more about the Homeland», there was a specific invitation addressed directly to young pupils, a kind of exhortation to go on a long trips that would allow them to really appreciate the wonders of the world and of Italy in particular. In order to help the students in their itinerary to the discovery of their country, the author suggested a method that makes the text edited by

¹⁶¹ On Ezio Bonomi, author of school textbooks in the second post-war period see the following paragraph of this work. For further information, see: P. Genovesi, *Il manuale di storia in Italia. Dal fascismo alla Repubblica*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2009, pp. 107-110.

¹⁶² See *Bellezze d'Italia*, in Bonomi, *Il libro della terza classe elementare. Religione, Grammatica, Storia, Geografia, Aritmetica*, cit., pp. 157-160. Another passage of this primary school textbook was devoted to Italy, *Grandezza e potenza d'Italia*, *ibid.*, pp. 160-162.

¹⁶³ See *Bellezze d'Italia*, cit., pp. 158-160.

¹⁶⁴ A. Armando, *Il libro della quarta classe elementare. Aritmetica, Geografia, Scienze*, Roma, La Libreria dello Stato, 1941 (the part on Geography is on pp. 125-233).

¹⁶⁵ Armando Armando was also responsible of the part related to the arithmetic, while the one about science was edited by Mario Mazza.

¹⁶⁶ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Armando and for a reconstruction of his activity in the educational field, see *Armando Armando* edited by Luigiaurelio Pomante and Roberto Sani, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 63-64.

Armando didactically innovative compared to other volumes of the previous period:

Get some folders or some envelopes; write a different name on each envelope or folder: sea, mountains, rivers, lakes, hills, plains, cities, countries; collect postcards or illustrations on Italy to distribute them in the different folders, after writing short captions below each of them, as in the following illustrations, drawn by an artist who has traveled widely in Italy and carefully observed every place¹⁶⁷.

So, the various illustrations in the primary school textbook¹⁶⁸ made by the Italian painter, illustrator and decorator Pio Pullini¹⁶⁹ helped school children in the discovery of Italy, as well as over one hundred photographs of the most important sites of artistic and architectural interest (from Piazza San Marco in Venice to the bell tower of Aprilia) and of the best known Italian works of art (sculptures and paintings, from the *Pietà* by Michelangelo to the *Madonna del Cardellino* by Raphael). The images, therefore, had the task to guide the child in the discovery and promotion of the cultural and natural heritage of his land, in order to develop in him a deep sense of national identity. In Armando's volume the reading passages, on the contrary, were virtually absent and also the descriptions of the regions and cities typical of the other primary school textbooks were reduced to the essential, according to a precise choice made by the same author of the volume:

The Italian cities are many, and a lot of them were established a thousand, two thousand, three thousand years ago and more. Talk about all of them would be impossible in such a small book like this. [...] Each region, each province, each district has old and new memories, and it would take volumes and volumes to give you an idea of the most beautiful works of art of our architects, our sculptors, our painters¹⁷⁰.

Therefore, Armando decided to give his readers only little information on the two most important cities, Rome, «where the successor of St. Peter speaks to the whole world, and from all over the world there are those who come to hear his word», and Milan, «full of ancient memories and artistic beauty, but also [...] modern city, with wide roads travelled daily by thousands and thousands of cars, with great palaces, and factories of all kinds»; and scant information on the major ports in Italy, namely Genoa, Naples and Venice¹⁷¹.

¹⁶⁷ See *Un primo viaggio per l'Italia*, in Armando, *Il libro della quarta classe elementare. Aritmetica, Geografia, Scienze*, cit., p. 125.

¹⁶⁸ They were related above all on the physical Italy.

¹⁶⁹ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Pullini and for a reconstruction of his activity in the educational field, see *Pullini Pio*, edited by Marta Brunelli, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 2, p. 378.

¹⁷⁰ See *Un secondo viaggio per l'Italia*, in Armando, *Il libro della quarta classe elementare. Aritmetica, Geografia, Scienze*, cit., p. 172; *Architettura, Scultura, Pittura*, in *ibid.*, p. 185.

¹⁷¹ *Città d'Italia*, *ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

The students had the task of completing and enriching the overall collection of towns and beauties of Italy, «with further pictures, with historical stamps, with historical maps, with topographical drawings or maps drawn by them» in order to «make a new exploration trip in Italy»¹⁷².

3. «How good it is to feel ourselves all children of our Italy, full of blue and sun». *The cultural and landscape heritage as a tool for a «new» citizenship feeling in the second post-war period*

Soon after the collapse of the Fascist regime, as aptly pointed out by Anna Ascenzi, «the question of textbooks and their function both as an instrument and vehicle for a genuine education of the spirit and of the values of democracy appears, immediately after the fall of the Fascist regime, as one of the central themes of the general debate, developed between the forces of the National Liberation Committee (CLN), with regard to the reconstruction, on new basis, the Italian schools»¹⁷³. Moreover, for some time there was a wide recognition of the important role played by textbooks in the educational framework of the Italian school introduced by Gentile Reform of 1923. In the Fascist period, in fact, the textbooks had proved to be an ideological and political tool of considerable importance above all «as the main factor in the construction of the consensus, among the younger generation, about the initiatives and achievements of Mussolini's regime»¹⁷⁴. On the same basis, in the period after World War II, there was the belief that an effective establishment of the democratic costumes and a new idea of citizenship in the peoples should unavoidably pass through the promotion of new cultural and civil model, compared to those of the Fascist period, but always using the school, and then to textbooks, as a privileged channel for carrying out the educational activity among the younger generations¹⁷⁵.

When reconstructing the history of the textbook, certainly the period between 1943 and 1945 can't be considered among the easier at all. The two school years 1943-1944 and 1944-1945, in fact, saw the peninsula divided into two parts (in the north there were the Germans and the Italian Social Republic,

¹⁷² See *Un secondo viaggio per l'Italia, ibid.*, p. 172.

¹⁷³ Cfr. Ascenzi, *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, cit., p. 253.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ See: R. Fornaca, *I problemi della scuola italiana dal 1943 alla Costituente*, Roma, Armando, 1972, pp. 12-26; D. Bertoni Jovine, *La scuola italiana dal 1870 ai giorni nostri*, Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1975, pp. 390-412; T. Tomasi, *La scuola italiana dalla dittatura alla Repubblica 1943-1948*, Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1976, pp. 47-69; R. Sani, *Sub specie educationis. Studi e ricerche su istruzione, istituzioni scolastiche e processi culturali e formativi nell'Italia contemporanea*, Macerata, eum, 2011, pp. 499-521.

in the south, the formally legitimate Southern Kingdom that was extending its power as the liberation of the national territory proceeded) and in each of them a specific legislation and practical solutions were applied, imposed by war needs, which, in fact, often went beyond the current regulations¹⁷⁶. In these two years, however, the problem of the revision of textbooks was noticed by several scholars¹⁷⁷, although it was the Subcommittee for the Education of the *Allied Military Government* (AMG), chaired by the US pedagogue Carl Washburne¹⁷⁸. To actually start a first ideological revision of school textbooks in use in the twenty years of Mussolini's regime and to urge, as part of a more general defascistization of the Italian school strongly wanted by the Minister of Education Guido De Ruggiero¹⁷⁹, the production and dissemination of a school journalism more in tune with the political, social and cultural ideals, of the nascent democracy.

As part of a series of measures to find a solution to the immediate needs of the Italian schools, profoundly affected by the war, between 1944 and 1945 the Subcommittee was engaged in the drafting of new educational programs for the nursery and primary school, and for the Institute with teaching specialization, and, simultaneously, established the criteria for the revision of textbooks related to schools of all levels, entrusting this task to a central ministerial Commission and to a series of regional commissions for the school established in the territories gradually freed and subjected to the control of the *Allied Military Government*, made up of teachers and school officials selected with the help of the Ministry of Education¹⁸⁰. The new programs were enacted by Ministerial Decree 9th February, 1945, *Programmi, istruzioni e modelli per le scuole elementari e materne* [*Programs, instructions and models for primary schools and kindergartens*]¹⁸¹, signed by the new minister Vincenzo Arangio

¹⁷⁶ See in this sense the ministerial measures adopted between 1944 and 1945 examined by Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista*, cit., pp. 294-298. Also F.V. Lombardi is very useful, *I programmi per la scuola elementare dal 1860 al 1985*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1987, pp. 433-435.

¹⁷⁷ See Ascenzi, *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, cit., p. 254.

¹⁷⁸ On the work of the Subcommittee for the Education see: C. Washburne, *La riorganizzazione dell'istruzione in Italia*, «Scuola e Città», nn. 6-7, 1970, pp. 273-277; S.F. Withe, *Italian popular education between fascism and democracy 1943-1945: the work and legacy of the Allied Control Commission – Education Subcommittee*, Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1985; Id., *America and Reconstruction of Italian Education 1943-1962*. New York-London, Garland, 1991.

¹⁷⁹ In the Ministerial Circular of 24th October 1944, n. 2190, we can read: «The defascistization of the school, including that of the textbooks, will receive particular attention, both in the case that the chosen book has already been amended, and in the case that for local impossibilities the texts of previous years had to be kept». See Ministerial Circular 24th October 1944, n. 2190 – *Libri di testo per l'anno scolastico 1944-1945*, in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista*, cit., pp. 296-298.

¹⁸⁰ See Ascenzi, *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, cit., p. 255.

¹⁸¹ M.D. 9th February 1945 – *Programmi, istruzioni e modelli per le scuole elementari e*

Ruiz, and which, though not formally, abolished the adoption of the State schoolbook¹⁸²; the programs were promulgated with Viceregal Decree 24th May 1945¹⁸³. It was, as Roberto Sani underlined, a particularly important document

In which the issue of education to democracy and a new sense of citizenship was placed at the center of the educational activity of the school; in this school, in fact, not only the task to fight illiteracy and to transmit essential elements of knowledge and culture was given, but also that to form, in the new generations, an active social conscience', i.e. a 'civil habitus', capable of promoting in the child the citizen¹⁸⁴.

In this process of diffusion of the democratic ideals¹⁸⁵ and of promotion of a renewed sense of citizenship, as well as of a concept of national identity without the Fascist excesses, once again the promotion and enhancement of the cultural and natural treasures of the peninsula were destined to play a role of major importance. The same programs of 1945, as stated in the *Avvertenze* (*Warnings*), gave a specific task to the disciplines of History and Geography:

The teaching of History and Geography will finally become a moral teaching after the tragic experience suffered by mankind. The heroism of those who fought over the centuries for freedom was exalted; the lives of saints and missionaries who made the work of civilization and alleviated suffering, pain, misery were described; [...] the admiration for artists who gave their work the chrism of beauty will be aroused; in a word, the true, authentic history of civilization will be relived, to come to a clear view of the current conditions in Italy and in the world.

This educational «mission» entrusted to the historical and geographic subjects could be carried out, however, only if adequately supported by the valuable work of school teachers, clearly invited to «renew their historical and geographical preparation» in order to make teaching «attractive, alive and really effective for the moral and civic education». In order to do this, the teacher would have to use

materne, «BUMPI», 16 febbraio 1945, I, nn. 7-8, pp. 307-313, now reproduced in Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista*, cit., pp. 298-302 (from which we will quote).

¹⁸² The already mentioned Law 7th January 1929 n. 5, establishing the State schoolbook, will be abolished by the Legislative Decree of the Lieutenant of the Kingdom of 31st August 1945, n. 714 – *Abrogazione della legge 7 gennaio 1929, n. 5, relativa al libro di testo unico di Stato per le Scuole elementari e modificazioni al testo unico delle leggi e delle norme giuridiche sulla istruzione elementare approvato con R. Decreto 5 febbraio 1928, n. 577*, «BUMPI», 16 December 1945, I, nn. 47-48, pp. 1914-1915, now reproduced by Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista*, cit., pp. 304-305.

¹⁸³ Viceregal Legislative Decree 24th May 1945, n. 459 – *Programmi per le scuole elementari e materne*, «BUMPI», 24 May 1945, I, nn. 7-8, pp. 266-308, reproduced by Lombardi, *I programmi per la scuola elementare dal 1860 al 1985*, cit., pp. 436-475 (for the quotation).

¹⁸⁴ See Sani, *Sub specie educationis*, cit., p. 506.

¹⁸⁵ Inspired by the principles of Dewey's activist pedagogy, the programs for nursery and primary schools in 1945 conceived the education to democracy as education at the exercise of the personal responsibility and initiative right from childhood. See *ibid.*, pp. 506-507.

all those subsidies that contribute to the concreteness of such teaching, as historical maps, geographic and topographic maps, models, illustrations and readings, poems of historical content, visits to monuments and museums, tours of historical and geographical interest, observation of typical objects of the past, interschool correspondence, investigation and assessment of natural phenomena in relation to the local economy. For Geography, in particular, we recommend the constant use of the map, that the student must know how to read with confidence¹⁸⁶.

Hence, the suggestion to teachers, within specific programs formulated for the individual classes, to make, for the third class, «visits to places, monuments, historic buildings», to make a «careful observation of the physical-political map of the province, of the region and of Italy» and to undertake with the fancy «travels and routes on the map, having in mind the physical characteristics they encounter»; and, for the fourth class, to propose «easy and interesting historical and geographical readings on the ways of life of different peoples and geography games for a better understanding of the physical and political map of Italy»¹⁸⁷.

So that the principles and ministerial guidelines on the new programs could be welcomed by teachers and above all find a concrete application in the school, it was necessary, however, that the textbooks adopted in the classroom would mirror the spirit of the ministerial dictates, and really adopt the new civil and political climate. Precisely for this reason the Subcommittee Washburne gave to school printers and publishers very precise and scrupulous criteria about how to draft the new texts for the primary school. *Appendix B* of the already mentioned Ministerial Decree 9th February 1945, for example, with specific reference to the textbook of Geography for the third class (the Book of History and Geography was adopted from the third class, and was combined with the use of a small atlas), prescribed that it should be

rich of scenic views, maps and plans, charts and diagrams, aimed at facilitating the understanding of the geographical world. It will also contain news and data on the economic life, geographical curiosities, anecdotes, suggestive hints about the life of the great explorers, etc. Questions will have to encourage the students to search for more extensive information and investigate in the context of his experience, with invitations to visit the locations to describe geographically them, by filling cartographic surveys, drawings, etc. It also gives space to the geographical readings of the lively travelers¹⁸⁸.

Therefore, a «new» textbook was required, that was able to be in step with the times, to look at current events with curiosity and even more to guide the student in his activities of discovery of the surrounding reality.

¹⁸⁶ See Lombardi, *I programmi per la scuola elementare dal 1860 al 1985*, cit., pp. 456-457.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 458-459. In the fifth class the direct study of Italy ceased, to study the major European and non-European states, analyzed also in their relations with Italy.

¹⁸⁸ See Ascenzi, Sani (edd.), *Il libro per la scuola nel ventennio fascista*, cit., p. 301.

Actually, the work of revision of textbooks turned out to be much more complex and challenging than one might imagine¹⁸⁹. In the case of reading books and primary school textbooks, then, this program appeared difficult to be performed at the beginning, because of the presence of a single series of textbooks, that of the state monopoly, «which was in all its parts full of Fascist propaganda»¹⁹⁰.

As Anna Ascenzi underlined, in fact

If it was true that these texts [those of the Second World War] turned out to conform, for the most part, to the dictates of the new programs as far as approach and organization of the material, it is also true that from the point of view of content and educational models which they proposed, the post-Fascist reading books and textbooks were a long way from reflecting the ideals of the new political and civil climate¹⁹¹.

Precisely for this reason, one of the sore points of the post-war school production, as the Commission for the revision of text books of the primary schools had brilliantly predicted already at the end of 1945¹⁹², can be identified in the full or partial reproduction of textbooks or, in the best cases, of whole reading passages, dated back to the early twenties or even to the last phase of Giolitti's era: they were reprinted in many cases even without the updating of the parts that were clearly anachronistic¹⁹³. Even from the school year 1947-1948, when a new editorial production started to be registered, many stories, readings and descriptions in the primary school and reading books still continued to be characterized by a modest reference to the current political and social situation of the Country, «perhaps considered to be matters too delicate and controversial by the authors and publishers in the context of the strong ideological conflicts which characterised Italian society of those years»¹⁹⁴.

¹⁸⁹ See, in this regard, Ascenzi, *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, cit., pp. 258-259; Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 234-237.

¹⁹⁰ See *Resoconto dell'attività di epurazione dei libri di testo*, in Commissione Alleata di Controllo – Sottocommissione dell'Educazione, *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943. Con cenni introduttivi sui periodi precedenti e una parte conclusiva del post-fascismo*, Milano, Garzanti, 1947, pp. 388-389.

¹⁹¹ See Ascenzi, *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, cit., p. 257.

¹⁹² See *Relazione della Commissione per la revisione dei libri di testo delle scuole elementari, Milano 21 novembre 1945* in Archivio dell'Istituto Nazionale per la storia del Movimento di Liberazione in Italia di Milano, Fondo CLN Lombardia, Commissariato Scuola, b. 78, f. 15.

¹⁹³ See Bacigalupi, Fossati, *Da plebe a popolo*, cit., pp. 237-250.

¹⁹⁴ See Ascenzi, *Education and the metamorphoses of citizenship in contemporary Italy*, cit., p. 258. On October 30th, 1947, in an article published in Milan on «L'Unità», Gianni Rodari pointed out: «The Italian Republic has now more than a year of life, but skimming the dozens of reading and history books we have before our eyes, it seems that the knowledge is forbidden to our schoolchildren [...]. [These books] seemed to be destined to boys in sailor suits with knee-breeches, as in the fashion magazines of forty years ago, instead that to our children, who were in the cellars under bombardment, and saw with their own eyes the national uprising, the Five days of Milan, the partisans shot in the streets and Mussolini hanging in Piazzale Loreto» (see G. Rodari,

In the light of what was just pointed out, it is inevitable that even the modes of representation, description and promotion of the Italian cultural and landscape heritage do not deviate much from those already encountered and analyzed during the Fascist period. The horizon of reference, of course, was no longer the homeland, understood in a Fascist sense, and made even bigger and prestigious by the work of the regime, but the celebrative and laudatory tones used in the Fascist period for a city, for a particularly valuable work of art, for a charming naturalistic view or a centuries old architectural monument, did not seem to change; as well the intent of using the artistic and environmental beauties presents in Italy with the aim to promote national identity and a strong sense of citizenship among the younger generation was the same.

In order to confirm this, it is enough to examine some of the most used reading books after World War II. First of all, the one by Lea Maggiulli Bartorelli, more commonly known by her pseudonym *Zietta Liù*, who, in 1946, after ministerial approval of 2nd August 1945, published *Albe serene* [*Serene sunrises*]¹⁹⁵. The book, which alternated prosaic poems and narratives, was in a language and style very close to its predecessors of the Fascist period, as the passage *Citta d'Italia* (*Cities of Italy*) clearly shows, aimed at glorifying the Italian beauties in order to arouse in the young readers a «remarkable patriotism»¹⁹⁶, as even in the Report of approval of the text, prepared by the Ministerial Committee, is shown:

I would fly up into the sky, like a little swallow, and see you all, kiss you all, my cities of Italy, because I love you all with the same love, and I have in my child's heart an immense poetic heartbeat for you. And I would see the placid lagoon on which Venice lies, the pearl of the Adriatic, the marble palaces and the light gondolas; and the immense and industrious Milan, heart of Italy, strong, industrious, beautiful; and Naples, divine flower of the Tyrrhenian Sea, brilliant mermaids' sister; and the royal Turin which is reflected in the large sleepy Po; and you, Florence, Dante's gentle home, that lived many hours of brilliant history, and gave laws of art and poetry to the world; the superb Genoa that saw the bold and generous Balilla challenge the eternal enemy; and you, Rome, my pride of Italy, our immense wealth and pride¹⁹⁷.

The same stereotypes and hyperbolic and rhetoric descriptions, fueled by an even more evident lyrical vein, were also in *Luce nuova* [*New light*] by Rosetta Sala¹⁹⁸. In this 1948 book, the author used the synthetic reworking of

Ragazzi nuovi e libri vecchi, «L'Unità», 30 October 1947, p. 12. See also E. Barassi, S. Magistretti, G. Sansone (edd.), *Il leggere inutile. Indagine sui libri di lettura adottati nella scuola elementare*, Milano, Emme Edizioni, 1971; M. Bonazzi, *I 'pampini' bugiardi. Indagine sui libri al di sopra di ogni sospetto: i testi delle scuole elementari*, Firenze, Guarnaldi, 1972.

¹⁹⁵ Zietta Liù (Lea Maggiulli Bartorelli), *Albe serene. Letture per la terza classe urbana e rurale*, Roma-Napoli, Edizioni S.A.E.I., 1946.

¹⁹⁶ See *Relazione della Commissione Ministeriale*, *ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁹⁷ See *Città d'Italia*, *ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁹⁸ R. Sala, *Luce nuova. Letture per la terza classe elementare*, Roma, Vittorio Bonacci Editore, 1948.

numerous nineteenth-century writings of classical authors such as Edmondo De Amicis¹⁹⁹, or of writers who lived at the turn of the century, as Alfredo Panzini, to praise Italy, «sleeping beauty of the sea» and to magnify its historical and cultural wealth and its «incomparable artistic beauty»²⁰⁰.

Fonte gaia [Happy source] by Olga Mascagni, published in 1948²⁰¹, had an entire section, entitled *Il bel paese* [The beautiful country], devoted to the description and promotion of the Italian cultural and natural heritage. The aim was always that of «nurturing with strong patriotic ideals», the new generations' consciences. With this goal, the author, even before dealing with the narratives on the artistic and landscape heritage of the peninsula²⁰², used the works of the authors of the previous century to create in the young students a certain admiration for the homeland and a sincere and shared sense of citizenship:

I love Italy because my mother is Italian, because the blood that flows in my veins is Italian, because the land where the dead my mother cries for and my father worships are buried is Italian, because the city where I was born, the language I speak, the books that educate me, because my brother, my sister, my companions, and the great people in which I live, and the beautiful nature that surrounds me, and everything I see, that I love, that I study, I admire, is Italian²⁰³.

The request of the Italian people to be fomented by a strong patriotic spirit, therefore, did not seem to be very different from that of the Fascist period, but in reading books after World War II also a new aspect emerged, namely the need for Italy to rediscover and cultivate the peace, and above all, the brotherhood among its inhabitants. The harsh repressions of the Fascist period, the tragic events of World War II and even more the partisan fights had divided the country, weakening it. Now, it was therefore necessary to recover the unity that would allow the country to return to grow and to be credible on the international scene. The cultural and natural heritage, of which to be proud, would serve again as an element of identity.

Thus, for example, Maria and Ninetta, protagonists of *Speranze. Libro di letture per la classe seconda* [Hops. Reading book for the second grade class] by

¹⁹⁹ *Saluto all'Italia, ibid.*, p. 100. The passage proposed was a shorter version of the longer one proposed in the Fascist period in the already analyzed books by Bianca Lena Pistamiglio and Francesco Carcò, Oronzina Quercia Tanzarella and Giovanni Capodivacca.

²⁰⁰ See *Italia, bella addormentata, ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

²⁰¹ O. Mascagni, *Fonte gaia. Letture per la quarta classe elementare*, Firenze, Edizioni Franceschini, 1948.

²⁰² Among the passages by Mascagni on the Italian landscape and artistic beauties, we remember in particular: *Torino-Genova-Milano-Venezia, ibid.*, pp. 169-174; *La ferrovia circumetnea, ibid.*, pp. 184-186.

²⁰³ See *L'amor di patria, ibid.*, pp. 165-166 (the passage was by Edmondo De Amicis). *La Patria, ibid.*, pp. 164-165 (the text was by Alfredo Panzini) was also very similar. For a bio-bibliographical profile of Alfredo Panzini's and for a reconstruction of his activity in the educational field, see *Alfredo Panzini*, by Dorena Caroli, *Alfredo Panzini*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE. Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 279-280.

Ezio Bonomi²⁰⁴, while admiring their hometown, Florence, its «majestic palaces and beautiful documents, the domes that bloom like giant corollas in the blue sky, the blue clear and sparkling river», were urged by the teacher to be proud of being part of the «Italian people» and, at the same time, to love their fellow countrymen, in the name of the fraternity and unity forgotten for a long time: «How beautiful it is to feel all children of our Italy, full of blue and sun! Let us love it, and let us love one another, and let's not forget that we are brothers»²⁰⁵.

After World War II, however, the primary school books, in particular, devoted many pages to real descriptions of the Italian cultural and environmental assets. One of the first textbooks adopted in the post-Fascist Italy and particularly important in this regard was the *Sussidiario della terza classe* [*Primary schoolbook of third grade class*], by the Ministry of Education and printed in the fall of 1944 by the Società Editrice Dante Alighieri for the school year 1944-1945²⁰⁶. The volume, especially in its layout but also in terms of content (see, for example, the modest presence of photographs, various drawings and illustrations), proved to be a faithful expression of the difficult and complex historical moment in which it was given to the press, as the *Preface* well showed:

The war made it very difficult to find the paper and the other materials required for printing a book. The paper of this book is not very good, and for this reason you should be more careful with it. To print the pictures some metals are needed. The war required the use of so much metal that has been impossible to find what they needed for all the illustrations that we wanted to put in this book. So you, helped by your teacher, should try to find photographs and postcards of famous people, or landscapes, or beautiful buildings, to be displayed in the classroom. They will replace the figures that we could not print. It will be an interesting game to find the figures illustrating just what you will read in this book²⁰⁷.

An active participation, therefore, was required to the young pupils, behind the teacher's careful guidance, to make their school book a truly comprehensive tool to learn more about the reality in which they live in. With this attitude, of course, the part devoted to the Geography played a leading role. It, however, edited by Ezio Bonomi, very popular author already in the last years of the Fascist period, was nothing but the revival, although appropriately purified

²⁰⁴ E. Bonomi, *Speranze. Letture per la classe seconda*, Milano, Compagnia Editrice Italiana, 1954.

²⁰⁵ See *Italia nostra, ibid.*, p. 29. The theme of brotherhood and unity among all Italians invoked by all the Italians was clearly present in other contemporary reading books among which in particular we mention: M. Mundula, *La conchiglia. Letture per la quarta classe elementare*, Torino, Paravia, 1948 (*In treno, ibid.*, pp. 155-157); P. Gigli, G. Martelli, *Nel giardino fiorito. Letture per la quinta classe*, Milano, Casa Editrice La Fiamma, 1949 (*Il giardino del mondo, ibid.*, pp. 40-41); V.E. Laurini, *Amore e lavoro. Letture per la quinta classe*, Roma, Edizioni scolastiche Laurini, 1949 (*La nostra patria e il nostro popolo, ibid.*, p. 33); M. Mastropaolo, *Un anno felice*, Napoli, Conte Editore, 1952 (*L'Italia, ibid.*, pp. 19-20).

²⁰⁶ Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione (ed.), *Sussidiario della terza classe: religione, grammatica, storia, geografia, aritmetica. Edizione ufficiale autorizzata 1944-1945*, Napoli, Società editrice Dante Alighieri, 1944 (the part on Geography, edited by Ezio Bonomi, is from pp. 87-111).

²⁰⁷ See *Prefazione*, in *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

of all those terms recalling the Fascist period («duce», «civilization of the Littorio», «Fascist regime»), of the same text adopted in the school year 1939-1940. The «Homeland» always appeared «like a giant boot» and the fate of Italy was that to «walk», as it did «for thirty centuries, leaving its marks on the world's roads»²⁰⁸. And exactly these marks in time and in history made the Italian peninsula, undoubtedly «the most beautiful country in the world», so to attract every year many foreigners who came «to Italy to admire not only its natural and artistic beauty, but even to contemplate the signs of its glorious history and to visit and study», no longer the works of the Fascist regime that had made Italy great, as Bonomi had written in 1939²⁰⁹, but «all the works of art that through the ages, the geniuses of painting, sculpture and architecture had handed down»:

The signs of its glorious history are everywhere: arches, columns, castles, towers, walls, ruins of aqueducts, of bridges, of countries, of ancient cities, recalling the time when Italy was already great and civilized, while many nations nearby were barbaric²¹⁰.

If Bonomi's text was an almost slavish reproduction of the volume used as a single State version, the 1946 volume *I tre sussidiari per la terza classe elementare* [*The three primary schoolbooks for the third grade class*] edited by Corrado D'Alesio and Carmela Mungo²¹¹ – this latter was the author of the part devoted to History and Geography – was more original in the geographical descriptions. Approved by the Central Commission of the Ministry of Education, Mungo's book devoted the entire Fourth Part of the volume, entitled *Viaggiare ed Osservare* [*Travel and Observe*], to the discovery of the Italian cultural and landscape heritage²¹². In the passage *Ed ora in viaggio*, the author, using the well-known and much used literary device of the trip, made by bike or plane, or by bus or on a donkey or even walking²¹³, offered the young reader a pleasant

²⁰⁸ See *La forma dell'Italia*, *ibid.*, p. 102.

²⁰⁹ See the above mentioned *Grandezza e potenza d'Italia*, *cit.*, pp. 160-162.

²¹⁰ See *Grandezza e potenza d'Italia*, in Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione (ed.), *Sussidiario della terza classe: religione, grammatica, storia, geografia, aritmetica. Edizione ufficiale autorizzata 1944-1945*, *cit.*, pp. 103-104.

²¹¹ C. D'Alesio, C. Mungo, *I tre sussidiari per la terza classe elementare*, Roma, O.E.T. Didattica, 1946 (the part on Geography and History was edited by Mungo, pp. 5-97).

²¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 75-97. The last pages of the text are devoted to a summary description of the European continent, the Asian one, and the African and American.

²¹³ Among the texts of the Second World War that used the expedient of a literary journey to offer a quick but effective description of the beauties of the peninsula, in particular we mention: A. Achilli, M. Grazzini, *Vicende e Paesi. Pagine di Storia e Geografia*, in *La spiga d'oro. Sussidiario per la quarta classe elementare*, Milano, Garzanti, 1947, pp. 1-136 (in particular see *Una «corsa» attraverso le regioni italiane*, *ibid.*, pp. 111-129); B. Sales, Don C. Orlandi, L. Sironi, M. Mastracci, *Sussidiario Italia. Lo smeraldo per la classe terza*, Roma, L'Italia Editrice, 1949 (the part on Geography, edited by Sales is from p. 79 to p. 136; see in particular *Comincia a conoscere la patria*, *ibid.*, pp. 97-127); C. Casati, S. Franchini, E. Genovesi, V. Lugani, G. Bacci, L. Pallavicini, L. Lombardi Fedeli, *Il mio mondo. Sussidiario per la terza classe elementare*, Milano, Società Editrice

and punctual description of some of the most evocative and selected beauties of Italy. The first stop was Umbria, «the green and holy land par excellence» and for the exploration of which only «a compass, a map of the region, the haversack with a good breakfast, and a bottle with something to drink» were required:

Let's suppose we live in Assisi, the town of St. Francis, our great saint. A magnificent walk is that of the Subasio, to the Convent of the Prisons. We take the path for the climb: the plain lies serene and quiet at our feet; Assisi is quiet and gray, with its smoking chimneys; St. Mary of the Angels in the background with the "beautiful dome of Vignola". [...] We will stop at the Chapel of the Birds, where St. Francis preached one day to the plumed listeners; and we will soon resume the way to the top of the mountain. [...] Try to make a trip of this kind, and then tell me if it is not a wonderful thing, that makes you love the history and geography²¹⁴.

But if, in addition to a walk on foot or by bus, there had been the economic availability to undertake a journey by plane, means of transport symbol of modernity that Italy could not and should not avoid and that, we will see, would be the protagonist in the years of a number of primary school textbooks, the goal suggested by the subsidiary would have been Sicily. It is a land «harsh and sunny, populated by proud people», cradle of art and ancient culture, with its «Palermo, the church of Monreale, rich in artistic beauties, one of the most famous monuments of the middle Ages» or «Trapani and its salt mines, Agrigento, Siracusa, Catania, dominated by Etna» and there, you can also see «the remains of the Italian-Greek temples and the Greek theater in Syracuse, well preserved»²¹⁵.

An equally effective and certainly more detailed narrative in the information provided was that offered by the subsidiary *Fatti e Paesi. Visioni, osservazioni e nozioni di Storia e Geografia per la Classe Quarta Elementare* [Facts and countries. Visions, observations and notions of History and Geography for the Fourth Primary Class], also published in 1946 and edited by Teresa Ceruti and Irene Lorenzetti²¹⁶. From the *Preface*, the authors, by identifying the criteria that governed the drafting of the text, declared that the ultimate goal of the book was to use the natural beauty and the Italian art and architecture heritage to promote national identity and the feeling of citizenship among young primary school students, as well as the concepts of brotherhood and solidarity among Italians, already highlighted for contemporary reading books:

Cinematografica, 1950 (the part on Geography, edited by Pallavicini, is from pp. 261-312; see in particular *In viaggio da Venezia a Milano, ibid.*, p. 286; *In viaggio da Aosta a Genova, ibid.*, pp. 287-289; *Da Bologna a Palermo, ibid.*, pp. 290-293).

²¹⁴ See *Ed ora in viaggio*, in D'Alesio, Mungo, *I tre sussidiari per la terza classe elementare*, cit., pp. 86-88.

²¹⁵ See *In aeroplano, ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

²¹⁶ T. Ceruti, I. Lorenzetti, *Fatti e paesi. Visioni, osservazioni e nozioni di Storia e Geografia per la classe quarta elementare*, Milano, Centro Editoriale Italiano, 1946 (the part on Geography, edited by Lorenzetti, is from p. 35 to p. 100).

For Geography, without excluding the scientific precision, it's important to rely on the pupils' experience, increased by the observation of the data and the reflection, in order to arouse a keen sense of admiration for the varied and picturesque nature and the secular work of men who have used it for their needs; to understand the particular character of each area and region and to arouse the sense of brotherhood and national and human solidarity²¹⁷.

In order to achieve this purpose, the physical and political description of the country, «large peninsula that raises his head toward the sky with the majestic crown of the Alps and then descends slowly through the three Adriatic blue seas, the Ionian and Tyrrhenian»²¹⁸, could only be, on the one hand, scientifically accurate, and, on the other, also strongly characterized by a very pompous use of the adjectives and a sentence construction based on a rhetoric not far from that of the Fascist regime. Each region, therefore, renamed on the basis of a principal historical, geographical, artistic, scenic or cultural feature (the Tridentine Venice is the «sentinel of Italy», Venezia Giulia is the «disputed region» Tuscany «Dante's earth», Umbria «the land of the Saints», Puglia «the heel of Italy»), was presented through a rich variety of data and information, suitably embellished with a neat and emphatic style, in an attempt to offer a framework capable of arousing the pupil's interest²¹⁹.

Another 1946 primary school textbook, *La vita nuova. Sussidiari riuniti per la quarta classe elementare* [*The new life. Unified primary schoolbooks for the fourth grade class*] is less redundant in the language but extremely valuable in terms of content and important for the promotion of the cultural and landscape heritage of the peninsula. Its section on Geography, entitled *Il mio paese* [*My country*], was edited by Grazia Corona²²⁰ and was based on an approach already widely used by the primary school textbook of the previous years, i.e. the alternation between parts containing didactic explanations and parts occupied by explanatory reading passages. So, the textbook recovered many narratives of the Nineteenth-century and the early Twentieth century writers, but also some of the Fascist period.

Thus, Corona, among the many passages presented to school children – next to the reproduction of the classic and well-known descriptions of the

²¹⁷ See *Premessa*, *ibid.*, p. 5.

²¹⁸ See *La mia patria. La figura*, *ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

²¹⁹ See, for example, *La terra di Venezia: la Venezia Euganea*, *ibid.*, pp. 67-68; *La terra del Vesuvio: la Campania*, *ibid.*, p. 76.

²²⁰ P. Barbieri, C. Bertola, G. Corona, F. Fresco, E. Mattei, *La vita nuova. Sussidiari riuniti per la quarta classe elementare*, Roma, O.E.T. Didattica, 1946 (the part about Geography, edited by Corona, is from p. 55 to p. 118).

Alps and the Apennines²²¹ or of the Italian lakes²²² taken from *Il Bel Paese* by Stoppani, or those already mentioned on the Ligurian Riviera by Giovanni Ruffini²²³ and Edmondo Torino de Amicis²²⁴ – made a great use of Mottini's volume²²⁵ entitled *In giro per l'Italia. Impressioni di viaggio* [Around Italy. Travel Impressions]²²⁶. The text, published in 1938 in the series of books for children of UTET, «La Scala d'Oro», directed by Vincenzo Errante and Fernando Palazzi²²⁷, was illustrated with photographs and some watercolors of topographic setting, and seemed to be like a «narrative and didactic version of the handbooks of the Italian Touring Club»²²⁸. Mottini organized the materials in the winking tone typical of his writing, presenting to the young reader a real journey through the landscape and the artistic beauty of the peninsula, during which the author, in the guise of a «Cicero for children»²²⁹, was pleased to note down the aspects of folklore and anecdotes of local life. Excerpts of many stages of this journey around Italy were therefore replicated by Grazia Corona in her textbook in order to further promote the artistic beauty of the peninsula. Therefore, among numerous Mottini's passage, in the primary school textbook of the second post-war period there were also a short description of Venice «the rich»²³⁰ or Genoa «the superb» with the «wonderful show»²³¹; Mottini's

²²¹ *Gli Appennini e le Alpi, ibid.*, p. 59. This book by Antonio Stoppani was very used in the second post-war period, so that it was reproduced in many primary school textbooks, among which we remember the above mentioned Achilli, M. Grazzini, *Vicende e Paesi. Pagine di Storia e Geografia*, cit., in which there are two short versions of the passage, *Il paesaggio alpino*, p. 90 and *Il paesaggio appenninico*, p. 93 and F. Bartorelli, P. Tamantini, R. Baiocchi, *Prime luci. Sussidiario per la quarta classe*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1949 (the part on Geography is edited by Furio Bartorelli from p. 143 to p. 210), in which you can find a longer version compared to the one reproduced by Corona, with the same title *Le Alpi e gli Appennini*, on p. 172.

²²² *I laghi*, in Barbieri, Bertola, Corona, Fresco, Mattei, *La vita nuova. Sussidiari riuniti per la quarta classe elementare, ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

²²³ *La Riviera ligure, ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

²²⁴ *Torino, ibid.*, p. 85.

²²⁵ For a bio-bibliographical profile of Mottini and a careful and detailed analysis of his artistic, musical and literary activity for magazines and newspapers, as well as of his activity as author of children's and adult's books, see the interesting article by S. Nicolini, «Occhi limpidi e cuore puro». *La storia dell'arte raccontata ai ragazzi da Guido Edoardo Mottini*, «History of Education and Children's Literature», vol. 4, n. 2, 2009, pp. 167-195.

²²⁶ E.G. Mottini, *In giro per l'Italia. Impressioni di viaggio narrate da Edoardo G. Mottini con numerose illustrazioni*, Torino, UTET, 1938.

²²⁷ On the series «La Scala d'Oro» see A. Lugli, *Libri e Figure. Storia della letteratura per l'infanzia e per la gioventù*, Bologna, Nuova Universale Cappelli, 1982, pp. 223-224; G. Marrone, *I libri illustrati per ragazzi. La scala d'oro e altre collane*, Roma, Comic Art, 1997 (in particular pp. 16, 58, 60, 62, 63, 64, 67, 70, 72, 75) and E. Rebellato, *La Scala d'oro. Libri per ragazzi durante il fascismo*, Milano, Unicopli, 2016.

²²⁸ See Nicolini, «Occhi limpidi e cuore puro». *La storia dell'arte raccontata ai ragazzi da Guido Edoardo Mottini*, cit., p. 188.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

²³⁰ See *Venezia*, in Barbieri, Bertola, Corona, Fresco, Mattei, *La vita nuova. Sussidiari riuniti per la quarta classe elementare, ibid.*, p. 91.

²³¹ See *Genova, ibid.*, p. 93.

writing was particularly nice and effective, especially when describing some of the most enchanting and picturesque natural beauties of the country. Among them, Corona proposed those of the Valnerina, the valley of the river Nera that connects the «laborious Marche» and the «green Umbria»:

We are in the lovely valley of the Nera. The Nera is a sapphire snake, tortuously lying between emerald meadows and ruby fields. Without exaggeration, the tall poplar trees that accompany seem exclamation marks, placed there for admiration. And down the river! The train, to reach it, has to run here and there through the mountain, to and fro, until the bottom. Here, it boldly rushes against the current and festively greets with a whistle. It seems to say: “Hi, blue river!” For you I return, for you I find the way ready to pass. Through the millennia you corrode the mountains, digging this valley. Without you, how could I go towards the men, on the plateau?²³²

If in Grazia Corona’s textbook there were countless descriptions of the natural and cultural heritage of the Italian peninsula, it was in another primary school textbooks of the immediate post-war period that is even more evident that the promotion of this heritage within the textbooks for the primary school has been used as an element of identity among the inhabitants of the different regions of Italy and then as a tool to develop that feeling of «community» repeatedly pointed out. Consider, for example, *Sussidiari Scolastici Sansoni* [*Primary schoolbooks Sansoni*] and, in particular, the *Sussidiario per la classe quarta* [*Primary schoolbook for the fourth grade class*], published in 1947 and edited by Rosa Frattina, Francesco Maria Fiori, Ester Maugini, Don Giulio Villani and Niccolò and Leona Rodolico, drafters of the latter section devoted to History and Geography²³³. Within this volume, the authors, before giving a detailed description of the physical and political Italy²³⁴, proposed a passage entitled *L’Italia* as an introduction to the following didactic explanations and proposed readings. This passage was a real tribute to the country, which, for its beauty and its wealth, deserved to be «known and loved» in all its shades. The same repeated and perhaps often redundant use of possessive adjectives like «our» and «your» was clearly intended to develop in the reader a sense of belonging to a shared national reality, Italy, which ideally bound children, parents and ancestors together:

Italy is the country that you have to know best. It is the country where you were born, and your parents and grandparents and ancestors were born. You are like the grain of wheat that came from a grain; and it, in its turn, from another, and always in the same field in

²³² See *Viaggio in treno, nella Valle del fiume Nera, ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

²³³ R. Frattina, N. and L. Rodolico, F.M. Fiori, E. Maugini, G Villani, *Sussidiario scolastico Sansoni. Classe quarta*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1947 (the part about Geography, edited by, is from p. 73 to p. 146).

²³⁴ Various description of the physical and political Italy, even if less detailed, can be found in the textbook for the fourth class (see R. Frattina, N. and L. Rodolico, F.M. Fiori, G Villani, *Sussidiario scolastico Sansoni. Classe terza*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1947).

which the ancestors, the fathers and the children worked. How this land where our fathers worked, suffered, enjoyed, and where there are our home, our school, our church and our cemetery cannot be dear to us! The village, the large or small town, where you were born, is Italian. As the flower hidden among the leaves in a meadow is beautiful, as the flower with its long stem, so the towns, villages, cities of Italy are beautiful: they all are dear to those who live there. And the beauty of Italy is precisely in its variety, in the harshness of the mountain, in the hill full of vineyards and olive groves, from the barren and rocky land to the fertile and intensively cultivated one²³⁵.

One of the proposed readings further confirm the above-mentioned purposes of Sansoni's volume: in it, surely one of the most original of the primary school textbooks after World War II, and entitled *Ciò che le regioni danno all'Italia* [*What the regions give to Italy*], the protagonist, «Mom Italy», after the war, called her creatures, the Italian regions, to celebrate all together, on the Alps, «the day of the birth of her beloved Rome». The message given to the younger generations was once again marked by brotherhood: only being «united», putting aside the territorial distances and the parochialisms but still preserving the regional identity, it would be possible to build the country's future:

The large family had not gathered for so long; there had been the long war, and, that's worse, the lost war, and then the peace that had increased deaths and damage, taking away Mum Italy's children and grandchildren. Now it was time to get together: the mother wanted to see her children, she wanted to comfort and be comforted by them. Forget for a day – said the old strong mother – the sad present, in commemoration of the birth of the most glorious daughter of Italy and make resolutions for the future²³⁶.

All the Italian regions rushed «on the shores of the alpine lake», each bearing the typical products of their land as a gift to their mother. And here, the description offered by Niccolò and Leona Rodolico, developed in about ten pages of the volume, turned into a varied and colorful fresco on the peninsula, in a skillful combination of local agricultural and food tradition, folklore and regional culture, of which it is appropriate to offer a brief excerpt:

The first to arrive was the farthest: Sicily coming by airplane. Italy tightens Sicily to her maternal heart, staring at her, moved [...]. 'Look at these oranges, Mom, my Palermo sends them to you, cultivating them in the Conca d'Oro and [...] meanwhile quickly aligning bottles of exquisite wines. [...] A roar, a plane takes off on the near meadow: Sardinia arrives, proud and even sweet in the look [...]. and the gifts Sardinia has brought to Italy are unloaded from the plane. Oil; wine and what wine! Vernaccia di Orestano, Monica di Cagliari, Malvagia di Alghero. Then [...] a blue coach arrives to interrupt the quiet speech [...]: Puglia, Lucania, Calabria and Campania, here they gather embracing almost simultaneously Italy, their Mother. The hard-working Puglia tanned by the sun [...], draws from the earth, above all, the abundance of its products. [...]The beautiful Campania is lively and expansive [...] and brings for Italy's neck a fine pink and red coral necklace[...].

²³⁵ See *L'Italia*, *ibid.*, p. 94.

²³⁶ See *Ciò che le regioni danno all'Italia*, *ibid.*, pp. 101-111 (for the quotation see p. 101).

Abruzzo followed by the smaller brother Molise are the first to run to the Mother. They are rough, as strong and well built mountain people. But their look is softened by a great kindness and goodness. They have mountain pastures and offer their fruits to sheep farming. [...] Abruzzo provides a jar of saffron, and licorice and fish from the Adriatico. [...] Lazio, seeming an ancient shepherd, loosens its gifts: ricotta cheese, curds, and lovely fresh bread made with the flour of the grain that abounds in the Pontine plain [...]. the mild Umbria [...] has peaceful and prayer places like Assisi and Cascia but knows well the uninterrupted work of the workshops of Terni, from whose blast furnaces and steel mills the Italian industry depends so much. [...] The Marca or the Marche [...] is a daughter who does not give any economic concern to the Mother. Without being very rich, has a large wealth that its wise administration is able to preserve. It has a rich countryside [...], the sea full of fish and [...] ancient industries with a safe future²³⁷.

And «Mum Italy», after having received the affectionate gifts also of all the northern regions, including those of the «elegant and with a fine and intelligent face» Tuscany, the «fat, robust and colorful» Emilia, the «friendly, exuberant, beautiful and lush» Lombardy, came to the meeting «on a powerful Alfa Romeo», the «tall, dark and with a serious and sometimes tough» Liguria, the «dignified and quiet» Piedmont proud of «his elegant Fiat» and the «smiling and witty Venezia Tridentina»²³⁸, saying good bay to her sons, gave a national solidarity message that wanted to be an exhortation addressed to all Italians (and especially the younger generation) to be committed in the «re-starting of the country», now that was not more overwhelmed by war hostilities, or victim of a wrenching civil war:

A wave of emotion passes all over the people. Italy says: «It is not time for words, but for deeds. Promise me, in the day when we celebrate our Rome, do not forget what has been done for my unit. We must not undo, but redo it»²³⁹.

In the picturesque trip across Italy described in the primary school textbook for the third class, *Come l'ape. Testi ausiliari per tutte le materie* [*Like the bee. Auxiliary texts for all subjects*], 1949, and whose part of Geography, *Elementi di Geografia* [*Elements of Geography*], was edited by Mario Sotgiu²⁴⁰, the Italian cultural and natural heritage was described with considerable wealth of details. The route along the peninsula, entitled *Visitiamo l'Italia* [*We visit Italy*] was properly distributed by the author in four different readings in which the traveler made use of various means of transport, from train to ship to the plane, so you can also learn about the most hidden corners of Italy. Thus, for example, the passage *Da Torino a Trieste* [*From Turin to Trieste*], «started from the

²³⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 101-106.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-110.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

²⁴⁰ M. Sotgiu, P. Caccialupi, A. Martini, G. Roberto, G. Scaglioni, *Come l'ape. Raccolta di testi di tutte le materie prescritte dai programmi ministeriali. Terza classe*, Milano, La Prora, 1949 (the part on Geography, edited by Sotgiu, is from p. 49 to p. 83).

beautiful and elegant city of the Piedmont, with its wide streets and the majestic and beautiful squares» to visit the «rich agricultural town» of Novara, «the magnificent Cathedral with thousands of spires» of Milan or the «monumental buildings and beautiful churches» of Verona²⁴¹. And, if the reader, after the second and the third trip, respectively *Da Trieste a Pola e a Venezia* [*From Trieste to Pola and Venice*]²⁴² and *Da Genova a Reggio Calabria e a Palermo* [*From Genoa to Reggio Calabria and Palermo*]²⁴³, which allowed him to visit Rome «in all its radiant beauty», wanted to learn something more about Italy, the last route *In aereo da Bolzano a Taranto* [*By plane from Bolzano to Taranto*]²⁴⁴, could definitely satisfy even the most demanding students. On the aircraft, quick and convenient means of transport whose use and spread had in Italy a remarkable development especially since the Second World War²⁴⁵, the young schoolboys would complete their discovery of Italy, «the poem of beauty»²⁴⁶, in the best way.

The trip described in *Aiuole e Luci. Sussidiario per la terza elementare* [*Flower beds and lights. Primary schoolbook for the third grade*]²⁴⁷ was always on a plane, maybe of Italian companies «among the safest in the world, for the good construction of the aircraft and for the tenacious and safe skills of our pilots»²⁴⁸. This time, however, beyond the fascinating and sometimes rhetorical descriptions of Rome «brain of Italy» and «the most glorious of our cities, full of superb monuments»²⁴⁹, or of the «cheerful and festive» Naples, «all shiny for the sunlight and the sparkling sea» or of the «wide beaches of Gaeta crowded with bathers»²⁵⁰, a special attention was deserved to the passage that

²⁴¹ See *Da Torino a Trieste*, *ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

²⁴² *Da Trieste a Pola e a Venezia*, *ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

²⁴³ *Da Genova a Reggio Calabria e a Palermo*, *ibid.*, pp. 70-72.

²⁴⁴ *In aereo da Bolzano a Taranto*, *ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁴⁵ After the Second World War, many companies were born thanks to the sale of military surplus after the conflict, since the transport planes were turned into passenger aircraft with relatively low costs, many aircraft were also built for the passengers' transport in the long haul.

²⁴⁶ See *Le bellezze d'Italia*, in *Primo seme. Sussidiario per la quarta classe*, Novara, Istituto Geografico De Agostini, 1949, pp. 17-18 (the part on Geography, edited by Luigi Visintin, is on pp. 1-78). The quoted passage is a quick trip across Italy, from North to South, to appreciate its landscape and artistic beauties.

²⁴⁷ P.R. Sorrentino, V. Golita, A. Fortunati, M. Albano, E. Marini, V. Rienzi, R. Giacchi, *Aiuole e luci. Sussidiario per la Terza Elementare*, Napoli, Conte Editore, 1950 (the part on Geografia, edited by Fortunati and Albano, is on pp. 139-172).

²⁴⁸ See *Viaggio attraverso alcune regioni d'Italia*, in G. Perotti, L. Sironi, E. Allari, G. Campagnari, M. Rusca, M. Scher, *Il seme d'oro. Sussidiario completo per la terza classe*, Milano, La Fiamma, 1949, pp. 114-128 (the quotation is on p. 115, while the part on Geography, edited by Luigi Sironi, is from p. 75 to p. 154). In this text we find a long trip made by plane along the entire Italian peninsula, among monuments, works of art appreciated throughout the world, historical places and enviable landscapes.

²⁴⁹ See *Il cervello d'Italia: Roma*, *ibid.*, pp. 157-158.

²⁵⁰ See *Un viaggetto di piacere*, *ibid.*, pp. 159-163. The scenic beauty of Naples and the open and sociable character of its inhabitants was the subject of several readings in contemporary primary school textbooks, among which we highlight *La Festa di Piedigrotta, a Napoli*, in P.R.

served as an introduction to the subsequent narrative of the Italian artistic and natural beauties. *L'Italia bella (The beautiful Italy)*, at the start of the fifties, was a tribute to the country, to its cultural richness, its natural beauty, to its being a pole of attraction for foreign tourists. The laudatory tones used by the authors of the passage, Alfonso Fortunati and Mario Albano, seemed even to remember the eulogies of the Fascist period:

Italy is our *homeland*. It is called *the garden of Europe*, because it is like a large and beautiful garden, in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. No country in the world is as beautiful as Italy, because no one has such a blue sky like ours and such a lovely sea as the one that bathes our shores. Therefore, thousands of foreigners come from all over the world in our country and remain amazed for all the gifts that God has granted to our country²⁵¹.

The enviable and unique cultural and environmental heritage owned by Italy, therefore, could only come back to the Italians, inevitably weakened by the recent disastrous war hostilities, but proud of their country, of which, as can be seen from *Piccolo Tesoro. Sussidiario per la terza classe (Little treasure. Primary schoolbook for third grade)*, whose part of Geography was edited by Guido Salvadeo²⁵², some cities in particular, such as Milan, «the moral capital of Italy» and increasingly the symbol of the economic recovery of the country after the disruption caused by the war²⁵³, were a symbol of extraordinary prosperity under several points of view:

If Rome is the capital of Italy, Milan is the economic center, because in Milan there are large factories, large businesses, big banks, big newspapers, the busiest people. Milan supplies northern Italy as a whole, they all buy in Milan and look to Milan. At the center of the city there are: the *Scala* which is the most famous theater in the world, *Palazzo Marino* which is the seat of the municipality, the *Gallery* where the Milanese met to conclude business,

Sorrentino, F. Amore, A. Fortunati, M. Albano, E. Tescione, R. Conti, *Aiuole e Luci. Sussidiario per la Quarta Elementare*, Napoli, Conte Editore, 1950 (the part on Geography, always edited by Fortunati and Albano, is on pp. 166-207), p. 200 and *Napoli*, in L. Marrosu, *Frutti d'oro. Sussidiario per la quarta classe elementare*, Torino, Paravia, 1952 (the part on Geography is from p. 175 to p. 254), p. 242.

²⁵¹ See *L'Italia bella*, in Golita, Fortunati, Albano, Marini, Rienzi, Giacchi, *Aiuole e luci. Sussidiario per la Terza Elementare*, cit., p. 157.

²⁵² D. Pollastro, R. Verdina, G. Kierek, G. Buschini, D. Duranti, G. Salvadeo, *Piccolo tesoro. Sussidiario unico per la scuola elementare. Classe terza*, Bergamo, Istituto Italiano Edizioni Atlas, 1950 (the part on Geography, edited by Salvadeo, is on pp. 279-336).

²⁵³ The promotion and description of Milan as the city symbol of the desired economic recovery of the country after the war, was a common element in many primary school textbooks of the period and will anticipate in fact the remarkable economic development which the town of Milan would experience. In particular, see the passages: *Milano*, in Sorrentino, Amore, Fortunati, Albano, Tescione, Conti, *Aiuole e Luci. Sussidiario per la Quarta Elementare*, cit., p. 192; *Il Duomo di Milano*, in D. Belleschi, E. Falsini, G. Gori, *Visioni e storia della Patria nostra. Sussidiario per la quarta classe*, Firenze, Edizioni del Giglio, 1948, p. 29; *Milano*, in L. Marrosu, *Frutti d'oro. Sussidiario per la terza classe elementare*, Torino, Paravia, 1952, p. 223 (the part on Geography is on p. 185 a p. 233).

the large square with the Cathedral with its spires, overlooked by the golden *Madonnina* ... Then the severe mass of *S. Ambrogio* with the Catholic University and the *Castello Sforzesco*. Finally, the Twentieth century Milan which has been forming at the periphery in all the directions, especially towards the north²⁵⁴.

In some primary school textbooks of the second post war period, however, next to the descriptions of the most important and famous cities of the peninsula or of the best known landscape, even some artistic, architectural and natural sites began to appear, that had been poorly taken into consideration up to that moment, but that increased the wealth of the cultural and environmental heritage of Italy. Thus, in the 1951 text, *La Nuova sorgente. Sussidiario completo per la quarta elementare* [*The new source. Complete primary schoolbook for the fourth grade*] edited by Mario Cera²⁵⁵, for example, a reading on the *Val Gardena*, area of the Dolomites with great traditions, already particularly popular during fascism was published: it, just after World War II, experienced a remarkable development so to become, in the sixties and seventies, one of the top destinations for winter tourism of the Italian peninsula. The description offered by Cera showed the South Tyrolean valley in all its natural splendor by remarking especially that almost mystical charm of the «quiet and secluded place, where a continuous prayer seems to flow from the dark mass of forests, inspired by the great Crucifixes, raised everywhere»²⁵⁶.

Conclusions

Every region, every city, every small Italian village, therefore, has always been able to boast a «portion» of that valuable cultural and natural heritage that, through textbooks, has been widely enhanced in order to promote national identity and the feeling of citizenship among new generations. What had happened during the Fascist period was repeated after World War II, following a very similar logic and purposes. The primary school textbooks and reading books, sometimes resorting to a redundant style similar to that used by fascism, sometimes through a more scientific but equally seductive writing manner (especially since the fifties), had never forgotten, as we have tried to analyze in this work, to focus on those works of art, those monuments, those local traditions and natural beauties that had allowed Italy to be regarded as

²⁵⁴ See *La capitale morale d'Italia*, in Pollastro, Verdina, Kierek, Buschini, Duranti, Salvadeo, *Piccolo tesoro. Sussidiario unico per la scuola elementare. Classe terza*, cit., p. 317.

²⁵⁵ M. Cera, *Nuova sorgente. Sussidiario completo per la quarta elementare*, Torino, SEI, 1951 (the part on Geography is on pp. 57-134).

²⁵⁶ See *La Val Gardena*, *ibid.*, pp. 95-96. In this same text, the passage *Il Faro di Portofino*, *ibid.*, pp. 102-103, is very interesting and devoted to an Italian landscape less 'exploited' in the school textbooks.

«the land of beauty and art»²⁵⁷, towards which, every Italian, from the school age, should have proudly felt a strong sense of belonging.

Since the mid-fifties, and especially after the 1955 educational programs for the primary school²⁵⁸, and so in a time span outside the one analyzed by this article, the cultural heritage and the main artistic and architectural heritage of the Italian cities would have been considered not as a tool to promote national identity and the feeling of citizenship in the younger generations, but mainly as a precious and critical resource to promote the economic growth and tourism development of the country²⁵⁹. The increasingly private and individualistic dimension acquired by childhood and educated young people would also have meant that the cultural and environmental heritage of the peninsula lost, as Anna Ascenzi aptly pointed out, «every vague ideological connotation to take a strictly neutral characterization»²⁶⁰. In the democratic and republican Italy of the fifties and sixties, that aspiration to contribute to the construction of the «new Italy» and the nationalization of the younger generations, cultivated as early as the late Nineteenth century and pursued in an even more convinced and systematic way in Giolitti's era and the period between the wars, would be gradually and definitively abandoned. This would lead to slowly set aside the process of mass nationalization of the Italian youth to which even the enhancement and promotion of the cultural and environmental heritage of the peninsula had contributed for a long time, but without encouraging the development of a similar commitment on the side of the establishment, within the new generations, of the ethical and civil values at the basis of the nascent Italian democracy.

²⁵⁷ See *Nella vita*, in Pistamiglio, Carcò, *Cieli sereni. Letture per classe quarta maschile e femminile*, cit., pp. 245-247.

²⁵⁸ On the 1955 programs, see Lombardi, *I programmi per la scuola elementare dal 1860 al 1985*, cit., pp. 477-514 and, above all, E. Catarsi, *Storia dei programmi della scuola elementare, 1860-1985*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1990.

²⁵⁹ In this regard it should be noted, as an example of text that anticipated this shift that developed from the mid-fifties, the case of the primary school textbook by B. Grella, *Meridiana. Sussidiario per le scuole elementari. Classe terza* Torino, SEI, 1954 (the part of Geography, entitled *Il mio mondo*, is on pp. 209-256), in which, in the use and promotion of the cultural and landscape heritage of the peninsula, the pedagogical intention and the ideological purposes of the previous years seem to have already been lost so as in the volume the descriptive parts are extremely short (for each major city there were only a few lines of comment), in favor, however, of a rich colorful iconography that seems to make the textbook similar to a tourist guide.

²⁶⁰ See, within this issue, A. Ascenzi's article, «*Italian beauties*». *The Italian cultural heritage and its landscape and natural resources in the school exercise books from the Fascist period to the World War II*.

«Italian beauties». The Italian cultural heritage and its landscape and natural resources in the school exercise books from the Fascist period to the World War II

Anna Ascenzi
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism,
University of Macerata (Italy)
anna.ascenzi@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: This paper intends to assess the forms and methods through which the Italian cultural heritage and its landscape and natural resources have been the subject of an organic presentation and reproduced on the covers of school exercise books for the purpose of promoting national identity and civil consciousness in the younger generations. The school exercise books, with their different and richly illustrated covers, in fact, stroke the imagination of generations of students, becoming much more than a modest teaching support or a minor element of the educational kit.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Exercise books; Cultural heritage; Landscape Heritage; National identity; Fascism; Italy; XXth Century.

Introduction

This paper is aimed to examine if – and how, through which forms and methods – the Italian cultural heritage and its landscape and natural resources have been the subject of a well structured presentation and have been reproduced on the covers of the *school exercise books* to promote the national identity and civic consciousness among the younger generation¹.

¹ In order to carry out this research we have examined over a thousand of covers of school exercise books, preserved in the documentary collections of the *Archivio storico delle Cartiere Pigna* (hereafter: ASCP) of Alzano Lombardo (Bergamo), in the *Centro di documentazione e ricerca sulla storia del libro scolastico e della letteratura per l'infanzia* (hereafter CESCO) of the University

The *school exercise books* were the focus of the specific attention of the history of education in the last two decades, as particularly significant sources for the reconstruction of the school habits and teaching practices that have characterized the European and extra European training systems at the turn of Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries². They were of different types and, with their richly illustrated covers, caught the imagination of generations of students, becoming much more than a simple teaching tool or a minor element of the educational kit: they came to represent an almost permanent and ubiquitous object – even in the variety of sizes and styles that characterized them – in the memories that each of us keep of the school life, as well as in the collective representation of the daily life of the Italian pupils³. Since the last two decades of the Nineteenth century the production of school exercise books and of other paper tools for writing recorded a significant increase in Italy⁴. At the basis of such a development, there is the growth of the domestic demand, mainly the result of the steady decline in the illiteracy rates and of the gradual raising of the educational levels; as well as the development in the publishing industry and the rapid spread of newspapers and magazines⁵. In this respect, it seems that the establishment, at first at a local and regional level, and then,

of Macerata and those composing the *Catalogo cumulativo nazionale dei fondi storici di quaderni ed elaborati didattici* (FISQED) established at the INDIRE – Istituto Nazionale di Documentazione, Innovazione e Ricerca Educativa of Florence.

² See J. Meda, D. Montino, R. Sani (edd.), *School Exercise Books. A Complex Source for a History of the Approach to Schooling and Education in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, 2 vols., Firenze, Polistampa, 2010. Very interesting references, on an international level, can be found also in: S. Gvirtz, *El discurso escolar a través e los cuadernos de clase. Argentina (1930 y 1970)*, Buenos Aires, Eudeba, 1999; Sociedad Española de Historia de la Educación (SEDHE), *Acreditación de saberes y competencias. Perspectiva histórica. Coloquio Nacional de Historia de la educación*, Oviedo, Universidad de Oviedo, 2001; J.A. Jiménez Eguizábal et al. (edd.), *Etnohistoria de la Escuela. XII Coloquio Nacional de Historia de la Educación*, Burgos, SEDHE – Universidad de Burgos, 2003; A. Viñao Frago, *Los cuadernos escolares como fuente histórica: aspectos metodológicos e historiográficos*, «Annali di Storia dell'Educazione e delle Istituzioni Scolastiche», vol. 13, 2006, pp. 17-35; A.C. Venancio Mignot (ed.), *Cadernos à vista. Escola, memoria e cultura escrita*, Rio de Janeiro, Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, 2008; P. Celada (ed.), *Arte y oficio de enseñar. Dos siglos de perspectiva histórica. XVI Coloquio Nacional de Historia de la Educación*, 2 vols., El Burgo de Osma, Sociedad Española de Historia de la Educación, Universidad de Valladolid, Centro Internacional de la Cultura Escolar, 2011.

³ See, in this regard: J. Meda, *Tra le sudate carte ... Guida ragionata ai fondi di quaderni ed elaborati didattici in Italia*, «Biblioteche Oggi», vol. 8, 2004, pp. 51-56; D. Montino, *Le parole educate. Libri e quaderni tra fascismo e Repubblica*, Milano, Selene, 2005; *I quaderni di scuola tra Otto e Novecento*, sezione monografica di «Annali di Storia dell'Educazione e delle Istituzioni Scolastiche», vol. 13, 2006, pp. 13-189.

⁴ G. Subbrero, *L'industria cartaria e poligrafica (1861-1951)*, in V. Zamagni, S. Zaninelli (edd.), *Storia economica e sociale di Bergamo fra Ottocento e Novecento. II. Il decollo industriale*, Bergamo, Fondazione per la storia economica e sociale di Bergamo, 1997, pp. 319-346.

⁵ P. Lanino, *La nuova Italia industriale. Volume terzo. Industrie chimiche, alimentari ed agricole*, Roma, 1917, pp. 3-30; V. Porri, *L'evoluzione economica italiana nell'ultimo cinquantennio*, Roma, Stab. Tip. C. Colombo, 1926, pp. 182-188.

at a national one, of a number of companies specialized in the production of *school exercise books*⁶ paralleled the process of the Italians' mass literacy and schooling, especially when, in the second half of the Seventies of the Nineteenth century, with the school regulations issued by the Left (Coppino law of 1877), this process became stronger and more systematic⁷.

As the studies on education and school history have recently documented, companies such as Paolo Pigna Paper Mill in Alzano Lombardo (Bergamo) and Binda Ambrogio Paper Mill in Vaprio d'Adda (Milan) fully understood, before other companies operating in the field, the importance of connecting their production for the school to a national educational project carried out by the Italian liberal ruling class⁸, even if intermittently and in different forms and ways, already from the age of Crispi⁹: these Italian companies tried to adapt the characteristics of their products to the mass schooling and to the process of nationalization of the Italians, supporting increasingly the process of rooting in the people the feeling of the importance of the school for the purpose of the socio-cultural development of the country and for the creation of a specific community identity. It was a process carried out with increasing conviction in the Giolitti era and that experienced significant developments in the years after World War I and during the Fascist period, and reached its climax in the aftermath of World War II, in a democratic and republican Italy.

The analysis of the characteristics of the *school exercise books*, and, in particular, the analysis of the illustrations and of their texts of presentation is

⁶ The majority of the *school exercise books* used in this research is produced by a small group of companies among which: Arti Grafiche Pizzi & Pizio (Milan), Ambrogio Binda Paper Mill (Milan), Paper Mills of Ceperano and Atina (Frosinone), Paolo Pigna Paper Mill (Alzano Lombardo, Bergamo), Cartiera Italiana (Turin), C.M.B. (Milano), Cartoleria e Libreria Domenico D'Angelo (Reggio Calabria), Cartoleria e Libreria Sciacca (Naples), C. Conti & C. (Milan), C.I.S.A. (Rome), Consorzio U.V.Q. (Milan), M.P.L. (Rome), Gruppo Editoriale SA.DEA., Istituto Geografico De Agostini (Novara), Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche (Bergamo), Tipografia-Cartoleria-Libreria «Cronaca di Calabria» (Cosenza), Turati Lombardi & C. (Milan). For a complete survey of the companies in the sector, see: J. Meda, *Quaderni di scuola. Nuove fonti per la storia dell'editoria scolastica minore*, «Annali di Storia dell'Educazione e delle Istituzioni Scolastiche», vol. 13, 2006, pp. 73-98.

⁷ See M. Bendiscioli, *La Sinistra storica e la scuola*, «Studium», vol. LXXIII, n. 4, 1977, pp. 447-466; and G. Talamo, *Istruzione obbligatoria ed estensione del suffragio*, in *Stato e società dal 1876 al 1882. Atti del XLIX Congresso di Storia del Risorgimento Italiano*, Roma, Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano, 1980, pp. 57-100.

⁸ See, in this respect: A. Ascenzi, *The Pigna Paper Mill and the Exercise Book of the «New Italy» (1870-1960)*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 3, n. 1, 2008, pp. 217-255.

⁹ See S. Soldani, *Il Risorgimento a scuola: incertezze dello Stato e lenta formazione di un pubblico di lettori*, in E. Dirani (ed.), *Alfredo Oriani e la cultura del suo tempo*, Ravenna, Longo Editore, 1985; G. Chiosso, *Nazionalità ed educazione degli Italiani nel secondo Ottocento*, «Pedagogia e Vita», vol. 48, n. 4, 1987, pp. 421-440; U. Levra, *Fare gli italiani. Memoria e celebrazione del Risorgimento*, Torino, Comitato di Torino dell'Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano, 1992; S. Soldani, G. Turi (edd.), *Fare gli italiani. Scuola e cultura nell'Italia contemporanea*. vol. 1: *La nascita dello Stato nazionale*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1993.

crucial, in this respect, to understand the evolution and the peculiarities of this particular source, as well as to assess the leading role it played in the construction of a particular school culture and in the development of the mass educational processes in the Nineteenth and Twentieth century. The school exercise books, although have never abandoned their original material function, maintaining their modest character of tools of a little importance in the students' school kit, came, already in the Giolitti's era and after the war, to play a very different role than the one originally given to them. We can affirm that this different and parallel function of transmission of educational contents and messages – and later, during the Fascist period, of ideological and political propaganda¹⁰ – was carried out before, and independently, with respect to their real material use, in classrooms or elsewhere.

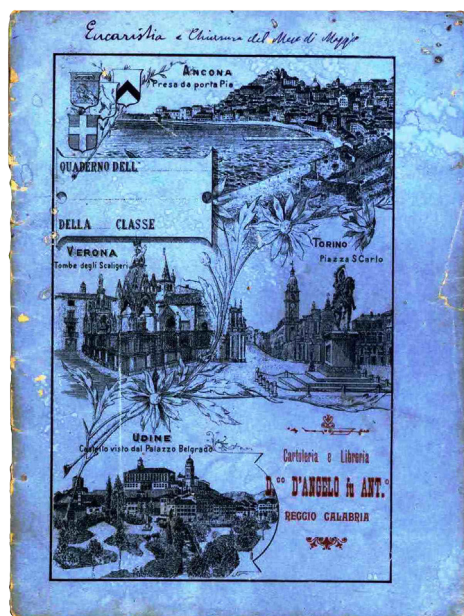
The *school exercise books*, in this regard, conveyed very soon a reassuring iconic-verbal message characterized by immediacy, simplicity and high intelligibility at all levels; a message destined to play an important role – although auxiliary and complementary – in the scholastic and extra-scholastic education of young people and, indirectly, of the Italian families, especially those of the working classes and rural areas. The *school exercise books*, in fact, much more than the textbooks, were used in domestic spaces, among the students' family members, thus attracting the adults' attention and interest, who found it easy to understand the illustrations and the short explanatory texts which generally characterized the 'editorial messages' of the exercise book itself.

The illustrations and explanatory texts on the *school exercise books*, conveniently suited to the needs and understanding capabilities of a mass audience, only partly composed of young school children as mentioned, would be of help to supplement and enrich the knowledge of their readers, who were not only the pupils that possessed it.

It is not a coincidence, in this regard, that the manufacturers understood quite soon that the illustrations of the covers, the iconic message conveyed by the school exercise books, needed a special attention and care: these illustrations should have been adapted to childhood and to a popular audience¹¹; they had to be attractive and appealing, if not exciting, and they had to fully reflect the changes in tastes and habits, so to be always up to date.

¹⁰ See Ascenzi, *The Pigna Paper Mill and the Exercise Book of the «New Italy» (1870-1960)*, cit., pp. 217-255. See also L. Marrella, *I quaderni del Duce. Tra immagine e parola*, Taranto, Barbieri, 1995; and J. Meda, «Contro il tanto deprecato mercantilismo scolastico»... *I controversi rapporti tra editori, insegnanti e cartolai e l'intervento del regime*, in Meda, Montino, Sani (edd.), *School Exercise Books*, cit., I, pp. 507-551.

¹¹ See A. Gibelli, *Il regime illustrato e il popolo bambino*, in V. De Grazia, S. Luzzatto (edd.), *Dizionario del fascismo. Volume I: A-K*, Torino, Einaudi, 2002, pp. 263-270; and, above all, Id., *Il popolo bambino. Infanzia e nazione dalla Grande Guerra a Salò*, Torino, Einaudi, 2005.



Pic. 1



Pic. 2

1. *The cultural and natural heritage to promote the love for the country and the national identity among the younger generations: the first evidence between the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries*

For what concerns the use, in the illustrations of the covers of the *school exercise books*, of topics and subjects derived from the Italian cultural and natural heritage and its landscape for the purpose of promoting a national identity and a civic consciousness among the younger generation, it is especially since the fascist period, and then in the years after World War II, that they were used in a systematic and significant way, also thanks to the development of the technical and graphical languages used since the Twenties and Thirties, compared to the previous phases. The school exercise books had on their covers works of art, monuments, and more or less famous Italian landscapes, sometimes accompanied by short texts of presentation, and can be dated back to the end of the Nineteenth century. They were produced by small local typographical and publishing industries whose aim was to spread the image and history of the «Italian beauties», in order to «develop in the young people a passion for the «hometowns» and the homeland», i.e. to promote the knowledge of the peninsula and the bond between the new generations and their homeland.

It is sufficient to refer here to the various *school exercise books* produced and distributed, since the Nineties of the Nineteenth century, by the Paper mill and bookshop Domenico D'Angelo in Reggio Calabria with the title «Incanto d'Italia» (Charm of Italy), whose covers were characterized by fine illustrations in Indian ink of squares and monuments of the major Italian cities (Pic. 1).

The *school exercise books* distributed, in the first Fifteen years of the Twentieth century, by certain print stores and stationeries operating in various Italian centers, are on the same wavelength. This is the case, for example, of the Print shop-Paper mill-Bookstore «Cronaca di Calabria» in Cosenza and of the series of covers entitled «Monumenti d'Italia» (Italian Monuments), on which the monuments and the most famous and representative places of the greatest Italian urban centers were reproduced (Pic. 2).

This is also the case of other small local companies operating during the Giolitti's age, whose series of covers of school exercise books showed pictures or photographic reproductions taken from the famous Alinari collections of Florence of landscapes, archaeological monuments and artistic and architectural assets of Italy (Pics. 3, 4, 5).

However, the idea to use, on the covers of the *school exercise books*, illustrations and topics drawn from the Italian cultural and natural heritage and its landscapes, for the purpose of promoting national identity and civil consciousness among the Italian pupils, was fragmentary and not very effective under the educational profile due to a series of factors such as: the local dimension of the producers of school exercise books, the very limited circulation and distribution of such products and, above all, the undeniable technological backwardness characterizing the graphic choices and the reproduction of the images.

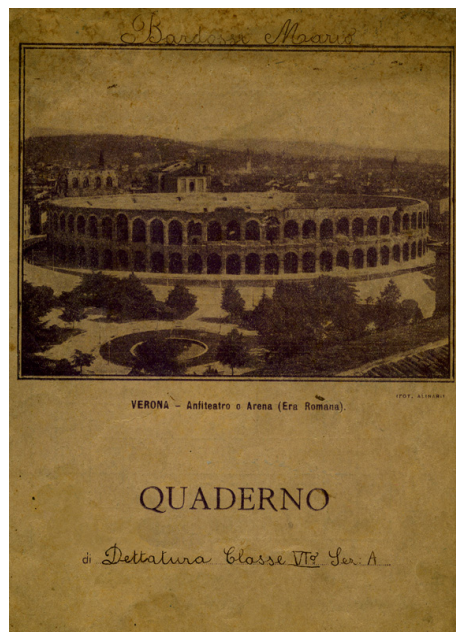
It is not a surprise, however, that the well-established idea of a «national education» based on the use of the natural and cultural beauties of the country, was destined to arouse, at least until the Great War, and even in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, a very modest echo and, consequently, to have a very little and rhapsodic influence on the new school generations' civil and political habits.

2. The «wonders» of Fascist Italy: the Italian landscape and cultural heritage and the ideological and political training of the younger generations in the school exercise books under Mussolini's dictatorship

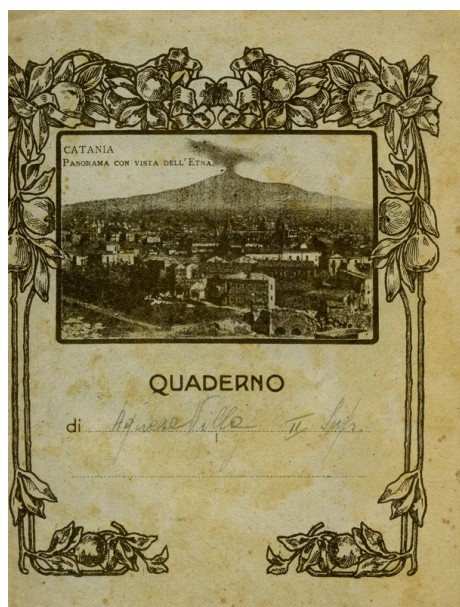
Analysing the period between the wars and, in particular, the period following the establishment of the Italian fascist regime, we are struck by the large number of *school exercise books* series dedicated to the illustration of the Italian cultural and natural heritage and its landscape. They are, in most cases, series published by companies of national importance and operating in a



Pic. 3



Pic. 4



Pic. 5

constantly developing market¹², as in the case of the already mentioned Paolo Pigna Paper mill in Alzano Lombardo that at this stage had a leading role in the production of school exercise books¹³; or as, only to mention some of the most important industries, the Istituto italiano di Arti Grafiche in Bergamo, the Arti Grafiche Pizzi & Pizio in Milan, the Ambrogio Binda Paper Mill in Vaprio d'Adda (Milano) and other two industries in Milan, the C.M.B. (Milano) and the Consorzio U.V.Q. (Milan)¹⁴.

In this sense, the series «Quaderno Italiano dell'Arte» is very interesting. It was published by Pigna Paper Mill in the late twenties and was characterized by as many as 24 illustrations dedicated to a number of monuments and works of art (sculptures and frescoes) preserved in the major Italian museums, effectively presented in a series of cards aimed to underline their nature of authentic masterpieces of world art and, at the same time, to highlight their role of ultimate expression of the creativity of the «Italian genius». Among the works reproduced in the above-mentioned series of *school exercise books*, we find the *Moses in San Pietro in Vincoli* (Roma) by Michelangelo, the Temple of San Pietro in Montorio (Roma) by Bramante, the famous painting *The Lute Player* by Caravaggio, the equally famous *portrait of Pope Julius II* by Raffaello Sanzio preserved at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, the *The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* by Sodoma and *Christ carrying the Cross* by Bernardino Luini (Pics. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11).

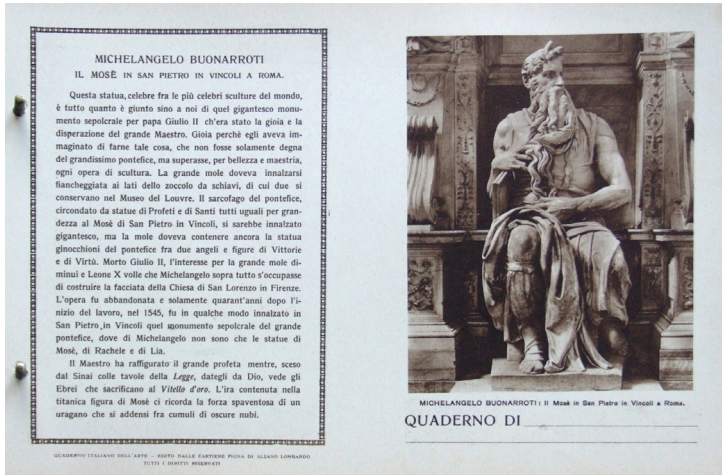
They were works characterized by very different features but they all testify the «extraordinary merits» and the «exquisite artistic sensibility» of those who were called «our forefathers», as well as, as the presentation card of the *Portrait of Pope Julius II* by Raffaello Sanzio stated, they let the young Italians know not only the «facial features but also the great soul of a truly Christian and Italian Pope, in a time when many forgot their country tortured by the foreign power».

Two other sets of *school exercise books*, published in that same period and destined to be quite widespread during the Thirties, were on the same wavelength: «Visioni d'Italia» (Italian Views) and «Monumenti» (Monuments) published since 1930 or 1931 respectively by the Arti Grafiche Pizzi & Pizio of Milan and the publishing company M.P.L. of Rome and characterized by a half-dozen of illustrations dedicated to some of the major monuments of the Latin classical antiquity, such as the *Colosseum* («Amphitheatrum Flavium») or the *Temple of Castor and Pollux* in Agrigento, to which the so-called *Via dell'Impero* wanted by Mussolini was added at the end of Thirties – to testify

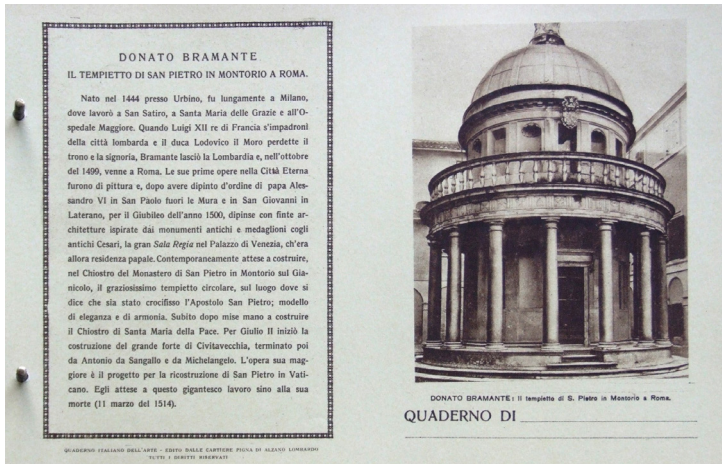
¹² See Ministero per la Costituente, *Rapporto della Commissione economica presentato all'Assemblea Costituente, II. Industria, I. Relazione*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1947, pp. 137-148.

¹³ See, in this regard, Ascenzi, *The Pigna Paper Mill and the Exercise Book of the «New Italy» (1870-1960)*, cit., pp. 217-255.

¹⁴ See Meda, *Quaderni di scuola. Nuove fonti per la storia dell'editoria scolastica minore*, cit., pp. 73-98.



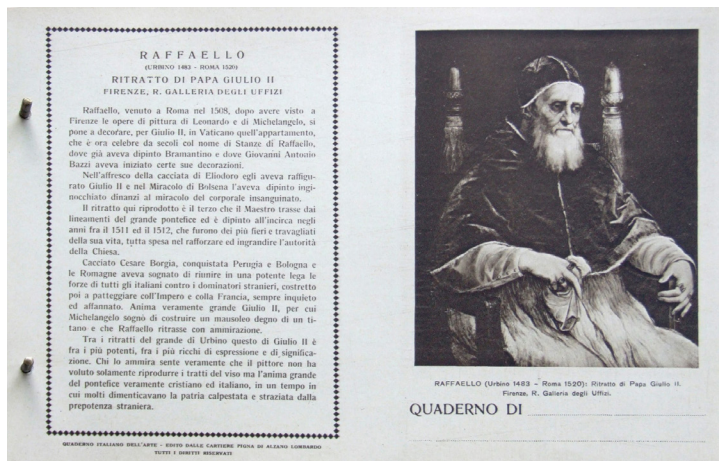
Pic. 6



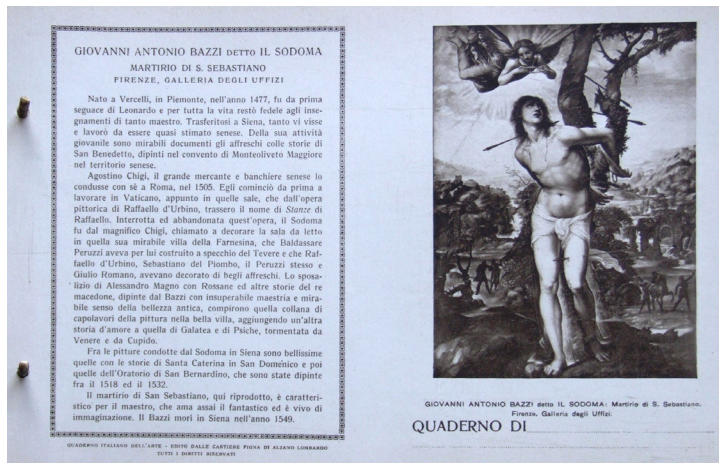
Pic. 7



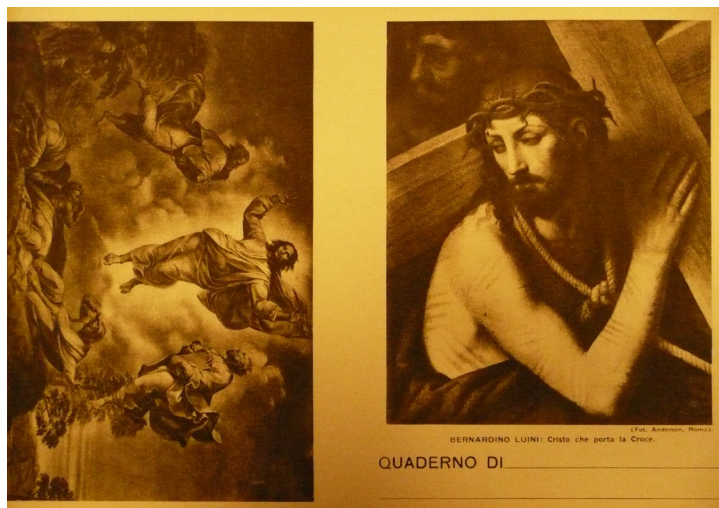
Pic. 8



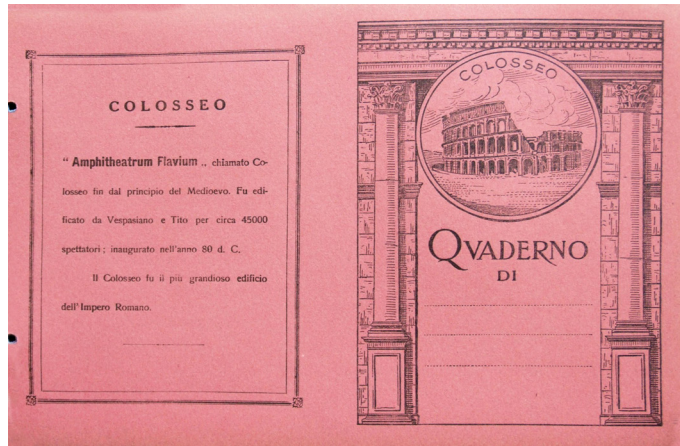
Pic. 9



Pic. 10



Pic. 11

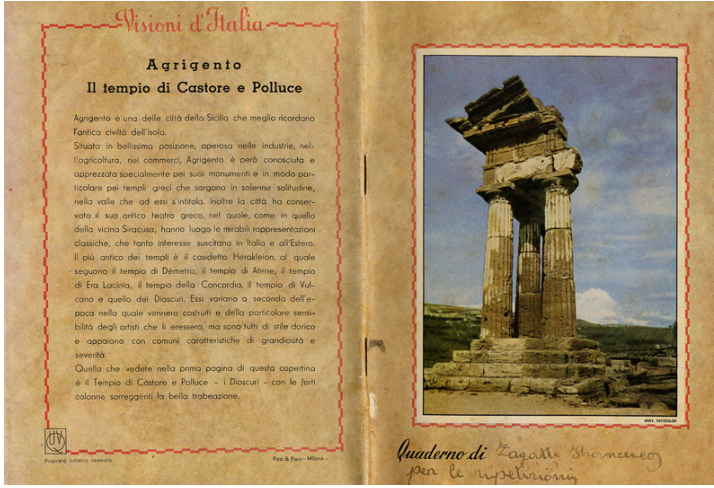


Pic. 12

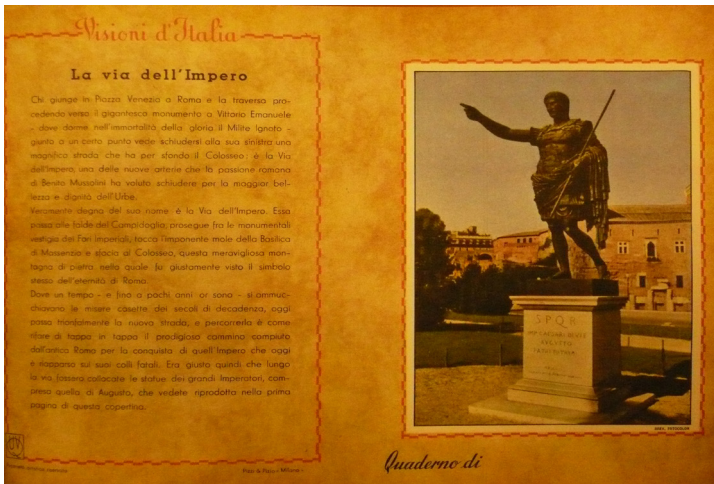


Pic. 13

the close connection between the imperial Rome and Fascist Italy, as imposed by the regime's directives: «Where once, and until a few years ago – its presentation card stated – there were miserable houses resulted by centuries of decline, today a new road is triumphantly established, and to follow it means to retrace step by step the glorious path taken from the ancient Rome for the conquest of that Empire that is now reappeared on its fatal hills» (Pics. 12, 13, 14, 15).

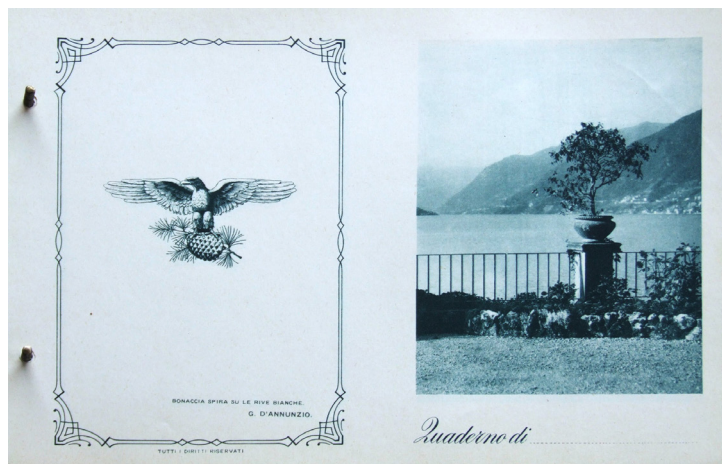


Pic. 14



Pic. 15

During the Thirties, thanks to the Istituto italiano di Arti Grafiche of Bergamo, a series of *school exercise books* dedicated to «Panorami d'Italia» (Italian Panoramas) were produced, in which, ten illustrations of Italian rural, mountain and lake landscapes were presented, accompanied by verses by G. Leopardi, G. D'Annunzio, G. Marradi and other Italian poets and writers (Pics. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20).



Pic. 16



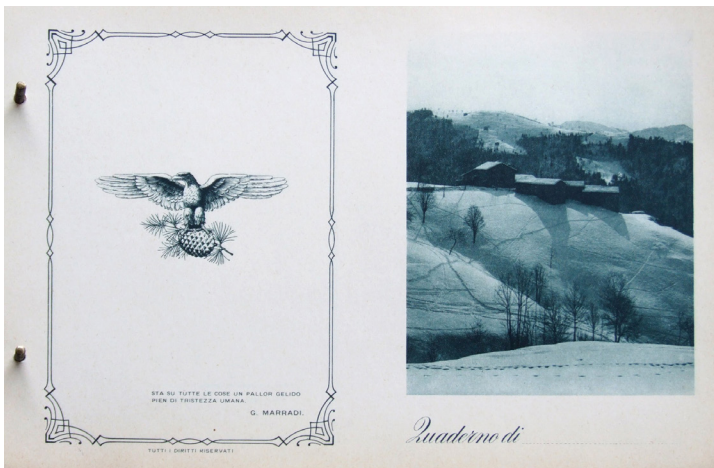
Pic. 17



Pic. 18



Pic. 19



Pic. 20

It was not, however, the only series of school exercise books entirely devoted to the Italian «natural heritage» and the «landscape beauties» published during the Fascist period. At the beginning of the Forties, in fact, thanks to the C.M.B. (Milan), the series «Monti e Laghi d'Italia» (Mountains and Lakes of Italy) was given to the press, also to present to young school children the incomparable natural beauty of a country like Italy, that offers «sights of beautiful landscapes» consisting of «mountains that stand out against the sky with their tops crowned



Pic. 21



Pic. 22

by eternal snows», «valleys surrounded by green and silence» and, finally, lakes «containing between their shores a cobalt blue sky, mirrored in the waters, and decorating with the bright ranges of colours of their flowers the coasts, lovely gardens, white villages and industrious cities». Landscapes and natural beauties, then, that, like the monuments and works of art, were destined to define the identity of the peninsula and to confirm the «unique character of our homeland» (Pics. 21, 22).

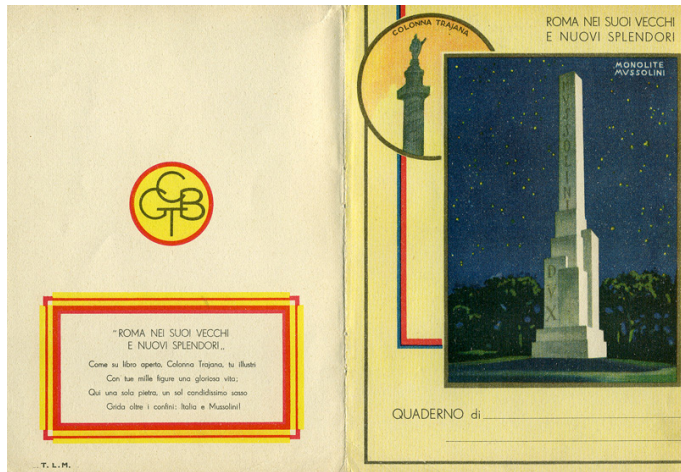


Pic. 23

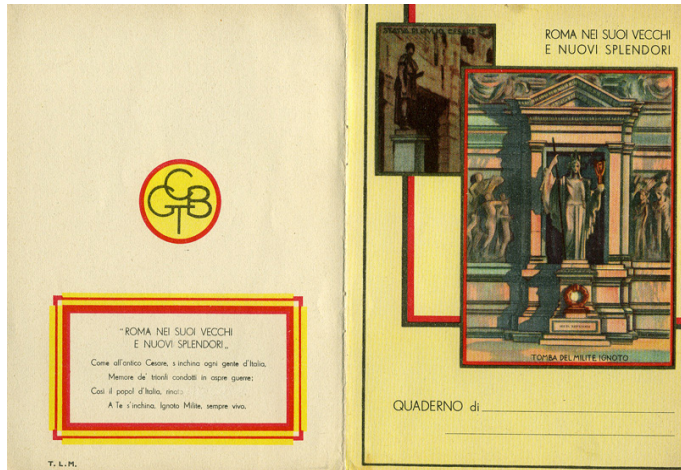


Pic. 24

During the Fascist period, there were also numerous sets of *school exercise books* dedicated to the illustration of the Italian archaeological, architectural and artistic heritage and to the real celebration of Italy as «the cradle of arts and beauty» and as a «real open-air museum». It is sufficient to mention here «Il Belpaese», the collection of exercise books by the bookshop C. Conti & C. in Milan, which reproduced drawings of monuments or panoramas of the Italian cities, and «Roma nei suoi vecchi e nuovi splendori» (Rome in its old and new splendors), the series produced by the typography-bookshop Melfa of Rome and focused on the comparison between the ancient monuments of the imperial Rome and those built during the Twentieth century to celebrate the «military glories of the Nation» and to commemorate the triumphs achieved by the «Italian population in hard wars» (Pics. 23, 24, 25, 26).



Pic. 25



Pic. 26

It is worth mentioning also the two sets of books «Città d'Italia», by Paolo Pigna Paper Mill of Alzano Lombardo, and «Castelli d'Italia», by the Arti Grafiche Pizzi & Pizio in Milan, both published during the Thirties and the former characterized by the illustration of the major monuments and historic buildings of the most important Italian cities, while the latter by the reproduction of the most famous Italian castles and medieval fortresses.

For what concerns «Città d'Italia», the notes of presentation of the illustrations are very significant and characterized by extensive references to the national identity and the love for the country. Thus, for example, in the *school exercise book* dedicated to the city of Bergamo, it was stated: «In the soul of every citizen of Bergamo there is the patriotic sentiment and no one can forget that the first group of young soldiers in Garibaldi's army is from Bergamo, they gave their life for the dream of the united Homeland».



Pic. 27



Pic. 28

Similarly, Florence was described emphasizing those aspects – its being «the cradle of our literature» and the main place of manifestation of the «Italian genius» – which made the Tuscan capital a great «civil monument» and one of the places symbol of the Italian homeland (Pics. 27, 28).

Also in the presentation of the illustrations of the series «Castelli d'Italia», there were references to events of the history country and to the sacrifice of those who had fought for the freedom and unity of the nation: «The Italians who visit the *Castello del Buon Consiglio* – the presentation card of the fortified residence of the Princes Bishops of Trento said – go on a devout pilgrimage to the *Fossa dei Martiri*, they enter into cells and collect their thoughts in the place where the martyrs passed their last hours». Among the castles and fortresses



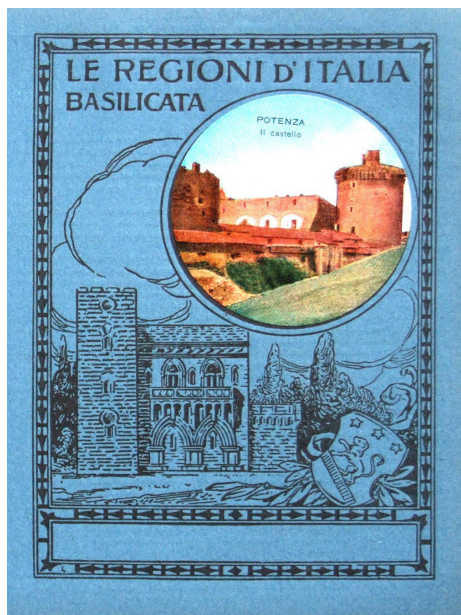
Pic. 29



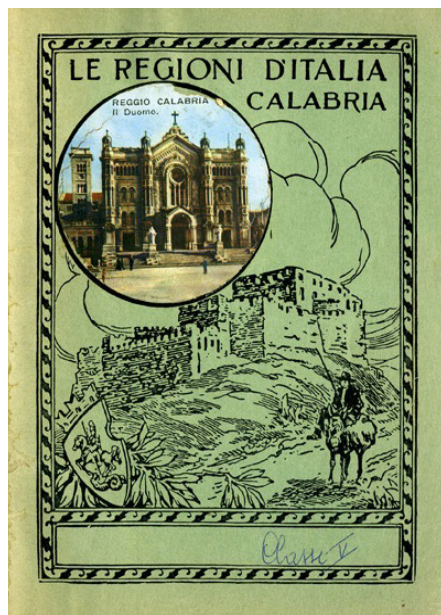
Pic. 30



Pic. 31



Pic. 32



Pic. 33



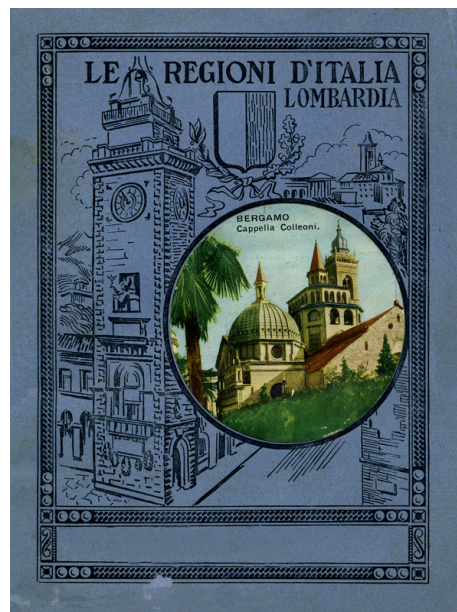
Pic. 34



Pic. 35



Pic. 36



Pic. 37

reproduced on the covers of books and whose story was told, there were the castle of Fenis in Val d'Aosta, the one of the Tyrol of Merano and Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome, together with monumental buildings such as Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (Pics. 29, 30, 31).

Finally, among the most famous and successful series of *school exercise books* dedicated to the illustration of the Italian cultural heritage published during the Fascist period, there is one dedicated to the «Regioni d'Italia» (Italian Regions) published since 1936. It included in the *recto* numerous illustrations of churches, squares, monuments, castles and other historical buildings of various provincial capitals; while in the *verso* it included detailed presentation cards about the historical traditions and the social, economic and productive characteristics of the various Italian regions, within which a significant space was given to the illustration of the natural resources and cultural heritage (Pics. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37).

The analysis of the series of covers published in this period reveals not only the systematic and pervasive character of the commitment for the transformation of *school exercise books* into a formidable instrument to convey and spread the ideology and Fascist propaganda¹⁵, but also the extraordinary modernity of

¹⁵ Ascenzi, *The Pigna Paper Mill and the Exercise Book of the «New Italy» (1870-1960)*, cit.,

the techniques and graphic and verbal languages used, which were destined to represent a genuine break with the previous stages. The same choice to combine images (drawings, photographs etc.) and short explanatory texts, which explicated or completed the message conveyed by the image, received, especially during the Thirties, a special impetus. They were, as in the previous seasons, texts written with a plain and simple language, comprehensible at different levels, that, however, underwent a profound change during the twenty years of Mussolini's regime, acquiring the rhetorical forms of the mass political communication typical of the fascist regime, thus confirming the ability of the companies in the sector to adapt their communication to different contexts and to be in harmony with the 'new times'.

3. *The Italian cultural heritage and its natural beauties from an identity factor to a resource for the development of the democratic and republican Italy after World War II*

With the fall of Fascism and the rise in Italy, in the aftermath of World War II, of the democratic regime, the producers of *school exercise books*, along with the need to reorganize the productive activities and to cope with the damage suffered and the general crisis in the sector produced by the shortage of raw materials and the delay with which it was possible to recover the commercial and distribution network, had also to cope with the need to radically rethink their editorial strategies and to redefine their corporate image, in terms of the choice of the themes and subjects to use on the covers of the exercise books¹⁶.

There are two essential aspects of the new strategy promoted by the industries after World War II. First of all, the final overcoming of that particular *pedagogical purpose* – in the sense of projects of national mass education, from time to time pursued by the post unitary *elites* – that, from the liberal fascism, had been a constant in the production and publishing strategies of the companies producing school exercise books.

The other aspect, closely related to the first, concerns the fact that, in the years after World War II, the end of the traditional perspective to follow – and to support with their products – the process of mass nationalization of the Italian youth, did not coincide with the acquisition of a similar perspective of commitment on the side of the diffusion, within the new generations, of the peculiar ethical and civil values expressed by the nascent Italian democracy¹⁷.

pp. 235-250.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 251-255.

¹⁷ See R. Sani, *La scuola e l'educazione alla democrazia negli anni del secondo dopoguerra*, in Id., *Sub specie educationis. Studi e ricerche su istruzione, istituzioni scolastiche e processi culturali e formativi nell'Italia contemporanea*, Macerata, eum, 2011, pp. 499-522.

To fully grasp the characteristics and scope of such a change, it is appropriate to examine the case of an industrial giant of the sector like the already mentioned Pigna Paper Mill in Alzano Lombardo. Since the Fifties, in fact, the school exercise books of the Pigna Paper Mill not only referred to the widespread 'American dream', with the stories of the Wild West¹⁸, and recovered the reassuring pages taken from the classics of children's literature (*Cuore* by De Amicis, several stories by Emilio Salgari, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe and *Peter Pan* by James Matthew Barrie)¹⁹, but they also gave large space to religious themes²⁰ and entertainment subjects, for the first time in a conscious and organized way, by age groups, focusing on fairy tales for children, comics for students of intermediate classes²¹ and on the presentation of the new sport 'myths' for the older pupils²². Also the covers dedicated to «La natura e le sue meraviglie» (Nature and its wonders)²³, taken from the American scientific documentaries, achieved success, striking the imagination of the young people and broadening the horizons of their knowledge.

Basically, in a context marked by the gradual prevalence of the logic of the market and the dynamics related to the development of the consumer society²⁴, the new editorial strategy pursued by Pigna Paper mill – and by other major companies in the sector – was to satisfy the new tastes of a public now shaped by the cinema and other mass media and increasingly inspired by the American model (Walt Disney) and the *American way of Life*²⁵.

In this context, some covers specifically dedicated to the promotion of the Italian cultural heritage and its artistic and architectural beauties found their

¹⁸ See the series «Eroi del Far West» and «Avventure indiane», 1948, in Archivio storico delle Cartiere Pigna (hereafter: ASCP) di Alzano Lombardo (BG), Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, nn. 1-2 and Scatola bianca grande.

¹⁹ See the series «Pagine del *Cuore*», «Sandokan», «Robinson Crusoe» and «Peter Pan», 1950-1954, in ASCP, *ibid.* n. 1.

²⁰ See the series «Parabole del Vangelo» and «I Cavalieri dell'Amore», 1948-1949, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, nn. 1-2.

²¹ See the series «Le Mille e una Notte-I viaggi di Sind Bad», «La Rosa di Bagdad», «Bill-Boll-Bull» and «Giornalino», 1948-1950, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, n. 1-2 e Scatola bianca grande.

²² See the series «I grandi campioni del ciclismo», 1948-1949, in ASCP, Campionario copertine vecchi quaderni, nn. 1-2.

²³ See the series «La natura e le sue meraviglie-Walt Disney», 1950-1960, in ASCP, Campionario copertine 1932-1950.

²⁴ See the series C. D'Apice, *L'arcipelago dei consumi. Consumi e redditi delle famiglie italiane dal dopoguerra a oggi*, Bari, De Donato, 1981; G. Ragone, *Consumi e stile di vita in Italia*, Napoli, Guida, 1985.

²⁵ See in this respect: V. De Grazia, *La sfida dello «star system»: l'americanismo nella formazione della cultura di massa in Europa 1920-1965*, in D. Ellwood, A. Lyttleton (edd.), «Quaderni Storici», vol. 58, 1985, pp. 95-134; S. Gundle, *L'americanizzazione del quotidiano. Televisione e consumismo nell'Italia degli anni Cinquanta*, «Quaderni Storici», vol. 62, 1986, pp. 563-580; G. Finck, F. Minganti, *La vita privata italiana sul modello americano*, in Ph. Ariès, G. Duby (edd.), *La vita privata. V: Il Novecento*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1988, pp. 351-380.



Pic. 38



Pic. 39

way. And this is the case, for example, of the series «Italia Artistica» (Artistic Italy) (1950), intended to propose the images (and their relative presentation cards) of certain suggestive basilicas (Pics. 38, 39).

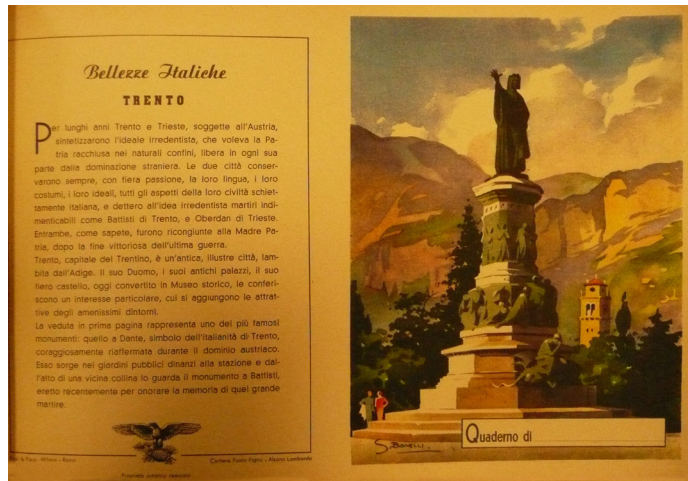
This is also the case of the series «Bellezze Italiane» (Italian beauties) (1952), focused on the monuments of the main Italian art cities (Pics. 40, 41).

This is the case, finally, of the series «La mia Patria. Monumenti e panorami della penisola», (My Homeland. Monuments and landscapes of the peninsula), published in the postwar period (1946) and characterized by a series of covers dedicated to monuments and natural landscapes of different regions (Pics. 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47).

In the years after World War II, however, the promotion, through the *school exercise books*, of the Italian cultural heritage and its artistic and architectural



Pic. 40



Pic. 41

beauties wasn't carried out only by the Pigna Paper Mill. We can affirm, indeed, that all the producers of exercise books had the same goal. The series of school books produced in the early Fifties by the Paper Mills Ceprano and Atina (Frosinone) and significantly entitled «Le Cento Città» (The Hundred Cities) (1951 or 1952), are particularly important, in this sense, and their richly illustrated covers were intended to present the most significant monuments of the small and large Italian urban centers (Pics. 48, 49, 50).

The Institute of Graphic Arts of Bergamo was on the same wavelength, dedicating in those same years many exercise book covers to the Italian cultural and natural heritage, among them we remember: the one called «Attraverso l'Italia» (Across Italy) (1950-1960) and focused on the presentation of a series of images of landscapes, monuments and historic buildings; and the one entitled



Pic. 42



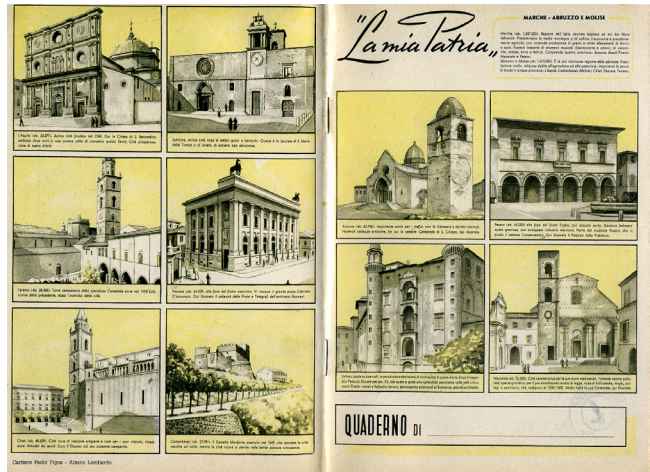
Pic. 43



Pic. 44



Pic. 45



Pic. 46



Pic. 47



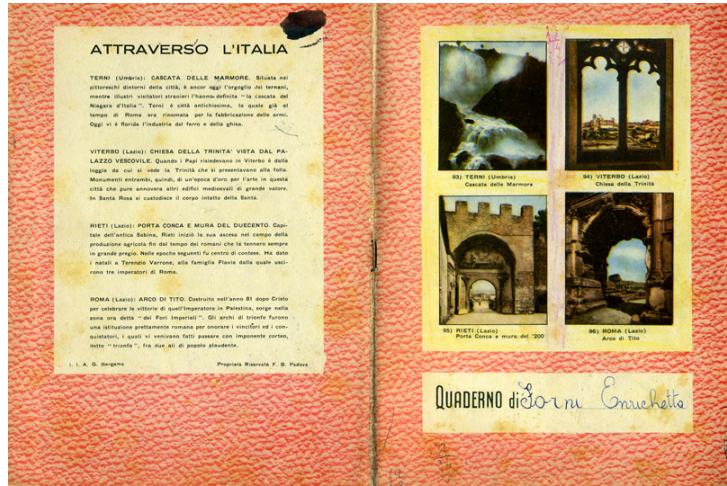
Pic. 48



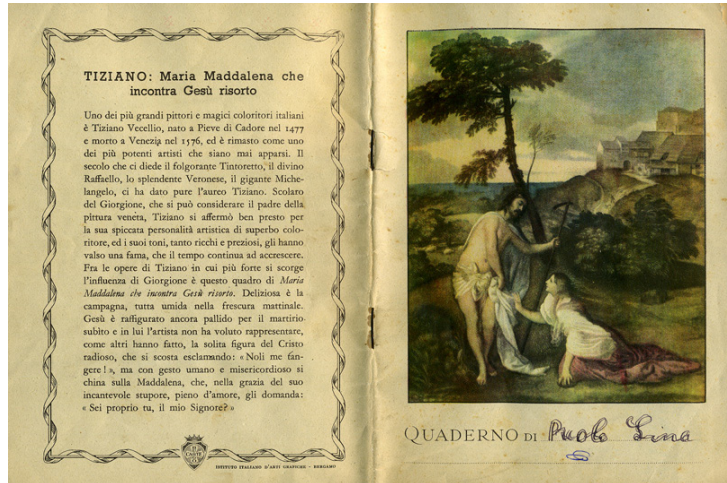
Pic. 49



Pic. 50



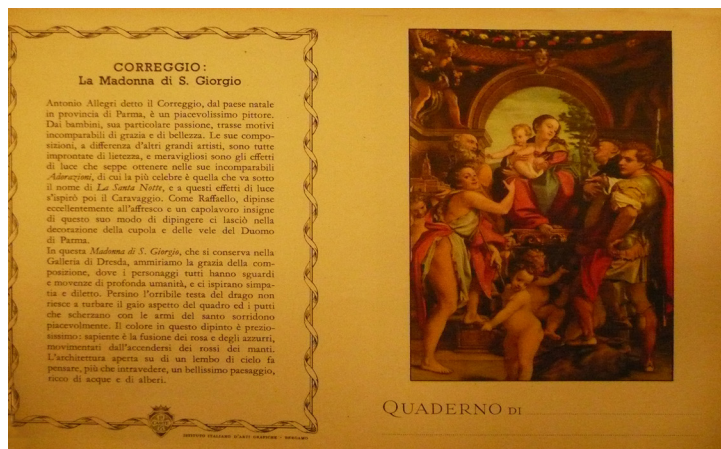
Pic. 51



Pic. 52

«Arte Italiana» (Italian Art) (1953-1965), characterized by the illustration of a series of masterpieces of the Italian painting (Botticelli, Tiziano, Canaletto, Correggio etc.) (Pics. 51, 52, 53).

Similar series of school exercise books promoted by various other companies in the sector were equally significant, at the turn of the Fifties and Sixties. This is the case, for example, of the Ambrogio Binda Paper Mill in Milan and of the Geographic Institute De Agostini in Novara, producers, respectively, of the two series entitled «Vedute d'Italia» (Italian views) and «Città Italiane» (Italian Cities) (Pics. 54, 55, 56).



Pic. 53

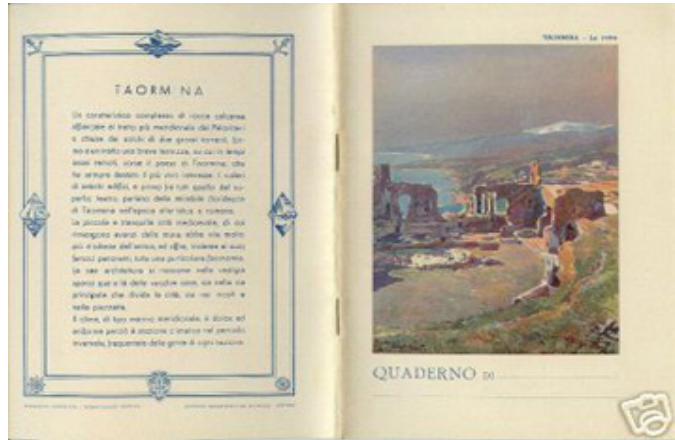


Pic. 54

It is also the case of the Sciacca Typography of Naples and its original series of *school exercise books* entitled «Mezzogiorno d'Italia» (Southern Italy) (Pics. 57, 58, 59, 60).

And it is the case, finally, of the beautiful series of *school exercise books* by the SA.DEA., the publishing consortium formed by the publishing house Sansoni of Florence and the Geographic Institute De Agostini of Novara, with the title «Tuttitalia» (since 1960) (Pics. 61, 62, 63).

And, then, of the one produced at the middle of the Seventies by the C.I.S.A. of Rome and entitled «Regioni d'Italia» (Italian Regions) (Pics. 64, 65, 66).



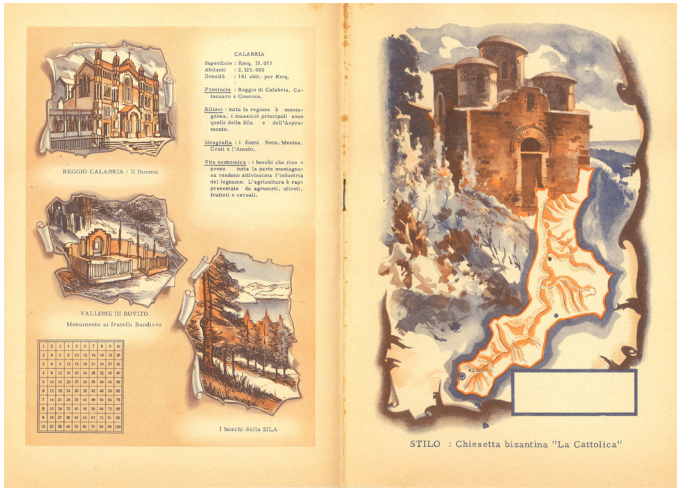
Pic. 55



Pic. 56



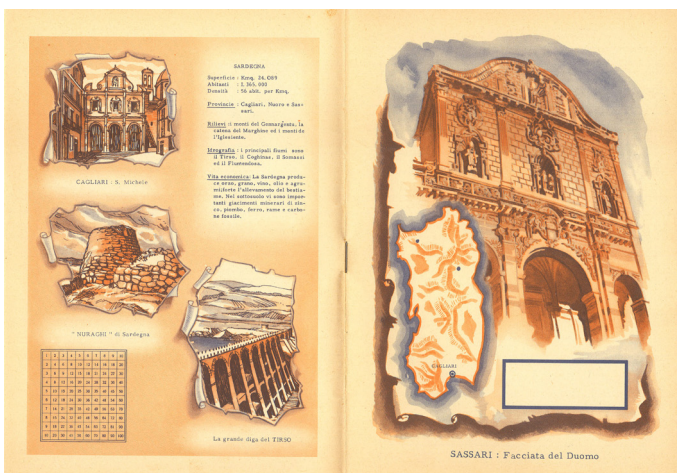
Pic. 57



Pic. 58



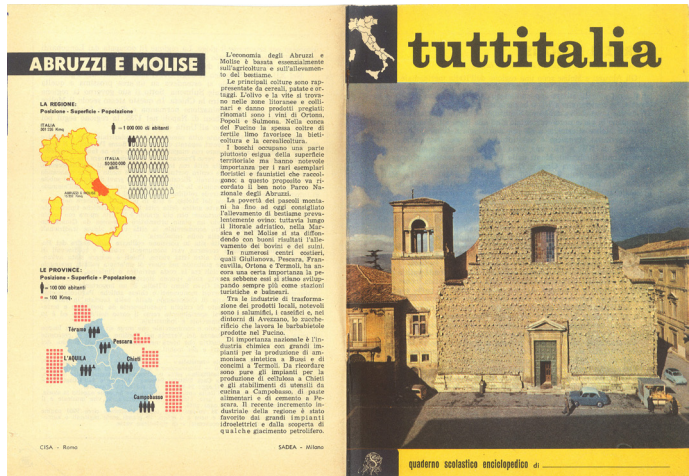
Pic. 59



Pic. 60



Pic. 61



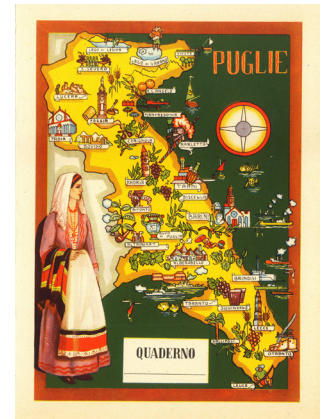
Pic. 62



Pic. 63



Pic. 64



Pic. 65



Pic. 66

Conclusions

However, in the period after World War II, unlike what occurred in the past, the cultural heritage and the artistic and architectural heritage of the Italian cities were considered, rather than as a tool for the promotion of national identity and feeling of citizenship in the younger generations, as an indispensable resource for the development of tourism and economic growth of the country.

This was an attitude that should not surprise if one considers the final abandonment, in the democratic and republican Italy, of that aspiration to contribute to the construction of «the new Italy» and to the nationalization of the younger generations that the producers of *school exercise books* – first of all Pigna Paper Mill in Alzano Lombardo – had developed as early as the late Nineteenth century, and then become even more effective and systematic in the Giolitti era and in the period between the wars.

In a context – that of the fifties and Sixties of the Twentieth century – characterized by a childhood and youth no longer subjected to an ideological and political plan imposed from above, but more and more projected in an individualistic and private dimension, the reference, in the *school exercise books*, to the Italian cultural and natural heritage lost, therefore, every vague ideological connotation to adopt a strictly neutral characterization.

*Essays and
Researches*



Saggi e
Ricerche

Frictions and fractions in the new education fellowship, 1920s-1930s: Montessori(ans) vs. Decroly(ans)

Angelo Van Gorp
Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy
Ghent University (Belgium)
angelo.vangorp@ugent.be

Frank Simon
Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy
Ghent University (Belgium)
frank.simon@ugent.be

Marc Depaepe
Centre for the History of Education
KU Leuven Campus Kortrijk (Belgium)
marc.depaepe@kuleuven-kortrijk.be

ABSTRACT: The role of important figures and their interconnections has been vital in the existence and development of the New Education Fellowship (NEF). Already from the very beginning the NEF struggled with rivalries partly due to the adoration some of these coryphaei enjoyed by their followers. This affected the so highly-praised solidarity and close cooperation for the benefit of the child. During the 1920s and 1930s a conflict ran on between Montessorians and Decrolyans, culminated at the Locarno congress (1927) and actually held the potency to undermine the NEF. These two camps propagated *Il Metodo* (1909) or *La Méthode Decroly* (1922), and for this purpose made use of *Pour l'ère nouvelle*, one of the NEF journals. We particularly observed this rivalry within the context of the Low Countries, Belgium and The Netherlands, although the conflict had a wider international character. In The Netherlands, the controversy carried on by the ambiguous Montessorian-Decrolyan Cornelia Philippi-Siewertsz van Reesema, who supported an 'experimental eclecticism', ended in a division of the Montessori Society. Even Montessori's son, Mario, interfered by publishing a «philippic». In the long run, top people as Ensor, Ferrière, Claparède and Bovet – the last two likewise advocates of experimental eclecticism – were compelled to take up a position in order to restrain the conflict, to emphasise again the NEF's internationality and to guarantee its survival.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: New Education Fellowship; Maria Montessori; Ovide Decroly; Method; Controversy; XXth Century.

Introduction

Considering striking similarities between their respective professional lives, the educational reformers Ovide Decroly (1871-1932) and Maria Montessori (1870-1952) are often mentioned in the same breath. Both were medical doctors who started from the study of retarded children in order to develop their own educational method for normal children, the Decroly Method and Montessori Method respectively. Particularly through their followers, the Decrolyans and the Montessorians, rivalry arose that also touched the New Education Fellowship (NEF) forcing its leaders to choose position and formulate statements on both methods. We particularly observed this rivalry within the context of the Low Countries, Belgium and The Netherlands, although the conflict had a wider international character as we will demonstrate. It is striking, however, that international historiography hardly focuses on those tensions. Is it a non-issue, since each organisation every now and then has to deal with discord, or does it say something about the extent in which historians all too often subscribe into contemporary discourses emphasising harmony rather than disharmony? After all, although Decroly initially disliked the idea of a fixed method, after the First World War he would support its dissemination¹, and consequently couldn't prevent it from being subject of comparison with the Montessori Method.

This was already the case in 1921, with the NEF's inaugural conference at Calais, and thus happened even before his assistant Amélie Hamaïde had published her bestseller *La méthode Decroly* (1922) that contributed largely to the dissemination and likewise fixation of the Decroly Method². In his report on the Calais conference, Henri Chochon, founder of the progressive school Le Domaine de l'Etoile in Nice, referred to the presentation of both methods, respectively by Decroly himself and Montessori's protégé Claude Albert Claremont, stating that they were «en apparence quelque peu contraire, en réalité très semblables». While the Montessori-method suited the younger child better, the Decroly Method permitted «de faire acquérir à l'enfant, sans fatigue, sans surménage, une foule de connaissances»³. Almost ten years later, on the NEF conference in Helsingör (August 1929), William Boyd wrote a similar though more extensive report comparing the Decroly Method (presented by Hamaïde) not only with the Montessori Method but also with other methods such as the Dalton Plan and the Winnetka Technique.

Boyd argued that these methods showed «some fundamental similarities» for «they all stress freedom, pupil initiative, active learning» as well as «a rich

¹ O. Decroly, G. Boon, *Vers l'école renouvelée. Une première étape*, Brussels/Paris, Office de Publicité/Fernand Nathan, 1921. See S. Wagnon, *Réformer l'école*, in S. Wagnon, J.C. Lemaire (edd.), *L'Alternative Decroly*, Brussels, La Pensée et les Hommes, 2013, pp. 197-256.

² A. Hamaïde, *La méthode Decroly*, Neuchâtel/Paris, Delachaux et Niestlé, 1922.

³ H. Chochon, *Le congrès international d'éducation à Calais*, «Le message théosophique et social», vol. 45, 1921, p. 358.

variety in the ways in which they seek to express the common ideals». The biggest difference however could be found «in their attitude to the curriculum». Montessori took «the existing curriculum with its subject divisions for granted, and proceed[ed] to seek freedom and individuality through special devices». Decroly on the contrary, among others, started with «a complete reorganization of subject matter round centres of interest, and [was] led through that to new methods». Consequently, he observed striking differences in the techniques applied: «the one set stresses individual work in independence of the teacher, and seeks to secure efficient direction of learning by means of graded apparatus and material, which defines the aim of the work and directs its progress; the other stresses group activities in the accomplishment of common tasks with the teacher watching and prompting and correlating, with a view to ultimate efficiency». But also here the conclusion was that it is «needless to say the opposition is not hard and fast in any of the methods» from which followed, again, the advice to apply both methods on different age groups⁴.

In other words, it looks as if the interwar period, the NEF's heyday, essentially was a time of peace and harmony between Decroly and Montessori, and between their respective adherents. It probably explains why the controversy discussed here is only briefly mentioned in the dissertation by Haenggeli-Jenni as well as in the compilation by Wagnon and Lemaire, while it is absent in, for instance, Koslowski, Wagnon, Blichmann and Grunder⁵. At the same time, the link with the Dutch Montessori Association, particularly disagreement between the hardliners and the moderate Montessorians inclining to a more eclectic or experimental approach, explains why the controversy has been picked up mainly in Dutch-speaking scholarship on either Decroly or Montessori, as was the case in Leenders, Van Gorp and Hazenoot⁶. It should be added, therefore,

⁴ W. Boyd, M. Mackenzie, *Towards a New Education*, London/New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1930, pp. 136-138.

⁵ B. Haenggeli-Jenni, *Pour l'Ere Nouvelle: une revue-carrefour entre science et militance (1922-1940)*, Doctoral Thesis, Section des sciences de l'éducation (Supervisor: R. Hofstetter), Geneva, University of Geneva, Academic Year 2010-2011; Wagnon, Lemaire (edd.), *L'Alternative Decroly*, cit.; S. Koslowski, *Die New Era der New Education Fellowship. Ihr Beitrag zur Internationalität der Reformpädagogik im 20. Jahrhundert*, Bad Heilbrunn, Julius Klinkhardt, 2013; S. Wagnon, *Ovide Decroly, un pédagogue de l'Éducation nouvelle, 1871-1932*, Brussels, P.I.E./Peter Lang, 2013; A. Blichmann, *Erziehung als Wissenschaft. Ovide Decroly und sein Weg vom Arzt zum Pädagogen*, Paderborn, Ferdinand Schöningh, 2014 (who though included a brief comparison between Montessori and Decroly); H.-U. Grunder, *Schulreform und Reformschule*, Bad Heilbrunn, Julius Klinkhardt, 2015.

⁶ H. Leenders, *Der Fall Montessori. Die Geschichte einer reformpädagogischen Erziehungskonzeption im Italienischen Faschismus*, Bad Heilbrunn, Julius Klinkhardt, 2001; A. Van Gorp, *Tussen mythe en wetenschap. Ovide Decroly (1871-1932)*, Leuven/Voorburg, Acco, 2005; M. Hazenoot, *In rusteloze arbeid. De betekenis van Cornelia Philippi-Siewertsz van Reesema (1880-1963) voor de ontwikkeling van het onderwijs aan het jonge kind*, Doctoral Thesis, Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences (Supervisors: M. van Essen, A. Minnaert), Groningen, University of Groningen, Academic Year 2009-2010.

that our story is primarily based on non-Italian, both primary and secondary sources, Leenders being the exception.

For it is our aim to present and discuss this controversy, the plan of this article is as follows. The next section introduces the NEF and emphasises the tension between nationalism and internationalism that follows from the NEF's organisational structure, how this caused frictions and how this did result in different fractions. The third section situates the previously mentioned Low Countries controversy within this context. The fourth section explains how Decroly himself got involved in the controversy and what the consequences were, particularly for the experimental fraction within the Dutch Montessori Association. The fifth section broadens the focus by zooming in on the different ways in which different actors at the Geneva Institute Jean-Jacques Rousseau positioned themselves within the controversy. The sixth and final section concludes the article with a discussion and conclusion.

1. *A rich bouquet*⁷

In June 1930, at the inaugural session of the «Section belge de la Ligue internationale pour l'Education Nouvelle» (the NEF's Belgian section), the Decrolyans expressed their conviction that «l'éducation nouvelle» was the leitmotiv that enabled them to contribute to the «true internationalism» that characterized the NEF striving for the worldwide progress of education. With it the NEF emphasised what was considered distinct and meaningful in each method meanwhile aiming at realising a synthesis of the diverging theories and methods. Although the relation between Flemish and French-speaking members of the Belgian section was far from good, the section nevertheless subscribed into the post-war message of peace and harmony the NEF propagated, stressing solidarity, cooperation, companionship and the like. During the inaugural session, Decroly described the NEF as follows:

Un mouvement mondial [...] qui coordonne les aspirations et les efforts de multiples personnalités et groupements indépendants [...], un organisme international, organisme indépendant des influences politiques et philosophiques, organisme capable d'assumer la tâche de dériver les courants torrentieux et dévastateurs issus de cataclysmes locaux et dont la violence a fait sombrer toutes les institutions existantes, organisme capable d'éviter les improvisations précipitées et maladroités, qui risquent de compromettre l'avenir en provoquant des réactions plus violentes encore, des reculs sans espoir⁸.

⁷ F. Dubois, *Tous ensemble!*, «Vers l'Ecole Active», vol. 7, n. 10, 1930, p. 152.

⁸ Section belge de la Ligue Internationale pour l'Education Nouvelle, *Séance inaugurale*, «Vers l'Ecole Active», vol. 7, n. 10, 1930, p. 146.

But was the NEF really that rich bouquet it pretended to be? At the closing session of the NEF conference in Montreux (1923) it was raised that each country had its own needs, characteristics, habits and languages. Therefore one preferably played the national card⁹. The NEF journal *The New Era* noticed that the NEF board had sought to establish a «very elastic association» which could be «adapted to the idiosyncrasies and methods of each individual country»¹⁰. And what to think of Adolphe Ferrière who as one of the NEF's protagonists at the NEF conference in Locarno, 1927, noted that the conference actually could be split in three parts that existed more or less next to each other: an English-speaking, a French-speaking and a German-speaking one¹¹. These examples show that the NEF could be considered a loose federation that combined two complementary but conflicting notions: nationalism and internationalism.

According to Ferrière, the NEF held the noble conviction to forge a homogenous whole out of its pioneers, their faithful followers, their friends and curious people (the faithful followers of tomorrow), notwithstanding the political, linguistic and ideological borders¹². The advocates and adepts of the new education had one ideal that united them: the «Cult of the Child». Ferrière distinguished between the Pioneer and the Other because the former throughout his/her educational principles incarnated the NEF's international and cosmopolitan dimensions. Relying on the pioneers the NEF would and should be able to overcome the idiosyncrasies of the people and its internal heterogeneity. The inspirational ideas of the pioneers transcended political, linguistic and ideological borders and would enable the creation of a tide bond between the diverse members of the NEF. At least, that was Ferrière's conviction.

Reality however showed a different picture, for the centripetal forces due to which the Other generally was attracted to one particular Pioneer counteracted the cosmopolitan, centrifugal dimension the Pioneer him/herself embodied. As one of us wrote elsewhere, Ferrière's sectarian-like phrasing helps to understand this process, for the Swiss propagandist and opinion maker compared the NEF to «a tribe». To him the pioneers were like «chieftains» who preceded the members of the tribe in the «Cult of the Child». But, as a result of the canonisation of the pioneers themselves, the Cult of the Child quickly gave way to the Cult of the Pioneer¹³. Many NEF militants oriented themselves to their idols, forming fractions around particular pioneers. This phenomenon contributed largely to the mythical *status* the pioneers like Montessori and

⁹ [H. Baillie-Weaver], [*Closing lecture*], «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 2, n. 8, 1923, pp. 140-144.

¹⁰ *Aims*, «The New Era», vol. 10, n. 39, 1929.

¹¹ A. Ferrière, *Chronique du Congrès*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 6, nn. 31-32, 1927, pp. 94-95.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 94. See also A. Van Gorp, *Ovide Decroly, a hero of education. Some reflections on the effects of educational hero worship*, in P. Smeyers, M. Depaepe (edd.), *Educational research: Why 'what works' doesn't work*, Dordrecht, Springer, 2006, p. 41.

¹³ Ferrière, *Chronique du Congrès*, cit., p. 94; Van Gorp, *Ovide Decroly, a hero of education*, cit., p. 41.

Decroly acquired and undermined the supposed homogeneity, that turned out to be rather utopian. Initially, everyone was allowed a place under the sun, but with the years passing various factions begrudged other pioneers any success and rivalry prevailed. The loose structure of the NEF was both its strength and its weakness.

Within the Cult of the Pioneer, the true high priestess undoubtedly was Montessori, who compared to many others relied on a method that was named after her. As regards the many practitioners that raved about her ideas, this method surely was her weapon, something she moreover was very much aware of. It also was an advantage that her method dated back to 1909, and that she already was an international celebrity when the NEF was founded. She could further rely on Beatrice Ensor's (the NEF's president's) sympathy, as well as on that of the theosophists to whom both Montessori and Ensor belonged¹⁴. Nevertheless, Montessori never took up a position on the NEF's board. Montessori's iconic *status* became most visible in the establishment of the Association Montessori Internationale, in 1929, and in the organisation of a series of Montessori conferences with which Montessori aimed at stimulating propagation and dispersion of her educational principles, materials as well as the orthodox application of her method. Due to pragmatic reasons, and because Ensor had requested so, the Italian Diva initially organised the Montessori conferences as part of the NEF conferences in Helsingör (1929) and Nice (1932) before starting her own series of independent annual Montessori conferences¹⁵.

2. *Beyond the controversy*

It goes without saying that it actually is impossible to isolate the Low Countries controversy from the international context of the NEF. As co-editor of *The New Era*, Alexander Neill, for instance, criticised Montessori in the first volume (1920) of the journal. He resented her educational ideas both scientifically and morally and rejected «Montessorianism»¹⁶. His radical ideas also brought him in conflict with Ensor and others within the NEF, reason why he left the journal's editorial board in 1924. It indicates that from the outset Ensor's ambition of establishing a neutral, broad-minded and open organisation and journal, was subject to controversy and that the Montessori

¹⁴ Beatrice Ensor wrote «In our opinion the Montessori system is a most valuable element in the forward movement in Education, and we propose to devote a few pages to this subject every quarter». See B. Ensor, «Education for the New Era», vol. 1, n. 1, 1920, p. 11.

¹⁵ R. Joosten-Chatzen, *Le premier Congrès International Montessorien à Elseneur*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 8, n. 53, 1929, pp. 299-300.

¹⁶ A.S. Neill, *Montessori*, «Education for the New Era», vol. 1, n. 1, 1920.

Method played a role in it¹⁷. In 1925-26, Montessori's antagonists even relied on another pioneer who, as one of the NEF's co-founders, as member of its international committee and as co-editor of *Pour l'Ere Nouvelle*, was highly esteemed within NEF circles: Ovide Decroly. With this, the controversy took the shape of a genuine 'method conflict' between Montessorians and Decrolyans in which Montessori's *Il Metodo* was constantly tested against the Decroly Method, and vice versa.

Although some years earlier Amélie Hamaïde, hence a Decrolyan, already expressed in her book on the Decroly Method a critique against Montessori, in order to demonstrate the superiority of Decroly's approach over Montessori's¹⁸, it was first and foremost the Dutch educationist Cornelia Philippi-Siewertsz van Reesema (subsequently referred to as Philippi), with her ambiguous classification of both Montessorian and Decrolyan, who contributed the most to the controversy. In what follows, we present Philippi as protagonist in this controversy, for she embodied the impact of the Cult of the Pioneer and equally demonstrated that the harmony Ensor was longing for seemingly was hard to achieve.

In October 1925, Philippi cautiously opened the debate by stating that Jan Ligthart, Ovide Decroly, Edouard Claparède and John Dewey, among others, preferred lifelike materials instead of Montessori's systematic material¹⁹. In a series of three articles about Montessori's precursors, published the year after, Philippi however preferred the strait forward attack²⁰. This time not Montessori was the main target, the Montessorians but were. According to Philippi, the enthusiasm towards Montessori that had characterised the initial stage, because of the emphasis on freedom, had made way to disillusion among principals of Montessori Schools, and to disorder and laziness among pupils. As a consequence, around 1920 Montessori had decided to more accurately define the principle of freedom. Obviously, thus Philippi, the so-called principle of freedom was much more a principle of order and discipline. In this it is possible to observe a tension that disturbed many educational reformers and their disciples.

Philippi argued that Montessori *thought* the material she had developed experimentally represented the child's needs at a particular age and a particular moment. Her own observations, however, had learned her that the Montessori material was way too rigid. Philippi doubted whether the material really met the

¹⁷ Haenggeli-Jenni, *Pour l'Ere Nouvelle*, cit., pp. 71-72.

¹⁸ Hamaïde used the one-liner that the Montessori-method to the Decroly-method was what «broken and dead branches» were to «intact and living trees». See Hamaïde, *La méthode Decroly*, cit., p. 197. See also M. Depaepe, F. Simon, A. Van Gorp, *The canonization of Ovide Decroly to a saint of the new education*, «History of Education Quarterly», vol. 43, n. 2, p. 230.

¹⁹ C. Philippi-Siewertsz van Reesema, *L'école adaptée aux besoins du développement de l'enfant*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 4, n. 17, 1925, pp. 31-32.

²⁰ Ead., *Les précurseurs de Mme Montessori, I-III*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 5, nn. 21-23, 1926, pp. 82-85, 119-121, 171-175.

children's needs. With her articles, Philippi's twofold aim was to demonstrate that Montessori, different from what she proclaimed, was not the «inventor» of the material that was named after her as well as to point at the shortcomings of the Montessori material as compared to other methods. While doing so, for her legitimation she first and foremost used Decroly as counterexample. Philippi was attracted to Decroly's educational ideas because he used materials that were connected to life and that the children themselves either collected or fabricated. Philippi thought it useful to have a closer look at the way the municipal schools in Brussels had applied the Decroly Method in a flexible way, thus allowing the creation of a true active school without running the risk of mechanising education and killing its underpinning principles. And that was exactly she blamed the Montessorians for, since they had interpreted Montessori's principle of freedom in a much too literal way. Montessorians seemed to believe that with the Montessori material the teacher would become superfluous, but Philippi was not convinced, for children didn't show any natural interest in the Montessori material and chaos reigned the Montessori classroom.

Others shared Philippi's opinion, to an extent even that between 1914 and 1920 Montessori's *status* had been declining. To Montessori it had been the sign to take action. An international campaign of lectures, courses and workshops brought her for instance to London (1919 and 1920), Amsterdam (1920) and Brussels (1922). The aim was to instruct interested people in the one and only application of the Montessori Method, which implied the strict use of the Montessori material as well as an emphasis on the guiding role of the Montessori teacher. Philippi, however, continued criticising the orthodox use of the Montessori material that in her view limited the child's freedom too much, for the method killed the child's natural inclination to play. Philippi could not understand this, since Montessori continuously stressed the importance of spontaneity and observation in education. Philippi's conclusion was ambiguous. Montessori undoubtedly had contributed a lot to educational reform, particularly in The Netherlands, but she should acknowledge the creative forces inherent to the child. Pedology had paved the way to a better understanding of the child and openness was required to further new education.

A first, rather modest reply came from the Dutch Montessorian C.L. de Ligt van Rossem, who claimed that the Montessori Method had a universal character which was the reason why Montessori was able to gain such a big crowd of followers²¹. Her method was not just *a* method, but *the* method, that had started a real revolution in education. But the controversy only reached its peak in the special issue of *Pour l'Ere Nouvelle* on the NEF conference in Locarno (1927) that was devoted to the themes of «freedom in education», «reining the

²¹ C.L. de Ligt van Rossem, *Un témoignage hollandais en faveur de la Méthode Montessori*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 6, n. 29, 1927, pp. 113-115.

child through psychology», «new methods», «experimental schools», «co-education», «art» and «history»²². In the category «new methods» both the orthodox and the more experimental group of Montessorians were offered a forum to present their practices. The first group was represented by the Austrian Miss Roubiczek, while Philippi was representing the second group. It is observable from Roubiczek's article that the Montessorians had been criticised for isolating themselves from the others²³. Montessori herself did not attend the conference, officially due to the political situation in her country. It could have added to the temper with which the others raised their voice. From Roubiczek's article it can be derived that first and foremost the Montessori material was subject to critique as well as the so-called scientific character of her method. Exemplifying the canonisation of Montessori²⁴, Roubiczek continued with mentioning that the Montessorians had closed the conference by reading out of Montessori's works, as was it a Bible reading group, and closed her article by emphasising that Montessori gave priority to the child over the method.

Philippi replied to Roubiczek's article by explaining her personal view on the Montessori Method, based on her own experiences²⁵. According to Philippi, the Montessori Method was based on the old psychology, that tried to stimulate development of the child's capacities by means of fixed materials. From the new psychology, on the contrary, that had started with disentangling the complexities of the human mind and discerning the unity of the human nature, she had learned that the child started from globalisation rather than from analysis. Moreover, the new psychology had learned her not to ignore the moment at which particular aptitudes developed, a moment perhaps that would escape without being noticed ever again if one would not pay attention to it. Particularly from that explicit reference to the principle of globalisation, it becomes evident that, among others, Philippi had Decroly in mind when referring to new psychology. Why ignoring the differences between children that he had described so accurately? To Philippi it was clear which method she would apply: the method that would match the individual child's capacities the most. Due to the Montessorians' egocentric attitude in Locarno, and the upsurge of «montessori(an)itis» to which it gave way, it was no coincidence that Montessori decided to start her own series of independent conferences shortly after, thus directing the cleavage between the NEF and the Montessori movement.

²² «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 6, nn. 31-32, 1927, p. 1.

²³ Roubiczek, [*Les Méthodes nouvelles: Note sur les tout petits*], «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 6, n. 32, 1927, pp. 228-229.

²⁴ Compare with Depaepe, Simon, Van Gorp, *The canonization of Ovide Decroly*, cit.

²⁵ C. Philippi-Siewertz van Reesema, *Les écoles Montessori de La Haye*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 6, n. 32, 1927, pp. 229-232.

3. *Philippic, Piracy, Parody*²⁶

It has become clear that Philippi has played a decisive role, in The Netherlands and beyond, within the NEF as well as within circles of Montessorians, in the controversy around Montessori. Thanks to her mother, H.C. Siewertsz van Reesema-De Graaf (1854-1923), who had attended in 1911 the International Conference of Pedology in Brussels chaired by Decroly, her inclination towards pedology as well as her adoration of Decroly became the driving force in Philippi's acting. Impressed by the Brussels conference, Philippi's mother had started in The Hague the *Vereniging voor Paedologische Lezingen*, an association that offered public lectures in pedology. It was intended to invite international pedologists to The Hague in order to allow the Dutch audience to get acquainted with the international developments in pedology. In 1914, Montessori was one of the first to be invited to The Hague. Inspired by Montessori's ideas and charisma, Philippi's mother would establish the first Montessori school in the Netherlands, and Philippi would become one of her mother's enthusiastic supporters.

In The Netherlands, The Hague would set the example for others, and in November 1917, the Dutch Montessori Association was founded. Philippi became a member of the board and Mrs. J.J. Prins-Werker, who a few years later would refer to Montessori's dictatorship²⁷, became secretary. In order to ban the prevailing chaos at Montessori schools, Philippi proposed to organise a course for Montessori teachers, which in September 1918 started in The Hague. Due to the openness that the Montessorians in The Hague showed towards pedology and other methods, the Montessorians in Amsterdam soon afterwards decided to start their own course, which on the longer run would result in the growing apart of both fractions. While the The Hague section stressed their independent *status*, the Amsterdam section defended an orthodox application of the Montessori Method in the wake of Montessori's visits to the Netherlands, in 1920 and 1922. The proclaimed independency implied that the Montessorians in The Hague explored the educational market on interesting and useful ideas and techniques. In this process, Philippi seemed to prefer Decroly over others, a development in which the period 1921-23 has been crucial. After all, in 1921 Decroly had been one of the key figures at the first NEF conference, in Calais, and after Philippi's mother had passed away, early 1923, and Philippi showed herself disappointed in the orthodox course Montessori and her epigones had taken, it was for Philippi an obvious step to

²⁶ Unless otherwise stated, this section is based on Ead., *Kleuterwereld en kleuterschool. Bijdrage tot het inzicht in de betekenis der bezigheden, het onderling contact en het spel van kleuters*, Amsterdam/Antwerpen, Wereldbibliotheek, 1954, p. 81; Ead., *Les écoles Montessori de La Haye*, cit.

²⁷ Philippi-Siewertsz van Reesema, *Les précurseurs de Mme Montessori, I*, cit., p. 82.

invite Decroly to The Hague in order to revitalise her mother's pedological association that had grown moribund²⁸.

So far we kept Decroly out of the controversy but also he contributed to it by writing two articles in *Pour l'Ere Nouvelle* in which he showed himself critical towards Montessori and that even predated Philippi's articles²⁹. It therefore could be said that it was Decroly, not Philippi, who gave the impetus to the controversy, but since Decroly wrote his articles after he had visited Philippi's school in The Hague, it is fair to say that Philippi's role has been crucial. Let's have a closer look at Decroly's comments on the Montessori Method. The first article pointed to the parallels between his and Montessori's careers: as medical doctors both had studied abnormal children before entering the educational stage by applying their insights into their respective educational methods. The concrete results, however, were completely different, thus Decroly. Although he proved not enthusiastic about the Montessori material, he shared several principles with her. Which principles, that could be derived from a lecture he had given two years earlier at the occasion of the introduction of the Decroly Method in two primary municipal schools in Anderlecht, Brussels³⁰. To a certain extent, there certainly were intersections between his own educative games and the Montessori material, for both stimulated initiative, individuality, freedom and spontaneity in the child. Decroly limited his critique to the formal side, as he believed the material was too abstract, too artificial and way too expansive³¹. In his second article, that described the experiences at the Montessori school in The Hague, Decroly was even more critical. He indicated that initially one had applied Montessori's principles in a rigorous way, the only result being that chaos reigned. After Montessori's visit to The Hague, in 1920, one had followed Montessori's guidelines, but that ended up in disappointment. During Montessori's second visit, in 1922, it became clear that she did not want to recognise that some children had interests the rigid Montessori material did not meet. The Hague section decided to search for new sources of inspiration, an eclectic method being the result of it.

Decroly liked what he had observed in The Hague, for no doubt the school atmosphere had become richer and more lively. In The Hague he had found a concept that in 1907 had also moved him to found his own school in Uccle, Brussels: a school environment in which the principles of the rural «écoles

²⁸ In 1925, due to pedology's declining *status* after the First World War it would be renamed into Stichting voor Kinderstudie [Child Study Foundation].

²⁹ O. Decroly, *De l'enseignement individuel dans des classes nombreuses*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 4, n. 13 hors série, 1924, pp. 16-19; Id., *Expériences d'éducation nouvelle à La Haye*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 3, n. 12, 1924, pp. 62-65.

³⁰ G. Boon, *Essai d'application de la Méthode Decroly dans l'enseignement primaire*, Brussels, Centre National d'Education, 1924, p. 11.

³¹ A. De Cordier et al., *Een groot opvoeder: De psycho-pedagoog Ovide Decroly – Un grand éducatrice: Le psycho-pédagogue Ovide Decroly*. Renaix 23.07.1871 – Uccle 12.09.1932, Renaix, Vriendenkring Rijksbasisonderwijs avec section française, 1981, pp. 95-98.

nouvelles», of the active school, were brought into practice, in such a way that it would prepare the reform of the public schools. Decroly described the The Hague dissent as «a well-reasoned eclecticism» that fought against the rigid dogmas that in his view were not compatible with life and the child's development. As always, thus Decroly, common sense had opposed the interference of mystic concepts in life. Decroly and Philippi not only shared the same conviction but also profited both from this alliance. Philippi used Decroly as legitimation of her experimental-eclectic approach to the Montessori Method while Decroly used in his favour the competitive atmosphere Philippi had created. Philippi's book on Decroly, published in 1931, was a book written by a Decrolyan rather than by a Montessorian³². Despite this, she stood out from other Decrolyans, for she always propagated an eclectic approach while most Decrolyans were hardliners for whom Decroly and the Decroly Method were as much celebrated as icons as was the case with Montessori within the Amsterdam section.

It thus turns out that together with the Decrolyans, as we have discussed elsewhere, Decroly can be considered co-responsible for the creation of his own myth³³. The competition-like atmosphere created a sense of us-versus-them. It was both a bottom-up and a top-down process. By interfering in the conflict between moderate and orthodox Montessorians, at least in The Netherlands Decroly became the prime competitor of Montessori. It occurs to us that Decroly deliberately used this discord in order to position himself on the Dutch new education market, a market dominated by Montessori. No wonder that many Montessorians didn't appreciate Philippi's orientation towards Decroly, and in 1931 she was discharged as member of the Dutch Montessori Association. The «philippic» Maria Montessori's son Mario addressed against Philippi was also addressed against Decroly, who dared to support the dissent. Philippi's eclectic approach to the Montessori Method was like «piracy» and could hardly be called a «parody»³⁴.

4. «Rien n'est orthodoxe»

With the propagated internationalism in mind, it is obvious that the NEF's promoters were not happy with such a method conflict. It therefore is no surprise that Beatrice Ensor, notwithstanding her relationship with Montessori, tried to keep a neutral position and plead in favour of both methods. And what about

³² C. Philippi-Siewertsz van Reesema, *Uit en over de werken van Prof. Dr. Ovide Decroly*, Groningen/Den Haag/Batavia, Wolters, 1931.

³³ Depaepe, Simon, Van Gorp, *The canonization of Ovide Decroly*, cit.

³⁴ M. Schwegman, *Maria Montessori 1870-1952. Kind van haar tijd. Vrouw van de wereld*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 1999, p. 219.

Adolphe Ferrière's point of view? Took he, as *the* propagandist par excellence, also a neutral position, or was he rather inclining towards Decroly, taking into account the connection that was established the previous years between Brussels (Decroly) and Geneva (the Institut Jean-Jacques-Rousseau, Edouard Claparède in particular)? His editorials in *Pour l'Ere Nouvelle* point in the other direction, for in different interventions he stood up for Montessori. Was it something strategically? Was he afraid that this strong fraction of Montessorians would turn its back to its «brothers»? It could have been a legitimate concern, for the strong decline of conference attendances after the NEF conference in Nice (from 1800 delegates in 1932 to 1000 in 1936) might also have been related to the (orthodox) Montessorians ultimately leaving the NEF, besides the increased political tensions on the eve of the Second World War and the dissolving of the Theosophical Educational Trust³⁵.

Let's have a look at what Ferrière wrote about Montessori. In 1926, he had met Montessori in a *Casa dei Bambini* in Milan. Afterwards he wrote a report on this meeting with what he called the Italian «pioneers of the active school»³⁶. In Milan, Montessori had organised a course for Montessori teachers who had to apply and to disseminate the Montessori Method all over Italy. The very fact that the Italian government had decided to subsidise this course, which actually was proof of the formal recognition of Montessori's ideas, provoked in Ferrière the lamentation that the disapproval of «Madame Montessori» had lasted far too long. Few women were as famous as she was and only few of her critics had been in contact with her. After all, Montessori did not participate in conferences, thus Ferrière, for «[e]lle aime écouter, dit-elle, mais non parler». She abominated discussions and needed rest in order to be able to study the little child, for she aimed at further the understanding of the child's development at different ages. Many myths were circulating about Montessori's educational principles, which was according to Ferrière unjustified. Different from what Montessori's critics (Philippi, for instance) had claimed, Montessori did not exclude free play and drawing, but «elle pense qu'il les trouve ou doit les trouver, à titre de détente, hors de l'école», and together with Ferrière Montessori deplored that too many children had no or only little contact with nature at schools. Moreover, it was not Montessori's fault that chaos reigned many Montessori schools, for she was no adherent of non-intervention. Once she had told him that for learning to read «il y a un moment culminant qu'il faut saisir au passage; il faut, à ce moment, attirer l'attention de l'enfant sur la lecture; le laisser passer, c'est reculer un apprentissage

³⁵ This happened in 1930. The NEF found a strong stimulus in the British Theosophical Society, particularly the Theosophical Fraternity in Education that was founded in 1915. See also note 14. Ensor played a crucial role in it while Montessori initially was the prime source of inspiration in their striving for «new ideals in education». See W.A.C. Stewart, *Progressives and radicals in English education, 1750-1970*, London, Macmillan, 1972, p. 199.

³⁶ A. Ferrière, *Une visite aux pionniers de l'école active en Italie*, «Pour l'Ere Nouvelle», vol. 5, n. 23, 1926, pp. 150-156.

nécessaire et faire en sorte qu'il sera plus lent, plus ardu et comportera plus d'efforts dépensés en pure perte»³⁷.

A second example is the editorial introducing the aforementioned reply by de Ligt van Rossem that was clearly written by Ferrière. In all countries, he wrote, the Montessori Method was under scrutiny. Montessori had many adherents who appreciated her emphasis on the child's freedom of choice. She also had many opponents, who first and foremost criticised the Montessori material, for it was judged «trôp spécial, trôp abstrait, trôp limité, trôp loin de la vie, trôp loin surtout des intérêts naturels de ce primitif qu'est le petit enfant». In The Netherlands, he continued, the controversy had not been limited to debate but had introduced an experimental approach. In The Hague, Ferrière counted three orthodox Montessori schools, that strictly followed the guidelines they had received from «la maestra» and three experimental Montessori schools that not only applied the Montessori material but had extended the method with domestic sciences and that pursued a closer relation with nature: «plantes et animaux, ce qui est d'ailleurs conforme aux vœux de Mme Montessori, et des jeux Decroly, des livres d'images, du dessin libre qui sortent plus manifestement du cadre de la Méthode»³⁸. Stemming from a fear that the dilettantism by «amateur parents» would kill the Montessori Method, a fear Ferrière believed was legitimate, the Amsterdam section had been searching for a book that was appropriate for vulgarisation of the orthodox application of the Montessori Method. The article by de Ligt van Rossem published in *Pour l'Ere Nouvelle* contained a selection of fragments Ferrière had selected out of this book. In other words, it was Ferrière who had instigated opposition against Montessori's critics.

How could or should this support towards Montessori be understood? From Ferrière's older works we observe that he was influenced by «la femme géniale qu'est Mme Montessori», who he admired, but also that «l'homme admirable qu'est le Dr. Decroly» probably was of even greater importance to him³⁹. In his book *Transformons l'école*, published in 1920, he defended the idea that «[l]'école est faite pour l'enfant et non l'enfant pour l'école»⁴⁰. It implied that the school needed to take into account the child's development, more particularly with what he called «la loi du progress» or «la loi biogénétique» with which he referred to the recapitulation theory⁴¹. On the basis of this theory he had distinguished four stadia in the psychological development of the child that was «ready for school». Each stadium, he explained, corresponded with a particular

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

³⁸ de Ligt van Rossem, *Un témoignage hollandais*, cit., p. 113.

³⁹ A. Ferrière, *L'activité spontanée chez l'enfant*, Geneva, EDIP, 1922, p. 8.

⁴⁰ Id., *Transformons l'école. Appel aux parents et aux autorités*, Bâle, Edition du Bureau international des écoles nouvelles, 1920, which was an extended and revised version of *L'éducation nouvelle. Rapport présenté au 1^{er} Congrès international de Pédologie*, 1911. The popular slogan could also be found, for instance, in Boon, *Essai d'application de la Méthode Decroly*, cit., p. 3.

⁴¹ Ferrière, *Transformons l'école*, cit., pp. 29-33.

educational programme. The first stadium, from the age of seven to the age of nine, he had called «l'âge des intérêts immédiats»; the second stadium, from ten to twelve, he had referred to as «l'âge des intérêts spécialisés concrets» or «l'âge des monographies»; the third stadium, from thirteen to fifteen, was a stadium characterised by «des intérêts abstraits simples»; the fourth stadium, from sixteen to eighteen, was suitable for «des sujets abstraits complexes»⁴². Interesting about this scheme is that in it Ferrière had incorporated a kind of compromise he could have used to pull the sting out of the conflict between Decrolyans and Montessorians. After all, while he proposed to apply the Decroly Method during the first stadium, the Montessori Method would be appropriate to apply during «la période du jeu», the stadium between the age of four and six, i.e. the pre-school age, which corresponded more or less with the age Montessori herself initially had in mind when she developed her method.

«Mme Montessori pour les tout petits, le Dr. Decroly pour les enfants de l'âge primaire, M. Paul Geheeb [Odenwald Schule] pour les adolescents – et sans doute quelque autres pédagogues d'Europe et d'Amérique que je ne connais pas aussi bien qu'eux – ont étudié à fond les lois de la psychologie enfantine et en ont tiré les conséquences pratiques qu'elles comportent», thus Ferrière's summary⁴³. This scheme could also be labelled as «eclecticism», but one that fundamentally differed from Philippi's experimental approach, for Ferrière believed the two methods could exist next to each other as they should be applied to different age categories. Consequently, Ferrière sent out a message in which he plead for purity and harmony: «inculquer la science psychologique aux futurs éducateurs par des méthodes simples et pratiques qui leur fassent pénétrer la nature de l'enfant telle qu'est, et créer pour les écoles des programmes et des méthodes simples et précis comme ceux de Mme Montessori ou du Dr. Decroly, qui permettent à un éducateur même d'intelligence moyenne de faire... disons: le moins de mal possible à ses élèves»⁴⁴. As the prime propagandist of new education, Ferrière not only defended *all* methods, but also inclined towards a rather orthodox application of those methods, as did for instance Chochon and Boyd.

Although he showed himself an advocate of orthodoxy, Ferrière hold some reservations towards the rigidity in which the hardliners among the Decrolyans and Montessorians approached their respective methods: «[J]e suis loin d'être fanatique de tous les procédés inventés par Mme Montessori. Certains sont plus ingénieux que géniaux. Parmi les détails techniques de la méthode, un grand nombre pourront être perfectionnés. [...] Une méthode qui ne serait pas perfectible ne serait pas vivante». Notwithstanding this critique, he believed the Montessori Method was superior to many other methods: «Ces réserves faites, je ne crains pas d'affirmer que la méthode Montessori me paraît être actuellement

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 35-37, 52-55.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

la voie la plus parfaite pour faire atteindre à l'enfant ces épanouissements de son intelligence, de sa volonté, de son sentiment aussi qui sont le but de toute éducation digne de ce nom». And he explained why he thought this was the case: «Mme Maria Montessori a fait des études de médecine», which indeed also applied to Decroly, reason why he included him in his laudation on Montessori: «En cela elle a suivi la même voie que le Dr. Decroly de Bruxelles. Trouver des procédés pédagogiques capables de captiver l'esprit des enfants anormaux et de les faire progresser, adapter ces méthodes mutatis mutandis, aux enfants anormaux, telle est la voie qu'ont suivie ces pionniers de la pédagogie»⁴⁵. It shows how much their medical backgrounds granted both Montessori and Decroly authority in Ferrière's view, as was undoubtedly the case with many of their followers. We have to bear in mind, however, that Ferrière's book predated Montessori's campaign that soon would lead to the fixation of her method within orthodox circles of Montessorians.

It probably explains why Ferrière's approach of orthodoxy, and opinion on Montessori, differed substantially from the standpoint one could read a few years later in publications by Pierre Bovet and Edouard Claparède, Ferrière's colleagues at the Institut Jean-Jacques Rousseau (IJJR) in Geneva. After the IJJR had published in 1912 a shortened French edition of Montessori's *Il Metodo*⁴⁶, an edition Montessori moreover disliked and of which she refused a second edition to be published, the Genevan institute decided in 1913 to organise its own course on the Montessori Method. To Bovet, the course was explicitly about «orienter, non endoctriner»⁴⁷. The course was such a success that Bovet, at the request of parents and with the support of Claparède, decided to start a school that was, inspired by Montessori's Casa dei Bambini, named La Maison des Petits. As was the case with the Montessorians in The Hague, Bovet and Claparède were of the opinion that the Montessori Method wasn't suitable to meet all requirements of «une éducation fonctionnelle»⁴⁸. The problem with the Montessori Method was exactly the very fact that it *is* a «system», thus Claparède:

Il pivote trop autour d'un matériel d'enseignement [...] qui est appliqué dogmatiquement. Directement inspiré par l'éducation des anormaux [...] le système Montessori méconnaît trop que l'enfant normal se développe, au fond, tout seul, et que ce qu'il faut avant tout, c'est le placer dans un milieu propre à satisfaire ses intérêts, ses besoins de curiosité et de mouvement, dans un milieu qui pose autant que possible des problèmes d'action ou de pensée à sa petite intelligence. En un mot, au lieu de l'exercer constamment par des moyens artificiels, qu'on le laisse davantage jouer au gré de son imagination déjà fertile!⁴⁹

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

⁴⁶ M. Montessori, P. Bovet, Mme H. Gailloud, *Les case dei Bambini: La méthode de la pédagogie scientifique appliquée à l'éducation des tout petits*, Neuchâtel, Delachaux et Niestlé, 1912.

⁴⁷ P. Bovet, *Vingt ans de vie. L'Institut J.J. Rousseau de 1912 à 1932*, Neuchâtel/Paris, Delachaux et Niestlé, 1932, p. 49.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

⁴⁹ E. Claparède, *Psychologie de l'enfant et pédagogie expérimentale. Introduction, historique,*

And he subtly added that «Mme Montessori», *if he was right*, didn't allow the child to play freely with her «sacro-saint» material. Reason why he was convinced that the Montessori material had lost much of its educational value, the more it was not connected to any problem of life. Claparède believed this was the main difference between the Montessori material and the educative games that the teachers Miss Mina Audemars and Miss Louise Lafendel had developed at La Maison des Petits. Montessori's approach obviously was *not* child-centered, Claparède emphasised. La Maison des Petits was perceived as an «école d'application», a kind of experimental school attached to the IJJR: «Rien n'est arrêté, rien n'est figé, rien n'est orthodoxe; rien ne se donne pour la méthode définitive»⁵⁰. From this it becomes clear that Bovet and Claparède preferred Philippi's ideal of an eclectic approach over the dogmatic approach their colleague Ferrière shared with Montessori:

Un coup d'œil dans la salle et sur les murs d'emblée un éclectisme qui peut étonner. Où sommes-nous donc? Est-ce dans un musée pédagogique? Voici des jeux ou des occupations froebeliennes; pourtant ces petites chaises sont montessoriennes, et les tables, encore que perfectionnées, dérivent de Rome aussi. Mais là, ce sont des jeux Decroly. A la paroi, ce calendrier, n'est-ce pas du Nature Study anglais? Et ces images sur l'histoire de la navigation doivent bien quelque chose à Miss Dopp et à l'Ecole de Chicago? Ces enfants qui se bâtissent une vraie maison où ils pourront se tenir et jouer à la poupée, est-ce une influence de Miss Patty Hill de Teachers College?⁵¹

Not all was borrowed elsewhere, for many educational objects and games that were used in the school were developed in Geneva and fabricated at the manufactory of ASEN, that also produced Decroly's educative games⁵².

5. Discussion and conclusion

It remains difficult to determine the outcome of this controversy. With Ferrière's influence soon declining, particularly after he was forced into a more symbolic role at both the NEF and the IJJR, and with the (orthodox) Montessorians deciding to leave the NEF, one might assume that an eclectic approach prevailed over a dogmatic approach. But as we mentioned before and elsewhere, not only many Montessorians but also the Decrolyans that after the death of their idol would preserve Decroly's educational heritage at the Decroly School in Uccle, Brussels, need to be characterised primarily through their

problèmes, méthodes, développement. Onzième édition avec 44 figures, Geneva, Kundig, 1926, p. XXIX.

⁵⁰ Bovet, *Vingt ans de vie*, cit., p. 60.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² ASEN literally stands for «Au Service de l'Education Nouvelle».

fixation on an dogmatic application and likewise cultivation of that other icon, the Method they propagated⁵³.

We would like to add that in Belgium and The Netherlands the controversy between Montessorians and Decrolyans continued after the Second World War. In December 1948, a Flemish-Dutch conference was organised at which Decrolyans and Montessorians gathered to discuss both methods⁵⁴. It is striking that, again, the debate was soon narrowed down to a technical-didactic discussion in which the individual (analytic-synthetic, cfr. Montessori) was opposed to the collective/social (global, cfr. Decroly), what actually is a rather principal than a real opposition. This is even more obvious when taking into account that most discussions mainly took the Montessori Method into consideration while Decroly's educative games were not mentioned at all although applications of the Decroly Method were often limited to the use of those games. Despite of these tensions, the conference also revealed that the Dutch educational reformer Kees Boeke (1884-1966) aimed at creating a kind of *modus vivendi* between both fractions. Indeed, in the post-war years he would play a decisive role in harmonising the relations between Montessorians and Decrolyans in the Low Countries. More about that in another article in which we will focus on the post-war development of progressive education in Belgium and The Netherlands in an attempt to bridge the research in which we focused on the first half of the twentieth century, particularly on Decroly, and our research on «alternative» education in Flanders from the 1960s until the present day⁵⁵.

It is worth noting here that despite Boeke's attempts the controversy never faded away, as is demonstrated in the *Paedagogische Encyclopaedie* (1949) that the Ghent professor and Decrolyan Jozef E. Verheyen edited together with the Dutch educationist Rommert Casimir (1877-1957). When in her contribution on Montessori the Dutch Montessorian Rosalie Joosten-Chatzen claimed that the Montessori Method had made a victory tour around the world, Verheyen felt it necessary to add a footnote in which he commented that the success of Montessori in «Decroly-country Belgium» never had been very big⁵⁶. He was certainly right, but it nevertheless is important to note that in 1927 some principles of the Montessori Method were introduced in the new official curriculum for

⁵³ A. Van Gorp, F. Simon, M. Depaepe, *A rede cultural da Escola de Decroly em Bruxelas. A teoria da organização e a função de guardião da história*, «Cadernos de História da Educação», vol. 9, 2010, pp. 329-345.

⁵⁴ See «Persoon en Gemeenschap. Tijdschrift voor Opvoeding en Onderwijs», vol. 3, n. 5, 1949.

⁵⁵ T. De Coster, F. Simon, M. Depaepe, 'Alternative' education in Flanders, 1960-2000: Transformation of knowledge in a neo-liberal context, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. 45, nn. 4-5, 2009, pp. 645-671; C. Goossens, A. Van Gorp, *The myth of the Phoenix: Progressive education, migration and the shaping of the welfare-state, 1985-2015*, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. 52, n. 5, 2016, pp. 467-484.

⁵⁶ R. Casimir, J.E. Verheyen (edd.), *Paedagogische Encyclopaedie*, vol. 2, Antwerp, De Sikkell, 1949, p. 271.

nursery schools in Belgium. This happened under the impetus of Leo De Paeuw (1873-1941), the director-general of normal education who moreover was opposed to the introduction in 1936 of a new official curriculum in primary education that was inspired by the Decroly Method⁵⁷. While the Decrolyans at the Decroly school in Brussels believed that they were an avant-garde school that had to target an elite whose role and importance it was to guide the masses, and were convinced that with the 1936 curriculum the Decroly Method was indeed penetrating into public education, the optimism of the Decrolyans over a breakthrough of the Decroly Method was quickly reined in over time. Even in «Decroly-country Belgium» the Decroly Method always remained in the margins of the educational system⁵⁸.

In 1975, Arnould Clausee wrote about «les confiscations de l'école nouvelle»⁵⁹. Inspired by the concluding chapter «L'éducation, une vie, ou une préparation à la vie?» in Claparède's *L'éducation fonctionnelle*⁶⁰, he has analysed the slogan «école par la vie, pour la vie» that refers to both Decroly and Dewey. The first part «par la vie» contains means and methods while the second part «pour la vie» contains the objectives. According to Clausee however, the slogan only receives meaning when «life» is properly defined. And here it becomes unpredictable, for objectives, methods and means are flexible concepts that run the risk of being used politically-ideologically in serving undemocratic purposes. Nazi Germany is a poignant point in case, for active methods were used in service of an ideology that was the negation of everything the NEF propagated. Clausee also refers to communism, fascism and the way the Catholic schools applied the concept of the active school, as was demonstrated in Eugène Dévaud's *Pour une école active selon l'ordre chrétien* (1934), «[un] livre remarquablement lucide»⁶¹.

Since the second half of the 1920s, Montessori maintained good relations with Mussolini in order to enable the implementation of the Montessori Method as part of the radical reform that the Minister of Education Giovanni Gentile propagated⁶². Without touching on the essence of her educational principles she has tried to demonstrate how within fascist Italy her method could possibly contribute to character building. Montessori's attempt however never materialised

⁵⁷ M. Depaepe, M. De Vroede, F. Simon, *L'implantation des innovations pédagogiques. Le cas du Plan d'Etudes de 1936*, in R. Poupart (ed.), *François Bovesse et l'éducation*, Mons, Editions universitaires de Mons, 1992, p. 52.

⁵⁸ Van Gorp, Simon, Depaepe, *A rede cultural da Escola de Decroly em Bruxelas*, cit.

⁵⁹ A. Clausee, *La relativité éducationnelle. Esquisse d'une histoire et d'une philosophie de l'école*. Paris/Brussels, Fernand Nathan/Labor, 1975, pp. 42-49.

⁶⁰ E. Claparède, *L'éducation fonctionnelle*, Paris/Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1931, pp. 236-260.

⁶¹ Clausee, *La relativité éducationnelle*, cit., p. 46.

⁶² On Gentile and fascism see A. Tarquini, *Fascist Educational Policy from 1922 to 1943: A Contribution to the Current Debate on Political Religions*, «Journal of Contemporary History», vol. 50, n. 2, 2015, pp. 168-187.

and although she failed it illustrates Montessori's opportunism, mercantile spirit and ideological volatility⁶³. Such a mercantile spirit has never been attributed to Decroly, and it remains unclear whether he knew of Montessori's demarche. Taking into account his consistent ideology and his militant liberal and masonic mind as opposed to Montessori's Catholic, theosophical orientation, it can be assumed however that *if* he would have known he would not have appreciated it⁶⁴. From private correspondence we moreover know that the First World War had a great impact on Decroly⁶⁵, while it is also indicative that in November 1926 the parents' committee at the Decroly School in Brussels, in presence of Decroly himself, decided not to accept German children at the school⁶⁶. We don't know of any open conflict between both protagonists, but they certainly tried to avoid each other as much as they could.

⁶³ Leenders, *Der Fall Montessori*, cit.

⁶⁴ Decroly joined freemasonry in 1902; Hamaïde became a member of the Loge La Sagesse (Droit Humain) that was founded in 1927. Information received from the Centre d'études et de documentation maçonniques du Grand Orient de Belgique.

⁶⁵ Wagnon, *Réformer l'école*, cit., pp. 206-208.

⁶⁶ Centre d'études decrolyennes, *Procès-verbaux ASBL Ecole Decroly, 1922-1962*.

Memoria y gratitud: el reconocimiento de la docencia a través de escrituras expuestas

Juan González Ruiz
Centro de Recursos, Interpretación y
Estudios de la Escuela
Polanco (España)
muesca@gmail.com

Memory and gratitude: the recognition of teaching through writings exposed

ABSTRACT: A number of scriptures that are exhibited publicly in school zones and their immediate environments testify relations between society and institutionalized educational practice. Some respond to the desire shown by the communities to perpetuate the memory and gratitude for life, example and the professional work of teachers, both men and women, especially noted for its educational and social commitment. Several signs, tombstones and inscriptions recall the existence of such teachers, giving name to schools or urban roads, mentioning his most famous merits or alluding to significant and episodic circumstances. In some cases, their inclusion in monuments or thematic spaces makes these scriptures significant participants in authentic «places of memory», capable of providing relevant historical references. A first and concise reading provides data and information probably narrower than those that can be found in archives and libraries, but re-reading and appropriate consideration of some formal circumstances (initiative, performance, materials, location, dimensions, maintenance, among others) open hermeneutical perspectives which greatly extend the historical fruitfulness of such testimonies of collective memory. This text, part of a more extensive study of the scriptures exposed in educational environments, shows news and commentaries of some paradigmatic cases, while outlining a systematic interpretation in research both with a limited local interest and a more general and comprehensive one.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Gratitude; Recognition; Memory; Teacher; Inscriptions; Public space.

1. Fuentes epigráficas escolares y conocimiento de las escuelas: entre la memoria y la historia

El variado conjunto de inscripciones, rótulos, letreros, lápidas, carteles, advertencias, anuncios, avisos, graffiti, placas, chapas, grabados, incisiones y otros textos más o menos circunstanciales expuestos públicamente sobre las escuelas o en sus entornos encierra un alto interés para el conocimiento del presente y del pasado de la educación. Según la conocida categorización de Julio Aróstegui¹, dentro del conjunto de las fuentes históricas estas inscripciones formarían parte de las fuentes directas, intencionales (testimoniales), culturales y no seriadas. En un orden de cosas más general, es de destacar que las más antiguas fuentes documentales escritas que se conservan en el ámbito de cualquier cultura sean los textos grabados sobre soportes sólidos, firmes y duraderos; no en vano la Epigrafía tiene acreditada una amplia trayectoria científica como ciencia auxiliar de la Arqueología y de la Historia de la Antigüedad². Añadiremos algunas otras consideraciones particulares, ya que la intención del presente escrito es estudiar estas cuestiones con algún detalle partiendo de unas epigrafías concretas: aquellas a través de las cuales la sociedad muestra el reconocimiento de la labor de los docentes. En todo caso, la tarea hermenéutica que motivan es parte de lo que hemos llamado *Epigrafía Escolar*, disciplina instrumental que se inscribe en los estudios de la Cultura Escolar. En esta actividad científica los testimonios materiales del pasado de las instituciones escolares van ganando día tras día importancia como fuentes para los estudios históricos de la educación.

Vaya por delante su inserción en la dualidad, un tanto confusa, entre «patrimonio material» y «patrimonio documental». Es obvio que las epigrafías escolares, por la solidez y persistencia de sus soportes, entran legítimamente en el ámbito del primero, pero un análisis profundo de ambos conceptos y de sus connotaciones nos lleva a tropezar con dos escollos: a) el de que no se pueda excluir el carácter «documental», por su alto contenido textual, de lo que pudiéramos llamar «patrimonio material epigráfico», como más adelante tendremos ocasión de explicar; y b) el de que el conocido como «patrimonio inmaterial», aparentemente distinto del material a la vez que del documental, guarde con el primero una fuerte relación metodológica, y ambos hayan sido revalorizados en los últimos tiempos como nuevos e importantes recursos para el conocimiento histórico. Algunos rasgos definen este tipo de fuentes, tanto materiales (y en concreto las epigrafías) como inmateriales, y las distinguen del resto, es decir, de aquellas otras que gozan de un reconocimiento canónico por

¹ J. Aróstegui, *La investigación histórica: teoría y método*, Barcelona, Crítica, 1995, pp. 340-349.

² J. Andreu Pintado, *La investigación sobre fuentes epigráficas*, in M^a J. Perex Agorreta (coord.), *Métodos y Técnicas de Investigación Histórica I*, tema 11, Madrid, UNED, 2012, pp. 579-626 (en particular p. 585).

parte de la historiografía clásica académica. Entramos dentro del difícil terreno, en el que no profundizaremos, de las relaciones entre «memoria» e «historia», que se ve reducido en esta ocasión al enfrentamiento entre «patrimonio material» y «fuentes documentales». En el caso de las epigrafías escolares que nos ocupan, como en otras escrituras expuestas, confluyen el patrimonio material y el documental, puesto que por una parte se sustentan en soportes de materialidad ostentiva, y por otra contienen textos cuyo contenido trasciende su mera literalidad.

Una primera reflexión viene suscitada por la diferencia entre «lo público» y «lo privado». Las escrituras expuestas tienen la condición de «públicas», puesto que se sitúan en lugares abiertos, normalmente en vías públicas de las poblaciones, o sobre los muros exteriores de edificios igualmente públicos, docentes o no; en todo caso son de acceso libre y espontáneo, de manera que están disponibles a la contemplación desde el exterior de los ámbitos estrictamente escolares, ofreciéndose intencionadamente a la contemplación, la lectura y la reflexión de quien quiera que circula abierta y libremente en su proximidad. Por el contrario, los documentos que se custodian en archivos, análogamente a los libros de las bibliotecas o a los periódicos de las hemerotecas, por más que pertenezcan a instituciones de titularidad pública tienen un acceso más restringido, a veces reservado, al que cabe calificar de «privado»; en todo caso, no se ofrecen abierta y espontáneamente a cualquier viandante como en el caso de las epigrafías. Se trata, pues, de escrituras guardadas, frecuentemente con celo extremado al amparo de la curiosidad ajena: los documentos *sensu strictu* tienen la condición de «privados», y su opacidad al conocimiento es mayor que aquellos que hemos llamado «expuestos» o «públicos».

Esta dualidad lleva a otras, que encierran un fecundo sentido dialéctico. La primera de ellas trasciende el ámbito de las fuentes de la memoria y de la historia: la que enfrenta los conceptos de «libertad» y «seguridad», presentes en tantos órdenes de la sociedad humana. Pudiera decirse que las escrituras expuestas son más libres que aquellos documentos guardados en archivos y bibliotecas; pero también es cierto que la libertad acarrea una mayor inseguridad, por lo que estos últimos se encuentran más protegidos de los riesgos a que se ven expuestas las primeras. El mismo término «exponer», al que el Diccionario de la Real Academia Española otorga en su primera acepción el significado de «presentar algo para que sea visto», recibe también el de «poner algo o a alguien en situación de sufrir daño o perjuicio» (quinta acepción). No me resisto a aventurar una metáfora: seguridad y acceso restringido son rasgos muy característicos de la investigación histórica más tradicional, que exigiría una severa revisión ante el empleo de las fuentes que nutren la memoria histórica, menos seguras pero quizá más libres por su condición de públicas.

Otro criterio cercano es el distinto grado de permanencia en el tiempo. La dicotomía entre lo efímero y lo permanente nos lleva a señalar la condición de

persistencia de la que se supone están revestidas las epigrafías, que las distingue de las escrituras efímeras, motivadas por determinadas circunstancias temporales, la mayor parte de ellas con referencias a la cotidianidad escolar: noticias de acontecimientos, anuncios a sucesos inmediatos, avisos e indicaciones de acciones concretas tanto programadas para periodos de tiempo definidos como limitadas a fechas precisas, etc. La solidez del soporte no es lo que determina la permanencia de las escrituras expuestas, sino en primer lugar la intención de quien las escribe y expone, y en segundo las circunstancias temporales que permiten o no su conservación. A la inversa, las escrituras efímeras expuestas en tabloneros de anuncios, carteles y otros soportes exponen textos e imágenes cuya validez pasajera suele condenarlos al abandono y la destrucción, con la consiguiente pérdida de su indudable valor testimonial, a no ser que en algún momento antes de su desaparición se decida conservarlas. A este respecto, es interesante contemplar el tránsito entre lo efímero y lo permanente, que encierra una interesante significación histórica y hermenéutica. La permanencia más o menos asegurada acarrea una cierta intemporalidad, entre un presente continuado y una fosilización del pasado. En sentido contrario se estima que los documentos efímeros, a causa de sus valores testimoniales concretos, deben ser conservados, por lo que cada vez más los archivos y las colecciones hemerográficas e icónicas disponen de apartados para albergarlos, custodiarlos y ponerlos a disposición de los investigadores. Al perder su justificación temporal pasan así de efímeros a permanentes, adquiriendo seguridad pero perdiendo también parte de su carácter público. Con frecuencia se hace efectivo el oxímoron de la desaparición de las epigrafías permanentes por causas muy diversas: derribos, decisiones de motivación política o ideológica, deterioros, rehabilitaciones, remodelaciones. Cobran así importancia las fuentes que podríamos considerar vicarias o «de segunda mano»: fotografías que mantienen el reflejo de la memoria, o referencias textuales que dan cuenta de la propia intrahistoria de las epigrafías y sus soportes.

El espacio en que se sitúan las epigrafías también tiene un rasgo característico: por lo general se conservan en los lugares para los que fueron destinados en su origen, a diferencia de otros bienes documentales cuyo destino, al menos en una primera instancia, no sería los archivos tanto generalistas como específicos. El contenido y la propia naturaleza de estos últimos habrían de surtir unos efectos distintos a aquellos que pudieran esperarse siendo custodiados en recintos cerrados. Por tanto, los posibles cambios de ubicación tanto de unos como de otros añaden matices de significación y sentido no desdeñables. El hecho es que las epigrafías se hallan ligadas a los lugares en que se ubican, cuando no directamente a sus soportes más inmediatos y conspicuos. Otorgan a los centros escolares la condición de «lugares de memoria» o la refuerzan con sus contenidos textuales. Se trata de una relación semiótica que no se produce, salvo de una forma muy episódica, entre el patrimonio documental y los archivos o bibliotecas en que se custodian. La irrupción y progresivo incremento del uso

de otros receptáculos de documentos manejados por tecnologías informáticas ha diluído aún más esa tenue relación: archivos virtuales, repositorios, bases de datos y otros instrumentos similares han sido despojados de cualquier connotación significativa con sus depósitos, carentes de identidad material y espacial. En todo caso, una nueva y radical consideración de las fuentes de la memoria y de su conservación y explotación científica se hace necesaria ante la aparición de las aplicaciones textuales e icónicas de Internet. Todos los rasgos que hemos contemplado adquieren una nueva dimensión y condicionan de manera distinta su valor epistémico.

Por último, en el inventario de los rasgos de las epigráficas escolares con mayor valor hermenéutico e histórico conviene referirse a su instalación en el transcurso del tiempo, puesto que tanto las laudatorias como las estrictamente conmemorativas aluden a hechos situados en el pasado pero proyectados hacia el futuro. Las primeras por lo general a la labor desempeñada por algún docente continuadamente a lo largo de un tiempo; por el contrario, las segundas, como indica su nombre, señalan las fechas puntuales en que sucedieron los hechos que se estiman merecedores de conmemoración. Importa señalar aquí el tiempo transcurrido entre lo sucedido y su reflejo epigráfico. Muchas epigrafías conmemorativas se realizan en la inmediatez temporal de los sucesos; en otras no es así, como es el caso de los aniversarios destacados por la rotundidad de las cifras que marcan la distancia temporal con la efeméride, de mayor carga mnemónica cuanto más altas son. Este parámetro se nos va a mostrar especialmente significativo en las epigrafías laudatorias objeto de nuestro estudio.

2. *Epigrafías escolares laudatorias y memoria de los docentes*

Podemos establecer diferentes tipologías epigráficas según distintos criterios, básicamente tres: los lugares e instituciones en que se colocan, los soportes materiales sobre los que se sitúan, o los textos que contienen y las intenciones manifiestas con las que fueron escritos. Nuestro objeto de estudio se sitúa en esta última: tratamos de aquellas epigrafías a través de cuyos textos, en el sentido más amplio, se pretende honrar y mantener la memoria de algún docente en el ámbito de su ejercicio profesional.

En otro lugar he presentado otra muestra de esta manifestación de reconocimiento social a la docencia: la de los monumentos erigidos en lugares públicos en forma de estatuas, relieves y otras expresiones más o menos aparatosas³.

³ J. González Ruiz, *Para honra y memoria. Los monumentos a los maestros como fuente histórica de reconocimiento social de la labor docente*, in P. Celada Perandones (ed.), *Arte y oficio de enseñar, dos siglos de perspectiva histórica, Actas del XVI Coloquio Nacional de Historia de la*

Aunque, en todo caso, resulten más ostentosos que las simples epigrafías, sus significaciones se ven desprovistas de la relación directa con la institución a que los docentes así honrados dedicaran su vida profesional. Además de las escrituras que señalan el destinatario de estas muestras monumentales, podemos encontrar otras expresiones con sentido encomiástico: los nombres de centros escolares dedicados⁴, las inscripciones que conmemoran hechos en los que tuviera participación algún docente, los nombres de vías públicas y sus placas y rótulos informativos y otros similares. En los acervos de documentos efímeros podemos encontrar otras muestras laudatorias de personas dedicadas a la docencia: actas y resoluciones, diplomas, declaraciones, convocatorias de homenaje, comunicados, reseñas de prensa, programas de actos académicos, discursos. Tampoco están destruidos de elementos encomiásticos documentos oficiales como hojas de servicios, nombramientos o títulos administrativos. Al recoger testimonios orales de la memoria inmaterial de la escuela, muy frecuentemente nos encontramos con otras manifestaciones laudatorias de docentes del pasado. Reconocimiento y gratitud suelen estar presentes en las evocaciones de los «antiguos alumnos», mientras que los recuerdos desagradables tienden a eludirse, a olvidarse o, al menos, a mantenerse en el fondo oculto de la memoria fisiológica.

No entraremos en la consideración de ninguna de estas manifestaciones citadas, limitándonos a las que llamamos «epigrafías escolares laudatorias», o, en su conjunto «memoria expuesta laudatoria». La intencionalidad mnemónica de ésta se concreta expresamente en unos textos donde se conjugan publicidad, homenaje y recuerdo, es decir: memoria y gratitud hechas públicas y con intención de permanencia en el tiempo. En su dotación conceptual confluyen tres rasgos básicos:

- a. la materialidad del soporte,
- b. su contenido textual, y
- c. el objetivo laudatorio.

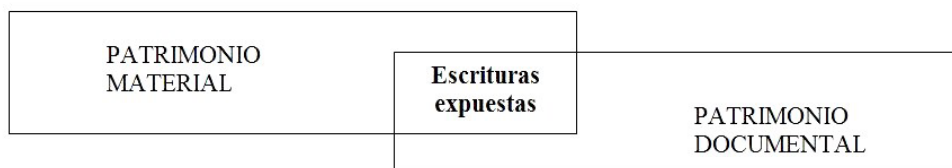
Resulta evidente que tales muestras epigráficas forman parte del patrimonio histórico educativo, puesto que testimonian hechos del acontecer escolar de un tiempo pasado, sobre el que se acumulan las referencias de su continuidad: se trata sin duda de auténticos elementos de la «memoria de la escuela», como

Educación, 2 vols., El Burgo de Osma, Sociedad Española de Historia de la Educación, Universidad de Valladolid y CEINCE, 2011, pp. 681-689.

⁴ H.M. Pérez Moreno, *La cultura escolenímica en España. Propuestas para el estudio etnohistórico de los nombres de las escuelas*, «Cabás», n. 7, <http://revista.muesca.es/documentos/cabas7/Cultura_escolenimica.pdf> (último acceso: 20 de febrero de 2017).

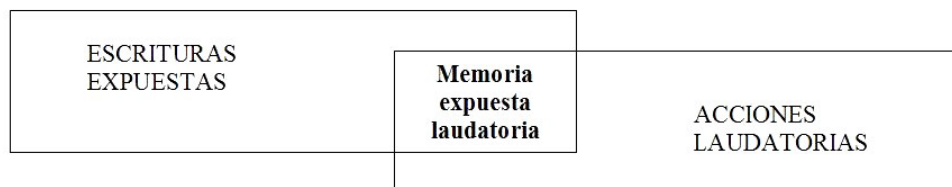
«práctica de evocación y recreación colectiva y pública de un pasado escolar». O dicho de otra manera: la memoria expuesta laudatoria en el ámbito docente forma parte del patrimonio material escolar, del patrimonio documental, y de los textos laudatorios docentes. Se trata de una forma de memoria que, como concepto, constituye una conjunción de otros tres: materialidad, documento y alabanza. Su misma naturaleza los sitúa en una posición intermedia entre los objetos y los documentos, participando del patrimonio material a la vez que del patrimonio documental (si es que esta distinción tiene algún sentido en general).

Diagram. n. 1



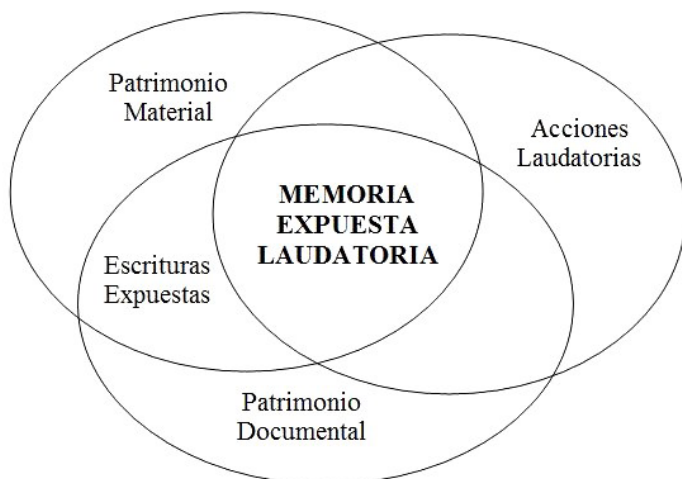
En función de los factores antes citados puede elaborarse una representación que ayude a su hermenéutica, a la vez que contribuya a la conservación y el conocimiento de la multitud de estas expresiones que se encuentran por todos los rincones del país: podríamos hablar de una Epigrafía Escolar, como disciplina emergente e instrumento auxiliar para la Historia de las instituciones escolares. Los objetos, a la vez que documentos, de los que nos ocupamos se sitúan en la confluencia entre las escrituras expuestas y las muestras de memoria y gratitud escolares. Podríamos acogerse bajo el epígrafe de «memoria expuesta laudatoria», puesto que participan tanto de su condición de escrituras expuestas como de su intención laudatoria:

Diagram n. 2



Este sencillo esquema conceptual encadenado se refleja en el siguiente diagrama conjuntivo de los tres ámbitos básicos que conforman la memoria expuesta laudatoria de la actividad docente escolar:

Diagram n. 3



Los muros y cerramientos de las escuelas exhiben rótulos, letreros, lápidas e inscripciones de muy variada factura en las que se hace memoria y se agradece la labor de algunos de los docentes que en ellas ejercieron. Similares muestras podemos encontrar en vías públicas de los entornos escolares: calles y plazas dan soporte a rótulos que les dan nombre o a placas conmemorativas o monumentos con sus propias inscripciones, dedicados tanto unos como otros a docentes destacados y recordados.

En todas ellas pueden observarse algunos caracteres que las definen, sin los cuales no bacría hablar de escrituras expuestas o epigrafías laudatorias:

- a. Reconocimiento
- b. Gratitud
- c. Publicidad
- d. Permanencia

De los monumentos estatuarios dedicados genéricamente a la profesión docente, cada vez más numerosos desde medio siglo atrás (monumentos “al maestro desconocido” podrían llamarse), solo se hará referencia a las inscripciones alusivas que puedan decorarlas. Y no serán tenidas en cuenta las estatuas de fundadores de órdenes religiosas consagradas a la enseñanza, santos o no, que adornan muchas ciudades españolas y que también dan nombre a un buen número de vías públicas, así como los de personalidades públicas que, aun habiéndose dedicado a la enseñanza en un tiempo ya lejano, en ningún caso pueda decirse que se trate de un reconocimiento directo y relativamente

inmediato de sus méritos docentes. Como ejemplos de esto último, los dedicados a Fray Luis de León en Salamanca o al calígrafo Torcuato Torío de la Riva en Villaturde (Palencia).

Los materiales de este tipo que pueden encontrarse por doquier constituyen una parte del conjunto documental de lo que llamamos patrimonio histórico escolar. Son especialmente abundantes y del mayor interés las epigrafías correspondientes a la primera mitad del siglo XX, cuando la escuela y el maestro tenían un papel protagonista en la vida cultural y social de las comunidades, especialmente las rurales de dimensión reducida. Por razones obvias, los responsables de las escrituras epigráficas, es decir quienes deciden su emisión, son distintos de las personas homenajeadas, pero muy frecuentemente quien ordena su ejecución material introduce rasgos adicionales o episódicos susceptibles de interpretación, que tienen que ver con muchos factores dignos de tenerse en cuenta relativos a la economía, la condición del ordenante, o la oportunidad del momento: en todo caso, circunstancias que ponen de relieve la participación social en estas iniciativas, tanto en sus orígenes como en sus resultados.

No son desdeñables los elementos decorativos que adornan los soportes o las propias inscripciones, que añaden notas de significación intencionada o cuando menos denotan el grado de cuidado puesto en la ejecución: recuadros, orlas, marcos arquitectónicos. Como tampoco los añadidos más o menos espúreos, anónimos y hasta clandestinos, que ensucian o alteran la apariencia prístina de las inscripciones pero que añaden sentido al relato de su trayectoria a través del tiempo: graffitti, pegatinas, tachaduras, alteraciones de diversa factura. Las ramas de roble y de laurel, como símbolos respectivos de la laboriosidad y del éxito, aparecen con frecuencia enmarcando bustos e inscripciones, así como otras formas, vegetales o geométricas, cuya posible significación se hace difícil de desentrañar. No es el caso de otros símbolos, tanto escolares como patrióticos o religiosos, más conspicuos y fácilmente reconocibles: libros, pluma, tintero, cuaderno, compás, escuadra, pizarra, globo terráqueo, mapa, bandera, escudo, amanecer, cruz...

Sin embargo, es en los textos epigrafiados y expuestos públicamente donde se encierran los mayores y más sutiles matices de sentido, y donde subyacen los subtextos no aparentes a primera lectura. Como bien nos dejó escrito un maestro pionero en estos asuntos, «quien quiera estudiar las prácticas extremas de la escritura» [debe] «ahondar en la documentación de una determinada situación escrituraria del pasado hasta tocar el fondo y medir así la profundidad»⁵. Los indicadores de estas interpretaciones hermenéuticas de textos epigrafiados, aun sin recurrir a sus derivaciones documentales, pueden ser muy diversos. El

⁵ A. Petrucci, *Scritture marginali e scriventi subalterni*, 1998, trans. *Escrituras marginales y escribientes subalternos*, «Signo, Revista de Historia de la Cultura Escrita», vol. 7, 2000, pp. 67-75 (en particular p. 72).

léxico utilizado se muestra especialmente significativo en el uso de adjetivos y adverbios de modo; la estructura sintáctica, lo mismo que la ortografía, denotan el nivel cultural de los erectores, o al menos su dominio de la lengua. El lenguaje rebuscado de algunas epigrafías, que hace pensar en alguna suerte de oficialidad, contrasta con la espontánea emotividad de otras, en las que la naturalidad del momento en que fueron hechas o la rusticidad de quienes las realizaron conduce a la omisión de algunos datos esenciales para su completa y correcta lectura futura: fechas, lugares, nombres, motivaciones. En la terminología de Armando Petrucci, sería el tributo a pagar por «las escrituras marginales y los escribientes subalternos». O, como puso de manifiesto el recientemente fallecido Michel-Rolph Trouillot, «any historical narrative is a bundle of silences»⁶.

Ha de tenerse en cuenta también la confianza que pueda suscitar el contenido de los textos. En las voluntades laudatorias inciden justificaciones objetivas junto con intereses muy diversos que, por lo general, pueden inferirse de los indicadores formales antes citados. Con frecuencia surge la duda de si los verdaderos beneficiarios de la laudatio son los homenajeados o más bien los homenajeadores.

Ello nos conduce a la toma en consideración del rasgo al que se aludió anteriormente: la doble manifestación mnemónica de las epigrafías laudatorias como balance entre el pasado y el futuro, como una doble mirada desde puentes de vista inversos, como una memoria de ida y vuelta. Una epigrafía en la que se conmemora la vida pasada de un docente, aunque solo sea con ocasión de su jubilación, constituye un ejercicio de memoria; pero también una propuesta para mantener en un futuro sin plazo fijado su recuerdo, con su añadido de reconocimiento y gratitud.

3. *Metodologías alternativas: indicios y conjeturas*

Se ha echado de ver hasta este punto que el estudio de las epigrafías escolares con fines históricos requiere unos planteamientos metodológicos, si no propios, distintos de aquellos empleados en los que se parte de fuentes documentales canónicas. Hablamos de Hermenéutica y hablamos de Historia, pero el canon metodológico más riguroso de estas disciplinas, especialmente la última de las citadas, difícilmente se compadece con el empleo de fuentes tan poco sistemáticas como las epigrafías escolares, de autorías escasamente fiables, de génesis tan mediatizadas, y que proporcionan informaciones aparentemente anecdóticas y

⁶ M.R. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1995, p. 27.

superficiales. Sin embargo, por más que se corra el riesgo de ser descalificados desde posiciones puristas, no debe asustarnos recurrir a metodologías alternativas cuya utilización viene siendo frecuente tanto en la vida diaria como en amplios sectores de la investigación en ciencias humanas sin que por ello hayan perdido su carácter científico; antes al contrario, han logrado de esta manera ampliar notablemente su ámbito de trabajo y su capacidad para generar conocimiento. La ausencia de propuestas relativamente definidas en este sentido nos incita a presentar algún ensayo, a modo de conjetura metodológica, partiendo de un doble principio: a) el modo de acceso habitual a estas fuentes materiales, y b) las sugerencias procedentes de otros campos del conocimiento.

En primer lugar habremos de constatar la pregnancia pública de que dan muestra las epigrafías, en su condición de escrituras expuestas a la libre contemplación. Es algo que las distingue sustancialmente de los documentos custodiados, según hemos visto anteriormente. Quien circula por las vías públicas normalmente lo hace sin una intención expresa de encontrarlas. Si lee su contenido cuando se tropieza con ellas, y mucho más si inquiera algo más sobre lo que se quiso expresar cuando se instalaron y se redactaron sus textos, es como consecuencia de una actitud prístina que se convierte así en el elemento genesiaco del proceso de conocimiento: la curiosidad. Y quien curiosear acaba haciéndose preguntas: a sí mismo, a aquello que inicialmente tiene delante y le provoca curiosidad, o, en última instancia, a otras fuentes y recursos que amplíen su conocimiento y le den sentido. Desde su primaria materialidad tanto las epigrafías permanentes como las escrituras efímeras invitan al curioso, al pedagogo y al historiador a hacerse preguntas, a hacer preguntas; lo cual, repitémoslo, está en el origen del conocimiento y la sabiduría.

La pregunta como origen del conocimiento, derivada de la ignorancia o de la simple duda, fundamenta, desde Descartes, toda una concepción epistemológica, que ha tenido otros desarrollos más pragmáticos en las metodologías de diversos campos científicos. El oximoron de la ignorancia racional se encierra en el método heurístico que el matemático y lógico David Harrah ha llamado Teoría de las preguntas, de corte claramente cartesiano, que puede sernos de utilidad. Nos llevaría en primer lugar a la pregunta sobre la existencia misma de las epigrafías, y de ahí a otras cuyas respuestas generan a su vez nuevas cuestiones, para ir construyendo simultáneamente un conocimiento cuya dinámica crea una relación entre quien pregunta y quien responde, entre el ignorar y el conocer: el proceso de comunicación científica en definitiva⁷. Un desarrollo posterior dentro del campo de la historia lo encontramos en la categorización que hace Topolsky, según el cual las primeras preguntas serían meramente «factográficas», y a ellas habrían de seguir otras llamadas

⁷ D. Harrah, *Communication, a Logical Model*, Cambridge (Massachusetts), MIT Press, 1963, p. 25.

«explicativas, o preguntas de búsqueda⁸». Además de las informaciones que las epigrafías proporcionan en las respuestas que puedan obtenerse de unas primeras preguntas factográficas, quizá condicionadas en el espacio y en el tiempo, todas ellas ofrecen tras unas posteriores preguntas de búsqueda segundas lecturas e interpretaciones de fondo: un caudal siempre importante y a veces insustituible de datos sobre la historia y la naturaleza de las escuelas, sobre su presente, sobre su pasado e incluso sobre sus expectativas de futuro. En nuestro caso, sobre la vida ejercicio profesional de los docentes que aparecen en las epigrafías escolares laudatorias, a veces espartanamente escuetas en su significado manifiesto, pero mucho más ricas en su sentido oculto.

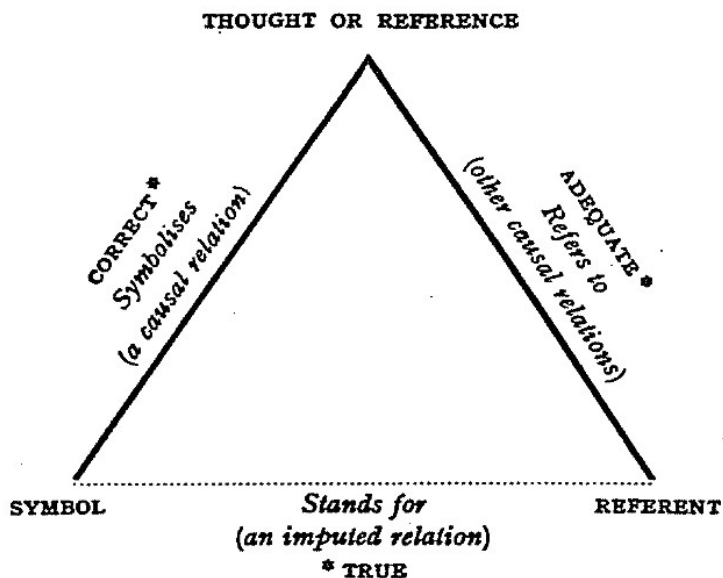
Se nos muestra aquí la diferencia entre «significado» y «sentido», según la ya clásica distinción conceptual de Ogden y Richards⁹, de tan fecundo interés filosófico y metodológico, o entre «texto» y «subtexto», quizá de mayor utilidad en nuestro ámbito de estudio. El significado del texto es «lo que en él se dice»; y su sentido «lo que se quiere decir» y se encuentra un tanto oculto en lo que hemos llamado subtexto, además de diluido en una amplia vaguedad de circunstancias contextuales. Ocurre además que las informaciones explícitas que se leen en los textos quizá no añadan nada nuevo a lo ya sabido por la generalidad de las gentes que conocieran al homanajeado, si bien cuanto mayor es el tiempo transcurrido desde los hechos que se recuerdan mayor es el valor informativo del texto epigrafiado y más rica la interpretación que se extraiga del sentido del mismo, cuyo desvelamiento, en todo caso, requiere de otros planteamientos metodológicos más allá de la simple lectura. A las epigrafías de cualquier tipo como formas de expresión a través de lenguajes con caracteres propios, lo mismo que a la Historia como conjunto de elaboraciones teóricas (ideas y palabras) a partir de productos lingüísticos, les atañen sin duda las teorías elaboradas en el campo de la Filosofía del Lenguaje, de las que la citada no es sino una muestra y sobre las que no vamos a extendernos. No está de más, sin embargo, traer aquí el llamado «triángulo semiótico», esquema con que ilustran su modelo los citados estudiosos de la Semiología¹⁰:

⁸ J. Topolsky, *Metodologia Historii*, Warszawa, 1973, trans. *Metodología de la Historia*, Madrid, Ediciones Cátedra, 1982, p. 282.

⁹ C.K. Ogden, I.A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*, New York, 1923, second ed. New York, Harper, Brace & Cy, 1927.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Diagram. n. 4



Esta primera propuesta metodológica resulta muy pertinente si, a modo de ejemplo, consideramos las respuestas a la pregunta de «para quién»: ¿A quién o quiénes se dirige el texto epigráfico que se expone a nuestra lectura en el momento presente? ¿Quién o quiénes figuraban en la intención de sus autores en el pasado como posibles lectores en el futuro? No es detalle baladí la más que probable discrepancia entre las respuestas a estas dos preguntas aparentemente similares; antes al contrario, encierra un significado histórico de interés, puesto que el paso del tiempo puede originar cambios sustanciales tanto en la forma como en el resultado de la recepción de los mensajes epigráficos. La voluntad de duración, el destino intencionado de estas escrituras para lecturas futuras y para la pervivencia histórica del presente añade un plus de significación a los textos de las escrituras expuestas. Podríamos aplicar a estas epigrafías lo que Alberto Manguel ha escrito a propósito de un contexto más amplio: «No hay monumento ni obra conmemorativa que no lleve tácitamente la inscripción: «recuerda y reflexiona»¹¹.

Algunos otros paradigmas metodológicos bien conocidos proceden de campos muy distantes de la Historia: tan distantes como que se inscriben en los polos de esa dicotomía clásica de nuestra cultura occidental, que atribuye a las Humanidades, la Historia entre ellas, un carácter más subjetivo que a las Ciencias físico-naturales, de las que se reclama una mayor objetividad.

¹¹ A. Manguel, *Leer imágenes*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 2002, p. 299.

Conviene, no obstante, tenerlos en cuenta en nuestro empeño, aunque aquí no hagamos sino poco más que enunciar muy someramente tres de ellos, los que mejor conciernen a nuestro asunto.

Me estoy refiriendo a lo que el matemático húngaro George Polya (1887-1985) ha desarrollado a partir del concepto de *Razonamiento Plausible*, procedimiento heurístico general para resolver problemas, en el que la elaboración y contraste de conjeturas basadas en datos supuestamente irrelevantes se convierte en el elemento primero, y uno de los más fecundos, del pensamiento matemático y, por extensión, de otras muchas áreas del conocimiento humano. Su teoría nos debe llevar a pensar (a conjeturar) que, por irrelevantes que nos parezcan ciertas epigrafías escolares, nos pueden ser muy útiles para comprender la realidad educativa en que fueron realizadas¹².

O a la teoría que el filósofo y físico austriaco Karl Rainer Popper (1902-1994) elaboró en los años sesenta del pasado siglo a partir del principio que llamó *Criterio de Falsabilidad*, cuyo original en inglés, *falsifiability*, resulta mucho más expresivo que su traducción española¹³. De nuevo el punto de partida son indicios ofrecidos por la investigación, intuitivos desde otras instancias empíricas o meramente inventados, sobre los que se construyen hipótesis teóricas a modo de conjeturas, de predicción más o menos arriesgada, cuyo carácter científico viene dado por la posibilidad de ser refutadas por nuevos datos empíricos. La expresión del lenguaje corriente «poner a prueba» aplicada a las teorías científicas adquiere así un genuino e insólito valor metodológico. Que una interpretación hecha a partir de los indicios evidenciados en epigrafías aparentemente banales pueda parecer inicialmente extraña y aun descabellada, no la priva de ser tenida en cuenta mientras pueda seguir siendo sometida a prueba y no sea refutada por otras evidencias en su contra.

Y, quizá de una forma más propia, al llamado *Paradigma Indiciario*¹⁴, modelo de investigación cuyos orígenes se remontan a los inicios del pensamiento occidental, y que ha sido aplicado de manera informal a campos tan diversos como la investigación criminal, los procesos judiciales, la medicina, la historia, la literatura, la psiquiatría, la arquitectura y otros no necesariamente científicos.

¹² G. Polya, *Mathematics and Plausible Reasoning*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1954.

¹³ K.R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, London, Hutchinson & Co, 1959. Y también *Conjectures and Refutations. The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.

¹⁴ C. Ginzburg, *Señales. Raíces de un Paradigma Indiciario*, in A. Gilly et al., *Discusión sobre la Historia*, Madrid, Taurus, 1995, pp. 75-128.

Escasamente formalizado, se basa también en el empleo de conjeturas con altas dosis de intuición a partir de detalles empíricos aparentemente poco significativos: *indicios*. Procedimientos epistemológicos asimilables a este modelo han sido descritos con notable y atractiva brillantez por el historiador italiano Carlo Ginzburg (1939) en diversos textos¹⁵, y han dado lugar a una corriente hermenéutica conocida como «microhistoria».

Resumiendo lo anterior, hemos visto hasta ahora cómo las dos primeras referencias metodológicas propuestas proceden de las Matemáticas y la Física, campos científicos distintos al de la Historia de la Educación y al de las Humanidades en su sentido más elemental. Y también cómo la Filosofía y algunos de sus componentes más conspicuos, la Lógica y la Epistemología, nos ofrecen puntos de vista y sugerencias valiosas para el trabajo dialéctico de interpretación histórica de las epigrafías escolares a base de preguntas y respuestas.

El estudio de lo que hemos llamado Epigrafía Escolar Laudatoria, como también el resto de proyectos de investigación en el ámbito del Patrimonio Histórico-Educativo, requiere, pues, de instrumentos distintos a los clásicos de la investigación histórica. A modo de aproximación, todos estos paradigmas metodológicos que acabamos de señalar tienen en común el punto de partida: los indicios empíricos. Y el hilo conductor del proceso investigador y creador: las conjeturas razonables y plausibles, en las que puede jugar un papel importante cierta dosis de fantasía e imaginación. En definitiva, el saber como aventura que nos lleve, ante una escritura expuesta laudatoria, a trascender lo que en ella podamos leer hasta alcanzar a conocer, o al menos suponer plausiblemente, qué es lo que pudo pasar para que esté allí y qué méritos que la justifique pudo atesorar el maestro objeto de tal expresión pública de honra y de memoria.

En el siguiente cuadro se muestran las referencias de las propuestas metodológicas aquí tratadas.

¹⁵ C. Ginzburg, Carlo, *Mitos, emblemas e indicios: morfología e historia*, Barcelona, Gedisa, 1989, pp. 138-175.

Diagram. n. 5

Instrumentos METODOLÓGICOS para el estudio de la EPIGRAFÍA ESCOLAR LAUDATORIA	
Teoría de las preguntas	(Harra 1963)
Preguntas factográficas Preguntas explicativas ¿Para quién o quienes? ¿Para cuándo? ¿Es auténtica la autoría? ¿Es fiable el contenido?	(Topolsky 1982)
Razonamiento plausible	(Polya 1954)
Teoría de la falsabilidad	(Popper 1959 y 1963)
Paradigma indiciario	(Ginzburg 1989)
El saber como aventura: indicios empíricos + conjeturas plausibles	

En un orden más concreto y material, el reclamo metodológico de planteamientos alternativos para el estudio de las epigrafías escolares puede extenderse a modelos empíricos procedentes de disciplinas aplicadas que guardan distintos grados de afinidad con las histórico-pedagógicas. La investigación sobre la historia de la cultura escolar es subsidiaria en gran medida de los instrumentos para el trabajo de campo en los ámbitos de la Etnología y del Periodismo. Por una parte, muchos Museos Escolares se relacionan con, o forman parte de Museos Etnográficos. Por otra, el componente narrativo inserto en la difusión de los estudios que parten de las diversas expresiones de la memoria escolar toma modelo de la práctica habitual que recibe el nombre de «periodismo de investigación», de más fácil recepción por parte de la población extraacadémica. Así pues, resulta legítimo y se muestra altamente eficiente aprovechar estrategias y tácticas sobradamente acreditadas en el ámbito del Periodismo, que construye sus conocimientos a partir de fuentes tanto canónicas como extraídas de la cotidianidad, y que los difunde por medio de las más avanzadas tecnologías de la comunicación. No es casual que ambas disciplinas coincidan con frecuencia¹⁶,

¹⁶ J. González Ruiz, *La memoria oral en la vida del docente como recurso didáctico en la*

ni que una derivada literaria como la llamada novela histórica, con sus añadidos de documentación, de memoria real y de ficción, haya adquirido últimamente tan gran predicamento.

La confirmación académica de esta línea de investigaciones puede datarse en España a partir del XII Coloquio de Historia de la Educación, cita congresual bianual de la *Sociedad Española de Historia de la Educación* (SEDHE), celebrado en Burgos en mayo de 2003 bajo el muy significativo título de *Etnohistoria de la Escuela*¹⁷. En este encuentro se certificó el acta fundacional de la *Sociedad Española para el Estudio del Patrimonio Histórico Educativo* (SEPHE). Sus Jornadas Científicas, al igual que otros eventos científicos de participación académica, se han venido dedicando más específicamente desde entonces a asuntos fronterizos entre la Etnología y la Historia de la Educación, frecuentemente con tratamientos cercanos al periodismo de investigación y de divulgación.

4. *En el camino de la conservación: catalogando la memoria epigráfica*

Una pregunta resulta clave en todas las iniciativas relacionadas con el patrimonio cultural, tanto las que tienen por objeto su conservación como aquellas otras dirigidas a su investigación: ¿cómo mantener los bienes patrimoniales susceptibles de ser utilizados como fuentes documentales? En nuestro caso: ¿cómo conservar las epigrafías escolares para que nos sirvan de recurso histórico y pedagógico?

Insistamos en que, al igual que sus soportes los edificios escolares, se trata bienes de un patrimonio inmueble no susceptibles de ser alojados en receptáculos ad hoc o en otros de más amplio espectro. Están donde están, cabría decir que «donde tienen que estar», y su propia ubicación es ya un elemento con significación propia. La desubicación de los bienes muebles para su traslado, las más de las veces traumático, a museos o lugares al amparo de los riesgos de la exposición pública plantea en los últimos tiempos un profundo y amplio debate en que tercián criterios políticos e identitarios. Aparentemente, no es el caso de los edificios escolares y tampoco debería serlo el de las epigrafías a las que dan soporte, pero hay que lamentar con frecuencia, ante la desaparición de unos y otras, que previamente no hubieran sido puestas a buen recaudo en algún museo o institución que garantizara su supervivencia al menos las últimas, de más fácil traslado.

historia de la escuela, «Revista de Ciencias de la Educación», nn. 231-232, 2012, pp. 325-336. Se alude a la emisora local de una pequeña comunidad rural en la comarca de Las Merindades, Radio Valdivielso, en cuya programación confluyen periodismo, etnografía y memoria viva de las escuelas del Valle de Valdivielso (Burgos), p. 234.

¹⁷ R. Calvo de León *et al.* (coords.), *Etnohistoria de la Escuela*, Burgos, Universidad de Burgos, 2013.

Se impone, pues, una medida cautelar que conserve siquiera lo más significativo de las epigrafías: su texto primario y los elementos secundarios que permiten las segundas lecturas hermenéuticas. La imagen fotográfica permite esta conservación, además de ser muy fácil de obtener y de digitalizar, lo cual favorece su almacenamiento, su acceso y su empleo en publicaciones y otras formas de difusión: las fotografías pueden así asegurar, aun de forma vicaria, la permanencia de las epigrafías. Pero para que cumplan sus objetivos con mayor eficiencia se hace necesaria la elaboración de catálogos que, además de permitir una conservación de los rasgos significativos de las epigrafías, posibiliten la existencia de un corpus documental y material susceptible de generar conocimiento histórico-educativo. Se limitaría así, además, el grave inconveniente de su dispersión original.

Para conseguir una utilidad más allá de los estudios meramente locales sería necesario establecer como punto de partida unos criterios básicos y unos instrumentos elementales de trabajo con los que elaborar los distintos archivos epigráficos. Estamos proponiendo algo similar a lo que la Epigrafía significa en el ámbito de la Historia de la Antigüedad, para dar lugar a un banco de datos al estilo de *Hesperia*¹⁸. Sin avanzar en los detalles técnicos para la construcción de tales instrumentos, indicaremos aquí las condiciones que debieran cumplir y los componentes básicos que habrían de componerlos. Cualquiera que fuera su amplitud geográfica, deberían ajustarse a los criterios de homogeneización y comprensión que permitieran:

- a. su conversión digital a partir de las imágenes fotográficas digitalizadas,
- b. su acceso a través de red por medio de bases de datos o similares,
- c. su revisión para recoger los sucesos que afecten a su existencia o a su configuración, y
- d. su indexación en el seno de otros fondos documentales de mayor extensión y alcance.

El componente básico de tales archivos ha de ser una «ficha epigráfica» que contenga todos los datos significativos (o «campos», en el lenguaje de las bases de datos informáticas) de cada uno de los registros del catálogo. No es el caso de proponer un modelo de tal ficha, pero sí podemos ensayar la relación de campos que, a nuestro juicio, debería contener. Destaca en ella la importancia que, como en cualesquiera catálogos de museos o bibliotecas, cobra la «signatura», compuesta a partir de un código preciso que cifre los principales campos susceptibles de generar búsquedas y relaciones. Se observará que no se deja sitio para las interpretaciones o segundas lecturas posibles a partir de los datos más conspicuos de una lectura inicial, siendo así que a esta función hermenéutica se le ha concedido una importancia notable; y es que lo que aquí se está ofreciendo no

¹⁸ E. Orduña *et al.*, *El banco de datos "Hesperia"*, in F. Beltrán *et al.* (edd.), *Acta Palaeohispanica X Actas del X Coloquio sobre Lenguas y Culturas Paleohispánicas*, Zaragoza, Institución Fernando el Católico, 2009, pp. 83-92, <<http://ifc.dpz.es/recursos/publicaciones/29/54/08ordunaetal.pdf>>, (último acceso: 20 de febrero de 2017).

es sino la materia prima con la que cada investigador, estudioso o simple curioso pueda sacar las consecuencias que se le ocurran.

A partir de este elemental esbozo, el diseño final de una ficha epigráfica y de la codificación para las firmas habrían de ser objeto de un acuerdo corporativo tras un trabajo técnico multidisciplinar de estudiosos procedentes de distintas instituciones y universidades.

Diagram. n. 6

FICHA EPIGRÁFICA EN EL ÁMBITO ESCOLAR Y EDUCATIVO	
<i>Campo</i>	<i>Descripción</i>
Número de Registro	Propio de cada archivo o catálogo, a tenor de las entradas en el mismo.
Signatura	Según una codificación que integre los campos que permitan el acceso y la búsqueda.
Localidad	Con la identificación más precisa: provincia y nación.
Lugar	Dirección en la localidad y, en su caso, centro escolar en que se ubique.
Imagen	Digitalizada.
Autoría y procedencia	Con las cautelas que protejan los derechos de autor.
Tipología	Monumento exento, lápida sobre muro al exterior, al interior ...
Motivo de dedicación	Fundación, inauguración, efeméride ... (uno de ellos sería el homenaje a docentes)
Texto epigrafiado	Reproducción literal, con ortografía corregida.
Fecha de la dedicación	En años. La expresada en el texto, la obtenida por otros medios o la aproximada (con la «c» tras la fecha)
Estado de conservación	Con las alteraciones sufridas: cambios de lugar, deterioros, desaparición.
Fecha de la imagen	La de la toma fotográfica que se expone.
Observaciones	Todas aquellas de carácter descriptivo o narrativo que aporten datos objetivos no contenidos en los restantes campos.
Fecha de la última revisión	La de la última observación o modificación de otro campo (especialmente el del estado de conservación)

La ficha está pensada para que pueda aplicarse a toda clase de epigrafías escolares, pero se ha procurado que los ejemplares del pequeño muestrario que se ofrece a continuación sean representativos de la riqueza y variedad de muestras epigráficas escolares laudatorias dispersas por diferentes puntos de la geografía española, instaladas en distintas fechas; en algunos casos confrontando en una misma ficha doble pares de epigrafías con nexos comunes. Muchas de ellas siguen en sus lugares originarios; otras han cambiado de emplazamiento, y algunas, por desgracia, han desaparecido ya y es posible que sus fotografías sean el único testimonio que reste de ellas. Todas han sido obtenidas por el autor, por lo que se eluden los campos de numeración de registro, signatura y autoría. Inevitablemente, la traducción a otros idiomas del texto que contienen encierra el riesgo de pérdida de los sentidos ocultos que se vislumbran en detalles léxicos o gramaticales.

5. *A modo de reducido muestrario*



Localidad: OLIVENZA (provincia de Badajoz, Extremadura)

Lugar: Calle de Francisco López Ortiz.

Tipología: Panel de azulejos.

Texto epigrafiado:

Aquí murió D. Francisco Ortiz López, distinguido maestro que desempeñó la escuela superior de niños de esta localidad durante 45 años. El pueblo agradecido a los eminentes servicios que prestó a la enseñanza le dedica este recuerdo.

Fecha de la dedicatoria: (no figura)

Estado de conservación: Muy bueno.

Fecha de la imagen: 2013.

Fecha de la última revisión: 2015.

Pic. 1



Pic. 2

Localidad: VINARAZ (provincia de Castellón, Comunidad Valenciana)

Lugar: Grupo Escolar *San Sebastián*, actual Centro de Educación de Personas Adultas.

Tipología: Lápida de mármol sobre muro exterior, con epigrafía incisa pintada.

Texto epigrafiado:

A D. Antonio Segura Queralt

1870 1905

Homenaje que la ciudad de Vinaraz ofrenda a la memoria del meritisimo pedagogo, honra del magisterio español, que supo convertir del deber en un culto y la enseñanza en un sacerdocio.

Fecha de la dedicatoria: 1920

Estado de conservación: Muy bueno.

Fecha de la imagen: 2015

Observaciones: Inicialmente instalada sobre el muro exterior de la antigua escuela donde ejerció, en un exconvento del centro de la localidad. Trasladada en 1929 al recién construido Grupo Escolar San Sebastián. Incluye un busto en relieve adornado de una guirnalda de hojas de laurel.

Fecha de la última revisión: 2015.



Pic. 3

Localidad: SAN FERNANDO (provincia de Cádiz, Andalucía)

Lugar: Calle Real, nº 127, sobre la fachada del colegio La Salle *El Carmen*.

Tipología: Lápida de mármol con epigrafía incisa pintada.

Texto epigrafiado: ¡¡Gloria al sabio matemático D. José de la Vega Martínez, cuyos méritos y virtudes son sobradamente conocidos en esta ciudad!! El Excmo e Ilmo Ayuntamiento de San Fernando.

9 de julio de 1927.

Fecha de la dedicatoria: 1927.

Estado de conservación: Muy bueno.

Fecha de la imagen: 2014.

Observaciones: Conservada en su lugar originario.

Fecha de la última revisión: 2015.



Pic. 4

Localidad: GERONA (Cataluña)

Lugar: Granvía Jaume I, sobre la fachada de la Escola Pública Joan Bruguera.

Tipología: Lápida de mármol con epigrafía en relieve.

Texto epigrafiado:

Gerona al eminente maestro D. José Dalmau Carles por su labor desde 1886 a 1927.

XV mayo MCMXXVII

Fecha de la dedicatoria: 1927.

Estado de conservación: Muy bueno.

Fecha de la imagen: 2014.

Observaciones: En su lugar originario. Una pequeña pegatina adosada con el texto *En catalá si us plau*.

Fecha de la última revisión: 2014.



Pic. 5

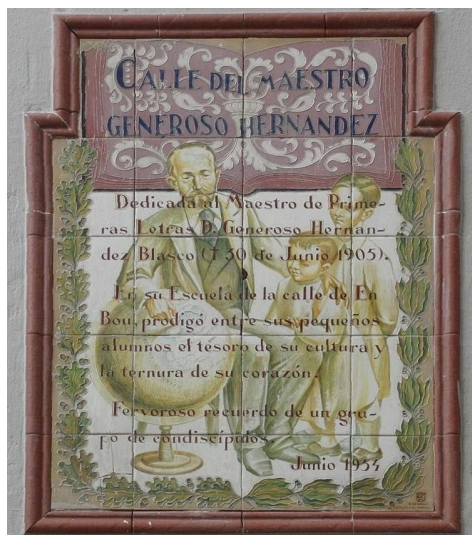
Localidad: VALENCIA

Lugares: Sobre el muro de una casa de la calle En Bou ocupada tiempo atrás por una escuela, y en la cercana calle del Maestro Generoso Hernández.

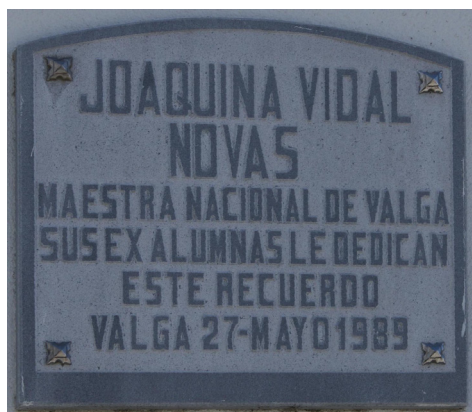
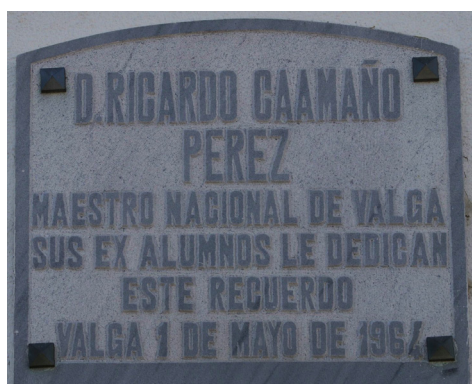
Tipologías: Lápida de mármol con epigrafía en relieve, y panel de azulejos.

Textos epigrafiados:

En esta casa funcionó una escuela de primeras letras cuyo maestro D. GENEROSO HERNÁNDEZ BLASCO tiernamente ayudado por su amada esposa D. ANTONIA BUENROSTRO hacía interesante y amena la instrucción de sus alumnos. Para conmemorar la bondad y sabiduría de aquel hombre digno, un grupo de discípulos le ofrenda este cariñoso homenaje. Valencia, 30 junio 1946 (†30 junio 1905).



Pic. 6



Pics. 7 and 8

CALLE DEL MAESTRO GENEROSO HERNÁNDEZ.

Dedicada al Maestro de primeras letras D. Generoso Hernández Blasco († el 30 de junio de 1905).

En su escuela de la calle de En Bou prodigó entre sus pequeños alumnos el tesoro de su cultura y la ternura de su corazón.

Fervoroso recuerdo de un grupo de condiscípulos. Junio 1954

Fechas de las dedicatorias: 1946 y 1954.

Estado de conservación: Bueno con riesgo de desprendimientos en la segunda.

Fechas de las imágenes: 1978.

Observaciones: En sus lugares originarios.

En la parte superior de la primera, relieve obra del escultor Salvador Aranda sobre dibujo de Vicente Ballester Marco.

En la segunda, supuesto retrato del maestro recordado.

Es de destacar el dilatado mantenimiento de la memoria.

Fecha de la última revisión: 2015.

Localidad: VALGA (provincia de Pontevedra, Galicia)

Lugar: Plaza de Manuel Vicente Cousiño.

Tipología: Lápidas de mármol con epigrafías en relieve, adosadas al muro exterior de las antiguas escuelas.

Textos epigrafiados:

D. Ricardo Caamaño Pérez

Maestro Nacional de Valga

Sus ex alumnos le dedican este recuerdo

Valga 1 de mayo de 1964

Joaquina Vidal Novas

Maestra Nacional de Valga

Sus ex alumnas le dedican este recuerdo

Valga 27-mayo 1989

Fechas de las dedicatorias: 1964 y 1989.

Estado de conservación: Bueno hasta su reciente desaparición. En la fecha de la imagen el Concello de Valga anunciaba la transformación de las escuelas en un “Edificio Usos Administrativos”. En 2013 las escuelas habían sido derribadas, el edificio anunciado no estaba construido y las lápidas habían desaparecido.

Fecha de la imagen: 2009.

Observaciones: Aunque hay una diferencia notable en las fechas de sus respectivas implantaciones, ambas lápidas mantienen idénticos rasgos formales.

Fecha de la última revisión: 2013.

6. *Epílogo provisional: trascendiendo anécdotas*

Estamos lejos de disponer de inventarios epigráficos de áreas geográfica concretas, y mucho menos de archivos relativamente completos y accesibles. Pero el acervo de que disponemos en el ámbito de España, del cual se ha traído aquí una ínfima muestra, nos ofrece indicios para formular conjeturas de interés, algunas de ellas adelantadas ya en apartados anteriores.

La principal es cautelar: el carácter vicario y accidental de las epigrafías escolares laudatorias para el conocimiento histórico de la educación introduce un sesgo importante y difícilmente salvable metodológicamente. Hay que suponer que ni todas las trayectorias docentes han sido tan positivas, ni la valoración social mayoritaria tan benevolente como se nos quiere hacer ver en ellas. Y, desde luego, en ningún caso podríamos encontrarnos con juicios negativos acerca de la labor de algún docente, cuyo recuerdo viniera a ser expresado a través de textos epigrafiados.

Es así que hemos de ponernos en guardia frente a los riesgos, que se nos presentan con frecuencia, de la nostalgia y la idealización de todas las muestras de la memoria de la escuela del pasado¹⁹, aunque en nuestro caso el tono benevolente sea algo inserto en la propia naturaleza de las epigrafías laudatorias. Se trata de una muestra de la bipolaridad con que juega la memoria recuperada: recurriendo a un conocido modelo estadístico, diríamos que los componentes de la realidad escolar y educativa del pasado se ajustan a una distribución normal, en cuyos extremos opuestos se sitúan los que son objeto de la memoria en todas sus formas: los más, amables o expresados benevolentemente; pero también otros radicalmente desagradables y difícilmente expresados a través de referencias personalizadas. Obviamente, de los primeros (aunque no de todos) podemos encontrar reflejos en epigrafías públicas, pero no así de los segundos.

Además de ser cuantitativamente poco representativo, el valor hermenéutico de nuestras epigrafías se ve condicionado cualitativamente, junto con este sesgo bipolar, por otros tres rasgos de consideración:

- a. Su particular referencia a las personas recordadas, de las que se quiere destacar precisamente su singularidad.
- b. El ámbito geográfico local en que tuviera lugar lo recordado.
- c. Su carácter episódico, del que difícilmente pueden extraerse conclusiones generales válidas en un ámbito global.

¹⁹ J. Meda, *La escuela del pasado y su conmemoración en los museos de la escuela italianos: tendencias y perspectivas*, in A.M. Badanelli *et al.* (coords.), *Pedagogía museística: prácticas, usos didácticos e investigación del patrimonio educativo. Actas de las VI Jornadas Científicas de la Sociedad Española para el Estudio del Patrimonio Histórico Educativo (SEPHE)*, Madrid, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2014, pp. 509-521.

d. Los rasgos materiales y formales que acompañan a los textos en su escueta literalidad (posición, materiales, decoración), que añaden interesantes referencias interpretativas.

La mayoría de ellas se erigieron en el primer tercio del siglo XX coincidiendo con diversos esfuerzos realizados por modernizar y revalorizar las instituciones educativas. En esta época es menor el tiempo transcurrido entre lo recordado y el recuerdo, y son más exultantes el léxico estrictamente laudatorio y la sintaxis empleada; en uno y en otro puede percibirse claramente la diferencia entre iniciativas cultas y elaboradas por una parte, y populares y más espontáneas por otra. En la segunda mitad de la centuria las valoraciones públicas de los docentes en forma de testimonios materiales se despersonalizan y se orientan a la erección de monumentos dedicados genéricamente «al maestro»²⁰, quizá tomando como ejemplo los consagrados «al soldado desconocido» a raíz de la Gran Guerra o, posteriormente, a otros colectivos profesionales.

Como epílogo, podemos concluir la necesidad de conservar las epigrafías escolares en general, y las laudatorias en particular, tanto por su condición de bienes culturales que testimonian un pasado escolar y social como por su valor como fuente para investigaciones histórico-educativas más allá de su naturaleza episódica.

Su carácter público ligado a soportes inmuebles y su exposición a riesgos diversos nos incitan a elaborar inventarios y repositorios de imágenes que, cuando menos, permitan mantener lo esencial de su contenido testimonial. Ello invita a la necesaria construcción, en el seno de los centros dedicados a la recuperación, conservación, estudio y difusión del Patrimonio Histórico-Educativo, de herramientas adecuadas dentro del instrumental de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación.

²⁰ González Ruiz, *Para honra y memoria. Los monumentos a los maestros como fuente histórica de reconocimiento social de la labor docente*, cit.

Pedagogy of death in popular traditions and in the institutionalization of the day of the dead in México

Adelina Arredondo
Institute of Education Sciences
Autonomous University of the State of
Morelos, UAEM (México)
adelinaarredondo@yahoo.com

Carlos Capistrán-López
Institute of Education Sciences
Autonomous University of the State of
Morelos, UAEM (México)
carlos.e_capistran@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT: Unlike the dominant contemporary practices in «western culture» where human death as natural phenomenon gets erased from the «emotional landscape», in Mexico it is commemorated like a national celebration, the most important of the year in the regions of indigenous tradition. Describes the beliefs and rites about death in pre-Columbian Mesoamerican indigenous cultures and in the Judeo-Christian cultures at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards to America. It explains the ways in which both traditions, have been syncretized in commemorative rites of the death and, through appropriations, impositions and resistance; it includes reflections on the institutionalization of the Day of the Dead by the state and the intervention of education and culture institutions which tend to homogenize it in the national geography binding it as a symbol of Mexicanity. We argue that constitutes pedagogy of death that makes it comprehensible and amalgamates it with life.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Pedagogy; Death; Life Cycle; Cultural Heritage; Day of the Dead; México.

Introduction

In every ancient culture important myths were developed around two major questions: the origin of man and his destiny after death. These myths have lasted through centuries in the form of rituals. Such is the case of the celebration of the “Day of the Dead” (*Día de Muertos*) in México, a colourful party in which symbols and meanings, the agents that intervene, the purposes, the interests that reconstruct it, reproduce it or resist it are multiplied. These festivities have their origin in pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican cultures, the ideological syncretism given by the Spanish colonization, the current secularization of the ritual promoted by the state and its institutions and the re-signification produced by popular culture, churches and commercial interests.

The celebration of *Día de Muertos* as part of the states educational programs began in the 80's. The Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) gave instructions that in every public school the tradition of Dead's Altars would be introduced in a way to counteract the North American tradition of “Halloween”. Over three decades it has rapidly consolidated, and now it is perceived as a standardized, institutionalized, officially commemorated celebration; it has been included in official programs and school textbooks as a genuine «Mexican popular tradition», whereas originally it was only typical in some regions of the country. This way, far from being erased and hidden from the «emotional landscape», Mexican traditions and school pedagogy keep death as a natural and symbolic reality that is permanently updated invading every area of public and private life.

What is the purpose of this celebration? What is its historical origin? What is its cultural significance? How it is expressed symbolically? How and where it is practiced? How have these various cultural events, distant in time and space, overlapped and synthesized? How have pre-Columbian indigenous traditions syncretized with Hispanic and Catholic rites? When did this celebration become a pedagogical object in schools? Through which strategies this celebration is produced and reproduced as a school ritual? On what historic cultural grounds are these celebrations introduced? For what purposes? Which are the institutional agents that promote and practice this celebration? To what personal, social and political effects? Are there any other objectives not manifested in the appropriation of these cultural manifestations? Is there resistance and permanence beyond the temporal existence of the modern state? What may the human significance of these celebrations be?

This paper will try to answer the raised questions in four chapters. The first describes how the beliefs and rituals of death were built in indigenous cultures, particularly in the Náhuatl culture, in Mesoamerica before the meeting between the American and European worlds. The second chapter explains how mortuary rituals and celebrations around death were held in Hispanic Judeo-Christian cultures that were imposed in Mesoamerica. In the third chapter we describe how both traditions intertwined through appropriations, impositions and resistances,

to account for the cultural syncretism which nowadays is the celebration of the Day of the Dead. The fourth chapter briefly explains how this celebration was institutionalized through the intervention and takeover from the State to transform these popular celebrations into a national symbol, a «mexicanizing» one. We conclude with reflections that attempt to synthesize and ponder on these new institutionalized practices around the celebration of the Day of the Dead as a novel pedagogy of death in the educational environment.

This narrative has been built with a holistic theoretical approach, trying to unravel the complex historical determinations, trying to show the undelaying power relationships. We have followed a chronological plot, considering the economic, political and social contexts that explain the cultural manifestations, and also showing the cultural and historical subjects as determinants of social evolution. We have based our work on primary and secondary sources, author's on-site observations and interviews with agents that produce and reproduce these cultural practices.

1. *Origin: indigenous cultures*

The cult of the dead as part of a cosmic vision, as a teaching way for an ethic life and as a mechanism of cohesion and reproduction of the people has been present in ancient Mesoamerican cultures. The diversity of beliefs, symbols and rites was synthesized, transformed and re-signified by the *Mexica* culture, also known as *Azteca* culture, which came to dominate the Valley of Mexico, and whose influence extended to the four cardinal points. They were the dominant culture at the arrival of the Spaniards. It is by their capacity to have synthesized worldviews, accumulated knowledge, preceding cultures and because they exacerbated the cult of death to extreme limits, that we will focus in this section on the description of the culture of death in the so-called People of the Sun, the *Mexicas*, also known as the Aztecs.

In the case of the *Mexica* Empire, more so than in other states of ancient Mexico, indigenous myths served to reproduce the power and legitimacy of the military-priestly class, easing the appropriation of the surplus produced by the subordinate classes and dominated towns. The elites in power legitimized and reproduced themselves appropriating the cultural elements of other towns as well as their surplus labour. Then they partially reversed that symbolic and material wealth into celebrations, irrigation, public buildings, roads and temples and of course war efforts to subjugate other people. Priests appeared as generators, carriers and players of the collective knowledge and as social guides; warriors were seen as defenders of the people and sustenance of the Sun by shedding his blood in the battlefield or on the sacrificial altar. Death was glorified because it was conceived as a necessity for the continuity of the universe and of life cycles.

Hence death, while germ of life, was the occasion of worship, constituting the subject of many celebrations. From the perspective of power relations the glorification of death through war and sacrifice of prisoners was the justification and the coercive means of control, of terror, which provided the ideological basis for the survival of a system based on slavery and tribute as a form of economic exaction of other peoples¹.

The Aztecs appropriated the worldview of the people of the Mesoamerican plateau. Pre-Hispanic people of the central highlands of México had a dialectic philosophical conception of life and death. This was the necessary means for the generation and reproduction of life. The idea of life was different from the one we have today. Individual life had no meaning by itself, because its concept corresponded more to the community as a whole than to men as a simple individual. That is, individual life acquired meaning for being part of and serving the reproduction of community life, as well as the conservation of the cosmic order². This ancient concept was used by the Aztecs as an instrument of power. As Octavio Paz said: «For ancient Aztecs it was essential to ensure the continuity of creation; sacrifice did not involve the otherworldly salvation, but cosmic health; the world, and not the individual, lived by the blood and death of men³».

In Mesoamerican cosmogony there is a cyclical conception of time. There were cycles of construction, destruction and rebirth of the universe; of chaos and return to the cosmic order. In the vision of the Aztecs, some time after the destruction of the «Fourth Sun» by the wind, the gods set themselves on fire to create a new cycle called «Fifth Sun» and of the Moon; while other gods by their sacrifice bestow these stars their movement. Then, to make sense of the new universe, benefactor gods such as *Quetzalcóatl*, created man from the bones of ancestors that had been destroyed in other cycles called «Suns». They had been rescued from the «place where the dead live», *Mictlán*⁴. *Quetzalcóatl* gave life to the stolen bones by pouring his own blood upon them. To feed mankind, *Quetzalcóatl* gave them corn and the secrets of agriculture⁵. In return, humans should keep this new world order providing hearts and blood to nourish and to

¹ A. Arredondo, *Origen y significado de la tradición de Muertos*, in Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua (ed.), *En Torno al Día de Muertos*, México, Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua, 1987, p. 13.

² E. Matos, *Muerte a Filo de Obsidiana*, México, SepSetentas, 1975, pp. 43-47.

³ O. Paz, *El laberinto de la soledad*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1982, p. 22.

⁴ T. de Benavente, *Memoriales o Libro de las Cosas de la Nueva España y de los Naturales de Ella*, México, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1971, pp. 382-389.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 194; M. León Portilla, *Los Antiguos Mexicanos a Través de sus Crónicas y Cantares*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977, pp. 19-22; Y. González Pérez, *El Culto a los Astros Entre los Mexicas*, México, SepSetentas, 1979, p. 149; W. Kickeberg, *Mitos y Leyendas de los Aztecas, Incas, Mayas y Muiscas*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994, pp. 21-32.

perpetuate the movement of the sun. By nature, death «by the obsidian edge» became a necessary condition for the continuation of life⁶.

For the Aztecs there was no soul, as in the Judeo-Christian conception, but many animistic entities: the *tonalli*, located in the head of the individual; the *teyolía* related to the heart, and the *ihíyotl* to the liver. The equivalent of the soul in the Judeo-Christian concept was the *teyolía*, for this was the essence that, upon death and after some time had elapsed, went to a destined place according to the different ways of dying and not by the acts in life⁷. Upon their death, nurturing infants went to *Xochatlapan* or *Chichihuacuauhco* where they were fed by a mother tree until their time came to be reborn and populate the world, after the creation of a new cycle or “Sun”. Those who died by drowning, by lightning or by very distressing diseases, considered to be related to water, went to *Tlalocan*, home of the god *Tláloc*, ruler of water, a place of perpetual summer and joy. The warriors killed in battle, by sacrifice or women who died in childbirth went to the place of honour, the «house of the sun» («Casa del Sol»). Others went to *Mictlán*, dark and neutral place⁸.

It was believed that for one to get to *Mictlán* you had to go through a long and hazardous journey, therefore a jug with water, flowers and aromatic herbs, food and beverages, clothing, blankets, utensils, weapons and other objects were placed beside the deceased to help him in his trance⁹. According to testimonies collected by Bernardino de Sahagún, there were seven places to cross: «Two mountain ranges, a snake guarding the road, the place of the green lizard, eight moors, eight hills, a cold wind of knives and a river. To overcome the latter a reddish little dog could help, so one was sacrificed to accompany him during his long journey»¹⁰. This belief is now reproduced by placing all these objects on the altar of the dead.

During the funeral music was played and songs were sang to encourage the dead on his way to *Mictlán*, but these ceremonies were occasions for a morality lesson to those who remained on earth: life and death were vital to continue preserving the cosmic order conceiving existence itself as a collaboration with the gods through service and sacrifice. Work activities continued after death. Those who went to the “Casa del Sol” had to accompany him on his daily journey across the sky, men in the eastern part of the path women on the West. Those who went to *Tlalocan* became *Tlaloques* and should contribute to the

⁶ Benavente, *Memoriales o Libro de las Cosas de la Nueva España y de los Naturales de Ella*, cit. pp. 50-54; Matos, *Muerte a Filo de Obsidiana*, cit. p. 9; A. Caso, *El Pueblo del Sol*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987.

⁷ E. Matos, *La muerte entre los mexicas: expresión particular de una realidad universal*, «Arqueología Mexicana», n. 52, 2013, p. 18.

⁸ B. de Sahagún, *Ritos y costumbres aztecas*, in M. Ángeles (ed.), *Historiadores de Indias*, España, Bruguera, 1971, p. 71; Matos, *Muerte a Filo de Obsidiana*, cit. pp. 58-59.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75; Id., *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España*, México, Red Ediciones S.L., 2012, p. 227.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 229-230.

water paradise caring for the springs and fountains, bringing rain and hail, driving winds or cleaning the underground pipes where the water ran. If they went to *Mictlán*, they were charged in the underworld to care for the wealth and had to accompany the sun at night when it travelled the lower path, which is the world of the dead. Nowadays the Rarámuris from northern México believe that the dead should clean underground conduits for water to flow into the sea¹¹.

The death cult was common to all pre-Columbian cultures but obsessive among Mexicas. It is no coincidence that they were named by the double meaning of «Pueblo del Sol» and «People of death»¹². The symbols of death were present in every act of their life, from their personal and domestic appearance, their architecture, their chants and poetry, their games and celebrations, even in the name of a day in their calendar: *Miquiztli* (death). In the Great Temple of the city of Tenochtitlán, capital of the Aztec Empire, there were shrines to the god *Tlaloc* and the god *Huitzilopochtli*, that is, the life/death duality. This duality indicated those places associated with destiny after death, *Tlalocan* and the Sun; so that the maximum temple in the Mexica city was a symbolic representation of the places people could go after death¹³. Next to the pyramidal structure of the Templo Mayor, was one that shocked the Spanish conquerors and explorers, friars among them, the *tzompantli*, which was a wall, or row of heads. This was a stone or wood building, a sort of permanent altar where the skulls of those sacrificed were impaled horizontally in numerous parallel lines. The Spaniard Andrés Tapia mentioned the existence of up to 136,000 skulls in one *tzompantli*¹⁴. While the Franciscan Motolinía counted between 500 and 1,000 of them¹⁵. The Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards was eased by disagreements and resistance of the other people of the Altiplano, victims of war and exploitation by the Aztecs¹⁶.

The offerings to the dead were and are still present in other indigenous cultures that considered their ancestors would come to visit at that time and who were offered a welcome that could consist of a path back home lined with flowers or signalled with wooden crosses, which in the cultures of the Chiapas highlands symbolizes the door between the world of the living and the world of the dead, or in other words the interface to this inter-dimensional transition¹⁷.

¹¹ A. López Austin, *La Enseñanza Escolar Entre los Mexicas*, in M. Bazant (coord.), *Ideas, Valores y Tradiciones. Ensayos Sobre Historia de la Educación en México*, Estado de México, El Colegio Mexiquense, A. C., 2002, pp. 32-33.

¹² Caso, *El Pueblo del Sol*, cit.; Matos, *Muerte a Filo de Obsidiana*, cit. p. 51.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 108; W. Kickeberg, *Las antiguas culturas mexicanas*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, p. 155.

¹⁵ Sahagún, *Ritos y costumbres aztecas*, cit., p. 74; D. Dehouve, *Ritos sangrientos*, <http://www.danieledehouve.com/images/articles/Ritos_sangrientos.pdf> (last access: 31st May, 2015).

¹⁶ B. Díaz del Castillo, *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, 2 vols., México, Promexa Editores, 1979, vol. 1, pp. 141, 262, 314 and vol. 2, pp. 36, 74.

¹⁷ R. Pozas Arciniega, *Juan Pérez Jolote, Biografía de un Tzotzil*, México, Fondo de Cultura



Pic. 1. Subtitle: *Tzomplantli*.

Source: *From the 1587 Aztec manuscript, the Codex Tovar*. Copyr., <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tzompantli_Tovar.jpeg> (last access: 29st January 2017).

Offerings and celebrations for the dead among Mesoamerican people were rites of retribution to nature and ancestors for a year without famine and a good harvest. These festivities in pre-Hispanic Mexico were similar to those practiced and still carried out by many cultures, celebrations where those no longer among the living are invited, through the offerings placed on altars.

In the rituals of ancient cultures found in what today is Mexico, a combination of popular traditions – generalized and transmitted from generation to generation – with the beliefs and practices imposed by the dominant power were present. Control was sought through institutionalized rites, not only thoughts and behaviours, but also physically where it was important, from religious and symbolic practices, to intervene in the fundamental biological cycles of the individuals, through the rituals of birth, the passage to reproductive age, the union of heterogeneous couples and death.

2. *Meeting of two worlds: the cultural syncretism*

Spain (basically Castilla), which launched the conquest of America, was by itself bearer and synthesis of many cultures. The Iberian peninsula was originally inhabited by people as diverse as the Celts, the Iberians and Basques; influenced by Phoenicia, Greece and Carthage; invaded by Alani, Swabians and Visigoths; however, it were seven centuries of Roman domination and as many of Islamic occupation that allowed the realization of the Iberian unity and the formation of the Spanish nationality¹⁸. Consequently, the concept and rituals around death are a result of this multicultural heritage. Latinos bequeathed their Christian essence, but also through the Greco-Roman pagan rites, their festive and playful nature; the Muslims, the solemnity that they bestow everything related to death. Generally speaking, religion had been displacing humanistic and pagan manifestations¹⁹.

The conquerors formed a heterogeneous mass composed of illiterate and superstitious soldiers, adventurers without religion, academically trained officers, impoverished artisans, religious fanatics, monks and missionaries, Jewish merchants, government officials, among others. In the extremes, Christianity differed among the soldiers, as conqueror and superstitious, among the missionaries, as utopian and evangelical²⁰, so that the Spaniards brought, together with the official Catholic version of death, in a complex way mixed with the former, concepts, rites and ceremonies that led to a strange syncretism between Christian faith, the Spanish folk traditions and ancient Mesoamerican beliefs.

Both for Christian and Islamic philosophy, man's destiny after death is determined by the kind of earthly life, specifically by the deeds performed in it; both worldviews and death conceptions are involved in the genesis of possessive individualism that characterizes the modern world. Thus, «the afterlife» is nothing but the continuation of the material life of the individual, maintaining the integrity of the self. In this context man consists of body and soul, the body being a means of earthly expression of the soul and this being immortal.

In Spain at the time of the Conquest, funeral rites were a liturgical mandate of the Catholic Church, so that certain practices had to be observed, among which were accompaniment of a patient during agony and waiting in silence for his passing, assisted if possible by a priest for «a good death». After death a candle was placed in one hand and a crucifix in the other, and relics and scapulars around the neck; the body was shrouded, and large candles were lit on the four corners of the bed. Death was announced by the ringing of bells that redoubled at the time of burial, which usually was performed in a church

¹⁸ R. Carrasco, C. Dérozier, A. Molinié-Bertrand, *Histoire et civilisation de l'Espagne classique. 1492-1808*, Paris, Nathan, 2001; P. Vilar, *Historia de España*, Barcelona, España, Editorial Grijalbo, 1980.

¹⁹ G. R. Elton, *La Europa de la Reforma 1517-1559*, Argentina, Siglo XXI Editores, 1984, p. 347.

²⁰ J. Lafaye, *Los Conquistadores*, México, Siglo XXI Editores, 1978, p. 144.

or adjacent cemetery²¹. Relatives and acquaintances deposited flowers at the grave of the deceased. Food and drinks were prepared for the attendants to the funerals who often came from distant places. There could also be sacred music and chants for those moments. In occasions an «alms box» was placed in order to collect monetary contributions from the assistants to cover funeral expenses, or the contribution or «charity» to the Church.

In a similar way as indigenous people, the Spaniards also had a date on which they worshiped the dead: All Souls Day, created by Pope Gregory IV in the ninth century. This celebration takes place on November 2 of each year; moreover, in Europe it was customary to celebrate the Feast of All Saints, including the Innocents, or the Holy Child on the 1st day of the same month, differing in content and form of mourning from the Mesoamerican rite. Upon arrival of the tradition in America under the influence of missionaries and friars, it was quickly accepted by the native population due to its malleability to blend in with the celebrations held for the dead before the Spanish conquest, and the close link established between the dead and living community, especially among indigenous peasants²². The *náhuatl* party for dead children, *Miccailhuitontli* and the great feast of the dead *Hueymiccalhuitl* melted into the Catholic festival calendar of the 1st and 2nd of November, in a mixture of indigenous and Christian rites. Often Spanish secular and religious authorities accused the natives of performing idolatry practices, of keeping their pagan rites on the celebration of death alive, such as the custom of placing bones of the deceased or some of their belongings on family altars²³.

The conception of death brought by missionaries and secular priests was reflected in a pedagogy of the image: in the frescoes of churches and convents icons of death were expressed in a moralizing meaning; in the context of Catholicism of Roman rite the premise of death as something to be feared was reaffirmed, as established in the Council of Trent between 1545 and 1563.

Along with the image of the gruesome and terrible death; came another, burlesque and funny, which had its origin in the sculptural, pictorial and literary Dance of Death or Danse Macabre, carnival performances and more remotely in mythology and theatrical performances of the ancient Greek and Roman cultures²⁴. The skeletal death is reminiscent of the Greek Fates and the death archer of a macabre Cupid, Roman god of desire. Thus, the Spanish people bequeathed a subjective death, grim and comical at the same time, with its scythe, its black robe and skeletal body, lurking at every corner waiting for the time to increase its load. In the secular scope, during the Late Middle Ages,

²¹ M. A. Rodríguez Álvarez, *Usos y costumbres funerarias en la Nueva España*, Zamora, Michoacán, El Colegio de Michoacán, El Colegio Mexiquense, 2009, p. 45.

²² C. Lomnitz, *La idea de la muerte en México*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2013, p. 111.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-116.

²⁴ R. Sabatier, *Diccionario Ilustrado de la Muerte*, España, Editorial Gustavo, 1970.



Pic. 2. Subtitle: *Dance of Death*.

Source: Estonia, Ending XV Century by Bernt Notke. Copyr., <<https://www.visitestonia.com/en/niguliste-museum-and-church-bernt-notkes-dance-of-death>> (last access: 29th January, 2017).

this sort of literary and figurative art, called the Dance Macabre, was spread for Europe which represented skeletons, emaciated personifications of death in different daily life contexts, showing that the life end reaches to all people the same. Has been handled the hypothesis that this cultural manifestation began in the Iberian Peninsula and came from the Arab culture, regarding the etymological origin of the word “macabre”²⁵.

The representations of death that was spread in New Spain originated in medieval Europe in the context of the great plagues: a skeleton wielding a scythe with which it reaped the lives of men, or a bundle of arrows and bow, with which arrows were thrown and indicated the day the chosen one would die. Other performances were death caused by a cart running over humans without distinction between men, women, children, elderly or rich and poor people; or death was depicted dancing with members of society, who after this macabre dance, were taken to the grave²⁶. Death represented as an archer, was a skeleton armed with bow and arrows, representing the transience of life, showing that no one was safe from death and that the time for repentance was short and expired soon. Examples of this type of iconography can be found in multiple sites of Mexico and murals as «The Triumph of Death», mural in the «Casa del Deán» in Puebla; «The Archer Death» in the former convent of San Gabriel Cholula, Puebla; or «The Holly Death in his car» in Yanhuitlán, Oaxaca.

Also included in Colonial iconography was the purgatory, which represented and described the pains and horrors that passed to those who were there. The

²⁵ H. González Zyma, *La danza macabra*, «Revista Digital de Iconografía Medieval», vol. 6, n. 11, 2014, pp. 23-51; A. L. Haindl Ugarte., *La danza de la muerte*, <http://www.edadmedia.cl/docs/danza_de_la_muerte.pdf> (last access: 30th November, 2016). Haindl prents the definition of James M. Clark.: «By the Dance of Death we understand literary or artistic representations of a procession or dance, in which both, the living and the death take part. The death may be portrayed by a number of figures, or by a single individual personifying Death», in J.M. Clark, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Glasgow University Publications, 1950, p. 1.

²⁶ «Arqueología Mexicana», n. 52, 2013, p. 72.

paintings and sculptures were part of the altars of brotherhoods, churches and convents. They were primarily intended to persuade the heathens of converting to the Christian faith, otherwise under the threat of ending in a hell of Dantesque characteristics; and for all, the threat of being subjected to a final judgment with terrible and apocalyptic overtones. In contradiction to the horrors of hell, this type of painting also extolled the virtues of the saints, therefore so a life of restrictions and penance was necessary for salvation, equivalent to the life those saints had led. References to these representations are found in the «Table of Souls» in the temple of Capulhuac in the State of Mexico, or paintings such as the anonymous «The Salvation of the Souls of Purgatory» of Chalcatongo, Oaxaca. The figure of the devil was added to these representations, in all its forms related to death. As if this was not enough, during the colonial time, indigenous and mestizo people witnessed the atrocities of the Inquisition: indescribable tortures, processions of hooded inquisitors carrying emblems, crosses and torches; soldiers with stout helmets, bearded face and hard expressions, escorting half-naked bodies, bloodied, flagged or inert, brought or taken public death by fire and stick. So, as in the case of other educational content of the colonial era, the death unfolded and reproduced from one generation to another in public spaces²⁷.

During the Colonial period burial practices and rituals were controlled by the religious authorities: the custom of cremating the bodies had to stop, so they would be buried in churches and holy fields. As well, it was issued a ban on ceremonies that were considered sacrilegious to avoid the use of the bodies for magical, religious or witchcraft purposes²⁸.

The popularization of the «Día de Muertos» in New Spain was due to the synthesis of the diversity of practices such as making home altars, offerings for the soul as a «treat», the providing of charity for the church, the poor and children, as well as the development of a special cuisine for those days, such as the development of «Dead's Bread» or sweets imitating the relics of Christian saints called «weaklings», of children shaped bread covered with pink sugar, or figures that simulated bones. That was also a medieval custom from León, Aragón, Castilla, and Catalonia, where the sweets are still made with almonds²⁹. Despite the illustrated Bourbon Reforms (end of the eighteenth century) that tried to stop the «popular culture» of the feast of the dead, it was firmly entrenched within the Colonial community. As Lomnitz notes, «Mexican popular culture with its multiple solidarities, was born of the cult from the dead in the Baroque era³⁰».

In independent México and free from the inquisitorial censorship, the celebrations of the «Día de Muertos» exceeded the boundaries of indigenous

²⁷ Arredondo, *Origen y significado de la tradición de Muertos*, cit. p. 16.

²⁸ L. González Obregón, *México viejo. Época Colonial. Noticias históricas, tradiciones, leyendas y costumbres*, México, Librería de la Viuda de Charles Bouret, 1910, pp. 113-119.

²⁹ «*Arqueología Mexicana*», cit. p. 75.

³⁰ Lomnitz, *La idea de la muerte en México*, cit. p. 252.



Pic. 3. Subtitle: *El jarabe en Ultratumba*, Grabado by José Guadalupe Posada.

Source: <<http://www.biografiasyvidas.com/biografia/p/posada.htm>> (last access: 29th January, 2017).

communities and Christian homes, overflowing and fusing into a popular festivity having streets, churches and cemeteries as the backstage. Since then and until the present, youth groups, dressed in humorous costumes alluding to the festival, carry a cardboard skeleton or a dummy coffin lit by lanterns and candles through the streets in joyous revelry, from house to house asking for his «grave» or offering for its skull, and giving joyful verses concerning death, known as «calaveras» (skulls) in return. In the late nineteenth century, the image of death was firmly established as a national making, through engravings and drawings of José Guadalupe Posada, reflecting the idiosyncrasies of the Mexican around death, the result of cultural syncretism, or as a way of resistance to the dominant modern culture at that moment, which try to hid the death³¹.

In markets, previous to that date, selling stalls proliferate, featuring figures of dead in cardboard and wood, little graves, coffins, clay skeletons, complete burials with dead and companions, movable jaw skulls and a multitude of ingenious toys and sweets representing human bones, skeletons and skulls. Street vendors of flowers, candles, incense, lanterns, fruit, bread, mole, multiply during that time. After the Mexican Revolution of 1910, the Mexican state promoted symbols in which people would recognize their national identity. Among the strategies used to disseminate this identity where mural painting, among which those of Diego Rivera stood out. Recognizing the weight of the tradition of «Día de Muertos» in both urban and rural communities, in his mural «Dream of a Sunday afternoon in the Alameda Park» completed in 1947 he portrayed the customs of nineteenth-century Mexico and captured the image of the «Mexicanized death» in the figure of «La

³¹ M. Gallegos, *José Guadalupe Posada, la muerte y la cultura popular mexicana*, <<http://newpagecomunicacion.sociales.uba.ar/files/2013/02/1245.pdf>> (last access: 3rd May, 2015).

Catrina» an engraving by Posada which was sumptuously dressed in European fashion. With the work of post-revolutionary artists and intellectuals familiarity with death was consolidated as «a peculiarly Mexican symbol»³².

The dead has also a very strong presence in many ways in the Mexican Literature, and «if in all countries and authors the dead is one of the essential topics, in the case of Mexico, it crushes by the diffuseness of the established typologies and the constant dialogue that writers and others maintain with the dead itself»³³.

3. «*Día de Muertos*». *Celebration today*

There are no conceptions or rituals about life and death that have a single origin. Conceptions of life and death are social constructions, part and result of cultural diversity and a constantly changing world, and so are the corresponding celebrations. According to how characteristics of different cultures blend or how synthesis occurs giving birth to a new product, we can see differences in how death is conceived and commemorated in the various regions that make up the Mexican geography.

Funerals are celebrated in different ways depending on culture, region and social class, so it can be done in a brief and austere way, sanitized, as if to ignore the fact, or with the mourning and solemnity of traditional Catholicism, or as a festivity like in some popular sectors with indigenous roots. The school, as an institution, until a few decades ago ignored this event, being the bearer of a refusal of death, rather than absent, denied. That was a reflect of the general tendency remarked in present Western culture by Ariès who shows how the dead blurs, disappears and becomes taboo³⁴.

Nevertheless, in some regions of Mexico strongly rooted in their indigenous cultures, funerals are practiced with music, songs and treats. Either by tradition or conviction, along the deceased various objects are arranged, not as a gift but as baggage that will serve him in his trance from this life to a supposed other. With that idea water and food are placed to quench their thirst and strengthen them during the journey, salt to prevent decay of the body before reaching its destination, sandals or shoes and new clothes for the difficult path, a stick to remove obstacles (thorns, reptiles, etc.), candles for lighting and coins to give to the dog that will help them cross a raging river. In addition they are encouraged

³² Lomnitz, *La idea de la muerte en México*, cit. p. 402.

³³ A.R. Villarreal, *La representación de la muerte en la literatura mexicana. Formas de su imaginario*, Doctoral Thesis, (Supervisor: R. Oviedo Pérez de Tudela), Madrid, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Academic year 2012. <<http://eprints.ucm.es/22384/1/T34654.pdf>> (last access: 16th January, 2016).

³⁴ P. Ariès, *Historia de la muerte en occidente desde la Edad Media hasta nuestros días*, Barcelona, El Acantilado, 2000, p. 83.



Pic. 4. Subtitle: *Altar de Muertos, Malinalco, Estado de México*, 1 de noviembre de 2015.
Source: copyr. Adelina Arredondo.

with prayers, songs, wreaths and burning incense or copal. It is believed that not helping a soul to reach the “beyond”, can cause it to stay grieving and converted into a *nahual* and will cause damage to their families. These beliefs are reproduced and reinforced through its ritualization and numerous stories circulating widely, or even without belief, they continue due to respect for family traditions.

In some towns and neighbourhoods of Mexico City and the states of Mexico, Morelos, Puebla, Tlaxcala, Hidalgo, Veracruz, Michoacán, Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas, everywhere that was the ancient Mesoamerica, is where you can appreciate the manifestly native roots rituals of the «Día de Muertos». Although characteristics that confer uniqueness to the celebrations in each locality can be distinguished, some elements are common. In the markets and streets, vending stalls multiply with incense, fireworks, candles, fruit, flowers, colourful toys like skeletons rising from a cardboard coffin when a cord is pulled, multi-coloured “puckered”, “china”, “paper”, sugar skulls, *pulque*, *mole*, etc. It is no coincidence that a famous *mole* fair takes place at this time. There are fairs

in towns weeks or days before, which have been celebrated for centuries in the streets, and are now threatened by the protests of neighbours and drivers for the inconveniences that they cause.

In Mesoamerican communities during the last weeks of October *mole*, *tamales*, *curundas*, sweets, *pulque* and the typical «Dead's Bread» is begun to be made in many homes. In fact, on October 28th, offerings are placed in some homes and are dedicated to those family members or relatives who died that same year due to accidents, violence or killings, called «offering of the injured» or in the second case «offering of the killed»; even, if the place of death is known, they garnish it with *Cempoalxóchitl* flowers or «dead's flowers» and candles. From the 30th of October on they remember the children who died without being baptized and who are called «limbos». In some places, from October 31st or November 1st «the little ones» are expected, those who have died while still children. In both offerings, altars with white flowers are arranged and offered particularly to the children «souls», sweets and toys.

On November 2nd, those who died in adulthood are expected. Usually, in houses «altars» are mounted and offerings are placed for missing family members, they are decorated with colourful tablecloths and hangings of puckered china" paper (cuts are being made in the thin paper to produce certain figures like skulls and skeletons), decorated candles, one for each death in the family, *Cempoaxóchitl* flowers, «bread of the dead», baskets of seasonal fruit as canes, oranges, hawthorns, squash and candy fruit; pans with the traditional *mole* and *tamales*, bunches of herbs, salt, cinnamon, chocolate, water, *pulque*, rum. In some regions, the offerings are completed with ceramic idols, usually zoomorphic, images of saints, crucifixes, pictures of virgins, of heroes and celebrities along with portraits of the deceased with their sugar «skulls» named after those who have left³⁵.

For other sectors of the population the rite of the dead is solemn and mournful: on October 31st or November 1st, at exactly 12:00 pm candles are lit, the Hail Mary and Our Father are prayed, those who are gone are named and are welcome by offering them the respect they deserve. It is a serious moment of rite and regret for the loss of loved ones, and in some communities as Calderon de Cuautla, Morelos, the «dedication of the offering» to the dead its accompanied with funeral bell tolls of the church community, at that moment everyone should remain silent and be respectful to the memory of the dead; in Malinalco, State of Mexico, church bells are tolled throughout the night.

As it was done in the past, on house's doors and access to them lanterns, candles, or pumpkin or *chilacayote* shells simulating skulls with a candle inside are usually placed. Flower-lined paths are also drawn to the houses, especially in the southeast of México. Lanterns, candles, flowers and paths are the signs

³⁵ Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, *Calaveritas*, Last updated: September 26, 2016. <<http://www.conaculta.gob.mx/detalle-nota/?id=16743>> (last access: 31st May, 2015).



Pic. 5. Subtitle: *Niña celebrando la fiesta de Muertos*, Cuernavaca, 30 de octubre de 2015.
Source: copyr. Adelina Arredondo.

that will guide the dead relatives in those days, to return to their former homes to see their family and enjoy food that they had found pleasant in life. It is said that spirits can only smell the aroma of the offerings, and when they run out fast it is because no neighbouring houses have placed offerings to their dead and had to come to satisfy their appetite in other people houses. Thus, keeping the tradition becomes a social norm, because anyone who does not participate can earn the enmity of its neighbours³⁶.

After the commemoration of the «Día de Muertos», foods, breads, fruits, and «skulls» are given away to be eaten among relatives, visitors and friends. Certain part of the offering is reserved to share it in the afternoons and evenings to large group of children dressed in costumes as they «ask for their calaverita» to the rhythm of verses and popular songs.

In other places house doors are open to all people who want to participate because that way their dead relatives realize that their loved ones have progressed

³⁶ Arredondo, *Origen y significado de la tradición de Muertos*, cit. p. 20.

and have many friends who come to pay homage. That is why in this festivity tourists are always welcome, as long as they show their respects by offering a candle in memory of the dead and keep their composure at all times; In addition, in some homes a container is placed to allow contributions from guests to cover the costs; in exchange food, beverages and sweets are provided for visitors. On the streets of Chamilpa and Ocotepec Morelos, tourists visiting the houses where they commemorate the dead, take pleasure with the arrangements of the altars and share food from neighbours.

At night, in some villages, the «Campanero» (Bell ringer) is organized. It is the formation of one or more groups, some can carry a cardboard skeleton while others dress up as imploring widows or wear grotesque masks and beards, carrying candles and walking sticks; another one brings a bag for offerings and another directs the playful courtship ringing a bell and calling from door to door asking for offerings that are typically deposited on the altars of the participants. On the afternoon of November 2nd, the population turns to the streets and churches in a great festival full of folklore and joy. Often, recreation programs are organized for the occasion by the civil authorities along cardboard skeletons and “calaveritas” (little skulls) contests. The latter are a popular literary genre that uses short satiric and mocking verses as well as an epitaph, dedicated to a living person as if he had died, with «absolute abandon of their power or social position»³⁷. In the city of Celaya, Guanajuato the «Walk of lights» is organized to commemorate the opening of the first civil graveyard of the town and the transfer of the human remains from the religious site. In the city of Cuernavaca and several towns in the state of Morelos they celebrate the colourful «indigenous and popular festival *Miquixtli* Day of the Dead» for several days which is prepared with lavish decoration in the central streets and public spaces, workshops, competitions, parades, popular and classical music concerts, dance, theatre, art exhibitions, lectures and craft markets and typical food.

On November 2nd, the extended families gather in graveyards, where they put new offerings and many candles on the graves of their ancestors, singing, praying, eating, drinking, and collecting memories of those who left. The ceremonies are known as «Llorada» (the crying) or «Lumbrada» (The lightening), and usually lasts all night, brightly lit by the profusion of candles. The «Noche de Muertos» celebrations of *Janitzio*, Lake *Pátzcuaro*, *Michoacán* are recognized for their magnificence and grandeur³⁸.

³⁷ El Portal de México, <<http://www.elportaldemexico.com/arte/literatura/calaveritas.htm>> (last access: 14th August, 2015).

³⁸ Portal Turístico de Pátzcuaro Michoacán, <http://www.patzcuaro.com/festividades/dia_muertos.html> (last access: 19th August, 2015).



Pic. 6. Subtitle: *Calavera*.

Source: copyr. Adelina Arredondo, ICE, UAEM.

4. *Institutionalization of the celebration*

The «Día de Muertos», as described above, with its colour and feasts, was only celebrated in the Mesoamerican region and the Southeast of Mexico, in the intimacy of family and popular neighbourhoods. In the north of the country it was almost unknown or ignored. But in the last decades of the 20th centuries, Halloween was adopted by middle-income urban areas, especially in the northern states of Mexico and in large industrialized cities. Halloween was the name used in Mexico, in English, with the same symbols and practices used in the United States. The festival itself is the result of a syncretism between the crop celebrations of Native Americans and people of Northern Europe, snatched, magnified and re-signified by commercial interests. Children dress up in costumes alluding to the spectral death or in different ways and come to ask for sweets and fruits from house to house. Families are prepared in advance with characteristic decorations in predominantly orange colour and the large pumpkin, native of America, symbol of harvest. Young people and adults held

masked balls. The festival was emptied of its ancestral symbolic content to be filled with the banality of marketing. Increasingly, the festival is replicated in the malls, which are full of allusive objects from weeks before the date. This began to cause concern among the state bureaucracy, in particular in the education sector in the capital city considering it a foreign cultural invasion. As a result the Secretariat of Public Education designed an intervention strategy at national level to disseminate popular practices of the centre of the country and counteract the commercial influence of the neighbouring country.

According to its Political Constitution, the United States of Mexico is a secular republic, carrier of a long history of radicalism in secular education since 1861³⁹. Therefore the Catholic celebration of All Saints and All Souls Day was not in the school calendar festivities. Educational policies not only ignore the dates and religious symbols but they are prohibited in educational establishments and public places, although it is true that there is a gap between standards and educational practices. Regardless of the secular culture of the Mexican state and its institutions, in the last three decades religious rites around the death that synthesized the indigenous and the Spanish, the sacred and the profane, religious and secular were formally incorporated into the school calendar and institutional cultural agenda⁴⁰. At first the bureaucratic intervention in the implementation of this celebration was opposed by radical liberals and cultural sectors not related to these practices, who did not know, share nor understand them. Nevertheless after a few decades of official rites these have ended being the standard, perceived as part of an alleged Mexican nature, as alleged essence of a «national spirit».

Like other festivities celebrated in educational institutions such as the enactment of the Constitution, Flag's Day, the birthday of President Benito Juárez, the battle of May 5th against the French invaders, the day of Independence and the Mexican Revolution, the "Day of the Dead" is considered as a Mexican heritage and has been established as part of civic education, of nationalist nature. This festivity was established as a «día de guardar» (day to keep) or holiday, but celebrated in previous dates with ceremonies and symbolic objects in school grounds and other public spaces such as parks, public squares or regional museums. The pedagogical objective of the «festival of Día de Muertos» highlighted by the educational authorities is the protection of national identity through the instilment of an ideology and symbolic practices common among all Mexicans.

³⁹ A. Arredondo, G. Roberto, *De la Secularización a la Laicidad Educativa en México*, «Anuario Sociedad Argentina de Historia de la Educación», vol. 15, n. 2, 2014, pp. 140-167.

⁴⁰ El Sol de Parral, *Tradición de altares de muerto tomó auge en el norte desde los 80's*, <<http://www.oem.com.mx/elsoldeparral/notas/n3178336.htm>> (last access: 19th April, 2015).

Interventions by public authorities depart from the high bureaucratic spheres, turning instructions down to a notice for each school that is repeated each year as follows:

In order to preserve and promote national culture through traditional events such as the *Día de Muertos*, during the last week of October and first of November, elementary schools should develop educational activities to address curriculum on theme, linking activities to promote the ways in which the celebration takes place in hometowns, which can include samples of altars and / or literary expressions and talks related to these customs, with strict respect for regional differences and family practices and preferences⁴¹.

Since the 80's, instructions like these were given to all educational units of basic education. Besides the description and even apology for the celebration of the «Día de Muertos» it has been included and/or imposed, as many other educational programmes, to communities for whom it was unknown including this in both the required textbook for primary education and as a teacher training device⁴². These policies contrast with the educational project of the post-revolutionary Mexican state that was oriented towards an «integrationist» policy first, and then «incorporationist» policy of the cultural and linguistic amalgam for the different indigenous groups settled in the country. The aim was to educate indigenous people on the basis of «western culture» of Hispanic origin, beginning with the dominant language, Spanish, and including patriotic values repeated in school celebrations. Subsequently an appropriation of indigenous cults is incorporated into the official school culture. This means first, to recognize indigenous cultures and then «amalgamate» these values with those of Western culture⁴³. In some states there was resistance to the imposition of this celebration in schools, but the power of the Ministry of Education, with support from the National Union of Education Workers, ultimately prevailed and the celebration was institutionalized in public schools. And not only in schools of basic education (preschool, basic and middle school) are altars for the dead placed, but also in senior high schools and public and private universities. The display of artistic creativity is remarkable on altars set out in the gardens of the National Autonomous University of Mexico or on the premises of the National Pedagogical University, with intense student participation. Gradually the celebration in schools at all levels of education no longer seems as an imposition, and is accepted as part of popular traditions.

⁴¹ H. Ollivier Pérez, *Circular n. 160/2011. Acerca de las manifestaciones culturales del Día de Muertos*, <<http://tecped-dges-ver.blogspot.mx/2011/10/circular-acerca-de-las-manifestaciones.html>> (last access: 19th April, 2015).

⁴² Secretaría de Educación Pública, *Ley General de Educación*, <http://www.sepbcsgob.mx/legislacion/ley_general_educacion.htm> (last access: 31st May, 2015).

⁴³ E. Loyo Bravo, *Una Educación para el Pueblo, 1910-1940*, in M. Bazant (coord.), *Ideas, Valores y Tradiciones. Ensayos Sobre Historia de la Educación en México*, Estado de México, El Colegio Mexiquense, A.C, 2002, pp. 167-181.

This institutionalization, this imposition «from above» expropriates, alienates, normalizes, homogenizes, uniforms, orders, pretends to nullify cultural diversity, denies regional particular traditions, trivializes and strips these ancient celebrations of its profound meaning. These regional festivities, a heritage and cultural expression are now a school obligation. The assault on the deep content of indigenous festivals of the dead is aggravated by the intervention of the media, particularly television, becoming participants in these festivities but also transforming them into an object of mass marketing. Big chain stores take advantage of the wide dissemination of the celebration to sell plastic indigenous symbols, mass made and industrialized abroad, which are sold along with Halloween merchandise, while the centuries old and colourful fairs and markets, where the traditional handcrafted products for this celebration are sold, languish and tend to disappear. The capitalist class aims again to take over the values, meanings and rites of the popular culture.

There are many contradictions. Children and young people celebrate the day of the witches, along with the day of the dead, a cultural symbiosis that incorporates new ways to celebrate without giving up the old ones. From educational institutions come warnings about the emergence of Halloween festivities, considering them as an invader in the Mexican culture, without observing the Amerindian roots that nourish that other festivity of European origin. The Catholic Church continues to celebrate the specific liturgy of these dates, encouraging the faithful to celebrate with it, trying this way to reproduce and extend their influence over the subaltern.

Beyond the use of the «Día de Muertos» according to market or state interests to forge national identity, the celebration continues updating its sense of belonging to the people and its hidden educational content. The celebration has been reassessed and revitalized by refreshing the historical memory that has been used by modern social movements to reclaim themselves, such as the student movements; and as a political use of other sectors of the population to demand representation in front of the national state⁴⁴.

The celebration of the «Día de Muertos» in the traditional domestic popular sphere remains an alien subject to state power. It is above all a tribute to those who have left, an act of communion between generations and between the living, the dead and those who are to come. There is a hidden resistance against the mechanisms of hegemonic power. The essential loyalties, the deepest feelings, the strongest identities do not lie in that abstraction called homeland, or national symbols, or ruling elites, but in the ancestors, in popular roots, in class identity.

Why is this tradition kept in an individual perspective? Awareness of one owns physical death is less painful than the idea of death in the consciousness of others, hence the need for rituals to preserve the memory of those who have

⁴⁴ Lomnitz, *La idea de la muerte en México*, cit. p. 432.

died and its reminder, that way, those participating in it somehow guarantee their own survival, subjective or virtual, among their relatives⁴⁵. Those other meanings of the celebration contribute to the setting and strengthening of the bonds of identity, community social cohesion, to the integral development of each person as a member of a larger conglomerate in terms of space and time. Re-signified traditions and customs, repeated through rituals, felt in private life and revived in public spaces are primarily public goods beyond forms, appropriations or manipulations given to them by the state, churches, or economic interests.

The Mexican secular celebration of the «Día de Muertos» has transcended the national boundaries to spread across borders. Proclaimed in 2003, since 2008 UNESCO has included «The Indigenous Festivity dedicated to the Dead» in the list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Final reflections

In most part of Mexico the cult of the dead is reproduced year after year while being enriched through sources such as: 1) worldview, traditions and practices of pre-Columbian Mesoamerican cultures; 2) the colonial process of ideological and religious syncretism, purifying indigenous cultures with Christian and pagan ideas that the Spaniards brought with them; 3) the process of secularization through advocacy, dissemination, promotion and generalization by public institutions of the «Día de Muertos», 4) the popular appropriation of the festivity which transcends ethnic groups, social classes and geographic regions; some participating because they believe in the content and symbolism of the celebration, others to keep an endearing tradition.

Based on the Novo Hispanic cultural practices, the «Día de Muertos» incorporates public and private, collective and individual manifestations. In the public sphere it is a colourful popular celebration through which tribute is paid to those who have physically died, but remain alive in memory, whether they were ancestors, in the historical sense, or close relatives. In the private sphere, it can be a rite of mourning for the dead and death, a ritual that facilitates the acceptance of death itself and therefore a revaluation of life.

In the public space the state appropriates the «Día de Muertos» as a secular celebration, lay and nationalistic, even for purposes of tourist attraction, but above these claims, the constant redefinition and feelings that the popular sectors keep on cultural manifestations of secular roots prevails. In the private space and in a broad sense, families promote the celebration, popular communities and subordinate sectors as something intimate, respectful, religious, to grieve, but

⁴⁵ I. Caruso, *La separación de los amantes*, México, Siglo XXI, 1981.

also with joy, rejoicing the remembrance of relatives and friends that are gone, for bringing them back to life with the memory, symbols, with intergenerational communication that links them and distinguishes them from the ruling elites. For them it has an educational content because all generations are involved, from the preparation to the conclusion of the festivity. Since childhood and in adult life everybody has a space for mourning, to become familiar with death, accept it as unavoidable, commemorate it, expect it as part of the cycle of life, recognize the natural transformation but also recognizing themselves as an ethnic group, as people, as a class.

The humanistic and pedagogical content in the depths of this celebration is that through it the conceptions of life as a continuous process are reiterated, renewed and magnified with each birth. Death coexists with life along a continuum, in a dialectic that allows us to understand that the one is contained within the other. It entails ethical, therapeutic and tanatological values, accepting the ephemeral nature of human existence and at the same time performing a tribute to life and to the living through the works and the memory of the dead. Death is not hidden, it is not denied, it is not placed in an ascetic dehumanized environment, it is presented as an inseparable antithesis of life; death and life synthesizing what is human in its social and individual sense. It is the vision that transcends individuals to perceive the links between generations, humans as part of nature, and the natural world, the cosmos, as the dominant entity. It is an acknowledgment of change as the law of existence and its potential for collective action in the future. It is a reminder that everything that exists might not exist and that the destruction of what exists is a condition for the existence of something new. In the intergenerational homage, awareness that the existence of the social is the result of past constructions and that the future will be the result of what is now being built is transmitted.

Zeitungen. Plattform für Debatten über die Modernisierung des kroatischen Schulwesens im 19. Jahrhundert

Vlasta Švoger
Kroatisches Institut für Geschichte
Zagreb (Kroatien)
vsvoger@isp.hr

Newspapers. Platform for debates on the modernization of the Croatian school system in the 19th century

ABSTRACT: Newspapers were the most important media in 19th century Croatia. They served as a medium for spreading information, new ideas and (political) programmes and they had crucial influence on shaping public opinion. This social role of newspapers is illustrated in examples from the history of Croatia's school system. Newspapers drew attention to poor conditions in Croatia's school system (poor level of education, meagre financial *status* of many teachers, lack of available space, teaching methods and finances for quality teaching etc.), analysed new teaching methods and textbooks. Teachers and other intellectuals analysed the pros and cons of new legislative bills pertaining to the education system, reported on different types of schools, their curricula and teachers. Some experts even presented their own proposals for a (more) comprehensive reform of Croatia's school system. Croatian political papers served, *inter alia*, as a platform for discussions on the modernisation of Croatia's education system in the 19th century.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Journals; History of Education; Modernization of education system; Croatia; XIXth Century.

Zeitungen – die wichtigsten öffentlichen Medien in Kroatien im 19. Jahrhundert

Als öffentliche Medien sind in Kroatien des 19. Jahrhunderts vor allem Zeitungen, Zeitschriften, Broschüren, Plakate und Flugblätter zu nennen. Unter diesen Typen schriftlicher Medien waren Zeitungen allerdings die wichtigsten¹.

¹ Dieser Beitrag wurde im Rahmen des von der Kroatischen Wissenschaftsstiftung (Hrvatska

Bis zum Revolutionsjahr 1848 galt in Kroatien das System der sog. Präventivzensur, geleitet von der Hofpolizeistelle in Wien und ausgeübt durch ihre Beamten in Städten, wo sich Druckereien befanden. Wie streng die Zensur ausgeübt wurde, hing in erster Linie von der Entwicklung und Komplexität politischer Verhältnisse innerhalb des Dreiecks Wien – Pest – Zagreb und weniger von der politischen Situation im Ausland ab².

Wegender Zensur hatten die in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts in Kroatien erscheinenden Zeitungen hauptsächlich informative Funktion. Aber schon im Vormärz konnte man in den wirtschaftlich und gesellschaftlich rückständigen kroatischen Ländern auch Forderungen nach Einführung der Pressefreiheit hören. Die 1848-er Revolution brachte viele bedeutende Veränderungen in politischen, gesellschaftlichen und wirtschaftlichen Verhältnissen, unter denen der Bedeutungswandel der Begriffe «öffentliche Meinung» und «Pressefreiheit» für diese Forschung besonders wichtig war. Von der ursprünglichen Bedeutung der «von vielen geteilten Meinung» der Begriff der «öffentlichen Meinung» bekam im Vormärz eine ideologische, liberal geprägte Färbung und während der 1848er Revolution diente die öffentliche Meinung als Legitimationsgrundlage der verfassungsrechtlichen Ansprüche liberaler Politiker. In der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts erfuhr der Begriff eine weitere Bedeutungsänderung: Die «öffentliche Meinung» wurde als ein «Stimmungsbarometer» verstanden, das beachtet werden musste, das aber beeinflussbar und manipulierbar war³. Die Pressefreiheit bedeutete nicht nur die Freiheit der Periodika, des Buchdrucks und des Buchhandels von staatlicher Bevormundung, sondern auch die Freiheit der Gedankenäußerung in Druckschriften. Die Pressefreiheit wurde nicht mehr als ein Akt der Herrschergnade, sondern als ein Grundrecht verstanden. Politische Presse (vor allem Zeitungen) wurde zum Mittel zum Ausdrücken

zaklada za znanost) geförderten Projektes UIP-11-2013-4919 erstellt. J. Horvat, *Povijest novinstva Hrvatske 1771-1939*, Zagreb, Golden marketing - Tehnička knjiga, 2003; P. Haramija, *Stoljeće političkog plakata u Hrvatskoj*, Ausstellungskatalog, Zagreb, Kabinet grafike Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti, 1992; E. Bauer, *Die Entwicklung der Publizistik in Kroatien*, Zagreb, Europa Verlag, 1942; V. Švoger, *Novinstvo kao javni medij sredinom 19. stoljeća u Hrvatskoj*, «Časopis za suvremenu povijest», vol. 32, n. 3, 2000, pp. 451-462; V. Švoger, *Das kroatische Pressewesen*, in H. Rumpler, P. Urbanitsch (edd.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918*, Band VIII, *Politische Öffentlichkeit und Zivilgesellschaft*, 2. Teilband - *Die Presse als Faktor der politischen Mobilisierung*, Wien, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006, pp. 2149-2176.

² Mehr über die Zensur in Österreich und in Kroatien siehe bei A.H. Benna, *Organisierung und Personalstand der Polizeihofstelle (1793-1848)*, «Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs», vol. 6, 1953, pp. 197-239; J. Marx, *Die österreichische Zensur im Vormärz*, Wien, Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1959; M. Birk, „Vaterländisches Interesse, Wissenschaft, Unterhaltung und Belehrung“ *Illyrisches Blatt (Ljubljana, 1819-1849)*, *literarni časopis v nemškem jeziku v slovenski provinci predmarčne Austrije*, Maribor, Slavistično društvo, 2000, pp. 37-45; I. Pederin, *Austrijska cenzura i nadzor nad tiskom u Dalmaciji*, Zadar, Matica hrvatska, Ogranak, 2008; A. Suppan, *Mjere cenzure protiv ilirskih listova Ljudevita Gaja*, «Radovi», vol. 3, 1973, pp. 213-239.

³ L. Hölscher, *Öffentlichkeit*, in O. Brunner, W. Conze, R. Koselleck (edd.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, vols. IV, Stuttgart, Klett-Cotta, 1978, pp. 413-467, insbes. pp. 448, 453-455.

von politischen Wünschen und Ansprüchen, aber auch zur Gestaltung der öffentlichen Meinung⁴.

Diesewichtige kommunikologische Rolle der Zeitungen erkennend beiläufig die regierenden Kreise in der Habsburgermonarchie und in anderen europäischen Ländern, das durch die Aufhebung der Zensur (die in der Habsburgermonarchie am 14. März 1848 verkündet wurde) entstandene Rechtsvakuum durch neue Vorschriften zu füllen und eine aktive Pressepolitik zu führen⁵. Nach dem Vorbild des österreichischen Pressegesetzes vom 13. März 1849 wurde das kroatische Pressegesetz ausgearbeitet (unterzeichnet vom Banus Josip Jelačić am 9. Mai 1849). Da das Gesetz auf einen starken Widerstand liberaler, liberal gesinnter Teile der kroatischen Öffentlichkeit stieß, wurde es nicht vollständig eingeführt und bald von der noch restriktiveren österreichischen Pressordnung vom 27. Mai 1852 abgelöst. Die späteren kroatischen Pressegesetze bildeten österreichische Pendanten nach, aber waren noch restriktiver. Die Bedingungen für die Tätigkeit der kroatischen Presse wurden allerdings erst im Jahre 1875 liberalisiert, als, im Rahmen der Reformen des Banus Ivan Mažuranić, die neuen kroatischen Pressegesetze – das Gesetz über die Anwendung der Presse, das Gesetz über Strafverfahren in Presseangelegenheiten, das Gesetz über die Zusammensetzung der Geschworenenlisten und das Gesetz über das Strafverfahren als Subsidiarquelle – promulgiert wurden. Diese Gesetze blieben die Grundlage der kroatischen Pressegesetzgebung bis 1918⁶.

⁴ M. Breil, *Die Augsburger „Allgemeine Zeitung“ und die Pressepolitik Bayerns. Ein Verlagsunternehmen zwischen 1815 und 1848*, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1996, p. 69; F. Schneider, *Presse, Pressefreiheit, Zensur*, in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, vol. 4, pp. 899-927. Zur Auffassung der Pressefreiheit und der gesellschaftlichen Rolle der Zeitungen in Kroatien um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts siehe V. Švoger, *Zagrebačko liberalno novinstvo o slobodi tiska i društvenoj ulozi novina od izbijanja revolucije 1848. do uvođenja neoapsolutizma 1851. Godine*, «Povijesni prilozi», vol. 30, 2006, pp. 204-223.

⁵ Die aktive Pressepolitik in der Habsburgermonarchie und im Deutschen Bund in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts wurde durch eine Kombination und ein Zusammenspiel von Regelung, Repression und Propaganda gekennzeichnet. R. Kohnen, *Pressepolitik des Deutschen Bundes. Methoden staatlicher Pressepolitik nach der Revolution von 1848*, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1995, pp. 90-181; V. Švoger, *Zagrebačko liberalno novinstvo 1848.-1852. I stvaranje moderne Hrvatske*, Zagreb, Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2007, pp. 35-40.

⁶ Zu Pressegesetzen in der Habsburgermonarchie im 19. Jahrhundert siehe Th. Olechowski, *Das Preßrecht in der Habsburgermonarchie*, in *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918*, vol. 8, pp. 1493-1530. Kroatische Vorschriften hinsichtlich der Presse im 19. Jahrhundert analysieren D. Čepulo, *Sloboda tiska i porotno suđenje u Banskjoj Hrvatskoj 1848-1918*, «Hrvatski ljetopis za kazneno pravo i praksu», vol. 7, n. 2, 2000, pp. 923-975; D. Čepulo, *Trial by Jury in Croatia 1849-1918: Transfer and the Context*, in Z. Pokrovac (ed.), *Rechtssprechung in Europa. Studien zum 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert. Rechtskulturen des modernen Osteuropa*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 2012, pp. 1-111; V. Švoger, J. Turkalj, *Die Pressefreiheit in Kroatien vom Ende der vierziger bis Mitte der achtziger Jahre des 19. Jahrhunderts – gesetzliche Regelung und Praxis*, in G. Máthé, B. Mezey (edd.) *Kroatisch-ungarische öffentlich-rechtliche Verhältnisse zur Zeit der Doppelmonarchie*, Budapest, Eötvös University Press, 2015, pp. 293-344.

Die Revolution von 1848 brachte nicht nur die Veränderung des rechtlichen Rahmens für die Tätigkeit der Presse in Kroatien, sondern führte auch zu einer «Leseexplosion» wegen eines verstärkten Interesses an aktuellen Informationen⁷. Wie in anderen europäischen Ländern wurden auch in Kroatien zahlreiche neue Blätter gegründet und die Auflagen der schon bestehenden Zeitungen stiegen wesentlich an. Dieses Interesse hielt aber nicht lange an, so dass manche von diesen Blättern, wie überall in Europa, allerdings nur für eine kurze Zeit erschienen⁸.

Eine direkte Folge der kurzfristig uneingeschränkten Pressefreiheit im revolutionären Jahr 1848 war eine Erweiterung des Themenspektrums der Zeitungen. Seit dieser Zeit schrieben kroatische (politische) Zeitungen – bis dann politisch farblos und eine Art der politischen und gesellschaftlichen Chronik – ausführlich über verschiedene politische Ereignisse und Prozesse in Kroatien, im In- und Ausland, über die Tätigkeit einzelner herausragender Politiker, berichteten eingehend über die Arbeit der kroatischen, österreichischen und ungarischen Regierung, des Kroatischen Landtages (Die erste kroatische Zeitung, die über Sitzungen des Kroatischen Landtags (Sabor) von 1848 meldete, war *Saborske novine*.) sowie der Parlamente in Wien und in Budapest, schilderten zusammenfassend auch den Inhalt von Parlamentssitzungen in anderen europäischen Ländern, präsentierten und befürworteten gewisse politische Ideen und Programme⁹ und setzten sich kritisch mit politischer

⁷ Dieses Interesse konnte man sogar auf dem Lande bemerken, wo etwa 90% der Bevölkerung Analphabeten waren. Ein Zeugnis davon legt die Autobiographie eines der bedeutendsten kroatischen Lehrer und Pädagogen des 19. Jahrhunderts Mijat Stojanović ab. Er schrieb, dass, nachdem die Nachrichten über revolutionäre Unruhen in europäischen Ländern und in Ungarn Slawonien erreicht hatten, seine Bauernnachbarn in ganzen Scharen zu ihm kamen, damit er ihnen aus den Zeitungen vorlese und sie belehre, wie sie sich unter solchen unstablen und gefährlichen Umständen benehmen sollten.

⁸ Neben den vier schon länger erscheinenden Zeitungen wurden in Kroatien im Revolutionsjahr zwölf neue Blätter gegründet. Mehr über diese Blätter und eine ähnliche Situation in einigen anderen europäischen Ländern siehe bei Švoger, *Zagrebačko liberalno novinstvo 1848-1852*, cit., pp. 31-44.

⁹ Da der Umfang dieses Beitrags beschränkt ist, werden in Fußnoten nur einige relevante Arbeiten erwähnt. M. Artuković, *Ideologija srpsko-hrvatskih sporova (Srbobran 1884-1902)*, Zagreb, Naprijed, 1991; T. Markus, *Slavenski Jug 1848.-1850. godine i hrvatski politički pokret*, Zagreb, Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001; T. Markus, *Zagrebački politički listovi 1848-1850 godine. Izabrani članci*, Zagreb, Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2005; P. Korunić, *Jugoslavenska ideja u hrvatskoj i slovenskoj politici za revolucije 1848-1849 godine*, «Radovi», vol. 14, 1981, pp. 91-228; M. Fruk, *Hrvatski listovi na njemačkome jeziku u službi ilirske ideje*, «Časopis za suvremenu povijest», vol. 32, n. 3, 2000, pp. 443-450; J. Turkalj, *Zvekan – humor, satira i karikatura kao sredstvo pravaške političke propagande*, «Povijesni prilozi», vol. 18, 1999, pp. 121-160; J. Turkalj, *Pravaški humorističko-satirički listovi kao prenositelji političkih poruka 80-ih godina 19. stoljeća*, «Časopis za suvremenu povijest», vol. 32, n. 3, 2000, pp. 463-472; S. Matković, *Novinstvo Čiste stranke prava. Prilog poznavanju pravaškog tiska*, «Časopis za suvremenu povijest», vol. 32, n. 3, 2000, pp. 487-496; V. Švoger, *Südslawische Zeitung 1849-1852. Organ nove epohe kod Južnih Slavena*, Zagreb, Hrvatski institut za povijest - Dom i svijet, 2002; Švoger, *Zagrebačko liberalno novinstvo 1848-1852*, cit.

Tätigkeit und Programmen politischer Opponenten¹⁰ usw. auseinander. In der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts waren die meisten Zeitungen in Kroatien politisch profiliert, auch wenn sie sich dem Lesepublikum als politisch neutral vorstellten¹¹. Sie behandelten auch verschiedene wirtschaftliche Themen und Probleme¹², schrieben sogar über die neue politische und wirtschaftliche Kraft – die Arbeiterschaft – und ihre Probleme¹³, über neue Tendenzen auf dem religiösen Gebiet¹⁴ und befürworteten moderne liberale Ideen in Bezug auf die Organisation des Staates und der Zivilgesellschaft¹⁵. Kurz gesagt, kroatische politische Zeitungen dienten im 19. Jahrhundert als eine Plattform zur Verbreitung neuer/moderner Ideen und Konzeptionen, die eine umfassende Modernisierung Kroatiens anstrebten und die wichtigsten Medien zur Gestaltung der öffentlichen Meinung waren.

¹⁰ N. Rumenjak, *Nacionalna ideologija listova Obzor i Srbobran (1901-1902 godine)*, «Povijesni prilozi», vol. 14, 1995, pp. 209-257; A. Kolak Bošnjak, *Između Europe i Azije. Hrvati i Madari u propagandnom ratu 1848/1849*, «Povijesni prilozi», vol. 27, n. 34, 2008, pp. 175-193.

¹¹ Kurz zur kroatischen Parteipresse siehe Švoger, *Das kroatische Pressewesen*, cit., pp. 2155-2164.

¹² J. Turkalj, *Gospodarska problematika u listu Hrvatska 1871. godine*, «Časopis za suvremenu povijest», vol. 28, nn. 1-2, 1996, pp. 121-138; V. Švoger, *Zagrebački liberalni tisak o preobrazbi hrvatskoga gospodarstva i izgradnji modernoga kapitalističkoga gospodarskog sustava 1848-1852*, «Povijesni prilozi», vol. 28, 2005, pp. 173-197.

¹³ V-k. [Franz Vaniček], *Die menschliche Arbeitskraft als volkswirtschaftlicher Faktor. I. Die Arbeitskraft als sich betrachtet, Agrarzeitung (AZ)*, n. 282 vom 9. 12. 1873; V-k., *Die menschliche Arbeitskraft als volkswirtschaftlicher Faktor. II. Erhöhung der Arbeitskraft durch Bildung*, AZ, n. 284 vom 11. 12. 1873, n. 285 vom 12. 12. 1873 und n. 286 vom 13. 12. 1873; V-k., *Die menschliche Arbeitskraft als volkswirtschaftlicher Faktor. III. Association der Arbeitskräfte*, AZ, n. 287 vom 15. 12. 1873, n. 288 vom 16. 12. 1873, n. 295 vom 24. 12. 1873, n. 297 vom 29. 12. 1873. In der kroatischen Presse war es im 19. Jahrhundert üblich, dass die meisten Artikel anonym oder unter einem Pseudonym, bzw. einer Chiffre, veröffentlicht wurden. Falls der Name eines so bezeichneten Autors identifiziert werden konnte, steht er hier in eckigen Klammern geschrieben.

¹⁴ I. Iveljić, *Katolička crkva i civilno društvo u Hrvatskoj 1848. godine*, «Časopis za suvremenu povijest», vol. 25, nn. 2-3, 1993, pp. 19-42; V. Švoger, *Vjerska problematika u zagrebačkom liberalnom tisku 1848.-1852.*, «Croatica Christiana Periodica», vol. 21, n. 56, 2005, pp. 121-145.

¹⁵ P. Korunić, *Osnovice građanskog društva u Hrvatskoj za revolucije 1848-49. godine*, «Radovi», vol. 32-33, 2001, pp. 69-104; V. Švoger, *Zagrebački liberalni listovi u ustavnoj monarhiji tijekom revolucije 1848-1849 i neposredno nakon nje*, in A. Buczynski, S. Matković (edd.), *Hereditas rerum Croaticarum ad honorem Mirko Valentić*, Zagreb, Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2003, pp. 175-183; Id., *Slobodni pojedinci u slobodnom narodu. Građanske i političke slobode i prava u hrvatskom tisku sredinom 19. stoljeća*, in M. Karbić, H. Kekez, A. Novak, Z. Horvat (edd.), *Ascendere historiam. Zbornik u čast Milana Krubeka*, Zagreb, Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2014, pp. 573-584.

Die Rolle der Zeitungen bei der Befürwortung neuer Ideen im kroatischen Schulwesen im 19. Jahrhundert

In diesem Beitrag werden in erster Linie jene kroatischen politischen Zeitungen analysiert, die ziemlich häufig auch Artikel zum Thema des kroatischen Schulwesens im 19. Jahrhundert veröffentlichten: *Novine hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske/Narodne novine*, *Slavenski Jug*, *Südslawische Zeitung*, *Jugoslavenske novine*, *Agramer Zeitung*, *Domobran* und *Sviet*¹⁶. Die in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts in Kroatien erscheinenden pädagogischen Zeitungen und Zeitschriften – *Napredak*, *Školski prijatelj*, *Kršćanska škola*, *Domaće ognjište* und *Hrvatski učitelj* – werden nur ausnahmsweise berücksichtigt. Die Probleme des kroatischen Schulwesens wurden von herausragenden Lehrern, aber auch von anderen interessierten Intellektuellen beschrieben. Eine systematische und umfassende Analyse kroatischer politischer Periodika in Bezug auf pädagogische und mit dem Schulwesen verbundene Themen liegt allerdings noch nicht vor.

Im Vormärz waren kroatische Zeitungen farblos und wegen der strengen Präventivzensur veröffentlichten sie im Großen und Ganzen Informationen über politische und kulturelle Tätigkeit einiger einflussreichen Persönlichkeiten und Staatsbehörden, über verschiedene Kulturveranstaltungen und seit den 1830-er Jahren auch über die Bemühungen der Mitglieder der kroatischen Wiedergeburtbewegung (auch Illyrische Bewegung genannt) um die Standardisierung der kroatischen Sprache, wobei für die Verbreitung und Popularisierung politischer und kultureller Ideen der Illyrier die literarische Beilage der Zeitung *Novine horvatske, slavonske i dalmatinske/Ilirske narodne novine*¹⁷, das Wochenblatt *Danica horvatska, slavonska i dalmatinska/Danica ilirska* (1835-1849), viel wichtiger war¹⁸. Die Illyrier setzten sich für die Einführung der kroatischen (oder der illyrischen Sprache, wie sie sie nannten, um so im Geiste der slawischen Wechselseitigkeit unter diesem Namen auch andere südslawische Völker zusammenzubringen) Sprache als Amtssprache in Kroatien ein, folglich auch als Unterrichtssprache in kroatischen Schulen. Das war der Rahmen, den kroatische Zeitungen nicht überschritten.

Nach dem Ausbruch der Revolution von 1848 führte die Verbreitung liberaler Ideen auch in Kroatien zu Diskussionen über das Verhältnis zwischen Staat und Kirche und besonders über ihre Rollen im Unterrichtswesen. Anders als in vielen anderen europäischen Ländern blieb ein Streit zwischen der Katholischen Kirche und Mitgliedern der modernen bürgerlichen Gesellschaft

¹⁶ Zu diesen Blättern vgl. Horvat, *Povijest novinstva Hrvatske*, cit.; Švoger, *Das kroatische Pressewesen*, cit.

¹⁷ Seit 1849 erscheint diese Zeitung unter dem Namen *Narodne novine* als kroatisches Amtsblatt.

¹⁸ S. Coha, *Poetika i politika Gajeve Danice*, Dissertation, Philosophische Fakultät (Betreuer: Prof. Dr. Vinko Brešić), Universität Zagreb, 2009.

in Kroatien in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts aus, mit Ausnahme einiger auf das Bildungssystem bezogener Polemiken¹⁹. Viele kroatische Lehrer setzten sich für eine allmähliche Schwächung des kirchlichen Einflusses auf die Schule ein. Trotzdem sprachen sie sich gegen den Ausschluss des Klerus aus der Schule und für ein Zusammenspiel des Staates und der Kirche im Schulwesen als Voraussetzung für erfolgreiche Entwicklung des Schulwesens aus, wofür der Staat Verantwortung trage, weil sie sich bewusst waren, dass es in Kroatien an guten und ausgebildeten Lehrern, die dem Priesterstand nicht gehörten, mangelte²⁰. Der Einfluss der Katholischen Kirche auf das Schulwesen in der Habsburgermonarchie und in Kroatien verstärkte sich nach dem Abschluss des Konkordats im Jahre 1855, weil darin die kirchliche Kontrolle nicht nur über den Religionsunterricht, sondern auch über den Unterricht in allen anderen Schulfächern, ja sogar über das Privatleben der LehrerInnen geregelt wurde²¹. Kroatische Lehrer wurden zur Zeit des Neoabsolutismus zu Trägern der Modernisierungstendenzen im kroatischen Bildungssystem und als Beginn einer organisierten fachlichen Tätigkeit kroatischer Lehrer wird die Gründung der Zeitschrift *Napredak*²² (Fortschritt) im Jahre 1859 angesehen. Obwohl während des Neoabsolutismus in Kroatien gewisse Fortschritte in Qualitätssteigerung des kroatischen Volks- und Mittelschulsystems erzielt werden konnten, schuf erst das Gesetz über die Organisation der Volks- und Lehrerschulen von 1874 eine gute Grundlage für die Modernisierung und Säkularisierung des Volksschulwesens in Kroatien. Beratungen im Kroatischen Landtag über diesen Gesetzentwurf verschärften wiederum den Zwist zwischen kirchlichen und Lehrerkreisen wegen des kirchlichen Einflusses auf die Schule, weil das Gesetz vorsah, dass die Kontrolle über das Schulsystem durch staatliche Organe übernommen werden sollte. Es bestand sogar die Gefahr vor dem Boykott der Volksschule seitens

¹⁹ Einen guten Überblick über den Wandel im Verhältnis zwischen Staat und Kirche in westeuropäischen Ländern in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts gibt A. Biočić, *Djelovanje katoličkih svećenika u saziwu Sabora Trojedne kraljevine od 1868. do 1871 godine*, Dissertation, Hrvatski studiji (Betreuer: Prof. Dr. Slavko Slišković) Universität Zagreb, 2014, pp. 6-23, Debattieren über Kontrolle Ausübung über das Schulwesen, pp. 19-20. Das Verhältnis zwischen dem Staat und der Katholischen Kirche in Kroatien schildert die Autorin auf pp. 24-33. Vgl. auch M. Strecha, *Katoličko hrvatstvo*, Zagreb, Barbat, 1997, pp. 57-58.

²⁰ C -, *Über das Volksschulwesen in Slowenien*, *Südslawische Zeitung (SZ)*, n. 246 vom 25. 10. 1850; anonym, *Unser Volksschulwesen II*, *SZ*, n. 230 vom 27. 12. 1849; M.[irko] B.[ogović], Leitartikel, *Jugoslavenske novine (JN)*, n. 140 vom 24. 9. 1850; F. [Ivan Filipović], *Potreboče pučke škole*, *JN*, n. 40 vom 25. 5. 1850.

²¹ M. Gross, *Počeci moderne Hrvatske. Neoapsolutizam u civilnoj Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji 1850-1860.*, Zagreb, Globus, Centar za povijesne znanosti Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Odjel za hrvatsku povijest, 1985, 278-279; A. Cuvaj, *Grada za povijest školstva kraljevina Hrvatske i Slavonije*, vol. 4, vervollständigte Ausgabe, Zagreb, Kr. hrv.-slav.-dalm. zem. vlada, Odjel za bogoštovlje i nastavu, 1910, pp. 23-24.

²² Über diese Zeitschrift vgl. D. Župan, *Pučko školstvo u vrijeme banovanja Ivana Mažuranića*, Magisterarbeit, Philosophische Fakultät (Betreuer: Prof. Dr. Petar Korunić), Universität Zagreb, 2002, pp. 34-36.

des katholischen Klerus (auch orthodoxe Priester leisteten starken Widerstand diesem Gesetzesentwurf), die aber dank den Bemühungen des Zagreber Erzbischof beseitigt werden konnte²³. Dieses Gesetz zeigte aber, dass der Prozess der Säkularisierung des kroatischen Schulwesens unumkehrbar war.

Der schlechte Zustand des kroatischen Volksschulwesens um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts wurde von mehreren Autoren beschrieben: es gab nicht genug Volksschulen, Lehrer waren schlecht bezahlt und ausgebildet und häufig der Willkür einiger mächtiger Einzelpersonen ausgesetzt, die Qualität der Seminare für Lehrerausbildung und einschlägiger Literatur war schlecht, es mangelte an guten Schulbüchern in kroatischer Sprache und adäquaten Lehrmitteln²⁴. In den folgenden Jahrzehnten verbesserte sich die Lage im Volksschulwesen, insbesondere hinsichtlich der Zahl der Volksschulen, der Lehrerausbildung und der Qualität der Schulbücher in der Muttersprache, doch die Lage ließ noch viel zu wünschen übrig. In den 60-er und 70-er Jahren wurden vor allem schlechter und unregelmäßiger Schulbesuch und zu kleine Klassenzimmer als die größten Probleme hervorgehoben, die sich auf die Qualität des Unterrichts auswirkten²⁵.

Als Mittel zur Steigerung der Qualität des Unterrichts in kroatischen Volksschulen hob Ivan Filipović, einer der angesehensten kroatischen Lehrer im 19. Jahrhundert, gute Schulen für Lehrerausbildung, wertvolle und dem Geiste der Zeit und den Bedürfnissen des Volkes angemessene Schulbücher (geschrieben im Geiste der slawischen Wechselseitigkeit), Autonomie der Schule (von kirchlichen Kreisen und feudalen Schutzherren) und Verbesserung der materiellen Lage der Lehrer hervor. Er beschrieb, wie man diese Ziele, von denen hier nur die interessantesten genannt sind, erreichen konnte: die Einführung einer allgemeinen Aufklärungssteuer und, wegen hoher Steuern, Senkung einiger anderer Steuern; die Schulen für die Lehrerausbildung sollten staatliche Einrichtungen sein, die für Angehörige verschiedener Religionen offen sind und den künftigen Lehrern kostenlos Unterkunft, Verpflegung und Schulung bieten; sie sollten theoretisches und praktisches Wissen aus unterschiedlichen Fächern bieten, den besten Schülern sollte man eine weitere Ausbildung an einer

²³ Mehr zu diesem Gesetz, zu diesbezüglichen Beratungen im Kroatischen Landtag und zur Polemik über die Rolle der Kirche im Schulsystem vgl. Župan, *Pučko školstvo*, pp. 44-61. Das Gesetz über die Organisation der Volks- und Lehrerschulen in Kroatien und Slawonien ist in Cuvaj, *Građa za povijest školstva*, cit., vol. 4, pp. 435-454 abgedruckt.

²⁴ M. Stojanović, *Još jedna reč o stanju naših narodnih učionicah*, *Novine dalmatinsko-hèrvatsko-slavonske* (NDHS), n. 6 vom 20. 1. 1847; A. S., *Još jedna reč o stanju naših narodnih učionicah*, NDHS, n. 45 vom 5. 6. 1847; S., *Nešto o staležu učiteljskom*, *Slavenski jug* (SJ), n. 73 vom 21. 6. 1849; I. Filipović, *Interpelatija na odsiek prosvjete*, SJ, n. 54 vom 8. 5. 1849; *Unser Volksschulwesen III*, SZ, n. 235 [232!] vom 29. 12. 1849; L. Štroboth, *An meine Amtsbrüder* (*Lehrer an den ärarischen deutschen Trivialschulen in der k. k. Militärgrenze*), SZ, n. 4 vom 5. 1. 1850; L. Štroboth, *Ansichten über den Zustand der Schulen in der Militärgrenze. II. und III.*, SZ, n. 13 vom 16. 1. 1850 und n. 16 vom 19. 1. 1850; Leitartikel, JN, n. 179 vom 9. 11. 1850.

²⁵ Anonym, *Što je uzrok da naše pučke učione pravo nenapreduju*, *Napredak*, n. 19, 1861, S. 293; I. Filipović, *Na obranu pučkog učiteljstva*, *Napredak*, n. 12, 1876, S. 178; *Pedagogičke iskrice. Članci za školu i dom od Ivana Filipovića*, *Narodne novine* (NN), n. 273 vom 28. 11. 1857.

slawischen Universität ermöglichen und auf diese Weise künftige Lehrkräfte an den Lehrerschulen heranbilden²⁶. In den genannten Artikeln legte er die umfassendste in kroatischen politischen Zeitungen um die Mitte des 19. Jhs. veröffentlichte Analyse des Zustandes des kroatischen Volksschulwesens und der Mittel zur seiner Verbesserung dar.

Ein anderer Lehrerschrieb den Lehrern eine Schlüsselrolle im Unterrichtsprozess zu, thematisierte Mittel zur besseren Ausbildung von Lehrern und hob als solche folgende hervor: die mit guten pädagogischen, wissenschaftlichen, ökonomischen und moralischen Büchern versehenen Bibliotheken, eine pädagogische Zeitschrift, Lehrerversammlungen, kontinuierliche berufliche Weiterbildung der Lehrer, bessere Gehälter für Lehrer, ein Jahrespreis für beste Lehrer, eine staatliche Rente nach 30-jährigem Dienst in der Schule und öffentliche Prüfungen am Ende des Schuljahres²⁷. Derselbe Lehrer schrieb auch über Mittel und Modalitäten zu einer guten und erfolgreichen sittlichen Erziehung der Kinder²⁸.

Seit dem Revolutionsjahr 1848 überwog in kroatischen Intellektuellen- und Lehrerkreisen die durch aufklärerische und rationalistische Ideen geprägte moderne Auffassung über die ausschlaggebende Rolle der Ausbildung bei der Gestaltung des menschlichen Charakters. Immer wieder wurde in Zeitungen hervorgehoben, dass das kroatische Volk durch Ausbildung zu nützlichen Mitgliedern der Gesellschaft werden könnte, die im Stande wären, rational zu denken, Gesetze zu befolgen und zum Fortschritt der Gesellschaft beizutragen. Die Ausbildung breiterer Gesellschaftsschichten, vor allem durch Volksschule, hielten sie für eine der Voraussetzungen für eine umfassende Modernisierung kroatischer Gesellschaft, aber auch für das wichtigste Mittel im Prozess der Homogenisierung des Kulturfeldes als eines wichtigen Schrittes zur nationalen und kulturellen Integration. Das auf Kommunikation in einer standardisierten (Volks)Sprache und Schrift basierte Bildungssystem war eine sehr wichtige Bedingung für die Bildung moderner Gesellschaft und moderner Institutionen²⁹. Das Erreichen dieser Ziele hing aber in erster Linie von der Qualität des Bildungssystems ab. Deswegen gaben einige Autoren eigene Vorschläge für die Lösung gewisser Probleme im kroatischen Schulwesen³⁰.

²⁶ F. [Ivan Filipović], *Potreboće pučke škole*, JN, n. 40 vom 25. 5. 1850.; F. *Potreboće pučke škole*. A. *O uredjenju sēmeništa za učitelje*, JN, n. 91 vom 26. 7. 1850; F. *Potreboća pučke škole*. B. *Ali kako da se ta sēmeništa urede?*, JN, n. 98 vom 3. 8. 1850; F. *Potreboće pučke škole*. B. *O školskih knjigah*, JN, n. 180 vom 11. 11. 1850; F. *Potreboće pučke škole*, JN, n. 181 vom 12. 11. 1850.

²⁷ V. Marik, *Sredstva, kako bi se naši pučki učitelji bolje izobraziti mogli*, NN, n. 158 vom 14. 7. 1859.

²⁸ Id., *Kojim je načinom moguće mladež čudoredno odgajati?*, NN, n. 159 vom 15. 7. 1859, n. 160 vom 16. 7. 1859, n. 161 vom 18. 7. 1859.

²⁹ M. Haralambos, *Uvod u sociologiju*, Zagreb, Nakladni zavod Globus, 1994, 212; Originaltitel: *Sociology: themes and perspectives*.

³⁰ M. Stojanović, *O učionici*, SJ, n. 31 vom 15. 10. 1848; M. Stojanović, *Rieč učiteljem jugoslavenskim od učitelja M. Stojanovića*, SJ, n. 20 vom 15. 2. 1849; M.[irko] B.[ogović],

Der umfassendste Vorschlag einer liberal geprägten Reform des kroatischen Schulsystems, die vor allem auf Gymnasien und Realschulen abzielte, aber auch die Gründung einer südslawischen Universität vorsah, entstammte der Feder eines anonymen Autors, ganz bestimmt eines akademisch Ausgebildeten oder eines Lehrers, was sich aufgrund seiner guten Kenntnisse der Sachlage schließen lässt. In einer Reihe von Artikeln unter dem Titel «Zur Studienreform» befasste er sich mit Mittel- und Hochschulen. Volksschulen analysierte er aber in drei Artikeln unter dem Titel «Unser Volksschulwesen». Die Volksschule hatte, seiner Meinung nach, eine sehr wichtige Rolle in sittlicher Erziehung, aber auch in der Bildung guter Staatsbürger und Mitglieder der nationalen Gemeinschaft. Deswegen sollte ein Volksschullehrer in erster Linie über notwendige Kenntnisse, aber auch über einen festen Charakter verfügen, um seine erzieherische und ausbildende Funktion ausfüllen zu können. Der Autor setzte sich für eine kritische und selektive Annahme der kulturellen Errungenschaften des Westens ein, und zwar nur jener, die der kroatischen nationalen Kultur nützen könnten. Er befürwortete eine Zusammenarbeit der Kirche und des Staates im Bildungssystem, sprach sich aber entschieden gegen konfessionelle Schulen aus, die, seiner Meinung nach, schon im jungen Alter religiösen Fanatismus hervorrufen könnten³¹. Seine Vorschläge hinsichtlich der Gymnasien und Realschulen waren viel konkreter. Den Anstoß zu seinem Artikel gab die Veröffentlichung eines neuen Unterrichtsplans für Gymnasien und Realschulen, den das Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht in Wien ausgearbeitet hatte³². Den neuen Gymnasialstudienplan bezeichnete der Verfasser der genannten Zeitungsartikel als «so dürftig, so schal, so vormärzlich, daß er selbst von dem *ancien regime* widerspruchslos angenommen worden wäre»³³. Seine Beurteilung war übertrieben, weil der neue Gymnasialplan viele Neuigkeiten brachte und bis zum Zerfall der Habsburgermonarchie die Grundlage für die Entwicklung und Modernisierung der Gymnasien bildete³⁴. Die neue Einteilung der Gymnasien in vierjährige Untergymnasien und achtjährige Obergymnasien hieß er willkommen, kritisierte aber scharf, dass einige vorbereitende philosophische Fächer – Enzyklopädie, Anthropologie, Psychologie, Logik, Ästhetik und Geschichte der Philosophie im Grundrisse

Leitartikel, *JN*, n. 140 vom 24. 9. 1850; F. [Ivan Filipović], *Potreboće pučke škole*, *JN*, n. 40 vom 25. 5. 1850; *Unser Volksschulwesen II.*, *SZ*, n. 230 vom 27. 12. 1849.

³¹ Anonym, *Unser Volksschulwesen*, *SZ*, n. 229 vom 24. 12. 1849, n. 230 vom 27. 12. 1849 und n. 235 [232!] vom 29. 12. 1849. Eine ähnliche Meinung von konfessionellen Schulen drückte auch der schon erwähnte Lehrer Ivan Filipović in seinem Artikel *Potreboće pučke škole*. B. O *školskih knjigab*, *JN*, n. 180 vom 11. 11. 1850 aus.

³² V. Švoger, I. Horbec, *Početak modernoga srednjeg školstva u Habsburškoj Monarhiji: Nastavni plan za gimnazije (1849)*, «Anali za povijest odgoja», vol. 10, 2011, pp. 7-15; Gross, *Počeci moderne Hrvatske*, cit., p. 304.

³³ *Zur Studienreform*, I., *SZ*, n. 133 vom 30. 8. 1849.

³⁴ Švoger, Horbec, *Početak modernoga srednjeg školstva u Habsburškoj Monarhiji: Nastavni plan za gimnazije (1849)*, cit., pp. 7-11.

– aus dem Unterrichtsplan der Obergymnasien ausgeschlossen waren, weil sie künftigen Juristen, Philologen, Philosophen, Theologen, Ärzten usw. notwendig waren. Seine Vision des reformierten Gymnasiums sah folgendermaßen aus: Verringerung der Stundenzahl für Religionsunterricht; ein modifizierter Unterricht der lateinischen und griechischen Sprache, der weniger grammatikalische und sprach-stilistische Inhalte umfasst, aber mehr Informationen über Geschichte und Kultur der Völker der Antike bietet; eine Verbindung nationaler Geschichte und Geographie, deren Inhalte mehr in Bezug auf allgemeine Geschichte und Geographie behandelt werden sollten; mehr Unterrichtsstunden für Mathematik, Physik und Chemie; die Unterrichtssprache sollte die Muttersprache sein, denn nur mittels dieser Sprache könnten die Schüler zu denken lernen; Verringerung der Deutschunterrichtsstunden sowie Einführung des Englischen und Französischen in der letzten Klasse des Obergymnasiums³⁵. Der neue Unterrichtsplan für Realschulen wurde von demselben Verfasser aber positiv bewertet, insbesondere wegen der Tatsache, dass er Gymnasien und Realschulen näher brachte und einen Übergang aus unteren Realschulen, die ebenso vier Jahre dauerten, in Obergymnasien ermöglichte. Die Realschule unterschied sich vom Gymnasium in erster Linie dadurch, dass in der Realschule mehr praktische Fächer unterrichtet wurden als im Gymnasium. In den ersten vier Klassen der Realschule sollte der Unterricht eher populär, in der Oberrealschule mehr wissenschaftlich ausgerichtet sein. Klassische Sprachen und naturwissenschaftliche Fächer sollten in der Realschule so unterrichtet werden, wie er für Gymnasien vorgeschlagen hatte. In der Realschule sollten mehrere lebendige Sprachen gelernt werden – Deutsch oder Italienisch sowie eine slawische Sprache in der unteren Realschule und Englisch oder Französisch in der Oberrealschule. Seiner Meinung nach könnten auch Musik, Gymnastik, Stenographie und eventuell andere Fächer unterrichtet werden³⁶.

Dieser anonyme Verfasser strebte eine Umwandlung der Gymnasien aus Schulen für Lernen der klassischen Sprachen in moderne Mittelschulen an, die den Schülern ermöglichen sollten, sich solide und umfassende Kenntnisse zu erwerben. Die Realschulen dagegen, wie sie im Studienplan für Realschulen gestaltet wurden, beurteilte er sehr positiv, weil sie ihre Hauptaufgabe – eine gründliche Bildung künftiger Unternehmer, Handelsmänner und Handwerker zu bieten – erfüllen konnten.

Derselbe Autor legte auch einen Entwurf für die südslawische Universität vor, die in Zagreb als dem politischen und kulturellen Zentrum der Südslawen gegründet werden sollte. Hatteschon die Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften in Zagreb eine große Rolle bei der Verbreitung der Ausbildung und Kultur in kroatischen Ländern gespielt, sollte die Universität eine noch unmessbar wichtigere Rolle haben. Da es in Kroatien an Fachmännern in verschiedenen

³⁵ *Zur Studienreform*, I., SZ, n. 133 vom 30. 8. 1849., II., n. 134 vom 31. 8. 1849.

³⁶ *Zur Studienreform*, III., n. 137 vom 4. 9. 1849.

Bereichen mangelte – Juristen, Priester, Lehrer, Ingenieure, vor allem Wald- und Bergbauingenieure, aber auch gebildete Landwirte, Handelsmänner und Handwerker –, sollte in Zagreb eine Universität gegründet werden, die höhere Ausbildung sowohl wissenschaftlich-theoretischer aber auch praktischer Richtung bieten sollte. Für künftige wirtschaftliche Entwicklung Kroatiens waren, seiner Meinung nach, unterschiedliche Fachschulen notwendig – ein polytechnisches Institut, eine Bergbauschule, zwei Schifffahrtsschulen, mehrere Handels-, Forst- und Landwirtschaftsschulen sowie einige Militärschulen³⁷. Ein solches Fachschulensystem würde große finanzielle Mittel und sehr viele, angemessen ausgebildete Lehrer erheischen. Um enorme Kosten zu ersparen und eine Zersplitterung im Ausbildungssystem zu vermeiden, setzte er sich für eine Verbindung der höheren Fachschulen mit der Universität ein. An einer solchen Universität sollten ausgebildete Leute unterrichten, die eine Wissenschaft nicht nur theoretisch, sondern auch praktisch kannten und die imstande wären, interdisziplinär zu unterrichten. Im Rahmen der Universität in Zagreb sollten folgende Fakultäten gegründet werden: eine philosophische Fakultät, eine «enzyklopädische Fakultät für exakte Wissenschaften» (An dieser Fakultät sollten naturwissenschaftliche und mathematische Fächer, Maschinenbau, Architektur, Land- und Forstwirtschaft, sowie Schifffahrts-, Handels- und Militärwissenschaften unterrichtet werden.), eine katholische und orthodoxe theologische Fakultät. An der bestehenden Rechtsakademie sollte man einen Lehrstuhl für slawisches Recht errichten. Des Weiteren schlug er eine sukzessive Gründung der medizinischen Fakultät vor, und zwar so, dass jedes Jahr diejenigen Lehrstühle errichtet werden, die für das nächste Studienjahr notwendig sind. Alle Fakultäten sollten begleitende Anstalten wie physikalisches Kabinett, chemisches Labor, botanischen Garten, Universitätsbibliothek³⁸ usw. teilen. Alle Professoren sollten interdisziplinär unterrichten und die Universität sollte auf dem Prinzip der Lehr- und Lernfreiheit basieren. Er schilderte kurz auch die Struktur der Leitungsorgane der Universität – des akademischen Senats und des Rektorats. Das Amt des Rektors sollten abwechselnd Vertreter aller Fakultäten innehaben³⁹.

In der erwähnten Reihe von Artikeln über Studienreform gab derselbe Autor auch seine Kommentare zum neuen provisorischen Gesetz über die höchsten fachlichen und leitenden Organe der Universität in der Habsburgermonarchie.

³⁷ Andere Autoren befürworteten die Gründung der Fachschulen in Kroatien auch: Landwirtschaftsschulen in Varaždin oder Požega, Handelsschulen in Karlovac oder Sisak und Rijeka, Schifffahrtsschulen in Rijeka, Bakar und Karlobag usw. Vgl. L.[Franjo Lovrić], *Od ustja Kupe na dan sv. svetih*, JN, n. 175 vom 5. 11. 1850; Leitartikel, SZ, n. 175 vom 19. 10. 1849; [Franz Vaniček], *Vinkovce*, 5. Febr., AZ, n. 35 vom 12. 2. 1851.

³⁸ Er schlug vor, dass die Bibliothek der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Zagreb der Öffentlichkeit zugänglich gemacht und in eine Universitätsbibliothek umwandelt werden sollte.

³⁹ *Zur Studienreform*. V., SZ, n. 148 vom 18. 9. 1849, n. 149 vom 19. 9. 1849, n. 150 vom 20. 9. 1849 und n. 151 vom 21. 9. 1849.

Zwei seiner wichtigsten Anmerkungen zu diesem Gesetz waren, dass das Gesetz auf nicht parlamentarische Weise erlassen wurde, weswegen seine Gültigkeit auf vier Jahre beschränkt war. Im Gesetz wurde keine orthodoxe und protestantische theologische Fakultät erwähnt, die man, seiner Meinung nach, auch hätte gründen sollen. Er äußerte sich auch zur Besetzung von Professorenstellen an den Fakultäten der Monarchie. Da in der Habsburgermonarchie in der Zeit davor einige Wissenschaften als für den Staat gefährlich proskribiert wurden (als solche erwähnte er Geschichte, kirchliches und römisches Recht, Kameralwissenschaften, Philosophie und politische Wissenschaften sowie deutsche Philologie, konnte man in diesen Wissenschaften keine angemessene wissenschaftliche Ausbildung erwerben. Deswegen sollten für diese Wissenschaften angesehene Professoren aus dem Ausland engagiert werden⁴⁰.

Der Autor war mit den Umständen im kroatischen Bildungssystem wohl vertraut und verglich sie mit der Situation in einigen anderen europäischen Ländern. Er vertrat moderne Auffassungen von der Lehr- und Lernfreiheit, einem interdisziplinären Unterricht mit Anwendung moderner Methoden und einer Kombination des theoretischen und praktischen Wissens. Daraus könnte man schließen, dass der Autor dieser Artikel ein gut informierter Lehrer oder ein im Ausland ausgebildeter Intellektueller war.

Nach dem Vorbild des *Entwurfes der Grundzüge des öffentlichen Unterrichtswesens in Österreich*, den das Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht 1848 ausgearbeitet hatte, erarbeitete die Abteilung für Ausbildung des Banalrates im Herbst 1849 einen Plan für die Modernisierung des kroatischen Unterrichtswesens unter dem Titel *Osnova temeljnih pravilah javnoga obučavanja za Hèrvatsku i Slavoniu*⁴¹. Der genannte kroatische Studienplan ahmte seine österreichische Vorlage sowohl in seinem Namen als auch in seiner inneren Struktur nach, war aber konkreter, den kroatischen politischen und sozialen Umständen angepasst sowie national und slawisch ausgerichtet (als Unterrichtsfächer waren Altslawisch und andere slawischen Sprachen vorgesehen). Nur der Unterricht im Obergymnasium hätte von Fachlehrern erteilt werden sollen⁴². Das Dokument wurde von demselben anonymen Autor der Artikel über die Studienreform als «nichts weiter, als eine Übersetzung des [...] Studienplans für Österreich mit Hinzugabe einiger Paragrafen, welche speziell heimliche Zustände betreffen eingeschätzt»⁴³.

⁴⁰ *Zur Studienreform*. VI, SZ, n. 169 vom 12. 10. 1849 und n. 170 vom 13. 10. 1849; *Zur Studienreform*. VIII, SZ, n. 225 vom 19. 12. 1849.

⁴¹ Eine vergleichende Analyse dieser zwei Pläne für die Modernisierung des Schulsystems in der Habsburgermonarchie und in Kroatien bringt V. Švoger, *O temeljima modernog školstva u Habsburškoj Monarhiji i Hrvatskoj*, «Povijesni prilozi», vol. 30, n. 42, 2012, pp. 309-328. Der Plan für Kroatien wurde in den Zeitungen *Slavenski Jug* und *Narodne novine* veröffentlicht: SJ, n. 166 vom 16. 10. 1849, n. 167 vom 17. 10. 1849, n. 169 vom 19. 10. 1849, n. 170 vom 20. 10. 1849 und n. 171 vom 22. 10. 1849; NN, n. 167-174 vom 16. bis 24. 10. 1849.

⁴² Švoger, *O temeljima modernog školstva u Habsburškoj Monarhiji i Hrvatskoj*, cit., pp. 316-324.

⁴³ Leitartikel, SZ, n. 175 vom 19. 10. 1849.

Nachdem in Kroatien 1859 die erste pädagogische Zeitschrift *Napredak*, gegründet wurde und bald danach auch andere pädagogische Blätter folgten, wurden in kroatischen Zeitungen die mit dem Schulsystem verbundenen Themen seltener behandelt. Die sich mit Schule und Ausbildung befassenden Zeitungsartikel waren nicht so komplex, interessant, gründlich und gut argumentiert wie die in den 1840-er und 1850-er Jahren. Man besprach Sondertypen von Schulen und ihre Tätigkeit (z. B. Wiederholungsschulen, Lehrerschulen, Gewerbeschulen, höhere Mädchenschule, Realschulen usw.)⁴⁴ und hob die sehr wichtige Rolle physischer Übungen, bzw. Turnens in der umfassenden und guten Ausbildung und die Notwendigkeit der Ausstattung aller Schulen mit entsprechenden Turnsälen hervor⁴⁵. Genauso wurden die Regeln einer neuen Lehrerergesellschaft veröffentlicht⁴⁶.

Die Artikel von Franz Vaniček, Lehrer am Gymnasium in Vinkovci, waren eine Ausnahme. Neben den Artikeln über das Gymnasium in Vinkovci⁴⁷ schrieb er auch sehr interessante Artikel über die wichtige Rolle der Mütter in Kindererziehung. Aufgrund seiner reichen Erfahrung mit Ausbildungssystem drückte er die Meinung aus, dass sowohl die Schule als auch die Familie eine wichtige Rolle in der Ausbildung spielen. In seiner Zeit, als Väter viel arbeiten mussten, um alle Bedürfnisse der Familie befriedigen zu können, übernahmen die Mütter eine große Rolle in Kindererziehung und -ausbildung. Er bezweifelte, dass sich künftige Mütter während ihrer Ausbildung auch die notwendigen Kenntnisse und Fertigkeiten für eine erfolgreiche Kindererziehung erwerben konnten. Als einen indirekten Beweis für seine Bedenken gab er die gut organisierte höhere Mädchenschule in Zagreb an, derer Unterrichtsplan sogar Chemie umfasste, Psychologie und Pädagogik aber leider nicht. Auf dem Lande war die Situation noch schlimmer, was er teilweise als Folge des Mangels an gut ausgebildeten und aufopferungsbereiten Lehrerinnen erklärte⁴⁸. Seiner Meinung nach war die Aufgabe des Staates, eine angemessene Ausbildung

⁴⁴ *I opet opetovnice, Domobran*, n. 28 vom 4. 2. 1865; *Učiteljska sjemeništa, Domobran*, n. 45 vom 24. 2. 1865; *Obrtničko-zanatlijska učiona. I-III, Domobran*, n. 50 vom 2. 3. 1865, n. 51 vom 3. 3. 1865, n. 52 vom 4. 3. 1865; *Višja djevojačka učiona u Zagrebu, I-III, Domobran*, n. 180 vom 8. 8. 1865, n. 183 vom 11. 8. 1865, n. 185 vom 14. 8. 1865; *Narodne učione, NN*, Nr 54 vom 6. 3. 1862; *Viša dievojačka učiona u Zagrebu, NN*, n. 185 vom 14. 8. 1865; *Narodna realna gimnazija, Sviet*, n. 107 vom 9. 8. 1866.

⁴⁵ *Turovišta i učione, Sviet*, n. 29 vom 5. 5. 1866.

⁴⁶ *Osnova pravilab društva "Učiteljska zadruga", Domobran*, n. 229 vom 6. 10. 1865.

⁴⁷ Er trug verschiedene Argumente für die Umgestaltung dieses Gymnasiums in ein Obergymnasium (was wirklich im September 1851 geschah) vor, bewertete als positiv die Bemühungen des Unterrichts- und Kriegsministeriums, das Gymnasium in Vinkovci mit notwendigen Unterrichtsmitteln, gemäß den damaligen pädagogischen Standards, auszustatten und gute Lehrer zu besorgen und auf diese Weise die Qualität des Unterrichts zu steigern. *Vinkovce, 5. Febr., AZ*, n. 35 vom 12. 2. 1851; *Vinkovce, 25. August, AZ*, n. 201 vom 2. 9. 1851; *Vinkovce, 20. Jän., AZ*, n. 20 vom 25. 1. 1851; ♀, *Vinkovce, 16. August., AZ*, n. 191 vom 21. 8. 1852; ♀, *Vinkovce, 25. Sept., AZ*, n. 232 vom 9. 10. 1852.

⁴⁸ V-k, *Einige Worte über Mittelschulen in Bezug auf die unsrigen, AZ*, n. 96 vom 28. 4. 1874.

für Mädchen zu ermöglichen. Im Einklang mit den damals überwiegenen Auffassungen bestimmte er die weibliche Identität vor allem als die Erfüllung der Rolle der Ehefrau, der Mutter und der Hausfrau. Jedoch, während die meisten seiner Zeitgenossen die disziplinierende Funktion der Schule in den Vordergrund stellten, die schweigsame, bescheidene, fleißige, gehorsame und fromme Mädchen heranbilden sollte⁴⁹, befürwortete Vaniček eine höhere, rational ausgerichtete Ausbildung, die den Mädchen die Erwerbung von notwendigen Kenntnissen und Fertigkeiten ermöglichen würde, damit sie imstande wären, ihre Rollen als Ehefrauen, Mütter und Hausfrauen erfolgreich erfüllen zu können. In seiner Zeit, als wegen des fast ganztäglichen Engagements des Vaters außer dem Hause die Frau eine viel wichtigere Rolle in der Familie als früher bekam – vor allem in der Erziehung und ersten Ausbildung von Kindern, sowie in sparsamer Führung des Haushaltes –, war es wünschenswert, dass die Frau eine rational ausgerichtete höhere, aber nicht zu hohe Ausbildung bekam, dass sie sich notwendige Fertigkeiten für rationale und sparsame Führung des Haushaltes und einen freieren Blick auf die Welt erwarb, damit sie, zusammen mit ihrem Mann, die erworbenen Kenntnisse und Fertigkeiten in ihrer Familie als Ehefrau, Mutter und Hausfrau anwenden konnte⁵⁰.

Eine ähnliche Meinung – nämlich, dass die Schule und die Familie eine gleich wichtige Rolle in Kinderausbildung und -erziehung haben - vertrat in einer Reihe von Artikeln (in Form von Briefen an seinen jungen Kollegen) Mijat Stojanovi, ein erfahrener und angesehener Lehrer. Er betonte aber die erziehende Rolle der Volksschule, die sich die Bildung eines ausgebildeten, emotionell und intellektuell reifen und selbstbewussten Menschen zum Ziel setzte⁵¹.

Abschließend kurz noch über einen Vorschlag der Reform des Volksschulsystems aus der Feder von Izidor Kršnjavi, einem hervorragenden Politiker, Kunsthistoriker und kroatischen Minister für Unterricht und Kultus (1891-1896). Von einer gründlichen vergleichenden Analyse der damals gültigen österreichischen, ungarischen und kroatischen Volksschulgesetze ausgehend, schlug er eine umfassende Reform des Volksschulsystems in Kroatien vor und

⁴⁹ Mehr über die Hauptziele und Durchführungspraxen im Prozess der Mädchenausbildung in Kroatien in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts siehe bei D. Župan, *Mentalni korzet. Spolna politika obrazovanja žena u Bansknoj Hrvatskoj (1868-1918)*, Osijek - Slavonski Brod, Učiteljski fakultet, Hrvatski institut za povijest – Podružnica za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje, 2013, pp. 47-140 und D. Župan, *Uzor-djevojke: obrazovanje žena u Bansknoj Hrvatskoj tijekom druge polovine 19. st.*, «Časopis za suvremenu povijest», vol. 33, n. 2, 2001, pp. 436-452.

⁵⁰ In einem Artikel schrieb er, dass man bei der Ausarbeitung des neuen Unterrichtsplans für eine sechsklassige Mädchenschule in Zagreb darüber nachdenken sollte, dass Mädchen «eine gesunde, kräftige, geistige Nahrung [bekommen], keine Ueberbildung! Nichts wäre verderblicher, als Vertrocknung der Mädchenherzen durch anspruchvolles Gelehrtenthum!» V., *Zengg*, 23. November, AZ, n. 273 vom 27. 11. 1862; V., *Zengg*, 23. November, AZ, n. 273 vom 27. 11. 1862; V., *Rakovac*, 28. November, AZ, n. 275 vom 1. 12. 1863.

⁵¹ M. St. [Mijat Stojanović], *Pisma starog učitelja svomu mladomu drugu*, NN, n. 95 vom 27. 4. 1858 bis n. 110 vom 15. 5. 1858.

argumentierte seine Thesen, indem er sich auf die wichtigsten pädagogischen Autoritäten seiner Zeit berief. Seiner Meinung nach sollte die Volksschule nicht nur grundlegende und allgemeine Kenntnisse bieten, sondern auch ermöglichen, wichtige fachliche Fertigkeiten und Kenntnisse zu erwerben, die für künftige Arbeit im Gewerbe und Handel notwendig waren. Deswegen schlug er eine Umwandlung des kroatischen Volksschulwesens in eine dreistufige 12-jährige Volksschulbildung (untere und obere Volksschule, sowie bürgerliche Schule) vor. In der oberen Volksschule und in der bürgerlichen Schule sollten die für den späteren Beruf wichtigen fachlichen Schulfächer unterrichtet werden und dementsprechend sollten auch die Lehrerschulen reformiert werden⁵². Einige von ihm in diesen Artikeln formulierte Grundsätze wurden zwei Jahre später ins neue kroatische Volksschulgesetz aufgenommen.

Zum Schluss

Indem die Autoren über den Zustand des kroatischen Schulwesens und über Mittel und Modalitäten für seine Verbesserung in Zeitungen berichteten, neue Schulgesetze und Reformpläne analysierten, neue pädagogische Tendenzen und Ideen befürworteten, und sogar eigene Vorschläge für umfassendere Reformen im kroatischen Schulsystem boten, dienten kroatische (politische) Zeitungen im 19. Jahrhundert als ein wichtiges öffentliches Medium, das zur umfassenden Modernisierung des kroatischen Schulsystems maßgeblich beitrug.

⁵² Dr. Kršnjavi, *Die Reform des Volksschulgesetzes*, AZ, n. 173 vom 31. 7. 1886, n. 179 vom 7. 8. 1886, n. 185 vom 14. 8. 1886, n. 190 vom 21. 8. 1886, n. 196 vom 28. 8. 1886 und n. 202 vom 4. 9. 1886.

Las fiestas escolares en Brasil (Curitiba, 1914-1971)*

Marcus Levy Bencostta
Universidade Federal do Paraná (Brasil)
marcus@ufpr.br

The school holidays in Brazil (Curitiba, 1914-1971)

ABSTRACT: This article aims to explain the possible meanings of culture expressed in the organization and celebration of festivities having on stage the school universe of infantile education in Brazil. The objective is to show how the festivities that were celebrated by the school can be translated into a social construction to facilitate the understanding of the identity suggested by those who organized and celebrated such festivities, from the symbols that justified their realization. Finally, the results of this approach to the children's education world are the perception that the festivities of the school calendar constitute discursive dimensions taken as social and symbolic meanings to be investigated by historic research.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: School holidays; Primary school; Brazil; XXth Century.

Introducción

Este trabajo es resultado de un conjunto de estudios y reflexiones fruto de investigaciones acerca de la presencia de la escuela primaria pública en el escenario curitibano, con una mirada más detenida hacia los llamados «grupos escolares», durante el periodo en que esta modalidad de enseñanza existió en la Capital de Paraná. Las ideas y cuestionamientos que aquí se van a exponer tienen su inicio en el año 1914, cuando el Día del Árbol y la Fiesta de la Primavera fueron incorporados al calendario de fiestas escolares en la ciudad de Curitiba. Por otro lado, se optó por el año 1971 para encerrar el abordaje de este tiempo-fragmento de la realidad histórico educacional curitibana – repleta de

* Este trabajo es resultado de un proyecto financiado por el CNPq con beca de productividad en investigación. Una versión parcial de este artículo se publicó en la forma de un capítulo de un libro de la Colección Horizontes de la Sociedad Brasileña de Historia de la Educación (volumen: Historia de las Culturas Escolares en Brasil, 2011).

luzes y sombras, más sombras que luces – por haber sido el año de publicación de la Ley n. 5.692/71, la que estableció que se efectuara paulatinamente la transformación, en todo Brasil, de la modalidad de «Grupos Escolares para Escolas de Primeiro Grau». De esta manera, se resalta la importancia de investigar este universo por ser esta modalidad, al menos en gran parte del siglo XX, responsable por marcar profundamente, con errores y aciertos, culturas de la escuela primaria pública brasileña¹.

Para esta ocasión, se propone una discusión sobre el tema de la fiesta escolar y de sus representaciones, como un espacio de sociabilidad capaz de contribuir para la construcción de interpretaciones históricas del mundo escolar. En otro momento se analizó el tema de la fiesta inserido en el cuadro de los calendarios de conmemoración de las fechas cívicas, las que, por determinación del estado republicano brasileño, se celebraban en las escuelas públicas². Es importante destacar que, las fiestas que aquí serán objeto de análisis no hacen referencia a fechas patrias, sino a otras conmemoraciones que en aquella época se celebraban en la escuela. Pese a no ser tan inflexible como el cívico, el calendario hacía que los alumnos teatralizaran en diferentes momentos del año escolar representaciones festivas de fondo religioso, popular y otros temas sugeridos por la propia escuela, bajo supervisión de los maestros.

Como ya se señaló anteriormente, el espacio escogido para la construcción de este análisis interpretativo es el de la escuela primaria, lo que no significa que las manifestaciones festivas realizadas en este ambiente posean un grado de singularidad que las diferencie de las festividades realizadas en otros espacios escolares distribuidos por todo Brasil. Sin embargo, se pueden considerar de gran utilidad para el análisis, ya que, al utilizar sentidos variados conforme la ocasión, las fiestas escolares se pueden percibir como emisoras de un lenguaje colectivo que no deja de lado su característica principal: expresar diversos planos simbólicos, aprehendidos por aquellos que tienen algún tipo de participación, ya sea como organizadores, como personajes o espectadores. Por lo tanto se seguirá insistiendo en la importancia de investigar los desfiles patrios, como también el conjunto de fiestas escolares como producciones de su cotidiano, con una acción, un tiempo y un lugar determinado: lo que resulta también en una concentración de afectos y emociones con respecto al asunto que se celebra y se conmemora y cuyo principal producto es la simbolización de la unidad de los participantes³.

La principal fuente de esta investigación es la prensa paranaense, compuesta por publicaciones de gran circulación, como por ejemplo los periódicos: «A

¹ M. Bencostta, *Grupos Escolares no Brasil: um novo modelo de escola primária*, in M. Stephanou, M. Bastos (edd.), *Histórias e Memórias da Educação no Brasil*, 2 vols., Petrópolis, Vozes, 2005, vol. 2, pp. 68-76.

² M. Bencostta, *Desfiles patrióticos: Memória e cultura cívica dos grupos escolares de Curitiba (1903-1971)*, in D. Vidal (ed.), *Grupos Escolares: cultura escolar primária e escolarização da infância no Brasil (1893-1971)*, Campinas, Mercado de Letras, 2006, pp. 299-321.

³ *Ibid.*

República, *Diário da Tarde* y *Gazeta do Povo*», y los de circulación restringida al mundo escolar y a sus familiares como la llamada «Imprensa Escolar». Respecto a la que, se hace necesaria una pequeña presentación.

Entre los años 1939 y 1942 la Dirección General de Instrucción⁴ dispuso una suma de dinero para que las escuelas primarias, secundarias, públicas y privadas, organizaran periódicos que vehicularan noticias y lecturas, las que debían contener valores cívicos y patrióticos además de actividades cotidianas consideradas interesantes, en un primer momento concentradas en la imagen del dictador Getúlio Vargas y más tarde en la de algunos héroes nacionales valorizados por el *Estado Novo*, como por ejemplo Tiradentes. El conjunto de instituciones educacionales que participaron de este proyecto sumaba 131 establecimientos de enseñanza divididos en: 88 grupos escolares (15 de la capital y 73 del interior de Paraná) y 43 escuelas secundarias (27 de la capital y 16 del interior de Paraná). Los periódicos fueron publicados en fechas específicas conforme el cronograma a seguir:

1939-15, Noviembre

1940-21, Abril; 07, Septiembre; 15, Noviembre

1941-25, Marzo; 21, Abril; 07, Septiembre; 15, Noviembre

1942-19, Abril.

Parte de este acervo fue comentada muy rápidamente en una publicación del inicio de la década de 1990. En aquella época se afirmaba que a estos periódicos les correspondía

mantener encendida la llama de las actividades, incentivando el entusiasmo entre los alumnos, llevándolos a emplear en ellas el esfuerzo o atención posible. Podían, aún, acercar la escuela a la sociedad transformándola a partir de la comunicación entre ambas. Llevaría, en fin, para el interior de la familia las noticias de la escuela elaboradas de acuerdo con los intereses del *Estado Novo*⁵.

Siguiendo este razonamiento, se percibe que su propósito se diferencia de aquellos de la gran prensa pues se inclina a un público reducido y específico, o sea, hacia la propia comunidad estudiantil y sus familiares. Su circulación fue estandarizada por la Dirección General de Instrucción tomando como marco algunas fechas conmemorativas como el Día del Niño (25 de marzo)⁶, Día de Tiradentes (21 de abril), Independencia de Brasil (07 de septiembre) y Proclamación de la República (15 de noviembre). Sin embargo, la riqueza de

⁴ *Relatório do Interventor Federal do Estado do Paraná, Manoel Ribas, ao Presidente da República Getúlio Vargas, apresentando as atividades do período de 2 de janeiro de 1931 a 31 de dezembro de 1939*, Curitiba, 1940.

⁵ C. Benevides, *Infância e Civismo*, «Anais do Simpósio Nacional de História», vol. 30, 1991, pp. 65-71.

⁶ Entre los años 1940 y 1942 el *Estado Novo* determinó que el día del niño se debería celebrar el 25 de marzo.

esos pequeños periódicos, llamados de *Gazetinhas*, para el estudio de las fiestas escolares va más allá del relieve de los artículos que comentan aquellos días. En ellos se puede obtener el registro de otras festividades incluidas en el calendario escolar como: el Día de la Madre, Carnavales, Navidad, Fiestas de Junio, etc., además de las páginas recreativas, curiosidades sobre cosas y personas y el cronograma de las fiestas planeadas.

En cuanto a la gran prensa, ella se presenta como una importante fuente para la historia pues, a medida que la educación gana notoriedad en el contexto brasileño, tanto político como social, los periódicos se muestran como un medio de divulgación de lo que pasa en el sistema de enseñanza. Críticas, enaltecimientos, decretos, prestación de cuentas a la sociedad, sugerencias, todos estos elementos pueden encontrarse en las páginas de estos periódicos. Esos elementos hacían parte del universo escolar tanto como los cuadernos y libros de los niños que estudiaban en los «grupos escolares».

1. ¿Por qué empezar con fiesta?

Esta pregunta fue elaborada por Roger Chartier al estudiar la fiesta como objeto histórico, utilizando una perspectiva analítica de larga duración sobre el papel de las fiestas en la Francia del Antiguo Régimen⁷. De manera especial este trabajo se apropia de la pregunta inicial del historiador francés para acercarse a sus inquietudes y para cuestionar las razones que llevan a investigar las celebraciones del calendario escolar «curitibano» con el afán de comprender la manifestación de una cultura festiva escolar. En este sentido, al mismo tiempo que entendemos los festejos escolares como representaciones colectivas inseridas en contextos históricos y sociales, lo que hace posible comprender cómo estas representaciones se producían, se transmitían y se comprendían, no dejan de ser un medio de conquista del espacio social; conforme resalta este autor cuando afirma que las luchas entre representaciones tienen tanta importancia como las luchas económicas. Por lo tanto, el concepto de representaciones se puede entender en el sentido adoptado por Chartier, o sea, clasificaciones y divisiones que organizan el entendimiento del mundo social, como categorías de percepción de lo real. Tales categorías, ciertamente, se modifican de acuerdo a las disposiciones de los grupos o clases sociales y, por lo tanto, no contienen discursos neutros, principalmente por producir estrategias y prácticas que objetivan imponer una autoridad, una deferencia o mismo legitimar opciones⁸.

En resumen, para comprender las representaciones de la misma forma que las personas percibían la escuela por medio de sus festividades, se hace necesario

⁷ R. Chartier, *Discipline et invention: fête*, «Diogène», vol. 1, n. 110, 1980, pp. 51-71.

⁸ Id., *Cultural History. Between Practices and Representations*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1988.

entender cómo esta cultura escolar⁹ elaboraba los componentes materiales y simbólicos de sus conmemoraciones, una vez que estas construcciones nos traen informaciones sobre su contexto histórico, lo que interfiere en las acciones de quienes producían las fiestas, así como en la mirada de la comunidad escolar que compartía aquellos eventos.

1.1. *Escuela Primaria y sus fiestas*

Se parte del presupuesto de que las fiestas componen hechos sociales y su estudio gana importancia no solo desde el punto de vista histórico, sino también antropológico, poniendo de relieve momentos simbólicos de integración de los actores del universo escolar frente a la construcción de instrumentos que las viabilicen como fenómeno cultural.

Pese a que es posible la libre comprensión del pasado, la cuestión de Chartier es el tipo de pregunta que se debería hacer para observar detenidamente la historia de la escuela primaria, pues es con el empirismo resultante de investigación que su comprensión asume la convicción de una explicación histórica. En este sentido se entiende la posibilidad de aproximarse a la realidad del pasado de la escuela primaria – a través del estudio y el análisis de prácticas culturales que poseen disciplinas y tiempos diferentes de los rigores de la escolarización aplicados en la sala de clase propiamente dicha.

Con esto, no excluyo las fiestas del carácter de partícipes del proceso de escolarización. Al contrario, reconozco que ellas componen el proceso de formación educacional de los alumnos, si bien poseen papeles diferentes frente a la necesidad de instrucción en la transmisión y construcción del conocimiento escolar.

Por lo tanto lo que se pretende es, contribuir para el debate mostrando que es posible comprender la escuela a partir de diferentes ángulos, sea utilizando

⁹ En las últimas décadas, hemos presenciado el crecimiento de los estudios en diferentes campos acerca del tema de las culturas escolares. En el campo de la historia de la educación europea, en especial, destacamos los trabajos de A. Viñao, *Historia de la educación e historia cultural*, «Revista Brasileira de Educação» vol. 1, n. 0, 1995, pp. 63-82; A. Escolano, *La cultura material de la escuela*, Berlanga, CEINCE, 2007; D. Julia, *La culture scolaire comme objet historique*, «Paedagogica Historica, Supplementary Series», vol. 1, n. 1, 1995, pp. 353-382; G. Ossenbach, *Corrientes e Instituciones Educativas Contemporaneas*, Madrid, UNED, 2011; entre otros tenemos también en la esfera norteamericana, E. Rockwell, *Recuperando la historia: tres planos en el estudio de las culturas escolares*, «Interações», vol. 5, n. 9, 2000, pp. 11-25; en Brasil, M. Bencostta (ed.), *Culturas escolares, saberes e práticas educativas: itinerários históricos*, São Paulo, Editora Cortez, 2007; L. Faria Filho, I. Gonçalves, D. Vidal, A. Paulilo, *A cultura escolar como categoria de análise e como campo de investigação na história da educação brasileira*, «Educação e Pesquisa», vol. 30, n. 1, 2004, pp. 139-159; R. Souza, V. Valdemarin (edd.), *A Cultura Escolar em debate: questões conceituais, metodológicas e desafios para a pesquisa*, Campinas, Autores Associados, 2005; D. Vidal, C. Schwartz (edd.), *História das Culturas Escolares no Brasil*, Vitória, EDUFES, 2010.

lentes investigativas que enfocan contextos ampliados o lentes que convergen para pequeñas brechas de la realidad del pasado.

Diversos estudios, en diferentes campos de las ciencias humanas, afirman que la fiesta es un hecho social colectivo que carga consigo un conjunto de significados que se le atribuyen conforme la historia y tradición en las que se origina.

La fiesta en sí misma, conforme Aline Itani,

es una acción de simbolización en la que se representa un evento o una figura revestida de importancia para la colectividad de la fiesta. Aquí se incluyen tanto los ritos, las celebraciones sagradas o religiosas, como las conmemoraciones políticas, eventos realizados con bailes, músicas, juegos, comidas. Comprender la fiesta en ese sentido requiere ver y sentir las representaciones e imágenes materiales y mentales que la circundan¹⁰.

Entre las varias fiestas conmemoradas durante el año se escogieron cuatro que posibilitan simbolizar los momentos de festividad construidos por la escuela. Sin reducir la importancia de las demás solemnidades y considerando el espacio propuesto para esta comunicación, este trabajo se restringe a algunos momentos, entendidos aquí como lugares de memoria que permean el imaginario de aquellos que asistieron a la escuela primaria pública.

1.1.1 *Septiembre: Fiesta de la Primavera y Día del Árbol*

Curitiba y la Primavera

Notas sobre el aspecto de la primavera

Adoro Brasil y lo comparo con un gran y bello diamante que brilla intensamente delante de las grandes naciones, y Curitiba es una partícula muy pulida de ese diamante, es como una estrella a brillar por las araucarias.

Leoni Taborda¹¹

Antes de finalizar el mes de septiembre ocurre en el hemisferio sur la llegada de la primavera que se anuncia con sus colores y aromas como la estación de las flores. Un abanico de fiestas la celebra, fiestas que se extienden geográfica e históricamente por diversas etnias y diferentes pueblos. No se sabe bien cuándo las instituciones educacionales de Curitiba incorporaron la celebración de la llegada de la primavera a sus calendarios de festividades. Sin embargo, noticias de fin del siglo anunciaban sus preparativos como preuncio de renovación del tiempo, lo que debería ser motivo de júbilo para la niñez y la juventud estudiantil que contaría en la ocasión con los juegos recreativos y deportivos¹².

¹⁰ A. Itani, *Festas e calendários*, São Paulo, Editora da UNESP, 2003.

¹¹ «Jornal Infantil», 07 sept. 1940.

¹² Infelizmente la tradicional intemperie curitibana no respetó el inicio de la nueva estación. En esta ocasión los organizadores de la fiesta cancelaron el desfile de los escolares debido a malas condiciones climáticas que asolaron la ciudad en aquel día. («A República», 21 sept. 1912).



Pic. 1. Alumno(s) del Grupo Escolar Paula Gomes en la Fiesta de la Primavera (1966). Acervo: Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas em História da Arquitetura Escolar (NEPHArQE).

El señor secretario de la instrucción pública nos pide para invitar por orden del Sr. Director General de Instrucción a todas las escuelas públicas de la capital a comparecer el sábado 21 del corriente mes, a las 2:00 de la tarde, a fin de que los alumnos y alumnas incorporados formen el gran cortejo que solemnizará en este día la Fiesta de las Flores, en conmemoración a la entrada de la primavera. Para este fin deberán los Srs. Maestros reunir al mayor número de sus alumnos, realizándose la ceremonia de grado en la Plaza Ozório¹³.

El principal parque curitibano al inicio del siglo XX se convirtió en uno de los espacios referidos para que los escolares realizaran dicha fiesta. Como en la primavera de 1924, por ejemplo, cuando los niños comparecieron al Paseo Público con un adorno en sus uniformes: una flor en el pecho que los acreditaba como los participantes más importantes de la celebración. La presencia de la banda militar animaba a los adultos con «marchinhas» y «polcas» mientras los niños se divertían con juegos y concursos como: la carrera de la naranja (en la ocasión alcanzaron primero y segundo lugar los grupos escolares «Professor Brandão y 19 de Dezembro», respectivamente); calzar zapatos cambiados; correr de ojos vendados etc. El encerramiento se dio con una carrera de automóviles de la marca *Gravinas*¹⁴.

¹³ «A República», 17 sept. 1912.

¹⁴ «Gazeta do Povo», 29 sept. 1924.

Pasados los años, al observar el éxito de la escuela pública en preservar la idea de festejar la más bella estación de la naturaleza, las autoridades de enseñanza del régimen dictatorial de Vargas no titubearon en aprovechar la oportunidad e incluir intereses de origen cívico en el imaginario infantil. Especialmente cuando se llevaba a los alumnos a relacionar la llegada de la primavera con el nacimiento de la nación brasileña, simbolizada por el «Grito de Ipiranga¹⁵». De tal modo que, Sebastião Sacerdote, alumno del segundo año del «Grupo Escolar Presidente Pedrosa», demostró haber asimilado esta noción de nación al registrar en el periódico su pequeña composición sobre el mes de septiembre.

Con que alegría mis ojos distinguen en el almanaque el mes de septiembre. Parece que este mes nos trae alegría, disposición, bienestar. Percibimos perfectamente la transformación que opera en toda la naturaleza: todo verde, florido, aire perfumado, días alegres y llenos de sol. Aunque, no es sólo por la primavera que queremos bien este mes. Para nosotros brasileños es aún más significativo pues el 07 de septiembre de 1822, D. Pedro I Imperador de Brasil proclamaba nuestra independencia dejándonos libres de Portugal. Así lo recordamos como el mes de la libertad, mes de la mayor fecha brasileña. Eligió Brasil el mes de las flores y de las sonrisas para celebrar su aniversario. Felicitaciones, ¡Brasil mío!¹⁶

La Fiesta del Día del Árbol, conmemorada el 21 de septiembre, luego se uniría a la Fiesta de la Primavera que algunas veces era denominada de Fiesta de las Flores¹⁷. Aunque esta asociación no había sido establecida desde el comienzo, cuando se iniciaron las primeras conmemoraciones de la Fiesta de la Primavera. Quien nos ofrece indicios de esta afirmación es el educador Theodoro de Moraes, maestro de la «Escola-Modelo Caetano de Campos» y autor de la famosa cartilla «Meu Livro», de 1909.

En el material que fue publicado en 1914 en un periódico de la ciudad de Curitiba, el maestro Theodoro defendía la incorporación del Día del Árbol al calendario de las fiestas escolares, eligiendo al mes de septiembre como el que tenía mejores condiciones para la realización de la Fiesta de los Árboles. Su idea era aproximar a los niños a la naturaleza. En este día deberían practicar ejercicios de siembra y observar la germinación de semillas plantadas anteriormente. Juegos y actividades al aire libre también eran recomendados. Theodoro tenía conocimiento sobre el ritual y cómo este día se celebraba en Estados Unidos («The Arbor-day»)¹⁸, y aprovechando este conocimiento propuso la forma de organizarlo en las escuelas

¹⁵ El *Grito do Ipiranga* es el principal símbolo que representa la declaración de la Independencia de Brasil de la condición de colonia de Portugal. El 7 de septiembre de 1822, a orillas del riachuelo Ipiranga (São Paulo), D. Pedro de Alcântara, hijo del rey de Portugal (D. João VI), y príncipe Defensor Perpetuo de Brasil, proclamó en este día el nacimiento de Brasil Independiente. Cfr. E. Viotti da Costa, *Da Monarquia à República: momentos decisivos*, São Paulo, Editora da UNESP, 1999.

¹⁶ «Jornal Infantil», 07 sept. 1940.

¹⁷ «A República», 10 sept. 1912.

¹⁸ El Día del Árbol se celebró por primera vez en Estados Unidos de América, en 1872, por iniciativa de Jonh Stirling Morton en el estado de Nebraska. En Portugal, la primera vez que se festejó, fue en el año 1907, por iniciativa de la Liga Nacional de Instrucción de este país.

brasileñas. Para él, cada grupo plantaría mudas en el patio de la escuela o mismo en una vía próxima. En un segundo momento, la conmemoración continuaría en sala de clase, dando continuidad al programa bajo responsabilidad de los alumnos del cuarto año:

1. Himno escolar
2. La selva tropical – lectura – parte de la obra *Canaã* de Graça Aranha (p. 45)
3. El valor de los árboles – breve explicación
4. La quema de los árboles – lectura – parte de la obra *Canaã* de Graça Aranha (p. 137)
5. ¿Qué plantamos cuando un árbol plantamos? – poesía de René Barreto
6. El árbol, parte de la obra de Coelho Neto
7. Quien preserva los árboles encuentra tesoros, Poesía de Castilho
8. Algunos árboles útiles de Brasil
9. Himno a los árboles
10. Redacción de una pequeña composición sobre los árboles¹⁹.

En 1914, el Día del Árbol y la Fiesta de la Primavera fueron, por lo tanto, incorporados al calendario de fiestas escolares en la ciudad de Curitiba. Con pequeñas variaciones a lo largo de décadas, este calendario reprodujo y reinventó momentos que se convirtieron en fiestas tradicionales, diversificaciones tales como el plantío de mudas de plantas, lecciones alusivas a la echa, juegos etc. Podemos ver este encadenamiento en 1934 cuando los periódicos relatan cómo los curitibanos brindaban la llegada de la primavera²⁰.

En Curitiba, *ciudad sonrisa*, donde todo es poesía, donde la belleza natural se une a la belleza artificial, el ambiente es propicio para conmemorar fechas tan significativas. Ese día es festivamente conmemorado todos los años, tanto por la juventud estudiantil en las escuelas como por la población de la ciudad. Cada año es realizado el plantío del árbol simbólico por los alumnos de las escuelas públicas, además de otras festividades. En este año, así como en los precedentes, varias serán las conmemoraciones y festividades que se llevarán a cabo, sea aludiendo a la entrada de la primavera o bien al “Día del Árbol”. Así, pues, en las escuelas hoy tendrán lugar actos conmemorativos, lecciones sobre el árbol, plantío simbólico y festejos entre los alumnos que bien sabrán decir el significado de la fecha de hoy. Por la noche varias sociedades recreativas promoverán disputas de baile y otras festividades, pero todas alusivas a la entrada de la primavera²¹.

Pese a que, la principal fiesta escolar de septiembre es cívica – que no se nos olvide el Día de la Independencia (07 de septiembre) – las otras conmemoraciones de este mes (Primavera y Día del Árbol) también compusieron y ocuparon el imaginario de fiestas de los alumnos de la escuela primaria curitibana.

¹⁹ «A República», 08 jun. 1914.

²⁰ En 1939 la fiesta del árbol fue conmemorada en la Plaza Tiradentes (centro de la ciudad de Curitiba) donde los niños plantaron mudas de pino y de yerba mate. Nuevamente estuvo presente la banda de músicos de la Policía Militar. (Gazeta do Povo, 23 de sept. 1939).

²¹ «Gazeta do Povo», 18 sep. 1934.

1.1.2 Octubre: Día del Niño

¡Qué alegría! Viene el Día del Niño
 El niño es el rey de la fiesta. Estamos en nuestra patria
 querida, Brasil, donde nacimos y bebimos nuestras primeras
 lecciones de amor en la cuna de nuestro querido hogar.
 ¡Escuela, te amamos! Es el sagrario bendecido donde
 aprendemos, con cariño y desvelo de nuestras maestras,
 Moral y Civismo; preparándonos para la lucha de la vida y
 para bien servir a nuestra tierra.

*Maria Alves de Souza*²²

La institucionalización del día del niño en Brasil se dio por la publicación del decreto-ley n.º. 4.867 de 05 de noviembre de 1924 que oficializó el día de su conmemoración para el 12 de octubre de cada año. Todo lleva a creer que la elección de esta fecha fue una deferencia a lo que se había decidido en los trabajos del III Congreso Americano del Niño y del I Congreso Brasileño de Protección a la Infancia, ambos realizados en la ciudad de Rio de Janeiro en el año de 1922. La propuesta fue conmemorar el día del niño en la misma fecha del “descubrimiento de América”²³.

Algunos años después, el Estado brasileño organizó, en 1927, el primer *Código de Menores* que conseguía reunir las leyes que trataban de la asistencia y protección a la infancia en Brasil, como un intento por asegurar mejores condiciones que llevaran a la disminución de los índices de delincuencia de la juventud, teniendo en cuenta en esa discusión el discurso de médicos, higienistas, sanitaristas y hasta de eugenésicos²⁴.

Esos esfuerzos se intensificaron en las primeras décadas del siglo XX, época en la que Brasil enfrentaba serios problemas sociales, tales como: urbanización creciente, aumento poblacional, presencia de enfermedades endémicas, elevada tasa de mortalidad infantil y de delincuencia juvenil [...] la campaña en pro de la asistencia a la infancia ganó considerable espacio en la sociedad brasileña, subordinando la mayoría de las cuestiones sociales,

²² «A Voz Infantil», 25 de mar. 1941.

²³ M. Kuhlmann Júnior, *Infância e educação infantil: uma abordagem histórica*, Porto Alegre, Mediação, 1998.

²⁴ «De todos los hombres y mujeres que abrazaron esta cruzada y construyeron modelos de asistencia a la infancia, uno de los más activos y destacados fue el higienista Dr. Arthur Moncorvo Filho. Durante su larga carrera como médico, que tuvo inicio en la década de 1880, cuando la pediatría era todavía una ciencia nueva y en expansión, publicó casi 400 obras en defensa de la infancia que le valieron reconocimiento internacional. Moncorvo Filho, un defensor aguerrido de la organización de servicios públicos en esta área, criticó el descaso del gobierno en lo relacionado a la pobreza en el sector urbano, llegando mismo a calcular el impacto negativo que esta falta de atención habría acarreado para los niños del país. Su objetivo era evidenciar la negligencia del gobierno con relación a los niños y destacar cómo tal postura comprometía el futuro de la nación» (J. Wadsworth, *Moncorvo Filho e o problema da infância: modelos institucionais e ideológicos da assistência à infância no Brasil*, «Revista Brasileira de História», vol. 19, n. 37, 1999, pp. 103-124.



Pic. 2. Alumnas del Grupo Escolar Francisco Zardo en la Fiesta del Día del Niño (1970). Acervo: Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas em História da Arquitetura Escolar (NEPHArqE).

económicas y políticas de la época. De hecho, para muchos médicos, políticos y abogados, el futuro del orden social brasileño parecía depender de la capacidad del gobierno de resolver efectivamente el problema de la infancia. El creciente interés alrededor de la cuestión infantil en Brasil también se puede atribuir, por lo menos en parte, a la organización al inicio del siglo XX de congresos promovidos por el movimiento panamericano. Estos encuentros crearon un espacio internacional para el intercambio de informaciones, ideas y debates, además de ejercer considerable presión política, que resultó en la creación de nuevas leyes sobre la infancia²⁵.

Uno de los primeros registros realizados por la prensa acerca de las conmemoraciones del día del niño en Curitiba es de 1927. Por orden de las autoridades de enseñanza, circunstancialmente en aquel año, la fiesta del niño que debería ser recordada como de costumbre el 12 de octubre fue trasladada para el 15 de aquel mes, lo que nos lleva a pensar que esta no sería la primera vez que fue conmemorada. La recomendación era que los alumnos invitaran a sus padres para acompañarlos a las escuelas y asistir a una programación característica de las fiestas cívicas – con el izamiento de la bandera nacional

²⁵ *Ibid.*

y, si fuera posible, una corta marcha de los alumnos en las inmediaciones de la escuela seguida de actividades nada lúdicas, como responder a preguntas sobre contenidos escolares. Ratificando la realización de la nueva fiesta con la antigua fecha del «descubrimiento de América», el día 11 de octubre los maestros deberían impartir una clase sobre el tema del descubrimiento²⁶. Pese a esta programación monótona, las primeras conmemoraciones se restringían a la escuela con un programa de gimnasia, declamación y canto de himnos, lo que no proporcionaba a los infantes momentos de alegría. La propia prensa intercedería por un espectáculo más adecuado a los homenajeados.

No sabemos hasta ahora de cualquier iniciativa de proporcionar a la niñez motivos de alegría en el día que se les consagra – 12 de octubre. [...] Esa magnífica reunión debería ser realizada en uno de los parques de esta capital o en el seno de la naturaleza. Y el programa surgirá amplio, infantil e interesante. En aquel día, déjese al niño en franca libertad, en divertimientos que les pueda ofrecer gran goce. Si existe tal propósito en ese sentido la propuesta queda aquí. Es lamentable que aquel día transcurra con homenajes simples, apagados e inexpresivos²⁷.

No hay como mensurar la contribución de críticas como esta para la modificación de la dinámica de la fiesta. Se sabe que, de hecho, con el pasar de los años las programaciones tomaron configuraciones más atractivas para los propios niños, a pesar de la insistencia del formato organizacional de la mente adulta para la fiesta. Esto es lo que se percibe en el relato de un alumno de 10 años, Nelson Prevedelo, que en 1939 estudiaba en el «Grupo Escolar Professor Brandão».

El día 12 de octubre es día feriado. Fue en este día que Cristóbal Colón descubrió América. Por ese motivo no tuvimos clase. Para aprovechar el feriado, nuestra distinguida directora determinó un picnic. Allí jugamos a distintos juegos; algunas niñas declamaron, otras cantaron. Hubo partidos de fútbol entre los alumnos del periodo de la mañana y del periodo de la tarde. Vencieron los alumnos de la tarde. A las once horas regresamos a casa²⁸.

La fiesta se estaba convirtiendo en una costumbre de proporciones nacionales a partir de su institucionalización en el calendario escolar y tuvo su fecha modificada por imposición del Estado Novo. Getúlio Vargas creó en 1940 el Departamento Nacional del Niño, órgano administrativo subordinado al ministerio de la adolescencia, que determinaba que de aquel año en adelante el día del niño sería conmemorado el 25 de marzo²⁹. No obstante, esta acción

²⁶ «Gazeta do Povo», 27 de sept. 1927.

²⁷ «Gazeta do Povo», 03 de oct. 1931.

²⁸ «Gazeta Infantil», 15 de sept. 1939.

²⁹ Decreto-ley 2024 de 17 de febrero de 1940, Capítulo VI (de la conmemoración del día del Niño); Art. 17 - Será conmemorado en todo el país el 25 de marzo de cada año el Día del Niño. Constituirá objetivo principal de esa conmemoración avivar en la opinión pública la consciencia de la necesidad de ser más vigilante y extensa la protección a la maternidad, a la niñez y a la adolescencia. (Brasil, 1940). En Paraná, en decreto del 11 de febrero de 1941, el director general

temporánea de la dictadura Vargas no alteró el sentido de la ceremonia en construcción hacia casi dos décadas. Tampoco este cambio eximió a la escuela de la responsabilidad de organizarla.

Al acercarnos al universo escolar primario por el relato de la pequeña Mary Sheean, alumna del grupo escolar del barrio llamado *Mercês* y que tenía en la época 10 años de edad, es posible percibir que los dos aspectos supra citados, sea el sentido de la fiesta o la responsabilidad de la organización, no sufrieron impactos que hicieran a sus personajes sentirse desprestigiados o inconformados con el cambio.

Todos tienen su día. Nuestro día es el 25 de marzo. En este año fue muy festejado con misa solemne y picnic en una granja de nuestro barrio. Jugamos, ganamos dulces, huevos de Pascuas y *capilé*. Nuestra directora y las maestras fueron perseverantes en distraernos y jugar con nosotros. Terminamos nuestro picnic con bastante desolación pues cuando la animación estaba en el auge cayó una lluvia intensa que nos dejó a todos mojados. ¡Muy mojados!³⁰

No tardó mucho para que el Departamento Nacional del Niño percibiera que la fecha de octubre era la más adecuada a sus objetivos, visto que la fecha de octubre se había vuelto la más festejada y que la del 25 de marzo no alcanzaba tal éxito. Sin embargo, los registros de prensa aseguran que el día del Niño era recordado en la fecha de marzo hasta el año de 1947³¹. Concomitantemente, las celebraciones de la Semana del Niño eran conmemoradas en octubre.

Aún bajo la intervención del Estado Novo y según instrucciones del propio Ministerio de la Educación y Salud, en el año de 1943 se determinó en todo el país la adopción de un tema central que nortearía las conmemoraciones – no sólo del día 12 de octubre, sino de toda la semana del niño. En esta ocasión el

de la educación, Hostilio César Souza Araújo, expidió instrucciones a los directores de todos los establecimientos de enseñanza en observancia al día 25 de marzo como día del niño instituido por el Decreto-Ley Federal n. 2204 de 17 de febrero de 1940 («Gazeta do Povo», 14 de mar. 1941). Antes de la publicación de ese decreto, en 1939, el mismo director general publicó un decreto determinando que: las instituciones educacionales del Estado organizaran el día del niño en la fecha usual de 12 de octubre («Gazeta do Povo», 07 de oct. 1939).

³⁰ «Presente», 19 de abr. 1942.

³¹ Hoy se celebra en todo el país el Dia da Criança. Entre nosotros también será festejada la efeméride dedicada a los futuros hombres de Brasil a la esperanza de la patria. En todos los establecimientos de enseñanza primaria del Estado serán realizadas charlas que contarán con la participación del Director General por el siguiente decreto: *El Director General de la Educación teniendo en cuenta el transcurso de mañana, el Día del Niño, RECOMIENDA – a los señores directores de los establecimientos de enseñanza pública del Estado que conmemoren condignamente el pasaje de esta fecha, realizando lecciones alusivas a la misma, sin perjuicio de las clases.* Director General de la Educación, en marzo de 1947. (a) Gaspar Velloso, Director General de la Educación («Gazeta do Povo», 25 de mar. 1947).



Pic. 3. Alumnas del Grupo Escolar República do Uruguay en la Fiesta de clausura del año lectivo de 1962 Acervo: Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas em História da Arquitetura Escolar (NEPHArqE).

tema elegido fue el niño abandonado³². En ese sentido todas las instituciones educacionales brasileñas deberían entablar lecciones y campañas entre los escolares para arrecadar recursos para instituciones de asistencia a la niñez desvalida en sus ciudades y provincias.

A pesar de los usos que el Estado hizo de esta fiesta en beneficio de sus discursos, no logró sacar el espacio escolar de su condición de principal escenario de su celebración, aunque tampoco quería que esto sucediera, una vez que la escuela continuaba a ser una fiel portadora de sus mensajes, independiente del régimen político en vigor. Muy recientemente, en las últimas décadas del siglo XX, podemos afirmar que el tablado de este festejo, en el que se convirtió el Día del Niño, removi6 sus intenciones para el universo comercial, con esto la escuela ha quedado sólo como mera coadyuvante de una fiesta donde, en el tiempo del picnic, de carreras de sacos y de *capilés*, era la gran norteadora de la escena festiva.

³² «Gazeta do Povo», 07 de oct. 1943.

1.1.3 *Noviembre, Diciembre: Fiesta de clausura del año lectivo*

El día 29 de noviembre será organizada una fiesta para todos los alumnos del grupo. Muchos de mis compañeros van a recitar, otros harán discursos. Después de la fiesta los alumnos y alumnas del 4º año reciben el diploma, los del 1º, 2º y 3er año reciben el membrete de la promoción. Los alumnos ganan dulces. A fines de noviembre arman la exposición con diversos bordados, dibujos, trabajos de aserrín, alfombras, etc. Los alumnos llevan a sus madres para ver la exposición.

José Simão³³

La última fiesta escolar del año era esperada, por gran parte de los alumnos, como aquella que anunciaba el término del período lectivo y el inicio de las vacaciones estudiantiles. En las primeras décadas del siglo XX, los exámenes finales eran aplicados en el último día de clase y solo después de concluidos los exámenes se daría inicio a la fiesta propiamente dicha. Además de la presentación de poesías, cánticos de despedidas, discursos de agradecimiento, la fiesta tenía en su programación la exposición de trabajos de agujas, modelaje, pintura, tejeduría, arte culinario, muestra de cuadernos de caligrafía, dibujos geométricos y carteles que quedaban expuestos en las salas y pasillos de la escuela.

Como de costumbre, los grupos escolares recibían en las escuelas autoridades de enseñanza acompañadas de otros representantes de los poderes público y civil entre sus invitados. Estas participaciones incluían, a veces, la presencia de las más altas patentes del Estado, que en muchas ocasiones actuaron como examinadores invitados para evaluar la performance de los alumnos³⁴. Veamos un ejemplo de 1915:

Se realizó el día 21 de noviembre en el “Grupo 19 de Diciembre” la fiesta escolar y la exposición de trabajos. La fiesta contó con la presencia del Excmo. Sr. Dr. Carlos Cavalcanti, presidente del Estado; Dr. Antonio Martins Franco, jefe del despacho de la presidencia; Dr. Azevedo de Macedo, superintendente general de enseñanza y Dr. Sebastião Paraná, representante de prensa³⁵.

³³ «O Conselheiro», 15 de nov. 1941.

³⁴ En la fiesta de fin de año del *Grupo Escolar Professor Cleto* en 1919, el inspector escolar Candido Natavidade da Silva compuso la comisión evaluadora con los evaluadores Newton Guimarães, Maria da Silva, Dolores Nascimento, Orminda Xavier Salmon e Gelvira Correa Pacheco. Los alumnos cantaron el Himno Nacional y el Himno de la Bandera después de las actividades, terminando la fiesta con la distribución de dulces para los niños. («A República», 07 de nov. 1919.

³⁵ «A República», 22 nov. 1915.

Una atención especial recibían las exposiciones de trabajo manuales de los alumnos, que poco a poco ocupaban mayor espacio y relieve en estos días de conmemoración, motivo por el cual la prensa no dispensaba elogios a esta iniciativa de las escuelas al ornamentar y dejar la fiesta más atractiva para aquellos que de ella participaban. La prensa no escatimó honores al hablar del esfuerzo de los maestros en preparar a sus alumnos para las diferentes presentaciones artísticas. Sin embargo, aún en la década de 1930 encontramos registros de la práctica del ritual de los exámenes finales como apertura oficial de la fiesta de fin de año. Esto significa que hasta este momento la escuela primaria no pudo separar por completo los momentos de alegría de las festividades en sí, de los momentos de tensión de los niños a la espera de la evaluación.

Es grande la animación que reina en los establecimientos de enseñanza pública en todo el Estado por ocasión del año lectivo. Maestros y alumnos trabajan activamente para los preparativos de los exámenes. Los maestros buscan desde un criterio justo promover el mayor número de alumnos posible. Quieren mostrar el fruto de un trabajo arduo durante el año escolar. Los alumnos a su vez quieren aprobar. Quieren regresar a sus hogares, tras el examen, orgullosos de las notas que los promueven. Aparte de este afán, maestros y alumnos trabajan para la exposición de trabajos manuales hechos durante el periodo escolar. Y se pueden observar por las calles grupos de niños alegres que cargan cuidadosamente paquetes envueltos conteniendo el fruto de su labor sabiamente orientada por las abnegadas maestras³⁶.

Si, por un lado, este formato que preveía la apertura de la solemnidad con los exámenes finales disminuyó de manera significativa, por otro lado fueron añadidos nuevos componentes de diversión y programaciones litúrgicas tales como: bailes y misas en agradecimiento.

En 1942, en una comunicación publicada en el periódico «Gazeta do Povo» para la fiesta de encerramiento del «Grupo Escolar Dr. Xavier da Silva» no existía cualquier referencia a exámenes o evaluaciones. En ese momento los cuidados se volcaban a la inauguración de la exposición de trabajos manuales acompañados de presentaciones artísticas producidas por los alumnos³⁷.

En tiempos de la dictadura civil-militar acontecieron innúmeros intentos de estandarizar la educación brasileña, en especial con la promulgación de la Ley de Directrices y Bases (LDB) para la enseñanza de primaria y secundaria en 1971. La reforma de la enseñanza instituida por la Ley 5.692/71, según Toledo y Revah encierra una larga fase de discusiones que trataban de la escuela pública brasileña.

Desde el final de la dictadura instalada con el *Estado Novo* (1937-1945), las discusiones sobre los cambios necesarios para la expansión de la escuela secundaria, sobre su función y articulación con la primaria, sobre la formación del profesor, la organización de su carrera y de su jornada de trabajo atravesaron las décadas de 1940, 1950 y 1960. Mismo con la aprobación de la Ley de Directrices y Bases de la Educación (4.024/61)³⁸.

³⁶ «Gazeta do Povo», 30 de nov. 1937.

³⁷ «Gazeta do Povo», 29 de nov. 1942.

³⁸ M. Toledo, D. Revah, *The culture industry and educational policy in the military regime: the*

Ya en la comunicación que hizo el *Diário da Tarde* en 1966 acerca del «Grupo Escolar Leôncio Correia», la importancia de la Fiesta del encerramiento del año lectivo reside en la entrega de regalos a los alumnos, maestros, conserjes y funcionarios³⁹. Percibimos, por lo tanto, que la fiesta asume su connotación de entretenimiento de modo preponderante cuando los alumnos, maestros, funcionarios y familiares se involucran para celebrar en conjunto un rito de pasaje que presta una vez más un homenaje al niño, quien es su principal personaje y el centro de todas las atenciones, aunque la organización de la fiesta continúe bajo responsabilidad de los adultos⁴⁰.

La celebración también asume una estructura de graduación semejante a aquella de los rituales de fin de curso de la enseñanza secundaria o de enseñanza superior en la que se obtiene un grado. Todos los años era, así, esperado el término del curso primario de los alumnos de los años finales, como también lo era en el curso primario complementario. Es abundante la cantidad de comunicados y relatos que circulan en los periódicos desde fines del mes de noviembre hasta la primera quincena del mes siguiente. El término en portugués preferido para referirse a la ocasión era «*colação de grau*».

«*Colação de grau*» en el Grupo «Escolar Pietro Martinez – un excelente programa fue realizado y su solemnidad alcanzó pleno éxito» – era así como el periódico «*Gazeta do Povo*» anunciaba la reunión de encerramiento del año lectivo de este establecimiento de enseñanza. La ceremonia de grado del grupo del primario complementario y del cuarto año del primario fue realizada en el salón de fiestas de la propia escuela. En este año el evento fue presidido por Beni Pijol de Souza Araújo, representante del Director General de la Educación, y como señal de reconocimiento y reciprocidad contó con la presencia de directoras de otros grupos escolares de Curitiba. La festividad tuvo derecho al canto del Himno a la Bandera, discursos de alumnos, maestros e invitados, poesías etc⁴¹.

Un segundo ejemplo de ese proceso de ritualidad llevado a cabo en la escuela fueron las invitaciones impresas en tarjetas. Estas invitaciones fueron

case of Escola magazine, «Revista Brasileira de História», vol. 30, n. 60, 2010, pp. 77-95.

³⁹ «*Diário da Tarde*», 14 dec. 1966.

⁴⁰ Otro ejemplo de este contexto de cambio fue firmado por Gercy Araújo, alumna de 12 años y concluyente del 2º año primario del *Grupo Escolar da Água Verde*. Esta niña presenta al periódico de su escuela un pequeño relato que nos aclara sobre la distancia temporal entre las actividades evaluadoras y la solemnidad de la fiesta de encerramiento del año lectivo: «Está llegando el fin de año y es la faena que aprecio más. Vísperas de exámenes, exposición, terminar trabajos etc. Vamos a entrar en un nuevo año, el de 1942 que sin duda será lleno de libros y estudios, pero que lo aceptamos con gusto porque nuestro pequeño trabajo es siempre bien acogido por nuestras maestras. Es en esta esperanza que vamos a hacer los exámenes finales para que seamos promovidos al 3er. año, dónde continuaremos en esta colmena del saber que es la escuela. Les presentamos a nuestra directora y maestra de este establecimiento de enseñanza, nuestras amigas y compatriotas, los más sinceros votos de nostalgia, paz y felicidad para el año de 1942; y que a todos les sea faustoso y próspero» («*Idéia Infantil*», 15 nov. 1941).

⁴¹ «*Gazeta do Povo*», 30 de nov. 1941.

confeccionadas en talleres de imprenta de la ciudad y tenían un lenguaje bastante formal para el universo infantil, como manifiesta el ejemplar de invitación de la fiesta de los alumnos del *Grupo Escolar Leôncio Correia* para el año de 1959 (tarjeta – 12x17cm) acompañada de la programación completa de la fiesta de encerramiento.

A los alumnos que se gradúan en los cursos primario y elemental del *Grupo Leôncio Correia* les complace invitar a Su Eximia y Excelentísima Familia para asistir a las solemnidades de ceremonia de grado que incluirá:

Programa

Día 15 de diciembre

8hs. Misa en Acción de Gracias rezada por el Frei José Leal en la Iglesia de Santo Antonio.

14hs.: Entrega de los diplomas en *la Sociedade Beneficente Operária União Bacacheri*.

16hs.: Baile Infantil en la misma Sociedad.

Le agradece su presencia

El alumno⁴².

De esta forma se puede percibir que festejar el fin del año lectivo representaba la apertura para un nuevo tiempo, el que distingue, delimita y organiza su pasaje sobre el tiempo antiguo. Esta celebración que separaba el tiempo de estudio del tiempo que anunciaba vacaciones y el descanso tras un año, legitimaba por la práctica de sus participantes el espacio de manifestación de una cultura escolar que halló contornos apropiados al universo infantil⁴³.

2. Razonamientos inconclusos

Podemos percibir que las fiestas celebradas por la escuela fueron experiencias colectivas que se configuraron como hechos sociales no aislados del cotidiano de los alumnos. Si, por un lado, la producción de las fiestas fue concebida a partir de la formalidad de los discursos y decretos de las autoridades de enseñanza responsables por insertarlas en el calendario, por otro lado, los sentidos que asume en el universo infantil son diferentes: pasa a ser lúdico, divertido, placentero, lo que determinó la dinámica de la participación del niño. A lo largo de la experiencia festiva de la escuela primaria curitibana,

⁴² *Convite de formatura dos alunos do curso primário e elemental do Grupo Escolar Leôncio Correia*, Curitiba, 1959.

⁴³ Tras la solemnidad fue distribuida una tarjeta-recuerdo (10x6cm). En la tapa una pintura en color inspirada en la parábola cristiana del buen pastor y en el anverso los siguientes dichos: *Grupo Escolar Leôncio Correia* // “Y Jesús crecía en sabiduría, en edad y en gracia delante de Dios y delante de los hombres”. // *Recuerdo de los alumnos que cumplieron los cursos Primario y Complementario*. // *Curitiba, 15-12-1959*. Cartão lembrança dos alunos que concluíram os cursos primário e complementar do *Grupo Escolar Leôncio Correia*, Curitiba, 15 dec. 1959.

los procesos de cambio en su formato contribuyeron para la construcción de nuevas representaciones simbólicas acerca de sus celebraciones. Es interesante observar que el vínculo entre las formas y contenidos de los festejos escolares y la historia política durante la dictadura civil-militar (1964-1989) asumió nuevos relieves y significados, diferentes de aquellos empleados durante la dictadura Vargas (1930-1945), especialmente, en lo referente a la construcción de tópicos nacionalistas que hicieron de la escuela un instrumento para formatear el comportamiento patriótico de los estudiantes brasileños, lo que contribuyó en la formación de un imaginario común donde, por medio de la utilización de símbolos políticos, se fijaron valores cívicos. Mientras tanto, pensando en continuidad de un tiempo de duración media, la escuela primaria pública brasileña republicana, bajo la tutela del Estado, continuó cumpliendo la función de trasmisora de valores para los niños, de acuerdo al régimen político que se adoptara en Brasil en diferentes momentos (democracia o dictadura). Por fin, es evidente que las fiestas escolares son un estimable objeto de investigación para comprender históricamente la vida social infantil, aunque todavía se investigue muy poco sobre ellas.

Juvenile rights and politicization of childhood in colonial Bengal. A socio- literary panorama

Shah Al Mamun Sarkar
Department of Humanities and Social
Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology (Indian
School of Mines)
Dhanbad (India)
samsarkarism@gmail.com

Nirban Manna
Department of Humanities and Social
Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology (Indian
School of Mines)
Dhanbad (India)
nirbanm@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: In the context of colonial Bengal, the childhood was never be an innocent space. It was either ignored or politicized. The politicization of the childhood was done at two levels: one by the colonizers and the second by the nationalists. The imperial reformation of childhood in Bengal was started with the «hatching of babu» and ended with «white man's burden». While, various native writers were involved to construct the native childhood through several social ramifications such as gender, body, and colour. Lastly, in the first half of 20th century, colonial childhood managed a space for their own when exclusively children's magazines started to create a niche for them. The article seeks to unveil the voyage of the colonial childhood from being an «object» to a «subject».

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Childhood; Colonial Bengal; Nationalism; Curriculum; Bengali Children's Literature; XXth Century.

1.

In ancient India, the children were considered to be the ‘would be caretaker’ of the future generation, therefore, nurtured them with optimum care and delicacy. Thus, the literature exclusively created and compiled for the edutainment of the children, such as *Panchatantra*, *Jataka Tales*, *Kathasaritsagar*, and *Betal Pachishi* which contain delicate and aesthetically sound stories. But, the trend had been shifted gradually and reached at its acme of ignorance in the immediate pre-British Raj when children were no longer treated even as human being but as an object. Rather, the children were treated to be a «*terra incognita*», and there was no special treatment for children in the family. Further, during the time, the word ‘child’ referred only to the «male child» who also was regarded in the light of his social, economic, and religious relationship to the family, community, tribe or clan. Therefore, the importance of the child was reduced to a potential earning entity of the family while the girl child was merely a seedbed of the future earning member. Hence, the birth of a «male child» was often regarded as a boost for a family. Again, these crude economical attitude towards childhood restricted the children from minimum educational training.

In pre-colonial Bengal, among the Hindus, there were different forms of institutionalized education such as *Tol*, *Chatushpathi* and *Vidyalyaya*. These forms of education were highly personalized form of home education consisting of a group of chosen pupils under the guidance of an elderly *Pandit*¹. Therefore, the opportunity to access such personal institutions for ‘informal education’ was limited only to the children from the higher strata of the society, and more specifically and exclusively for the Male *Brahmins*² children. Moreover, these institutions were the important socio-religious sites where the «holy language» Sanskrit was taught and practiced. Here, *Pandits* were the supreme authorities to decide what to study and what not, as well as they were often a symbol of terror whom children were bound to respect and pay attention to, willingly or unwillingly; otherwise «spare the rod, spoil the child» was the notion to control the childhood. Further, the education in these informal institutions was forceful and burdensome, where children had to memorize a huge number of (boring) Sanskrit *shlokas* from the ancient classics where the sole concentration of the *Pandits* was on the teaching of *Sanātana*³ knowledge. The «education

¹ *Pandit* (plural form of it is also used in the article as *Pandits*) is the scholar or teacher (exclusively *Brahmin*) who mastered and skilled in the *Sanskrit* language, *Vedic* scriptures, Hindu rituals, Hindu law, religion, music, and philosophy.

² They are the uppermost caste among Hindus since Vedic Age when Hindus were divided into four castes such as Brahmin (Teachers and Masters of Religion), Kshatriya (Ruling class people), Baishya (Business class people) and Sudra (lower caste people). Brahmins, the uppermost class of people, who alone had the explicit right to study all the higher religious and secular knowledge, to officiate as priests, to preach the religious doctrines, and to function as teachers.

³ Something that is eternal. Something that is unquestionably sacred.

for all» was a wanton idea and the «education through entertainment» was the rarest fantasy. Instead, the children were taught the virtue of old values such as unconditional allegiance to elders, to parents, to teachers, to the king; in fact, each individual had to conform to the hierarchic structure of the society; thus it demands a complete subordination to the rules and regulation without questioning it. However, for the common people, in the villages and towns, there were vernacular institutions such as *Pathshala* which taught mainly reading, writing, and rudiments of arithmetic useful for daily affairs. While the *tols* run by the upper caste *Pandits* relied on preparing children a strict performer of Hindu religion, these institutions imparted only basic religious instructions to the pupils. The optimum utilization of such institutions were generally taken by the sons of the *Baishya* (Business class people). The farmers were generally remained aloof from any kind of educational outfit. But, the women, and other lower castes including untouchables were completely barred from any kind of education, thus, were vulnerable to exploitation. However, they managed to acquire the scattered 'information' of basic arithmetic from elders and pears for maintaining daily affairs.

On the other hand, in pre-colonial Bengal, unlike the Hindus, among the Muslims, the education was not monopoly of a section of the community due to the democratic character of Islam. *Maktab* and *Madrasah*⁴ were there for both the institutionalized 'formal education' and local level «informal education» open for general public. At another level, there was the practice of «home education» especially among the wealthy families by personally appointed *Moulavi*⁵ or *Ustad*⁶. Like the *Tol* and *Vidyalay*, here also the concentration was on the religious teaching from the Qur'an, and the Hadiths. *Talbayen* as students were termed in these institutions being far away from home or parents and elders, were to stay at *jaigir*⁷ near the *Maktab* and *Madrasah*. Here

⁴ *Maktab* and *Madrasah* are the institutions for education of Muslims which are parallel to the *Tol* and *Chatushpathi* which are for Hindus. But, these were both formal and informal institutions for the education exclusively for the Muslims. These institutions were prevailed since the advent of Islam in Indian subcontinent during early 7th Century specially in south India (Malabar of present day) started by Arab traders. This system was adopted more effectively during Sultanate period and still today in all over India, one can find this system of education run as a popular but parallel system of English education among Muslims. For detail see, The Milli Gazette article by Prof. Zafarul Islam.

⁵ *Moulavi* is equivalent to the teacher who teaches in the *Maktab* and *Madrasah*. *Moulavi* is called so because of his educational 'degree' he attained with the same name after formal education from a certified *Madrasah*.

⁶ It is an Urdu word, synonymous to *Guru* or guide or leader who is very experienced and mastered in many things. Here, *Ustad* and *Moulavi* are quite synonymous but one is certified (*Moulavi*) and the other (*Ustad*) is not necessarily a certified one.

⁷ *Jaigir* is a system quite similar to paying guest while here the student stays at someone's house for the purpose of education where the owner of the house would bear all the expense of the student as a charity. It is common practice even today in India especially among the Muslims to run *Maktab* and *Madrasah*.

Moulavi or *Ustad* was taken the complete responsible for the education and nourishment of the *talbayan*. As *Pandits*, the *Moulavi* or *Ustad* often played the role of strict and cruel ruler of the pupils. Further, the children often get brutal punishment for silly mistake(s) like the wrong pronunciation of particular sound (of Arabic/Persian/Urdu letter or phoneme). The medium of instruction was mostly Arabic and sometimes Persian, the language of the Islamic culture and administration of the time. But, again, among the Muslim children, a very insignificant percentage of the population was interested in education. And they were often seen to be withdrawn forcibly from early education due to the economic demands of the family.

Both in the Hindu and the Muslim set up, the girl child excluding a few wealthy families was restricted from receiving any kind of education. During the time, the girl child had to stay at home to learn all the household chores and to fulfill domestic duties assigned to them by their elderly female members. In pre-British Indian society, particularly in Bengal, the position of woman (girl) was assigned as subordinate to man (boy), even law and religion didn't recognize or dreamt of the equality and equal right of women with men. Different standards were formed or adopted to judge the individual and social conduct for men and women where women were often excluded from many rights and freedom which were enjoyed by men; rather, woman was held in subjection to man. In this regard A.R. Desai said that

Indian history recorded instances of outstanding women like Gargi, Chandbibibi, Nurjahan, Razya Begum, the Queen of Jhansi, Mirabai and Ahalyabai, who accomplished great feats in the spheres of literature, art, philosophy, administration and even warfare. But these women sprung from the governing privileged strata of the society and were, therefore, free from conditions of social subjection in which the Indian women, in the mass, lived and who had, therefore, neither freedom nor opportunity for the development of self-expression⁸.

Further, the child marriage was one of the principal evils for both the boys and girls who had to marry as early as possible, even possibly as early as immediately after their birth⁹ when they even didn't know the meaning of marriage. In this practice, the girls had to suffer more than the boys. When the girls were to play with dolls and spend life in mirth, they had to involve into dutiful life in the household matter. They had to become *ginmi*¹⁰ so early in their life that

⁸ A.R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, Mumbai, Popular Prakashan, 2014, pp. 256-257.

⁹ Sometimes, it was evident during the time that the parents of both the babies got their newly born babies married at the time of their birth which was decided earlier or decided to marry their babies at the time of their birth (after checking their gender). This trend is also present in modern day Rajasthan and Haryana States of India.

¹⁰ *Ginni* refers to both wife as well as a female member who becomes expert in managing household matter alone. Therefore, she decides what to do and how to do house management. This word is also used as a compliment or encouragement for the girl child for her successful contribution in the household matter.

often became burdensome for them; which was again a severe exploitation of the right of the childhood. Another curse of early marriage was the underage pregnancy which often became fatal for the girls; they had either to face death during childbirth or the death of pre-mature child in their womb. Above all, it severely compromised their physical as well as mental health. During the pre-colonial and the colonial period, neither the medical facility was so good nor was the society so much aware or supportive towards the girl child. Instead, the girl child was of no importance at that time, not even in their own family.

Again, there was a pernicious practice of *sati-daha* (burning of widow) among the Hindus in which the girl children often were thrown onto the pyre of their husband in the name of religion. It was a cruel social custom for the Hindu widows who either committed suicide immediately after the death of their husband or had to walk into the pyre to consummate the act of loyalty and devotion. This custom was nothing less than a «coldblooded killings of innocent women», mostly the child widows, in the name of religious norm of being *sati*. Although, this pernicious custom had been practiced among the upper class Hindus only especially among the *Kshatriyas* since at least 4th Century B.C.; but, the notoriously hegemonic marriage norms set by *Kulinism*¹¹ directly or indirectly introduced and accelerated that cruel custom among the common masses. According to *Kulinism*, the Brahmins were allowed polygamy, which they considered as a glorious act. While, during immediate pre-colonial as well as in the initial phase of colonial Bengal, the «dowry» was another malicious trend of the society which worstly affected the marriage scenario of Bengal, especially among the poor Hindus. To escape from the excess demand of dowry, the fathers of girls preferred to marry off their (child) daughter to a very old and even to a dying *kulin Brhamin* in the hope of better life in next birth (the Hindus believed in the concept of re-birth). Subsequently, these female children became pray of *sati* custom immediately after her marriage or within few years after her marriage. During that time, it was also evident mostly among the poor people that they often practiced infanticide of girl child because they considered the girl child to be their burden. These were nothing but the extreme injustices done to the (girl) children in all over India in general and Bengal in particular. Although, A.R. Desai depicted that «in the past, religion-reform movement like Buddhism tried even partially to elevate the *status* of the Indian women but it was only during the British period that big movements were organized to destroy the social and legal injustices from which they suffered for centuries»¹². In the first half of nineteenth century, the great social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) strove, by propaganda, to put an end

¹¹ According to M Goldberg as presented in The Encyclopædia Britannica, «*Kulinism*, in Hinduism, caste and marriage rules said to have been introduced by Raja Vallala Sena (or Ballal Sen) of Bengal (reigned 1158-1169). The name derives from the Sanskrit word *kulina* («of good family»). Hypergamy (marrying a bride of a lower caste) was allowed for the top three castes».

¹² Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, cit., p. 256.

to the practice of *sati-daha*, and finally a law was passed in 1829 with the help of Lord William Bentinck (1774-1839), the then Lieutenant-General in the British India, to abolish the practice of *sati-daha*. The infanticide was also subsequently declared as a crime.

In the subsequent years after the law of abolition of *sati-daha*, the British Government in India actively interfered to eradicate this custom completely from the Hindu practices. Thus, the Hindus modified their religious norms regarding the *sati* or widow. A new discourse was formed that after the death of her husband, the *sati* can live her life but, strictly obeying certain terms and conditions only. They were to lead extremely restricted life. They were barred from eating many foods especially the non-vegetables; they were considered impious, therefore, barred from performing any rituals; and from any sorts of entertainments. In general, they had to spend their life like a «living-dead» wearing a white *saree* which became symbol of widowhood and witnessed many associated sufferings.

Again, widows were exposed to the sexual exploitation due to their ripe age and social apathy towards widowhood. On seeing the conditions of widows, the great social reformer Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891) started revolting against such norms and he demanded for re-marriage of widows. After his great effort, in 1856, the re-marriage of widows was legally permitted by the British Legislation; and later in 1860, an Act was passed to raise the ‘age of consent’ for both the married and unmarried girls to ten. However, in the late nineteenth century the ambiguity of regarding definition of childhood in terms of age was in the center of vortex as reflected in the great debate known as Age of Consent Debate (1891). The Age of Consent Act itself was controversial on several accounts, specially, to highlight the debate surrounding what should be considered appropriate to be fixed as «the age», i.e. the minimum age for a girl to acquire the capacity for cohabitation with her husband. Finally, in 1927, the British India Legislative sought to raise the age of consent to fourteen years for girls and eighteen for boys as the age of maturity for the Hindus only; later the law was applied to all irrespective of religions and it is popularly known as the Sarda Act¹³.

However among the Muslims, there was no exploitation done on women in the name of *sati* and its associated practices because Islam allowed the divorce as well as re-marriage. But, Muslim girls were also to suffer from child marriage. More than that Muslim girls had to suffer more from their very strict notion of *pardah*. *Purdah* is veiling from the strangers. In a sense, the Muslim girls were to wear *hijab* (an outer dress that covers, from top to bottom, each and every parts of the women body) while going outside home. And, within home, they had to remain in the interior most part of the house, where no stranger

¹³ It is the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929, widely known as Sarda Act which was named after its sponsor Harbilas Sarda. This Act was exclusively come into effect from April 1, 1930 for all the communities of India irrespective of caste, creed, and religion.

(male) was allowed or the female members were not allowed even talk with the males outside the family. Similarly, these girls were also barred from any form of education as boys. Although, theoretically Islam encourages the education above all barriers (irrespective of sex, caste, creed, colour and religion), but, in India, the Muslim girls had to suffer in the name of religion. While, with the spread of liberal and rational education of the West among natives, the practice of *purdah* began to shrink. The foremost of the women who discarded the *purdah* to set examples were the Begums of Bhopal, Their Highness¹⁴.

Among the Hindus, another pernicious act of exploitation was done to the women in general and girl children in particular in the name of religion which was called *Deva Dasi* (servant of God). The tradition of keeping *Deva Dasi* (like the Nuns in Christianity) in the temple became notion mostly in the southern part of India, while in the other parts including Bengal this trend was also evident both in pre-colonial as well as in colonial period. The notion of *Deva Dasi* was set in such a way that she had to devote her entire life in the service of the God, by singing songs and performing *bhakti* in the temple; she was not allowed to marry in her life. Thus, began the exploitation. People considered these temple girls to the “free” to be exploited. Therefore, these temple girls gradually became «temple prostitutes». They also gave birth to illegitimate children who often became pray of infanticide, while few also, especially females, were kept alive to continue the seemingly «(un)holy» legacy. Further, these little girls were to suffer more than the elders. Since childhood, they had to perform their life according to the demand of the people. Thus, they often had to die because of pre-mature pregnancy or pre-mature childbirth. Except learning the art of becoming *Deva Dasi* from their elders, they were strictly barred from other socialization and any other form of education. Therefore, it became a lifelong prison to them which was dulled through inaction, without light of knowledge, illuminating «her vision, steeped in ignorance and prejudice, groping in the dark, a martyr to the conventions of the society in which she born»¹⁵. Thus, the girl children were the victims of the above mentioned customs not only prevailed in pre-colonial India but spread its hydra heads in the colonial age too.

2.

These well-known reformations paved a way for a well-structured thought towards children rights and concern. During the second half of the nineteenth century, a conscious social as well as political stage was set for the introduction of children’s literature in the Bengali literature. Previously the Bengali term

¹⁴ Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, cit., p. 258.

¹⁵ P.C. Ray, *Life and Times of C R Das*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1927, p. 116.

«*Shishu Sahityik*» (writer of children's literature) was usually a derogatory expression for writers as they were considered non-serious and «babyish» author; and children's literature was seen an oxymoron and just a «fancy» term. While literature portraying children either underestimated the existence of children or treated them as «wild flower in a bush» which grew without care. The conscious, systematic, and successful exploitation of the value of being and about children had to wait until the first half of 19th century. The emergence of children, as well as that of literature were suited to the need of the hour with regards to both the imperialists and the nationalists. The demand of educated individuals as administrative apparatus to steer the immense, extensive, and well-ramified state machinery of colonialism reached its peak as the Britishers were unable to control huge empire singlehandedly. While, in view of Gargi Gangopadhyay, in the early nineteenth century, a separate literature for children in India came into existence with the earnest and joint efforts of various missionary agencies and benevolent societies including the Christian missionaries, British Government and the loyalist¹⁶. Then to accelerate the educational mission Britishers took several steps such as setting up the first printing press at Serampore near Calcutta in 1800 and subsequently the Calcutta School Book Society was set in July 4, 1817 by Serampore Mission with the aim of procurement, «preparation, publication and cheap or gratuitous supply of books useful in Schools and Seminaries of learning»¹⁷. This step was taken to fulfill the demand of text-books for the preparation of the «rising class» who would assist the Britishers to run their system and propagate their policies. Thus, society was headed mostly by the state officials who carefully censored and produced the texts which may impart the lessons on the duties of being good citizen as well as who remained loyalist to the Empire.

The Calcutta School Book Society had brought out the first Bengali monthly magazine for children in 1818 called «*Digdarshan*» (Voyages around the World). The society had also developed substantial materials for children including text books, magazines, picture books etc.; and planned to publish gift books and magazines for the school-going-children for instance *Pashwabali*, (The Creatures, 1822) a Monthly Magazine about Living Creatures, 1822, and books such as *Nitikatha* (Stories and Morals, 1818) by Radhakanta Dev, Tarinicharan Mitra and Ramkamal Sen, *Itihas Katha* (Stories from History, NA) by Captain Stewart, *Manoranjanetihis* (Exotic Narratives, 1819) by Tarachand Dutta, *Hitopodesh* (Book of Moral Stories, 1820) by Ramkamal Sen, and *Bangla Shikshagrantha* (Book for Learning Bengali, 1821) by Radhakanta

¹⁶ The loyalists were the Indian natives who were either influenced by the British Education or willingly became the subject of the British Government; who always favoured and glorified the British Government and its policies.

¹⁷ K. Mitra, *Shotabdir Shishu-Sahitya: A History of Bengali Children's Literature 1818-1960*, Calcutta, Pashchimbanga Bangal Akademi, 1999, p. 34.

Dev. Main concerns of these literature were to provide morality, ethics and value teaching along with dissemination of the knowledge, both scientific as well as social. Important characteristics of these text-books were that these books were basically the reprints from the publications of the London Society or translations from the European classics. Further, the Society had attempted to allure the native at large number by translating the English books into vernacular language to inculcate the imperial propaganda¹⁸. These translated text-books were included in the school curriculum as a discourse to provide knowledge and to train the natives accordingly. Gradually and increasingly, the native children became a political being and their politicization was termed as a «sign of progresses». It was an age when the western education was taken to be the harbinger of modernity as well as for enormous mode of the upward social and economic mobility. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the pioneer among the Indians who, keeping the Eurocentric viewpoint of reformation, believed that the old system of education in India only «perpetuate superstition and authority» while the English education was a «liberal, secular and scientific system» where anybody can get education irrespective of castes, class, sexes or any other social barriers¹⁹. Further these Eurocentric reformations were termed as so called Bengali Renaissance when social, cultural, religious and literary reformations swept through Bengal. Thus gradually in the nineteenth century Bengal, the concepts of «childhood» and «children's literature» also began to be reinterpreted and redefined from a perspective of a «political being».

3.

The cultural and political socialization of the children of the colonial Bengal had been undertaken by a wide range of mediums such as literature, theater, films, newspapers, magazines and so on. Perry Nodelman considers that these mediums were used for «dealing with childhood-dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it»; in short, these mediums were the «adult style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over childhood»²⁰. While, Satadru Sen describes the «juvenile periphery» in colonial Bengal as a set of experimental and institutional spaces where childhood could be redefined in preparation for «battles of adulthood» and ascribed with a set of moral meanings and normative behaviours that could be mapped on the 'colonizer and the colonized', «the

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, cit., p. 131.

²⁰ P. Nodelman, *The Other: Orientalism, Colonialism and Children's Literature*, «Children's Literature Association Quarterly», vol. 17, n. 1, 1992, pp. 29-35 (in particular p. 29).

dominant and the upstart», «the modern and the traditional». The British educational system in colonial Bengal not only institutionalized education but also authenticated the native childhood as a political subject.

The colonial schooling under the direct control of the British authorities offered certain benefits to its students which the traditional systems of schooling like the *madrasah* or *tol* or *Pathshala* could not. In this regard, Kazi Shahidullah had pointed out the massive changes that the colonial school ushered in. In his view, the colonial system of education introduced the printed books for imparting knowledge instead of the oral tradition used in the *pathshala* or any other systems of education prevailed in Bengal. Further, the *pathshala* curriculum was mainly designed to meet the practical requirements of rural society. Therefore, the stress was given on reading, writing, arithmetic, accounting, letter composition, elementary Sanskrit grammar, and *zamindari*²¹ and *mahajani*²² accounts²³. Although it was uncommon trend, but, the daughters of *zamindars* (Landlords) were also given the necessary education required to manage estates so that they could take charge in the event of widowhood²⁴. Again, the textbook-centric and examination-oriented pedagogical set up of modern western education system also introduced the concept of fixed classroom and its associated elements such as class routine, timetable, school calendar, annual examinations or attendance registers which solely controlled by higher authority such as a state controlled Education Department to monitor and regulate the development of the native children. On the other hand, the *pathshalas* were run by the *pandits* who themselves were the supreme authority and had complete freedom to determine the lessons to be taught as well as the promotion and progress of the disciples. But, most importantly, they did not have to submit to a higher authority or external control.

Gradually, by the mid nineteenth century, with the establishment of Company Raj and due to its Orientalists overview, English became the language of governance and colonial authority. Subsequently, it came to be associated with the education and its knowledge was seen as a sign of social prestige. Therefore, the pre-colonial literary heritage, particularly of Persian²⁵ and Sanskrit, gradually faded away. Thus, the colonial education became «a site and object of desire» and a mean of cultural ascendance within an imperial setup because of its involvement in the processes of creating «new technologies

²¹ Knowledge and training for a landlord to run and look after the land and properties.

²² Knowledge and training for a businessman how to run and look prosper in business.

²³ K. Shahidullah, *The Purpose and Impact of Government Policy on Pathshala Gurumohashoys in Nineteenth Century Bengal*, in N. Crook (ed.), *The Transmission of Knowledge in South Asia: Essays on Education, Religion, History and Politics*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 121.

²⁴ P. Acharya, *Indigenous Education and Brahmanical Hegemony in Bengal*, in Crook (ed.), *The Transmission of Knowledge in South Asia: Essays on Education, Religion, History and Politics*, cit., p. 112.

²⁵ The Mughal court language adopted for official purposes.

of the self» which he described as governing of the self in terms of individual disciplining and shaping. Further, the colonial education was also concerned with the production of skills and competences, and the acquisition of these skills made children a «modern» and «civilized» being. Again, the socio-economic mobility that colonial education promised was also possible because of this institutionalized education was open to all the strata of society without being monopoly of the privileged upper castes²⁶. It is also considered that the colonial curriculum was a discourse and a mechanism which ensured the social distribution and cultural validation of knowledge. Therefore, in terms of curriculum, the school textbook enjoyed as a symbol of bureaucratic control which helped to understand how those in power defined «knowledge» and how the access to this knowledge enabled the state to consolidate and assert its power over its subjects and this Orientalist straight jacketing of school textbook had shaped the cultural consciousness of students; therefore, became a means of rationalizing, legitimizing and controlling «human» action. Further, the school curriculum was shaped to promote larger service to the Empire, adulation of the monarchy and imperial concerns²⁷. Further, the traditional disciplines such as history and geography were also used to encourage towards the knowledge of development, civilizational progress and racial superiority. Hence, it can be categorically observed that the colonial state dominated and ensured the power to rename and reorganize the knowledge, as well as to pass on the knowledge to the future generation.

The Missionary Schools perceived the Bengali children and childhood to be another fragment within marginalized category, who cannot lead life of their own, cannot do thing of their own. Therefore, childhood became a site to accomplish the «white man's burden». Irrespective of caste, colour, creed, religion, and gender, the missionary²⁸ schools welcomed the children from diverse strata of the society. In order to educate and civilize the native

²⁶ S. Seth, *Governmentality, Pedagogy, Identity: The Problem of the 'Backward Muslim' in Colonial India*, in C. Bates (ed.), *Beyond Representation: Colonial and Postcolonial Constructions of Indian Identity*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 68.

²⁷ S. Topdar, *Knowledge and Governance: Political Socialization of the Indian Child within Colonial Schooling and Nationalist Contestations in India (1870-1925)*, Doctoral Thesis, Department of History (Co-Chairs: T. R. Trautmann and Sumathi Ramaswamy), University of Michigan, 2010, pp. 11-13.

²⁸ The missionaries come to set up schools for the slum children or the orphan home for the children like Alhadi (A joyful spirit; this word is ironically used here as name to a girl who has no joy in life except the strong urges for it) in Premendra Mitra's *Paank* (1926), who has parents but still considered to be orphan and taken to the orphan home; where she gets better food, beautiful and clean dresses to wear, real dolls to play with, and, moreover, she gets education from the school like the higher class children; as if more than a dream world for these children. There she has only to convert into Christianity and take care of the various works in the orphan home. Although, she was exploited there by the master of the orphan home but she feels it better to stay back than returning to her parents. While, the male child gets less exploited, still, it seems the orphan home treats them like the slaves in the name of civilizing mission or making them self-dependent.

children, these schools often disciplined the childhood with strict rules and severe punishments. Even, in the name of disciplining the natives, these schools often exploited the native's body and mind ceaselessly without being least humane towards their tenderness. For the school authorities, the criteria of being civilized or modern were narrowed down to the appropriate personal habits only. Therefore, appearances and manners played the central role in conceptualizing and development of colonial education. Whereas, the colonial authority often criticized the age-old native pedagogical setup such as the *tol*, *pathshala*, and *madrasah* to be, in the word of Sanjay Seth, «characterized by the cacophonous sounds of students collectively reciting lessons, ill-disciplined students chatting simultaneously and the resultant babel and din were frequent complaints of school inspectors»²⁹. Further, in 1855, a school Secretary of the Bengal Council of Education, Mr. Buck had criticized the children of the indigenous school to be the undisciplined who often squatted on the clay floor «without any order or regularity» whereas he praised and differentiated the children in the colonial (government) school across the road posed in neat and open small *puckah* building to be very disciplined who conducted their activities with «order, regularity and earnestness»³⁰. Thus, the discipline and order were perceived to be the ultimate aid for the 'ideal' classroom setting to control the childhood. Further, the childhood was often seen in colonial gaze where the ideology of disciple was so strictly followed in such school that they restrict to wear garments and ornaments. Mary Carpenter, an educator and reformer of colonial schools, estimated the natives to be heathen' children, men and women who had no sense of personal decency of wearing garments and covering the body. She also believed that the native girls (and women) wore miserable dress which only covered their little bodies partially and they were decked with any ornament they could get hold of often worth hundreds of pounds in the process becoming gullible victims of a thief or murderer³¹. Thus, the semi-nakedness of the native body became a site for reformation. Carpenter considered this «semi-nakedness» to be a «civilizational deficit», while the «expensive jewels» which were the symbol of wealth, and the *status* was «foolhardiness» and «victimhood». She also depicted that, in the colonial schools, everyone was dressed neatly and decently where nobody wore any ornaments, because these were forbidden inside the (colonial) schools. Therefore, she justified the colonial schools and its restrictions on the childhood. Rather, she preferred the native children to appear as «gentle» as they felt to be «civilized». Hence, «neat clothes, tasteful appearance and a clean body» were the physical markers of a «reformed» childhood; otherwise the natives were uncivilized exotics.

²⁹ Seth, *Governmentality, Pedagogy, Identity: The Problem of the 'Backward Muslim' in Colonial India*, cit., p. 67.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ M. Carpenter, *Six Months in India*, London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1868, p. 79.

Another school inspector of that time, Mrs. Wheeler, reported in 1884 that the native children were «degrading and unhygienic» who came to classrooms with dirty hands and faces, untidy hair and dirty clothes³². She further said that the Bengali girls in the school «remained unkempt on an everyday basis» except some especial occasion when they «decked up in gorgeous saris and jewels». Mrs. Wheeler believed that the native children imbibed dirty habits from their home. She also felt that, although, «it costs nothing to wash the face and hands clean, and comb the hair tidy every day; but these things they will not learn at home»³³. Therefore, she suggested the school authority to adopt certain measures to correct the native domestic space. She also emphasized that these basic hygiene training for girls had the advantage of preparing them for their subsequent roles as good wives and mothers who could pass on these «civilized habits» to their children and practice cleanliness in the space of their marital households. Thereafter, the school authority introduced physical education and hygiene training in the school curriculum along with the text-books. Besides, they also introduced «school uniform» to bring every child into one class.

Sudipa Topdar believes that the widespread harrowing tales on the barbaric treatment meted out to the girl children in Indian society (female infanticide, child marriage, sufferings of child widows and widow immolation), the physical education would be an important component of female education from the perspective both of colonial administrators and Bengali reformers. However, very little government policies were existed to improve the health and well-being of girl children in schools. Rather, as Sister Mary Victoria (Principal of Diocesan College, Calcutta) reported in Howell's *Progress of Education in Bengal* (1912-1917) that the average girl student was very weak and required good food, exercise and remedial gymnastics. The descriptions of the deformity of girl child's body – weak, curved and immobilized – have resonances with the debility question raised by Macaulay³⁴. Similar observations were made by other school inspectors as well. Yet, Hornell's report chronicled how hygiene instruction in girls' schools in Eastern Bengal was not well structured and eventually produced the desired effect.

The emphasis on the physical education for girls was laid with special regards to «kinetics of hygiene» at home as well as schools. Mrs. Wheeler's idea to «reform homes» in «schools» found manifestation in the physical education curriculum meant for female students. The *Fifth Quinquennial Review* (1912-1917) depicted that the schools where physical education was taught as part of a prescribed curriculum for girls, also offered compulsory teaching of hygiene and emphasized the skills of domestic economy from as early as grades up

³² *Education Commission Report by the Bengal Provincial Committee (1905-1911)*, Calcutta, Superintendent of Government Printing, 1884, p. 385.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ W.W. Hornell, *Progress of Education in Bengal 1912-13 to 1916-17*, Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1918, p. 236.

to four. While, between grades five to seven the scope was broadened, but restricted within the parameters of matrimonial duties, to include the themes like «cleanliness, ventilation, exercise, filtered water, drains, care for the sick and care of children»³⁵. The focus on domesticity for girls continued in upper grades as well, particularly in grades eight and nine, where textbooks such as *Santanpalan* (Upbringing of Children, n.d.) was thought to be a crucial part of the prescribed curriculum. In his report, Hornell commented that «while valuable work had been done in mission schools on the subject of child rearing, in schools managed by Indians the subject was not treated seriously»³⁶. As a consequence, the School and College Hygiene Committee proposed of employing a Bengali female medico in educational institutions, as well as establishment of women's gymnasium. However the local government did not accept these proposals for the rigid traditional outlook. It is revealed from the accounts of several school inspectors that in the early twentieth century physical education for girls received more attention in missionary schools as compared to the native institutions due to the latter's reluctance in accepting the British reformations in positive note.

In her manual on physical education for girls in Indian schools, a Methodist missionary Florence Salzer, criticized several erroneous postural habits of the native teenagers who often carried a big earthen pot or babies balancing on their hips. She also warned that «anything carried on the hip, be it a baby or a water *ghara* [pitcher] displaces the internal organs»³⁷ which might jeopardize the reproductive capabilities of the women and made the baby bowlegged. She further depicted that the bodily frailties of the Bengali girl was emanated from a life accustomed to the wretched conditions of the *zenana*³⁸. Thus the *zenana* became a site where British women and missionaries to carry out multiple agendas of reformation by providing medical care to the colonial women. Janaki Nair considers that «for the British missionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century the *zenana* was a hitherto uncharted site for religious reform, i.e., conversion»³⁹.

Thus, the metaphor of discipline, upliftment, improvement and the cultivation of morality of the native childhood was as a part of the colonial agenda theorized by the Whites and subsequently propagated through their school curriculum.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

³⁷ F. Salzer, *A Manual of Physical Education for Girls for Use in Indian Schools*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1923, p. 1.

³⁸ The women's chamber where men from outside of the family were forbidden, while Mary Carpenter's depicts the *zenana* to be the sunless, airless unhygienic and oppressive Oriental space which had kept the passive Indian women confined for generations. It is a secluded space devoid of the rationality of modern science and one permeated by superstition and disease.

³⁹ J. Nair, *Uncovering the Zenana: Visions of Indian Womanhood in English women's Writings, 1813-1940*, «Journal of Women's History», vol. 2, n. 1, 1990, p. 15.

4.

Among the native writers of children's literature, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, in his *Varnaparichay* (1855), had scripted a bunch of male characters like Gopal, Rakhal, Yadav, Abhay, Bhuvan, Madhab, Girish, Surendra, Nabin and few more to construct the loyalist native children. Interestingly all his ideal juvenile characters as mentioned above bear only first names and there is no «family title» ascribed to them; which, perhaps, implies that the childhood should be free from the undesirable family backgrounds and class barriers that prevailed in the Indian society. Rather, the trend was to remove all class and creed barrier and to bring under them a uniform shade where the quality and talent of the child were the sole determinant and qualification. Vidyasagar like others too advocated for the imperial idea of reformations in Bengal. In view of Sibaji Bandyopadhyay, in the colonial age Vidyasagar was the first to form the ideology of a “good child” and “bad child”. Vidyasagar set the prototype of good child and bad child and characterized them as Gopal⁴⁰ and Rakhal⁴¹ respectively. Gopal is gentle, polite, hardworking, and obedient boy who also loves books and respects elders; while Rakhal is opposite to Gopal, he is lazy, harsh, unsteady, disobedient and uncontrollable; and never listens to others. Gopal is a kind of boy who always obeys the rules laid upon him without ever crossing the limit. Thus, while Gopal is the «culture», Rakhal becomes the ‘anarchy’ for the colonizers. Hence, Gopal-like people were the prospective *Babus* in the British Offices who obeyed everything without any questions; while Rakhal-like people who are were undesirable in the colonial enterprise. Vidyasagar always wanted that «sakol baloker-i gopaler moto howa uchit and kono baloker-i rakhaler moto howa uchi noi» («every child should become Gopal» and «no child should become Rakhal»)⁴². Further, Vidyasagar also mentioned that Gopal and Rakhal were dynamic and dialectic in nature, who can easily interchange with each other. Therefore, Gopal can become Rakhal and vice-versa following the set of rules that decides «goodness» and «badness». Rakhal and Gopal were set as the prototype of male characters before the native children and native parents to aspire. Here surprisingly Vidyasagar failed to set any female prototype characters for the natives. It bewildered several critics that a social crusader who fought for the widow re-marriage and women right, side-stepped women question in his literature. It is evident from his introduction of *Charitabali* (1856) that «je sokol brittanta abogoto hoilo,

⁴⁰ Gopal is used as synonymous to goodness because it is another name of Lord *Kṛṣṇa*, whom everybody love; and therefore, adorably calls this name.

⁴¹ A cowboy or a person who works as servant in some landlord's house is called *rakhal*; who is generally illiterate and mannerless guy, who has no much self-dignity and respect and often gets ill treatments from others.

⁴² *Gopal-Rakhal Dwandashamash: Upanibeshbad o Bangla Shishusabitya*, Kolkata, Karigar, 2011, p. 27.

balokdiger lekha-porai anurag jonmite o utsaho briddhi hoite paare; ei pustoke todrup brittanta matro sonkolito hoiyachhe» («all the details are given in this book is to inspire exclusively the male children»)⁴³. Though the critics like Sibaji Bandyopadhyay came forward in Vidyasagar's defense and believed that the extremely popular *Varnaparichay* was sufficient to influence and encourage the girl child as well and there was no separate text(s) required to motivate the girls exclusively towards education. Vidyasagar's «gender inattentiveness» in literature was realized by Kamini Sundari Devi and wrote *Bamabodhika – I* (The Awakening of Girls – I) for encouraging girl child towards education. She tried to recreate *Varnaparichay* with an added dimension of gender paradigm by designing the characters of Barada and Sarada in the images of Vidyasagar's Gopal and Rakhali.

By the end of nineteenth century, the notion of «ideal native childhood» had started transforming with the rise of nationalist interest. Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), the great philosopher and reformist of the colonial Bengal, was discontented with the notion of Gopal who was the earlier ideals for native childhood. In his opinion, «Gopal is extremely gentle and simple guy; creation of Gopal is not so profitable rather unfruitful attempt». Vivekananda's term «profitable» hints at the enterprise of building nationalistic sentiments and nation building. In this regard, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), also considered that there was no dearth of innocent Bengalis like Gopal who could get job after study and a huge lot of dowry at marriage; rather, he felt that Rakhali is the only hope for the nation. Therefore, the critics like Tagore and Vivekananda tried to appraise the notion of «good» and «bad boy» in the light of the nationalist imagination. As a result, by subverting the traditional image of imperialist childhood, a «new ideal» childhood emerged and was promoted through the Bengali children literature. Thus, the characters like Amol and Sukumar of Rabindranath Tagore, Pagla Daghu of Sukumar Ray (1887-1923), Bhombol of Khagendranath Mitra (1896-1978), Kolu-Chand of Lila Majumder (1908-2007), Sadananda of Satyajit Ray (1921-1992) became the adorable among natives. These new champions were mysterious and charismatic ones, a combination of good and bad qualities, and who was laid in the midway of Gopal and Rakhali. They were created with more realistic creative brush and with a firm nationalistic aim to deconstruct the imperialistic binary of good and bad. Among the above ideals, *Pagla*⁴⁴ Dashu was the strongest. He is as good

⁴³ I.C. Vidyasagar, *Charitabali*, in M. Datta (ed.), *Vidyasagar Rachana Sangraha: A Collection of Works Written by Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar*, Calcutta, Universal Book Depot, 1985, p. 273.

⁴⁴ *Pagla* means madly or crazy one; Dasharathi or carelessly Dashu, a character created by Sukumar Ray in his *The Crazy tales of Pagla Dashu and His Co.*, is so adamant and fearless to do anything whatever he feels right. He is afraid of nobody, not even the Head Master of his school. He can do anything and everything to take revenge like a mad guy. Besides, his outlook is so scrappy that he appears to be out of fashion or unsuitable for the school boy. He wears whatever dress he like. Even the Head Master of the school has no control over him. Everybody including

in studying as Gopal is and he is a prankster like Rakhal. Unlike Gopal, he questions everything. Thus he is a combination of intelligence and recklessness. He is capable of going to any extent for his objectives. Therefore he is a threat to an established order and rank. Further, boys like Dashu were naughty who spared nobody not even their «masters». In an instance, for teaching a lesson to a heedless teacher, Dashu secretly put a Chinese-cracker under the chair of the teacher who was sleeping inside the classroom instead of teaching. In this section of the story, Ray's description oozes a deep sense of sarcasm directed towards those people of positions, «All of a sudden, pandemonium broke out— a series of crash! boom! bang! sizzle! rocked the entire school»⁴⁵. In this context, it can be categorically said that the colonial schools were epitomized as a disciplined institution to enslave the childhood to be a numbskull obedient «subject» with strict rules, restrictions and severe punishments; but, Dashu is a «fearless» boy who toppled all rules and regulations; Thus he is called as *Pagla* or «mad». Therefore, to the nationalists, these intelligent pranksters like Dashu became the ideals for the nation, who questions and confronts the colonial Empire. This popular term, *Pagla* in Bengali is often used for calling adorable children. Sukumar Ray might have used this term intentionally to encourage parents to nourish their children in the image of Dashu.

The social as well as political mobilization of the colonial childhood eventually took a subversive turn towards the first decade of the twentieth century against the background of the Division of Bengal (popularly known as *Banga Bhanga*) by the Raj in 1905. But along with the moderate politicization of childhood, there was an initiative by several magazines to provoke a space for their own, where a child is liberated from the being a «political object».

5.

From 1880s, the colonial education was often treated as site of contestation for its ideologies, interests and powers towards creating an enlightened native community. During this period, the Indian nationalists came forward to question the colonial education system over the practice of education and the definition of knowledge. The nationalists also aimed for the political socialization of the native child with its indigenous ideologies. Therefore, the British Empire and

teachers avoids confronting him; thus, gave him the name of Pagla Dashu where “*pagla*” means “crazy” or “mad” which recalls the theory of Foucault depicted in the *Madness and Civilization* (1964) regarding the “mad people” who doesn't obey the norms of the society or whose actions or behavior doesn't fit in the previously set norms of the society. Further, *pagla* has another connotation as well. Loving children are often adorably called as *pagla*.

⁴⁵ S. Ray, *Pagla Dashu*, 1923, Jadavpur University Translators' Collective, Engl. trans. *The Crazy Tales of Pagla Dashu and Co.*, New Delhi, Hachette, 1940/2012, p. 55.

the Indian nationalists locked their horns for the possession of the colonial childhood. These contestations led towards a complex negotiation between the colonial and indigenous ideologies. Since then, the Indian nationalists began creating alternative centers of knowledge production using non-institutionalized pedagogies by publishing Bengali children's magazines which targeted the «home» to be the site of reformation⁴⁶. These magazines provided a platform of «leisure» reading for the native children outside the school premises. Slowly the 'delightful magazine' maneuvered the childhood towards a native strategy that linked the child to the nation. These magazines realized that the creation of a politically aware «new child» was assigned a position of significance within the family. Therefore, teenagers were expected to be raised to serve the nation and bring glory to it.

The editors of these magazines significantly provided enough leeway to the targeted child readers. These child readers, both boys and girls, were given huge importance for their choice and demands as well as encouraged to provide their feedback and suggestions. In the first volume and first issue of «Amaar Desh»⁴⁷ the editorial section addressed the children as follows: «*Amaar Desh* [...] is being published especially for you. [...] Write to us informing what you enjoy, what you would like us to carry in this magazine. Since this magazine belongs to you, it will function according to your wishes»⁴⁸. Thus, they not only took advantage of the opening up of a new space for self-expression in demanding what they wanted to read but they also articulated their roles as nationalist in the times to come. A teenage boy from Noakhali (present day Bangladesh), Buddhadeb Basu, responding to the Editors of the magazine, «*Mauchak*⁴⁹», categorically stated that the «*Mauchak* publishes a variety of stories and essays however the real issues, i.e. news about the country is missing. The importance of learning about loving one's country is so essential that I do not need to add anything new to that fact»⁵⁰. For this child, his future role as a citizen of India had already been chalked out in his mind. He goes on to write, «When India gains self-rule, it is us the young boys and girls of today who will maintain

⁴⁶ In this regard, Tanika Sarkar has noted that quite contrary to the Victorian middle-class household, for the colonized Bengali *bhadralok*, the home was not a place for refuge or rest. Rather, it was the «real place for work». In this regard Tagore's *Home and The World* is the perfect example. For the Nationalists, children were considered to be the future father of the nation; therefore, given priority over everything. These children were considered to be 'new child' by Pradip Kumar Bose.

⁴⁷ *Amaar Desh* means «my country». With the same name, a magazine exclusively for children was published during colonial period which mostly dealt with the stories from the nation (India). Present content has been taken from «*Amaar Desh*», vol. 1, n. 1, 1920, p. 7.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ «*Mauchak*» (Bee Hives) is another magazine for children published during colonial period which also provided enough freedom to the child reader to write their feedbacks and suggestions. See detail in «*Mauchak*», vol. 2, n. 3, 1921, p. 516.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

the country's pride. It is on us that the future [of the nation] lies». While, a girl reader, Gauri Debi from Patna, wrote to include more information about the country since she too longed to learn more about India. In response to the continuous stream of such letters, «Mauchak» introduced a new section titled *Deshar Katha* (News from the Nation) that exclusively carried news about the latest political and nationalist developments happening all over India. Similarly in the early 1920s several girl readers wrote letters to the «Mauchak» office complaining that the magazine had never published any article specifically on exercises for girls. To accommodate their requests, the «Mauchak» not only apologized but also published a series of essays on exercises for girls in the subsequent issues from 1927⁵¹.

Further, the girls were not only motivated to send their written entries but also to participated publicly with young boys in essay writing, short story writing and puzzle solving competitions that periodically organized by the magazines. In such essay competition on holiday travel, the girls like Sushmita Devi and Karunakana Gupta, won prizes for their *Rangoon Bhraman* (Travel to Rangoon) and *Grishmer Chuti* (Summer Vacation) respectively which indicates a healthy female readership in an age where female literacy was very low and the girl readers were very assertive participants in creative writing. Thus in the pages of the magazines one gets to see the girls from privileged class who were beneficiaries of the efforts of the social reform movement of the nineteenth century promoted female education among mass. In this context Sudipa Topdar has argued that while for young girls the scope for direct participation in nationalist activism like direct political agitations was still restricted in the early twentieth century, they contributed in channelizing revolution outside.

6.

In the nineteenth century Bengal, the concepts of «childhood» and «children's literature» also began to be reinterpreted and redefined from a perspective of a political being and it has been observed that gross politicization of childhood in the beginning of the colonial era gradually minimized and eventually it paved the way for discovering an intellectual, inquisitive and investigative childhood which is reflected in teenage detective characters of Satyajit Ray (1921-1992), Sasthipada Chattopadhyay (1941) and Samaresh Majumdar (1942) in the post-independence age. Above discussion concludes that the literature especially the children's literature could widely be used as an «apparatus» or a medium of instruction through which the propaganda and policy could be propagated and transmitted as did by both the Britishers as well as Indians to modify, mould

⁵¹ «Mauchak», vol. 7, n. 3, 1927, p. 448.

and reconstruct the future childhood as per the demand of the time; loyalists and nationalists respectively. Therefore, children's literature could be efficient and effective mode of shaping, promoting, implementing and interrogating children's rights where the necessity and complexities of the child rights could easily and exclusively be solved. It would be more effective, if the created children's literatures which are pregnant with the child's rights are included in the school curriculum with the help of school authority so that every child could read the material, therefore, becomes aware of the rights. In the modern age, in addition to the printed materials, animation movies and films could be other options which could be used to propagate at mass level.

Formación de Maestros en España en el periodo de entre siglos XIX y XX: la Aritmética y el Álgebra de José Dalmáu Carles

Carmen López Esteban
Didáctica de la Matemática y de las Ciencias Experimentales
Universidad de Salamanca (España)
lopezc@usal.es

Fernando Almaraz Menéndez
Economía e Historia Económica
Universidad de Salamanca (España)
falmaraz@usal.es

Alexander Maz Machado
Departamento de Matemáticas
Universidad de Córdoba (España)
ma1mamaa@uco.es

Formation of teachers in Spain in the period between XIX and XX Centuries: Arithmetic and Algebra of José Dalmáu Carles

ABSTRACT: This paper is part of a comprehensive research on the Initial Formation of Teachers in Arithmetic and Algebra through textbooks. Here, the broad terms of the research are established with emphasis on the research method. We study in detail the case of José Dalmáu Carles, outstanding professor of Normal Schools in the periods late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries, showing that her book *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra. Tratado Teórico-Práctico-Demostrado con aplicación a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para uso de las Escuelas Normales y de las de comercio* brings new elements to the formation of teachers aligned with the best European movements of the time.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Formation of teachers; History of Education; José Dalmáu Carles; Spain; XIX-XXth Centuries.

1. Antecedentes

Durante los últimos años se ha producido un interés creciente hacia la historia de la educación en general y de la educación matemática centrandose la cuestión de cómo la historia de las matemáticas puede ayudar a profesores de matemáticas y alumnos, en particular, motivado, entre otras razones, por el fracaso que ha seguido a los proyectos de reforma curricular. El extenso movimiento internacional comenzó a tomar forma especialmente en la década de 1970, a partir de que la National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) celebre el 31st *Yearbook* de 1969, titulado *Historical Topics for the Mathematics Classroom*, (Temas Históricas para el Aula de Matemáticas) y de que en el seno del Segundo International Congress on Mathematical Education (ICME), celebrado en Exeter, UK, en 1972, se crease el Grupo de Trabajo (EWG 11) de «History and pedagogy of mathematics»¹. Este interés se ha traducido, en el ámbito de la investigación, en publicaciones sobre la evolución de los programas oficiales, la formación de profesores, las corrientes didácticas imperantes y el análisis histórico-crítico. El *International Handbook of Research in History, Philosophy And Science Teaching*, escrito en 2014, dedica un capítulo a proporcionar una amplia visión del estado del campo de la historia de las matemáticas en la educación, con énfasis en la formación de maestros de matemáticas². En este marco se ha puesto de manifiesto la importancia del análisis del libro de texto como reflejo de la actividad que se produce en el aula:

Todo libro escolar es instrumento pedagógico que se inscribe desde sus orígenes en un modelo de actuación escolar, más o menos impulsada desde instancias educativas superiores, pero directamente relacionado en el estilo pedagógico y preparación del principal responsable de su uso e implantación en la tarea escolar, el maestro³.

En España, algunos investigadores han tratado temas diversos con la línea de investigación basada en el análisis en los libros de texto en la educación matemática: Uno de los primeros trabajos fue el desarrollado por Modesto Sierra, Luis Rico y Bernardo Gómez⁴, y cada uno de estos autores ha seguido

¹ A.G. Howson (ed.), *Developments in Mathematical Education*, Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Mathematical Education, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. 1973.

² K.M. Clark, *History of Mathematics in Mathematics Teacher Education*, in M.R. Matthews (ed.), *International Handbook of Research in History, Philosophy and Science Teaching*, Boston, Springer Academic, 2014 pp. 755-791.

³ J.M. Hernández Díaz, *El libro escolar como instrumento pedagógico*, in A. Escolano (dir.), *Historia ilustrada del libro escolar en España. Del Antiguo Régimen a la Segunda República*, Madrid, Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez, 1997, pp. 123-148.

⁴ M. Sierra, L. Rico, B. Gómez, *El número y la forma: libros e impresos para la enseñanza de la Aritmética y la Geometría*, in A. Escolano (dir.), *Historia ilustrada del libro escolar en España. Del Antiguo Régimen a la Segunda República*, Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez, Madrid, 1997, pp. 373-398. En este capítulo del libro se expone la evolución de los libros escolares de la aritmética

trabajando en esta línea, bien individualmente o en obras colectivas⁵. La importancia del análisis de libros de texto en la comunidad de investigadores en Educación Matemática en España se ha puesto de manifiesto en el XIII Simposio de la SEIEM, en la Universidad de Cantabria, donde se dedicó un Seminario de Investigación al Análisis de Libros de Texto. Es relevante el artículo escrito en 2008 por Luis Rico, Antonio Marín, José Luis Lupiáñez y Pedro Gómez Rico, Marín, Lupiáñez y Gómez⁶ donde se coloca al libro de texto en el espacio intermedio entre la secuenciación general del Boletín Oficial del Estado y la planificación diaria de actividades que el profesor debe realizar y se describe una metodología de análisis de libros de texto, referida al caso de los números naturales en Educación Secundaria.

En cuanto al estado de la cuestión sobre la institución formadora de Maestros, hay trabajos en Revistas especializadas: *Historia de la Educación*, *Bordón*, *Revista de Educación*, *Revista de Ciencias de la Educación*, *Studia Paedagógica*, *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, *Vida Escolar* (por citar algunas), y *Actas de Congresos*, especialmente en *Sociedad Española de Historia de la Educación*. Otros trabajos proceden de investigaciones donde la comunidad científica se inclina por recuperar la historia educativa local y regional, en distintos periodos. Dentro de la formación inicial ha destacado en los distintos planes la formación matemática de los futuros Profesores de Primaria, en unos casos orientada al dominio exclusivo de la disciplina y, en otros, complementada por la orientación didáctica y profesional. La evolución histórica de esta formación puede y debe ayudar a comprender la situación

y la geometría en nuestro país desde la aparición de la imprenta hasta la guerra civil española, ya que las matemáticas, y en particular sus ramas más populares, la aritmética y la geometría, han estado siempre presentes en los planes para la formación de los ciudadanos.

⁵ Podemos estudiar estos aspectos en trabajos centrados en historia de la educación matemática: B. Gómez, *Desarrollo histórico de la enseñanza de la aritmética. El caso de los algoritmos de cálculo*. «Aula de innovación educativa», vol. 50, 1996, pp. 11-16; B. Gómez, *Tendencias metodológicas en la enseñanza de la proporcionalidad derivadas del análisis de los libros de antiguos: el caso de los problemas de "compañías"*, «Revista latinoamericana de investigación en Matemática Educativa (RELIME)», vol. 2, n. 3, 1999, pp. 19-29; B. Gómez, *La justificación de la regla de los signos en los libros de texto: ¿Por qué menos por menos es más?*, in P. Gómez, L. Rico (edd.), *Iniciación a la investigación en didáctica de la matemática. Homenaje al profesor Mauricio Castro*, Granada, Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2001, pp. 257-275; A. Maz, *Los números negativos en España en los siglos XVIII y XIX*. Doctoral Thesis, Department of de Didáctica de las Matemáticas (Supervisor: Luis Rico), Universidad de Granada, Anno Accademico 2004-2005; A. Maz, L. Rico, *Situaciones asociadas a los números negativos en textos de matemáticas españoles de los siglos XVIII y XIX*. «PNA», vol. 1, n. 3, 2007, pp. 113-123; Idd., *Las Liciones de Thomas Cerda: doscientos cincuenta años (1758-2008)*, «Suma», vol. 60, 2009, pp. 35-41; A. Maz, M. Torralbo, L. Rico (edd.), *José Mariano Vallejo, el matemático ilustrado. Una mirada desde la Educación Matemática*, Córdoba, Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Córdoba, 2006; M. Sierra, M.T. González, C. López, *El concepto de continuidad en los manuales españoles de enseñanza secundaria de la segunda mitad del siglo XX*, «Educación Matemática», vol. 15, n. 1, 2003, pp. 21-50.

⁶ L. Rico, A. Marín, J.L. Lupiáñez, P. Gómez, *Planificación de las matemáticas escolares en secundaria. El caso de los números naturales*, «Suma», vol. 58, 2008, pp. 7-23.

actual y, en consecuencia, actuar sobre ella; como se ha dicho, la historia de la educación matemática es considerada como «laboratorio del desarrollo curricular»⁷ y mediante ella puede entenderse la interacción entre educación matemática y sociedad. Pocos son los trabajos que en España existen sobre la Historia de la Formación en Matemáticas y su Didáctica de Profesores de Primaria⁸. En cuanto a otros países hay que destacar el caso italiano. Son destacados los trabajos realizados en el *Centro Studi della Matematica Medioevale*, fundado en 1980 en la Universidad de Siena⁹.

2. Método y fases de la investigación

Lo mencionado anteriormente nos ofrece un marco general para situar nuestra investigación, que se inscribe en la línea de investigación sobre formación de profesores. En particular centramos la atención en el papel del libro de texto. Los autores especializados en la historia de las Escuelas Normales en España establecen cinco grandes períodos en el desarrollo de esta institución, con los que coinciden Modesto Sierra y Luis Rico al referirse a la investigación histórica en Educación Matemática:

- Primer período: desde la fundación de la primera Escuela Normal en 1839 hasta la Restauración de 1875.

⁷ A. G. Howson, *On Writing a history of mathematics education*, «Recherches en Didactique des Mathématiques», vol. 5, n. 2, 1984, pp. 238-252.

⁸ Destacamos los trabajos de Modesto Sierra y de Luis Rico, así como los de Dolores Carrillo y Carmen López, M. Sierra, *El currículum de Matemáticas y su Didáctica en las Escuelas Universitarias de Formación del Profesorado de EGB*, «Studia Paedagogica», 19, 1987, pp. 101-114; Id., *La formación inicial de los profesores de primaria en Matemáticas y su Didáctica en España: antecedentes y situación actual*, in M. Sierra, L.C. Contreras, N. Climent (edd.), *La formación de profesores de matemáticas: estado de la cuestión y líneas de actuación*, Universidad de Huelva, Huelva, 1999, pp. 23-50; M. Sierra, L. Rico, *Contexto y evolución histórica de la formación en Matemáticas y su Didáctica de los profesores de primaria*, in J. Giménez, S. Llinares, M^a V. Sánchez (edd.), *El proceso de llegar a ser un profesor de primaria. Cuestiones desde la educación matemática*, Granada, Ed. Comares, 1997, pp. 39-62; D. Carrillo, *La Metodología de la Aritmética en los comienzos de las Escuelas Normales (1838-1868) y sus antecedentes*, Tesis, Departamento de Didáctica de las Ciencias Matemáticas y Sociales, Universidad de Murcia, 2005; C. López, *La formación inicial de Maestros en Aritmética y Álgebra*, USA, UK and Germany Editorial LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2011.

⁹ De acuerdo con J. Docampo, *Reading Luca Pacioli's in Catalonia: an early 16th-century Catalan manuscript on algebra and arithmetic*, «Historia Mathematica», vol. 33, 2007, pp. 43-62, se debe mencionar la tesis de Van Egmond presentada en la Universidad de Indiana con la catalogación de los más de 300 manuscritos e impresos italianos de aritmética práctica y álgebra sobre el ábaco anteriores al año 1500 localizados. E. Warren van, *Practical Mathematics in the Italian Renaissance; a Catalogue of Italian Abacus manuscripts and printed book to 1600*, Florencia, Stamperia Editoriale Parenti, 1980.

- Segundo período: desde 1875 hasta 1931, la Restauración y el Plan Cultural de 1914.
- Tercer período: desde 1931 hasta 1936, el Plan Profesional de la República.
- Cuarto período: desde 1939 hasta 1970, el Franquismo.
- Quinto período: desde 1970 hasta 1990, que se inicia con la Ley General de Educación (LGE) y está caracterizada políticamente con la recuperación de las libertades democráticas.

A estos cinco periodos consideramos que hay que añadir un sexto periodo que se iniciaría con la implantación de la LOGSE hasta 2010 con la entrada en Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior, caracterizado por los intentos de reforma que han cristalizado en los nuevos Planes de Estudio elaborados por las diversas Universidades adaptados a la Declaración de Bolonia. Sin embargo, el quinto y este último periodo quedan fuera de esta investigación al considerar que cambia el rol del libro de texto en la enseñanza de las Matemáticas en las Escuelas Universitarias de Formación de Maestros. En estos periodos no existen libros que organizan la enseñanza, sino una lista de libros de referencia o consulta.

El objetivo general de esta investigación es analizar la evolución y cambios del currículo de Matemáticas en la formación de Maestros en los conceptos fundamentales de Aritmética y Álgebra a través de las Leyes, Decretos y Órdenes Ministeriales y fundamentalmente a través de los libros de texto. Está enmarcada en la investigación en historia de la educación matemática habiéndose utilizado el método histórico de investigación en educación, que según Julio Ruiz Berrio¹⁰ sigue las fases:

- Heurística: búsqueda y selección de fuentes documentales
- Crítica: análisis de la documentación
- Hermenéutica: interpretación de los datos a la luz de los análisis realizados.
- Exposición.

Los objetivos han sido cubiertos en las sucesivas fases de realización del proyecto; en cada uno de los periodos se ha llevado a cabo un análisis del saber institucional de la Formación de Maestros en Aritmética y Álgebra, teniendo presente la legislación vigente, la situación socio-política y los debates internos de la disciplina, realizando una recopilación de los planes de estudio, estudiando en cada uno de ellos el peso de la Aritmética y el Álgebra. También se ha llevado a cabo un análisis escolar de los manuales seleccionados.

El criterio para la elección de los libros de texto ha sido el de los autores más relevantes o de las editoriales más importantes de cada uno de los periodos. Se ha procurado que los autores elegidos tuvieran alguna trascendencia o que la influencia de los textos fuera importante en otros textos de la época, analizando

¹⁰ J. Ruiz Berrio, *El método histórico en la investigación histórica de la educación*, «Revista Española de Pedagogía», vol. 134, 1976, pp. 449-475.

las sucesivas ediciones de ellos. Se ha seguido un criterio de selección en el que el nivel al que estuviesen dirigidos fuese la enseñanza en la formación inicial de Maestros. También hemos seleccionado manuales generales que entendemos como libros de consulta y de gran difusión en las Normales.

El proceso seguido para satisfacer los anteriores criterios de relevancia de autores y trascendencia de textos requirió de la consulta de manuales bibliográficos especializados y, en particular, la *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada*¹¹. También se llevó a cabo una verificación con expertos del área con el objetivo de conocer si se omitían autores de relevancia u obras de gran trascendencia e importancia en la época.

Una vez confeccionado el listado de textos seleccionado como muestra, se hizo uso de una recopilación de información bibliográfica elaborada en la Universidad de Granada por M. A. Olmo sobre textos de Aritmética para la formación inicial del Maestro (1800-1930)¹², con el propósito de conocer textos que tuvieran interés para la investigación por si no se hubiesen sido considerados anteriormente. De la lista de veinticuatro manuales que hemos seleccionado en el período comprendido entre 1839 y 1971 para la formación inicial de Maestros en Aritmética y Álgebra se ha elegido un libro representativo de cada periodo para hacer un estudio profundo de contenido. Estos han sido:

- J. Avendaño, *Manual Completo de instrucción primaria, elemental y superior: para uso de los aspirantes a Maestros*, Madrid, Imprenta de Dionisio Hidalgo, 1844-1845.
- J. Dalmáu, *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra, Tratado Teórico-Práctico-Demostrado con aplicación a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para uso de las Escuelas Normales y de las de comercio*, Madrid, Perlado Páez y C^a, 1897, 18^a edición corregida.
- M. Comas, *Cómo se enseña la aritmética y la geometría*, Madrid, Ed. Pi y Margall, 1932 Quinta edición.
- M. Xiberta Roqueta, J. Xiberta Peramateu, *Álgebra*, Gerona, Tipografía Carreras, 1961.
- E. Roanes Macías, *Didáctica de las Matemáticas*, Salamanca, Ediciones Anaya S.A., 1971.

Hemos elegido un libro para cada periodo excepto para el cuarto periodo en el que se han elegido dos libros ya que a partir de la refundación de la Ley de Educación Primaria, se elabora el plan de estudios de 1967 bajo el prisma de la Matemática Moderna lo que determina un cambio en la producción de libros

¹¹ *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada. Europea Americana*, Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, S.A., 1929.

¹² María de los Ángeles Olmo Romero (q.e.p.d.) tiene la primera idea de este trabajo y realiza una primera recopilación de información sobre textos de matemáticas antiguos en diferentes bibliotecas españolas M^a A del Olmo, L. Rico, M. Sierra, *Textos de Aritmética para la formación inicial del Maestro (1800-1930)*. *Actas del IX Coloquio de Historia de la Educación*, Granada, SEDHE, 1996, pp. 351-355.

para Maestros y, por tanto, dos épocas bien diferenciadas. La metodología que se ha seguido para el análisis de contenido de estos Manuales se basa, en la propuesta por Sierra, González y López para su investigación tanto sobre la evolución del límite funcional, como sobre el concepto de continuidad en los manuales españoles de enseñanza secundaria de la segunda mitad del siglo XX¹³. Metodología que fue reutilizada por López¹⁴ en el estudio de la aritmética y el álgebra en los libros de formación de maestros.

En particular se han considerado las cuatro dimensiones siguientes para el análisis de contenido:

Análisis didáctico-cognitivo: A través de este análisis se ha pretendido explicitar los objetivos que el autor busca conseguir gracias al libro, los lectores a los que va dirigido, las influencias que recibió para su escritura, las teorías de enseñanza-aprendizaje presentes y el modo en el que se intenta que el alumno desarrolle ciertas capacidades cognitivas¹⁵.

Análisis conceptual: En primer lugar se analizaron los contenidos y su secuenciación en la obra, incluyendo un estudio de las principales definiciones. Seguidamente se detallaron los problemas y ejercicios resueltos o propuestos que aparecen en el libro. A continuación, se realizó la clasificación cognitiva de los contenidos de la aritmética y finalmente, se elaboró un mapa conceptual a través del cual se pueden identificar los focos conceptuales en los que se estructura la obra¹⁶.

Sistemas de representación: Por representación entendemos cualquier modo de hacer presente un objeto, concepto o idea. «Conceptos y procedimientos matemáticos se hacen presentes mediante distintos tipos de símbolos, gráficos o signos y cada uno de ellos constituye una representación»¹⁷. Hay diversidad de modos de representar conceptos matemáticos: mediante signos o símbolos

¹³ M. Sierra, M.T. González, C. López, *El concepto de continuidad en los manuales españoles de enseñanza secundaria de la segunda mitad del siglo XX*, «Educación Matemática», vol. 15, n. 1, 2003, pp. 21-50; M. Sierra, M.T. González, C. López, *Evolución histórica del concepto de límite funcional en los libros de texto de Bachillerato y Curso de Orientación Universitaria (C.O.U.): 1940-1995*, «Enseñanza de las Ciencias», vol. 17, n. 3, 1999, pp. 463-476.

¹⁴ López, *La formación inicial de Maestros en Aritmética y Álgebra*, cit.

¹⁵ Se ha seguido la definición de análisis didáctico-cognitivo recogido en R. Duval, *Semiosis y pensamiento humano*, Cali, Universidad del Valle, 1995.

¹⁶ La definición de análisis conceptual está desarrollada en la obra M. Sierra, C. López, *Innovaciones en la formación en Matemáticas y su Didáctica de los Maestros en el primer tercio del siglo XX: aportación del movimiento normalista español (1923-1936)*, «Revista Interuniversitaria de Historia de la Educación», vol. 29, 2010, pp. 179-193.

¹⁷ E. Castro, *Representaciones y modelización*, in L. Rico (coord.), *La Educación Matemática en la Enseñanza Secundaria*, Barcelona, Horsori, 1997, pp. 95-124. Los modos de representación muestran objetos que forman parte de una estructura, se presentan organizados en sistemas, por ello Janvier y Kaput hablan en sus obras de sistemas de representación: C. Janvier (ed.), *Problems of Representation in the Teaching and Learning of Mathematics*, London, Lawrence Earlbaum Associated Publishers, 1987; J. Kaput *Technology and Mathematics Education*, in D.A. Grouws (ed.), *Handbook of research on mathematics teaching and learning*, New York, Macmillan, 1992, pp. 515-556.

especiales, mediante esquemas, gráficos o figuras, principalmente. Lo peculiar de las ideas y conceptos matemáticos es que cada uno de ellos admite diversas representaciones. Los modos de representar nociones matemáticas destacan las propiedades de los conceptos y procedimientos. Se pueden utilizar distintos tipos de símbolos, gráficas, signos, tablas, figuras, etc.

Análisis fenomenológico: Se presentan aquellas situaciones en las que los conceptos matemáticos incluidos en el libro tienen uso, es decir aquellas que muestran su funcionalidad. Una situación viene dada por una referencia al medio (natural, cultural, científico y social) en el cual se sitúan los ejemplos o ejercicios propuestos. Por tanto, en el análisis fenomenológico consiste en la revisión de sus usos según los tipos de situaciones y como se conectan las matemáticas con otras ramas del conocimiento. Un análisis fenomenológico según el trabajo de Rico, Marín, Lupiáñez y Gómez¹⁸ consiste en describir fenómenos asociados a los conceptos matemáticos así como la relación que existe entre ellos.

3. *Formación de Maestro en la época de Dalmáu*

Contextualizando nuestra investigación, en el año 1839 se funda en Madrid la primera Escuela Normal para la formación de Maestros (denominación tradicional española de los profesores de Primaria). En la Ley Moyano de 1857, se consideraba los estudios para Maestro como enseñanzas profesionales y conlleva la elaboración de un Programa General de Estudios de 1858, que tendría una vigencia en algunos preceptos de casi cuarenta años. A pesar de la previa denominación de profesionales, la enseñanza de las Escuelas Normales se articula con un fuerte componente culturalista, pues comprobamos que el 76,58% de las lecciones las concentran las asignaturas de Lectura, Escritura, Lengua y Aritmética en el grado de Maestro Elemental y el 45% en grado de Maestro Superior, contenidos propios de la instrucción primaria. Las nociones de Álgebra, Física, Química e Historia Natural, materias científicas y experimentales reflejan que la mentalidad positivista ha calado en el ordenamiento normalista. La disciplina de Religión y Moral, como materias unificadoras de mentalidad. El componente de la Pedagogía, el objeto propio de las Escuelas Normales, no pasa de tener una presencia simbólica en el ordenamiento. En definitiva, el programa normalista debía orientarse desde el punto de vista socioeconómico en la línea de la formación de maestros para una sociedad básicamente agraria como para la industrialización progresiva que se iba a operar en la sociedad española. En el período en el que vivió Dalmáu Carles se distinguen dos etapas en la formación de Maestros, la primera hasta 1914 caracterizada por

¹⁸ Rico, Marín, Lupiáñez, Gómez, *Planificación de las matemáticas escolares en secundaria. El caso de los números naturales*. cit.

dificultades institucionales en la formación y la segunda, desde dicho año hasta la Segunda República, que se caracteriza por la promulgación y desarrollo del Plan de 1914, con un marcado carácter enciclopedista y culturalista.

En la primera etapa, los programas de las Escuelas Normales experimentaron repetidos cambios en la composición de sus materias como resultado de los distintos planes de formación de maestros que se pusieron en práctica. Las dificultades procedían de los continuos cambios políticos y de la ausencia de una política educativa coherente, sobre todo del partido conservador que carecía de un programa educativo definido. Tras los agitados sucesos del sexenio revolucionario, los deseos de paz y orden de amplios sectores de la población facilitaron la llegada de la Restauración. En 1876 se aprueba una nueva constitución que restaura la monarquía constitucional. La vocación conciliadora de esta ley, sin embargo, no facilitó el consenso en política escolar. Esta dificultad se desprende de la propia interpretación que harán los diferentes sectores políticos que hizo de la educación un espacio de lucha política, describiendo la legislación educativa un movimiento pendular en función de quién ocupase la cartera de educación. La educación volvió a tener un gran protagonismo a finales del siglo XIX. La crisis interna y la independencia de las últimas colonias en Asia y América hicieron que se acuñase la famosa frase de «salvar a España por la escuela». La regeneración de España pasaba por la reforma de la escuela. Fruto de este sentimiento será el período de cambios producido a principios del siglo XX, en el que, una vez más, el consenso entre progresistas y liberales volverá a dar sus frutos. Se reformarán las Escuelas Normales, la enseñanza secundaria y los planes de estudio de las enseñanzas universitarias. Las reformas también afectarán a la reglamentación de los exámenes, a la regulación de la enseñanza de la religión, a la titulación del profesorado, a la reordenación del bachillerato y a la autonomía universitaria. Un hecho muy destacado será el intento de que los maestros pasen a ser pagados por el tesoro público, puesto que hasta entonces eran pagados por los ayuntamientos y su salario era bastante deficiente. Hasta 1923, la política en general, y la educativa en particular, fueron vacilantes e inestables. Los gobiernos se fueron precipitando más que sucediendo, ya que la duración media de los mismos apenas llegaba a los cinco meses. En cualquier caso, en estos años no puede hablarse con rigor de una política educativa coherente.

En el año 1898 la reforma de las Escuelas Normales planteo un curriculum de carácter cultural y técnico, sin requisito previo de enseñanzas secundarias y un plan de asignaturas recargado, con un deseo de una mayor preparación pedagógica al explicitar las prácticas de enseñanza. El mayor inconveniente de este plan era que suponía reducir a un curso académico la formación de maestros elementales.

El Plan de Romanones lleva a cabo una modificación profunda de los estudios del Magisterio: desde 1901 a 1903 los estudios de Magisterio se trasladarán a los Institutos de Enseñanza Secundaria, consciente de la necesidad de elevar el

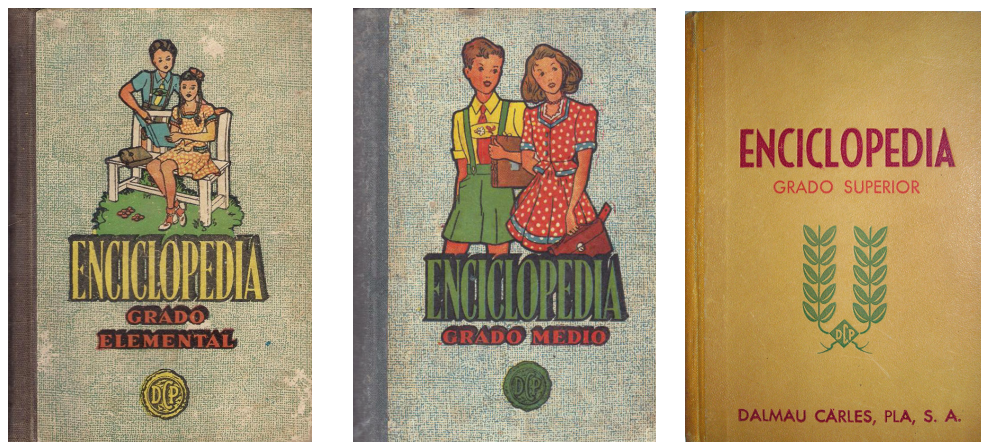


Pic. 1 Josep Dalmau Carles, dibujo pluma y firma, <<http://www.xtec.cat/centres/b7001930/01histo/3dalmau/1dalmau.html>>, último acceso: 11 de diciembre de 2014.

nivel cultural del maestro; se reconocía el carácter verdaderamente profesional de las Escuelas y pensaba que la formación pedagógica debía ser una asignatura. El análisis del plan permite ver cómo quedaba reforzada la preparación de los maestros elementales y por primera vez se les exigían tres cursos.

En 1903 los estudios de Magisterio retornan a las Escuelas Normales, se establece la edad mínima de catorce años para poder ingresar en estos Centros y se dispone que los estudios conducentes al título de Maestro Elemental sean de dos años, y de otros dos para el título de Maestro Superior, y las Escuelas Normales recobran su autonomía. Según el Real Decreto de 24 de septiembre de 1903 los estudios de magisterio se reestructuraron estableciéndose un nuevo plan de estudios que se mantendría vigente hasta 1914.

Los planes de estudio anteriores no respondían a las necesidades pedagógicas de los futuros maestros. En distintos sectores sociales y profesionales fue generándose un ambiente favorable a la renovación de estos estudios. El Plan de Estudios de 1914 propuesto por el ministro de Instrucción Pública, Manuel Bergamín, suponía un avance importante para la época. Este Plan exigía un examen de ingreso efectuado sobre los conocimientos de la escuela primaria y cuatro cursos en la Escuela Normal, los dos primeros teóricos y los dos últimos alternando la pedagogía con las prácticas escolares. Se unificó las categorías de maestros en un título único y significó la consagración de la igualdad del currículum de las maestras y los maestros. Los aspirantes a maestros accedían con un nivel de instrucción muy elemental. De ahí la excesiva tendencia enciclopedista del Decreto Bergamín que, a la vez, trataba de completar la instrucción recibida en la enseñanza primaria. Esta era la causa de la progresiva tendencia enciclopedista de los planes de estudios de magisterio, justificándose así la denominación de Plan Cultural recibida por el Decreto Bergamín o Plan 14. Fue ésta una reforma que atendió más a los conocimientos instructivos que a los pedagógico-profesionales. No obstante, el período que estuvo vigente el plan, 1914-1931, resultó una etapa próspera para la formación del magisterio primario porque existió un ambiente



Pic. 2. Portadas Enciclopedias Grados (fotografía de los autores).

pedagógico-cultural propicio y se contó con el apoyo de los intelectuales de la *Institución Libre de Enseñanza*.

Durante esta época vive José Dalmáu Carles, Maestro de Enseñanza primaria, preocupado por la formación del Magisterio.

4. Referencias Biográficas de José Dalmáu Carles

Una aproximación biográfica la hemos encontrado en un libro escrito en idioma catalán, con la colaboración del Ayuntamiento y la Diputación de Gerona¹⁹, que muestra su biografía en paralelo con la historia de la editorial que fundó, una de las más importantes empresas que existieron en el siglo XX en la ciudad de Girona.

Josep Dalmáu Carles nació el 20 de abril de 1857 en San Cebrià de los Ajos, al término municipal de Cruïlles y fallecido en Gerona en 1928. A los trece años fue a vivir en Palamós y continuó trabajando y estudiando a la vez. Empezó a hacer pequeñas publicaciones de opiniones a los diarios.

Se casó a los 19 años con María Casademont y Riu. Fundó la editorial «Dalmáu, Carles & Cia» en 1904. Estuvo principalmente especializada en la publicación de libros escolares y métodos pedagógicos, aunque también publicó biografías, libros de historia, enciclopedias y muchas otras clases de libros.

¹⁹ S. Asso Coll, *Biografia del mestre Josep Dalmáu Carles: Breu història de l'editorial Dalmáu*, Tarragona, Carles Pla S.A. (Studia), 2007.

Estudió magisterio mientras trabajaba como gerente en un comercio de vinos, contable en una fábrica y depositario de los fondos municipales del ayuntamiento de Palamós. Obtuvo el título de maestro de primera enseñanza en la Escuela Normal de Maestras de Girona. Para obtener grado de Maestro Normal, en el año 1883, viajó para finalizar los estudios a Madrid, donde se relacionó con personalidades que influyeron en sus ideas, entre las cuales destacó Manuel Becerra, matemático y político, del cual Dalmáu fue su secretario particular. En el año 1884 consiguió el título de Maestro Normal y el certificado de estudios de la especialidad de enseñanza a sordo-mudos. Manuel Becerra le ofreció una plaza de profesor a la Normal de Cádiz y también de inspector, pero lo rechazó porque prefería volver a ser maestro de escuela y estar con su familia. El 1886 obtuvo el número 1 en la oposición de la escuela Girona donde vivió y trabajó durante más de 40 años y creó un nuevo tipo de escuela pública. Su escuela estaba en el edificio de «Las Àligues», en la plaza St. Domènec, donde actualmente está la Universitat de Girona. Ante las deficiencias que tenía dicha escuela y la falta de apoyo de las autoridades decidió hacer la escuela en su casa convirtiéndola en un internado regido por su mujer. En su escuela no sólo se daban conocimientos básicos, sino que los preparaba para la vida profesional y los enseñaban lenguas extranjeras. Finalmente, se consiguió la construcción del “Grupo escolar” de donde fue director. José Dalmáu Carles fue Profesor Normal, Director del Grupo Escolar de Gerona y fue nombrado Caballero de la Real Orden de Isabel la Católica y de la Orden Civil de Alfonso XII por méritos en la enseñanza.

En 1919, al asociarse Josep Dalmáu Carles con su yerno Joaquim Pla Cargol (esposo de su hija Catalina Dalmáu i Casademont), la editorial adoptó su nombre definitivo: «Dalmáu Carles Pla, S.A.».

Dalmáu escribió y publicó gran cantidad de libros, tanto de matemáticas como de lectura y de otros temas, que fueron una revolución para la enseñanza. Escribió y publicó una enciclopedia donde se recogían las enseñanzas reglamentarias de la escuela primaria. *La Enciclopedia Cíclico Pedagógica* tiene como subtítulo *Ciencias-Letras-Bellas Artes*. Se compone de 1556 páginas en las cuales se desarrollan temas de gramática, lenguaje, aritmética, álgebra, geografía, geografía general, geografía descriptiva, historia sagrada, historia de España y Universal, física, química, biología, botánica, geología, mineralogía, fisiología e higiene, agricultura, industria, comercio, filosofía, moral, derecho, preceptiva literaria, bellas artes, música, etc... Con este temario el profesor que impartiera las clases de cualquier grado tenía un amplio campo para que sus alumnos adquiriesen la formación necesaria para poseer una Cultura General según el uso de la época. Aparte del dictado, redacción, operaciones aritméticas y problemas que era tarea casi diaria el profesor, iba alternando las distintas materias que estaban en la citada Enciclopedia.

Se editaron ediciones de cada uno de los grados por separado, así hemos encontrado ediciones de 1930 de grado superior (o tercer grado) 1944 del grado

elemental, de grado y de 1960 del grado preparatorio, (aunque se editaron más años, pero no se indicaba el número de la edición). La enciclopedia de Dalmáu se ha estado usando en las escuelas españolas hasta mediados del siglo XX.

Como explica el Maestro y Profesor Honorífico de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Jesús Asensi Díaz «en la escuela, tras superar las Cartillas Rayas (Método de enseñanza de lectura- escritura, diseñado por Ángel Rodríguez Álvarez entre 1904-05 y editado por Agustín Sánchez Rodrigo, en Plasencia) se seguía con la Enciclopedia de Dalmáu de Grado preparatorio, se pasaba a la Enciclopedia Grado Elemental y superada esta se pasaba al Grado Superior; después, en los años 60, en la escuela pública, el libro fundamental que servía de base para la educación de los alumnos era la Enciclopedia, intuitiva-sintética-práctica de Antonio Alvarez Pérez, Maestro-Director del Centro Educativo «Álvarez» en Valladolid»²⁰.

La cita siguiente de Asensi explica cuál era la metodología docente de la época en la enseñanza primaria.

Como la enciclopedia de cada grado servía para dos cursos escolares, Dalmáu Carles, indicaba en una nota previa que el primer año sólo había que estudiar lo impreso en letra mayor y en el segundo año, todo cuanto contiene el libro. Esto hacía que muchos alumnos estuviéramos pendientes de la letra pequeña para, si era posible, aprenderla también y así superarnos a nosotros mismos y sorprender a los compañeros, aunque el maestro decía que no era necesario. Cada lección, que era muy corta, terminaba con un recuadro, en letra muy pequeñita, que proponía los ejercicios del primer año y otro recuadro que contenía los ejercicios del segundo año. Siempre me llamaron la atención los grabados con que se ilustraba, algunos de gran calidad pero que no favorecían su copia. La enciclopedia de grado elemental exponía en su primera página que tenía 400 grabados.

Dalmáu escribió un conjunto de obras sobre Aritmética y Álgebra que se usaron en la enseñanza de las Matemáticas durante el periodo de entre siglos. Entre sus obras dedicadas específicamente a la enseñanza de las Matemáticas, señalamos:

- *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra. Tratado Teórico-Práctico-Demostrado con aplicación a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para uso de las Escuelas Normales y de las de comercio* (1ª edición, 1899);
- *Aritmética. Lecciones de aritmética aplicadas a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para las escuelas y colegios de Primera Enseñanza* (De texto por R.O. de 28 de abril de 1898);
- *Lecciones de Aritmética 1ª y 2ª parte* (1ª edición, 1894);

²⁰ J. Asensi Díaz, *Memoria de un Maestro. Memoria de la Escuela*, «Tendencias Pedagógicas», vol. 14, 2009, pp. 33-55.

- *Resumen de las lecciones de aritmética aplicadas a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para las escuelas y colegios de primera enseñanza* (1ª edición, 1897);
- *Soluciones analíticas de los ejercicios y problemas contenidos en las siguientes obras del autor: Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra, Lecciones de aritmética 1ª Parte y 2ª Parte, Resumen de las lecciones de aritmética y Rudimentos de aritmética* (1ª edición, 1898);
- *Rudimentos de aritmética para las escuelas y colegios de primera enseñanza* (1ª edición, 1898).

Además Dalmáu escribió y editó cartillas escolares, como:

- *España mi patria, Método completo de lectura* (varios cursos) (1919, 1922, 1943, 1945, 1962);
- Método completo de lectura: *El camarada*, y *Nuevo camarada* (1950);
- *Lecciones de cosas* (1945), del que se conoce una versión en lengua catalana de 1937;
- *Deberes, El primer manuscrito*, (1921, 1927, 1965, 1969);
- *El segundo manuscrito* (1920, 1923), y *Europa, nueva adaptación del manuscrito segundo* (1933);
- *Métodos de caligrafía y escritura vertical*.

También escribió *Rudimentos de Derecho* (1903, 1924, 1927, 1932).

5. La Aritmética y el Álgebra en la obra de Dalmáu

De su libro de *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra*, editado por primera vez en la Librería de J. Franquet y Serra en 1897, publicó diversas versiones en función de la población a la que iba dirigida, que se recogen en los subtítulos. *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra, Tratado Teórico-Práctico-Demostrado con aplicación a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para uso de las Escuelas Normales y de las de comercio*, donde la población diana es los alumnos de Escuelas Normales y de Comercio. Su número de páginas es 513.

Otra versión de la obra anterior es la *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra* que subtituló *Lecciones de aritmética aplicadas a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para las escuelas y colegios de Primera Enseñanza*. Su población diana es alumnos de la Primera Enseñanza (bien de grado medio o grado superior). Fue declarada de texto por R.O. de 28 de abril de 1898. La diferencia con el libro anterior es que al ir dirigido a la enseñanza primaria, no parecen teoremas ni demostraciones. También se editó el libro del profesor y el libro del alumno, incluso se editó por separado la Primera Parte (Aritmética) y la Segunda Parte (Álgebra).

Publicó en 1897, también relacionado con el libro de *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra*, un *Resumen de las lecciones de aritmética aplicadas a*

las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para las escuelas y colegios de primera enseñanza, de 185 páginas, dirigido a enseñanza de los colegios de primera enseñanza. Se observa que este libro tiene una estructura más simple y organizada que el libro de *Lecciones de aritmética aplicadas a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para las escuelas y colegios de Primera Enseñanza* de la Parte de Aritmética, con definiciones, aunque no tiene la Parte de Álgebra. La gran repercusión de este libro se puede ver en que en el año 1923 ya se publica la 89ª edición aumentada y corregida. También en la portada del libro se recoge datos del éxito del *Resumen de las lecciones de aritmética aplicadas a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para las escuelas y colegios de primera enseñanza* ya que se recoge que está considerado como de texto por R. O. de 28 de Abril de 1898, y adoptado para la instrucción de S. M. el Rey D. Alfonso XIII y además se le ha concedido la medalla de oro en la exposición científica de «Palais du travail» celebrada en París en 1900. En el prólogo de esta obra se aprecia los fuertes lazos familiares de Dalmáu al dedicársela a sus hijos con unos versos muy emotivos:

A MIS HIJOS

A vosotros, queridos de mi alma, que con vuestro amor y aplicación constante me proporcionáis las únicas alegrías que endulzan mi trabajosa vida, dedico este librito.

Recibidlo con el mismo cariño que os lo ofrezco, y ved siempre en él un pálido testimonio del afecto entrañable que os profesa vuestro padre.

Gerona y Abril 1897

En 1898 publicó *Rudimentos de aritmética para las escuelas y colegios de primera enseñanza* y, en el mismo año de 1898, *Soluciones analíticas de los ejercicios y problemas contenidos en las siguientes obras del autor: Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra, Lecciones de aritmética 1ª Parte y 2ª Parte, Resumen de las lecciones de aritmética y Rudimentos de aritmética*. El libro de *Soluciones*²¹ mantiene la estructura de todos los libros y en algunos ejercicios o problemas hace referencia en cuál de los libros aparece el enunciado correspondiente. El prólogo tiene dos partes: una que titula *Á nuestros comprofesores y a la prensa del ramo* que hace referencia al objetivo pedagógico de este conjunto de obras y del uso de este libro en las Escuelas Normales y cómo el libro favorece al magisterio en general, y «muy principalmente a los dignos compañeros que nos honran adoptando nuestras obras». La otra parte del prólogo cuyo título es *Sobre los métodos de resolución que hemos empleado* en el que profundiza en esa labor pedagógica y el valor educativo con el que escribe estos libros:

²¹ J. Dalmáu, *Soluciones analíticas de los ejercicios y problemas contenidos en las siguientes obras del autor: Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra, Lecciones de aritmética 1ª Parte y 2ª Parte, Resumen de las lecciones de aritmética y Rudimentos de aritmética*, Gerona, Dalmáu Carles, PLA, S.A., 1898.

Dos son los métodos generales que pueden emplearse en la resolución de las cuestiones aplicando los principios teóricos de las ciencias matemáticas: los *métodos analíticos* y los *métodos empíricos*.

Los primeros, esencialmente educativos, son el alma de la enseñanza, y es imposible separarse de ellos, ya que constituyen el único medio en virtud del cual la inteligencia del alumno aprende a ver con claridad las relaciones más ocultas.

Los métodos empíricos carecen de valor educativo, sí; pero, en nuestro concepto, deben considerarse como el complemento de la enseñanza, tanto por la necesidad de sintetizar en breves preceptos la operación analítica que ha exigido continuados razonamientos, como por la comodidad inapreciable que proporcionan en la vida práctica, ofreciéndonos la manera de reducir a sencillas y cortas operaciones los razonamientos más largos y complicados.

Es cierto que el trabajo del Profesor debe ser, ante todo, educativo; pero tampoco lo es menos que el alumno se forma en la Escuela para la vida social, en la cual el tiempo es un tesoro, y de aquí la necesidad de habituarle a calcular con la aplicación de métodos breves, cuya generación, si es posible, haya entendido mediante el análisis de las cuestiones.

Con lo que llevamos dicho, creemos justificar cumplidamente nuestra conducta acerca de los métodos de resolución que hemos empleado al escribir nuestras *Soluciones*.

Quien nos lea verá como, atentos a nuestro deber educativo, *analizamos* las preciosas relaciones que existen entre los términos y el resultado de la substracción, de la multiplicación y de la división; *analizando*, tratamos el cálculo de los números decimales, quebrados comunes y complejos; *analizando* resolvemos las aplicaciones de los principios fundamentales de la extracción de raíces, del peso específico de la elaboración de monedas y de las diferentes cuestiones a que se aplican, ordinariamente, el principio de proporcionalidad; *analizando*, queremos que se resuelvan los múltiples ejercicios de cálculo mental que lleva nuestro libro, y *analizando*, en fin, hasta tratamos los diferentes problemas de falsa posición simple y compuesta.

Aplicamos los métodos empíricos a la resolución de aquellas cuestiones que, en la vida práctica, necesariamente, los reclaman, y aún entonces, siempre tenemos el cuidado de remitir al lector, por medio de notas, a los principios teóricos de nuestra *Aritmética Razonada* que se fundamentan los métodos abreviados que empleamos.

Deseamos, pues, que el lector, por la simple ojeada de un capítulo no deduzca, equivocadamente, que nos separamos del *método analítico*, que es, precisamente, nuestro guía.

Este prólogo, como vemos, indica explícitamente las teorías de aprendizajes subyacentes respecto a la Formación de Maestros en el manual, los métodos analíticos y los métodos empíricos y las intenciones del autor al escribirlo, muy preocupado por elevar el nivel cultural de los futuros docentes.

6. *Análisis de contenido de Aritmética Razonada y Nociones de Álgebra de Dalmáu*

El Análisis de Contenido tal y como aquí se presenta, es una herramienta técnica para establecer y estudiar la diversidad de significados de los contenidos de las Matemáticas Escolares. Como hemos comentado anteriormente, hemos utilizado la metodología el de Análisis de Contenido, comenzamos por el

Análisis Didáctico-Cognitivo donde hemos analizado las intenciones del Autor y seguimos con el Análisis Conceptual, queriendo establecer cuáles son las definiciones de los contenidos matemáticos como objetos de aprendizaje, estableceremos una clasificación detallada de ellos y mostraremos el sistema de relaciones que se generan entre los distintos tipos de contenidos con lo que construiremos, en cada caso, a un mapa conceptual; seguimos con el estudio y revisión de los Sistemas de Representación, cualquier modo de hacer presente un concepto, junto al Análisis Fenomenológico que consiste en delimitar aquellas situaciones donde tienen uso los conceptos matemáticos involucrados, aquellas en las que estos muestran su funcionalidad.

Título completo: *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra* y subtítulo: *Tratado Teórico-Práctico-Demostrado con aplicación a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para uso de las Escuelas Normales y de las de comercio*. Hemos trabajado sobre la edición de 1910. En cuanto a la forma de presentación de la obra, el texto se estructura en preguntas y respuestas, en estilo catecismo, numerando los párrafos, donde se escribe en negrita las primeras palabras que suelen indicar el concepto que se define en él y se escribe en cursiva aquellas palabras más relevantes del párrafo. Estos distintos tipos de letras, tienen una función que señala el propio autor:

A fin de facilitar el estudio de la materia, se han empleado tipos de mayor tamaño para la impresión de toda lo que podemos llamar esencia de las lecciones; la letra bastardilla para determinadas definiciones y palabras sobre las que conviene llamar particularmente la atención del alumno, y tipos de menor tamaño, para la solución razonada de los problemas que se intercalan en el cuerpo de la obra aplicando los principios teóricos y para cuanto podemos considerar como secundario, aunque, a menudo, indispensable, para ver claramente lo esencial²².

Tiene 20 páginas del comienzo donde se recoge la Dedicatoria y Una Explicación Necesaria y apartados dedicados a las medidas de Castilla y Cataluña y otras provincias. Al final tiene unos apéndices para indicar fórmulas de superficies y volúmenes.

Este libro está dedicado a Director de la Escuela Normal de Gerona, D. José Cumbáu y Serra.

En la Explicación Necesaria, que a modo de prólogo²³ se presenta en el libro, se hace una reflexión de los conocimientos tanto teóricos como prácticos que son necesarios en la formación de Maestros, indicando las deficiencias que presentan los libros para la enseñanza profesional:

²² Id., *Lecciones de Aritmética (grado superior)*. Libro del alumno, Gerona, Dalmau Carles, 1916, 61ª edición, p. 6.

²³ Id., *Prólogo*, in Id., *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra, Tratado Teórico-Práctico-Demostrado con aplicación a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para uso de las Escuelas Normales y de las de comercio*, Madrid, Perlado Páez y C^a, 1897, 18ª edición corregida.

ver, en todas ellas, deficiencias notabilísimas. Las más esencialmente prácticas, callando el porqué de las reglas sólo pueden formar Maestros empíricos, alguna que otra, de índole teórica, más bien parece texto compendios con destino a la segunda enseñanza, cuyos estudios distan mucho de ser garantía suficiente para la formación del Maestro por cuanto a la labor de éste se fundamenta, precisamente, en la aplicación de los principios que la teoría proporciona.

Así, el Maestro debe poseer el conocimiento y la demostración de los principios de la Aritmética, debe dominar la aplicación de unos y otros a las cuestiones especulativas y poseer la práctica de las operaciones algebraicas y aplicaciones.

El objetivo que el autor pretende con la obra es doble: «proporcionar un texto teórico-práctico» y que el libro «sea su consultor y guía en las difíciles tareas de la enseñanza, un libro que le permita realizar satisfactoriamente su misión, cualquiera que sean las necesidades de la población donde ejerza; un libro, en fin que, rompiendo antiguos moldes, ofrezca al Magisterio modernos horizontes, lo mismo desde el punto de vista educativo, que en su aspecto instructivo y de aplicación». Este objetivo tiene como fin el mejorar la Formación de Maestros.

¡Ojalá pueda, con el tiempo convencerme de que este trabajo, pobre por ser mío, ha sido de alguna utilidad a la clase que tanto me honra y cuyo mejoramiento, con toda mi alma ansío!
J.D.C.

Está repleto de definiciones, pero también tiene propiedades y algunas aplicaciones para la enseñanza. Tiene múltiples problemas y ejercicios, más de 5.000, como indica en la portada, para el cálculo mental y escrito. La parte teórica de la Aritmética termina en la página 342 y comienza la parte práctica desde la página 343 hasta la 429. La parte del Álgebra es mucho más reducida, con 57 páginas de teoría y 11 de parte práctica.

En la secuenciación de los contenidos se pueden identificar un “foco conceptual” que estructura la Aritmética: conocimiento conceptual compuesto por los elementos primarios (en forma de definiciones) y operaciones sobre ellos, haciendo gran hincapié en el cálculo mental, y resolución de problemas a través de estas operaciones, y la estrategia de la proporción con la regla de tres. Se observan además dos “subfocos conceptuales”: uno referido a Aplicaciones de las operaciones/ Procedimientos para la enseñanza, donde se dan orientaciones didácticas para las operaciones de números enteros (este “subfoco” no se repite en ningún otro lugar del manual) y otro «subfoco» referido a las propiedades de las operaciones que funciona como motor de desarrollo del manual en cada una de sus partes.

En cuanto al Álgebra, se consolidará la asunción de la sintaxis del álgebra, se combina el formato horizontal, simbólico algebraico y el vertical de columnas de los algoritmos estándar. Se muestra un “foco conceptual” centrado en la resolución de ecuaciones a partir de las operaciones con cantidades algebraicas.

La fundamentación de los métodos algebraico se observa al considerar las propiedades fundamentales de las operaciones. Antes de comenzar con la multiplicación se presenta un interesante apartado sobre *Aplicaciones de la adición y la substracción y procedimientos para su enseñanza*, donde se indica el orden de enseñanza: primero las operaciones con números abstractos y cuando los conozcan bien entrar en el cálculo formal de los números concretos, presentando simultáneamente ejercicios sencillos de sumar y restar primero y después de multiplicar y dividir. Indicar que el niño debe aprender a leer los problemas para distinguir cuándo debe sumar o restar, multiplicar o dividir y procurar que los enunciados de tengan las mismas unidades. Propone cuatro problemas para ver el procedimiento en la enseñanza simultánea de la suma y la resta de números concretos.

Es muy interesante la afirmación que hace en el apartado de Aplicaciones de la Multiplicación y procedimientos para su enseñanza, en la que mecanizar la enseñanza de la multiplicación es innecesaria, que se debe emplear el análisis para el «desarrollo del raciocinio» y pone tres ejemplos de cómo hacer ver que multiplicar es «hacer un número tantas veces mayor como unidades tiene otro»²⁴.

PROBLEMA 3º: A Razón de 24 pesetas el decalitro, ¿cuántas pesetas valdrán 126 decalitros de vino superior?- ¿Qué se pide en este problema?- Lo que valen 126 decalitros de vino. – Y ¿qué sale?- que 1 decalitro vale 24 pesetas.- Si 1 decalitros de vino vale 24 pesetas, 126 decalitros ¿valdrán más ó menos?.- Valdrán más.- ¿Cuántas veces más?- 126 veces. – Por consiguiente ¿de qué será la operación?.- De multiplicar, porque hemos que hacer el número 24 ciento veintiséis veces mayor.- Y multiplicar es.... – Hacer un número tantas veces mayor como unidades tiene otro.

RESOLUCION: 24 pesetas
 x126 decalitros

504
252...

Valdría 3024 pesetas

En España, durante el siglo XVIII, cada provincia tenía sus propias unidades de medida e incluso localidades muy próximas las tenían diferentes, por lo que las operaciones comerciales resultaban muy complejas y difíciles, con numerosos engaños y abusos. Después de muchos intentos fallidos, finalmente los gobernantes españoles decidieron adoptar el sistema métrico decimal por

²⁴ Id., *Aritmética razonada y nociones de álgebra, Tratado Teórico-Práctico-Demostrado con aplicación a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para uso de las Escuelas Normales y de las de comercio*, cit., p. 44.

Ley de 19 de julio de 1849 que establece el 1 de enero de 1860 como fecha oficial de su entrada en vigor. Respecto a su enseñanza el Artículo 11 de la Ley establecía que desde el 1 de enero de 1852 sería obligatorio su estudio en todas las escuelas públicas o particulares, quedando facultado el Gobierno para cerrar los establecimientos que no cumplieran con esta obligación²⁵. Al asumir el sistema métrico decimal los libros de texto tuvieron que ser reelaborados, lo que condujo a una reestructuración de los programas que obligó a introducir los números decimales añadiendo el sistema métrico decimal con las unidades, múltiplos y submúltiplos de longitud, capacidad, peso y volumen y el sistema monetario, aunque se mantuvo el cálculo con los números complejos, denominados correspondientes, dedicándose en algunas obras una parte al cambio y transformación de unas unidades a otras dentro del sistema métrico y del antiguo sistema al nuevo. La realidad es que durante mucho tiempo subsistieron en España los dos sistemas de medidas, lo que se reflejó en los libros de texto de aritmética por la coexistencia de lecciones relativas al sistema antiguo de medidas y al moderno. Dalmáu introduce en este libro «el sistema decimal»: es el conjunto de pesas, medidas y monedas que tienen su origen en el metro y a partir de aquí introduce los números complejos métricos. «Este sistema es el único legal en España y varias naciones de Europa y América»²⁶. «Para operar los complejos métricos, el método más rápido y sencillo consiste en reducirlos a incomplejos de una especie cualquiera, y proceder luego como en operaciones de enteros y decimales»²⁷.

También son muy importantes en el texto las demostraciones de las propiedades, aunque algunas son simples comprobaciones a través de ejemplos otras tienen un uso muy abstracto de símbolos matemáticos, por ejemplo en la demostración de la fórmula de resolución de ecuaciones de segundo grado²⁸.

En cuanto a los aspectos fenomenológicos, la obra comprende, además de la teoría indispensable, más de 5.000 problemas y ejercicios prácticos para el cálculo mental y escrito, debidamente metodizados y de aplicación inmediata. Al detallar las cuatro operaciones, para números, dando los algoritmos siempre plantea ejemplos en contextos puramente matemáticos²⁹.

²⁵ A pesar de lo estipulado en esta Ley, se continuó utilizando el sistema antiguo, especialmente en las zonas rurales. Eduardo Benot, *Sistema métrico. Complemento a la Aritmética general*, Madrid, editor Mariano Núñez Samper, 1895, dice en la página 10: «Hostilidad contra el sistema métrico nunca verdaderamente la hubo; pero sí una desobediencia mansa contra lo dispuesto, tal y tan insistente, que de ella únicamente puede formarse idea teniendo alguna noticia de las leyes, Reales decretos y Reales órdenes dictadas por los poderes públicos en lo referente al ramo de la Instrucción pública». Y a continuación presenta una retahíla de decretos, órdenes y reglamentos, en los que se recuerda sucesivamente la obligatoriedad de enseñar y utilizar el nuevo sistema de medidas.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 471.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

En los apartados dedicados a los procedimientos de enseñanza de las operaciones se usan ejemplos de la vida cotidiana de monedas, y también de unidades del sistema métrico decimal y algunos ejemplos con unidades del sistema antiguo de medidas castellanas o catalanas³⁰.

Después de explicar el sistema métrico decimal sí se representan fenómenos de la vida cotidiana con números complejos decimales. La parte práctica de Aritmética comienza con una gran cantidad de ejercicios de cálculo que puede hacerse mental o escrito con números “abstractos”. Sigue con problemas de operar con números “complejos” y métricos decimales, y quebrados donde las situaciones son de la vida diaria y relacionadas con diversos oficios: de labranza, comerciantes, navegantes, bordadoras,... Del mismo tipo son los ejercicios para usar las reglas de tres, las de compañía, las aleaciones, las reglas de interés simple y compuesto y de los distintos tipos de ecuaciones.

La parte práctica del Álgebra comienza con algunos ejercicios de operaciones con cantidades algebraicas y sigue con una colección exhaustiva de ejercicios y de problemas que dan lugar a los distintos tipos de ecuaciones: de primer grado con una, dos o más incógnitas, y de segundo grado. Las situaciones son similares a las vistas en la parte de la Aritmética.

Conclusiones

Se presentan las conclusiones de este artículo, observando que la dinámica de transmutación del significado cultural y social de la Aritmética y el Álgebra para Maestros no sólo aparece en las frías disposiciones ministeriales ya que al analizar los libros de textos usados en la formación de Maestros en lo referente a estas dos materias se han hallado diversas concepciones ligadas a la idea de número y cantidad y del paso a los conceptos algebraicos:

1. En general, existe una disociación entre la Aritmética y el Álgebra, respetando la naturaleza secuencial de ambos sistemas matemáticos pero sin organizarse evitando saltos, rupturas o cortes didácticos entre ellos.
2. También se ha observado que de la doble naturaleza del Álgebra, operacional y estructural, en el manual estudiado predomina la primera, al introducir el lenguaje algebraico y las operaciones de sistema de signos.

El libro *Aritmética Razonada y Nociones de Álgebra* de Dalmáu, editado por primera vez en 1899 y su *Resumen de las lecciones aritméticas aplicadas a las diferentes cuestiones mercantiles para las escuelas y colegios de primera enseñanza*, tuvieron bastante difusión y fueron reeditados durante todo el periodo estudiado, dirigido el primero a los alumnos de las Escuelas Normales

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

y de las de Comercio y el segundo a grado medio. En el manual dedicado a la Formación de Maestros se realizan algunas reflexiones didácticas para la enseñanza de las operaciones, escribiendo el autor en el prólogo que el libro va ser «su consultor y guía en las difíciles tareas de la enseñanza» y quiere hacer un libro diferente a esas obras «de índole teórica, que parecen texto compendioso con destino a la segunda enseñanza»; aunque después de analizar el texto, la formación del Profesor de Primaria se mantiene centrada en unas matemáticas útiles y prácticas, de contenido clásico y este gran maestro se preocupa de escasas concesiones a la aportación didáctica. Los libros de Dalmáu Carles presentan una importante innovación con la introducción de problemas al final de ellos. En algunas aritméticas anteriores aparecen problemas, pero siempre para ejemplificar el contenido del texto, pero con Dalmáu Carles es la primera vez que un autor presenta al final de la obra una colección de problemas para ser resueltos por los alumnos, que son calificados por el propio autor como «educativos».

La obra de Dalmáu está enfocada a la adquisición de conocimiento procedimental de las operaciones aritméticas, haciendo hincapié en el cálculo mental y de la resolución de problemas con ellas, pero también al conocimiento y demostración de algunas propiedad de estas operaciones; en el cálculo algebraico se busca plantear problemas en los que hay que formular las ecuaciones; El autor intenta cubrir las deficiencias que ha observado en otros textos y busca una formación teórica y no sólo empírica de los futuros maestros, tratando de mejorar la insuficiente formación que recibían los maestros elementales. Como hemos visto, fue cuestión implícita de todas las reformas del Magisterio y de los Planes de Estudio en este periodo aumentar su preparación académica. El Plan del 14 cerró una etapa de abandono de las Normales e iniciaron un nuevo rumbo que las condujo hacia la consolidación profesional, hecho que no se materializó hasta el lustro republicano.

An early controversy over educational innovation: Christos Evangelides vs. John Valettas in Syros (1851-1852)

Anthony L. Smyrnaiois
Faculty of Primary Education
University of Thessaly, Volos (Greece)
smirnaiois@uth.gr

ABSTRACT: The history of educational innovation narrates mainly the efforts of the teachers, the educators and of all those who form the educational system to spread literacy and also to invent methods and tools for an easier, child-centered and more effective education that would be connected to life as well as the market needs. The early and unique venture of Christos Evangelides in the Greek island of Syros between 1842 to 1855 is a premature fruit of an educational innovation at a time when such attempts were completely absent from Greece. However, the conflict it provoked was not only the conservative reaction to that spirit but it was also connected to motives of personal and sectional dislike, at a place where the spirit of educational competition and its commercial exploitation had become more and more obvious.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Educational innovation; Christos Evangelides; John Valettas; Syros; Greece; XIXth Century.

Education in Greece during the 19th Century

The modern Greek state was founded by the London Protocol in 1830, after the end of the Greek Revolution of 1821. Its first and second degree education was in its turn founded by the laws of the Bavarians in 1834 and 1836, although first degree schools had been operating even during the Revolution, while a systematic educational effort had taken place by the governor I. Kapodistrias (1828-1831). According to the Bavarian legislation, the primary education was essentially consisted of the mutual teaching school whereas the secondary education was consisted of the Hellenic School and the Gymnasium (high school). Both education levels were dominated by classicism, whose origins can be detected in the most appreciated ancient Greek heritage, the modern

Greek Enlightenment and the classicistic obsession of the Bavarians themselves. Despite the early democratization of modern Greek education compared to most European countries, its overall assessment in the middle of the 19th century but later on as well was fundamentally disappointing: the mechanistic way of teaching, the memorization, the incompetence and roughness of the teachers, the lack of teaching means and school buildings, were just few of the factors that contributed to the largely superficial knowledge of the new generation of Greeks.

The schools founded by Protestant missionaries in Syros, in Tinos, in Athens, in Argos, in Piraeus, in Areopoli of Mani and in many more places, had already been trying to cover these deficiencies from 1828. Those missionaries were funded by voluntary societies of various Protestant Confessions (Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists and Episcopalians), which came mostly from the USA and Great Britain, and their aim was to convert Greeks to Protestantism through the philanthropy they offered. The most famous missionary schools and those operating for the longest time were the *Philhellenic Paidagogeio* in Hermoupolis of Syros and the *Hill School* in Athens, where thousands of students had studied and tens of teachers had been trained.

Private schools founded by Greek teachers and professors, many of whom had studied abroad, also tried to cover the educational gaps from 1840 onwards. At first these educators usually worked in public schools and later on with the fame they gained for their abilities they established the private ones, which at the same time had boarding schools for students from other parts of Greece and from other countries as well. Therefore, the reputation of those schools went beyond the borders of the Greek state and many Greeks who lived abroad considered their patriotic duty sending their children to study in the private schools of G. Papadopoulos and D. Sourmelis in Athens or in the schools of Chr. Evangelides and I. Valettas in Hermoupolis of Syros. However, during the 19th century, the establishment of many private schools and increasingly intense speculative competition among them brought up the need for some boundaries «to this impetuous course of the commercialization of education» that led inevitably to the «paralysis» of public schools as mentioned in a circular by the Minister of Education in 1871¹.

¹ A. Dimaras (ed.), *I metarrithmisi pou den egine* [The reformation which was not brought about], vol. A: 1821-1894, Athens, Hermes, 1974 (in Greek), pp. 210-211.

Hermoupolis of Syros: a meteoric town at the crossroads of Eastern Mediterranean

Hermoupolis of Syros was founded by Greek refugees of the Greek-Turkish war that came from Chios, Psara, Izmir, Crete and Macedonia, finding refuge in this island of Cyclades as the Roman Catholic residents of its upper city had been under French protection for centuries. Soon the city began growing, it became the commercial and transport center of the whole Eastern Mediterranean, while by the 1860's it had become the economic capital of the modern Greek state². One of the first concerns of the new residents was the establishment of mutual teaching schools and renowned teachers of the time, such as George Kleovoulos, started teaching the refugees' children initially in the shanties on the coast of Syros. In 1827 Protestant missionaries arrived there as well and took on the education of the city. In 1830 they founded an independent educational institution, the *Philhellenic Pedagogeion*, which was run for 47 whole years by the German missionary Fr. Hildner, a delegate of the Anglican Church Missionary Society³. This school included nursery schools, Lancastrian and Greek schools for boys and girls, as well as training Seminars for teachers. It was in fact the main spark for the numerous establishments of public and private schools in the following decades, as the local authorities acknowledged themselves. The abundance of these schools and the large number of their students especially for such a small island as Syros is shown in a report presented by the newspaper «Telegraphos ton Kycladon» in 1856, which indicated the economic growth of the city but also the favouring of private against public education. In this report ten primary and secondary public schools appeared to be operating with a total number of 1.698 students, while eight private schools counted even more students (2.578)⁴. The love of the citizens of Hermoupolis for education was great and they made every effort to found public or private schools in their city, watching closely their progress, rewarding their achievements and confronting their mistakes. In fact they thought that the headmasters and teachers of these schools, along with the writers, the typographers, the booksellers and the newspaper editors, formed a «sacred team», which was meant to fight illiteracy and the «bad luck» of the Greek nation⁵.

² E. Kolodny, *Hermoupolis-Syra. Naissance et évolution d'une ville insulaire grecque, «Méditerranée»*, vol. 2, 1969, pp. 189-219 and B. Kardasis, *Syros – Stavrodrome tes Anatolikes Mesogeiou (1832-1857)*, [V. Kardasis, Syros. The Crossroads of Eastern Mediterranean (1832-1857)], Athens, Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, 1987 (in Greek).

³ See the detailed history of this school in A.L. Smyrniaios, *Sta ichne tis utopias: To 'Phillelliniko Paidagogeio tis Syrou kai e protestantiki omogenopoiesi tis oikoumenes kata to 19o aiona* [In the traces of utopia: The Philhellenic Pedagogeion of Syros and the protestant homogenization of the world during the 19th Century], Athens, SOV, 2006 (in Greek).

⁴ «Telegrafos ton Kycladon», n. 68, August 18, 1856.

⁵ «Enosis», n. 175, September 23, 1855.

Christos Evangelides and John Valettas: two strong educational personalities

The first private school of Hermoupolis was founded by Christos or Christodoulos Evangelides (1815-1881), who came from Thessaloniki. During the Greek Revolution he travelled with his mother to Izmir and from there some philanthropist Americans sent him to their country⁶, where he arrived in the beginning of 1828. There he was put under the protection of a group of philhellene Americans, which was in fact named *The Evangeles Society*, and he attended Mount Pleasant Classical Institute in Amherst of Massachusetts, where he studied under the eminent Greek philologist E.A. Sophocles, then the University of the City of New York, where he founded a students' association named *The Philomathian Society*, and finally the Columbia College. His protectors wanted him to ordain priest in order to work as a Protestant missionary in Greece, but he returned to his country in 1837 and later on, as recommended by a student of Ad. Korais and a famous scholar and professor in the University of Athens Neofytos Vamvas, he settled in Hermoupolis in Syros. There he worked privately and in the High School of Syros as a teacher of the English language, while in July of 1842, or according to other sources in 1846, he founded a private school and a boarding school for boys with the name *Greek Lyceum*, which included a Lancastrian and a Greek school. Very soon *Lyceum* gained a great fame in Greece as well as the Greek communities of other countries, while its most well-known students included the later famous 19th century Greek writers Emm. Roides and Dim. Vikelas⁷. Apart from the Greek professors, some foreigners also taught there, such as the Italian lex. Fumagalli from Rome (Calligraphy), exiled in Syros after the revolutions of 1848, and the Germans Julius Henning (Vocal Music) and Carl Fabricious (Latin). The basic principles of the operation of this Lyceum reflected deeply its Protestant orientation. According to its Articles, the institution was based on «Love, Truth, Industriousness and repentance for sin» and its goal was the formation of a man «who has been taught not to expect anything in this world either of his parents or of the Government, except only of God and of himself»,

⁶ J. Gregoriadis, *The Greek boy*, «Modern Greek Studies yearbook», University of Minnesota, vols. 10-11, 1994-1995, pp. 603-627; C.G. Hatzidimitriou, *Christodoulos M.L. [Evangeles] Evangelides (1815-1881): An Early Greek American Educator and Lobbyist*, «Journal of Modern Hellenism», vols. 21-22, 2004-2005, pp. 205-238.

⁷ Emm. Roides (1836-1904) was a famous literary satirist, critic and journalist, who published in 1866 his notorious novel *The Papess Joanne*, a controversial work, which banned by the Greek Church and brought him immediate fame. Demetrios Vikelas (1835-1908) was a businessman, writer, translator, advocate of the revival of the Olympic Games in Athens in 1896 and the first president of the International Olympic Committee (1894-1896). For the educational and spiritual relationship between Rhoides and Evangelides, see A.L. Smyrniaios, *The drive of sarcasm: The Greek Lyceum of Hermoupolis and the Protestant education of Emm. Roides*, «Nea Hestia», vol. 1772, Dec. 2004 (in Greek), pp. 649- 683.

like the Americans⁸. Evangelides's Protestantism was therefore connected with the American republican spirit and his admiration towards anything American was evident. In America he was known as «The Greek boy» whereas in Greece as «The Greek Yankee»⁹. A further dimension of the thought of Evangelides was his adherence to the Greek *Great Idea* of the re-establishment of a new Greek Empire in Constantinople. Thus, having decided to transfer the American Protestant culture in Greece, he aspired to render it suitable for the great mission of Hellenism in the enlightenment of the East. Besides, two years after the establishment of the *Lyceum*, the speech of G. Colettis in the Greek Parliament (1844) confirmed this spirit of the Greek irredentism, which was meant to steer the thoughts and actions of Greek people until 1922.

The *Greek Lyceum* was famous mainly for its unique educational innovations, totally unknown till then in Greece, which Evangelides used to enrich his programme. He claimed that the source of these innovations was the American educational system, although he possibly referred to the private and not the public one, a claim which was accepted by both admirers and opponents of this educational venture. Therefore, apart from the basic courses that were taught in all the public and private schools of the time, the *Lyceum* offered extra lessons of physical education and swimming in the «Evangelides coast», as it is known up until today among the residents of the city, hygiene lessons by the city's doctors, foreign languages (English, French and Italian) as well as lessons of instrumental music, vocal music and dancing. Moreover, theatrical plays written and played by the students were put on, while the students would often go on excursions in Syros nature. Evangelides also sought to make them accustomed to the handling of money, he encouraged writing and the publication of a school paper, *H Melissa* (The Bee) published by Emm. Roides and D. Vikelas, while he was involved personally in his students' exercises, thus cultivating the spirit of emulation. Moreover, due to a habit that he had had since he was a student, he tried to create opportunities for his students to practice on lectures and their participation in public discussions every Saturday afternoon. Then they recited ancient or modern Greek texts which they had chosen or written themselves with the guidance of Evangelides. Such a drill was that of Emm. Roides, which was the only one that was published in the local press¹⁰. Finally, the classrooms of the *Lyceum* were also used for other

⁸ Gregoriadis, *The Greek boy*, cit., pp. 620-621.

⁹ S.A. Larrabee, *Hellas Observed: The American Experience of Greece 1775-1865*, New York, New York University Press, 1957, p. 267 and Hatzidimitriou, *Christodoulos M.L. [Evangeles] Evangelides*, cit., p. 211. Writing towards the end of his life to his friend and famous American poet William Cullen Bryant he will assure him: «You must know that I persist in my adoptive country and I am proud to be a Yankee. I belong to the Empire state, I am a Newyorker... When Americans find their way to Syra, it is for me a day of relief and joy». See Gregoriadis, *The Greek boy*, cit., p. 625.

¹⁰ «Enosis», n. 289, October, 17, 1851.

social events like the recitations of the renowned Italian poet and an expert on improvisation Giuseppe Regaldi (1809-1883)¹¹.

All these paradoxical for the time educational innovations attracted many Greeks living abroad but also rich Greeks who lived in Hermoupolis or other regions of the newly-established state. Through them the *Greek Lyceum* surpassed the limits of a private school that only cared for the good education of its students and it gained wide social dimensions that were completely new at least to the Greek education of the time. Its aspiration was to become an institution in the society of Hermoupolis, an institution which would promote even more the city itself and its zeal for education, rendering the boundaries between school and the society porous. Therefore, while until then the society was present in schools only during the period of public examinations, in Evangelides's Lyceum parents, the authorities and anyone interested in the process could become familiar with this educational venture at any point of the school year. This was then yet another social event which attracted many locals and visitors as well.

Some years after the establishment of the *Lyceum*, in 1849, the teacher and scholar John N. Valettas (1816-1900) from Sifnos founded his own private school and boarding school for boys named *Greek Pedagogeion*¹². Valettas studied initially in Sifnos, later in the School of the Holy Tomb in Jerusalem, and, finally, in the Gymnasium of Syros, where the famous scholar of the time N. Vamvas was his professor. Later on he served as a teacher in Hermoupolis and other parts of Greece, as a headmaster of the *Anotero Dimotiko Parthenagogeio of Hermoupolis* (Higher Girls' School of the Municipality of Hermoupolis) and as a headmaster in the Gymnasium of the city. In January 1849 he was transferred, probably for political reasons, from Syros to Nafplion but at last he resigned to found in September of the same year the *Greek Pedagogeion*, which he ran until 1857. Furthermore, he was an author of school Geography text-books.

The sharp journalistic controversy: «Eolos» vs. «Enosis» and the supposed impact on the Hellenic Diaspora

In the Greek newspapers of the 19th century very common were both the eponymous and anonymous attacks against public figures, which in many cases provoked the furious reaction of the offended, who demanded the revelation of their anonymous writers or refuted these accusations, sometimes with very long letters.

¹¹ «Enosis», n. 289, July 16, 1852.

¹² «Eolos», n. 262, August 20, 1849.

The controversy that will be examined in this article is different. On the one hand because it concerns an extremely acrid attack, which in fact lasted many months till it subsided, something that in the Greek press of the time appertained mainly to the conflicts among political people or those about Protestant missionaries, and on the other hand because the accusations of the newspaper «Eolos» towards Chr. Evangelides and his educational work were refuted by the other widely-read newspaper of the city, «Enosis», and not by the educator himself. The two papers had already been crossing their swords on various political issues long before this specific conflict broke out. Moreover, as the controversy evolved, it became clear that the aim of the first paper was not only indicating some irregularities that had taken place in the Lyceum but also the complete personal and professional crushing of Evangelides, from which, as will be seen later on, he never recovered.

Evangelides's educational innovations were attacked by the paper «Eolos» in September of 1851, when his fame in Greece and abroad had peaked. Until this point more than 400 boys had studied in his school¹³, while through the intervention of the famous Protestant missionary Jonas King he was appointed as consul of the USA in Syros. The paper, which, although had expressed favourable views for the *Greek Lyceum*, will all of a sudden refer to the «disgraceful» state of the institution, due to the constant changes of its teachers, while it will claim that the praise that it had published in the past had been written by a teacher of Evangelides after many requests by the Macedonian educator himself. Finally, the editor of the paper will encourage Evangelides to reveal to the Greeks who had trusted him with their children the «absurdities» that were happening in the *Lyceum*¹⁴.

These sharp accusations of «Eolos» will receive an indirect answer by the paper «Enosis», which in its previous issues had commended Evangelides and his *Lyceum* highly by publishing a paternalistic speech of his towards his students in order to show how much he cared for them and to justify the use of some of the innovations of the *Lyceum*¹⁵. However, «Eolos» will taunt this speech directly, stressing initially Evangelides's illiteracy, while it went on to reproach him with various other things such as not lighting up his school for the Greek national holiday of the 3rd of September, which in fact it attributed to Evangelides's displeasure with not having been decorated by King Otto, as demanded by the royal tradition of the time. Other accusations involved the extremely high fees he imposed on the students who just lived and ate in the boarding school, although they did not attend his school any more as they studied in the Gymnasium, and the loss of valuable school time due to the excess of the institution's educational innovations. The reference of the paper

¹³ Hatzidimitriou, *Christodoulos M.L. [Evangeles] Evangelides*, cit., p. 211.

¹⁴ «Eolos», n. 371, September 15, 1851.

¹⁵ «Enosis», n. 289, September 19, 1851.

would once more conclude with the accusation of his deceiving the Greeks living abroad, who ignored what was really happening in the *Lyceum* due to the distance and «were buying fibs»¹⁶.

The conflict between the two papers will continue until February of 1852. The accusations of «Eolos» will become more and more sharp, using a very aggressive language and addressing both Evangelides and the newspaper «Enosis», which in fact called «the newspaper of the Lyceum» and «the Cerberus of the Lyceum», asserting that there was in fact an economic transaction between them, as it revealed that the school would buy twenty copies of the paper each time¹⁷. It will even doubt the originality of the American diploma which Evangelides got from Columbia College. As a result, the newspaper «Enosis» published it translated from Latin¹⁸. Nevertheless, according to «Eolos», this diploma did not certify the knowledge of Evangelides, whose profession was no other than «a mere teacher of the English language and a hotel owner», as despite his high-level knowledge he only taught English in the *Lyceum* for nine whole years¹⁹. On the other hand, «Enosis» will continue defending Evangelides, considering that he got «a special experience, a special competence... during many years in the wise and strict Lyceums of America»²⁰. Furthermore, it will invoke the testimony of the most qualified person, the headmaster of Syros Gymnasium, Georgios Sourias, who supervised the public examinations of the *Lyceum* and of the Supervising Committees, which, however, had never reported any improprieties until then. But on the contrary «Eolos» will claim that Sourias said that the situation in Evangelides's school was «deplorable»²¹. Other accusations that «Eolos» spread unscrupulously had to do with the inadequate structure of the school, the reduced teaching hours by the teachers and the professors, who also worked in public schools, as well as the alchemies of Evangelides to make the teaching hours in the *Lyceum* appear full, while it accused him of giving illegal certifications, misappropriating even the name of King Otto²².

At some point «Eolos» touched upon a soft spot of the modern Greek society, doubting the adequacy of the religious teaching in the *Lyceum*, especially the one organized by Evangelides in his school every Sunday morning after the Mass. We know from the archives of the *Church Missionary Society* (C.M.S.) that the Macedonian educator adopted this habit from the German missionary Fr. Hildner, who ran the *Philhellenic Pedagogeion* of the city and had begun developing a special spiritual relationship with him. He was asking him for advice for organizing the biblical teaching in the *Lyceum*, for establishing a

¹⁶ «Eolos», n. 372, September 22, 1851.

¹⁷ «Eolos», n. 374, October 6, 1851.

¹⁸ «Enosis», n. 289, October 24, 1851.

¹⁹ «Eolos», nn. 377-378, November 3, 1851.

²⁰ «Enosis», n. 289, October 3, 1851.

²¹ «Eolos», n. 373, September 29, 1851.

²² «Eolos», n. 374, October 6, 1851; n. 375, October 13, 1851; n. 380, November 10, 1851.

Sunday school in it and for the distribution of the Bible and many Protestant books. Evangelides also frequented the Protestant Masses officiated by the missionary in the chapel of the *Philhellenic Pedagogeion* and had expressed his wish to introduce a family worship, requesting to be given the Common Prayer Book for this purpose²³. Furthermore, when Evangelides travelled to the USA in order to ask the help of philhellene Americans for the liberation of Thessaly and Epirus (1854), he also went to London, as recommended by Hildner, to get to know the leaders of the C.M.S. In fact in one of his letters to the German missionary he will express his compatriots' and his own gratification to the priceless contribution of the *Pedagogeion* to the moral uplift of the society of Syros. Hildner would use this praising letter later on to assure the C.M.S that his efforts were not a waste of time, despite the fact that no Greeks had officially converted to Protestantism, which was the clear objective of this missionary society. Finally, in his letters to the society the German missionary described Evangelides as a member of his *Infant Greek Protestant Church*²⁴.

However, *Eolos* claimed that all that happened on those Sundays was a mere reading of just a piece of the Gospel by Evangelides and actually not the version translated by the Seventy, which was the one used by the Orthodox Church, but the version translated into modern Greek by the *British and Foreign Bible Society*²⁵. On the contrary, the principal of the *Lyceum* obliged his students to memorize it at the end. On the contrary, in Valettas's school the reading of the Gospel took place «from the original text» by the priest and teacher Agapios Politas, who provided a verbatim interpretation of the text, something that «Eolos» praised and encouraged the other schools of the city to do as well²⁶.

Finally, «Eolos» will downgrade the top-level innovation of Evangelides, which was the public presentation of his students' essays every Saturday. Then the students would read a letter, «an exercise on patriotism», «on philanthropy», «on lies» or «passages by writers or poets». «Eolos» observed that memorizing and presenting ideas that belonged to others was not useful at all for the students, while in Valettas's *Pedagogeion* the same procedure took place by assigning concepts to the students, the writing of original texts by them and next their correction by the teacher. The inappropriateness of that particular drill in the *Lyceum* was actually proved by the fact that a student had once copied a text from a newspaper, which «criticized and condemned foolishly and

²³ Smyrnaios, *Sta ichne tis utopias*, cit., p. 215.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

²⁵ An anonymous writer of the paper «Enosis» will refute this accusation of *Eolos*, while an American Baptist missionary who visited the Lyceum in 1852 will state that Evangelides used in his school the text of the Seventy and not the translation in modern Greek, because, as he himself explained to the missionary, «it is as easily understood by anyone who learns to read as is the Bible in modern Greek». «Enosis», n. 289, October 24, 1851 and «The Missionary Magazine», published by The American Baptist Missionary Union, vol. XXXIII, Boston, 1853, p. 69.

²⁶ «Eolos», n. 376, October 29, 1851.

childishly the acts of the government», something that caused the headmaster of the gymnasium G. Sourias to object and interrupt the reading. «Eolos» also attacked the theatrical plays of the *Lyceum*, which now named it in a derogatory sense «Greek Theatre», and criticized the scarification of the lessons of a whole semester for the preparations of the plays²⁷. It even suggested that Evangelides should be silent and confine himself to «his remarkable pedagogy, which consisted in playing with the students»²⁸.

In any case, «Eolos» mentioned again and again that parents were deceived about the progress of their children in the *Lyceum* and their published texts in the columns of «Enosis». Moreover, «Eolos» will urge the father of Emm. Roides to consider the magnitude of the deceit, as «if he reads the letter written by his son in the paper «Enosis» and compares it to those he receives from him (unless they are corrected too), he will understand that he is being mocked by Mr. Evangelides and that he buys this mockery at their own expense, in case he is one of the 20 subscribers of Enosis»²⁹.

Valettas did not take part in the conflict between the two newspapers of Syros, in which «Enosis» always tried to find reasonable arguments to refute the accusations of «Eolos». He even sent a letter to the paper «Enosis» to assure that he had absolutely nothing to do with the accusations of «Eolos» against Evangelides, whom he claimed to appreciate³⁰, but he failed to convince «Enosis» that he did not write the articles in «Eolos»³¹, a fact that was later confirmed in the presence of «reliable people»³², as «Enosis» asserted. At some point «Enosis» will also turn against Valettas and his school, using however a more decent language, and it will indicate its deficiencies of staff and lessons³³. Evangelides himself stayed out of this journalistic controversy as well except for one time, when, after he had praised his work, he stated that he despised his hidden accusers and that he was certain about the «excellent and highly moral constitution of the Greek Lyceum»³⁴. Nevertheless, in November of 1851 he published a pamphlet entitled *A Brief Report of the Greek Lyceum*, where he confessed the deficiencies of his school but only in terms of professors for the Gymnasium classes, claiming that in Syros he could not find professors who were acknowledged by the government³⁵.

²⁷ «Eolos», n. 389, January 19, 1852.

²⁸ «Eolos», n. 393, February 23, 1852.

²⁹ «Eolos», n. 376, October 20, 1851.

³⁰ The assurance of Valettas in «Enosis» was in fact confirmed by «Eolos», which once more will praise the educator from Sifnos for the great devotion he showed to his work. As a result many students of Evangelides, «due to the disorder that dominated the courses and the wretchedness of the school's owner», rushed to enroll in his school.

³¹ «Enosis», n. 289, November 14, 1851.

³² «Enosis», n. 289, December 12, 1851.

³³ «Enosis», n. 289, October 31, 1851.

³⁴ «Enosis», n. 289, October 24, 1851.

³⁵ *Sentomos Ekthesis tou Ellinikou Lykeiou* [Brief Report of the Greek Lyceum], Hermoupolis,

According to the paper «Eolos» some of the students of the *Lyceum* began taking part in this controversy anonymously but also teachers of Evangelides's school, such as A. Kontzias, became involved in it. Kontzias had been a professor in Valettas's *Greek Pedagogueion* until he was «dismissed» after 18 months due to «incompetence», as «Eolos» wrote, and he was next hired in Evangelides's *Lyceum*. He started defending Evangelides through the pages of the paper «Enosis», blaming Valettas directly for his behaviour towards him³⁶. This provoked the reaction of Valettas, the paper «Enosis»³⁷ as well as an anonymous editor. However, this conflict will shift from the educational innovations of Evangelides and will become an elaborate and meticulous process of exchanging accusations concerning the illiteracy of both³⁸, reaching eventually its end.

The effect of the conflict outside Hermoupolis

The fame of those two educational establishments had gone far beyond Syros, reaching Athens and the Greek communities of foreign countries. As a result, when the controversy broke out, various newspapers published in Athens such as «Eon» and «Elpis» defended Evangelides immediately, while *Athena* also contributed to the end of the conflict. «Eon» will praise the order that dominated the school and the paternal care shown by Evangelides towards his students and boarders, which the paper's editor claimed to have witnessed himself, actions attributed mainly to Evangelides's studies in America as well as his teaching experience. He will in fact wonder about the attacks he suffered, which he attributed to the high competition and the envy of his opponents³⁹. «Elpis» will consider these attacks unfair and vain as «the facts themselves confirmed» the value of the *Lyceum*, while it accused «Eolos» of having anti-European and even «Ottoman» musical preferences because it objected to the teaching of music and dancing in the *Lyceum*⁴⁰. Finally, «Athena» will criticize «the unforgivable Eolian wind» that had fallen upon the *Greek Lyceum*, its headmaster and its professors, confirming that this school stood out among the other educational institutions of Hermoupolis for the intellectual and mainly the moral progress of its students⁴¹. Evangelides was also defended by the Greek

1851 (in Greek).

³⁶ «Enosis», n. 289, November 21, 1851.

³⁷ «Enosis», n. 289, December 5, 1851.

³⁸ «Eolos», n. 383, December 8, 1851 until «Eolos» n. 389, January 19, 1852 and «Enosis», n. 289, December 12, 1851.

³⁹ «Eon», n. 1206, November 3, 1851.

⁴⁰ «Elpis», n. 650, October 12, 1851.

⁴¹ «Enosis», n. 289, January 16, 1852.

paper «Amalthea», which was then published in Izmir. «Eolos» will in its turn accuse it of repeating the words of «Enosis», without first having checked their truthfulness, and it encouraged its editor to bring Evangelides to reason «if he has a personal relationship with him, or to hire new teachers, or to stop taking advantage of the trust of the parents living abroad»⁴². The answer of the paper to «Eon» was that the mere number of the students of the private schools of the city proved that his claims that this school was «the best of all the private schools in Hermoupolis» were groundless⁴³.

The sudden end of the controversy

The conflict between the two newspapers of Syros about the school of Evangelides ended in February 1852 as suddenly as it began, except for a short reference to the cruelty of Evangelides as a teacher made by the paper «Eolos» many months later⁴⁴. However, the motives of this straightforward and merciless attack of the paper «Eolos» towards the educator are not clear. Showing the so called «futility» of the educational innovations in the *Greek Lyceum* does not seem to be the only cause of this attack. It was rather connected with the personal dislike to Evangelides himself and his activities in Hermoupolis in general, as, besides managing his educational institution and giving private lessons, he was also involved in real estate. Maybe it had to do with the feeling of superiority that characterized him, deriving mainly from his studies in America and the great reputation he had gained there⁴⁵, as opposed to the other teachers of the city who had studied in Greece. Evangelides, as it

⁴² «Eolos», n. 374, October 6, 1851. This encouragement by the editor of «Eolos» was totally justified, because he knew that the editor of «Amalthea» was Iakovos Samiotakis, who was Evangelides's brother-in-law, as we learn from his journal.

⁴³ It is shown from the list of the private schools that the *Greek Lyceum* had 40 students (30 foreign boarders and 10 locals), the *Parthenagogeion* of E. Magkaki and Trikon 50 female students, all locals, the *Greek Pedagogeion* of Valettas 160 students (10 foreigners and 150 locals), while the mutual teaching schools of Papadakis and Fragkoulis had 25 students each, all locals. «Eolos», n. 379, November 10, 1851.

⁴⁴ It is a fact that Evangelides was very strict with his students, as stated by Dim. Vikelas in his *Memoirs*, by Evangelides himself in his journal, and by the paper «Eolos», which, while defending Valettas from the accusations of the paper «Enosis» about the beating of a student who had been caught smoking, will mention that in the Lyceum as well «many had been punished a lot of times by being tied with ropes and beat so mercilessly that they had to stay in bed for many days» «Eolos», n. 483, December 17, 1853.

⁴⁵ During his stay in America Evangelides often showed up in philhellenic events wearing a *foustanela* (a kind of Greek kilt), something that inspired the poem *The Greek Boy* of the famous 19th Century American poet William Cullen Bryant, while the painter Robert W. Weir had also painted his portrait. W. Cullen Bryant II, T.G. Voss (edd.), *The Letters of William Cullen Bryant*, 3 vols., 1849-1957, New York, Fordham University Press, 1981, vol. 3, pp. 280, 292.

is known from the journal he wrote in Syros a few years later (1856-1860)⁴⁶, downgraded completely their contribution and maybe that was what provoked the envy and caused the conflict, which was probably initiated by educators. It was the violent response of the educational section of the city to one of its members, who wanted to differ from the common methods of the others in such a dynamic way.

The attack of «Eolos» had the expected results and brought up the complete professional debilitation of Evangelides, from which he never really recovered. The *Greek Lyceum* continued its work until the summer of 1955, although Evangelides had already given its management to Nik. Fardoulis, the professor of Latin of the Gymnasium of Syros since May of 1854. Then he went for thirteen months to the USA, where, as recommended by his compatriot and Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Paicos, he tried to gain the support and help of his American friends for the Greek revolution in Thessaly during the Crimea War (1853-1856)⁴⁷. However, this trip did not go well because the Americans trusted more the fierceness of the English papers, which considered the Greek revolution in Thessaly to have been incited by the Russians, rather than the patriotic reasons of Evangelides and the strong movement inside the American society which favoured Russia as a means to control the expansion of G. Britain in North America⁴⁸. Thus he returned disappointed from the USA and then he decided to close the Lyceum and rent out his building to Panagiotis Antoniadis, a former professor of the Gymnasium of Syros, who established his own private school there, the *Emporikon Ekpaideytirion* (Commercial School) until 1860, confirming thus the words of the paper «Eolos», which from 1851 had foreseen that «the time would come when anyone who passes by the Lykeion will see the word ‘rent’ on its door»⁴⁹. Evangelides taught only the English language in it, while he accepted boarders from other areas of Greece and neighbouring countries in his house, taking on their feeding, helping them with their lessons and their moral supervision. He stayed in Hermoupolis until 1878 and later moved to Athens, where he re-established for a few years the *Greek Lyceum*, which he ran until his death in March of 1881.

On the other side, the *Greek Paidagogeion* of Valettas continued its rising course after the conflict of 1851-1852, holding the sceptre of private education

⁴⁶ This journal is kept today in Houghton Library of the University of Harvard. See A. L. Smyrniaios, M. Karambini-Iatrou, S. Gemenezzi-Malathouni, *Nichterina Skalarthymata: The journal of the Macedonian educator Christos Evangelides (1815-1881)*, Athens (to be published soon).

⁴⁷ See G. A. Toze, *Amerikanikai kai Anglikai plerophoriai peri tes epanastaseos tou 1854 en Makedonia* [American and British Reports Concerning the Revolution in Macedonia in 1854], «Makedonika», vol. 3, 1954 (in Greek), pp. 1-65.

⁴⁸ Hatzidimitriou, *Christodoulos M.L. [Evangeles] Evangelides*, cit., p. 213.

⁴⁹ «Eolos», n. 382, December 1, 1851. The private school of Antoniadis continued its successful work, but in 1860 it left the building of the *Greek Lyceum*, while in 1864 it was transferred in Athens.

in Hermoupolis in 1856, when 270 students had been studying in it⁵⁰. However, despite its success, when «rightly all Greeks living abroad send their children to the school because there they are taught in the best possible way and their conduct is strictly supervised», it was attacked «by known and old opponents», as the paper «Eolos» will mention⁵¹. Therefore, he, who rejected many applications of Greeks living abroad in order for their children to study in his school due to lack of space⁵², was obliged to end his educational activity in Hermoupolis two years after Evangelides's *Lyceum* had closed. In September of 1857 he gave the management of *Greek Pedagoieion* to the former professor of the Gymnasium of Syros, Nikolaos Krispis. Krispis had already established a private school in the city and as a result the two schools merged into one⁵³. Meanwhile, Valettas turned for a few years to journalism and became the editor of a new paper in Hermoupolis, the «Astir ton Kycladon», which he abandoned in 1860 to go to London. There he began a scholar's career, publishing important books and translations, such as the *Letters* of Patriarch Fotios and a dissertation on Homer among others. Finally, from 1870 to 1884, he ran the first school of the Greek community of the city.

The conflict between the two educators continued in an indirect, although peculiar, way as seen in the journal of Evangelides, where he will talk derogatorily about Valettas. Nevertheless, two paradoxical facts are worth noticing. The first is the friendship between Evangelides and the editor of «Eolos» N. Varvaresos, as it is revealed in his journal in 1859-1860, and the second is his decision to send his son Alexandros to study in the *Greek Pedagoieion*. In all probability, his dislike towards P. Antoniadis, whose educational work he knew very well since he used to teach the English language there, was greater than the one he had towards Valettas. Maybe he thought that the *Greek Pedagoieion* was indeed the best private school in Hermoupolis or he might have just employed the Christian virtue of forbearance, as he was a deeply religious educator.

Many years later, one of his most well-known students, Dim. Vikelas, seems to accept the accusations of «Eolos» towards Evangelides to a certain point, stressing highly though the pedagogical aspect of his contribution. He will write in his Memoirs that his teacher «had not learned many things: I think in fact that he did not even know well the English language, which he taught, but he had got pedagogical habits in America and introducing them in Greece had been beneficial. There he learned how boys are raised like men, how to combine moral and physical education»⁵⁴. Therefore, at a time when the American Protestant Republicanism, the Greek *Great Idea* and the extraordinary

⁵⁰ «Telegrafos ton Kycladon», n. 68, August 18, 1856.

⁵¹ «Eolos», n. 631, October 13, 1856.

⁵² «Eolos», n. 518, August 19, 1854.

⁵³ «Telegrafos ton Kycladon», n. 117, August 6, 1857.

⁵⁴ D. Bikelas, *Hē zōē mou: paidikai anamnēseis - neanikoi chronoi* [My life: child memories, youthful times], Athens, The Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, 1908 (in Greek), p. 112.

temperament of Evangelides struggled to be in tune with the society of Syros, where the cosmopolitan spirit, the sectional competition and personal passions mingled, the innovational aspiration of the famous educator eventually came ingloriously to an end. The second step in the history of Greek educational innovation happened many years later, in the early 20th century, when a quite similar experiment took place in the city of Volos, in Thessaly. The *Anotero Dimotiko Parthenagogeio* of Volos (Higher Girls' School of the Municipality of Volos), which operated under the guidance of the later renowned pedagogue Alex. Delmouzos, did not also manage to endure the pressure of various political, ideological, religious and personal factors and closed after just three years from its establishment (1908-1911).

Education as a power for constituting a new Nation: the relations of power and education in Turkey from the Republican period (1923) until today

Ismail Guven
Elementary Education
Ankara University (Turkey)
guveni@ankara.edu.tr

ABSTRACT: This paper elicits an interpretation of educational developments and discussions related to the educational system in Turkey since 1923 (Republican Era), in terms of political and ideological levels that exercise power to control education. Regarding education as a power for constituting new nations, the relations of power and education in Turkey since Republican Period (1923) to the current day will be discussed in this paper. The paper will start with the conceptual framework, whereby education is considered as an arena for struggle in the public sphere based on developments in the reform of the Turkish educational system since 1923. The paper provides a brief outline of a century of Turkish education, and the impact of external powers on educational policies.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Nation Building; Republican Era; Turkey; XX-XXIth Centuries.

Introduction

Education forms identities and maintains the relations of power and knowledge. Foucault implies that there is a strict relationship between power and knowledge, based on discourse that acts as a conjunction between power and knowledge. Gaining power and controlling education has been the focal point of the educational agenda worldwide, and Turkey is no exception. The state elites and governments used education as a power within Turkey in constituting a modern nation. Turkish governments have strictly controlled and monopolized educational activities since the outset of the Turkish Republican era (1923). The educational system has been profoundly changed through

external interventions (either military or elites). As a result, the education system has been shaped to different ideologies and political approaches, in terms of governmental policies rather than educational principles. The aim of this paper is to analyze education as shaping power for creating a new nation in Turkey since the Republican era (i.e. from 1923 until the current day).

Power and Education: A theoretical Analysis

Education acts as a vehicle for change and influence social relations, politics, economic attitudes, beliefs, teachers and parents, and other agencies such as the media and vice versa. Thus, different classes and segments try to control education, which can result in a power struggle that creates tension. Gramsci put forward that the tension is created as a result of structural impediments to economic and social pressures; however, this argument is not true for the educational field as there are always counter pressures that stem from bureaucratic pressures as they organize and administer a single area of individual or societal need (e.g. health, housing, industry)¹. Educational reforms are a kind of power struggle, as Spring states, that attempt to control education means «to gain power over the political system and other social organizations»². Educational policymaking is a real power struggle among political and social actors. Educational policies have economic, political and ideological dimensions. It is directly related to the maintenance of a system of power and serves to protect a system of power through the transmission of culture by the reproduction of any social formation as an apparatus for assisting in the maintenance of social relationships, and also for controlling social relations³. The dual relationship with power is consistent with the real structure of fields and suggests that it is very important to conceive of education as a field with its particular state. Power struggles within the field become most evident during reform processes that aim at shaping «the meaning and purposes of schooling», since education policies delineate what is valid and worthwhile.

¹ B. Salter, T. Tapper, *Education, politics, and the state: The theory and practice of educational change*, London, G. McIntyre, 1981.

² J. Spring, *Conflict of Interests: the Politics of American Education*, New York, Logman, 1988.

³ L. Althusser, *Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (notes towards an investigation)*, in A. Sharma, A. Gupta (edd.), *The anthropology of the state: A reader*, Malden, Blackwell, 2006, pp. 86-111.

Relations of Power and Education: the Turkish Education System

The modernist and Western elites attempted to change the traditional Ottoman Islamic social, economic, and political structures upon the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923. The elites took westernization, nationalism, democracy/republicanism and secularization/secularism as the new basis for the society. The Republican elites attempted to create a culturally homogenous nation state based on the loyal units to republican principles. The Turkish Revolution, with its emphasis upon secularism and nationalism, emerged from a common background shared in the Middle East, but at the same time, with the country facing to the West. Turkey also is a rare country, with the youngest population of the Middle East, 75% of whom are under 25 and 98% of whom follow Islam, albeit the country is secular, a rarity in the Middle East. The social and cultural indicators in Turkey, such as literacy rate, participation of women in socioeconomic life, civil rights of women in every sphere of life, also are more effective than seen in other countries of the Middle East. There are many different aspects of that distinction. Many statesmen, politicians and educators have served Turkey in developing Turkey as a secular country, and the most important player has been the military in this development. The military, with its role in political and social life, have organized educational reforms and made many decisions related to education⁴.

The majority of cadres who might have governed were from the military, an Islamic background, or were civil servants educated along western lines. Regarding themselves as true owners of the nation, the Republican elites tried to change the political and economic spheres so that they monopolized power and excluded other groups such as the Arabs. They created a hierarchy among the people and paid special attention to Turkish citizenship. As stated in various resources, political elites form nations and delineate the borders of social, cultural and educational activities and citizenship by creating a centralized education system. They launch revolutions such as in Turkey and tend to take for granted a higher significance. The political elites first develop a nation-building process, and then carry it out.

In Turkey, the political elites instigated such a transition and determined the common education and similar cultural models parallel to their own ideals, interests and subsequent actions. The political elites initiated the Turkish nation-building process in a «top-down» way, and held all the power without facing any serious resistance from different groups of society⁵. This period is known as the «single party era» or «Early Republican Era», which is identified with the Republican People's Party. Since there was no working class or bourgeoisie class interests, demands and conflicts played no role in the

⁴ F. Ahmad, *The making of modern Turkey*, London, Routledge, 2002.

⁵ F.W. Frey, *The Turkish political elite*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1965.

formation of Turkey as a nation. Thus, the republican political elite emerged as the main actors in defining and undertaking change⁶. In the Early Republican era, members of Parliament were very keen on their ideals, and maintained a close watch on societal reactions to the transformations they were carrying out; however, they never undermined the expectations of the people and changed their rhetoric and policies accordingly. The language, education and citizenship were their focus. The early years of the Republic were characterized by a series of reforms which pertained to the building of the new Turkish nation. These transformations were debated in, and ratified and undertaken by the Grand National Assembly; thus by the political elites who envisaged the necessity of such radical transformation. The radical policy of transformation aimed to change the mentality and behavior of the people. In this effort, education played an important role, but the existing education system was very weak, the infrastructure inadequate, and the curriculum old-fashioned. Only 10% of the population was literate, and the educational institutions were too inefficient to support the creation of a nation and support the associated developments. Thus the Turkish elites formed totally different policies from the Ottoman era in order to alter the entire educational system; expanding it in a logical manner, connected to national goals.

Reforms and changes in the Turkish Educational System

Power elites first attempted to create coherent, integrated and secular schools that were totally different from the Ottoman era. Regarding the necessity of secularization and the hazards of multi-headed education system in 1924, the Law for the Unification of Education and Instruction (Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu) placed all educational institutions under the control of the Ministry of National Education to administer secular (mekteps) schools, as opposed to madrasas. The law aimed to control all religious, foreign and minority schools, and to reduce religious impacts on public school education. The law also served to eliminate the cultural separatism in Turkey, namely the gap between those trained in modern schools and those trained in madrasas⁷. The schools aimed to train only persons prepared to function in the modern world. Secularization also entailed the gradual elimination of religious instruction from the curriculum until no religious subjects were taught in urban schools. The curriculum paid special attention to good citizenship and to the respect of other beliefs. All

⁶ Ç. Keyder, *The Ottoman Empire*, in K. Barkey, M. von Hagen (edd.), *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building*, Boulder, Westview, 1997, pp. 30-44.

⁷ I. Guven, *Türkiye'de Devlet, Eğitim ve İdeoloji* [State, Education and Ideology in Turkey], Ankara, Siyasal Kitabevi, 2000.

religious pictures and symbols were removed from textbooks, buildings, and classrooms. The foreign and private schools were excluded, however, so long as they did not infringe in any way upon secularist and nationalist principles.

Secularism and nationalism also applied to the very core of Turkish culture, its language. The most important implementation as a revolution was changing the Arabic script to the Latin alphabet in 1928. During these years, foreign experts such as Dewey, Kühne, and Omer Buyse were invited to Turkey, where they wrote about education and its influences. During the early period of the Republic, the Turkish government vastly restructured the educational system, with an attempt to create new philosophical orientation. All of this brought about a need for curriculum reform, and in 1926 the curriculum was altered to shape the new citizens parallel to the new ideological orientation, along with some traditional subjects such as Ottoman history, Islamic religion etc. Textbooks were rewritten and the ideals of the Republic, its principles and goals became predominant in the new curriculum. Courses such as psychology, law and science were offered at the secondary level. In 1926, these reforms were started with the primary school curriculum, and one year later they were extended to secondary schools. The new curriculum emphasized the development of critical, responsible and creative citizens in schools.

In addition to restructuring and reorganizing the existing educational system, the new government also paid special attention to educational opportunities, and the 1924 constitution made primary education compulsory for all children, and exempt from any fees. The national budget for education increased, but total allocation was limited as the local boards' contributions were very little. All these made the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) a unique body for education and it subsequently removed the power from these boards, making the educational system wholly centralized.

The Republican cadres also attempted to improve the state of women's education in line with the expectations of Mustafa Kemal, and by 1923-24, women were admitted to join the same classes as men in all faculties. At the end of the 1920s, a compulsory program of adult education was in place that required every Turkish citizen between the ages 15 and 45 to attend courses in civics, literacy, mathematics, and health. In the years that followed, a modern university (Istanbul University, 1933) was reopened for higher education in place of the Ottoman «Darulfünun» (University). In order to increase the educational and cultural participation of rural areas, People's Houses (community centers) were established. The aim of these institutions was to serve as political socialization agencies and also they served as centers for educational and cultural activities through emphasizing modernization, laicism and nationalism⁸. The People's Houses served as political socialization by providing educational and cultural

⁸ H.K. Karpaz, *The People's Houses in Turkey: Establishment and Growth*, «Middle East Journal», vol. 17, nn. 1-2, 1963, pp. 55-67.

activities. In this way, new patterns, symbols and loyalties were disseminated throughout the society, helping to socialize the masses in the values of the Republic⁹. However, the reforms did not penetrate rural areas that deeply, as the teachers who were educated in the larger cities did not adapt to rural life and their numbers inadequate. Thus, the Ministry of National Education launched a project for teacher training. The aim was to train a new type of schoolteacher, one who was prepared to serve as an agent of change for rural communities. It was expected these teachers would educate the children besides disseminating the new ideology and modern way of life as a means to raising the standard of living. One of the world's most significant teacher education approaches was the Village Institutes, which aimed at recruiting young war veterans and primary school graduates who underwent a five year training program on agricultural and mechanical subjects, and their application to common rural problems. A new type of teacher emerged, one who was self-reliant and enabled to fulfill the needs of a rural community. During the years of the Second World War, these institutions carried out very important duties in terms of teacher education; training countless teachers which transformed rural Turkey in spite of inadequate financial support. The institutes enlightened the Turkish villagers, awakening their consciousness about being a citizen of Turkey. Afterwards, people from rural areas started to seek out more educational opportunities, with many migrating to the big cities. The impact of these Village Institutes was massive on general life in the rural areas, with many who graduated playing very important roles in the social, political and educational life of Turkey¹⁰.

Multi-party Period and Transmission of Power post-1950

After the end of the Second World War, new challenges arose and a new rising political class started to question the modernization policies, and the political and social life. Rifts occurred among the political elite, and other classes such as capitalists, traders and entrepreneurs, who all demanded increased rights in decision making. In their drive for more power, the new group quickly gained the support of many elements within the society, and they demanded a greater degree of freedom within the country. In this atmosphere, ideological attitudes ranging from racialism to communism were openly expressed, and fundamental political issues became the hot topics of the day. The new rising classes from the rural background, but now highly educated, formed a new party by using

⁹ M. Bilir, *Yetişkin/Halk Eğitiminin Tarihsel Gelişimi* [Historical Development of Adult Education], İstanbul, Kalkedon Yayınları, 2009, pp. 25-85.

¹⁰ F.Kirby, N. Berkes, *Türkiye'de köy enstitüleri* [The Village Institutes in Turkey], İstanbul, Tarihçi Kitabevi. 2010.

a more liberal discourse and swept to power without any definitive educational or cultural policies. The multiparty period allowed for the raising of new power based on the all segments of Turkish society. The liberal intellectuals, capitalists, and feudal landowners with religious tendencies gained power through a new liberal government under the Democrat Party (DP). Cadres of the DP were aware of the importance of rural supports, and liberalization of religion, thus they withdrew religious restrictions and reintroduced religious instruction into the curriculum. Financial aid from the USA and the conditions post Second World War provided for the growing integration of rural villagers into the national economy, mobilizing a migration from rural to urban areas. The new social environment of the big cities pushed them towards adjusting to modernism. The villagers recognized the potential power and started to partake in political life. They pressed on the traditional negative notions of government, with administrable relations transformed and the bureaucracy and government began to be viewed as institutions they could manipulate for their own interests¹¹. However, the religious tendency in traditionalists made them vote for a religiously-oriented government, backing the DP. The DP government gained power in a short time and undermined other classes such as military officers, elites, and scholars in universities, who were powerful in all aspects of life. The DP government restricted the opposition and took some measures such as limiting the rights of free speech and limiting the autonomy of universities. The economic power dominated social *status* and the *status* of the bureaucrats, intellectuals and the military in politics and governmental issues began to lessen. This development changed the composition of political leadership and government officials. The military and the bureaucrats who held power over the government were replaced by those in occupational categories such as «trade, agriculture», and the «free professions». They became national decision-makers, and ruled life in Turkey parallel to their fundamental ideologies. The role of education for class mobilization was regarded by the people of rural areas and the number of students enrolled in schools increased. However, the unplanned developments did not allow for the adopting and implementing of a systematic policy of education¹².

Political factors and tendencies of the governments dominated educational development during the 1950s. The major cadres of the Ministry of National Education were not primarily educators, and therefore they made very rapid decisions to open schools or launch new curricula without basis of any objective criteria. The inclination of the Education Ministries determined even the type of schools which were opened or closed. For instance, a minister from the finance

¹¹ M.B. Kıray, *Toplumsal yapı, toplumsal değişme* [Social Structure and Social Change], İstanbul, Baglam Yayınevi, 1999.

¹² J.S. Sylizowicz, *Education and Modernization in the Middle East*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1973.

sector opened commercial schools without conducting any sort of needs analysis, whereas another ordered the opening of technical vocational high schools. The popular demands and pressure from the different classes who had favor in the government caused an incoherence in policies and daily decisions. The changing power relations altered some very important educational institutions. For instance, the feudal landowners and fundamentalists regarded the Village Institutes, which trained teachers particularly for rural areas, as a threat to their privileges and pressed the DP government into closing them, and reintroducing religious teaching into schools.

Religion has been emphasized in many circumstances and it soon followed that religious lessons were included in the 4th and 5th grade curriculum of middle schools. Universities were not indifferent to these challenges, and a Theology Faculty was established at Ankara University. The DP governments loosened the regulations regarding compulsory education for girls because of pressure from fundamentalist voters, and within a decade, the rate of women in education had declined. The DP government sacrificed educational improvements and developments to maintain popular support, and in doing so, damaged the educational process. Closing of the Village Institutes led to a growing feeling of cynicism and self-aggrandizements among the intellectuals with adverse consequences for the quality of education. This resulted in alienation of teachers and intellectuals. Lack of planning decreased the educational opportunities. In spite of the quantitative developments, educational opportunities remained very much restricted. Inadequate fiscal resources allocated to education also damaged educational opportunities. Low salaries of teachers forced many to seek alternative employment and an inadequacy in teacher's numbers within Turkish education became a persistent problem. International power relations also impacted Turkish education. Close relations between the USA and Turkey after the Second World War brought about a certain level of Americanization within Turkish education, eroding the European heritage. Many advisors from the USA were assigned to the Ministry of National Education and different Foundations such as Rockefeller started to contribute to Turkish education, causing the educational philosophy of Turkey to change sharply and a new sense of discord burgeoned among the staff from many educational institutions¹³.

Many intellectuals and educators criticized these deficiencies severely; however, the government undermined this sensitivity and gave no clear picture to the public; moreover, they took action to suppress potentially embarrassing reports from even being published regarding Turkish education. Even the higher education institutions were oppressed. The Universities law had granted autonomy to universities, with university management entrusted to academic bodies. However, power and responsibility was vested within the faculties and universities faced serious moral and disciplinary problems; the most serious

¹³ Guven, *Türkiye'de Devlet, Eğitim ve İdeoloji*, cit.

of which were vast discrepancies in quality. The government was unhappy with these universities, therefore it attempted to introduce new universities which differed from the existing universities in both different cities as well as in Ankara, the capital city. The USA and the Land-grant university tradition were accepted. The new universities were expected to make some practical and social research besides their scientific activities for all classes. The aim of this attempt was to break the monopoly of two universities and create new higher education institutions, which were supposed to support the government¹⁴. Besides the military cadres, the unhappiness of power elites with the government caused splits in different spheres and demonstrations of university students against the government increased. In 1960, the military took over the government – democracy in the short history of Turkey had by then already experienced many military interventions. These interventions changed Turkish society and the educational system, and prompted the creation of new policies in education. The rapid changing of policies negatively affected the improvement of the educational system. Although the three military interventions were structurally the same in essence, they exhibited different, even conflicting results. The military intervention of 1960 for instance, led to a very autonomous educational approach, but the coup d'état of 1980 limited this autonomy. With the military intervention, the main features of general education were under debate. The area of intervention expanded from political life to educational life. It was the same for the coup d'état of the 1980 Intervention¹⁵.

Military Intervention and Radical Change in Education

Turkey experienced three military interventions over the last five decades. The last was the military intervention of 1980 that was closed to any political opposition. The military's assumption of this intervention had a legal basis. The military regime formed a tool called National Security Council (NSC) as an intervening system to keep the military's intention legal. In fact, its roots go back to the 1960s. At least since 1961, Turkish politics has always been under the scrutiny of the military and this has been particularly the case since 1971. This has been a way for the military to control major elements of social, political, and economic power. All basic means of governing bodies were under military

¹⁴ Id., *Türkiyede Öğretmen Eğitiminin Tarihsel Dönüşümüne Eleştirel Bir Bakış* [A critical approach to transition of teacher education in Turkey], «Eleştirel Pedagoji», Temmuz/Ağustos, 2015, pp. 14-19.

¹⁵ Id., *Education, the Military And Politics in Turkey*, in K. Mutua, S. Sunal (edd.), *Research on Education in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Middle East: An Historic Overview*, Charlotte, IAP, 2009, p. 243, and see. Z. Etoz, *Power and education in Turkey as a matter of public sphere*, «International Journal of Contemporary Sociology», vol. 40, n. 1, 2003, pp. 13-31.

responsibility¹⁶. The military took upon itself the duty of offering advice and delivering stern warnings as soon as the political situation showed any signs of getting out of hand. The defenders and instigators of military intervention used a very different discourse, based on religious (Islamic) grounds, than in the 1960 or 1971 military interventions. It was a dilemma for them, because throughout the history of Turkey, the army was always known as a well-trained and secular class in Turkey¹⁷.

The ideology of the military leaders was indefinite and confusing. They preferred oppressive government with sometimes a conservative and religious political structure, a liberal economy, and strict control of workers unions, associations and educational organizations. The military leadership identified political parties, their leaders and party system as major contributors to domestic strife, incessant terrorism, the erosion of public authority, and growing chaos that prevailed within Turkey. Therefore, the setting up of a new basis for the establishment and functioning of political parties and party system became one of their major concerns¹⁸. Thus to make themselves legal in the eyes of people, the military government used religious discourse. They almost administered religious issues and implementations in every phase of life. In addition they abolished all political institutions, including directorial boards of universities. In a short time, the military government and its rulers had defeated all sources of controversial ideas and recommendations regarding an opposing social life.

As stated, military regimes maintain civic action programs and assume the offices previously held by members of the former regime or substitute personnel and institutions in order to influence the new cadres. A similar course of events was seen after the 1980 intervention in Turkey, where secularism, namely the relation between state and religious education and the role of religion in politics was redefined¹⁹. It is very common for governments to use a religious discourse style to garner support from the people and as a tool against left-wing ideologies in Turkey. Using religion as a tool, the military leaders explained that if religion and tradition had been active in every phase of life, the bad situation faced would have been better. There was no danger of civil war²⁰. It was quite reasonable for governments and political parties in Turkey to approach societal problems by using religion. They used religion because, as Lewis stated, «Religion and Islamic symbols are still alive in the very deep roots of Anatolian rural life and many regions of Turkey»²¹. The military controlled and arranged

¹⁶ M.Heper, A. Guney, *The military and the consolidation of democracy: The recent Turkish experience*, «Armed Forces & Society», vol. 26, n. 4, 2000, pp. 635-657.

¹⁷ İ. Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun en uzun yüzyılı* [The longest century of the Empire], İstanbul, Timaş Yayınları, 2008.

¹⁸ I. Turan, *Religion and political culture in Turkey*, in R. Tapper (ed.), *Islam in modern Turkey*, London, I.B. Tauris, 1991, pp. 31-55.

¹⁹ Guven, *Türkiye'de Devlet, Eğitim ve İdeoloji*, cit.

²⁰ Ahmad, *The making of modern Turkey*, cit.

²¹ B. Lewis, *The emergence of modern Turkey*, London, Oxford University Press, 1961.

for many educational activities. The army leaders always paid attention to the educational system and intervened directly or indirectly in education through the National Security Council. After 1983, civil governments were established which made many alterations to education, but the most significant was the introduction of an eight-year compulsory education.

The Major Debate: Eight-year Compulsory Education

The leaders of military regimes dominate the education and socializing process. They are usually interested in the ideology and the introduction of new educational policies. Nationalist and sometimes vague elements are promoted through educational activities, especially in the organizing of schools, the formation of textbooks and the appointment policies for personnel, and the curtailment of certain activities. The military coup leaders and civil governments paid special attention to education and the educational system, and took many decisions to try to put the educational system in order after the intervention of 1980. The most important undertaking was on compulsory education. The move to an eight-year compulsory education has been central to the programs of every almost government in Turkey since 1970. For instance, the civil government of 1971 urged the realization of an eight-year compulsory education program with the aim to prepare students for life and the upper levels of educational, and introduced the Education Law (number 1739), ratified in 1973²². Nevertheless the government did not succeed in implementing it nationwide in Turkey due to a lack of financial resources and support of other agencies. This decision was politicized by the opposition parties in order to garner the support of voters later on.

The secondary education system also witnessed many dramatic changes as a subject promotion credit system was implemented in 1974, but was abandoned later without researching its effects. It was implemented for a second time between 1991 and 1992, but appeared to fail and the politicians changed the system yet again. The Ministry of National Education cancelled further implementations in 1995-1996 because of the inadequacies in the system. Secondary education was organized on the basis of fundamentalist and nationalist, liberal policies. The secondary schools did not educate individuals for working life or life in general, but simply functioned as institutions to prepare young people for higher education. This gave rise to a loss of prestige of secondary schools. Textbooks and curriculum did not aim to prepare individuals in many subjects, but remained a collection of abstract subjects, furnishing students with information

²² Guven, *Türkiye'de Devlet, Eğitim ve İdeoloji*, cit., p. 13.

that was largely of no use to them. These practices all took place after the establishment of the new order.

After 1980, the politicians in power used education as a tool to muster support from their voters and made many decisions that did not contribute to the educational system. They changed the organization of secondary education many times in a very short period, and practiced other new approaches without considering the effects of the changes, not even seeking the advice of any educational authority or even the educators. For example, the Ministry of National Education removed foreign language lessons for two years in secondary education, but then included them back into the curriculum, and then implemented a subject promotion and credit system for a short period, but later cancelled it. These implementations caused inadequacies in secondary schools and graduates from all kinds of secondary schools entered higher education without the essential knowledge, or enough creative-thinking skills for daily life. The Ministry of National Education maintains strict control over schools, even down to determining the lesson plans centrally before disseminating them throughout the country²³.

Islamic groups and political parties with an Islamic agenda who have been governing Turkey since 1983 are considered to control the Ministry of National Education. One Minister of Education from a party of Islamic tendency made a decision to include Arabic language courses in the curriculum of secondary schools, and suggested that religious instruction in both primary and secondary schools should henceforth be converted into applied courses as a means to teach the performance of *namaz* (daily prays) to students, acts which caused a major controversy in the press. Also controversial, was his decision during the summer of 1985. The commission was directed to censor modern Turkish words that emphasize “national” history and geography, with particular attention to the leading political and military figures of the early Republican era known for their religious opposition to the *Kemalist* regime, as well as the introduction of Islamic philosophy in textbooks. In fact, just as in the 1950s, there has been much talk of a revival of Islam and of a religiously-empowered government who have, in recent years, attempted to accord every unit of education to Islamic rules in Turkey²⁴. The case in point demonstrates the precarious nature of relations between state and civil society in Turkey. As stated, the 1982 Turkish Constitution requires that religion be taught under state supervision in primary and secondary schools; however, in 1984 the government declared that Islam (religious lessons) taught as a compulsory course contravenes the Turkish Constitution. This movement also elicited criticism from those who would

²³ N. Sakaoğlu, *Osmanlıdan Günümüze Eğitim Tarihi* [History of Education since Ottoman era], Istanbul, Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2003.

²⁴ Guven, *Türkiye’de Devlet, Eğitim ve İdeoloji*, cit., p. 157.

like to keep public school education strictly secular²⁵. It also caused increased interest in the religious schools (Prayer Leaders and Preachers Schools), with widespread success resulting in approximately 376 religious schools and nine Theology Faculties. Monthly Islamic magazines dominated social life, and were provided freely to schools, in addition to numerous legal and illegal courses on the Quran, and foundations (religious-based funds) as the outcomes of political and ideological approaches²⁶.

After 1983, the religious tendency government chose to continue the military government's repressive policies in terms of political, civil, social and cultural life. The rightist and fundamentalist (religious) groups experienced some freedom to express their opinion and thoughts in education. They demanded and brought about new public rules such as that conservative clothing should be worn on Youth Holiday Ceremonies, that universities should be under strict control so that certain books cannot to be taken out of public libraries. Moreover, some university students rejected certain practices in secular schools. For example, students who studied medicine rejected working on cadavers. This was a consequence of Islamic liberalization within the educational system. The increasing number of institutions of Islamic education, Islamic propaganda in the media, and the participation of some members of parliament and government disturbed almost every formal institution, especially within the Turkish armed forces; and threatened the secular nature of education²⁷.

It was a big danger for democracy and these challenges pushed the NSC (National Security Council), that was composed of military coup leaders and members, to make decisions that were the most important for education and educational activities. The military made a hidden intervention and took some decisions that were focused on educational activities and implementations. The best known was the compulsory eight-years of education. Some of the other decisions of the NSC are as follows: Educational policies should take the same direction of the Law of Educational Unity (c. 1924), the implication being that education must stay loyal to secularity; decisions concerning religious schools, stating that religious schools should provide young people only with religious education and no other subject areas; and that the numbers of schools and students should be limited by measure of supply and demand.

²⁵ E.J. Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin tarihi* [Turkey: A modern history], İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1991, p. 421.

²⁶ B. Aksit, *Islamic education in Turkey: madrasah reform in late Ottoman times and imam-hatip schools in the republic*, in *Islam in modern Turkey*, in Tapper (ed.), *Islam in Modern Turkey*, cit., pp. 145-170.

²⁷ Heper, Güney, *The military and the consolidation of democracy: The recent Turkish experience*, cit., p. 645.

Power Struggle: Transformation of Higher Education under Military Repression

The military government did not tolerate autonomy in higher education, eroding existing higher education law and taking HEC institutions under its control by appointing liberal administrators. The new higher education system was totally centralized after the military intervention of 1980 and tied to the rigid authority of the HEC. The council was established under the authority of politicians in November 1981, and held authority through higher education law (number 2547). This initiative constituted a very serious attempt by the government to assert its control over the universities, with politicians controlling and inspecting higher education through this law. They created such a university system whereby students only took courses and then graduated, and did nothing else. Moreover, universities lost much of their academic manpower through law number 1402, which was introduced by the military in an attempt to restore impartiality to a politicized university system. The political authorities established 21 new universities in 1992, without first solving the immediate financial problems and a general lack of academic staff. Later, the number of newly founded universities reached 42, still without prior investment. The HEC, which is a constitutional institution, determined (and indeed still determines) what departments could be established, and what kind of courses would be taught in many departments of faculties and universities. There was (is) a complete lack of autonomy at the higher education level. The HEC appointed many assistant professors to the posts of professor, without any exam or checks for relevant competencies for such academic posts. This caused title controversies in universities.

The HEC, or those who administer the orders of the HEC, appoint all HE directors, including university rectors and faculty deans, and is the most antidemocratic directorial period in the history of Turkish university education. The HEC was included in the Constitution and empowered to supervise the administration of universities, including important areas like staffing and admissions. It still goes on today, with the HEC making all HE related decisions centrally, and without the input of universities or scholars. There is always a tension and anxious behavior dominant among scholars, academic staff and other persons within universities. They have negative expectations that they could find themselves in academic circumstances having been changed overnight by the HEC. The military rulers appointed another high-level bureaucrat for higher education, a move common among military governments.

The HEC, established in 1981 by the order of the military, is responsible for the planning, organizing, administering and supervising of higher education. The president appoints the members of the council and may even be chosen from those outside the university system. Furthermore, the chairman of the HEC defines the final nominees for university rectors and appoints faculty deans, although the final appointments are decreed by the President of the Republic of Turkey

(as per the Turkish Higher Education Law). As a result, political figures and higher education institutions have gradually become an extension of the ruling parties. The military rulers claimed that they intended to review all institutions of the state, as per the constitution, and the Civil Code regarding the *status* the universities and the educational system. The government implemented a new Higher Education Law, despite continued resistance from universities. This law aimed to bring all universities, academies and other higher education institutions under closer control of the government, which according to opposing academics, «completely eliminated» the administrative and scientific autonomy of the universities. After the military intervention of 1980, the Turkish educational system faced many problems. The military leaders and the military supported governments did not try to improve the educational opportunities, yet made decisions that further extended the educational equalities of the country. The privatization of education at every level spread nationwide, but in the favor of the rich classes, or for a happy minority. This decreased equal educational opportunities in Turkey. The Turkish state authorities also supported and gave momentum to private education through the introduction of new regulations and laws. The number of private schools increased, that is, privatization in education attained its legal basis after the military government period of the 1980s. The state also provided funds to private educational institutions, but worse still was that the state established private schools itself for the purpose of financial gain. This was an illegal move and an unacceptable implementation since, according to Article 27 and Article 42 of the Turkish Constitution of 1982, «the state provides educational opportunity to every citizen through public schools». Also Turkey is recognized within the same Constitution as «a social state». Despite these constitutional articles, the state established private educational institutions and fractured equal opportunities, causing a growing gap between the different social and economic classes.

There are many articles in the 1982 Turkish Constitution that charges the state to provide education as a constitutional responsibility. But this Constitution damaged the balance of right and authority and made the state more powerful than the individual. For instance, the Turkish Constitution of 1961 described the state as one «based on human rights», but the Turkish Constitution of 1982 considers the state as «respectful to human rights»²⁸. The impact of economics on education was greater than other factors, with the economy drastically influencing the Turkish educational system. After the economic²⁹ crisis in January 1980 and the 1980 military intervention, the restructuring of the socioeconomic and cultural system changed the educational system, ranging from elementary schools through to universities. Inadequacies in the financial

²⁸ N. Altunya, *Eğitim hakkı* [Right to education], in *75. Yılda eğitim*, İstanbul, Bankası Yayınları, 1999, pp. 77-89.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

resources allocated for education caused a decline in the quality of education, in public schools especially. Private educational at all levels started to appear and is still very much in charge. Equal opportunity in education have been neglected and damaged since the military intervention of 1980. Students have not been granted a suitable education according to their abilities and skills, in spite of constitutional articles, which should have obligated the state to provide educational opportunities to all students.

Inequalities in the education of women has not improved at all levels of schooling. The regional gap has become larger in some regions of Turkey. The state has not provided educational opportunities to both genders. Moreover, the degree of women's education has remained very low at all educational level, with some families in some parts of Turkey still not sending their daughters to secondary schools³⁰. The rate of secondary education has remained very low across the whole country. Despite the constitutional prohibitions, newly-opened private secondary schools have been established, which has damaged equal opportunities. The universities have increased in terms of size and numbers, but they face many difficulties with a lack of laboratories and skilled academic staff. The rapid population expansion has resulted in the opening of private universities and educational institutions that prefer persons from the higher economic classes. Some universities have not educated students adequately and their graduates have not managed, even today, to find suitable employment. The outcome of all this are social controversies and a loss of hope of our youth.

Impact of Collaborative Power on Curriculum

In 1962, the curriculum was revised in terms of new developments and educational needs. The subjects of the 1948 curriculum were grouped under five main headings, taking into consideration their similarities. The aim of the 1962 curriculum amendments were to meet the requirements of society as a whole, besides the needs of local communities. The trial stage of the 1962 curriculum took six years and the teachers, scholars and experts from different fields examined the implementations and made various recommendations for revisions, and the final curriculum was approved in 1968. This curriculum remained in force until 1982, when a new model was developed through collaboration of universities and the Ministry of National Education. The aims and subject matters were revised. However, the power relations changed in Turkey during the 1990s and international bodies such as the World Bank became involved in the setting of schools curriculum in Turkey³¹. Giving funds for the revising of the curriculum,

³⁰ Guven, *Türkiye'de Devlet, Eğitim ve İdeoloji*, cit., p. 379.

³¹ Id., *Türkiyede Öğretmen Eğitiminin Tarihsel Dönüşümüne Eleştirel Bir Bakış*, cit.

the World Bank launched projects and a new curriculum was adopted. The funds of the World Bank project covered improving the quality of instructional materials and textbooks, as well as improvements to the infrastructure of schooling in Turkey. The curriculum revisions were based on separate content areas such as mathematics, science, and social studies, but the most dramatic change in the curriculum occurred in 2004.

The Elementary Education curriculum was changed in 2004, with largescale curriculum reform implemented since 2005. These reforms introduced major changes to the elementary education programs; having been described as a «constructivist education reform». The existing curriculum of social studies, science, mathematics and Turkish, and later on the other lessons, were altered centered on discourse based on social and technical competencies. These changes are expected to be incorporated into the curriculum in terms of a reforms' framework. The Ministry of National Education made the changes centrally, and hoped to develop a curriculum that employed high quality teaching materials, with handbooks, in-service education, textbooks and workbooks and other supplementary documents. Although there is common agreement about the limitations of this new reform and curriculum, there has been less agreement among experts and program developers, except for the Ministry of National Education³².

The 2000s: Rising New Liberal Governments and Power Transition to the Conservatives

Post 2002, the Islamic tendency Justice and Development Party took power after winning the general election. They started to change social, educational and political life in line with conservative Islamic ideals, particularly in education. In 2012, a controversial school reform was brought into law that approved the opening of religious junior schools, and changing the eight-year compulsory education into two stages (4+4 years). In addition, the Fatih project (ICT adaptation) was introduced, although not well grounded.

Although the new law claimed to extend compulsory education from eight years up to 12 years, in practice the bill tends to direct middle school students towards attending middle level Islamic schools, which appears to be the real purpose of introducing intensive religious education. The bill also reduced the average starting age of children to kindergartens, and pushed families to enroll 60-month old children in primary school, without any basis on research.

³² F.H Bıkmaz, *Yeni ilköğretim programları ve öğretmenler* [New Elementary Curricula and Teachers], «Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi», vol. 39, n. 1, 2006, pp. 97-116.

Secondary schools were divided into three categories as academic, religious, and vocational and technical education establishments, each providing four years of compulsory education after primary school. The religiously tendency government have tried to legitimize this backward step by discourse based on the muddle that goes back to Turkey's last great educational reform of 1997 (in fact it goes back earlier than that), just after the military helped remove from power an Islamist-led coalition. In fact, the attempts in 1997 were in favor of girls enrolling in compulsory education without any intermittent stages, which reduced truancy in Turkey. It was expected that children would stay longer in school, with all eight compulsory years of schooling spent within the same primary school, without intermittence. The new bill (enacted in 2012) assumes that children could enroll at normal vocational schools from the ninth grade (rather than the sixth, as before), but the reality was that it made it possible for children to be enrolled at religious schools. The worse thing is that the bill is very weak, and in the uproar, the government decided to implement it immediately, without public debate. Some educational faculties reported on the negative effects of this implementation, but the government did not take such reports into consideration, with critics and educational scientists accusing them of being ideological. Moreover, the government used its power hastily and introduced another bill called FATİH (which translated stands for «Movement to Increase Opportunities and Technology»). The FATİH project eventually aims to provide every student in Turkey with a tablet PC. The project is chaotic and ambitious in terms of financial and educational principles, yet the government is very keen on realizing this project.

The latest implementation regards «elective courses». The religious tendency government has tried to spread their religious ideology via schools. In addition to religious high schools, new elective courses have been created such as one on the Quran (Holy book of Islam), and the life of the Prophet Mohammed etc., and have added these courses to the elective course list of academic high schools. Whilst these are elective courses, implementation is down to the initiative of the school principals, who are all centrally appointed by the Ministry of National Education. In reality, these principals are pushing students towards choosing these elective courses. The most significant point of this decision is the introduction of questions into the «Central University Entrance Exam», with the scores determining at which faculty the students can study.

Discussion

Power plays an important role, which becomes self-evident during reform processes when new «values» are created. Power struggles within educational reform means shaping «the meaning and purposes of schooling», since education

policies delineate what is valid and what is worthwhile. Creating a new nation always brings about power struggles. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, and his cadres instituted power for transformation of the country, with education playing a key role in that transformation. Thus, the military and bureaucratic elites held the power during the formation of a western-looking Turkey. The transformation of the educational system came from the top down; however, these changes were made for benefit of all classes in Turkey, unlike as seen in the West. During and since the time of Atatürk, education has developed and expanded. The important class military elites, bureaucrats, and religious tendency leaders who held the power have shaped education along the lines of their expectations and ideologies. They created curriculum and outlined educational policies and implementations. The power holders used the Ministry of National Education and schooling as a tool for creating an educational system which fits their own expectations. At the beginning, power served as a positive instigator for societal change and for increasing the educational level in Turkey; however, it has since been abused in preference for implementing religious and conservative values in society. In summary, the use and abuse of power is exceptionally critical.

«To bring our universities back to their former glory». The debate on the legal and economical *status* of university professors in the years after World War II on the pages of «L'Università italiana» (1946-1949)

Luigiaurelio Pomante
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism
University of Macerata (Italy)
luigiaurelio.pomante@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: Through the analysis of the combative and lively magazine «L'Università italiana» [The Italian University] – one of the most active university media outlet during the post-war period – the article retraces the active debate developed around the question of the renewal of the legal and economic *status* of university professors and, more generally, of the moral and material reconstruction of the Italian university system after the war, still largely characterized, in its legal and academic custom, by the elitist and rigidly conservative organization given to it by the Gentile reform in 1923 and, in other respects, by the ideological and propagandist influences of the fascist regime.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of University; Higher Education; Journals; Italy; XXth Century.

One of the main and most serious problems that the governments of the Second World War had to face in the field of education was the one linked to the material conditions of the school and university facilities. Not even the university, in fact, could avoid the destructive and crippling action of the war. In this regard, in 1951, in the Introduction to the publication prepared by the Ministry of Education on the reconstruction of the Italian universities, the then head of the General Management of the University Education, Giuseppe Petrocchi, drew a dramatic picture of the conditions in which, after the conclusion of the war events, the Italian university system was:

At the end of the hostilities – he wrote –, bomb attacks, raids and requisitions had profoundly affected the efficiency of many of our Institutes, damaging and considerably reducing their real estate and equipment. The war had also prevented the normal renewal of the scientific equipment that appeared outdated by the rapid evolution of the technical progress and totally inadequate to fulfill their dual function of teaching materials and tools for scientific research. The university or school libraries included Italian publications up to 1942, and foreign ones up to 1939.

And yet, the total or partial unavailability of the buildings (classrooms, laboratories, libraries, university residences etc.), the destruction of a great part of the teaching and scientific tools and the clear obsolescence of the sophisticated equipment in use in research laboratories, the dispersion of a large part of the books of the university libraries and, at the same time, the failure in updating the acquisitions of scientific works by the university libraries represented, according to Giuseppe Petrocchi, only one aspect of the serious crisis that characterized the higher education system. A further aspect, which is also intended to have strong consequences on the national university life, was represented «by the serious moral crisis of the student class in the years 1945 and 1946»:

The young people, back from the war, from deportation and imprisonment – the high ministry official underlined – flocked, in huge masses, to universities, eager to conclude their studies interrupted by the hostilities. But the studies could not be accomplished with the serenity and seriousness needed to obtain substantial fruit. Not only the number of students reached unprecedented proportions in the history of our universities (which thus had to face two orders of difficulties: on the one hand, their decreased efficiency, on the other hand, their extreme crowding); but a deep weariness, a complex anxiety embittered and tormented young people. [...] They had, in essence, the need to provide urgent and adequate means to bring back a mass of young people hardened by years of war and suffering on the normal path of their studies and their lives, and to rebuild not only the buildings and laboratories and libraries, but also the souls and intellects.

The real financial disarray of the state further aggravates the already difficult framework created by the conflict, and forced it to deal with the emergency of the reconstruction of the country with very poor economic resources:

The means that the State, which was also subject to the process of reorganization, could use in favor of the education sector in general and the university in particular - the general manager pointed out - were completely insufficient to face even the most immediate needs¹.

Given, in fact, the serious deficiencies and the undoubtedly extraordinary nature of the interventions required to restore at least the conditions of the pre-war phase, the financial allocations for education were still those determined in the second half of the Thirties and amounted to the 5% of the total expenditure

¹ See G. Petrocchi, *Introduzione*, in Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione - Direzione generale dell'istruzione universitaria, *La ricostruzione delle università italiane*, Firenze, Le Monnier, 1951, pp. 1-2.

of the State: an amount that seemed utterly inadequate to cope with the state of emergency and the needs of the immediate post-war period².

The problems arising from the dissolution of a large part of the central and organizational structure of the higher and university education were added to the structural ones, along with the associated difficulty of quickly restoring the normal functioning of the administrative apparatus; as well as those related to the need of suppressing the racist provisions in the university regulations and, more generally, in the process of «defascistization» of the legislation and the special regulations in the field of higher education and university³.

Finally, the situation of the higher education and the recovery of the university studies in the country were made more problematic also due to the conditions of strong material and moral poverty in which the university professors were. In the academic year 1945-1946 the (ordinary and extraordinary) permanent professors of the Italian universities were 1,469, those in charge, but not permanent and who obtained the teaching annually, slightly more than 2,000 units (2,001) while the permanent assistants who cooperated with the various professorships at the universities of the Peninsula were 2,226.

The faculties of Medicine and Surgery and Law were those who could boast the largest number of permanent professors (297 the first, 281 the second), while the faculty of Mathematical, Physical and Natural Sciences was the one with the highest number of non permanent charges (331), followed by Engineering (245)⁴. For all these figures connected to the university world, and particularly

² See Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1953.

³ For a careful evaluation of the Italian school and university conditions in the post war period, see: *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943. Con cenni introduttivi sui periodi precedenti e una parte conclusiva sul periodo post-fascista, preparato dalla Sottocommissione dell'Educazione della Commissione Alleata in Italia e offerto al Ministero della P.I.*, Roma, Garzanti, 1947; *La rinascita dell'Italia (1945-1952)*, «Documenti di vita italiana», vol. 3, nn. 14-15, 1953, pp. 1003-1014; M. Di Domizio, *L'Università italiana. Lineamenti storici*, Milano, AVE, 1952, pp. 248-257; Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1953; R. Fornaca, *I problemi della scuola italiana dal 1943 alla Costituente*, Roma, Armando, 1972; G. Ricuperati, *La scuola nell'Italia unita*, in *Storia d'Italia*, 6 vols., Torino, Einaudi, 1973, vol. 5, Tomo II, pp. 1695-1722; T. Tomasi, *La scuola italiana dalla dittatura alla Repubblica*, Roma, Editori riuniti, 1976; L. Ambrosoli, *La scuola in Italia dal dopoguerra ad oggi*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1982; M. Gattullo, A. Visalberghi, *La scuola italiana dal 1945 al 1983*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1988; G. Cives, *La scuola italiana dall'Unità ai nostri giorni*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1990 (in particular G. Luzzatto, *L'Università*, pp. 153-198); S. Sani, *La politica scolastica del Centro-Sinistra (1962-1968)*, Perugia, Morlacchi Editore, 2000 (in particular pp. 1-50); F. Bonini, *La politica universitaria nell'Italia repubblicana*, in G.P. Brizzi, P. Del Negro, A. Romano (edd.), *Storia delle Università in Italia*, 3 vols., Messina, Sicania, 2007, vol. 1, pp. 425-459.

⁴ Data taken from Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, cit., p. 286.

for permanent professors⁵, the salary, still at the pre-war levels⁶, now appeared totally inadequate when compared to the immediate aftermath of the war⁷. It also appeared not appropriate to the level of education possessed by professors and disregarding of the fact that the professors became permanent at an age much higher compared to other professions and that their academic career was really slow, both well-rooted phenomena in the Italian university system of the previous decades⁸.

Teachers had always been poorly paid and now with the increase in the cost of living, they began, along with the great mass of employees of the State, to receive salaries that were of no use. The salaries were doubled by the Italian government, then tripled, then quadrupled and quintupled, but they were always behind the rise in prices. It is difficult to determine precisely this latter, but you can get an idea of it from the fact that the circulation of the lira had risen from 22.5 billion in 1938 to 285 billion of lire at the end of 1945, i.e. almost thirteen times. Under these circumstances the state employees, and the employees in general, are always the ones to be damaged, because radical changes in their conditions are administratively and financially difficult to be carried out relatively quickly⁹.

In addition to the psychological difficulties related to the absence of the old social and economic *status* of teachers¹⁰, there were also those resulting from the climate of uncertainty and of existential disquiet produced by the sudden

⁵ The lecturers, in fact, most of the time already enjoyed another salary paid by the state or by a public body.

⁶ For a comparison with the prewar situation, see: *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943. Con cenni introduttivi sui periodi precedenti e una parte conclusiva sul periodo post-fascista, preparato dalla Sotto-Commissione dell'Educazione della Commissione Alleata in Italia e offerto al Ministero della P.I.*, cit., pp. 377-378.

⁷ See, in this regard, T. Besozzi, *Ventimila lire al mese guadagnano i professori universitari*, «L'Europeo», vol. 2, n. 10, 9th March 1947, p. 2 and *Retribuzione dei professori di istituti governativi d'istruzione superiore*, in *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943. Con cenni introduttivi sui periodi precedenti e una parte conclusiva sul periodo post-fascista, preparato dalla Sotto-Commissione dell'Educazione della Commissione Alleata in Italia e offerto al Ministero della P.I.*, cit., pp. 480-483.

⁸ See, in this regard: M. Moretti, I. Porciani, *Il reclutamento accademico in Italia. Uno sguardo retrospettivo*, «Annali di storia delle università italiane», vol. 1, 1997, pp. 11-39; G. Fois, *Reclutamento dei docenti e sistemi concorsuali, dal 1860 a oggi*, in Brizzi, Del Negro, Romano (edd.), *Storia delle Università in Italia*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 461-483; A. Mariuzzo, *Politiche universitarie e selezione pubblica della comunità scientifica. Forme e funzioni del reclutamento accademico dall'Unità alla Seconda guerra mondiale*, in G. Ambrosino, L. De Nardis (edd.), *MaTriX. Proposte per un approccio interdisciplinare allo studio delle istituzioni*, Verona, QuiEdit, 2015, pp. 159-176.

⁹ See *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943. Con cenni introduttivi sui periodi precedenti e una parte conclusiva sul periodo post-fascista, preparato dalla Sotto-Commissione dell'Educazione della Commissione Alleata in Italia e offerto al Ministero della P.I.*, cit., p. 378.

¹⁰ For a detailed historical reconstruction of the university professors' social *status* and salaries over the centuries see the extensive essay A. Zannini, *Stipendi e status sociale dei docenti universitari. Una prospettiva storica di lungo periodo*, «Annali di storia delle università italiane», vol. 3, 1999, pp. 9-38 and A. Verrocchio, *I docenti universitari tra Otto e Novecento. Carriere, condizione economica e stato giuridico*, «Italia contemporanea», vol. 24, n. 206, 1997, pp. 65-84.

decline of the traditional political and institutional reference points that the collapse of fascism and the terrible tragedy produced by the second World war had provoked. In fact, even the academics, not unlike the teachers of primary and secondary school, appeared to be «troubled by a deep crisis of cultural and political identity, after the fall of the fascist regime, in the values and choices they identified with»¹¹.

In order to provide a critical and rigorous analysis of the complex and troubling situation in which the a contemporary higher education system was and, more specifically, with the aim to emphasize and assert their rights and support their economic, legal and cultural claims, the Italian university professors thought to have their voice heard through the pages of a new periodical, since 1946. «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», borrowing its name from a prestigious academic journal published in Bologna from 1902 and for about 40 years¹², was founded in Rome. It, however, was connected for typographic continuity to the periodic «Studium urbis», published occasionally by the Capitoline University in the previous two years only to give space and prestige to the city of studies in Lazio¹³. The new magazine, whose direction was entrusted to the Roman Dean Giuseppe Caronia¹⁴, but whose real *deus ex machina* was the administrative director Nicola Spano¹⁵, arose not only as a local publishing company but as a national newspaper addressed to the entire academic community. As reported, in fact, in a well evident box on the first

¹¹ See R. Sani, *Le associazioni degli insegnanti cattolici nel secondo dopoguerra 1944-1958*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1990, p. 6. For what concerns the category of university teachers in particular, see: A. Sensini, *Il professore d'università*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1963; A. La Penna, *Università e istruzione pubblica*, in *Storia d'Italia*, cit., vol. 5, book 2, pp. 1737-1779; P.P. Giglioli, *Baroni e burocrati. Il ceto accademico italiano*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1979. For an analysis of the teacher and intellectual class' difficulties see the always valid work by M. Barbagli, *Disoccupazione intellettuale e sistema scolastico in Italia: 1859-1973*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1978.

¹² The first issue of the long-lived magazine «L'Università italiana: rivista dell'istruzione superiore» was published in May 1902 and the year of suspension of the publications was 1942. For the first nine years, the magazine was released every two weeks while since 1911 he came out monthly. See also M. Moretti, «Noi e le nostre università». *Schede sulle riviste professorali italiane fra Otto e Novecento*, in G. Angelozzi, M.T. Guerrini, G. Olmi (edd.), *Università e formazione dei ceti dirigenti. Per Gian Paolo Brizzi, pellegrino dei saperi*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2015, pp. 521-538.

¹³ The periodical «Studium Urbis» was the internal bulletin, irregularly published, of the University of Rome that, from the autumn of 1944 and for eighteen months, published laws, ministerial circulars and news on the Capitoline university.

¹⁴ Giuseppe Caronia, who was trained as a doctor at Palermo School of Rocco Jemma and prominent professor of pediatric clinic at the University of Rome, became in 1944 dean of the same Capitoline university, a role he held until 1948. Member of the Constituent Assembly of the Christian Democrats, he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies in the Catholic party in the first and second legislature (1948-1958). On him, see especially A. Pavan, *Caronia, Giuseppe*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1988, vol. 34, pp. 363-366.

¹⁵ On Nicola Spano see the excellent bio-bibliographical profile by Giuseppina Fois, *Nicola Spano. Vita e opere di un funzionario universitario*, in N. Spano, *L'Università di Roma. Ristampa anastatica*, Roma, Casa Editrice Università La Sapienza, 2008.

page of the first issue, published on the 1st of April 1946, the new magazine openly declared to be addressed to the academic authorities of all the Italian universities and especially to the Deans

so that they consider common to all the universities the task of creating an information magazine, with diligent correspondents able to keep updated, with useful and current news, those who live and work in the universities; so that they make this magazine a true mirror of the different currents of thought and of the material and spiritual needs of all the universities in Italy¹⁶.

This obvious and undeniable situation of economic and moral «emergency» of the Italian universities was further and more fully explicated in the editorial opening the first page of the magazine, titled *Risorgere* (Revive) by the periodic direction. In fact, it drew, in a synthetic but very effective way, a clear picture of the contemporary Italian universities, troubled by the difficult and censorious «years of consensus» and from the miseries of World War II:

In a rather general and vague way – we can read in the editorial - now we can know the economic, moral and cultural loss left to us by the war and fascism. The extent to which the universities languish is too much unknown: with insufficient and provisional budgets; with no chance to do research and publish the results; with the teaching exercises abolished or reduced for lack of material and personnel; with a number of students that was already too large and that was now increased by irregular crowds of veterans and displaced persons; with new, transitional rules, little known and difficult to be applied, with teachers reduced in the number or transferred or suspected or depleted; with the public opinion indifferent to the moral problems and to the practical ones of assistance, of places, personnel, equipment.

However, even in front of such a terrible picture, the academic authorities and the teaching staff, aware of their high-profile role in society, were asked to work together to examine the situation according to their skills, trying to detect as soon as possible, perhaps even through the pages of «L'Università italiana», the most urgent problems to be solved and propose possible solutions.

No one is discouraged: in everybody there is a promising enthusiasm and a thirst for new life. Many wounds are healing faster as you could hope. The Italian Universities rise again. [...] The salvation of science will come from scientists, the resurrection of the university by academics. But the first condition to rise again is to know the full reality, to know what works and providences are possible today and what are the most pressing: complex problems that the rush of the newspapers and the breathless political competition do not allow to examine with the necessary objectivity and competence. All the men of culture have certainly something to say, to propose, to teach and to learn from a public debate on our problems; and to all, therefore, this magazine offers hospitality and asks loving

¹⁶ See «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 1, 1° April 1946, p. 1.

collaboration, above every personal interest, or of groups or of schools, above every political colour. [...] After the objective information, the strict studies and the serene discussions, it will be up to the legislators of the pacified and truly free Italy to dictate the rules to bring our universities to their former glory¹⁷.

Since the early numbers and for all the four years in which it was published (the last number was published on the 15th of July, 1949)¹⁸, the new periodical collected articles of professors of various Italian universities and men of Italian and foreign culture on the serious problems of university rebirth and organization of higher education; it presented precise press reviews of what was published on the most important national and local newspapers on issues concerning the Italian academic world; it offered a large and detailed Italian and foreign news bulletin with information on the activities of cultural professional and student associations, on the life of the academies and of university and culture institutions, on the teachers' appointments and transfers; it published all the provisions, regulations and ministerial circulars, concerning the world of universities and the functioning of the institutions with a particular emphasis on the teaching practices; it guaranteed the publication and spread of advertisements and regulations regarding competitions, scholarships and scientific awards as well as reviews and reports of the most important published university and cultural textbooks. Furthermore, the magazine was always open, through its numerous sections, to the students' or teachers' requests, sometimes to seek clarification and accurate interpretations of the provisions concerning them, or to report malfunctions and problems regarding individual universities.

Finally, «L'Università italiana» paid a particular attention «to the battles» carried out by the trade associations operating within the university, in order to express their authoritative judgment on the problems concerning the moral, legal and economic condition of the university staff and especially teachers. With specific reference to this aspect, it should be emphasized that in the aforementioned first issue of the magazine of the 1st of April, 1946, it is possible to find some very useful information on the Italian university professors' economic and legal *status* after World War II. On the occasion of the I National University Trade Union Congress, in fact, held at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Rome from the 7th to the 10th of March 1946, that was a totally new experience in the history of Italian universities, animated by the «intention to broaden the previous contacts among the trade union leaders of the Italian Universities»¹⁹, the risk of a gradual «proletarianization»

¹⁷ See La direzione, *Risorgere*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 1, 1° April 1946, p. 1.

¹⁸ On the economic problems that led to the closure of the newspaper in 1949, see the extensive discussion reported in Università di Roma, Consiglio di amministrazione, *Verbali*, voll. 18-19, meetings 31st of July 1947, pp. 293-294 and 21st of November 1947, p. 70.

¹⁹ See *Il primo Congresso sindacale nazionale universitario*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 1 (trade union appendix), 1° April 1946, pp. 1-2.

of the teaching category became clear. It was linked to the difficult financial conditions of the country and then the resulting downgrading of its social and economic *status* worried the Italian academics. Precisely for this reason, prof. Renato Calapso, professor of geometry at the University of Messina²⁰, giving voice to the thoughts of many of his colleagues, in his speech at the meeting, refused categorically the use of the term «workers» for the members of the class he represented, highlighting the gap existing between the teachers, particularly the permanent ones, and the other components of the Italian university world (lecturers, office workers, subordinates, technicians, nurses etc.).

We are not workers, he stated explicitly, we are university professors. [...] The university professors' activities do not obey the rules that standardize the employment relationships of workers; it is by its nature an occasional activity, which escapes all external disciplines. The economic issues, which are at the basis of all the trade union activities and organizations, are secondary for the creators and scientists, satisfied to have achieved in modern times an independence and a social recognition that once no one dreamed. From Aesop's slavery to the current freedom, it is not a short step. The teachers do not complain about their poverty²¹.

In fact, if the rejection of the term «worker» in its meaning of subordinate dependent, and therefore devoid of its true professional autonomy, represented an idea shared by most academics of the time, the same can not be said about what Calapso had asserted about university teachers' lack of interest and their practical economic condition. Many Italian academics after World War II, although «totally absorbed in the sacred fire of their research and their teachings and pervaded by the need to associate their disciples to their work»²², seemed particularly interested in improving their economic conditions, adapting them to their cultural *status*. On the 1st of May 1946 «L'Università italiana», drawing inspiration from the contents of an article published in the previous days on the «Corriere d'informazione» of Milan, dealt with this subject, highlighting the difficult situation teachers experienced at that time. The journalist's very meticulous analysis was able to offer the reader a complete picture of the situation and to highlight the problems of the public Italian higher education

²⁰ Renato Calapso graduated in Messina in 1922 and soon after he entered the university teaching and became an assistant in the professorship of Analysis. Lecturer of analysis, in 1935 he was the first winner of a chair of geometry at the University of Messina, where he remained until the 31st of October 1976, date of his retirement. From 1936 and for over twenty years he was Dean of the Faculty of Science of the University of Messina, a member of several academies and President of the cultural institution of the City of Syracuse, he himself created for the Archimedean Celebrations of the XX Century.

²¹ See *Il professore è lavoratore?*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 1 (trade union appendix), 1° April 1946, p. 1.

²² See V. Polara, *I professori universitari di ruolo e le organizzazioni politiche e sindacali*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 3 (trade union appendix), 1° May 1946, p. 6.

system of that time, especially in terms of financial remuneration and teachers' recruitment:

The inadequacy of the salary is the problem of all the government employees, but it was morally more acute and cruel for this category which is the greatest repository of the national culture and science. The sharp difference in the knowledge, values, and functions between two state officials of equal rank, but one that is an office worker and another a university teacher, would require a different salary; in addition university teachers' career stops to the grade IV of the State, [...] if you think that in France the Dean of the Sorbonne is equalized to the Marshal of France and in Italy [...] there are many magistrates who have the rank III and II. The career began with the rank VII, quite inadequate for the beginning of career, the end of a long and difficult preparatory work, which often passes through the painful maceration of assistantship, and finishes usually in their forties. For a clerk who began his career at twenty, the right to pension arrives when he is 40 years old, while a university professor had to wait at least his 60²³.

The situation seemed even more serious and difficult to solve, however, for the young willing to undertake a university career, which were in a terrible state of insecurity characterized by annual appointments, an almost total dependence to their reference teacher and an economic compensation which barely guaranteed the survival. Such life conditions, lasting too long in the years, pushed many of them, even brilliant scholars, to abandon reluctantly their dreams and academic aspirations:

The assistantship – the article states – is finally a serious question: the assistants were appointed from year to year and subject to annual confirmation, they live in the constant concern of losing their jobs at any moment and their salaries could reach at most those of a state clerk of tenth grade²⁴.

With specific reference to such a complex and incomplete context requiring urgent consideration by the political class, the Association of Permanent Professors of the University of Messina, among the most active in terms of trade union battles and claims thanks to the work of its president, prof. Virgilio Polara, in June 1946 submitted to the Ministry of Education a document containing the main university professors' demands. A few crucial points can be found in that document around which the controversy between the teacher class and the Minerva would develop, in the following months. Because of the reticent attitude of the latter, given by the difficult financial situation of the country,

²³ See *L'insostenibile stato economico dei docenti universitari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 3 (trade union appendix), 1° May 1946, p. 6. The unfavorable comparison between the legal salary of Italian professors and one reserved for foreign teachers in their university was one of the favorite themes of a meeting sponsored by the Center of psychological studies of Rome, held in May of 1946 and of which there is an extensive summary on the pages of «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 6, 15 June 1946, pp. 1-4.

²⁴ See *L'insostenibile stato economico dei docenti universitari*, cit.

the Italian universities' professors, for their part, claimed with increasing determination faster and economically more substantial career advancement, the granting of special office or study benefits like the ones of other categories (for example the magistracy), «an absolute independence from the state powers and from all foreign intervention» that would «mutilate» the teachers' scientific and educational mission (as sadly happened in the fascist era), and, not least, the abrogation, or at least modification, of the Royal Decree 24th April 1935, n. 565²⁵, which, under the Fascist Minister Cesare De Vecchi, had anticipated the retirement of university teachers of five years, i.e. at their 70th year²⁶. The most important passages of this document, prepared by the teachers from Messina and that quickly became the banner of the battles fought by the Italian academics²⁷, was warmly welcomed on the pages of «L'Università italiana», in its issue of the 1st of July 1946, in which the need for urgent action by the ministry was well stressed:

Given some observations on the particular functions of university professors as part of national life, and on the 'very strict selection, which is not found in any other category of state employees and allows only a very few people, after a long and solid preparation, to obtain the professorship', the document states that any 'comparison with other categories of state employees, and in particular with the teachers of secondary schools, with the magistrates and with teachers of primary schools, can not be invoked to deny or postpone adequate and urgent measures'²⁸.

The document, precisely because of the special educational and formative function recognized to university professors within the society, that was essential in an Italian context which required not only a material but also a moral and cultural reconstruction that only a competent and experienced élite could

²⁵ R.D. 24 aprile 1935, n. 565, *Indicazioni relative ai limiti di età pel collocamento a riposo del personale direttivo ed insegnante degli istituti d'istruzione*.

²⁶ This decision of the Minister Cesare De Vecchi greatly limited what the Italian law had previously established about the age of retirement of teachers. The Casati Law, in fact, in 1859, established that the quality of university professor was «lifelong». The age limit at 75 years was introduced only with the law 19th July 1909, n. 496, which, however, included the possibility that the professors were, for exceptional reasons, kept in their chair with no age limits. The age limit was later confirmed by Gentile in 1923 before being lowered, in fact, with de Vecchi. On the various age limits set in different eras by the Italian law for the retirement of university teachers see the interesting excursus proposed in G. Gonella, *Stato giuridico dei docenti, discorso tenuto dal Ministro Gonella al Ministero della P.I., il 19 aprile 1951, nella seduta d'apertura del Convegno dei Rettori delle Università e Politecnici italiani, indetto a cura dell'ANPUR e del Ministero della P.I.*, in Id., *Cinque anni al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, 3 vols., Milano, Giuffrè, 1981, vol. 2: *Libertà della Scuola e nuovi ordinamenti scolastici*, pp. 281-286.

²⁷ Similar claims to those contained in the document, for example, were into another document, a few months later, by the Piemontese University Professors Association. See in this respect «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 11 (trade union appendix) 1^o September 1946, p. 5.

²⁸ See *Per la sistemazione economica dei professori universitari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 7 (trade union appendix), 1^o July 1946, p. 5.

guarantee, firstly invoked the immediate release of «the university professors from the current hierarchical structure» in order to eliminate «every odious comparison with the other categories of state employees», whose tasks were very different from those attributed to men of science and culture. Secondly, the paper urged the ministry to avoid any further comparison with other teachers which could only highlight the unfair treatment given to university professors. According to the regulations then in force, in fact, established by the Royal Decree 11th November 1923, n. 2395, which established the State administration's hierarchical structure and determined the grade of the professors' career (and therefore a better or worse salary)²⁹, the university professors resulted to be «caged» in a too strict career system and economic-legal treatment, not very suitable to their role in society. The extraordinary teachers, in fact, were appointed to the seventh grade where they remained for three years and then are appointed, becoming full professors, to the sixth grade. They would stay here for 8 years, after which they would be assigned to the fifth grade. After seven years in that position, they would finally pass to the fourth grade, which was the culmination of the career for a university professor until his retirement³⁰. A too long path, and for this reason not comparable with what required by other public careers, even the school world:

And if you wanted to do that comparison it would only serve to demonstrate that the university professors experience an economic and moral treatment certainly not better than that of the secondary school teachers and of the magistrates. Just keep in mind that you can not obtain a professorship, especially for the scientific subjects, before your 45, on average, with the appointment to extraordinary teacher and the classification in seventh grade. The teachers of secondary schools, when 45 years old, have already done their whole career and almost all are in seventh grade: a large number of them became Headmaster at the sixth grade! And who can not easily ascertain that the magistrates, when 45, are at least at the fifth grade? The simple request made by university professors of the displacement of a grade in their careers, by an urgent deliberation [...] seems to be evident also on the basis of the previous comparisons. Substantially similar reasons justify the request that, for university professors, the staying in the fifth grade (currently the sixth grade) is reduced to just five years³¹.

In the light of this particularly challenging, and full of obstacles, academic program, the teachers of Messina, on behalf of all their colleagues of the Peninsula, also hoped that their past years of useful service as assistants or as lecturers of university courses were at least recognized for their career:

²⁹ R.D. 11 November n. 2395, *Ordinamento gerarchico delle amministrazioni dello Stato*, published on the Official Journal on the 17th of November 1923, n. 270.

³⁰ See the table in *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943. Con cenni introduttivi sui periodi precedenti e una parte conclusiva sul periodo post-fascista, preparato dalla Sotto-Commissione dell'Educazione della Commissione Alleata in Italia e offerto al Ministero della P.I.*, cit., p. 480.

³¹ See *Per la sistemazione economica dei professori universitari*, cit.

Since, as said before, the university professors obtain the professorship not in a young age, and only after having experimented for several years their attitudes and their technical knowledge and their culture as university assistants or lecturers, it seems right and fair that these years of service could be recognized for their career, in accordance, moreover, to a legislative provision that was always applied until the enactment of the Gentile law.

This request, if satisfied, resulted in a little economic State expense, because it refers, according to the authors of the document, only to a hundred teachers, and it would also have allowed the university professors not only to be placed «at the same the level of other employees beginning their profession very soon, but also to prevent many college assistants to abandon their university career to another safer and faster, with serious damage for the scientific research».

The Association of the professors of the University of Messina, closing the document, then, emphasized the need that the measures they required found a quick and simple implementation, independent of any other plan of broader university reform, and this not only

for reasons of justice and fair distribution, but also in view of the supreme interest of the community, because both the balance and rectitude of the national life and the authority and the prestige that the nation can enjoy abroad depend mysteriously but surely on the free and uncontrollable activities of thinking men³².

Even if without any specific reference to the university professors' requests of the previous months, a conciliatory sign full of optimism came from the new Minister Guido Gonella, that arrived at the ministry of Education on the 13th of July, 1946 with the second government De Gasperi³³. He, in his first speech to educators, entitled *L'Italia rinascerà dalla scuola* (Italy will reborn from school)³⁴, recognized as a top priority of his ministry the need to invest on the school and culture through a precise and concrete development program, which, according to him, would be essential for the material and moral revival of the entire country. In this work of rebirth, the role of the teaching staff at all levels was essential, whose economic and legal *status*, considered «humiliating» by the minister, had to be improved and brought back to decent and morally adapt levels:

The Ministry intends to deal – we can read in Gonella's speech full reported on the pages of «L'Università italiana» of 1-15 August 1946 – the current school crisis not with words, but with deeds. But the State may require only if it first will give the example of being able to fulfill his duties primarily towards the teaching staff, improving the humiliating condition

³² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³³ Guido Gonella became Minister of the Education on the 13th of July, 1946, in the aftermath of the establishment of the government II chaired by Alcide De Gasperi and remained at the Minerva until the 26th of July, 1951, during the III, IV, V and VI De Gasperi's government.

³⁴ This speech was given, by radio, by Guido Gonella on the 15th of July 1946, just two days after his appointment as Minister of Education.

in which the class of educators is condemned to live. The economic dignity of teachers must be raised to the level of moral dignity by immediate dispositions that can no longer remain lower than those that other social classes already enjoy, which not carry the weight of such a grave moral responsibility³⁵.

The minister Gonella soon showed, not only with words but also with deeds, helpfulness towards the Italian teaching staff, without forgetting the university professors. In this sense, the 20th of August, 1946, the owner of the *Minerva* met in Rome the members of the National Executive Council of the University Trade Union who represented both the permanent professors and the non-permanent ones, in addition, obviously, to all the various and heterogeneous world of technical- administration employees. The Christian Democrat Minister «listened with benevolence» the demands made by the national secretary of the union, Dr. Ernesto Vergara-Caffarelli, and promised that within a few months he would appoint a «ministerial commission to study and definitively formulate the requests themselves»³⁶. In fact, such a Commission, composed of the greatest exponents of all the categories of the university staff, was appointed in the month of December 1946 «with the task to study and submit to the Minister a plan of a new legal and economic organization of the academic staff in all its categories, from that of the subordinates to that of full professors»³⁷. In order to understand and meet the needs of the university world, the minister decided to appoint the Professor Achille Pellizzari, then Dean of the University of Genoa, former deputy to the Constituent Assembly and transitional chairman of the newly formed National Association of Permanent University Professors (ANPUR, hereafter)³⁸ a purely representative body of the university teachers, as exponent of the association within the Commission.

Precisely in view of the imminent beginning of the work of the Ministerial Committee, the magazine «L'Università italiana», in the first issue of 1947, thought to offer to it and, indirectly, to the minister Gonella, a broad reflection

³⁵ See G. Gonella, *L'Italia rinascerà dalla scuola*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, nn. 9-10, 1^o-15 August 1946, p. 1. This speech was published, wholly or in part, in periodicals of the time and can be found also today in Gonella, *Cinque anni al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, cit., vol. 2: *Libertà della Scuola e nuovi ordinamenti scolastici*, cit., pp. 117-118.

³⁶ See *Notiziario parlamentare e politico*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 11, 1^o September 1946, p. 5.

³⁷ See *Associazione nazionale dei professori universitari di ruolo*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 10, 15 May 1947, p. 5.

³⁸ On Achille Pellizzari, professor of Italian Literature at the University of Genoa (formerly also in the universities of Messina and Catania) and Dean of the University of Liguria from the 8th of March, 1946 to the 21st of March, 1948 (date of his death), active protagonist of the Italian Resistance and deputy of the Christian Democrats to the Constituent Assembly, see the recent volume A. Mastrodonato (ed.), *Vite ritrovate. Achille Pellizzari. Un educatore alla resistenza*, Parma, Istituto storico della Resistenza e dell'età contemporanea, 2015. Also his obituary is interesting, A. Capocaccia, *In memoria di Achille Pellizzari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 7, 15 April 1948, pp. 1-2.

on the difficulties of the higher education in Italy and especially the teaching staff's ones. With a very effective style, the writer of the article, Nicola Spano, first of all determined the most serious «illnesses» afflicting at that particular moment the Italian universities and which required immediate action:

The most serious illnesses of the Italian university are: malnutrition, due to a lack of economic food, dropsy due to an excess of students and the professors' depressive melancholia.

If for the first two diseases Spano foresaw long and difficult treatment, with a success that could not always be guaranteed, for the third, the one affecting the teachers' world, the healing seemed possible and requiring not too much time:

The treatment seems easier for the teachers: and if for their ills nothing is done, it means that there is a lack of good will. We have focused for years on side issues, while the central theme is always that of the creation of a well selected and spiritually serene class of teachers. [...] We would like - it is clear - to earn a lot of money and a lot of prestige. But if the state does not have the means to decently pay the teaching staff (and we believe that a real university consciousness is missing) it must be generous in granting at least a bit of 'prestige'.

According to the then administrative director of the University of Rome, trying to set the university professor in the compelling logic of the public employment and its bureaucracy was unthinkable and «inappropriate and offensive»:

We must remember that the university professor is not material for entomologists, can not be placed in any shelf nor framed in any bureaucratic 'organic table' (shame on us, that have soldiers and magistrates and clerks of 3rd and 2nd grade while no scientist, even if national glory, can never exceed the 4th. Marconi reached the rank of genius in the world but in the university only that of general manager; and a physicist like Fermi was awarded with the Nobel prize while he was something like a head of division). The university professors are distinguished by their name, humble or glorious as it is, not by their bureaucratic position.

And then:

A little bit of arithmetic: while everyone can begin to serve the state from the early youth, and after 40 years he rests, in misery, perhaps, but with the maximum of his pension, the university professor instead conquers the chair only in a mature age, so he rarely accomplishes the 40 years of service and sometimes does not even reach the 20 required for the minimum pension.

From these considerations and «for reasons not of prestige and privilege, but of elementary justice», Spano came to hope that the new year could bring the Italian professors «some small and not at all expensive gifts», that he summed up in some «conclusions- proposals» concerning mainly the possible redefinition of the rules on the retirement of teachers and the eventual agreement of a more suitable salary and pension:

a) The university professor who leaves the professorship at the age limit, must not have a pension reducing the salary reached until then, nor lose the academic benefits that are a complement of the salary itself; b) if, for an absurd uniformity with the employees, common rules are imposed on the professors, the calculation of the years of work should be initiated at least when they begin their careers (as lecturer or assistant, especially if voluntary) [...]; c) it is absurd to start the career with the 7th grade. The extraordinary (strange adjective which means less than ordinary) grade should be abolished with the usual useless relationships made by friends of faculty and always with a happy outcome. All the professors should possess only one grade, that of University Professor, and a single salary, without exams or grades or increments; and possibly it should enable them to live humanely at the beginning and at the end of their career [...]; d) after the retirement he could enjoy (as a right, and not as a humiliating concession), to continue his work and his research in the Institute to which he gave his best energies³⁹.

Nicola Spano's article aroused, predictably, the interest and sharing of many academics, especially the permanent ones, which asked the Roman magazine to house their fervent and interested speeches in the magazine⁴⁰. Meanwhile, on the 23rd of January 1947, in light of the teachers' repeated requests about the need for an economic and legal improvement and also as a result of some unrests developed within the Italian universities and which had the technical-administration staff as protagonist, the minister Gonella, during a meeting with some of the CGIL trade union and the National University Trade Union (SUN), assured the imminent beginning of the work of the Commission appointed in the previous month of December in order to review the numerous «claims about the legal and economic *status* of the staff»⁴¹.

During the first days of February, meanwhile, the ANPUR, in order to further accelerate the start of the work of the Ministerial Commission, sent to all the university professors a circular, also almost entirely reported on «L'Università italiana», in which the immediate purposes that the Association intended to pursue are reiterated and among these, of course, there was that relating to the possible beneficial change in the legal and economic *status* of professors with particular reference «to the modification of the current age limit and pension benefits», according to one of the following two patterns:

a) abrogation of the provisions of De Vecchi's law which lowered the limits from 75 to 70 years; or b) placement outside the charge of the permanent university professors at the age of 70 years, keeping for them the emoluments of their office, and the right to teach in split courses or additional courses, with no age limit, thus leaving free the charge for the winners of new competitions.

³⁹ See N. Spano, *Auguri per l'anno nuovo*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 1, 1° January 1947, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁰ See in particular the articles, very similar in content to that of Spano and largely in line with his thinking, published in «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 6, 15 March 1947, pp. 1-2 and vol. 4, n. 7, 1° April 1947, pp. 2-4.

⁴¹ On the meeting of the 23rd of January 1947 see *Attività del sindacato*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 3, 1° February 1947, p. 2.

Regardless of the solution that the ministry would choose about the particularly urgent problem of the age limit, and on which an opinion to all teachers of the Italian universities was asked⁴², the ANPUR hoped also that

any pensions for university professors could represent an appropriate remuneration for the costly problems of their long scientific training, and the dignity and needs of the social task they are entrusted with⁴³.

On the 12th of February, the Commission appointed by Gonella held its first meeting and the works lasted for about two months, creating «sometimes lively discussions», but always dominated by the common desire to successfully complete the difficult task given by the minister. As we read, in fact, on the pages of «L'Università italiana», «all the interested categories have shown understanding and reasonable flexibility, also renouncing to important claims for the common interest»⁴⁴. The report and the reform plan drawn up by the Commission were presented to the Minister of Education on the evening of the 4th of April and presented to Guido Gonella by Professor Pellizzari and the other members of the Commission «in a long and friendly conversation». With reference to the permanent professors, the main points unanimously accepted by the Commission concerned: the release of university teachers from all their hierarchical ordering of state officials and then the elimination of the various grades of careers then in use for public employment; the appointment of teachers exclusively through competition and by the judgment of commissions elected by the permanent teachers of the different subjects; the distinction of tenured professors in the two categories of «ordinary» and «extraordinary», and the staying in that category for a period of three years and «the following passage to the ordinary category, after a favorable opinion of the faculty and a committee of permanent professors, elected and composed like the selection boards of the competitions»; the significant increase of the monthly salary of a full professor up to 50,000 lire and up to 30,000 lire for the extraordinary ones (more than 20% higher than what earned until that moment)⁴⁵; and, finally, the placement out of the charge (and not in retirement, as provided by the above mentioned Law named De Vecchi in 1935) of university professors at the age

⁴² On the issue of university professors' retirement many had expressed their opinion in the previous months while others would do the same in the days following the circular issued by ANPUR. See: E. Puxeddu, *Limiti di età e ampliamento dei ruoli dei docenti universitari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 9, 1° May 1947, p. 1 and *Sui limiti di età dei professori universitari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 11, 1° June 1947, pp. 1-3.

⁴³ See *Associazione nazionale professori universitari di ruolo*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 5, 1° March 1947, p. 4.

⁴⁴ See *Associazione nazionale professori universitari di ruolo*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 10, 15 May 1947, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁵ These figures would be object of improvement or economic deterioration on the basis of the decisions that the state would have taken in the future with regard to state officials.

of 70, without any change in their economic treatment but the requirement for teachers to continue «to give their didactic work, both in split or complementary courses and in partial courses, in compliance with the opportunities of the school and the deliberations of the respective faculties». In this way, in the teachers' opinion, young people who hoped to enter the academic world would have had the road open and, at the same time, the Stet and the Science would not be deprived of the priceless contribution that those men arrived at the highest level of preparation and experience can still validly give to the school and the country»⁴⁶. In exchange for the eventual satisfaction of these demands, the teachers would have renounced to all the study allowances.

The work of the Commission and especially the proposals it advanced were profusely and lively discussed during the first National Congress of the ANPUR, held at the Faculty of Arts, at the University of Rome on the 9th and 10th June 1947 and which was attended by about 800 university professors of the universities of Bari, Bologna, Cagliari, Camerino, Catania, Ferrara, Florence, Genoa, Macerata, Messina, Milan, Modena, Naples, Palermo, Parma, Perugia, Pisa, Sassari, Siena, Turin, Trieste and Venice. The meeting, that was recorded on the columns of «L'Università italiana»⁴⁷ was attended by the Minister of Agriculture Antonio Segni and the owner of Minerva Guido Gonella. This latter, in his greeting speech, after having underlined that the reform plan presented by the Commission had been examining by the offices concerned and having reiterated the urgent need for an improvement of the legal and economic *status* of the teaching staff, expressed some doubts about the demands made by the Italian academic world.

First of all, Gonella was very hesitant about the existence of financial resources capable of satisfying the hypothesis of «the release from the hierarchical ordering of teachers» and «of the distinction of tenured professors in two categories», as well as on the sustainability of this system from the bureaucratic and administrative point of view; secondly he hoped to be able to postpone any possible change about the university professors' age of retirement or placement out of the charge and their possible taking charge of teaching tasks, to the creation of a broader reform also concerning other kinds of schools:

Given that, undoubtedly, we can not feel any fetishism for grades – we can read on the report of Gonella's speech- the Minister noted that predictably the proposal would meet strong resistance from the Ministry of the Treasury, which believes that it is inappropriate to

⁴⁶ See *Associazione nazionale professori universitari di ruolo*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 10, 15 May 1947, p. 5. The dispensation from these academic obligations would be granted to teachers out of charge for the age limit «only for proven inability, due to health reasons».

⁴⁷ For a detailed reconstruction of the two days in Rome and especially for a precise and faithful summary of the activities of the different participants see *Il Primo Congresso Nazionale dell'Associazione dei Professori Universitari di Ruolo*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, nn. 12-13, 1° July 1947, pp. 1-6.

modify the hierarchical organization system of 1923, since it is an easy system for comparing grades and careers. [...] On the issue of the retirement of teachers, whose complexity is clear to everyone, considering the different needs which is fair and right to balance, the Minister noted, again, that the definition of the issue can not be seen but in relation to what will be decided about the teachers of other school orders⁴⁸.

The topic of teachers' retirement or their placement out of charge was debated over the months following the ANPUR Congress⁴⁹, because, once the emergency state linked to the war was finished, which in the previous two years had prompted the government to adopt derogating measures⁵⁰, on the 1st of November 1947, in compliance with the existing and remembered law n. 565 of 1935 by De Vecchi, there would be the mandatory retirement of those teachers who had passed or reached 70 years of age. In September, with the aim to clarify some delicate and controversial issues, the Commission instituted by Gonella in the fall of 1946 and that, as mentioned, had already presented on the 4th of April 1947 its reform project about the new economic and legal treatment given to university professors, returned to meet in an extraordinary session. The minister's proposals were not different in the content from what already decided in the previous spring, except for a request for a further increase in the amount to be paid each month to the permanent teachers (60,000 lire for the ordinary and 40,000 for the extraordinary one). As established in a circular spread by the ANPUR to its members and reported almost entirely on «L'Università italiana», shortly thereafter official organ of the Association, the art. 6 of the Commission's plan was that the professors, at least in their 70 years of age, were placed out of their charge and not at rest. In this position, they would «fully preserve their academic rights and their salaries» and would be required to «continue to benefit of their teaching and scientific activities [...] while maintaining the direction of scientific institutes»⁵¹.

On the 26th of October, 1947, finally, the legislator established some points on the issue of professors' retirement. By legislative decree of the Provisional Head of State n. 1251, in fact, containing *Disposizioni per il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori universitari che hanno raggiunto i limiti di età*⁵² (Provisions

⁴⁸ *Il discorso del Ministro, ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁹ See in this sense G. Stoppoloni, *Sui limiti di età dei professori ordinari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 15, 30 August 1947, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁰ In November 1946, for example, the Council of Ministers, with reference to the state of emergency related to the war, and in order not to simultaneously depriving the Italian universities of 88 full professors, decided to extend until the 1st of November 1947 the retirement of the professors who had at least 70 years. See, in this sense: E. Vergara-Caffarelli, *Sul limite d'età dei professori universitari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 16 (trade union appendix), 15 November 1946, p. 4 and «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 3, n. 17, 1^o December 1946, p. 2.

⁵¹ See *Associazione nazionale dei professori universitari di ruolo*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 17, 1^o October 1947, pp. 1-2.

⁵² D. Lgs. C.P.S. 26 October 1947, n. 1251, *Disposizioni per il collocamento fuori ruolo dei*

for the placement outside the role of university professors who have reached the age limit), it was decided that after the age of 70 the university professors acquired «the title of emeritus until the end of the academic year during which they are having their 75th birthday», when in fact they were finally retired. In this way, officially creating the category of emeritus/out of charge, the retirement at the age of 70 established during the fascist era was abolished and brought to 75 years as previously, and the emeritus professors were allowed to preserve the academic prerogatives typical of the condition of professors, with the full economic treatment available for it. The teachers, for their part, were required to carry out scientific and educational activities, in consideration of the availability of institutions and means, especially in relation to the needs of experimental research. At the same time, however, «the professorships and the related charges [were] considered vacant, pursuant to and for the purposes of the provisions in force»⁵³ and this would have allowed the entry of «fresh forces» within the university teaching world.

The Minister of Education Guido Gonella, attending the Conference of university and high school Directors, held on the 12th and 13th November 1947 in Rome with «the aim of analyzing the most urgent issues at this time in the university life»⁵⁴, judged fully satisfactory the measure that, reconciling the needs of those (teachers in charge) who want to «establish the extreme limit for teachers at 70 years» and of those who (the full professors) «hope for it at 75», succeeded in obtaining

the substantial benefit of increasing the positions, creating a broad category of emeritus, and, while extending the age to 75 years old, does not arise difficulties for young people who have the opportunity to aspire to a university chair⁵⁵.

In fact, the legislative decree approved in October of 1947, an intermediate solution and compromise between the opposing demands advanced by two very distant groups of teachers, hid some inherent weakness, and was intended to generate some controversies. The third sentence of the first paragraph of art. 1 of that legislative measure, in fact, stated that, «in exceptional cases, after the proposal of the Faculty and the compliant advice of the Superior Council of Education, expressed with a majority of two thirds of its members, the minister will allow that the professor placed out role is not replaced in the teaching and direction of his department»⁵⁶. In this way, the people in the so-called «exceptional

professori universitari che hanno raggiunto i limiti di età, published on the O.J. on the 22nd of November 1947, n. 269, and then ratified with the law 4 July 1950, n. 498.

⁵³ See *Collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori che hanno raggiunto i limiti di età*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 20, 1° December 1947, p. 1.

⁵⁴ See *I Convegno dei Rettori delle Università e dei Direttori di Istituti Superiori*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 20, 1° December 1947, p. 1.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵⁶ See *Collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori che hanno raggiunto i limiti di età*, cit.

cases» would have maintained their teaching, without being «moved on related subjects», thus preventing that their professorship was declared vacant. The real risk was therefore to encourage very arbitrary situations, and especially to see the uncontrollable proliferation of the number of «exceptional cases», not always related to the evaluation of the teacher's actual value, but following the logic of agreements and alliances of the powers within the Italian university.

In order to denounce this danger, the co-director of «L'Università italiana», Nicola Spano, published a controversial and irreverent contribution on the 15th of December, 1947 inviting the Italian academics to think seriously about what was happening and to express their own opinions on the legal provision. He offered an almost grotesque image of the Italian university: a University that appeared in those days exclusively concerned with the struggle among teachers, among those who, in the light of the new ministerial regulations, intended to keep the chair and those who, conversely, wanted to conquer their «place of prestige».

There is no doubt: the ones who do not want to be more candid than Candido, already see a new university sport: the tug of war. On one side the lecturers, on the other the emeritus: the former to obtain, the latter to keep the largest number of teaching positions. [...] The gods of Olympus, who had the gift of the eternal youth, never had the sense of proportion; and why demand balance, objectivity, selflessness, respect for the proportions, from those *boni viri* that make up the councils and academic assemblies? We speak, therefore, of human affairs.

Spano, in particular, attacked the expression «exceptional cases» used by the legislative decree, guilty of having created a dangerous gap in the university world and almost paradoxical situations not easy to be solved:

Is it possible for the legislator and psychologist more than for the ingenuous philologist, better determine this concept of 'exceptional'? The lecturers say: The faculties and the Higher Council, for fellowship or to avoid trouble, will appoint *todos caballeros*; and we still remain ... only lecturers. The old professors, from their part, know well that the faculty colleagues will all be absolutely benevolent, even in secret ballots, because interested in trying a new practice [...]. The doubts, for them, however, begin when they start thinking of this blessed (so to speak) High Council that [...], due to its academic-political-bureaucratic-trade union structure, is going to work with the wisdom of a good Commission of competitions and with the objectivity of an assembly of magistrates?

And then:

Young people to be called in a faculty, usually recommend to the 'Dear revered Master': now it is the 'old master' to turn to the 'young and dear colleague' to be preserved in the direction of his own institute and of his teaching. [...] But who will be pleased to bear or suffer comparisons with colleagues? To do, in the old age, new competitions? To attempt races or perhaps lotteries? To question, his (real or perceived), prestige of seventy-years-old professor?⁵⁷

⁵⁷ See N. Spano, *Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori al settantesimo anno di età. Alcune domande*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 4, n. 21, 15

Spano's article moved the Italian teaching body deeply. Within a few weeks the Roman editorial office of «L'Università italiana» received the heartfelt speeches of thirty academics, mainly ordinary, whose contributions were published in full on the periodical issues from January to April 1948 in what turned into a real *Investigative Report* promoted by the magazine⁵⁸. The majority of the reflections recognized, as emphasized by Gennaro Mondaini, Professor of Economic History at the Ateneo of Rome, «the legislator's nobility of intentions towards the category»⁵⁹ in order to satisfy, as far as possible and especially from the economic point of view, the academics' requests, through the wise and responsible work of the Commission established by Gonella at the end of 1946.

At the same time, however, it became clear that the solution adopted, «that does not fully solve all the problems»⁶⁰, was a compromise mainly due to «political, economic and psychological reasons»⁶¹, with all the consequences, even the fearsome ones, that this might involve. Hence, the reservations and the proposed amendment advanced by the teachers who participated to the *Investigative Report* promoted by «L'Università italiana» that were pressing and far superior «to the pleasure for the important result of the extension of the years of teaching and of the increased number of professorships»⁶². A good number of participants strongly criticized the new «category» of the emeritus, defined by Ettore Rossi, professor of Turkish language and literature at the University of Rome, a «sad substitute of the lecturer»⁶³ or in the words of the Professor Gino Cassinis, director of the Milanese Polytechnic,

December 1947, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁸ The following teachers participated to the investigative inquiry: Guido De Ruggiero, Gino Cassinis, Gaetano Boschi, Giuseppe Lugli, Arnaldo Volpicelli (vol. 5, n. 1, 15 January 1948); Michele Mitolo, Francesco Gabrieli, Ettore Rossi, Raffaele Paolucci (vol. 5, n. 2, 31 January 1948); Gaetano Martino, Giuseppe Ugo Papi, Francesco Piccolo, Mario Praz (vol. 5, n. 3, 15 February 1948); Raffaele Pettazzoni, Luigi Russo, Giacomo Cavallucci, Widar Cesarini Sforza (vol. 5, n. 4, 29 February 1948); Luigi Galvani, Francesco Tricomi, Arrigo Colarizzi, Alessandro Della Seta, Giovanni Favilli, Paolo Toschi, Ernesto Vergara-Caffarelli (national secretary of SUN), Rodolfo Margaria, Gennaro Mondaini (vol. 5, n. 5, 15 March 1948); Italo Simon, Giorgio Pasquali, Giulio Cotronei, Paolo Lamanna (vol. 5, n. 6, 31 March 1948); Corradino Mineo, Fabrizio Cortesi, Ettore Paratore, Oddone Fantini (vol. 5, n. 7, 15 April 1948); Margherita Piazzolla Beloch, Guido Sensini (vol. 5, n. 8, 30 April 1948).

⁵⁹ See *Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori. Hanno risposto alla nostra inchiesta*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 5, 15 March 1948, pp. 56-60 (quot. on p. 59).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ See *Concludendo. Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 9, 15 May 1948, pp. 111-112 (quot. on p. 111).

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁶³ See *Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori. Hanno risposto alla nostra inchiesta*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 2, 31 January 1948, pp. 15-17 (quot. on p. 17).

hybrid figure, which has all the prerogatives of the permanent professor role, but it is not a professor. Or at least, reaching the age of 70, they lose the knowledge and expertise in the discipline they taught for all their lives and become excellent teachers of things that possibly they had never dealt with⁶⁴.

This aspect of «repositioning the teacher on related subjects» was, according to prof. Luigi Russo, director of the Scuola Normale of Pisa, one of the most negative points of «a very complex law which wanted to create uncertainty and perplexity, [...] prolonging the academic survival of the seventy-years-old teachers with teaching roles on related subjects»:

What a humiliation was – Russo said – the need to change the subject, and barter their own with a secondary and marginal one, only to pretend to continue to be part of an academic body⁶⁵!

To this «essential and deplorable defect» of giving marginal roles to the emeritus to the point, as Mario Praz, professor of English language and literature at the University of Rome, said, of assimilating them to «a racehorse that, being no longer good in the field, is put to pull the car, passing from the category of the steeds to that of the hacks»⁶⁶, was also added the possibility provided by law to keep the professors “out of charge” in “their charge” in «exceptional cases». The debate among teachers became more lively precisely on this aspect, touching the «more sharp points»⁶⁷. In fact, if some people came to argue that the exceptional nature should be allowed for everybody or for no one, even proposing to abolish it (as in the case of the aforementioned Cassinis or of the prof. Francesco Tricomi, professor of mathematical analysis to the University of Turin), some other people insisted on the idea, also welcomed by the majority of the councils of faculties, to consider it an «exceptionality of fact» and not «of person» and that the case and not the professor should be considered exceptional. As the professors Arrigo Colarizzi, Alessandro Dalla Seta and Giovanni Favilli, ordinary at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Modena, stated in their intervention, in fact,

⁶⁴ See *Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori. Risposte alla nostra inchiesta*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 1, 15 January 1948, p. 2.

⁶⁵ See *Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori. Hanno risposto alla nostra inchiesta*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 4, 29 February 1948, pp. 47-48 (quot. on p. 47).

⁶⁶ See *Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori. Hanno risposto alla nostra inchiesta*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 3, 15 February 1948, p. 36.

⁶⁷ See *Concludendo. Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori*, cit., p. 112.

There should be no exceptional reasons other than those determined by the lack of other experts in the subject, which professorship would be vacant with their placement out of charge; or the need not to interrupt investigations, outside the normal activities of a teacher and of supreme national interest. However, any consideration for personal merits should always be kept out of the interpretation of the law⁶⁸.

According to Ernesto Vergara-Caffarelli, national secretary of the National University Trade Union participating in the *Investigative Report* also promoted by Spano, «the guiding principle» of the law and the explanatory circular, «was that the proposal of exceptional nature should be made only in very rare cases», but, as occurred in Italy other times, «this had not happened»⁶⁹. Thus, in effect, by including in the law the formula «exceptional cases», the legislator allowed that, as in Francesco Gabrieli's opinion, professor of Arabic language and literature in Rome, «the spirit of the law was eluded, returning to block almost all those chairs that, with the provision in question, should become free», which really was one of the main objectives to be achieved with the legislative provision. The linguist of the Capitoline university, in closing his speech, could probably better than others offer a very effective picture of the immediate effects that the new measure, «while fair and provident for the economic side», had created on other aspects:

The precipitous urgency of their resolutions – Gabrieli said – prevented the universities to agree on uniform standards of behaviour in the various cases, thus creating from university to university embarrassing and perhaps unfair differences of assessments, towards some colleagues, certainly no less deserving of the 'exceptional' treatment, compared to those that have benefited of it. The ministry, as usual, after having opened the door of the exception to the law, recommends its very careful use; which is at least naïve, from those who know the weak human clay⁷⁰.

Certainly, regardless of the existing critical and undeniable problems highlighted by the investigation carried out by «L'Università italiana»⁷¹, the legislative measure adopted in the autumn of 1947, had confirmed an interest from the government to the issues raised by the Italian academic world. The ANPUR, relying on this and especially on the support of the then Minister of

⁶⁸ See *Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori. Hanno risposto alla nostra inchiesta*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 5, 15 March 1948, pp. 56-60 (quot. on p. 58).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ See *Il collocamento fuori ruolo dei professori. Hanno risposto alla nostra inchiesta*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 2, 31 January 1948, pp. 15-17 (quot. on p. 17).

⁷¹ Prof. Arnaldo De Valles, Professor of Administrative Law, dealt with this same, after a few months, in an interesting article entitled *Divergenze d'interessi fra professori universitari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, nn. 17-18, 15-30 September 1948, pp. 176-178.

the Treasury Gustavo Del Vecchio⁷², longstanding university professor very sensitive to his colleagues' requests, did not stop to conduct its battles in order to achieve further improvements in the legal and economic condition of the category it represented. Just in the same months of the *Investigative Report*, in fact, the Association gathered in various occasions. On the 10th and 11th of February 1948, in fact, the Governing Council of the ANPUR, convened in Rome under the direction of the Vice President Antonio Capocaccia⁷³, communicated to the other members of the Council that at the beginning of the year, in extraordinary session, the Ministerial Commission established in December 1946 for the legal and economic reform of the university staff had gathered. That commission had «revised» the reform scheme already submitted to the Ministry in April 1947, and proposed again to Gonella⁷⁴ on the 2nd of February, 1948, with some modifications concerning mainly the recent legislative provision on teachers out of charge (in particular, the elimination of the so much debated third sentence of the first paragraph of the art. 1 was requested, about the so-called teachers considered «exceptional cases» and who can keep their chair) and the need for a substantial shortening of the academic career. In the letter associated with the new scheme of the bill, which concerned all the categories of the university staff, from professors to the subordinate and nursing staff (for medical schools)⁷⁵, the Commission, contacting the owner of the Minerva, thanked him for the helpfulness and attention shown towards the university teaching staff but hoped an extra effort:

This legal framework would satisfy the aspirations of all the categories of the university staff; and, creating a stable and decent organization for the people, would lay the first and most important foundations of that great university reform that will be promptly implemented

⁷² Gustavo Del Vecchio, university professor, Italian economist and politician, taught at the National Institute of Economic and Commercial Sciences of Trieste (1920-26), and later at the University of Bologna (1926-1938 and 1945-48); at Bocconi in Milan (1930-38) and in Rome (1948-58). He was Minister of the Treasury from the 6th of June, 1947 to 22nd of May, 1948 under the IV De Gasperi government. On him see D. Giva, *Del Vecchio, Gustavo*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1990, vol. 38, pp. 397-402.

⁷³ The president of the ANPUR, Achille Pellizzari, did not participate to the Governing Council for serious health reasons (he then died on the 21st of March, 1948).

⁷⁴ See *La riunione del Consiglio direttivo dell'Associazione Nazionale Professori Universitari di Ruolo*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 4, 29 February 1948, pp. 49-50. In this issue of the magazine the whole scheme of reform proposed by the Commission to Gonella and entitled *Nuovo stato giuridico ed economico del personale universitario* is reproduced entirely, in the appendix.

⁷⁵ This reform plan was severely criticized, always on the pages of «L'Università italiana», by prof. Bruno Lavagnini, professor of Greek literature at the University of Palermo, who defined it «extremely disappointing», almost «a conglomerate formed by the juxtaposition of the different categories' desires, almost to satisfy the individual requests, regardless of the structural changes made necessary by the experience and the new democratic spirit that must replace the authoritarian spirit of the previous legislation» (see B. Lavagnini, *Postille a un progetto*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 7, 15 April 1948, pp. 85-87 (quot. on p. 85).

in the interest of science and school. So, this Commission is confident that the Minister Gonella, so generously attentive of the problems of high culture, will be so kind to present it promptly to the Government and the Constituent Assembly for its approval, thus tying his name to an essential measure for the Italian University⁷⁶.

At the same Roman meeting, the Governing Council of the ANPUR also gave news of a «recent» provision of law, «not yet fully defined in details, regarding the shortening of careers and the establishment of the third grade»⁷⁷, which would shorten the teachers' academic path allowing a small number of university professors, selected according to the criterion of seniority («we can not know if in terms of length of the service or of age»)⁷⁸, to reach the «third grade», until that moment precluded to the university professors' career. The reference was to the legislative decree 23rd March 1948, n. 265⁷⁹, approved by the Council of Ministers by a resolution of 17th March 1948, which established the abbreviation of the teachers' permanence in the sixth and fifth grades, respectively, to five and four years. Thus, while until then the tenured professor, becoming ordinary after the prescribed three years in which he was extraordinary arrived at the highest level in his career – the fourth – after fifteen years, under the new provision would instead be able to reach it after nine years.

With the above-mentioned decree, moreover, the third grade was «opened» in part also to university teachers, by establishing de facto eighty positions (for this reason it was called «third grade with closed positions»), to be appointed for three quarters to permanent teachers and the remainder to teachers already out of position⁸⁰.

On the 8th of April, the Council of Ministers approved a new legislative decree that would later be issued on the 7th of May, 1948⁸¹, by which, in light of the numerous requests received by ANPUR in the previous months, the academics' economic condition was further improved. This legislative measure, in fact, restored an academic payment for university professors of 120,000 lire for extraordinary ones and 180,000 lire for ordinary ones; however, they were

⁷⁶ See A. Pellizzari, *A.S.E. On. Guido Gonella*, in *Nuovo stato giuridico ed economico del personale universitario*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 4, 29 February 1948, appendix, p. 1.

⁷⁷ See *La riunione del Consiglio direttivo dell'Associazione Nazionale Professori Universitari di Ruolo*, cit., p. 49.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ D. Lgs. 23 March 1948, n. 265, *Integrazione delle norme sullo stato giuridico ed economico del professori universitari*, Published on the O.J. on the 16th of April 1948, n. 90.

⁸⁰ The establishment of the third grade with closed positions was subject to severe criticism by the aforementioned prof. Virgilio Polara in *Breve commento al convegno dell'A.N.P.U.R.*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 6, 31 March 1948, pp. 70-71.

⁸¹ D. Lgs. 7 May 1948, n. 1003, *Indennità accademica ai professori universitari ed indennità di carica ai rettori delle Università e degli Istituti di istruzione universitaria*, published on O.J. 31st of July 1948, n. 176.

not calculable to the pension purposes⁸². Such academic payment would also be given to professors out of position pursuant to the Legislative Decree of the Provisional Head of State of the 26th of October 1947, n. 1251. A significant part, therefore, of the requests of the Italian academic world, whose cause was strongly supported on the pages of «L'Università italiana» since its first issue, seemed to have been satisfied with these three legislative decrees that the minister Gonella had personally advocated and that, in fact, had established a significant improvement in the career and in the economic condition of the Italian academics. To confirm this, in view of the upcoming Second National Congress of the ANPUR to be held in Rome from the 30th of May to the 1st of June 1948⁸³, an article was published on the pages of the university magazine whose direction had meanwhile passed to Nicola Spano⁸⁴. It was signed by prof. Guglielmo Nocera, professor of Roman law at Perugia, who, while emphasizing «all the criticism, complaints and the reasons for unhappiness that the individual measures have aroused», urged his colleagues to reflect on the fact that the recent laws have actually increased the university teachers' role and prestige:

We are aware of the fact that [...] all are convinced that the new teachers' legal and economic *status* is the solution to all the university problems and that the solution of these problems results in a higher national advantage; that the distinction, which we claim more than any other in the State, is not ambition to have a privilege, but it is an objective priority of function. Everyone must know that we do not ask for something to improve our material standard of living [...] but to exercise our function of researchers and teachers with spiritual fullness and for the public good⁸⁵.

Nicola Spano himself, reviewing the situation of the academic year 1947-1948, praised the university teacher' purposeful and determined attitude but also to the «concrete» answer arrived from the ministry, an answer that also let us hope for a future perspective:

The evaluation of a school year – we can read on the number of the 31st of December, 1948 of «L'Università italiana» – unlike the financial one, is always uncertain and elastic as an

⁸² The legislative measure also included a charge compensation for the university and high education deans of 30,000 lire.

⁸³ On the contents of the congress see the large report in *Il Secondo Congresso Nazionale dell'A.N.P.U.R.*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 11, 15 June 1948, pp. 133-138; but also Nicola Spano's interesting article, *Di chi la colpa?*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 12, 30 June 1948, pp. 149-151.

⁸⁴ Nicola Spano is editor in chief of «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie» from n. 5 of 15 March 1948, following the resignation of Professor Giuseppe Caronia from his charge of Dean of the Capitoline university as well as editor of the magazine. His successor, prof. Giuseppe Cardinali, in the meeting of the Academic Senate of the 11th of June 1948 showed the decision to be removed, like its predecessor, from his charge of director of the magazine. In this regard see Fois *Nicola Spano. Vita e opere di un funzionario universitario*, cit.

⁸⁵ See G. Nocera, *Bilancio dell'A.N.P.U.R.*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 9, 15 May 1948, p. 110.

examination of conscience, also because full of personal and political interference. [...] Certainly we can affirm that the 1947-1948, was, despite all the human weaknesses and errors, a year full of works and promises, all devoted to plough and sow with passion a field by its nature full of thorns and brambles, and yet always full of beautiful flowers and tasty fruits.

In particular, on the achievements of the Italian academic world, Spano, who fought a lot of battles «in the university and for the university», did not seem to have doubts: the professors had received help and support from Minerva, and if united and cohesive, in the coming years they could increase the size of these «privileges».

The professors have obtained some advantages. Now they can come to the fourth grade in 12 years, instead of 18, as in the past. They got an academic payment of L. 180,000, if ordinary, and of L. 120,000, if extraordinary [...], and, fact of considerable importance for its moral significance, 80 positions of III grade have been established, 20 of which are for those out of their charge. It's not much; but they are still considerable advantages, and others will be prepared, and much larger, if the professors are conciliatory, without all those medieval *associative sinkholes*. Everything depends on their organizational capacity⁸⁶.

Teachers, therefore, have the duty to insist in their demands, supported by the minister Gonella's work that, contrary to the common way of thinking and acting of a good part of the Italian political class, had demonstrated his firm belief in the role of culture and scientific research as drivers of the revival of the country.

We will not stop [...] because we have really understood that the money, the billions, are the *humus* and oxygen even to the exalted sciences and the divine art. And, for this, we are certain that Mr. Gonella will multiply his efforts and will give no rest to his colleagues of the Treasury, reminding – Solar truth, which has become banal – that Italy can not compete with other nations if not in the arts and sciences⁸⁷.

Spano's reflection anticipated what in the following months would have occurred in the field of education and in which he would be a protagonist. At the end of April 1949, in fact, the *Inchiesta per la riforma della scuola italiana* (Inquiry for the Italian School Reform) promoted by Guido Gonella in the previous year⁸⁸ was to end and, after less than three months after the

⁸⁶ See N. Spano, *Bilancio dell'anno 1947-48*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 5, n. 24, 31 December 1948, pp. 221-222.

⁸⁷ See N. Spano, *Problemi finanziari*, «L'Università italiana. Quindicinale di informazioni universitarie», vol. 6, n. 1, 15 January 1949, p. 1.

⁸⁸ For a framework of the Inquiry promoted by Gonella and for an assessment of its conclusions see in particular Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, cit., pp. 243-248; G. Chiosso, *Motivi pedagogici e politici nei lavori dell'inchiesta Gonella (1947-1949)*, «Pedagogia e Vita», vol. 45 (1983-1984), n. 3, pp. 295-321; L. Pazzaglia, *Ideologie e scuola fra ricostruzione e sviluppo (1946-1958)*, in *Chiesa e progetto educativo nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra (1945-1958)*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1988, pp. 495-543; Sani, *La politica scolastica del Centro-Sinistra (1962-1968)*, cit., pp. 21-38. On the tasks and objectives of the Commission established to promote this inquiry see in particular G. Gonella, *L'Inchiesta nazionale sulla*

conclusion of the works, the owner of the Minerva would have established a new *Commission* charged to develop, in the light of the results of the Inquiry, a draft of the general reorganization of schools and universities⁸⁹. Once the works began in July 1949, the *Commission*, chaired by the Minister, would present in August a temporary scheme entitled *Lineamenti di riforma della scuola* (Outlines of school reform), of which two drafts were produced, the last of which provided the basis for the next report of the 19th of December 1949 presented by the Minister Gonella to the Board of Education on the problems of the school reform⁹⁰.

The scheme of the reform was discussed by the Board between January and March 1950, in the course of 98 sessions, and then returned to the Ministerial *Commission* that, by the end of August 1950, developed a more complex and detailed text, made up of 286 articles, in which all the aspects and issues concerning the reorganization of education were debated⁹¹. However, Gonella, convinced that a so broad bill could meet serious difficulties, - meanwhile he had become Secretary of DC while maintaining the ministry of Education⁹² -, urged the *Commission* to draw up a shorter and more concise text, in which only the general norms of the reform were specified. The new bill, prepared between December 1950 and the spring of 1951, n. 2100, consisted of only 56 articles divided into 13 titles, and was discussed and approved by the Council of Ministers on the 18th of June, 1951 and subsequently submitted to the Chamber of Deputies on the 13th of July, 1951 under the title *Norme generali sull'istruzione* (General education norms)⁹³. As it is known, the project

riforma della scuola, «La Riforma della scuola», vol. 1, n. 1 (November 1947), pp. 3-6; *Schemi di questionari per l'inchiesta sulla riforma della scuola elaborati dalle competenti sottocommissioni*, «La Riforma della scuola», vol. 2, n. 2 (March 1948), pp. 40-45. On the results of the inquiry see also *L'Inchiesta nazionale per la riforma della scuola (1947-1949)*, «La Riforma della scuola», vol. 3 (1949), n. 16 (supplement to the number of June 1949). The magazine «La riforma della scuola» is a valuable tool to get an idea of the work of the *Commission*. Between 1947 and 1949, 16 installments were published with the addition of a substantial supplement to number of June 1949 in which the account of the activities of the Commission and of the subcommittees, the general reports and the results of the investigation were reported.

⁸⁹ On the work and objectives of the new Commission see in particular: G. Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro sinistra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1988, pp. 52-88; Pazzaglia, *Ideologie e scuola fra ricostruzione e sviluppo (1946-1958)*, cit., pp. 506-513; Sani, *La politica scolastica del Centro-Sinistra (1962-1968)*, cit., pp. 29-38.

⁹⁰ The two drafts of the *Lineamenti*, both published with the caption *schema provvisorio e riservato*, were dated back to 10th and 28th August 1949.

⁹¹ See Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro sinistra*, cit., pp. 71-77.

⁹² In this regard, Giorgio Chiosso underlined that «what was feared by the reform opponents as a strong position to accelerate the approval of the project, however, revealed to cause its slowing down due to the increasing commitment of the Minister» (*ibid.*, p. 71).

⁹³ D.D.L. n. 2100, *Norme generali sull'istruzione*. For the specific contents of introductory relation and the 56 articles forming the D.D.L. n. 2100 see G. Gonella, *Relazione al progetto di riforma e Testo del disegno di legge di riforma*, in Id. *Cinque anni al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, cit., vol. 1: *La rinascita della Scuola dopo la seconda guerra mondiale*, cit., pp. 233-350.

did not succeed, «even to be discussed and was forgotten, at the end of the legislature»⁹⁴. Despite the substantial amount of preparatory work, therefore, the bill was shelved like many others, both for the climate of ideological clash characterizing the relations between political forces but also for the many financial reservations expressed by the Ministry of the Treasury⁹⁵, no longer ruled by Gustavo Del Vecchio but from the stricter Giuseppe Pella, on whom Gonella, in the previous months, had exerted pressure with the dual objective of meeting the growing needs of the university world and to see finally recognized the prominent role of education and culture in the Italian society.

⁹⁴ See L. Pazzaglia, *La politica scolastica del Centro-Sinistra*, in L. Pazzaglia, R. Sani (edd.), *Scuola e società nell'Italia unita. Dalla Legge Casati al Centro-Sinistra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2001, pp. 481-495 (quot. on p. 481).

⁹⁵ On the failure of the D.D.L. n. 2100 see also Pazzaglia, *Ideologie e scuola fra ricostruzione e sviluppo (1946-1958)*, cit., pp. 508-513 and Sani, *La politica scolastica del Centro-Sinistra (1962-1968)*, cit., pp. 29-38.

Die pädagogischen Bewegungen der «Neuen Erziehung» und die Universitätspädagogik in Ungarn (1920-1945)

András Németh
Research Centre on Historical,
Theoretical and Comparative Education
Eötvös Loránd University
Budapest (Hungary)
nemeth.andras@ppk.elte.hu

Connections between the «new education movement» and academic pedagogy in Hungary (1920-1945)

ABSTRACT: In the development of the educational sciences in Central Europa can be more phases distinguished. The phase, which is the focus of the present contribution, began around 1880 and continued into the twentieth century. In this period an educational movement (progressive education, experimental pedagogy, child study) arose that centered on the empirical paradigms of research was aimed towards renewal of the school and teacher education. The next time, in first half of the twentieth century is the phase of lasting institutionalization of the educational sciences, which in most places began already in the first half of the twentieth century. Here the «new education movement» – called reform pedagogy in Germany – played a role. The paper will be shown that in this periods of the development of the discipline, also in Hungary a complex relationship developed between educational reform movements and the educational sciences. It will be shown the development of pedagogy is described briefly within the context in which complex connections between «new education» and academic pedagogy in Hungary developed. They have three models, whereby the institutionalization of reform pedagogy in Hungary are distinguished.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Educational sciences; Development of the discipline; Progressive education; Child study; Educational reforms; Hungary; XXth Century.

Einleitung

Anhand der bisherigen Arbeiten kann man in der Entwicklung der Erziehungswissenschaft in Mitteleuropa drei Phasen unterscheiden. In die erste

Phase, die in den einzelnen Ländern unterschiedlichen chronologischen Abläufen folgten, fällt noch die institutionelle Herausbildung der damals verstandenen Pädagogik als disziplinäres Feld. Diese Entwicklung hat die stärkste Dynamik im letzten Drittel des 19. Jahrhunderts. Sie annahm im Anschluss an die allgemeine Institutionalisierung der Lehrerbildung zwei sich unterscheidende Formen. Einerseits kam es zu einer breit angelegten Theoriebildung in Bezug auf die pädagogische Praxis, deren Höhepunkt in der Herbartianismus etabliert. Andererseits wurden dazu Vorlesungen eingeführt und Lehrstühle oft mit enger Beziehung zur Philosophie eingerichtet, die auf die Pädagogik bezogen und die akademischen Voraussetzungen für die Disziplin darstellten. Die zweite Phase, die uns diesem Beitrag hauptsächlich beschäftigt, begann um 1880 und dauerte bis die ersten Jahrzehnte des 20. Jahrhunderts. In dieser Zeitraum entstand eine pädagogische Bewegung in deren Zentrum die empirischen Paradigmen der Forschung in den Sozialwissenschaften, in erster Linie in Psychologie stand. Diese in erster Linie im Kreis der Lehrkräfte von Grundschulpraxis der populären Bewegung charakterisierte eine starke Dynamik, die sich vor allem zur Erneuerung der Schule und der Lehrerbildung orientierte. Aber die verschiedenen Richtlinien der Bewegung (Reformpädagogik, experimentelle Pädagogik, Pädologie) konnten sich nicht immer an den Universitäten einrichten, oft wurden die empirische Ansätze aufgegeben oder an den Rand gedrängt. Die dritte Phase entspricht der dauerhaften Institutionalisierung der Erziehungswissenschaft, die am meisten Orten bereits in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts einsetzte und in der die Reformpädagogik eine Rolle spielte¹.

Der vorliegende Beitrag verfolgt zwei Ziele: es geht einerseits darum zu zeigen, dass auch in Ungarn in der zweiten und dritten Periode ein komplexes Verhältnis zwischen pädagogischen Reformbewegungen und Erziehungswissenschaft entwickelte; und es geht zweitens darum, die Besonderheiten der ungarischen Entwicklung zu analysieren. Daraus ergibt sich folgender Aufbau des Textes: in einem ersten Kapitel wird allgemein aufgezeigt, dass die ungarische Geschichte der Pädagogik und Erziehungswissenschaft einerseits eine Rezeptionsgeschichte vor allem deutscher Entwicklungen ist, andererseits sich durch eine große Adaptationsleistung charakterisiert. In einem zweiten Kapitel wird kurz die Entwicklung der Pädagogik geschildert in deren Kontext sich dann das komplexe Verhältnis zwischen «neuer Erziehung» und Universitätspädagogik entwickelt. Diese Entwicklung wird dann detailliert in den nächsten Kapiteln geschildert, wobei drei Modelle der Institutionalisierung der Reformpädagogik in Ungarn unterschieden werden.

¹ R. Hofstetter, B. Schneuwly (edd.), *Erziehungswissenschaften in 19.-20. Jahrhundert. Zwischen Profession und Disziplin*, Bern, Lang, 2002.

1. Die ungarische Erziehungswissenschaft zwischen Rezeption und Adaptation

Die Entwicklung des Institutionensystems der ungarischen universitären Erziehungswissenschaft steht auch mit den grundlegenden Besonderheiten der wirtschaftlich-gesellschaftlichen und politischen Entwicklung der mitteleuropäischen Region in engem Zusammenhang. Also mit dem politischen Kraftfeld, das sein Existenz der ziemlich lange, bis zum Ende des 19-ten Jahrhunderts bestehenden preußisch-deutschen, österreichischen beziehungsweise österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie verdanken kann². Diese Tendenzen sind in allen grundlegenden Vorgängen dieser Epoche deutlich nachvollziehbar: In der kapitalistischen Industrialisierung, in der Verbreitung der Marktwirtschaft, in der Urbanisierung, in der Entwicklung der fachkundigen Staatsverwaltung und des Institutionsnetzes des Bildungswesens. Daraus folgt, dass zahlreiche gemeinsame Elementen in der staatlich-administrativen Ordnung, in der fachlichen Betreuung der Prozessen der Erziehung und Bildung, in der bildungs- und wissenschaftspolitischen Entscheidungen, und in den Institutionalisierungsprozessen der allgemeinen Bildung und der Wissenschaft dieser Region feststellbar sind. Weiteres sind auch die Reaktionen ähnlich, die in der gesellschaftlich-wirtschaftlichen Modernbestrebungen, beziehungsweise in den antimodernen kulturkritischen Bewegungen um die Jahrhundertwende in diesen Ländern zum Vorschein treten.

An den ungarischen Universitäten institutionalisiert sich auch die theologisch, später erziehungsphilosophisch orientierte theoretische Pädagogik und in dem letzten Drittel des 19. Jahrhunderts wird in dem Ländern dieser Region das Unterrichtswesen aufgrund des schulpädagogischen Prinzips des Herbartianismus modernisiert. Fast überall besetzten die Vertreter der herbartianischen Pädagogik die an den Universitäten errichteten pädagogischen Lehrstühle, und bestimmten die Rhetorik der institutionalisierenden Universitätspädagogik³. Die universitäre Erziehungswissenschaft, die sich nach der Jahrhundertwende entfaltete, wird der Logik des geschlossenen disziplinären Systems der deutschen Wissenschaft folgend den Rang einer selbständigen akademischen Wissenschaft gewinnen. Das Begriffssystem, das selbständige Forschungsgebiet der zu einer universitären Disziplin gewordenen geisteswissenschaftlichen Pädagogik wird auf dieser Grundlage ausgestaltet. Zur Analyse entstand die normative Hermeneutik, die der Methode der empirischen Forschung gegenübergestellt wird⁴.

² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

³ R. Coriand, M. Winkler (edd.), *Der Herbartianismus-die vergessene Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, Weinheim, Deutscher Studien Verlag, 1998; H.E. Tenorth, *Erziehungswissenschaft in Mitteleuropa*, in K.P. Horn, A. Németh, B. Pukánszky, H.E. Tenorth (edd.), *Erziehungswissenschaft in Mitteleuropa. Aufklärerische Traditionen – deutscher Einfluß – nationale Eigenständigkeit*, Budapest, Osiris, 2001, pp. 23-40.

⁴ H.E. Tenorth, *Der Beitrag der Erziehungswissenschaft zur Professionalisierung pädagogischer Berufe*, in Apel et al. (edd.), *Professionalisierung pädagogischer Berufe im historischen Prozeß*, Bad

Weiteres können sowohl in der Professionalisierung der verschiedenen pädagogischen Berufe als auch in der Institutionalisierung der verschiedenen Schultypen in dem 19-ten und 20-ten Jahrhundert verwandte Züge festgestellt werden. Für sie sind die Trennung zwischen der Rahmen und der Leitung der staatlich organisierten, schulischen Eliten- beziehungsweise der Massenbildung aufgrund der Schultypen, und die duale Lehrerausbildung charakteristisch⁵. Dies zeugt einerseits die mit der theoretischen und praktischen Aufgaben verbundenen streng abgehobene Hierarchie des Fachwissens nach sich (theoretische und praktizierende Pädagoge), andererseits die grundlegend verschiedenen fachlichen Sozialisation der Lehrer der verschiedenen Schulen.

Aus diesen Tatsachen folgt, dass die Geschichte der ungarischen wissenschaftlichen Universitatspadagogik als Rezeptionsgeschichte interpretiert werden kann. Die Denkweise der ungarischen Erziehungswissenschaft charakterisierte die Ubernahme und die Aufnahme auslandischer, vor allem deutschen geistlicher Stromungen. Die wissenschaftliche Leistung zeigt sich besonders in der Schnelligkeit der Rezeption, beziehungsweise in deren ursprunglichen Adaptation. Diese Rezeptionsvorgange sind in der Institutionalisierung der in dem 19. Jahrhundert an den ungarischen Universitaten entstehenden modernen akademischen Wissenschaften, beziehungsweise in der Reformpadagogik nach der Jahrhundertwende und in der Entstehung deren wissenschaftliche Richtung charakterisierenden empirischen Padagogik deutlich nachvollziehbar.

Das wichtigste landerspezifische Merkmal der Entwicklung der ungarischen nationalen Wissenschaft ist der Ma der schopferischen Adaptation. Es ist wichtig, dass die von der internationalen Wissenschaftsentwicklung angebotenen Losungen und Handlungsmuster in der Verwirklichung der Aufgaben der Institutionsentwicklung, und der bildungspolitischen Entscheidungen der Entwicklung des in der zweiten Halfte des 19. Jahrhunderts immer selbstandigen ungarischen Nationalstaats angewandt wurden. In dem Hintergrund der ungarischen universitaren Wissenschaftsentwicklung stehen die verschieden Anspruche auf die Modernisierung, die Herausforderungen und Reformideen der drei einander folgenden Reformperioden der Entwicklung des ungarischen Nationalstaates. In der ersten Periode, die in dem Geist des nationalen Liberalismus entstand, entwickelte sich unter der Wirkung der Reformen im Geiste der herbartianischen Padagogik das Institutionssystem der modernen ungarischen Bildungswesen und Hochschulwesen, beziehungsweise das der Wissenschaft und Forschung. Die zweite Reformperiode dauerte von der Jahrhundertwende bis zum ersten Weltkrieg, beziehungsweise bis zu den

Heilbrunn, Klinkhardt, pp. 429-461; P. Wagner, B. Wittrock, *States, institutions and discourses: A comparative perspective on the structuration of the social sciences*, in P. Wagner, B. Wittrock, R. Whitley (edd.), *Discourses on society, The shaping of the social science disciplines*, Dordrecht, Kluwer, 1991, pp. 331-358.

⁵ P. Lundgreen, *Berufkonstruktion und Professionalisierung in historischer Perspektive*, in Apel et al.(edd.), *Professionalisierung padagogischer Berufe im historischen Proze*, cit., pp. 19-34.

darauf folgenden Revolutionen. Das war die Periode der Verbreitung der Reformpädagogik und der empirischen Pädagogik, die in engem Zusammenhang mit den verschiedenen radikalen politischen – und Lebensreformbewegungen steht, die aufgrund der Urbanisierung und der Krise des modernen Zeitalters entstanden sind. In der nächsten Entwicklungsperiode, die etwa bis die Mitte der dreißiger Jahre dauert, wurde auch die ungarische Pädagogik emanzipiert, sie wurde zu selbständigem Universitätsdisziplin. Im Hintergrund dieser Periode stehen die Bestrebungen der sich in den zwanziger Jahren entfaltenden neuesten «konservativen» Bildungsreform, die die Herausforderungen der durch den Vertrag von Trianon veränderten Situation beantworteten.

2. Die erste Reformperiode: Die Modernisierung des ungarischen Bildungswesens

Im Jahre 1867 beendete mit dem Ausgleich der fast zwei Jahrhunderte lange Kampf zwischen der Habsburgdynastie und der ungarischen Nation. Die politische Kraft, die nach dem Ausgleich in die regierende Position kam, vertrat die liberale ungarische Reformbewegung, die in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhundert entstand. Die Einzigartigkeit der ungarischen Liberalismus wurzelt sich in der verspäteten Verbürgerlichung, dessen gesellschaftlichen Basis der Adel (wohlhabende Grundbesitzer, adelige Intelligenz, im kleinen Teil Aristokraten) bildet. Die zweifache Zielsetzung des ungarischen nationalen Liberalismus bedeutete einerseits die Bestrebungen auf die nationale Unabhängigkeit – von dem kaiserlichen Hof unabhängige, in dem 16. Jahrhundert verlorene ungarische Staatlichkeit und territoriale Integrität –, andererseits die Einrichtung des wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Institutionssystems des modernen bürgerlichen Staates mit Ungarisch als Staatssprache, das das Ständestaat abschaffen sollte⁶.

In den letzten Jahrzehnten des Jahrhunderts wurde unter der Leitung der ungarischen Liberalismus und im dessen Geiste die allgemeine Reform des Verwaltungs- und Bildungswesenssystems des modernen ungarischen Rechtsstaates durchgeführt. Aus der verspäteten Säkularisation, die die ungarische Entwicklung charakterisierte, ergibt sich, dass das ungarische Schulsystem in den Jahren vor dem Ausgleich fast völlig von den christlichen Konfessionen bestimmt wurde. Die einzige ungarische Universität in Budapest ist auch eine katholische Universität, obwohl sie formal immer eine königliche Universität war. Demzufolge kann die stark katholisch orientierte ungarische universitäre Erziehungslehre bis zu den 1870-er Jahren nicht als wissenschaftliche Disziplin betrachtet werden – obwohl deren institutionelle Rahmen mit dem

⁶ A. Gergely (ed.), *Magyarország története a 19. Században*, Budapest, Osiris, 2003.

im Jahre 1814 an der philosophischen Fakultät der Universität gegründeten pädagogischen Lehrstuhl auch in Ungarn gegeben waren⁷.

In der Reformperiode nach dem Ausgleich musste auch die Universitätspädagogik mehrere neue Erwartungen erfüllen. Die erziehungsphilosophische Formulierung der neuen Bildungspolitik des regierenden adeligen Liberalismus konnte den Geistlichen, die in der Hoch- und Mittelschulen tätig waren, beziehungsweise der mit ihnen verbundenen Vertreter der ultramontan-konservativen katholischen weltlichen Intelligenz nicht überlassen werden. Zu der Leitung des bürgerlichen Unterrichtswesens mussten anstatt der katholischen und protestantischen Theologen neue, der jeweiligen Regierung loyale Fachleute mit modernen Kenntnissen für die Leitung des Schulwesens gebildet werden. Zu der schulpädagogischen Untermauerung der fachkundigen Arbeit der Lehrer, die die nationalkundige Bildung der breiten Massen untermauern sollten, und der Gymnasiallehrer, die für die Bildung des neuen nationalen Intellektuellen-Beamten-Kollegiums verantwortlich waren, war die theologisch orientierte christliche Erziehungslehre, die an der Budapester Universität und an den königlichen Akademien, sowie an der Lehrerbildungsanstalten jahrzehntlang mit unveränderten Inhalten unterrichtet war, nicht geeignet.

Zu der schulpädagogischen Untermauerung der wirkungsvollen Arbeit ungarischen Schulwesensystems schien die in dieser Zeit sich entfaltende deutsche herbartianische Pädagogik am meisten geeignet zu sein, deren Rezeption – wie es auch in den anderen mitteleuropäischen Ländern feststellbar ist⁸ – während der in den 70-er Jahren beschleunigten Modernisierung des ungarischen Schulwesens sich immer stärker durchsetzt.

Aber dieses Sichtpunkts- und Elitenwechsel ging in mehreren Stufen vor. Während an der Wiener Universität, die das Praxis der Budapester Universität in größtem Maße beeinflusste, wurde zum Lehrer, später zum Professor⁹ der Pädagogik Theodor Vogt (1835-1906) ernannt, der herausragende Vertreter des österreichischen Herbartianismus, lehnte der erste frisch ernannte weltliche Professor der Universität, der katholische Ágost Lubrich (1825-1900) die Aufnahme der herbartianischen Pädagogik strikt ab, weil sie seines Erachtens die christlichen Traditionen gefährde. Für seine Gegner und für die sie unterstützende liberale Regierung bedeutete aber gerade diese damals als modern betrachtete herbartianische Konzeption den theoretisch-ideologischen

⁷ A. Németh, *Die Entwicklung der Pädagogik zur Universitätsdisziplin, sowie ihre Institutionalisierung an der Universität in Budapest*, in Horn, Németh, Pukánszky, Tenorth, *Erziehungswissenschaft in Mitteleuropa. Aufklärerische Traditionen – deutscher Einfluss – nationale Eigenständigkeit*, cit., pp. 309-345.

⁸ Tenorth, *Erziehungswissenschaft in Mitteleuropa*, cit., p. 33; J. Oelkers, W. Schultz, H.E. Tenorth (edd.), *Neukantianismus. Kulturtheorie, Pädagogik und Philosophie*, Weinheim, Deutscher Studien Verlag, 1989.

⁹ W. Brezinka, *Pädagogik in Österreich. Geschichte des Faches an den Universitäten von 18. bis zum Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Wien, ÖAV, 2000.

Basis, auf den die nationale liberale Modernisierung des Schulwesens gebaut werden konnte, und der mit deren die institutionalisierten Säkularisation betonende Ideenwelt am ehesten im Zusammenklang stand¹⁰.

Mór Kármán (1843-1915), der Rivale von Lubrich machte sich am Ende der 1860-er Jahren an Leipziger Universität als der Schüler von Ziller mit den herbartianischen Pädagogik bekannt. Er war Privatdozent an der Universität, der Gründer der von der Universität unabhängigen Bildungsanstalt für Gymnasiallehrer, und der Organisator und Leiter der Referendarschule, sowie der leitende Gestalt der Reform der ungarischen Gymnasien. Er war an der Ausarbeitung des Mittelschulgesetzes aus dem Jahre 1883, und an der Ausarbeitung des neuen, dem Bildungskonzept des nationalen Liberalismus entsprechenden Rahmenlehrplanes für die Gymnasien beteiligt. In dessen Mittelpunkt stand neben den griechischen und lateinischen Klassiker die historisierende Anschauung, die nationale Literatur und Geschichte, die detaillierte Darstellung der natürlichen Gegebenheiten des Heimatlandes, beziehungsweise die Betonung der untrennbaren Einheit der nationalen und der europäischen Kultur. Dieses Lehrplankonzept spielt auch eine wichtige Rolle dabei, dass in der Wertordnung des ungarischen Bürgertums der antike und klassizistische Harmoniekult, die Ordnung, die Schönheit und die auf ewigen Grundlagen beruhende Autorität weiterhin eine zentrale Rolle spielen. Das ist eine Bildung, die die Grundlagen eines harmonischen, konfliktfreien Gesellschafts- und Weltbildes, und das dementsprechende Moral und den von der Dissonanz grauende künstlerischen Stil gewährt¹¹.

Aufgrund der Verbreitung der herbartianischen Pädagogik erschien am Ende der 1890-er Jahren in Ungarn eine Wissenschaftlergeneration, die fast ausgeschlossen von den Schülern von Kármán rekrutiert wurde (Ernö Fináczy, János Waldapfel, László Nagy, Ödön Weszely), und deren Mitglieder dabei, dass der Herbartianismus nach der Jahrhundertwende zu einer Universitätsdisziplin wurde, beziehungsweise bei dessen Verbreitung über der mittelschulischen Lehrerausbildung hinaus in der volksschulischen Lehrerausbildung und in der Praxis der Volksschule eine bedeutende Rolle spielten.

¹⁰ A. Németh, *A magyar neveléstudomány fejlődéstörténete*, Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 2002, pp. 212-214.

¹¹ L. Felkai, *Neveléstörténeti dolgozatok a dualizmus korából*, Budapest, Tankönyvkiadó, 1983, pp. 224-225; E. Ballér, *Tantervelméletek Magyarországon a XIX. és XX. században*, Budapest, OPKM, 1996, pp. 41-43.

3. Die Urbanisationsreform von Budapest: Die Periode der außeruniversitären Institutionalisierung der neuen pädagogischen Bestrebungen

TrotzdesnachdemAusgleichgrundlegendverändertenpolitischen-,rechtlichen- und Bildungssystems und trotz der Verbreitung der modernen kapitalistischen Wirtschaft war die ungarische Gesellschaft um die Jahrhundertwende durch einen einzigartigen Zwiespalt charakterisiert. Das System betreffen lebte das Alte und das Neue, die agrarische und die urbane Welt nebeneinander, obwohl die Entwicklung der damaligen Gesellschaft grundlegend die Entwicklung der Lebensverhältnisse, die Modernisierung und die Urbanisierung charakterisierte. Wenn man diese Vorgänge ein bisschen vereinfacht und nach Analogien sucht, kann festgestellt werden, dass dieser Zwiespalt sowohl in der ungarischen wissenschaftlichen Denkweise als auch in der nächsten Reformperiode der ungarischen Bildungswesen, zwischen der Jahrhundertwende und dem Ende des ersten Weltkrieges beobachtet werden kann.

Dies wird auch dadurch gezeigt, dass das Profil des pädagogischen Lehrstuhles der Budapester Universität – in der nächsten Periode – Ern Fináczy (1860-1935) bestimmte, der angesehene Erziehungswissenschaftler, der ungarische Vertreter des von Willmann vertretenen mit wissenschaftlichen Forderungen auftretenden, und auf katholischen Grundlagen beruhenden Herbartianismus¹². Den Kern seines wissenschaftlichen Werks bildet sein erziehungswissenschaftliches Schaffen, das die auf antiken, beziehungsweise christlichen Erziehungstraditionen beruhenden historisch-deduktiven Grundlagen seiner katholisch orientierten normativen Pädagogik bedeutet, dessen größten Ergebnisse in seiner¹³ großformatigen Werk über die Erziehungsgeschichte in fünf Bänder nachvollziehbar sind. Er war in den ersten Jahrzehnten des Jahrhunderts der Vorsitzende der Ungarischen Pädagogischen Gesellschaft, seine Fachkenntnisse bestimmten grundlegend das pädagogische Profil der Periode¹⁴. István Scheller (1847-1939), Professor der in den 1870-er Jahren in Klausenburg gegründeten anderen ungarischen Universität, war als evangelisch-lutherischer Theologe und verpflichteter Anhänger des Protestantismus – und als Gegner der herbartianischer Philosophie und Pädagogik, der offiziellen Ideologie der k. u. k. Monarchie -, der Vertreter der theologischen und pädagogischen Auffassung Schleiermachers, des Begründers der anderen grundlegenden Richtunglinie der in dem Neohumanismus wurzelnden deutscher philosophischen Pädagogik¹⁵.

¹² Oelkers, Schultz, Tenorth (edd.), *Neukantianismus. Kulturtheorie, Pädagogik und Philosophie*, cit., p. 170.

¹³ T. Hanák, *Az elfelejtett reneszánsz*, Budapest, Göncöl Kiadó, 1993, p. 3.

¹⁴ B. Pukánszky, A. Németh, *Neveléstörténet*, Budapest, Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, 1994, p. 512.

¹⁵ A. Németh (ed.), *Reformpedagógia-történeti tanulmányok*, Budapest, Osiris, 2002, pp. 306-307.

Die Universitätsrezeption des Positivismus in Ungarn verknüpft sich am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts mit dem Namen von Imre Pauer (1845-1930), dem Professoren für Philosophie, der auch die nötige Ausbildung zum Unterricht der Pädagogik hatte. Für diese Periode ist der deutsche Dominanz, der auch auf anderen Gebieten bedeutend war, und die daraus folgende eigenartige Akzentverschiebung charakteristisch. Die innerhalb der Universität auftretende positivistische Pädagogik erscheint am anspruchsvollsten in der frühen Werken Ákos Pauler (1876-1934), der spätere Professor des philosophischen Lehrstuhls. Er erweiterte seit 1898 ein Jahr lang in Leipzig an der Institut von Wundt seine Studien in der experimentellen Psychologie. Später studierte er ein Jahr lang in Paris, und besuchte dort die Vorlesungen und Demonstrationen in Psychologie von Pierre Janet. Aufgrund dieser Erfahrungen kommen in seinen Werken vor allem die Rezeptionstendenzen der anglosächsischen und französischen Wissenschaftsmodelle zur Geltung. Die Etablierung des selbständigen Lehrstuhls für experimentelle Psychologie in Budapest wurde im Jahre 1918 verwirklicht. Géza Révész (1878-1955), der Professor des kurzfristig existierenden Lehrstuhls hielt schon zwischen 1908 und 1918 als Privatdozent der experimentellen Psychologie in den Themen Kinderpsychologie, später pädagogischen Psychologie Vorlesungen.

Die dritte Entwicklungsphase des in den Kreisen der radikalen Intelligenz immer beliebten Positivismus, und die damit parallel entstandene soziologische Betrachtungsweise entfaltete sich in Ungarn am Anfang des Jahrhunderts außerhalb der Universität. Dieser Prozess bedeutete auch die Abschwächung der einseitigen deutschen Rezeption. Die ungarische Wissenschaft befreite sich nur in den ersten Jahrzehnten des 20. Jahrhunderts von dem deutschen Einfluss. Diese Entwicklung bedeutete nicht die Hegemonie eines neuen Denksystems, sondern ein permanentes Suchen, die Tätigkeit verschiedener prominenter Denker, die Rivalität von Richtungen, die Gründung neuer Gesellschaften und das geistige Duell von Zeitschriften. In den ersten zwei Jahrzehnten nach der Jahrhundertwende standen die sozialen und gesellschaftsphilosophischen Probleme im Vordergrund und stimulierten sozialphilosophische Intuitionen, die später, 1918/1919, zum direkten Aufeinandertreffen der Philosophie und der Politik, gleichzeitig zur Kompromitiation der Philosophie führten¹⁶.

Im Jahre 1901 wurde die «erste ungarische Werkstatt der Soziologie» gegründet, die Ungarische Gesellschaftswissenschaftliche Gesellschaft, in weiteren erschien die Zeitschrift «Huszadik Század» (Zwanzigstes Jahrhundert), die die radikale Intelligenz um sich scharte. In den Werken der Anhänger des Positivismus vermischte sich am Anfang des Jahrhunderts die auf den Anschauungen von Spencer basierende Auffassung mit weiteren biologischen und psychologischen Richtungen der Epoche, vor allem mit dem Darwinismus,

¹⁶ A. Németh, B. Pukánszky, *Paradigmen in der Geschichte der ungarischen Pädagogik*, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. 34, n. 3 (supplementary series), 1998, pp. 275-276.

dann mit der Theorie von Emile Durkheim und der psychoanalytischen Lehre Sigmund Freuds. Die Anhänger des Positivismus in Ungarn – vor allem aber die Soziologen unter ihnen – übernahmen später auch einige Elemente von den Gesellschaftstheorien des Marxismus bzw. wurden bedeutende Persönlichkeiten (z.B. Georg Lukács), der marxistischen Philosophie in Ungarn.

Der Konservatismus der Universität trug dazu bei, dass sich diese Bestrebungen in dieser Zeit noch außerhalb der Universität etablierten. Für die offizielle Auffassung der Universitätsmentalität zeigt typisch die distanzierte Äußerung von dem angesehenen Professoren, Ernő Fináczy, mit der man die neue soziologische Orientation und die Pädologie dieser Zeit anging. Nach der Meinung von Fináczy sind für die Erziehungswissenschaft die wissenschaftlichen psychologischen Forschungen wichtig, aber er war gegen die Bestrebungen, die an die Stelle der traditionellen normativen Pädagogik eine ganz neue pädagogische Betrachtungsweise stellen wollten. Diese Ablehnung sprach diejenigen mit der traditionellen Pädagogik rivalisierenden neuen Bestrebungen an, die deren neue Betrachtungsweise nach dem Positivismus mit Hilfe experimentell-induktiven Methoden sie erneuern wollten.

In der Rezeption, und später in der Verbreitung dieser mit der offiziellen erziehungswissenschaftlichen Auffassung konkurrierenden Richtung spielten die Volksschullehrer und die Lehrer der Lehrerbildungsanstalten, die die Elite dieser Lehrgesellschaft bildeten, eine immer bedeutendere Rolle. Diese Professionsgruppe bedeutete nämlich in dieser Zeit eine immer stärkere Fachkompetenz. Ihre herausragende Aufgabe zeigte sich vor allem in der Rezeption der modernen psychologisch-pädagogischen Strömung, die ihre Blüte nach der Jahrhundertwende erlebte. Weiterhin kam es auch zur Verbreitung der Ergebnisse der Pädologie in Ungarn. Der Lehrer der Budapester Staatlichen Lehrerbildungsanstalt, László Nagy (1857-1931), und seine Mitarbeiter gründeten 1906 die Ungarische Gesellschaft für Kinderforschung. Sie wurden die Organisatoren der Gesellschaft, die von der Verbreitung der modernen pädagogisch-psychologischen Bestrebungen – ähnlich den ausländischen Repräsentanten der Richtung¹⁷ – die Begründung der Erziehungswissenschaft auf einer experimentellen, empirischen Grundlage, beziehungsweise die Verbreitung der neuen pädagogischen Anschauungsweise erwarteten. Um die kinderzentrierte pädagogische Auffassung verbreiten zu können, wurden Fortbildungskurse für praktizierende Lehrer gehalten sowie Bücher und Zeitschriften herausgegeben: ab 1907 erschien unter der Redaktion von László Nagy die unabhängige Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft: «A gyermek» (Das Kind). Außerhalb der Hauptstadt entstanden ebenfalls neue Zentren der Kinderstudien. Als eine der hervorragendsten Persönlichkeiten der theoretischen Pädagogik in

¹⁷ M. Depaape, *Zum Wohl des Kindes? Pädologie, pädagogische Psychologie und experimentelle Pädagogik in Europa und in den USA, 1890-1940*, Weinheim, Deutscher Studien Verlag, 1993.

Ungarn tat Ödön Weszely viel, damit sich die Bewegung ausbreiten konnte und die Ergebnisse der Kinderstudien und der Reformpädagogik auch anderen Lehrern zugänglich wurden¹⁸.

Die neuen pädagogischen Ideen und die Prozesse dahinter, die Entwicklungstrends der verschiedenen Bildungssysteme und des Lehrerberufes in Mitteleuropa, die eigentümlichen Züge in der ungarischen Rezeption der verschiedenen wissenschaftlichen Trends – sie sind «wie das Meer im Tropfen» im ersten ungarischen Pädagogiklexikon des Jahrhunderts anwesend, in der Enzyklopädie der Volksbildung, die zwischen 1911 und 1915. Die Fachausgabe erschien für die ungarische Lehrerschaft, deren Anzahl nach der Jahrhundertwende auf mehr als 40 Tausend anstieg, die Lehrer waren in ihrer Gesamtzahl stark, in ihrer beruflichen Qualität herausragend. Die Enzyklopädie fasst alle Kenntnisse auf dem Gebiet der Pädagogik und der Schulverwaltung zusammen, die für einen modernen ungarischen Volksschullehrer nötig waren.

Die Arbeit untersucht im Detail die verschiedenen Trends der experimentellen Psychologie und Pädagogik, der Kinderstudie, beziehungsweise der Kinderpsychologie, stellt die Arbeiten der bedeutendsten ausländischen und ungarischen Repräsentanten vor. Sie gibt einen Überblick der verschiedenen Reformschulen jener Zeit, vor allen der englischen «New School»-Bewegung und die daraufhin entstehenden nationalen pädagogischen Reformtrends und die neuen methodischen Ideen (Abbotsholme, École des Roches, Landerziehungsheim, Reformschule, Parker-Schule, Arbeitsschule, Waldschule, Pfadfinder). Tolstoi, Ellen Key, Ruskin, Berthold Otto erscheinen als selbstständige Schlüsselworte, beim Begriff Konzentration wird auch Dewey erwähnt, dessen Werk *Schule und Gesellschaft* im Jahre 1912 in ungarischer Sprache erscheint¹⁹.

Die Bestrebungen der Lehrer sowie der radikalen Intelligenz näherten sich während der Kultur- und Unterrichtsreformen des liberalen Bürgermeisters von Budapest, István Bárczy (er amtierte seit dem Ende des ersten Jahrzehnts des 20. Jahrhunderts bis 1918), einander an. Die Aktivitätszentren dieser Zusammenarbeit, die bis zum Ende des Weltkrieges dauerte, sind das im Jahre 1912 gegründete Pädagogisches Seminar, das zur Weiterbildung der Lehrer in der Hauptstadt ins Leben gerufen wurde, und die seit 1906 unter dem Titel *Volksbildung (Népművelés)* erschiene Zeitschrift²⁰.

Die *Volksbildung*, das Presseorgan des kultur- und bildungspolitischen Bárczy- Programm sicherte neben den Zeitschriften *Das 20. Jahrhundert (Huszadik Század)* und *Das Westen (Nyugat)* nicht nur für die Vertreter der ungarischen Pädologie und experimentellen Psychologie Möglichkeiten zur

¹⁸ S. Kőte, *Egy útmutató pedagógus*, Budapest, Tankönyvkiadó, 1986.

¹⁹ A. Németh, *Nemzetközi tudományfejlődési és recepció tendenciák a század első hazai pedagógiai lexikonjaiban*, «Magyar Pedagógia», vol. 105. n. 2, 2000, pp. 187-208.

²⁰ Id., *Weszely Ödön*, Budapest, OPKM, 1990, pp. 13-17.

Publikation, sondern auch den verschiedenen Richtungen der ungarischen Lebensreformbewegung, von den verschiedenen anarchistischen, syndikalistischen und tolstoianischen Bestrebungen (Ervin Szabó, Jenő Schmidt, Ervin Batthyányi) bis zu zahlreichen Ansätzen der ungarischen Jugendstil. Die Vertreter dieser Initiative hatten die Möglichkeit, auf den Blätter der Zeitschrift ihre Meinung über die neue urbane Kultur, über die neuen Richtungen der Stadtmodernisierung, über die Beziehung von Kunst und Erziehung, über die neuen Aufgaben von Volksbildung und Schule, über den neuen Menschen und die neue Gesellschaft, über die veränderten Beziehung zwischen Mann und Frau, über den neuen Moral und neue Erziehung, über die Kunst des Kindes, über die Wichtigkeit des Rückkehrs zur Volkskunst, als die natürliche Lebensweise, über den «dritten Weg» zur Erneuerung der ungarischen Kultur und Gesellschaft zu äußern. In der Zeitschrift *Volksbildung* und im Kreis der Vorträger und Hörerschaft der Kursen und Vorlesungen das Pädagogische Seminar, sowie unter den Mitgliedern Gesellschaft für Kinderforschung befindet sich in den 1910-er Jahren die Vertreter der unterschiedlichen Richtungen der ungarischen Jugendstil: auch die leitenden Persönlichkeiten der Künstlerkommune in Gödöll, der ungarischen Bewegungskunst, und der neuen musikalischen- und künstlerischen Erziehung, sowie des Sonntagskreises. Mit dem Ende der Revolutionen wird die erste, spannende Phase der Beziehung zwischen dem ungarischen Lebensreform und der Reformpädagogik abgeschlossen. Diese Phase, die auch nicht von Extremismen frei war, war durch die vibrierende Symbiose der zwei Bewegungen charakterisiert.

4. Das konservative Reform des ungarischen Bildungswesens – die Periode der breiten Institutionalisierung

Eine neue Epoche der wirtschaftlichen, gesellschaftlichen und politischen Entwicklung Ungarns begann mit der Periode von 1920, die in erster Linie entscheidend durch die Folgen des Friedenabkommens eines verlorenen Krieges determiniert wurde. Der Vertrag von Trianon (1920) erschütterte alle gesellschaftlichen Schichten Ungarns. Daher wurden die starke Bestrebungen zur Entwicklung des Bildungswesens in der 1921 beginnenden Epoche der Bethlen-Konsolidation als eine strategisch bedeutsame Aufgabe betrachtet. Im Hintergrund dieser Kulturpolitik stand der Gedanke der sogenannten «kulturellen Überlegenheit», deren Ideologie von einem prominenten Kulturpolitiker, dem damaligen konservativen Kultusminister Kuno Klebelsberg (1875-1932), stammte. Ein wichtiges Mittel war dazu nach seiner Meinung der Neonationalismus, eine christlich-nationale Ideologie mit neugestaltetem Inhalt, mit deren Hilfe die Ausbildung einer hochqualifizierten (aber mit nationalen und revisionistischen Gedanken erfüllten) «Intelligenzelite» verwirklicht, und

daneben auf die allgemeine Hebung des kulturellen Niveaus der Bevölkerung gedrängt wurde.

In diesem Interesse ließ Klebelsberg während dieser Periode das einheitliche institutionelle System des Landes organisieren, die Akademie erhielt Unterstützung vom Staat, die Museen und Archive wurden in einer einheitlichen Organisation vereinigt, die in den 1910er Jahren begonnenen Universitätsgründungen (Debrecen, Szeged, Pécs) wurden fortgesetzt, ihre Institute wurden weiter ausgebaut; zwischen 1924 und 1926 schließlich begann er mit der Modernisierung der Mittelschulen, daneben wurde eine große Anzahl von Volksschulen gebaut²¹.

Parallel zu diesen Ereignissen fand in den zwanziger Jahren auch die Reform der Lehrerbildung statt: der *Status* der 5-jährigen Lehrerbildungsanstalt wurde gestärkt, Bürgerschulen wurden nach 1927 als Mittelschulen anerkannt; eine Hochschule wurde nach Szeged verlegt und bekam den Namen: Hochschule für Bürgerschullehrerausbildung. Nach der gesetzlichen Regelung von 1924 wurden an allen Universitäten Ungarns neben den philologischen Fakultäten Lehrerbildungsinstitute gegründet, die werdenden Gymnasiallehrern neben ihrem Universitätsstudium den Erwerb aller ihrer Fachkenntnisse ermöglichen sollte, und das innerhalb eines organisierten Lehrplans. Dementsprechend konnte nur jener Student eine Qualifikation als Lehrer erhalten, der an der philologischen Fakultät einer Universität eingeschrieben war, sowie mindestens zwei Mittelschulfächer gewählt hatte und die vorgeschriebenen Vorlesungen und Seminare an der Universität und am Lehrerbildungsinstitut erfolgreich absolviert hatte.

In den zwanziger Jahren ist das frühere Interesse an sozialen und sozialphilosophischen Fragen zurückgedrängt worden. Ein wichtiges Thema für in der Philosophie wurde der Nationalgedanke, die Eigenschaften des Nationalcharakters und der Nationalmentalität. Als Gegengewicht zu den analytischen, relativistischen und demaskierenden Bestrebungen der ersten zwei Jahrzehnte verstärkten sich die synthetisierenden, bewahrenden, das Absolute und die Unveränderlichkeit suchenden Richtungen²². In Zusammenhang mit diesen Tendenzen begann die Hegemonie der geisteswissenschaftlichen Richtung und des Neukantianismus auch in dem damaligen geistigen und pädagogisch-psychologischen Denken eine immer wichtige Rolle zu spielen.

Das beschleunigte die Entwicklung der Pädagogik zu einer Universitätsdisziplin in einem erheblichen Maße, die Erziehungswissenschaft machte einen großen Schritt nach vorn auf dem Weg zu einer modernen wissenschaftlichen Disziplin²³.

²¹ A. Ladányi, *Magyar felsőoktatás a 20. században*, Budapest, Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, 1999.

²² Hanák, *Az elfelejtett reneszánsz*, cit., p. 44

²³ R. Stichweh, *Wissenschaft, Universität, Professionen*, Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp, 1994; H.E. Tenorth, K.P. Horn, *Erziehungswissenschaft in Deutschland in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, in Horn, Németh, Pukánszky, Tenorth (edd.), *Erziehungswissenschaft in Mitteleuropa. Aufklärerische Traditionen – deutscher Einfluß – nationale Eigenständigkeit*, cit., pp.

Dieser Prozess entfaltetete sich in den dreißiger Jahren. Die wichtigsten Merkmale werden im folgenden Abschnitt zusammengefasst: A) Mit der Verbreitung der Geisteswissenschaften wird die Pädagogik an den Universitäten als intra- und interdisziplinär anerkannte Universitätsdisziplin etabliert und in das System der akademischen Wissenschaften integriert. B) An allen Universitäten wurde unter der Leitung eines ordentlichen Professors ein selbständiger Lehrstuhl für Pädagogik organisiert. An den Philosophischen Fakultäten entwickelten sich die Lehrstühle für Pädagogik zu einem Universitätsinstitut, das eine Bibliothek und auch ein Seminar hatte. C) Ab Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts entstand das Netzwerk der selbständigen nationalen wissenschaftlichen Vereine und Presseorgane, bei deren Leitung die Professoren und Privatdozenten der Universitäten durchgängig eine führende Rolle spielten. D) Dank dem Aufbau der sich entfaltenden geisteswissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen wurden die empirischen Forschungsmethoden in den Hintergrund gedrängt. E) In der Anzahl und im Niveau der von den Professoren publizierten «wissenschaftlichen» Publikationen, Monographien, Handbücher, Zeitschriftenartikel und Lehrbücher ist ein bedeutender Anstieg festzustellen. F) Die Zahl der Experten mit dem Dokortitel stieg an, und damit wurde auch die Rekrutierung des eigenen Nachwuchses möglich²⁴.

Diesem Institutionalisierungsprozess knüpfen sich immer stärker die Elemente der Reformpädagogik und experimentellen Pädagogik, die in den Zeiten vor dem Weltkrieg für verachteten Volksschulpädagogik oder für pädagogischen Utopie gehalten waren. In erster Linie rückten diejenigen langfristigen Ideen in den Vordergrund, die mit der Betrachtungsweise der Ideologie der in dieser Zeit sich entfaltenden Bildungsreform verwandt waren. Die Maße ihrer Entfaltung hing einerseits von der Orientierung der verschiedenen Universitätsprofessoren, andererseits von den speziellen Aufgaben der einzelnen Universitäten. Die praxisorientierte schulpädagogische Betrachtungsweise war an allen Universitäten charakteristisch. Das steht im Zusammenhang mit der breiten Reform der Lehrerbildung und der Stärkung deren Kompetenzorientierung. In dieser breiten Reformbewegung, in der inneren Schulreform spielten die dauerhaften didaktisch-methodischen Elemente der Reformpädagogik schon wichtige Rolle.

Ein eigenes Phänomen ist, dass während in den ersten Jahrzehnten das Zentrum der sich entfaltenden neuen Bestrebungen in der Hauptstadt war, in dieser Zeit die Institutionalisierung der Reformpädagogik verstärkt an den Universitäten auf dem Lande erscheint. Für den veränderten Prestige der Reformpädagogik ist Empfang von Maria Montessori, die in den 30er Jahren auf die Einladung der Ungarischen Pädagogischen Gesellschaft mehrmals in Ungarn war, ein typisches

176-191; K.P. Horn, *Erziehungswissenschaft in Deutschland im 20. Jahrhundert*, Bad Heilbrunn, Klinkhardt, 2003.

²⁴ Németh, *A magyar neveléstudomány fejlődéstörténete*, cit., pp. 372-374.

Beispiel. Sie wurde von den Gestalten des pädagogischen und den öffentlichen Leben als eine international berühmte Persönlichkeit der Erziehung empfangen, über ihr Programm wurde auch in den ungarischen Presseorganen berichtet. Zu ihrer Ehre hielt der Vorsitzende der Ungarischen Pädagogischen Gesellschaft, Gyula Kornis an der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften Rede. Dann gab der Minister für Kultur, Kuno Klebelsberg zur Ehre der «dottorressa» in dem Nationalcasino ein feierliches Mittagessen, zu der alle Protagonisten der ungarischen Wissenschaftlichkeit eingeladen wurden.

In der Etablierung der Reformpädagogik an den Universitäten kann man in Ungarn drei typischen Modelle unterscheiden:

a) *Von Postherbartianismus über experimentellen Pädagogik zur Kulturpädagogik*

Die Bestrebungen im Geist der experimentellen Pädagogik nach der Jahrhundertwende kamen am stärksten an der Universität in Pécs zur Geltung. Zu dem Institut, das im Jahre 1923 von Ödön Weszely (1873-1935), dem Professoren für Pädagogik gegründet wurde, gehörten auch eine Fachbibliothek mit 2000 Bänden, ein pädagogisches Forschungslabor und ein Museum. Ein wichtiges Kapitel im frühen pädagogischen Schaffen von Weszely bildet die Tätigkeit zwischen 1906 und 1918 in dem Bildungsreform von Budapest. Er war der erste Direktor des Pädagogischen Seminars und der Redakteur des kulturpolitischen und bildungspolitischen Presseorgans des Bárczy-Programms, der Zeitschrift «Volksbildung». Im Lebenswerk von Weszely vollendet sich das späte Herbartianismus, vor allem die vollständigste Rezeption von Rein Auffassung. Dank dessen machen sich in seinen theoretischen und schulpädagogischen Arbeiten der Einfluss der neuen pädagogischen Auffassungen aus der Zeit nach der Jahrhundertwende, die Pädologie und die neuen Forschungsergebnisse der modernen Psychologie bemerkbar. Die geisteswissenschaftlich-kulturpädagogische Orientierung seiner systematisierenden Werke aus den zwanziger Jahren stellt eine eigenartige Brücke, einen Übergang zwischen dem späten Herbartianismus und der kulturpädagogischen Auffassungsweise der dreißiger Jahre dar²⁵.

b) *Rezeption der Reformpädagogik im Geist der Rousseau Institut in Genf*

An der Universität in Budapest bestand die bedeutendste Errungenschaft der zwanziger Jahre neben der immer stärkeren Verbreitung der geisteswissenschaftlichen Anschauungsweise darin, dass aufgrund des Pädagogikunterrichts

²⁵ Németh, Weszely Ödön, cit.

an Universitäten die auf die moderne Kinderpsychologie gegründete reformpädagogische Auffassung an Bedeutung gewann. Gyula Kornis der damalige Professor für Philosophie selbst bot regelmäßig Vorlesungen in Kinderpsychologie an, parallel zu diesen Vorlesungen wurde Cecil Bognár (1883-1967), späterer Pädagogik-Professor der Universität in Pécs und in Szeged, im Jahre 1923 zum Privatdozenten für Kinderpsychologie (Pädologie) ernannt. Elemér Kenyeres (1891-1933), einer der bedeutendsten Vertreter der Reformpädagogik in Ungarn, folgte ihm 1930. Er vertrat neben Weszely in dem akademischen Gebiet die Anschauungsweise des schulpraxisorientierten «Volksschullehrers». Von 1926 studierte er mit einem Stipendium an der Universität in Genf. Seine Bekanntschaft mit den bedeutenden Vertretern der Rousseau Institut in Genf hatte eine bedeutende Rolle in seiner späteren akademischen Tätigkeit. Auf die Wirkung von Kenyeres begann am Ende der 20-er Jahre auch die Rezeption von Piaget in Ungarn²⁶.

c) Rezeption der französischen psychologischen Richtungen und der Reformpädagogik im Dienst der Reform der Lehrerbildung

Eine der bedeutendsten akademischen Werkstatt der ungarischen Reformpädagogik entstand an der Universität in Szeged. In dessen Hintergrund stand die Umstrukturierung der ungarischen Lehrerbildung für Hauptschulen (in Ungarn sogenannte Bürgerschule). Die Institution, die früher in Budapest tätig war, wurde als Hochschule neben die Universität in Szeged umgesetzt. Gleichzeitig entstand an der Universität in Szeged der erste Lehrstuhl für pädagogische Psychologie in Ungarn, dessen Professor Hildebrandt Várkonyi (1888-1952) kurz vorher an der Sorbonne in Paris als Stipendiat sein philosophisches und psychologisches Studium erweiterte. In seinen Vorlesungen und in seiner wissenschaftlichen Publizistik rezipierte er die modernsten psychologischen Strömungen der Epoche (Piaget, Janet, Freud, Jung, Adler) und die Bestrebungen der Reformpädagogik. Für seine Forschungsarbeit war die starke Orientierung an der pädagogischen Psychologie charakteristisch. An dem ihm geleiteten Institut und in seinem Forschungslabor waren zahlreiche begabten Schülern von ihm tätig. Mit seiner Unterstützung leitete eine seiner Studentinnen, Erzsébet Dolch die «Gartenschule» (Kerti Iskola), eine der Reformschulen in Szeged. Eine andere Studentin von Várkonyi, Erzsébet Baranyai, die erste Privatdozentin der Pädagogik in Ungarn, wurde auch die anerkannte Expertin der pädagogischen Psychologie und der Reformpädagogik²⁷.

²⁶ A. Németh, *Kenyeres Elemér élete és munkássága*, in L. Balogh (ed.), *Neveléstörténeti Füzetek 12*, Budapest, OPKM, 1992, pp. 63-69.

²⁷ B. Pukánszky, *Reformpedagógia Szegeden a két világháború között*, in Németh (ed.), *Reformpedagógia-történeti tanulmányok*, cit., pp. 101-120.

Die Referendarschule der mit der Universität verknüpften pädagogischen Hochschule in Szeged hatte auch eine bedeutende Rolle in der Verbreitung der reformpädagogischen Bestrebungen in der Schulpraxis. Die Studenten, die ihr Schulpraktikum in dieser Schule machten, lernten nicht nur die allgemeinen theoretischen Zielsetzungen der Reformpädagogik kennen, sondern sie konnten auch die praktische Arbeit in dessen Geist unmittelbar erleben. Nachdem die Studenten der Hochschule aus dem Gebiet des ganzen Landes kamen, verbreitete sich die Wirkung der neuen pädagogischen Ideen in ganz Ungarn. Die methodischen Erneuerungen der Lehrer, die die praktische Arbeit leiteten, publizierten neben der Zeitschrift *Die Schule der Handlung* (Cselekvés iskolája) auch in der Fachbuchserie, die von der Schule herausgegeben wurde. Dank dessen trugen die Ergebnisse ihrer Innovationsarbeit zu der Entwicklung der methodischen Kultur der breiten Kreise von praktizierenden Lehrer in Ungarn bei²⁸.

Fazit

Die Entwicklungsdynamik der in unserer Arbeit vorgestellten Vorgänge bleibt auch in der kurzen demokratischen Übergangsphase (1945-1948) nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg noch erhalten. Die besonderen pädagogischen Bestrebungen der früheren Zeiten lebten weiter, beziehungsweise erwachten; die traditionellen christlichen Richtungen, die geisteswissenschaftliche Pädagogik, die in der universitären Pädagogik eine dominante Rolle spielte, die Erziehung der Nation, die pädagogischen Bestrebungen der Volksschriftsteller und der Volksbewegung, die verschiedenen Richtungen der Reformpädagogik. In den Jahren nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg kommt die Betrachtungsweise der Reformpädagogik und der Kinderforschung, immer stärker zur Geltung; die pädagogische Denkweise, die die Besonderheiten des kindlichen Lebensalters und die Selbsttätigkeit des Kindes in den Mittelpunkt stellt. Die Popularität der französischen und der angloamerikanischen empirischen Pädagogik ist gewachsen. Auch im Laufe der Entfaltung der Schulreform und der Erneuerung der Erziehungswissenschaft tritt die demokratische Denkweise, die die Kindsorientierung, die gesellschaftliche Gerechtigkeit, die gesellschaftliche Solidarität, und die Chancengleichheit betont, immer stärker in den Vordergrund. Es schien so, dass die entfaltende neue ungarische Demokratie die besten Traditionen der ungarischen universitären Erziehungswissenschaft und Reformpädagogik weiterführt.

Diese Veränderungen, die anfangs breite gesellschaftliche und berufliche Zustimmung erkämpften, erfolgten aber später nicht dem parlamentarischen Spielregeln der demokratischen, pluralistischen Gesellschaft entsprechend, nicht mit der Hilfe der Mitteln der Kulturpolitik, nicht auf dem Wege der inneren

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 117-120.

Selbstentwicklung der Pädagogik, und nicht im Rahmen eines Wettbewerbs, der sich im Rahmen der öffentlichen Debatten der verschiedenen pädagogischen Richtungen entwickelt. Es gaben schon ab 1946 verschiedene politisch veranlasste Versuche auf die Auflösung der traditionellen institutionellen Rahmen und Wissenschaftsinhalte der Erziehungswissenschaft, und in den folgenden Jahren wurden die Instituten umgestaltet, die nicht in die so genannten kommunistischen Pädagogik passten, und eine davon abweichende pädagogische Anschauung vertraten, bis sie dann völlig verschwanden. Die Fachleute, die der neuen Ideologie entgegengesetzte Prinzipien vertraten, wurden langsam in den Hintergrund gedrängt und später auch existenziell immer mehr in eine unmögliche Situation gebracht²⁹.

Nach der Verstaatlichung der Schulen (1947) lief die Verwirklichung des kommunistischen Unterrichtsmodells und der kommunistischen Erziehungswissenschaft mit den immer größeren Mitteln der offenen staatlich-politischen Gewalt. Infolge dessen entstand auch in Ungarn die einheitliche staatliche Schule, die einheitliche kommunistische Erziehung und Jugendbewegung, die den ganzen ungarischen Schulsystem, und die Ganzheit der Erziehung und Bildung in den Dienst der Bau des Sozialismus-Kommunismus gestellt sind. Dadurch verwirklichte sich die diktatorische Schule eines diktatorischen Staates, in der die Grundlagen der äußeren und inneren Einheit die sozialistisch-kommunistischen Ideologie, die sozialistisch-kommunistischen Ziel- und Bildungsapparat, der mit Marxismus und Leninismus gefüllte Lehrstoff und der obligatorische Materialismus-Atheismus bildeten. In der, auf die Wirkung der staatlichen Diktatur immer tiefer monolithisch werdenden ungarischen Gesellschaft verschwindet zu dieser Zeit immer mehr die berufliche Autonomie, der kritische Geist, die Fachwissenschaftlichkeit, die die Erscheinungen der Welt in ihrer Objektivität beobachtet.

²⁹ E. Golnhofer, *Hazai pedagógiai nézetek. 1945-1949*, Pécs, Iskolakultúra, 2004, pp. 143-144.

Hayao Miyazaki. The kingdom of dreams and madness*

Maria Teresa Trisciuzzi
Faculty of Education
Free University of Bozen (Italy)
mariateresa.trisciuzzi@unibz.it

ABSTRACT: Hayao Miyazaki is a versatile and multifaceted artist; he was awarded many prestigious prizes for the screenplays and the direction of his films, such as the Berlin Golden Bear at the International Film Festival in 2002, the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature in 2003 and the Golden Lion for Career Achievement at the Venice Film Festival in 2005. Miyazaki always created his movies for younger generations and wrote stories about them. His films are often a journey in the world of children through an honest and accurate look at the sensitivity of the little ones. The Japanese author has a rare delicate way to describe those years, whose enchantment has been forgotten by many adults. Miyazaki's works have always been conceived for an all-encompassing audience, both in culture and in age, but he focused particularly on younger viewers, who could identify with the protagonists: the Japanese director has never concealed his love for younger generations, so he wrote and drew for them and about them.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Children's Literature; Transmedia storytelling; Man-Nature Relationship; Childhood and Young Education; Gender Education; Hayao Miyazaki; Japan; Italy; XXth Century.

* The reference is to the strong and fascinating documentary by Sunada Mami. The director shoots the creative process that takes place inside Studio Ghibli and focuses on Hayao Miyazaki; she spends most of the time inside the Studio, a three-floor bright building surrounded by a luxuriant park. Mami very well portrays not only how a company works, but also the atmosphere that surrounds the production of an animated feature film, which leaves a mark in our feelings that is impossible to erase.

1. Hayao Miyazaki between Children's literature

Hayao Miyazaki is a Japanese author, a manga artist and an animator; he is also a film director, a producer and a screenwriter. He directed many animated features: *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (1984), *Laputa: Castle in the Sky* (1986), *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988), *Kiki's Delivery Service* (1989), *Porco Rosso* (1992), *Princess Mononoke* (1997), *Spirited Away* (2001), *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea* (2008) and *The Wind Rises* (2013). They are all full of characters, plots and symbols of children's literature of all times¹. In fact, one of the peculiarities of the Japanese Master is that he is inspired by autobiographical events that left a sad mark in his own life, as well as by the imaginary worlds created by some of the major western children's books writers, such as Stephen King, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, Astrid Lindgren, Bianca Pitzorno, Italo Calvino and Philip Pullman.

¹ For the history of children's literature, the epistemological perspectives and the itinerary for research, see also: L. Cantatore, *Parva sed apta mihi. Studi sul paesaggio domestico nella letteratura per l'infanzia del XIX secolo*, Pisa, ETS, 2015; W. Grandi, *La vetrina magica. 50 anni di BolognaRagazziAwards (The Magic Showcase. 50 Years of BolognaRagazziAwards, Publishers and Children's Books)*, Pisa, ETS, 2015; A. Cagnolati (ed.), *Tessere trame narrare storie. Le donne e la scrittura per l'infanzia*, Roma, Aracne, 2013; A. Faeti, *Guardare le figure. Gli illustratori italiani dei libri per l'infanzia*, Roma, Donzelli, [2011], 2013; S. Calabrese, *Letteratura per l'infanzia. Fiaba, romanzo di formazione, crossover*, Milano, Mondadori, 2013; M.T. Trisciuzzi, *Hayao Miyazaki. Sguardi oltre la nebbia*, Roma, Carocci, 2013; A. Antoniazzi, *Contaminazioni. Letteratura per ragazzi e crossmedialità*, Milano, Apogeo, 2012; I. Filograsso, *Bambini in trappola. Pedagogia nera e letteratura per l'infanzia*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2012; G. Grilli, *Libri nella giungla. Orientarsi nell'editoria per ragazzi*, Roma, Carocci, 2012; Hamelin Associazione Culturale (ed.), *Ad occhi aperti. Leggere l'albo illustrato*, Roma, Donzelli, 2012; M. Salisbury, M. Styles, *Children's picturebooks: the art of visual storytelling*, London, Laurence King, 2012; M. Terrusi, *Albi illustrati. Leggere, guardare, nominare il mondo nei libri per l'infanzia*, Roma, Carocci, 2012; E. Beseghi, G. Grilli (edd.), *La letteratura invisibile. Infanzia e libri per bambini*, Carocci, Roma, 2011; L. Tosi, A. Petrina (edd.), *Dall'ABC a Harry Potter. Storia della letteratura inglese per l'infanzia e la gioventù*, Bologna, BUP, 2011; M. Nikolajeva, *Power, voice and subjectivity in literature for young readers*, New York, Routledge, 2009; P. Boero, D. Boero, *Storia del Cinema. Letteratura per l'infanzia in cento film*, Genova, Le Mani Editore, 2008; M. Bernardi, *Infanzia e Fiaba. Le avventure del fiabesco fra bambini, letteratura per l'infanzia, narrazione teatrale e cinema*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2005; K. Reynolds, *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Mcmillan, 2005; S. Blezza Picherle, *L'albo illustrato. Immagini, significati, sensi*, in A. Campagnaro (ed.), *Poche storie... si legge!*, Atti Primo Convegno Regionale Lazio sulla promozione della lettura per bambini e per ragazzi, «Il Pepeverde», vol. 20, n. 1, 2004, pp. 66-69; S. Chapleu, *New Voices in Children's Literature Criticism*, Lichfield, Pied Piper Publishing, 2004; A. Ascenzi (ed.), *La letteratura per l'infanzia oggi*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2002; A. Faeti, *I diamanti in cantina. Come leggere la letteratura per ragazzi*, Cesena, Il Ponte vecchio, 2001; P. Hunt, *Children's Literature*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 2001; V. Watson, *The Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001; W. Fochesato, *Libri illustrati: come sceglierli?*, Milano, Mondadori, 2000; P. Boero, C. De Luca, *La letteratura per l'infanzia*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1995.

The first Miyazaki film that comes to Italian theatres is *Princess Mononoke*² in 2000. This film was originally shown in theatres as a «movie for children», but it is actually one of the most mature of Miyazaki's animated features. The plot is intricate, the tone is dark, some battle scenes are realistically brutal and the many protagonists and supporting characters can be better understood and appreciated by an audience, which is able to keep concentrated and sustain a constant emotional tension.

We have to understand that, at the beginning, Miyazaki's films were poorly distributed in Italy and only a few people saw them. However, thanks to the news coverage of the international prizes, he received and the word of mouth of the viewers, who presented Miyazaki's work as something original and different; he managed to get a much better distribution for his following movies.

During the '80s and the '90s, Studio Ghibli's³ production was distributed in the United States, thanks to a deal between Tokuma Shoten Publishing and The Walt Disney Company. Later on, the director refused to keep this granting of rights after the dialogues and original scores of his movies, such as *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*⁴ and *My Neighbor Totoro*⁵, had been cut and censored, in order to make them «less Japanese» and more satisfactory for the English-speaking audience. Nevertheless, the real beauty of Miyazaki's *anime* lies in his own interpretation of the traditional Japanese culture, in his love for ancient stories of *kami* (Gods) and *rei* (Spirits), as well as in the inspiration from traditional values. For example, the *bushi-dō*, i.e. *the way of the noble warrior*, is supported

² *Principessa Mononoke*; Original title: *Mononoke Hime* (1997); international title: *Princess Mononoke*; subject by Hayao Miyazaki; written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki; supervising animators: Masashi Ando, Kitaro Kosaka, Yoshifumi Kondo; art directors: Nizo Yamamoto, Naoya Tanaka, Yoji Takeshige, Satoshi Kuroda, Kazuo Oga; computer graphics: Yoshinori Sugano; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 134'.

³ In 1984, Hayao Miyazaki's animated feature film *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* came out; the movie was based on a *manga* (the Japanese word for *comics*) that was written and illustrated by Miyazaki himself. The movie had an extraordinary success, which prompted Miyazaki, jointly with his friend and colleague Isao Takahata, to establish a new animation film studio: *Studio Ghibli*. *Ghibli* is an Italian word that stands for "hot wind that blows in the Sahara desert". This name was also used for some Italian airplanes. Miyazaki loves airplanes and Italy; therefore, he gave his studio this name. His "love-hate" for flying is very well depicted in his last work, *The wind rises*. The title comes from a Tatsuo Hori short story with the same name. Hori chose a verse of a poem by Paul Valéry, *Le vent se lève, il faut tenter de vivre*, which becomes *Kaze tachinu, iza ikimeyamo* in Japanese, and *The wind rises, we must try to live* in English. H. Miyazaki, *Note di Regia* from film "Si alza il vento", <<http://www.studioghiibliessential.it/film-thewindrises.html>> (last access: 26th May, 2016).

⁴ *Nausicaä della Valle del Vento*; international title: *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*; original title: *Kaze no Tani no Nausicaä* (1984); directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayah Miyazaki, based on his own *manga*; supervising animator: Kazuo Komatsubara; art director: Mitsuyoshi Nakamura; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toru Hada; running time: 117'.

⁵ *Il mio Vicino Totoro*; international title: *My Neighbor Totoro*; original title: *Tonari no Totoro* (1998); directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayah Miyazaki; supervising animator: Yashiharu Sato; art director: Kazuo Oga; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toru Hada; running time: 86'.

by moral qualities that drive the *samurai* (like the code of honour for European medieval knights), such as justice, loyalty, compassion, courage and honesty. Therefore, in the Japanese culture, the real force lies in not worrying about our own happiness in order to pursue an ideal and fulfil a duty for the others and ourselves. In the history of film, this kind of mentality is emblematically depicted by Akira Kurosawa's cult movie *Seven Samurai* (*Shichinin no Samurai*, 1954) as well as in some western movies.

Later on, Miyazaki looked for inspiration beyond his origins and drew it from different sources, combining the western and the traditional Japanese cultural heritage. He loves Italy and Europe and often set his animated fairy tales in the West; it is an imaginary West that resembles the East dreamed by many western artists. According to Emy Beseghi:

There is a spiritual, and often magic, dimension, with which the great Japanese Master depicts fantastic beings, who are friends with girls and boys; they come from the pantheon of the Japanese mythology, mostly from the Shinto (Japanese religion), that is characterized by an animistic vision of nature. The fascination of this life philosophy lies in seeing the beauty of small things (i.e. a blade of grass that grows or a dewdrop that falls) as well as in the beauty of great landscapes, snowy mountain tops contrasting with blue skies, or huge and mysterious forests that initiate the characters⁶.

2. *The Man-Nature relationship between destruction and rebirth*

One of the recurring themes in Miyazaki's films is the relationship between Man and Nature; sometimes they can be violently in contrast, but sometimes they can be in harmony. For example, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* is a wonderful tribute to pacifism and environmental awareness, along with a strong indictment against the inclination of humans to destroy and pollute; it also symbolically portrays a high respect for nature and life in any shape and form. In fact, in Miyazaki's stories, human beings do not usually play key roles, which are instead played by animals and fantastic creatures with animal features, like the Totoros.

Furthermore, children are the protagonists of most of his films: their innocence is in contrast with the violence of the adult world, therefore they often have the power to bring people together and bring them closer to nature. For example, Mei and Satsuki, the two little sisters who are the protagonists of *Tonari no Totoro*, become close friends with the spirits of the woods, thus confirming the pivotal role of girls and boys in bringing Man closer to Nature and its mysteries. *Satsuki* and *Mei* can be translated as «May», so they can be

⁶ E. Beseghi, *La cattedra di Peter. Castelli erranti, città incantate, valli del vento*, «Liber», n. 89, 2011, pp. 73-74.

considered as a metaphor of spring, of the liveliness of childhood, of the rebirth as opposed to death, and of the various aspects of the human spirit; the two sisters are physically separated but metaphorically united by their names, thus symbolizing the different characteristics of every single person.

Another theme that we find in this film, in addition to the connection between childhood and nature, is «death». It is usually considered taboo for children and it is subject for discussions among adults, because they are afraid that talking about it could be a problem and discomfort children; but, actually, children often ask about death, since they have to face it in real life; therefore, they ask for answers that adults are not able to give.

Death is also referred to as *The Darker Side of Children's Books*⁷. Pádraic Whyte, Assistant Professor in English at Trinity College Dublin, explains that: «For hundreds of years, many of the books written for children have dealt with complex and seemingly dark themes, yet the popular myth persists that such themes cannot be found in children's literature»⁸. Moreover, he goes on:

From the cruel and violent misogyny of *The Little Mermaid* (1837) and the depiction of a child's emerging sexuality in *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) through to the engagement with violence and xenophobia in Armin Greder's picturebook *The Island* (2007) and the treatment of child death in Siobhán Parkinson's *All Shining in the Spring: The Story of the Baby Who Died* (1995), children's literature has not shied away from dealing with dark and disturbing themes⁹.

Anna Castagnoli very well describes the theme of death, together with the relationship between children and nature and the metaphor for growing up, with reference to fairytales, specifically to the 1595 ballad by Thomas Millington *Babes in The Wood*. As we can infer from the title, the story is about two children, who are adopted by a greedy uncle after having been orphaned. In order to get rid of the children, the uncle orders two ruffians to take them in the wood and kill them. One of the ruffians is moved to pity, so he kills his accomplice and abandons the children in the wood; but they are unable to feed themselves, so they starve and freeze to death. The ballad ends with two robin birds coming and covering the children's bodies with leaves. This story cannot be described as a fairytale due to the lack of magical elements; it has only two things in common with the reworked retelling of *Hansel and Gretel*: the brother/sister couple and the abandonment in the woods.

⁷ See <https://www.tcd.ie/news_events/articles/death-violence-the-monstrous-in-childrens-literature-focus-of-exhibition/5981#.V08R6PmLS00> and <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2lZcQURfzfg>> (last access: 26th May, 2016).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

Maybe in the wake of a real piece of news, or maybe in the wake of the ritual of abandonment as explained by Vladimir Propp in his study of fairytale origins¹⁰, this ballad had an unlimited success in England: it was printed and reprinted, and made into films, cartoons and many pantomimes, but maybe the most successful interpretation was Randolph Caldecott's¹¹, published by Frederik Warne & Co. Ltd in London and New York in 1879¹².

Castagnoli explains:

The two little children stand out in a very realistically depicted wood (the nature is so well described, that a botanist could list the plant species); they run and then die without receiving the consolation of a fairy. Only the robin birds pity them. In the Celtic tradition, these birds represent the rebirth of spring and are in charge of the rite of passage to the New Year. Caldecott stages the only magical act: in the last scene, the oaks in the wood are suddenly deprived of their beautiful leaves, but the continuity of space and narrative would have them to be identical to the previous image. Is it the mourning of nature for the children or rather does it reveal the real secret of the fairytale of the children in the wood? The secret of the metamorphosis of the growth, of that delicate rite of initiation that leads from childhood to adulthood: it is a passage that requires the acknowledgement of death as a viaticum¹³.

As for the film *My Neighbor Totoro*, the strength and power of Nature prevail on the fear of its destruction, and life – or, at least, hope – prevails on death, to prove the limitless resources of the human spirit. Through the images on screen, Hayao Miyazaki succeeds in sending important messages, which are very clear, despite the use of (pretty obvious) metaphors; this way, he highlights the idea that, if we want to overcome difficulties, we have to find courage in us, but also in what surrounds us, like the small details in everyday life. The peace and the strength with which the characters face a potential adversity show that it is useless to hide sorrow and pain, because we just have to find the best way to address them.

According to Emy Beseghi, children meeting books and animated feature films often «result in a captivating and saving encounter»¹⁴. In fact, in these stories, children find something wonderful and dreamlike; they follow:

¹⁰ V. Propp, *Morfologia della fiaba*, Roma, Newton Compton Editori, 2009; Id., *Le radici storiche dei racconti di magia*, Roma, Newton Compton Editori, 2009.

¹¹ R. Caldecott, *Babes in The Wood*, London & New York, Frederick Warne & Co Ltd, 1879.

¹² A. Castagnoli, *Seguendo le briciole nel bosco*, «Hors Cadre[s], L'illustration des contes», n. 9, October 2011, pp. 24-27. The article has been excerpted from Anna Castagnoli's blog *Le figure dei libri. Dentro intorno a margine a capo del libro illustrato*, <<http://www.lefiguredeilibri.com/2011/11/09/segundo-le-briciole-nel-bosco-un-mio-articolo-sulla-rivista-hors-cadres/>> (last access: 26th May, 2016).

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ E. Beseghi, *La passione secondo Montag*, in Ead. (ed.), *Infanzia e racconto. Il libro, le figure, la voce, lo sguardo*, Bononia University Press, Bologna, 2003, pp. 18-19.

an invisible abode, a secret realm where they can search for their own paths, lay down their dreams, explore, be surprised, discover things their own way and never lose their own point of view. Therefore, they never give up on their childlike gaze, but they are simultaneously able to see the world with different eyes¹⁵.

The artistic message of Miyazaki is based on a childhood rich in magic, which has the right to play and the desire to have its breath taken away by astonishment and by the dream to live in an *Other* world; but he also explores adolescence and its difficult and conflicting phases of transformation into adulthood.

As Anna Antoniazzi underlines: «Children's literature narrates a child's gaze and its extraordinary saving power, thus frequently offering characters at the border, who struggle between remaining elsewhere and acquiring a new matureness»¹⁶.

It is interesting to notice how Nature is always seen as benevolent, when compared to the destructive actions of men and progress, but, when analyzed separately, it is seen as ruthless and cruel; if it is attacked and oppressed, Nature reacts with violence and destroys everything it finds.

A lot depends on gaze and perspective: Miyazaki's perspective is multicenter and looks at the reality as a place with lights and darks, with synergy between the characters, and with opportunities to put right what once went wrong. In this regard, we can find a way *back to nature*, to the Earth's original pureness, to a *Paradise Lost*¹⁷, which is a theme that we can come across in many of his films, since the childhood of the author was marked by wars and its subsequent environmental disasters caused by men.

3. Female's point of view

«We have reached a time, in which males' way of thinking is reaching a limit. Girls and women have more flexibility. That is why a female's point of view is more fitting to current times»¹⁸. With this sentence, Miyazaki seems to identify the destruction of the world and the natural and environmental disasters with a «male era» and that this must be replaced with a different saving action, i.e. a «female era», in which women rule the world.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ A. Antoniazzi, *L'isola che non c'è. La tentazione di non crescere*, in A. Antoniazzi, A. Gasparini, *Nella stanza dei bambini. Tra letteratura per l'infanzia e psicanalisi*, Bologna, Clueb, 2009, p. 59.

¹⁷ The reference is to *Paradise Lost* by John Milton. For more details, see: R. Sanesi, E. Tadini, *John Milton. Paradiso Perduto*, Torino, Einaudi, 1992.

¹⁸ *Interview to Hayao Miyazaki in Kaboom: Explosive Animation from America and Japan*, Sidney, Museum of Contemporary Art, 1994, p. 129.

Miyazaki's works have always been conceived for an all-encompassing audience, both in culture and in age, but he focused particularly on younger viewers, who could identify with the protagonists: the Japanese director has never concealed his love for younger generations, so he wrote for them and about them; we must say, that he always paid specific attention to little girls and boys.

It is very rare to find someone who is able to approach childhood's themes and problems without overindulging in clichés, sentimentalism, or moving ruses. Hayao Miyazaki learned this skill through his life experiences, since he was able to transform the problems he had while growing up and the search for his own independence into positive elements and did this thanks to the power of his inner vision, on which he will then build a universe made of those cheerful and dynamic characters that made him famous.

Since he bases every film on strong female characters, Miyazaki has been called *Onna no Jidai*, which means creator/initiator of the «age of women» in films¹⁹. Undoubtedly, his heroines are born in the Japanese culture, but, instead of just being umpteenth variation on this theme, they come out as role models, who are often characterized by strong elements of the Western culture.

Miyazaki's impressive enhancement of the female roles proves to be open and progressive and differs from the media, whose vision of little girls has always been misogynous and considered them only as supporters, as companions who create difficulties or as soft and shallow characters. This negative vision of little female characters has been highlighted by Emy Beseghi:

Usually, the *media* prove that they have always been attached to a very unforgiving scenery that doesn't offer many opportunities to the little girl and that cannot – or doesn't want to – show her image if not through trite *clichés*; this image is inevitably related to the idea of inferiority and insubordination, to self-pitying, to coquetry, and to an overbearing political and existential *convergence*²⁰.

In the preceding children's literature, adventure was prohibited to little girls. Excluding little girls from the possibility to live adventures was – from a symbolic point of view – a quite common negative attitude. As Emma Watson said, better remembered as Hermione Granger, «the brightest witch of the age»²¹, in the *Harry Potter* books:

I feel like young girls are told they have to be a princess, and be delicate and fragile, and that is b*t [nonsense]. I identify much more with the idea of being a warrior, being a fighter. If

¹⁹ See A. Antonini, *L'incanto del mondo. Il cinema di Hayao Miyazaki*, Milano, Il Principe Costante Edizioni, 2005, p. 65.

²⁰ A. Di Stefano, C. Migani, *Anna Livingstone, i suppose. Le bambine nei fumetti*, in E. Beseghi (ed.), *Ombre rosa. Le bambine tra libri, fumetti e altri media*, Teramo, Lisciani & Giunti, 1987, p. 21.

²¹ These are the words used in the *Harry Potter* books to define Hermione's character.

I were going to be a princess, I would be a warrior princess, definitely. I think women are scared of feeling powerful and strong and brave sometimes. I think you have to embrace it²².

Adventures warring protagonist ad Katniss Everdeen, main character of the cult saga *Hunger Games*²³ by Suzanne Collins written, the skillful orphan with bow and arrows, played by Jennifer Lawrence at the movies, rejects the stereotype of the male warrior: it is a rebel that protects without checking, without overpowering the fight and use force without succumb to it. Alternatively, as the protagonist of *The Sleeper and the Spindle*²⁴, children's book written by the famous Neil Gaiman and illustrated by Chris Riddell. The volume is a free adaptation of Snow White and the fairy tale Sleeping Beauty. This time, however, the princess will not be awakened by a prince's kiss but by a queen's one. It is the story of a young queen that, on the eve of her wedding, sets out to rescue a princess from an enchantment. She casts aside her bulky and impractical wedding clothes, takes her chain mail and her sword and follows her brave dwarf retainers into the tunnels under the mountain toward the sleeping kingdom. This queen will decide her own future – and the princess who needs rescuing is not what she seems; Margaret Mead said:

All discussions about the *status* of women, the character, the temperament of women, the emancipation and subjugation of women are losing sight of the basic fact which is that the parts of the two sexes are designed according to the cultural story that is the basis of reports human and that the growing child is modeled just as surely as the child in a particular fee and well-defined²⁵.

After all, the purity and innocence of their gaze allows little boys and girls to live the world in a way that is different and inaccessible to adults, who are choking on society's rhythm and conventions. The cage of *routine* and appearance is a filter that clouds imagination and distances people from their past, when they were adolescents, or boys and girls.

In addition, as we know, curiosity brings children to safety. Gloria Grilli wrote about *saving curiosity*:

Since it prevents from passively accepting motionless concepts, saving curiosity for an individual, who isn't satisfied, but also for the general progress of the human being, brings said individual to doubt and to imagine something else, to constantly go and see and prove, thus bringing him to the possibility [...] of having to redefine everything²⁶.

²² S. Danna, *Le ragazze guerriere*, «La Lettura - Corriere della Sera», May 22nd, 2016, p. 2.

²³ S. Collins, *Hunger Games*, New York, Scholastic, 2008-2010; Ead., *Hunger Games*, Milano, Mondadori, 2009; Ead., *Hunger Games. La ragazza di fuoco*, Milano, Mondadori, 2010; Ead., *Hunger Games. Il canto della rivolta*, Milano, Mondadori, 2012.

²⁴ N. Gaiman, C. Riddell, *The Sleeper and the Spindle*, London, Bloomsbury, 2014.

²⁵ M. Mead, *Sesso e temperamento*, Milano, Il Saggiatore, 1967, p. 22.

²⁶ See Grilli, *Le maschere*, cit., p. 99.

Mei²⁷ has this kind of curiosity: while her sister is at school, Mei, who is only four years old, explores the garden around her house and, urged by her enthusiasm and by the desire for discovery, she often goes farther than she should. Once, she follows a trail of acorns and, in the tall grass, she sees a strange small being pop out from the ground: it is a sort of rabbit-cat, who is running away from something and at times, it becomes invisible. She follows the strange creature, who is joined by a bigger one. Mei goes through a tunnel of roots and arrives in a wood, where she falls in the trunk of a giant oak while trying to take an acorn. In the trunk, she sees a wood in the wood, where a creature similar to the ones she saw before is sleeping; only this one is huge. Mei is not scared, but rather curious and amused. Unlike *The girl who loved Tom Gordon* by Stephen King, or the girls in *The Path*²⁸, Mei strays from the path and tries «not to think that, sometimes, if you get lost in the wood, you could get hurt. Sometimes, you could die»²⁹.

Like many other little girls in the fairytale universe, Mei – who reminds us of Alice³⁰ and Little Red Riding Hood³¹ – meets someone in the wood, but unlike them, the protagonist knows that she is not in front of a Queen, who will try to cut her head, or a wolf, who is going to eat her. Given by the many stories she knows, her experience helps her associate this animal with *Totoro*: without any fear, she lays down on his belly and serenely falls asleep. In this passage, Nature becomes a refuge for Mei, a protective *Mother*³², a sort of parallel magic world in which many mysterious creatures live and wait to be discovered. The girl is not left alone during her exploratory and existential journey, because she can count on the reassuring figure of *Totoro*, «the keeper of the forest», who, towards the end of the story, is going to help her in apparently irresolvable situations.

The bus that *Totoro* is waiting for is a bus-shaped giant cat: when it arrives, he gets on the Cat-Bus (*Nekobus*) and takes the umbrella with him. Right after that, the bus, where the father of the two little girls is on, arrives. This scene highlights the contrast, but also the juxtaposition, of two worlds: the real world and the fantasy world; they peacefully coexist, but only in the imagination of children, or at least of anyone, whose vision isn't blurred, yet. In return for their

²⁷ *My Neighbor Totoro*.

²⁸ *The Path*, Tale of Tales, 2009. Antoniazzi explains: «The real protagonist of the videogame is the wood; a surreal and unsettling wood, in which six girls dresses in red – selected one by one by the player – walk around and that resembles the wood of fairy-tales». See A. Antoniazzi, *Contaminazioni. Letteratura per ragazzi e crossmedialità*, Milano, Apogeo, 2012, p. 66.

²⁹ Stephen King, *La bambina che amava Tom Gordon*, Milano, Sperling & Kupfer, 1999, p. 3.

³⁰ The protagonist of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking glass, and what Alice found there*.

³¹ See S. Calabrese, D. Feltracco, *Cappuccetto rosso: una fiaba vera*, Torino, Einaudi, 2005.

³² The bond between «Mother-Nature», symbol of refuge and protection, and the «Tiger-Mother», the main image of the illustrated fairy-tale by Cheng Jiang Hong, is full of ancient symbols with deep references and reminds of the figures from the myth. See the picturebook C. Jiang Hong, *Il principe tigre*, Milano, Babalibri, 2005.

umbrella, the girls receive some seeds, and they decide to plant them in a part of the garden that surrounds their house. The seeds represent the power of life, the (both physical and inner) growth and the improvement of a previous situation. The love of Nature is also a very strong image that is conveyed by the two girls planting the seeds. During their sleep, both Mei and Satzuki see *Totoro* in their dreams, who wanders about where they planted the seeds; this is proof that their bond is stronger than the bond between two ordinary sisters and they almost result to be the same person. When they go out at night, they join *Totoro* and together they attend to the germinating and the rapid growth of an enormous plant, which resembles *Totoro*'s house. Like Mei, Satzuki, too, goes back to childhood: she finds herself on the border between childhood and adolescence. The girls hug *Totoro* and, together, they fly in the night sky. However, in the morning, they cannot find the plant in the garden anymore; Mei and Satzuki do not understand, nor agree if they have dreamed or actually lived an experience that they both remember very well: but they find the first sprouts of the seeds they planted. This image is also a symbol of growth, which usually comes all of a sudden and is not always easy to accept. Even though they are still young girls, or maybe because of that, Mei and Satzuki live every day the unstable condition of their mother with calm, until they receive a message from the clinic in which she is hospitalized. When little Mei runs away from home to go to the hospital to her mother, she gets lost and her older sister Satzuki, together with all the families of the small village, look for her everywhere, but cannot find her. Eventually, Satzuki turns to *Totoro* and begs him to help her find her missing sister. *Totoro* accepts the girl's plea and helps her look for the little girl, together with the Cat-Bus³³, which Satzuki gets on. The Cat-Bus drives at full speed towards her missing sister: it drives through the wood, the fields and on high voltage transmission lines. Mei is scared and cried: after a long exploratory journey, that recalls an emotional journey, they find her. This can be seen as a new force and a regained hope, as a rebirth and the return to the Here world. Only thanks to the help of the *other* world, embodied by *Totoro* and his friend the Cat-Bus: they are both creatures of the world of imagination, in which the two sisters live part of their everyday life's experiences. Alison Lurie tells about an important moment of her childhood:

When I was seven years old, my family moved to the country and my perception of the world drastically changed. I was used to organized and regular spaces: I saw identical cities, streets, condominiums, and parks with rectangular flowerbeds and flowers that we could "not touch" behind fences. Suddenly, I found myself in a landscape that was characterized by an exciting disorder, variety and surprise. As the daughter of modern-days and learned parents, I was told that most of the most interesting characters of my favorite stories were

³³ Even though they resemble real animals, Miyazaki's animals often result from the union of different species. In this case, the director carries us to the magic world of imagination on a very particular creature: a crossbreed between a cat and a bus.

not real: witches, fairies, dragons and giants didn't exist. [...] I gave up my common sense and started to believe what the stories in my books were saying. Suddenly, I noticed that the landscape was full of mysteries and possibilities, it was basically alive. I was not surprised, after all: it was the way most people had seen the natural world for thousands of years and it was the way it was depicted in the stories I loved most³⁴.

During her childhood, the writer, just like Satzuki, indulges in her fantasy world and believes the impossible making it possible, so, for her, curiosity becomes *saving curiosity*: using it as an asset, the protagonists were able to see and meet *Totoro*, who helped the find Mei. Miyazaki always created his movies for younger generations and wrote stories about them. His films are often a journey in the world of children through an honest and accurate look at the sensitivity of the little ones. The Japanese author is great, not only because his settings are perfect, he is obsessively perfectionist or he sends deep messages on being aware of environment and peace, but also because he has a rare delicate way to describe those years, whose enchantment has been forgotten by many adults.

For Satzuki and Mei, as well as for Sosuke, the little protagonist of the adventures with the fish Ponyo, an uncommon friendship with a – mostly imaginary – animal, whose features are the sum of many animals, can somehow make up for the enormous lack of a parental figure in their lives: the two sisters' mother is hospitalized, while Sosuke's father is often forced to stay away from home to work as a fisher.

So, these wonderful allies (both the imaginary and the real ones) carry out the key task of preventing real severe dangers, i.e. that these children grow up too fast because of the sword of Damocles that hangs over their lives and those of their parents and that is responsible for a mournful atmosphere in many scenes, mostly in *Totoro*. Alessandro Bencivenni explains: «*Totoro* shows very well how the imaginary world of children can be an amazing getaway from anguish and the fear of loss that could otherwise be unbearable for a child»³⁵. Bencivenni draws a parallel between the anxiety expressed by the little girls in *Totoro*, who are afraid to lose their mother, and Miyazaki's mother, who suffered from an illness when the director was a child. The story presents many autobiographical implications³⁶.

³⁴ A. Lurie, *Bambini per sempre. Il rapporto tra arte e vita, tra finzione e biografia*, Milano, Mondadori, 2005, p. 180.

³⁵ A. Bencivenni, *Hayao Miyazaki. Il dio dell'anime*, Genova, Le Mani, 2005, p. 95.

³⁶ We have to remind that Miyazaki's childhood was characterized by the fear of losing his mother, who suffered from tuberculosis and therefore had been away from her family for a long time in order to be treated. Despite her illness, we can understand that Miyazaki's mother was a really energetic woman: as the director's younger brother admitted, she was the inspiration for Dola, the pugnacious gang leader in *Laputa*, and a whole lot of powerful and determined female characters, who act as a counterpart for young heroines, who are just as brave, but more spiritual and dreamy and who will be the protagonists of the stories.

For Miyazaki, only the power of imagination can relieve the pain and that feeling of loss that is always in the air in his films. For these children, the feeling of magic is the only therapeutic mental weapon that can be opposed to those sad thoughts that shadow their days.

The little sisters Mei and Sazuki become close friends with the spirits of the woods, and this confirms the pivotal role that, according to Miyazaki, little children play in reuniting Man to Nature. In this context, it should be reminded that the great Astrid Lindgren³⁷ told the story of Ronja Rovaedotter, an independent, energetic and brave little girl like a young and healthy animal of the woods (much like Pippi was forty years before) and the protagonist of Emily Hughes's picturebook, *Wild*. The picturebook's protagonist, a little bit as Pippi and like Mowgli, is found in the forest, and «no one remember how she came to the woods, but all knew it was right»³⁸. The crows teach her to speak, bears to hunt, foxes to play and «she understood, and she was happy»³⁹. But one day some animals come into the scene, animals other than those she knew in the forest, and with a trap they catch the young and cheerful wild. Intrigued and astonished they bring the recalcitrant child in the gray and distant civilization. The wild protagonist ends up in a horrible house pair of orc-psychiatrists that measure the child, dress the child, and with fiendish sadism try to inculcate the use of the alphabet, of good manners and quite games, but «she did not understand, and she was not happy»⁴⁰. After having swept like a tsunami the prison-house, leaves yellow dresses and coercive braid and back naked and happy in the woods «because you cannot tame something so happily wild»⁴¹.

This picturebook, like other well-known novels of Children's literature, talks about identity and diversity, the acceptance of the other, of how humans are different from each other.

Through the history of this beautiful wild child, like the same author and illustrator reiterates, the reader reflects on the concept that everyone should be accepted for what it is. In 1969, Francois Truffaut, famous film's director, interprets and directs *Il ragazzo selvaggio (L'enfant sauvage)*. The film is inspired by a true story of a French physician Jean Itard, who takes care of, and trying to re-integrate into society, Victor, a *wild* boy found in the state of nature in the Aveyron forest⁴².

³⁷ See: A. Lindgren, *Pippi e le sue sorelle*, in F. Lazzarato, D. Ziliotto (edd.), *Bimbe donne e bambole. Protagoniste bambine nei libri per l'infanzia*, Roma, Artemide Edizioni, 1987, pp. 13-16.

³⁸ E. Hughes, *Wild*, London, Flying Eye Books, 2013.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² See: *Mémorial sur les premiers développements de Victor de l'Aveyron* (Paris, 1807). About Victor's story see Sergio Moravia's essay, *Il ragazzo selvaggio dell' Aveyron*, Laterza, Bari, 1972. For a history of wild children up to the contemporary, see: E. Macinai, *Bambini selvaggi. Storie di infanzie negate tra mito e realtà*, Milano, Unicopli, 2009.

Back to Miyazaki's little girls, we can see that Mei, just like any four-year-old child, mangles words, doesn't have a great sense of direction or time and is moved by an unstoppable curiosity: she is relentless and overwhelming, she expresses her feelings without shyness and is an ode to the joy of life. Satzuki is a ten-year-old girl with an open and responsible character, she takes care of her younger sister and helps her father: she is aware of the health conditions of her mother, addresses the difficulties with maturity, but doesn't want to speed up her growth, since she feels at ease with the childlike innocence of Mei and with getting to know *Totoro*⁴³.

The novel inspires his next film with the same name by Eiko Kadono⁴⁴: in it, Miyazaki tells the story of the apprenticeship of the young witch Kiki as a metaphor of her transition to a more complex and independent life stage. Kiki is thirteen years old and, in order to complete her apprenticeship as a witch, she must live for a whole year in a new city relying only on her own resources. In addition to everyday practical problems, she must face new emotions, like loneliness, the indifference of people and the love for Tombo, who is as old as she is. Kiki manages to overcome all challenges, even the temporary loss of her ability to fly, thanks to her inner strength and the help of those nice people she meets during her adventure. *With Kiki's Delivery Service*⁴⁵, Miyazaki underlines the value of ordinary people in everyday life and the importance of the educational role of adults in the growth process of young boys and girls. This movie emphasizes all the small things we face and share every day.

Even if she is two years younger than Kiki, Chihiro, the protagonist of *Spirited Away*⁴⁶, finds herself on the threshold of that age, in which childhood starts to distance itself (for Kiki, this literally happens when she leaves her small town one night, thus leaving her being a child behind herself and going towards a new life that will make her mature and independent).

Chihiro lives at the beginning of the new millennium, i.e. after the economic crisis of 1995 that hit Japan and altered those balances that had been acquired and defined in the post-war period. In the contemporary world, urbanization has spread rapidly and the memory of a farming past (as told in other Miyazaki's films) has disappeared.

⁴³ For more details, see also: Trisciuzzi, *Hayao Miyazaki. Sguardi oltre la nebbia*, cit., chap. 3.

⁴⁴ See the novel by E. Kadono, *Kiki consegna a domicilio [Majo no takkyūbin]*, Bologna, Kappa Edizioni, 2003.

⁴⁵ *Kiki, consegna a domicilio*; original title: *Majo no Takkyūbin* (1989); international title: *Kiki's Delivery Service*; directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki, based on the novel by Eiko Kadono; supervising animators: Shinji Otsuka, Katsuya Kondo and Yoshifumi Kondo; art director: Hiroshi Ono; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Hayao Miyazaki, Toru Hada and Toshio Suzuki; running time: 103'.

⁴⁶ *La città incantata*; original title: *Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi*; international title: *Spirited away*; directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki; supervising animators: Masashi Ando, Kitaro Kosaka and Megumi Kagawa; art director: Yoji Takeshige; computer graphics: Okui Atsushi; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 125'.

The protagonist of *Spirited Away* lives a pampered life, she has everything, but she is bored, scared and driven by a rabid indifference. The girl almost never smiles and every little setback emphasizes her pouty and displeased expression. One could say that Chihiro suffers from excessive protection. Haku, Linn and Kamaji encourage Chihiro and push her to become independent: they allow her to live experiences and learn from her own mistakes.

The viewer understands the impatience of the protagonist from the very beginning, i.e. from the film's opening scene. It portrays Chihiro's family moving house in a sunny spring day and shows how difficult this is for her, making her sulky and mournful. At the beginning of the story, the girl lies down on the backseat of a flawless Audi and is surrounded by bags – one of which has the *Adidas* logo on – and sacks. Her voice, sometimes worried, sometimes unhappy, reveals a negative attitude towards every change: when her parents show her new school, the girl sits up and sticks out her tongue towards the building and everything that it represents. Nevertheless, Chihiro is also very scared of what she does not know. We could say that everyone would be scared in front of the mysterious gallery that enables the passage between the human world and the world of *kami* and *rei* (Gods and Spirits); everyone, but two impulsive people: her parents.

This little girl, who is almost a teenager already, is starting to face preadolescence, i.e. that phase in which the first uncertainties towards an unknown world, which is perceived as scary, peek out: a period of transition and growth that is full of new encounters and unprecedented experiences. In Miyazaki's work, too, we find girls who are suspended between certainty and the desire to know and understand the transformation inside and outside of them.

Lastly, among Miyazaki's young protagonists, we have to talk about Ponyo – who runs on the sea waves, loves ham and brings the light of the abyss on earth – and her little friend Sosuke, who graces old ladies⁴⁷ with his innocence and cries because he can't find his mother. Ponyo and her friend Sosuke are the protagonists of «an adventurous fairytale about children's love and an answer to the torments of our times», as the director himself puts it. A «reversed» *Bildungsroman*⁴⁸ that children should read and parents should listen to.

⁴⁷ About the relationship between different ages, including the *elderly* and *children*, see: C. Poesio, *Le molte facce della vecchiaia*, «Liber», vol. 48, 2000, pp. 28-33; L. Dozza, F. Frabboni (edd.), *Pianeta anziani. Immagini, condizioni e dimensioni esistenziali*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2010; Idd., *Lo sguardo dei nonni*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2011; M. Corsi, S. Ulivieri (edd.), *Progetto Generazioni. Bambini e Anziani: due stagioni della vita a confronto*, Pisa, ETS, 2012; M.T. Trisciuzzi, *Little Old Ladies. La figura della nonna nella letteratura per l'infanzia*, in F. Pinto Minerva (ed.), *Sguardi incrociati sulla vecchiaia*, Rovato-Lecce, PensaMultimedia, 2015, pp. 87-106.

⁴⁸ About *bildungsroman*, see: S. Calabrese, *Letteratura per l'infanzia. Fiaba, romanzo di formazione, crossover*, Milano, Mondadori, 2013; M. Meek, V. Watson, *Coming of age in children's literature*, London, Continuum, 2003; F. Moretti, *Il romanzo di formazione*, Milano, Garzanti, 1986; K. Morgenstern, *Über das Wesen des Bildungsromans*, Vortrag, 1819, in R. Selbmann, *Der*

In *Gake no ue no Ponyo*, Miyazaki plunges into the deep seas and creates a completely new world, that never appeared in any of his films, setting 80% of the scenes in it. This fascinating movie tells the story of Ponyo, a mermaid whom fights to fulfil her dream to live together with a child named Sosuke. However, it is also the story of a five-year-old boy, who manages to keep a solemn promise. *Ponyo* brings Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* to contemporary Japan and makes it an adventurous fairytale about children's love. Moreover, two novels have inspired *Ponyo*: the first one, *Gake no Shita no Iya Iya En* by Rieko Nagakawa, a Japanese short story for children, that is very popular in Japan; the other one is the legend of Urashima Taro, a fisher who saves a turtle and, as a reward, goes to visit the Dragon Palace, where the God of the Seas resides. In his director's notes, Miyazaki writes:

A village by the sea and a cliff. A small number of characters. The ocean as a living presence. A world, in which magic and alchemy are part of everyday life. In addition, the deep sea interacts with the waves on the surface, just like our subconscious. Through the distortion of space and outlines, the sea abandons its usual role as just a landscape and becomes one of the main characters of the story. A boy and a girl, love and responsibility, ocean and life: these are the situations portrayed and simplified in *Ponyo*. This way, I wanted to offer my answer to the torments and uncertainties of our times⁴⁹.

Ponyo is a film of the highest quality, surrounded by sweet love, full of dreams and hope and makes its viewers happy. *Ponyo* shows the real nature of Hayao Miyazaki. It does not originate exclusively in his imagination, but rather in his real life. This work allows us to see the «waves» of the mind of the Japanese Master without compromising his true self or his heart when he makes a film. The story is flowing, vivid and sparkling and it comes to life with Ponyo's desire to change, her «eccentric» wish to leave the world she was born in, which is pure and immaculate, to go up and inhabit the mainland, which is dirty and polluted. Her ascent brings alteration on both the girl/fish's inside and outside. The worlds tip over and connect the internal world with the external world, the sea world and the terrestrial world, the animal world and the human world. Even if it fits in the Andersenian dimension⁵⁰ - including her ability to turn into sea-foam – Ponyo is a new figure of the modern mermaid. However,

deutsche Bildungsroman. 2., überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage, Stuttgart, Metzler Verlag, 1994, pp. 9-12; C. Papini, D. Fioretti, T. Spignoli (edd.), *Il romanzo di formazione nell'Ottocento e nel Novecento*, Pisa, ETS, 2007.

⁴⁹ H. Miyazaki, *Note di Regia. Un Villaggio In Riva Al Mare*, <<http://www.studioghiibliessential.it/film-ponyosullascogliera.html>> (last access: 26th May, 2016).

⁵⁰ H.C. Andersen, *Fiabe*, con *Introduzione* di G. Rodari, *Prefazione* di K. Ferlov, Torino, Einaudi, 2005; Id., Andersen, *Fiabe e storie*, con *Introduzione* di Vincenzo Cerami, *Illustrazioni* di Fabian Negrin, Roma, Donzelli, 2014. For more details on Andersen's works, see: A. Lurie, *Il brutto anatroccolo: Hans Christian Andersen*, in Ead., *Bambini per sempre*, cit., pp. 20-29; F. Bacchetti, *Andersen e la fiaba: un classico tra letteratura e pedagogia*, in F. Cambi (ed.), *Itinerari nella fiaba. Autori, testi, figure*, Pisa, ETS, 1999, pp. 87-101.

it is always present as a kiss, the *fairytale happy ending* changes its meaning in Miyazaki's film. It is not the Disney version of a kiss that sets forth the *happy ending* as the only solution for the male⁵¹ or female protagonist⁵², but it is a fairytale kiss – in its most traditional meaning – that we can understand as a possible plan for the future.

4. Castles and Islands

Castles have always been the quintessential source of mystery and fairytale *topoi*⁵³. In fact, as Emy Beseghi explains, «in fairytales, the castle is hidden in the heart of the forest and, in his research, Propp identifies it with an isolated house in the woods, where – in various civilizations – girls and boys spent their period of initiation»⁵⁴.

Narrated houses are sometimes homes that tell a story, who speak of themselves and of those who live there, contain clues – of historical and geographic places of social classes, symbols, *status*, generational or epochal cycles, family transformations, of *moods*⁵⁵.

Casa di fiaba, published by Topipittori, written by Giovanna Zoboli and illustrated by Anna Emilia Laitinen, it is a poem dedicated to the place most explored by children, in every nook and cranny its most secret, in the dream and reality.

There are houses that run on chicken feet, like those found in Russia, *Nel bosco della Baba Jaga* – Russian fairy tale rewritten by Luigi Dal Cin – as a beautiful as horrific images, populated by female figures protagonists and architects of a total reversal of classical roles like that.

Anthropomorphic houses, almost reptilian, raised a little from the land as to overlie humanity with its futility, they have been represented in many ways:

⁵¹ See: *Porco Rosso*; original title: *Kurenai no Buta* (1992); international title: *Porco Rosso*; directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayah Miyazaki; supervising animator: Masashi Ando; art director: Katsu Hisamura; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 93'.

⁵² See: *Ponyo sulla scogliera*; original title: *Gake no ue no Ponyo* (2008); international title: *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea*; directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayah Miyazaki; supervising animator: Katsuya Kondo; art director: Noboru Yoshida; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 100'.

⁵³ For more details on this theme, see also: V. Propp, *Morfologia della fiaba*, op. cit.; V. Propp, *Le radici storiche dei racconti di magia*, op. cit.

⁵⁴ E. Beseghi, *Interiors. Case che parlano, stanze che sussurrano*, in *L'isola misteriosa. Finzioni di fine secolo*, Milano, Mondadori, 1995, p. 61.

⁵⁵ For more details, see: Cantatore, *Parva sed apta mihi. Studi sul paesaggio domestico nella letteratura per l'infanzia del XIX secolo*, cit.

from the fairytale to the picturebook, up to the Japanese animations movies *Howl's Moving Castle*⁵⁶.

The house of the great wizard Howl, that magic castle that moves among realms that are constantly at war, deals with the thematic width that the *topos* contains, which summarizes the meanings of many fairytale houses of children's literature⁵⁷. At first, the castle of the wizard Howl – as seen through the eyes of the protagonist, Sophie, and the people who catch sight of it in the distance – reminds us of Bluebeard's castle⁵⁸, with its forbidden room full of blood and young women. This might be because it is told that, when passing close to cities, Howl broke many hearts and rumor spread that he stole – we don't know if «metaphorically» or «literally» until we enter the heart of the story – the girl's hearts. In addition to the castle full of secrets of Perrault's fairytale, as the story goes on, Howl's castle reminds us of the one where Beauty meets the Beast, or rather those castles where medieval princes married the Melusines⁵⁹ – hybrid creatures half-woman half-snake – but also the castle that, in Gothic novels, stands out dark and intimidating, where the misadventures of the famous «persecuted princess» waiting for a prince who saves her are set⁶⁰. Inside, the castle is different with respect to how it looks externally and gives a different impression. Between the house and its owners there is an archetypal bond, an external and internal reflection: the house in this case reflects the personality of its inhabitants. Howl comes across a certain way, but as soon as we get to know him deeply well, we change our opinion and understand that we never have to judge a book by its cover. This way, the director goes back to a basic idea of his poetics: there is no such a thing, situation or person that is completely good or bad, beautiful or ugly, strong or weak. Each one of these characteristics are part of everyone and we never have to judge the looks with levity and shallowness, but we always have to increase our understanding, or at least pay more attention to problems that can allow us to reflect on what is beyond⁶¹.

An essential theme in Miyazaki's world is the «threshold»: not everyone can see it, not everyone can cross it. A recurring and very important fairytale

⁵⁶ The reference is to *Il castello errante di Howl*; original title: *Hauru no Ugoku Shiro* (2004); international title: *Howl's Moving Castle*; directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; screenplay by: Hayah Miyazaki; based on the novel *Howl's moving castle* by Diana Wynne Jones; supervising animators: Akihiro Yamashita, Takeshi Inamura, Kitaro Kosaka; art director: Yoji Takeshige, Noboru Yoshida; computer graphics: Mitsunori Kataama; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 119'.

⁵⁷ See Beseghi, *Interiors. Case che parlano, stanze che sussurrano*, cit.

⁵⁸ About Bluebeard's Fairytale, see also: A. Articoni, *La sua barba non è poi così blu... Immaginario collettivo e violenza misogina nella fiaba di Perrault*, Roma, Aracne, 2014.

⁵⁹ About the story of this character, see also: L. Harf-Lancner, *Morgana e Melusina: la nascita delle fate nel Medioevo*, Torino, Einaudi, 1989.

⁶⁰ See also: Danna, *Le ragazze guerriere*, cit.

⁶¹ For more details on this theme, we recommend G.M. Bertin, *Educazione alla ragione. Lezioni di pedagogia generale*, Roma, Armando, 1968; M. Contini, *Elogio dello scarto e della resistenza. Pensieri ed emozioni di filosofia dell'educazione*, Bologna, Clueb, 2009.

theme, the threshold is the *limen* that separates here from elsewhere, ordinary from extraordinary, the certain and the known from the mysterious and the unknown; as Carlo Ginzburg would put it, our long shamanic journey of initiation begins «beyond» the door, where we venture into the world of the dead. In *Howl's moving castle*, those who are inside the castle and want to exit find themselves in front of a door that is not only what it looks like. Miyazaki suggests to be careful when crossing the threshold of the magic castle, because not everything that the eye sees coincides with reality. This door reminds us of the door that Mr. Magorium⁶² has in his toy store: when turned, the doorknob activates a mechanism that shows a different exit according to the color chosen. Real worlds with an inebriating scent that remind us of the poppy field crossed by Dorothy⁶³, blue skies where we can catch a glimpse of «battleships» with bird-men on board, who are already so brutally deformed to be still human.

Just like, as Antonio Faeti puts it, «at the half of the 16th century, [...] the castle wasn't that impregnable fortress anymore, used mainly to militarily and strategically protect the feud»⁶⁴, so Howl's castle doesn't protect just one realm, since it is always moving: its owner tries to save all realms at war when it intervenes in the conflict without taking any side, but only hindering the killing spree on both sides. If we look closely to Howl's moving castle, we notice that its shape is vaguely anthropomorphic, but it moves squeaking like a giant four-legged chicken; it exists thanks to a pact that binds Calcifer and Howl. The whole building can move thanks to the beating heart of the wizard and the warmth of the small fire demon. The heart and the fire cross and make the castle come to life. Inspired by some ideas of the novel by Diana Wynne Jones⁶⁵, Miyazaki opens the door of the castle on a dark and black sky, a place where war and death are the only cruel realities. The wizard Howl flies in this *non-sky* – it is too gloomy to be defined as such – trying to stop a war with another war, with death and destruction. Only when he understands that the only way to find its own humanity again is by saving the worlds at war, he will be able to open its heart to love, hope and trust⁶⁶.

⁶² See the film with Dustin Hoffman and Natalie Portman: *Mr. Magorium e la bottega delle meraviglie* [Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium], directed by Zach Helm, USA, 2007.

⁶³ *Il mago di Oz* (*The Wizard of Oz*) is a 1939 film based on the book *Il meraviglioso mago di Oz* (*The wonderful Wizard of Oz*), which is the first of the thirteen *Land of Oz* works by L. Frank Baum. The director of the feature film is Victor Fleming, who is best known for *Gone with the wind*, that came out the same year, while Dorothy Gale, the protagonist, is portrayed by Judy Garland, one of the most successful actresses of the time. The film was awarded with many prizes and is considered one of the classics of the cinema history. The famous song *Over the rainbow* (music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by E.Y. Harburg, sung by Judy Garland) has been later sung in other versions by many artists and used in different fields, too.

⁶⁴ A. Faeti, *Gli ospiti e i sogni di quel castello*, in *Gli amici ritrovati. Tra le righe dei grandi romanzi per ragazzi*, Milano, BUR, 2010, p. 147.

⁶⁵ D. Wynne Jones, *Il castello magico di Howl* [Howl's Moving Castle, 1986], Bologna, Kappa Edizioni, 2005.

⁶⁶ For more details, see also: Trisciuzzi, *Hayao Miyazaki. Sguardi oltre la nebbia*, cit., chap. 5.

Another magic castle that we find in Miyazaki's films is Laputa's castle. The director spoke about it in an interview:

Let's try to think of the Treasure Island. That deserted island in the middle of nowhere is an obsolete scheme. The deep sea has been explored, and so has the space. I did not have much choice, so I thought of an old castle. When I had to decide where to place it, the sky was the only option left. Many years ago, I read *Gulliver's Travels*. I immediately thought that Laputa was very interesting and that I would have loved to use it in a project of mine. So eventually, this created the ground for the film⁶⁷.

At the end of the interview, the director reflects on an important matter: «At the end of the day, the things we think about when we face difficulties are always the things we thought when we were children»⁶⁸. As Antonio Faeti explains:

The island appears completely as educational metaphor and educational parable. It is a place where one can hide and find, a remote and restricted elsewhere, a definite space until it comes out as a mirror for those who escape to it to question themselves, or are forced to do so; the island suggests the secret desire of an adolescence that has been deprived even of the most uncertain traces of ancient initiation rites⁶⁹.

The protagonist of *Spirited Away* is a young girl who is almost a teenager, on the border between childhood and adolescence. She is bored, annoyed by internal and external changes, but mostly – as for most adolescents – by her parents, who didn't think twice before jeopardizing their family just to satisfy their uncontrolled gluttony. On the other hand, it is thanks to the inadequacy of adults that Chihiro can land on this city-island and face her personal journey of initiation⁷⁰, thus saving her parents as well. Through the metaphor of the island, the adolescent searches for a place that summarizes horror, punishment and even deadly risks. There are imaginary islands, where adults cannot go or stay, like the Max' island *Where the Wild Things Are*⁷¹, a Maurice Sendak' picturebook, and like *L'isola dei Liombruni* by Giovanni De Feo, an island where children forget about their real lives, their families, their parents and even their names; the only thing left is the island. On this island, adults, who

⁶⁷ H. Miyazaki, Interview in *Extra – Video promozionale*, in *Laputa. Il castello nel cielo*, Lucky Red, 2012.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ A. Faeti, *I tesori e le isole. Infanzia, immaginario, libri e altri media*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1986, p. 25.

⁷⁰ About the journey as a metaphor of education and initiation in children's literature, see: A. van Gennep, *I riti di passaggio*, Torino, Boringhieri, 1981; S. Barsotti, *E cammina, cammina, cammina... Fiaba, viaggio e metafora formativa*, Pisa, ETS, 2004.

⁷¹ M. Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are*, New York, Harper & Row, 1963. About Sendak' picturebook, see: A. Castagnoli, *Maurice Sendak e William Blake: una mia scoperta sulle fonti di "Nel paese dei mostri selvaggi"*, <<http://www.lefiguredeilibri.com/2014/04/28/maurice-sendak-e-william-blake/>> (last access: 26th May, 2016).

remember everything, are not able to defend themselves from the brutal, deadly and animal-like attacks by their children and their little friends.

But we would like to remind of some other imaginary islands: the island where children spend their days out of time and are lost from a world that doesn't look for them anymore, like in Peter Pan's adventures⁷²; or the island, which the lame pirate Long John Silver longed for⁷³, who was constantly looking for a hidden treasure; or the dark and unsettling island in *Lord of the Flies*⁷⁴. But the best balance between the *topos* of the labyrinth and the *topos* of the island, understood as «a place that exists and doesn't exist, [...] a place that is out of time, civilization, laws and institutions»⁷⁵ can be seen in the tv show *Lost*⁷⁶.

In conclusion, animated feature films, comic books, fairytales, novels and picturebooks could metaphorically represent a mysterious and maybe saving island, a restricted but remote place where one can hide, get lost, and find themselves again and perhaps improve to a new and more mature self-awareness.

Filmography by Hayao Miyazaki – Feature Films

Lupin III. Il castello di Cagliostro

1979; original title: *Lupin III: Cagliostro no shiro*

International title: *Lupin III: Castle of Cagliostro*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; storyboard by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki, Haruya Yamazaki, based on the *manga* by Monkey Punch and the novels by Maurice Leblanc; supervising animator: Yasuo Otsuka; art director: Shichiro Kobayashi; artistic supervisor: Kazuhide Tomonaga; music by: Yuji Ono; produced by: Isao Takahata; running time: 100'.

⁷² J.M. Barrie, *Peter and Wendy*, Introduction and notes by Jack Zipes, London, Penguin Books 2004; J. M. Barrie, *Peter Pan nei giardini di Kensington*, Milano, BUR, 2014.

⁷³ L.R. Stevenson, *L'isola del tesoro*, Torino, Einaudi, 2006.

⁷⁴ At the beginning of the 20th century, the theme of the “gang” became increasingly important in children's literature, as it became the protagonist of many novels, like *The Paul Street Boys* (F. Molnàr, 1906), *War of the Buttons* (L. Pergaud, 1912) or *Lord of the Flies* (W. Golling, 1954). On this theme, see also: J. G. Ballard, *Un gioco da bambini*, Milano, Baldini & Castoldi, 1999; A. Antoniazzi, *Un gioco da ragazzi. Ovvero quando le bande diventano lo specchio della realtà*, in E. Varrà (ed.), *L'età d'oro. Storie di bambini e metafore d'infanzia*, Bologna, Pendragon, 2001, pp. 105-125; G. Grilli, *L'infanzia malinconica*, in Varrà (ed.), *L'età d'oro. Storie di bambini e metafore d'infanzia*, cit., pp. 91-103; Macinai, *Bambini selvaggi. Storie di infanzie negate tra mito e realtà*, cit.

⁷⁵ See W. Grandi, *Infanzia e mondi fantastici*, Bologna, BUP, 2007, p. 27.

⁷⁶ *Lost*, tv show created by J.J. Abrams and Damon Lindelof. First season: 2004. Six seasons. On this theme, see also: Antoniazzi, *Contaminazioni*, cit.

*Nausicaä della Valle del Vento*1984; original title: *Kaze no Tani no Nausicaä*International title: *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki, based on his manga; supervising animator: Kazuo Komatsubara; art director: Mitsuyoshi Nakamura; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Isao Takahata; running time: 117'.

*Laputa. Il castello nel cielo*1986; original title: *Tenku no shiro Rapyuta*International title: *Laputa: Castle in the Sky*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki; supervising animator: Yoshinori Kanada; art director: Toshiro Nozaki, Nizo Yamamoto; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Isao Takahata; running time: 124'.

*Il mio vicino Totoro*1988; original title: *Tonari no Totoro*International title: *My Neighbor Totoro*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki; supervising animator: Yashiharu Sato; art director: Kazuo Oga; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toru Hada; running time: 86'.

*Kiki, consegna a domicilio*1989; original title: *Majo no Takkyubin*International title: *Kiki's Delivery Service*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki based on the novel by Eiko Kadono; supervising animators: Shinji Otsuka, Katsuya Kondo, Yoshifumi Kondo; art director: Hiroshi Ono; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Hayao Miyazaki, Toru Hada e Toshio Suzuki; running time: 103'.

*Porco Rosso*1992; original title: *Kurenai no Buta*International title: *Porco Rosso*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki; supervising animator: Masashi Ando; art director: Katsu Hisamura; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 93'.

*Principessa Mononoke*1997; original title: *Mononoke Hime*International title: *Princess Mononoke*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki; supervising animators: Masashi Ando, Kitaro Kosaka, Yoshifumi Kondo; art directors: Nizo Yamamoto, Naoya Tanaka, Yoji Takeshige, Satoshi Kuroda, Kazuo Oga; computer graphics: Yoshinori Sugano; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 134'.

*La città incantata*2001; original title: *Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi*International title: *Spirited Away*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki; supervising animators: Masashi Ando, Kitaro Kosaka e Megumi Kagawa; art director: Yoji Takeshige; computer graphics: Okui Atsushi; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 125'.

Il castello errante di Howl

2004; original title: *Hauru no Ugoku Shiro*

International title: *Howl's Moving Castle*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki, based on the novel *Howl's Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones; supervising animators: Akihiro Yamashita, Takeshi Inamura, Kitaro Kosaka; art directors: Yoji Takeshige, Noboru Yoshida; computer graphics: Mitsunori Kataama; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 119'.

Ponyo sulla scogliera

2008; original title: *Gake no ue no Ponyo*

International title: *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki; supervising animator: Katsuya Kondo; art director: Noboru Yoshida; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 100'.

Si alza il vento

2013; original title: *Kaze Tachinu*

International title: *The Wind Rises*

Directed by: Hayao Miyazaki; subject and screenplay by: Hayao Miyazaki; director of cinematography: Atsushi Okui; editing: Takeshi Seyama; music by: Joe Hisaishi; produced by: Toshio Suzuki; running time: 126'.

Per una promozione dei mezzi di educazione di massa nella ginnastica: l'opera di Pietro Gallo (1841-1916)

Domenico Francesco Antonio Elia
Dipartimento di Scienze Filosofiche,
Pedagogiche ed Economico-Quantitative
Università degli Studi «G. D'Annunzio»
di Chieti-Pescara (Italia)
domenico.elia@unich.it

Promoting mass education means in gymnastics: Pietro Gallo's work (1841-1916)

ABSTRACT: This paper continues Elia's study in the application of the historiographical category of «mass education means» (Meda, 2007) to gymnastics and sport equipment in schools (Elia, 2012). The investigation focuses on the introduction of Jäger's stick in 1878 school regulations as a turning point in the process of definition of «mass education means» in the school field. The author argues that the spread of Jäger's stick in Italy thanks to Pietro Gallo made it cheaper to outfit a gym and encouraged the adoption of Emilio Baumann's gymnastic theory, i.e. the so-called «Italian gymnastics» (Elia, 2015). Indeed, Bauman favoured «small pieces of equipment» because they enable students to do exercises that mimicked natural movements in contrast with the workouts done with «big pieces of equipment», and Jäger's stick was classified as one of these new «small pieces of equipment».

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Educational Policies; Gymnastics; Means of mass education; Pietro Gallo; XIXth Century.

1. Lo studio del prodotto sportivo: premesse e sviluppi

Le ricerche condotte da Elia nell'ultimo quinquennio sulla natura del «prodotto sportivo», inteso come una «merce triplice»¹, hanno dimostrato come,

¹ «Per divenire merce il prodotto deve essere trasmesso all'altro, a cui serve come valore d'uso, mediante lo scambio». K. Marx, *Il Capitale*, 5 voll., Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1989, vol. 1, p. 73. Secondo S. Hardy, il prodotto sportivo è composto da un aspetto che definisce formale (le regole dell'attività sportiva o del gioco), da uno istituzionale (le ricadute dello sport al di fuori della

nel contesto storico italiano di Età liberale, esse si intersechino inevitabilmente con lo studio delle differenti correnti educative² relative all'insegnamento della ginnastica nelle scuole³. A loro volta, queste ultime si dimostrarono promotrici di specifici attrezzi, ritenuti indispensabili per la corretta esecuzione degli esercizi componenti i programmi scolastici⁴ e divenuti, così, oggetto di standardizzazione da parte di «industrie educative»⁵ nell'ambito dei «mezzi di educazione di massa», secondo l'efficace definizione formulata da Meda nel 2007⁶. L'introduzione dell'obbligatorietà dell'insegnamento della ginnastica nelle scuole di ogni ordine e grado, voluta dalla legge promulgata il 7 luglio 1878 n. 4442⁷, che coronava gli sforzi del ministro della Pubblica Istruzione Francesco De Sanctis⁸, fu accompagnata, nel dicembre dello stesso anno, dalla pubblicazione del *Regolamento, programmi e istruzioni per le scuole primarie, secondarie, normali, maschili e femminili* che introdusse l'obbligatorietà per

performance) e uno materiale (beni sportivi). Cfr. S. Hardy, *Entrepreneurs, Organizations, and the Sport Marketplace. Subject in Search of Historians*, «Journal of Sport History», vol. 13, n. 1, 1986, pp. 14-33. Si vedano anche i seguenti contributi: S. Hardy, J. Loy, D. Booth, *The material culture of sport: toward a typology*, «Journal of sport history», vol. 36, n. 1, 2009, pp. 129-152; L.J., Borish, M.G. Phillips, *Introductory Essay. Sport history as modes of expression: material culture and cultural spaces in sport and history*, «Rethinking History», vol. 16, n. 4, 2012, pp. 465-477.

² «Le cosiddette 'scuole' che fra Ottocento e Novecento operano in Italia [...] sono quattro: quella fisico-igienista che propugna una educazione fisica basata quasi esclusivamente sulla pratica della ginnastica svedese, oltre che su una intensa istruzione igienica; quella ginnico-ludica e sportiva incentrata sullo svolgimento dei giuochi inglesi e sulla ginnastica svedese; quella 'italiana', dei 'riformatori' fautori della ginnastica naturale dalle forti valenze spirituali e psicologiche; infine quella «torinese», dei «conservatori» seguaci della tradizione, della ginnastica muscolare sistematica ed ordinativa». G. Bonetta, *Corpo e Nazione. L'educazione ginnastica, igienica e sessuale nell'Italia liberale*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1990, pp. 139-140. Sullo stesso argomento, cfr. G. Bonetta, *Nelle palestre del regno. Le vicende della ginnastica educativa nei primi 50 anni della legge Casati*, «Lancillotto & Nausica», vol. 26, n. 1, 2009, pp. 16-25.

³ Cfr. D.F.A. Elia, *A case-study: gyms and gymnastics teachers in Apulia and Basilicata (1861-1893)*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 9, n. 1, 2014, pp. 467-486.

⁴ Id., *The Italian way to gymnastics: Emilio Baumann's «psycho-kinetic theory»*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 10, n. 2, 2015, pp. 277-295.

⁵ Cfr. P. Mœglin, *Les industries éducatives*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2010. Per lo studio di una singola impresa italiana specializzata nella produzione di articoli ginnico-sportivi, cfr. D.F.A. Elia, *Storia della Ginnastica nell'Italia Meridionale. L'opera di Giuseppe Pezzarossa (1851-1911) in Terra di Bari*, Bari, Progedit, 2013; per uno studio statistico della produzione sportiva in Età liberale, cfr. Id., *Uno strumento di ricerca per la storia materiale sportiva: la banca dati dell'Ufficio italiano brevetti*, «Italia contemporanea», vol. 67, n. 281, 2016 (in corso di stampa).

⁶ All'interno di tale ambito rientra ogni «attrezzo di consumo scolastico [...] nel momento in cui viene sottoposto ad un processo di codificazione formale con fini omologanti e inizia ad essere distribuito su larga scala da grandi imprese industriali». J. Meda, «Mezzi di educazione di massa». *Nuove fonti e nuove prospettive di ricerca per una «storia materiale della scuola» tra XIX e XX secolo*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 6, n. 1, 2011, p. 261.

⁷ Cfr. P. Ferrara, *L'Italia in palestra: storia, documenti e immagini della ginnastica dal 1833 al 1973*, Roma, La Meridiana, 1992, pp. 126-131.

⁸ Cfr. P. Morelli, *De Sanctis Francesco*, in G. Chiosso, R. Sani (edd.), *Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione 1800-2000* [d'ora in avanti DBE], 2 voll., Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2014, vol. 1, pp. 461-462.

le istituzioni scolastiche e comunali di provvedere all'equipaggiamento delle palestre secondo un elenco di 26 attrezzi ginnastici, dei quali solo cinque erano facoltativi⁹: conseguenza inevitabile di tale disposizione legislativa fu, da un lato, un processo di codificazione formale degli attrezzi ginnastici, destinati a diffondersi in tutto il territorio nazionale, dall'altro, un aumento della domanda di tali strumenti, che condusse alla scomparsa dei più antichi laboratori artigianali, incapaci di far fronte alla crescente richiesta degli attrezzi ginnastici, a favore di moderne fabbriche, in grado, al contrario, di rispondere positivamente alle nuove realtà culturali e legislative¹⁰. La letteratura scientifica storico-pedagogica ha indicato quali fossero gli obiettivi ai quali i programmi sottostavano: coltivare «una severa condotta morale in grado di educare al dominio di sé, piuttosto che di conservare l'ordine prestabilito nella società [...] assicurando la formazione-costruzione di sudditi-lavoratori devoti»¹¹. A tale scopo era necessario perseguire una ginnastica in grado di assicurare una «ripetizione seriale [del movimento] capace di distruggere ogni piacere nel movimento»¹². La nuova legislazione, pur stanziando una somma a favore degli insegnanti più poveri perché potessero ottenere agevolazioni in vista del conseguimento dell'abilitazione all'insegnamento della ginnastica¹³, non intendeva prendere provvedimenti a favore di una reale popolarizzazione di tale disciplina: l'introduzione, tuttavia, accanto ai costosi e ingombranti attrezzi previsti da Obermann¹⁴, di uno strumento poco conosciuto in Italia, il bastone Jäger, all'indomani della legge sull'obbligatorietà della ginnastica,

⁹ L'elenco approvato nel 1878 includeva i seguenti attrezzi: «1. Bacchette di varia lunghezza; 2. Manubri di vario peso; 3. Pedana; 4. Bastoni Jäger di legno e di ferro; 5. Bastoni di legno per la scherma; 6. Aste per il salto; 7. Giavellotti; 8. Funicelle per il salto; 9. Fosso; 10. Trave di equilibrio (Obermann) e asse d'equilibrio (Baumann); 11. Trave d'appoggio (facoltativo); 12. Parallele fisse; 13. Sbarra fissa; 14. Scala (facoltativo); 15. Palco di salita con pertiche verticali ed oblique e funi libere di varia grossezza; 16. Anelli; 17. Cavallo; 18. Cavallina (facoltativo); 19. Piano d'assalto (facoltativo); 20. Passo volante (facoltativo); 21. Bersaglio a palle; 22. Bersaglio pel tiro al giavellotto; 23. Bombe, sassi e pala di ghiaia; 24. Impugnatura per la lotta, ecc.; 25. Fune da tiro; 26. Attrezzi per i giuochi». Elia, *A case-study: gyms and gymnastics teachers*, cit., p. 482.

¹⁰ Cfr. Elia, *Uno strumento di ricerca per la storia materiale sportiva*, cit.

¹¹ M. Ferrari, M. Morandi, *I programmi scolastici di «educazione fisica» in Italia. Una lettura storico-pedagogica*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2015, p. 25. Si rimanda, inoltre, al saggio di D. Ragazzini, *Dalla ginnastica educativa all'educazione fisica nella scuola elementare*, in A. Semeraro (ed.), *L'educazione dell'uomo completo. Scritti in onore di Mario Alighiero Manacorda*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 2001, pp. 29-40.

¹² T. Codignola, *Riletura di Georges Vigarello – Le corps redressé. Histoire d'un pouvoir pédagogique*, in A. Mariani (ed.), *La corporeità: il contributo delle scienze umane*, «Humana Mente», n. 14, luglio 2010, p. 309.

¹³ «Art. 8. [...] La somma da iscriversi per l'anno 1879 è di lire trentamila (30.000)». Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno d'Italia, vol. 19, n. 165, 15 luglio 1878, cit. in E. Landoni, *La ginnastica sale in cattedra. L'educazione fisica nell'ordinamento scolastico italiano dall'Unità ad oggi*, Milano, L'Ornitorinco Edizioni, 2011, p. 37.

¹⁴ Cfr. R. Obermann, *Atlante degli attrezzi di ginnastica educativa composto di quattordici tavole pubblicato con autorizzazione del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, Torino, Doyen, 1865.

da parte del ginnasiarca veneto Pietro Gallo (1841-1916)¹⁵, rappresentò un tentativo, dapprima fortemente ostracizzato e in seguito, invece, largamente accettato, di rendere più diffusa e popolare la ginnastica, in virtù del suo prezzo basso che permetteva alle Amministrazioni comunali, incaricate di finanziare «la costruzione delle palestre sia nelle scuole governative, che municipali»¹⁶, di provvedere all'acquisto di un numero di esemplari bastevole per tutti gli alunni, privilegiando una serie di movimenti meno artificiosi di quelli previsti dalla ginnastica educativa di Obermann¹⁷, a favore, invece, di una maggiore naturalezza del movimento fisico, secondo le teorie che furono proprie della scuola di ginnastica sorta attorno alla figura di Baumann¹⁸.

Scopo del presente lavoro di ricerca diviene, dunque, quello di dimostrare quali effetti determinarono le reciproche influenze di tutti e tre gli aspetti del bastone Jäger inteso come «prodotto sportivo» teorizzati da Hardy: a livello normativo, attraverso l'introduzione di un manuale scritto dallo stesso Gallo intorno al suo uso¹⁹, contrastato o imitato in opere seguenti²⁰; a livello istituzionale, mediante lo studio dei risultati che le teorie ginnastiche di Gallo ebbero nel territorio veneziano, ove il ginnasiarca operò dal 1867 fino alla sua morte; e, infine, a livello materiale, attraverso la disamina dell'attrezzo in sé stesso e dei molteplici modi di impiego cui esso si prestava.

¹⁵ Cfr. S. Dorigo, *Gallo Pietro*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, p. 610.

¹⁶ Ferrara, *L'Italia in palestra*, cit., p. 139.

¹⁷ Per ginnastica educativa lo svizzero Rodolfo Obermann (1812-1869) intendeva «l'insieme di quei tali generi d'esercizi, i quali [...] vennero dalla ragione e dall'esperienza riconosciuti come i più efficaci, i più convenienti a rendere in breve tempo, e con sistematica progressione il corpo umano atto e docile per l'uso più variato, ed il più vantaggioso delle proprie membra, a fortificarne vieppiù la salute, a compartirgli una simmetrica costruzione, ad aumentare la spontaneità ed il volume del suo sistema muscolare, a condurre l'individuo alla piena conoscenza delle sue forze fisiche, ed a destare per tal modo in lui quel coraggio morale, che ne è naturale conseguenza». R. Obermann, *Della ginnastica. I. Prime nozioni sulla ginnastica*, «Letture di famiglia», vol. 3, n. 50, 1844, pp. 402-403.

¹⁸ La teoria ginnastica di Emilio Baumann (1843-1916) aveva un fine «psico-cinesico, ossia educativo dello spirito» (E. Baumann, *Ginnastica e scienza*, Roma, Scuola Tip. Salesiana, 1910, p. 499) ed era dall'autore considerata «una rivisitazione di quella tedesca e svedese indirizzata eminentemente al rafforzamento del carattere ma adattata alla poverissima realtà scolastica del nostro Paese» (A. Risi Rota, M. Ferrari, M. Morandi, *Patriotti si diventa: luoghi e linguaggi di pedagogia patriottica nell'Italia unita*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2009, p. 107).

¹⁹ Cfr. P. Gallo, *Il Bastone Jäger. Esercizi proposti da Pietro Gallo Direttore della Ginnastica in Venezia e compresi nel Programma Governativo annesso alla legge 7 luglio 1878 n. 4442*, Venezia, Tip. di Lorenzo Tondelli, 1879.

²⁰ Cfr. C. Malatesta, *Il bastone Jaeger nelle palestre italiane: compendio estratto dalla teoria di Jaeger pubblicato col consenso dell'autore e approvato come testo dalle Scuole magistrali di ginnastica di Torino e di Roma*, Torino, G.P. Paravia, 1879; F. La Torre, *Il Bastone Jaeger e gli appoggi Baumann: Lezioni di ginnastica*, Messina, Tip. dei Tribunali, 1896; F. Michelotto, *Istruzione militare elementare col bastone Jaeger scritta in ordine progressivo per le scuole secondarie dove i giovani sono già preparati agli esercizi militari senz'armi da Michelotto Fermo*, Roma, Tip. alle terme diocleziane, 1883; F. Della Dea, *Gli esercizi del bastone Jäger insegnati in dodici progressive lezioni*, Milano, Stab. G. Civelli, 1885.

2. Pietro Gallo e la «scuola italiana» di ginnastica

La letteratura storico-pedagogica ha dedicato maggiore attenzione alla figura di Baumann²¹, considerato il principale esponente della «ginnastica italiana», attorno alla quale si riunirono insegnanti gravitanti attorno alle zone limitrofe di Bologna – ove prestò servizio fin dal 1863 – e che, per tale motivo sono stati indicati anche come polo «veneto-romagnolo»; minor importanza, invece, è stata attribuita agli altri esponenti di tale indirizzo, fra i quali Pietro Gallo e Costantino Reyer (1838-1931)²². Le ragioni di questo «silenzio storiografico» sono riconducibili a un più generale ritardo delle ricerche storiche italiane sui ginnasiari ottocenteschi, rispetto a quanto accaduto in altri contesti europei²³: lo studio di tali figure permetterà, quindi, il recupero di una notevole fioritura di opere a carattere pedagogico, igienico e ginnastico relative alla formazione di «un corpo da curare, da un lato, da rispettare e valorizzare, dall'altro, e da valorizzare nei suoi bisogni di moto e di gioco, di scoperta e di libertà»²⁴.

In una lettera scritta da Baumann e indirizzata al senatore Antonio Allievi (1824-1896), egli, in qualità di Direttore della Regia Scuola Normale di Ginnastica di Roma, affermava che la propria teoria ginnastica fosse il frutto della collaborazione di tutti gli italiani – fra i quali spiccavano Costantino Reyer e Pietro Gallo – che l'avevano introdotta nelle scuole elementari di Venezia subito dopo la fine della Terza guerra d'indipendenza, nel 1866²⁵. Per tale ragione, questa teoria prendeva il nome di «ginnastica italiana», designando con tale nome «il complesso di movimenti da eseguire od inibire, mediante i quali la scuola tende all'educazione del giovane cittadino»²⁶. Baumann e Gallo si ponevano in contrasto con la ginnastica di Obermann, da loro ritenuta incapace di accrescere nell'alunno la resistenza, il carattere e la destrezza²⁷.

Nell'introduzione ai *Programmi di ginnastica proposti per le scuole elementari del Comune di Venezia*, scritto nel 1873 da Gallo con la collaborazione di Baumann, gli autori sottolineavano due aspetti fondamentali alla base della «ginnastica italiana»: la necessità di raggiungere, attraverso gli esercizi corporali, «due altissimi fini: cioè, lo sviluppo del corpo ed il suo addestramento ai bisogni

²¹ Cfr. A. Magnanini, 201. *Baumann Emilio*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 118-119.

²² Cfr. J. Ulmann, *Nel mito di Olimpia: ginnastica, educazione fisica e sport dall'antichità ad oggi*, Roma, Armando, 2004, pp. 372-373; C. Desinan, *Reyer Castagna Costantino*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 2, p. 405.

²³ Cfr. Elia, *The Italian way to gymnastics*, cit., pp. 277-280.

²⁴ F. Cambi, *Immagini del corpo moderno, riflessioni educative*, in A. Mariani (ed.), *Corpo e modernità: strategie di formazione*, Milano, Unicopli, 2004, p. 23.

²⁵ Cfr. E. Baumann, *Programmi di ginnastica vigenti e futuri. Relazione del Dottor Baumann Emilio Direttore della R. Scuola Normale di Ginnastica*, Roma, Tip. Di Mario Armanni, 1885, pp. 6-7.

²⁶ Baumann, *Ginnastica e scienza*, cit., p. 501.

²⁷ E. Baumann, P. Gallo, *La risposta del dott. Emilio Baumann e Pietro Gallo alle osservazioni del maestro Felice Valletti sui programmi di ginnastica proposti per le Scuole Elementari del Comune di Venezia*, Venezia, s.e., 1873, p. 11.

della vita»²⁸ e il bisogno di cercare attrezzi alternativi rispetto a quelli introdotti da Obermann, noti anche come «grandi attrezzi»²⁹, allo scopo di allenare tutti i muscoli del corpo umano allo stesso modo.

Occorreva quindi supplirvi, certo non facile cosa, perché il *cavallo*, le *parallele*, il *trave d'appoggio* e tutti gli altri strumenti di simile genere importano una spesa non indifferente [...]. Perciò abbiamo inventato un apposito ordigno cui imponemmo il nome d'*appoggio* [...] destinato a sostituire gli attrezzi delle *parallele*, del *cavallo* e del *trave d'appoggio*, colla differenza che, mentre in quest'ultimi il corpo ha due sostegni, cioè le braccia, negli appoggi in genere ne ha quattro, braccia e piedi, per cui i movimenti, essendo meno difficili sono più adatti all'età degli alunni³⁰.

La forte impronta progressista e democratica del contesto socio-culturale e politico bolognese aveva influenzato profondamente la «ginnastica italiana», la cui presenza nell'ordinamento scolastico era illustrata agli scolari e alle loro famiglie come derivata «soprattutto da ragioni igieniche, connesse alla cura dei geloni, e pedagogico-didattiche, cioè legate ad un'idea di educazione fisica che [...] portasse l'alunno alla conoscenza e padronanza del proprio corpo come mezzo per la formazione della mente, del cuore e del 'carattere'»³¹.

Una breve biografia di Gallo e dei motivi che lo spinsero a trasferirsi da Livorno, ove prestava servizio fin dal 1865, a Venezia, è rintracciabile nella relazione che presentò al termine del primo anno di insegnamento nelle scuole di Venezia³² e nella lettera che inviò al Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione nel 1878 per ottenere il diploma di Maestro Normale di ginnastica³³, nella quale elencava le tappe del suo percorso formativo, iniziato con il conseguimento di un brevetto presso la Scuola normale militare di Torino nel 1864³⁴: trasferitosi a Venezia tre anni più tardi, motivato sia dal desiderio di far ritorno alla sua regione natia, sia dall'amicizia maturata con Reyer, le cui condizioni di salute

²⁸ P. Gallo, E. Baumann, *Programmi di ginnastica proposti per le scuole elementari del Comune di Venezia*, Venezia, coi tipi dello Stabilimento Antonelli, 1873, p. 11.

²⁹ Tale specie comprendeva gli attrezzi che «restando immobili sul terreno, consentono di operare ginnasticamente su di essi o attorno ad essi». L. Todaro, *Trattato di educazione fisica*, Catania, Crisafulli, 1940, p. 103.

³⁰ Gallo, Baumann, *Programmi di ginnastica*, cit., pp. 11-13

³¹ M. D'Ascenzo, *Alle origini delle attività sportive nella scuola italiana: la ginnastica «razionale» di Emilio Baumann (1860-1894)*, in R. Farné (ed.), *Sport e infanzia: un'esperienza formativa tra gioco e impegno*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2010, p. 213.

³² Cfr. P. Gallo, *Ginnastica. Anno scolastico 1867-1868. Relazione*, Venezia, Tip. della Gazzetta, 1868.

³³ Cfr. Lettera del Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione a Gallo Pietro, *senza oggetto*, Roma 18 dicembre 1878, in Archivio Centrale di Stato [d'ora in avanti ACS], Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione [d'ora in avanti MPI], Divisione Biblioteche e Affari Generali [d'ora in avanti DBBAAGG], Archivio Generale [d'ora in avanti AG], *Ginnastica, tiro a segno, nuoto, palestre, scherma 1861-1894* [d'ora in avanti G], b. 1, f. 20.

³⁴ Cfr. Lettera di P. Gallo al Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione, *senza oggetto*, Venezia s.d., in ACS, MPI, *Personale 1860-1880*, f. «Gallo Pietro».

erano andate peggiorando³⁵, Gallo iniziò nel 1867 la sua carriera nella città lagunare presso i ginnasi «Marco Foscarini» e «Marco Polo» e le scuole tecniche «S. Stin» e «S. Felice»³⁶.

Allo scopo di fornire utili indicazioni per docenti di una materia ancora poco conosciuta qual era la ginnastica³⁷, su suggerimento di Reyer, Gallo dette alle stampe un *Regolamento disciplinare* e delle schede-rapporti che i singoli insegnanti veneziani dovevano compilare ogni mese.

Nell'introduzione al modulo di valutazione redatto dai due ginnasiarchi, erano indicati, tra i fini da raggiungere, quelli igienici che erano, come è stato affermato in precedenza, un tratto caratteristico della «ginnastica italiana»: il medico, infatti, sarebbe subentrato all'insegnante di ginnastica solo laddove egli non fosse riuscito nel suo scopo di irrobustire il corpo³⁸. Nel 1871, seguendo l'esempio offerto dalle scuole veronesi dirette dal maestro Francesco Cajol, Gallo richiese che per la promozione alle classi superiori delle scuole comunali fosse accertato un «certo progresso nella ginnastica, tenendo conto, ben s'intende, della varia costituzione fisica individuale»³⁹. In attesa di ricevere approvazione della sua proposta, per quell'anno scolastico Gallo aveva stabilito una serie di esercizi speciali obbligatori, rispetto ai quali gli alunni ricevevano ogni mese una valutazione mediante stesura di una classifica delle loro *performances*⁴⁰. Gallo e i suoi colleghi ponevano così le basi per un riconoscimento formale della disciplina ginnastica nei programmi scolastici, aggiungendovi, alle tre condizioni necessarie individuate da Pierre Arnaud⁴¹, anche il voto, che diveniva un potente mezzo di persuasione perché gli alunni si impegnassero con assiduità nella disciplina⁴². Solamente nel 1909, tuttavia, con l'introduzione della legge

³⁵ «Mi legava a lui la più sentita amicizia, cementata da comuni sofferti pericoli e privazioni all'epoca dell'emigrazione». Gallo, *Ginnastica. Anno scolastico 1867-1868*, cit., p. 1.

³⁶ Cfr. Lettera di P. Gallo al R. Provveditore agli Studi di Venezia, *senza oggetto*, Venezia 6 gennaio 1868, in Archivio Storico del Comune di Venezia [d'ora in avanti ASCV], Fasc. VII/13, 1865-1869.

³⁷ Nel 1862 furono approvati i programmi di ginnastica riservati esclusivamente alle scuole maschili superiori. Cfr. Ferrara, *L'Italia in palestra*, cit., pp. 40-42.

³⁸ «Se dopo alcuni mesi di esercizio non si potesse constatare [nei soggetti più deboli] [...] un vigorimento pronunciato, se ne avviserà la famiglia perché ove non più vale l'azione dell'igienista cominci quella del medico». *Modulo di valutazione di Gallo-Reyer*, s.d., in ACS, MPI, *Personale 1860-1880*, f. «Gallo Pietro».

³⁹ P. Gallo, *Discorso pronunciato dal direttore della ginnastica Pietro Gallo in occasione del saggio dato dagli alunni delle scuole comunali – 13 luglio 1871*, Venezia, Tip. della Gazzetta, 1871, p. 4.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5

⁴¹ Secondo Arnaud una disciplina per essere considerata integrata all'interno dei programmi scolastici deve possedere i seguenti attributi: finalità ben precise, rappresentatività culturale e riconoscimento istituzionale. Cfr. P. Arnaud, *Contribution à une histoire des disciplines d'enseignement. La mise en forme scolaire de l'éducation physique*, «Revue française de pédagogie», vol. 89, n. 1, 1989, pp. 29-34, <http://www.persee.fr/doc/rfp_0556-7807_1989_num_89_1_1403> (ultimo accesso: 11 febbraio, 2016).

⁴² Cfr. M. Gattullo, *Didattica e docimologia. Misurazione e valutazione nella scuola*, Roma, Armando, 1967.

Rava-Daneo, la valutazione dell'educazione fisica avrebbe assunto condizione *sine qua non* per il passaggio d'anno.

Le indicazioni volute da Gallo e Reyer nei loro regolamenti per le scuole elementari e superiori del comune di Venezia anticiparono quindi di alcuni anni quelle che sarebbero state stabilite nel 1878, puntando similmente «sull'interiorizzazione da parte dell'alunno di un preciso codice comportamentale, improntato alle norme fisiologiche, igieniche e pedagogiche moderne»⁴³. Lo sviluppo di un polo di studi sulla ginnastica a Venezia, d'altra parte, non si limitava alla sfera scolastica: nel marzo del 1869, solo due anni dopo il trasferimento di Gallo nella città lagunare, infatti, proprio a Venezia si era svolto il I convegno dei maestri di ginnastica, che aveva deliberato, su indicazioni di Gallo, Reyer e Domenico Pisoni, l'istituzione della Federazione Ginnastica Italiana⁴⁴.

Tuttavia, malgrado la ricerca di una via alternativa rispetto a quella tracciata da Obermann, la «ginnastica italiana», risentì ugualmente di una forte impostazione militarista, il cui fine ultimo era quello di assicurare alla patria un esercito preparato⁴⁵. Forti legami tra ginnastica e sfera militare, d'altra parte, erano già emersi nel discorso pronunciato da Gallo al termine dell'anno scolastico 1867/68, nel quale il maestro veneziano attribuiva alla popolarità della ginnastica in Germania la sua ascesa come potenza europea e mondiale.

Ed oggi stesso non è la Germania se non la prima tra le Nazioni almeno a niun'altro seconda? Ancor sono vive alla nostra memoria le gloriose vittorie dell'armi prussiane. Credete voi che influenza su quelle vittorie non abbia avuta anche la Ginnastica? La Ginnastica che conta in Germania innumerevoli scuole frequentate da cento migliaia di alunni? In una nazione in cui ogni uomo nasce soldato, se questo uomo, fin dalla più tenera età, educò il suo corpo agli esercizi ginnastici, quanto non potrà egli meglio servir la sua patria?⁴⁶

L'attuale ginnastica – secondo Gallo, che condivideva questa sua opinione con quella di Baumann – «può fare degli uomini forti, ma non dei cittadini. Anzi io aggiungo che dessa non può dare nemmeno uomini forti, ma solo dei presuntuosi sdolcinati»⁴⁷.

⁴³ A. Magnanini, *Il corpo fra ginnastica ed igiene: aspetti dell'educazione popolare nell'Italia di fine Ottocento*, Roma, Aracne, 2005, p. 77.

⁴⁴ Cfr. C.G. Lacaia, M. Fugazza, *L'istruzione secondaria nell'Italia unita 1861-1901*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2013, p. 221.

⁴⁵ «Noi ammettiamo – scriveva Gallo commentando l'opera *La ginnastica fra i banchi maschile e femminile del dott. Emilio Baumann* – soltanto alcuni movimenti per chiamare la scolaresca all'attenzione, alla docilità, prima di passare da un ramo all'altro d'insegnamento, per riscaldare gli alunni nell'inverno e per ottenere da essi una obbedienza militare». P. Gallo, *Bibliografia – La ginnastica fra i banchi maschile e femminile del dott. Emilio Baumann*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 14, n. 4, 1880, p. 2.

⁴⁶ P. Gallo, *Discorso pronunciato nell'occasione del Saggio di Ginnastica dato dagli alunni delle Scuole Comunali di Venezia il giorno 20 agosto 1868*, Venezia, Tip. di L. Tondelli, 1868, p. 1.

⁴⁷ P. Gallo, *La ginnastica come l'intendiamo noi*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 18, n. 1, 1884, p. 2.

Nel 1885 Gallo stampò un breve saggio, intitolato *Torniamo all'antico: educazione fisica*⁴⁸, allo scopo duplice di denunciare la ginnastica propugnata dai seguaci di Obermann e, allo stesso tempo, mostrare come la riduzione degli attrezzi ginnastici avrebbe comportato, come conseguenza, un maggiore interesse della gioventù nei confronti della sua disciplina. Per ottemperare al primo obiettivo, Gallo si ispirava al modello educativo della Grecia antica, riprendendo il concetto della *kalokagathia* espresso dallo storico tedesco dell'arte Jacob von Falke (1825-1897) nella sua opera *Ellade e Roma: quadro storico e artistico dell'antichità classica*⁴⁹:

Conforme a questa armonia, anche l'educazione era duplice del corpo e dello spirito [...]. I Greci consideravano come mezzi per raggiungere questa doppia educazione la musica e la ginnastica [...] cioè il complesso di ogni svariato ma regolato esercizio del corpo. La musica e la ginnastica insieme unite dovevano produrre un uomo bello e possibilmente perfetto: formare il cittadino⁵⁰.

La seconda finalità sarebbe stata conseguita attraverso una disamina tra il materiale ginnastico in uso presso i Greci – i quali ottenevano splendidi risultati pur senza usare nessuno degli attrezzi coevi all'autore – e quello, invece, adottato in Italia fin dalla legislazione del 1878. Il confronto, secondo l'autore, era impietoso: l'abbondanza degli attrezzi usati nelle scuole italiane – e di conseguenza, l'istituzione di una sequela interminabile di movimenti – infatti, comportavano come unico risultato l'aumento di richiesta di esenzioni delle lezioni da parte degli alunni e un generale stato di apatia e disinteresse nei confronti della disciplina motoria⁵¹. Le idee di Gallo furono ritenute troppo radicali dall'Ispettore Generale per la ginnastica, Felice Valletti (1845-1920)⁵², esponente di spicco della scuola di Obermann, il quale, sulle colonne del periodico «Ginnasiarca», lo accusò di aver propugnato un'idea irrealizzabile, servendosi «degli stessi mezzi dei quali si serviva la ginnastica greca 25 secoli fa»⁵³, nonostante lo stesso Gallo avesse ribadito di non volere riproporre in modo pedissequo il sistema educativo greco⁵⁴.

⁴⁸ Id., *Torniamo all'antico: educazione fisica*, Venezia, Tip. M. Fontana, 1885.

⁴⁹ Cfr. J. Von Falke, *Ellade e Roma: quadro storico e artistico dell'antichità classica*, Milano, Treves, 1882.

⁵⁰ Gallo, *Torniamo all'antico*, cit., pp. 7-8.

⁵¹ «I scolari s'annoiano perché l'interminabile sequela di movimenti agli attrezzi, e la qualità loro poco o punto interesse desta ad essi. Difatti l'esecuzione di codesta moltitudine di movimenti esige un tempo lungo e una pazienza d'anacoreta». *Ibid.*, p. 14. Sul carattere scientificamente incongruo della ginnastica, cfr. G. Gori, *La ginnastica*, in Arisi Rota, Ferrari, Morandi (edd.), *Patrioti si diventa*, cit., pp. 101-112.

⁵² Cfr. W. Cesana, *Valletti Felice*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 623-624.

⁵³ F. Valletti, *Il metodo d'insegnamento*, «Il Ginnasiarca», vol. 1, n. 2, 1887, p. 10.

⁵⁴ «Adottare in tutto e per tutto la coltura fisica del corpo umano dell'immortale popolo Greco non sarebbe conforme l'esigenze ed i bisogni odierni ben differenti del popolo nostro». Gallo, *Torniamo all'antico*, cit., p. 15.

3. *La partecipazione di Gallo alla Commissione dei programmi del 1878*

L'approfondimento della genesi della legge n. 4442 del 7 luglio 1878 richiederebbe una trattazione autonoma, che non è possibile qui affrontare per mancanza di spazio⁵⁵: sarà sufficiente ricordare, ai fini della ricerca qui intrapresa, che tale disposizione legislativa ebbe come naturale completamento il *Regolamento programmi e istruzioni per le scuole primarie, secondarie, normali, maschili e femminili del Regno*, stabilito da una Commissione nominata dal ministro della Pubblica Istruzione De Sanctis⁵⁶ e approvato con Regio Decreto il 16 dicembre 1878.

La Commissione, composta dai più insigni ginnasiarchi dell'epoca⁵⁷, tra i quali Pietro Gallo, si riunì il 25 novembre⁵⁸ e concluse i propri lavori il 13 dicembre⁵⁹. La Commissione attribuì a Gallo l'incarico di scrivere la teoria dell'uso del bastone Jäger⁶⁰, obiettivo che il maestro veneziano portò a compimento, pubblicando, l'anno seguente, il saggio contenente le istruzioni per il corretto utilizzo dello strumento ginnastico⁶¹.

Purtroppo l'Archivio Centrale di Stato non ha conservato copia dei verbali della Commissione, per cui non è possibile, allo stato attuale delle ricerche, ricostruire le modalità con le quali furono stabiliti i Programmi stessi⁶². Al termine dei lavori della Commissione, il ministro De Sanctis inviò una lettera a tutti i suoi membri, ringraziando «per l'intelligente zelo col quale presero parte ai lavori della commissione stessa, dall'operato della quale confido abbia a vistarne efficace giovamento l'educazione fisica della gioventù italiana»⁶³. L'efficacia e la composizione della Commissione furono oggetto di articolate critiche da parte dei periodici ginnastici: ancor prima che questa iniziasse i suoi lavori, nel numero di settembre-ottobre del 1878, il periodico ufficiale della

⁵⁵ Cfr. Elia, *Storia della ginnastica nell'Italia meridionale* cit., pp. 14-18.

⁵⁶ Cfr. Lettera di F. De Sanctis alla Commissione, *Commissione pel regolamento e i programmi di ginnastica*, Roma 2 novembre 1878, in ACS, MPI, DBBAAGG, AG, G, b. 1, f. 21.

⁵⁷ La Commissione risultava così composta: «Presidente sen. Allievi; membri: proff. Baumann, Caravella, Fenzi, Gamba, Gallo Francesco, Gallo Pietro, Lapegna, Gajani, Maddalozzo, Moreno, Orsolato, Parrini, Scarenzio, Tedeschini, Torlonia, Valletti, segretario relatore». M. Gotta, *Legislazione e Ordinamenti dell'Educazione Fisica nella Scuola Italiana (dal 1859 al 1953)*, Roma, Scuola Tipogr. Mutilatini di Guerra, 1953, p. 31.

⁵⁸ Lettera di De Sanctis alla Commissione, *Commissione pel regolamento*, cit.

⁵⁹ Lettera di De Sanctis alla Commissione, *Ringraziamento*, Roma 13 dicembre 1878, in ACS, MPI, DBBAAGG, AG, G, b. 1, f. 21.

⁶⁰ *Allegato al decreto di conferimento della patente normale di ginnastica*, [s.d. ma 17 dicembre 1878], in ACS, MPI, DBBAAGG, AG, G, b. 1, f. 20.

⁶¹ Cfr. Gallo, *Il Bastone Jäger*, cit.

⁶² Le fonti archivistiche esaminate, aventi come oggetto la nomina della Commissione e le pratiche relative al conferimento ai suoi membri di patenti normali di ginnastica senza esami, non conservano alcun verbale dei lavori della Commissione stessa. Cfr. ACS, MPI, DBBAAGG, AG, G, b. 1, ff. 20-21.

⁶³ Lettera di De Sanctis alla Commissione, *Ringraziamento*, cit.

«Federazione Ginnastica Italiana», schierata – dopo la scissione del 1874⁶⁴ – sulle posizioni della scuola di Obermann, in un lungo articolo metteva in guardia dall'introduzione di quelli che erano considerati esercizi lontani dall'ortodossia del metodo presente, introdotti da Gallo e dai suoi colleghi, soprattutto se tali innovazioni erano raggiunte, come temeva il redattore, in seno a un gruppo ristretto di individui:

non è la voce di un ginnasta tedesco o di un suo cieco apostolo, che ci farà credere buona una innovazione: dalla discussione ampia e coscienziosa, dalla esperienza fatta per qualche tempo e con utili risultamenti innanzi a persone competenti e non partigiane, vogliamo confermati e approvati i nuovi esercizi, le nuove nomenclature che si propongono⁶⁵.

Nel numero successivo si coglieva una seconda occasione per criticare le innovazioni apportate da Gallo, invitando i maestri di ginnastica a non cadere facili vittime di chi si sforzava per introdurre novità ginnastiche non ancora approvate dal Regolamento: «in quanto al bastone Jäger non è ancora dimostrato dalla commissione Ministeriale se possa essere applicato nelle scuole Comunali dove gli alunni sono ancora troppo giovani, per resistere un quarto d'ora di lezioni»⁶⁶.

In realtà lo stesso Gallo non contestava l'asserzione secondo la quale il nuovo regolamento per le scuole avrebbe dovuto essere approvato a larga maggioranza. Rispetto allo stesso Baumann, più cauto nell'esprimere giudizi positivi sulla necessità di avere un unico metodo d'insegnamento – perché avrebbe rischiato, secondo la sua opinione, di vedere arrestato il progresso ginnastico, in nome di un'uniformità imposta dall'alto –, Gallo riteneva che non fossero rilevabili inconvenienti, purché le proposte di introdurre modiche e novità nei programmi fossero affidate a un congresso periodico dei 69 direttori dei corsi autunnali di ginnastica⁶⁷, «che solo dovrebbe avere la facoltà di deliberare e d'introdurre modificazione al programma *italiano* [...] [che] ci darebbe, lo si capisce, anche una sola *tecnologia ginnastica italiana* e con questa verrebbe tolta la presente confusione delle lingue»⁶⁸. Un desiderio, quest'ultimo, condiviso anche dal periodico della Federazione Ginnastica Italiana⁶⁹.

⁶⁴ Cfr. Ferrara, *L'Italia in palestra*, cit., pp. 98-101. Nel 1874 la scissione dette vita a 2 federazioni distinte: la Federazione Ginnastica Italiana e la Federazione delle Società Ginnastiche Italiane, legata al polo veneto-romagnolo. La scissione terminò solo nel 1887, con la costituzione della Federazione Ginnastica Nazionale.

⁶⁵ P. *L'applicazione della legge sulla ginnastica*, «La Ginnastica in Italia. Bollettino Ufficiale della Federazione Ginnastica Italiana», vol. 5, nn. 7-8, 1878, p. 126.

⁶⁶ [s.a.], *Corrispondenza*, «La Ginnastica in Italia. Bollettino Ufficiale della Federazione Ginnastica Italiana», vol. 5, n. 9-10, 1878, p. 191.

⁶⁷ Una richiesta condivisa anche da Reyer: cfr. C. Reyer, *Notizia inverosimile*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 8, n. 6, 1883, p. 4.

⁶⁸ P. Gallo, *Lettera al Direttore*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 14, n. 5, 1880, p. 2.

⁶⁹ «Noi speriamo che il Ministero terrà conto di questa proposta, difesa strenuamente dal prof. Gallo di Venezia». P., *Adunanza federale*, «La Ginnastica in Italia. Bollettino Ufficiale della

La debolezza dei Regolamenti del 1878 risiedette principalmente nel loro carattere teoricamente provvisorio⁷⁰, ma di fatto riconosciuto come quello cui attenersi finché non fosse stato elaborato un programma definitivo.

4. *La guida al bastone Jäger e l'accoglienza sulle riviste di ginnastica*

Il bastone Jäger era stato introdotto in Italia per la prima volta da Reyer⁷¹, come lo stesso insegnante scrisse in una missiva indirizzata all'Ispettore Generale Valletti⁷² ed era considerato come uno dei «piccoli attrezzi», ossia «quelli che si muovono sostenuti dal ginnasta ed in dipendenza dell'impulso che ad essi dà il ginnasta stesso»⁷³.

Il metodo di Otto Jäger (1828-1912)⁷⁴, dal quale prendeva il nome l'attrezzo ginnastico, non ebbe fortuna in Germania perché poneva in crisi l'uso degli attrezzi tradizionali come la sbarra fissa e le parallele; secondo Valletti conservava «lo spirito militare del Jahn⁷⁵, e segu[iva] lo Spiess⁷⁶ per quanto riguarda l'insegnamento collettivo, dandovi però più ampia applicazione; il suo fine principale, più che all'educazione armonica del corpo, tende direttamente alla immediata preparazione della gioventù alla vita militare»⁷⁷. Le sue opere non furono mai tradotte integralmente in Italia, perché la scuola torinese ritenne il metodo Jäger improntato radicalmente alla preparazione bellica dei fanciulli,

Federazione Ginnastica Italiana», vol. 5, nn. 11-12, p. 201.

⁷⁰ Magnanini, *Il corpo fra ginnastica ed igiene*, cit., p. 76.

⁷¹ Cfr. Lettera del Presidente della Società Veneziana di Ginnastica «Costantino Reyer» al Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione, *Domanda che il Signor Costantino Reyer, in compenso delle sue prestazioni, venga nominato Ispettore della Ginnastica in Italia*, Venezia 11 aprile 1878, in ACS, MPI, DBBAAGG, AG, G, b. 70, f. 173.

⁷² Cfr. Reyer, *Notizia inverosimile*, cit., p. 4.

⁷³ Todaro, *Trattato*, cit., p. 104.

⁷⁴ Non esiste, allo stato attuale, uno studio italiano sulle opere di Jäger in ambito ginnastico; si rimanda, perciò, ad alcuni studi in lingua tedesca: H. Witzenmann, *Otto Heinrich Jaegers Freiheitslehre*, Dornach Spicker, 1981; M. Krüger, *Otto Heinrich Jaeger – der «Rothstein des Südens»*. *Zur Debatte um das Jaegersche Wehrturnen in Württemberg*, in «Sportwissenschaft: the German journal of sports science», vol. 19, n. 2, 1989, pp. 172-193. Un breve cenno a Jäger è contenuto anche nell'opera di V. Pinto, *Apoteosi della germanicità: i sentieri di Julius Langbehn, critico della cultura tedesca di fine Ottocento*, Lecce, I libri di Icaro, 2009, pp. 238-239.

⁷⁵ «Scopo della ginnastica [di Jahn] era di rinforzare la volontà e far del corpo ad ogni tempo un servo destro, abile e pronto a disposizione di un animo forte e di carattere fermo». F. Valletti, *Storia della ginnastica*, Milano, U. Hoepli, 1893, p. 92. Cfr. F.L. Jahn, E.W.B. Eiselen, *Die Deutsche Turnkunst*, Berlin, Kosten der Herausgeber, 1816. Cfr. anche G.L. Mosse, *La nazionalizzazione delle masse*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2000, *passim*.

⁷⁶ «La ginnastica – secondo Spiess – non deve appoggiarsi su nessuna scienza perché è un'arte (*Kunst*) il cui compito è ideare, registrare e far eseguire i vari movimenti». Ulmann, *Ginnastica*, cit., p. 262. L'opera fondamentale che illustra il metodo di A. Spiess è *Die Lehre der Turnkunst*, 4 voll., Basel, Schweighauser Sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1867.

⁷⁷ Valletti, *Il metodo d'insegnamento*, cit., p. 10.

trascurando quindi «quelle generali leggi pedagogiche che devono informare ogni istituzione educativa»⁷⁸: le sue teorie, tuttavia, finirono coll'essere lette in Italia con due distinti intenti, il primo, riconducibile a Gallo e ai suoi sostenitori, teso a «italianizzare» le teorie del ginnasiarca tedesco, il secondo, invece, proprio di Curzio Malatesta⁷⁹, volto a riproporre una versione più limitata e fedele allo spirito originario di Jäger.

Nella prima edizione della sua guida – alla quale farà seguito una seconda nel 1884⁸⁰ – il maestro veneziano, dopo aver ricordato che l'introduzione del bastone Jäger risale al primo Corso magistrale di ginnastica tenuto dalla Società Bolognese di ginnastica nel 1877⁸¹, descrisse quali benefici effetti avrebbe comportato l'adozione dello strumento nelle scuole.

Posso asserire per prove di fatto che nessun altro attrezzo sviluppa in sì breve tempo gli arti superiori al pari di questo del Jäger, e che non v'è altro ginnico esercizio che alletti di più la scolaresca e la tenga costantemente attenta e disciplinata. E notassi poi che questi due cardini del progresso dell'educazione fisica – attenzione e disciplina – si conseguirono naturalmente dall'energia dei movimenti e dalle posizioni di finissima estetica che adornano il ginnasta nei differenti atteggiamenti⁸².

Rispetto alle teorie di Jäger, Gallo propose una versione meno improntata allo spirito marziale che aveva animato il ginnasiarca tedesco, eliminando le posizioni *oblique*

perché se eseguite con l'energia che esige l'attrezzo Jäger [...] avrebbero dato agli alunni ancor troppo giovani un'impronta morale così marcata ed esagerata che loro punto si conviene. Tali *posizioni* s'addicano soltanto alle Società ginnastiche⁸³.

Un altro vantaggio che l'adozione del bastone Jäger avrebbe apportato consisteva nell'economicità del suo prezzo e nella sua versatilità: in questo modo sarebbe stato possibile ottenere una «semplificazione nel materiale ginnastico, la quale faciliterà l'insegnamento e la introduzione e diffusione di questo anche nei comuni più poveri a motivo della piccola spesa occorrente allo stabilimento di modeste palestre»⁸⁴, rendendo possibile in Italia una ginnastica «da camera», riservata a quanti, per motivi anagrafici o economici, non avessero avuto la possibilità di frequentare regolarmente una palestra.

Seguiva poi la descrizione degli esercizi resi possibili dall'uso del bastone Jäger, il quale si presentava come

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷⁹ Malatesta, *Il bastone Jaeger nelle scuole italiane*, cit.

⁸⁰ Cfr. P. Gallo, *Il bastone Jaeger pegl'italiani*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 18, n. 2, 1884, p. 2.

⁸¹ Cfr. Gallo, *Il bastone Jäger*, cit., p. 5.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

⁸³ P. Gallo, *Lettera agli Onorevoli Colleghi ed a tutti i cultori del bastone Jäger*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 13, nn. 11-12, 1879, p. 2.

⁸⁴ Cfr. Gallo, *Il bastone Jäger*, cit., p. 6.

un'asta cilindrica di ferro semivocale alle due estremità; la sua lunghezza varia dal minimum m. 0.60 al maximum m. 0.95 a seconda della statura di chi l'adopera, dovendo esso, nella posizione BRACC'ARM, arrivare coll'estremità superiore all'altezza dell'occhio: anche il diametro ed il peso variano, il primo da mil. 18 a 24 ed il secondo da Kg. 1-1.500, 2-2.500, 3-3.500⁸⁵.

La diffusione del trattato di Gallo fu assicurata da una capillare distribuzione dell'opera nelle scuole comunali di Venezia, mediante l'acquisto di circa 50 copie del volume da parte del Municipio della città lagunare, che avrebbe provveduto a «consegnarli in più occasioni alle direzioni delle Scuole elementari»⁸⁶.

Gallo inviò una copia del suo opuscolo anche al Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione, il quale rispose al maestro veneziano ringraziandolo per il cortese dono⁸⁷. Secondo Francesco La Torre, autore di un trattato sul bastone Jäger⁸⁸, fu proprio il libello di Gallo a segnare una tappa fondamentale nel favorire la conoscenza dello strumento ginnastico fra i cultori degli esercizi fisici italiani: l'ostilità che lo accompagnava, secondo il suo parere,

era da attribuirsi più alla mancanza allora di una teoria in lingua italiana, che ne indicasse e ne spiegasse i vari esercizi, che ai difetti dell'ordigno stesso, contro il quale veniva troppo presto azzardato un giudizio, che non poteva perciò essere né coscienzioso, né severo, né tampoco sicuro⁸⁹.

Il giudizio di La Torre può essere riletto in modi diversi e non necessariamente coincidenti fra loro: se è vero che, a partire dalla pubblicazione dell'opera di Gallo e dalla promulgazione dei regolamenti del 1878, furono eseguite numerose esercitazioni col bastone Jäger, con particolare frequenza nelle scuole e nelle società ginnastiche venete, nelle quali l'influenza di Gallo e Reyer era stata maggiore⁹⁰, è tuttavia innegabile che l'introduzione di una teoria italiana del metodo di Jäger non bastò a sopire i dubbi e le riserve che aleggiavano sopra l'uso di tale attrezzo. Una prima frattura si venne a creare – come accennato – con Malatesta, autore di un manuale alternativo a quello di Gallo: questi,

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁸⁶ Lettera del Municipio di Venezia all'ispettore urbano e all'economista, *Programmi per gli esercizi al bastone Jäger pubblicati dal direttore Pietro Gallo prezzo l. 1,58 all'esemplare – acquisto di un numero sufficiente di tali esemplari per le Scuole comunali*, Venezia 8 maggio 1879, in ASCV, Fasc. VIII/60, 1875-79; cfr. anche Lettera del Municipio di Venezia alla Div. IV, *senza oggetto*, Venezia 29 maggio 1879, ivi.

⁸⁷ Lettera del R. Provveditore agli Studi di Venezia al Ministro dell'Istruzione Pubblica, *senza oggetto*, Venezia 25 aprile 1879, in ACS, MPI, *Personale 1860-1880 f. «Gallo Pietro»*.

⁸⁸ La Torre, *Il bastone Jäger e gli appoggi Baumann*, cit., pp. 7-8.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

⁹⁰ Si vedano i seguenti articoli: [s.a.], *Cronaca della Ginnastica. Notizie italiane*, «La Ginnastica in Italia. Bollettino Ufficiale della Federazione Ginnastica Italiana», vol. 5, nn. 5-6, 1878, p. 97; G. Orsolato, *Cronaca della Ginnastica. Notizie italiane*, «La Ginnastica in Italia. Bollettino Ufficiale della Federazione Ginnastica Italiana», vol. 5, 1878, nn. 7-8, p. 144; [s.a.] *Notiziario*, «La Ginnastica», A. XV, n. 10, 1881, p. 4.

infatti, con l'assenso dello stesso Jäger e con l'avallo del cav. Valletti⁹¹, tradusse una parte dell'opera del ginnasta tedesco – relativa agli esercizi col bastone a piè fermo, *maneggio, posizioni, slanci* – sconfessando tuttavia l'idea portante di Gallo, ossia che il bastone avrebbe potuto sostituire molti attrezzi previsti dalla scuola torinese, «avendo – al contrario – mira di seguitare, per quanto mi fosse possibile, l'ordine e la terminologia del Manuale Obermann»⁹², limitandosi, dunque, a considerare i movimenti col bastone Jäger preparatori agli esercizi con gli altri attrezzi. La pubblicazione del manuale di Malatesta, in aperta sfida ai programmi ministeriali stabiliti nel 1878, rappresentò una nuova occasione di contrasto tra la scuola di Obermann e quella di Baumann: se, infatti, il periodico filo-torinese non perdeva occasione di lodare l'opera di Malatesta⁹³, l'organo di stampa ufficiale della Federazione delle Società Ginnastiche Italiane, invece, lamentava come il giornale piemontese non avesse rilevato «che la paternità degli esercizi sul *Bastone Jäger* fosse stata lasciata a chi veramente spettava»⁹⁴, ossia Gallo. La polemica si accendeva nel numero successivo, nel quale, nel corso di una recensione dell'opera di Malatesta, denunciando con fermezza e preoccupazione come questo testo fosse stato adottato dalle scuole magistrali di Torino e di Roma, legate agli ambienti obermanniani, l'articolaista si interrogava

per quale ragione due scuole magistrali [...] scelsero a proprio testo un libro che nella prefazione dichiara di scostarsi dal modo di considerare il nuovo attrezzo da quello pubblicato da colui ad opera del quale il bastone Jäger entrò a far parte del programma governativo, di colui che in seno alla Commissione di maestri raccolti dal ministro della pubblica istruzione in Roma l'anno scorso propose gli esercizi col bastone Jäger adottati dalla Commissione stessa ed introdotti nel programma ufficiale del 16 dicembre 1878⁹⁵?

Il rischio era quello di formare nelle scuole su menzionate un personale docente estraneo – quando non apertamente ostile – alle indicazioni contenute nei programmi ministeriali vigenti. Nella lettera, citata in precedenza, rivolta a tutti i suoi colleghi per incoraggiarli ad adoperare il bastone Jäger nelle loro lezioni di ginnastica, Gallo invitava gli insegnanti e i cultori dell'educazione fisica a svolgere i programmi ponendo attenzione alle capacità fisiche e intellettuali dei propri alunni, evitando però di adottare manuali i cui contenuti si fossero rivelati in contraddizione con le indicazioni ministeriali: «ciò – infatti – creerebbe il caso, e la tanta sospirata unità d'insegnamento non soltanto sarebbe un'ironia, ma derise sarebbero eziandio, e da parte di educatori, le leggi dello Stato»⁹⁶.

⁹¹ Malatesta, *Il bastone Jäger nelle palestre italiane*, cit., p. 7.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Cfr. [s.a.], *Il bastone Jäger*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 13, n. 9, 1879, p. 3.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ [s.a.], *Il bastone Jäger del professor Curzio Malatesta (Torino, Paravia, 1979, L. 1,50)*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 13, 1879, p. 4.

⁹⁶ Gallo, *Lettera agli Onorevoli Colleghi*, cit., p. 2.

L'opuscolo di Gallo ricevette commenti contrastanti, non solo da parte della scuola torinese, ma anche da un insigne ginnasiarca, Gregorio Draghicchio⁹⁷, acuto osservatore delle coeve teorie pedagogiche del corpo. Questi, in un lungo articolo pubblicato sulla rivista triestina «Mente sana in corpo sano», commentava negativamente la teoria di Jäger, ritenendola sottesa solo alla preparazione militare del fanciullo:

noi siamo del sommo parere, che la palestra non debba essere cambiata in caserma, che essa non debba aver esclusivamente in mira di formare dell'allievo il *futuro soldato*, sibbene l'*uomo futuro*, ché quando essa darà alla patria un uomo robusto, sano ed atto a sostenere le fatiche ed a sopportare i disagi della vita, essa avrà fatto il dover suo, giacché un uomo siffatto non può non essere anche un eccellente soldato⁹⁸.

Il ginnasiarca triestino, tuttavia, promuoveva l'uso del bastone tedesco «perché gli esercizi che con questo bastone si eseguono, oltreché promuovere la bellezza del corpo e del suo portamento, servono mirabilmente ad educare l'allievo all'esecuzione pronta, vivace, franca e gagliarda»⁹⁹. Draghicchio, inoltre, rivolgeva due specifiche critiche all'opuscolo di Gallo, la prima riguardante la natura del bastone stesso, che Gallo voleva adottabile dagli alunni delle scuole elementari e dalle alunne nella sua forma in legno¹⁰⁰, mentre il ginnasiarca triestino, interpretando alla lettera la teoria di Jäger, avrebbe preferito restasse metallico¹⁰¹; la seconda, invece, legata alla proposta avanzata dal maestro veneziano di proporre esercizi specifici anche per le bambine.

Noi non li troviamo affatto adatti al sesso femminile sia dal lato igienico, che dal lato educativo. Dal lato igienico, perché le fanciulle sono di costituzione di gran lunga più gracile di quella dei maschi, e quindi eseguire esercizi con un bastone pesante potrebbe riuscire dannoso alla loro salute [...]; dal lato educativo, perché gli esercizi Jäger hanno un'impronta troppo virile, troppo militare perché si addica al carattere, all'indole della femminile gioventù¹⁰².

Gallo rispose alle critiche avanzate dal ginnasiarca triestino in un articolo pubblicato sulle pagine del periodico «La Ginnastica», nel quale prendeva le distanze dagli aspetti più radicali della teoria di Jäger, dichiarando come non avesse «mai inteso abolire tutti gli attrezzi ginnastici»¹⁰³ e che la sostituzione nelle scuole femminili del bastone di ferro con una variante più leggera in

⁹⁷ Cfr. N. Močinić, *Draghicchio Gregorio*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 498-499.

⁹⁸ G. Draghicchio, *Bibliografia*, «Mente sana in corpo sano», vol. 7, n. 5, 1879, p. 19.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Cfr. Gallo, *Il bastone Jäger*, cit., p. 9.

¹⁰¹ «Quale è la caratteristica del bastone Jäger? Che esso sia di *ferro*. Ove ciò non si ammetta, cessa d'esistere il bastone Jäger e non vi restano che le sue teorie, i suoi esercizi, le sue combinazioni in 16 tempi. Quindi è che restammo stupiti nello scorgere, nei programmi governativi, e parzialmente anche nell'opuscolo Gallo, tramutarsi il bastone di ferro in bastone di legno». *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ P. Gallo, *Sul bastone Jäger*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 13, n. 6, 1879, p. 1.

legno, avrebbe ottenuto come effetto quello di adattarne gli esercizi anche alle fanciulle¹⁰⁴. Quanto all'affermazione sulla necessità di adottare esclusivamente bastoni di ferro, sostenuta da Draghicchio, Gallo contestava che «la caratteristica del bastone Jäger non istà nel suo peso ma nella qualità degli esercizi che con esso si fanno, e nella rapidità delle mosse»¹⁰⁵.

L'adozione del bastone Jäger secondo le teorie di Gallo incontrò alcune resistenze anche all'interno del polo «veneto-romagnolo», nonostante «La Ginnastica», il periodico vicino alla scuola di Baumann, avesse dichiarato che la seconda edizione dell'opera del maestro veneziano fosse stata in grado di interpretare la teoria di Jäger adattandola al contesto italiano, mostrandosi così preferibile rispetto a chi, al contrario, «si limitò a tradurre il difficilissimo libro sul bastone [...], ma [che fece] poco o nulla in pratica alla ginnastica italiana»¹⁰⁶. Baumann indirizzò una lettera alla direzione de «La Ginnastica», nella quale ammetteva di usare nelle scuole elementari la bacchetta «come una preparazione al bastone» ritenendo, tuttavia, che questa scelta non rappresentasse un'innovazione, bensì una semplificazione, e che i fanciulli della scuola primaria avrebbero faticato meno con un supporto più leggero. Baumann, comunque, profetizzava una lotta serrata fra bacchetta e bastone ed esprimeva così il proprio giudizio in merito: «li esercizi alla maniera del Jäger sono molto più belli, più vari e più utili che non quelli della bacchetta. Tra il Jäger e la bacchetta comincia adesso una lotta [...]: il più debole senza dubbio soccombe»¹⁰⁷.

Naturalmente, nella guerra serrata che avrebbe dovuto fare seguito fra la bacchetta e il bastone Jäger, Gallo non aveva dubbi su quale sarebbe stato destinato all'estinzione: nella sua opera *Torniamo all'antico*, infatti, lamentava aspramente come non si potesse «ideare contraddizione maggiore. Col bastone si possono eseguire, e meglio, tutti gli esercizi della bacchetta e altri molti; eppure si vuole mantenerla! Perché, Dio buono?»¹⁰⁸. Gli stessi esercizi col bastone Jäger, introdotti in via sperimentale nelle scuole comunali di Venezia, avevano dimostrato «che per esso si possono ottenere ottimi effetti, poiché fra tutte le scuole il maggior sviluppo fisico fu ottenuto dove si lavorò col bastone Jäger»¹⁰⁹. La diffusione degli esercizi col bastone Jäger secondo le teorie di Gallo fu confermata anche dalla pubblicazione, nel periodico «La Ginnastica», di alcune combinazioni con il bastone¹¹⁰, ispirate alle norme dell'insegnante

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ [s.a.], *Il bastone Jäger*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 18 n. 3, 1884, p. 3.

¹⁰⁷ E. B., *senza oggetto*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 14, n. 3, 1880, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸ Gallo, *Torniamo all'antico*, cit., p. 12.

¹⁰⁹ [s.a.], *Cronaca della Ginnastica. Notizie italiane. Venezia*, «La Ginnastica in Italia. Bollettino Ufficiale della Federazione Ginnastica Italiana», vol. 5, nn. 9-10, p. 182.

¹¹⁰ F. Dalla Dea, *Notiziario*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 14, n. 12, 1880, p. 4.

veneziano, sperimentate dal maestro Francesco Dalla Dea, che dedicò un manuale all'uso del bastone, nel quale lo presentava

come l'unico, come il necessario attrezzo esclusivamente adatto a sviluppare le parti più recondite del nostro corpo, a rafforzare certi muscoli che col solo uso degli altri ordigni rimarrebbero negletti, inerti, con grave pericolo di coloro cui il bisogno costringesse improvvisamente ad adoperarli¹¹¹.

Quasi vent'anni più tardi, un altro insegnante di ginnastica, Francesco La Torre, pubblicava la sua opera sul bastone Jäger, mostrando non solo come le istanze innovatrici di Gallo fossero state accolte da una larga schiera di sostenitori, ma anche che le stesse, perfino all'interno di un mutato clima pedagogico nel settore della ginnastica, scaturito dalla promulgazione dei programmi del 1893 incentrati sulle teorie di Mosso¹¹² e di Celli¹¹³ – che propugnavano un'attività fisica da svolgersi all'aperto, avvalendosi anche di attività ludiche – mantenevano ancora la loro attualità, portando finalmente a termine l'esclusione dei «grandi attrezzi» per le ragazze e per i fanciulli sotto i 14 anni¹¹⁴:

Si mettano perciò via – concludeva l'autore nella sua introduzione – buona parte dei grandi attrezzi che io, a mio avviso, trovo di sparuta utilità pratica, e si dia invece maggiore importanza a quegli esercizi che meglio si prestano per dare al corpo uno sviluppo armonico, e che tendono e mirano al più grande compito ch'è quello di formare, infine, il cittadino soldato!¹¹⁵

5. Conclusioni: il bastone Jäger nel contesto di una militarizzazione della ginnastica

L'introduzione del bastone Jäger all'interno degli attrezzi previsti come canonici per rendere una palestra funzionante, dunque, non deve sorprendere: di là dalla *querelle* intrapresa fra i sostenitori dei «grandi attrezzi» e dei «piccoli attrezzi», il bastone Jäger si prestava perfettamente a sostenere quel programma di educazione scolastica proprio di una Sinistra storica, che, rispetto al ritardo evidenziato dai governi precedenti, aveva saputo recepire «l'importanza dello sport come ginnastica perché ne vede[va] la dimensione essenzialmente nazionale e militare»¹¹⁶. La sua diffusione avrebbe avuto effetti positivi sulla

¹¹¹ Dalla Dea, *Gli esercizi del bastone Jäger*, cit., p. 7.

¹¹² Cfr. G. Chiosso, *Mosso Angelo*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 212-213.

¹¹³ Cfr. G. Alatri, *Celli Angelo*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 318-319.

¹¹⁴ Cfr. Ferrari, Morandi, *I programmi scolastici di «educazione fisica»*, cit., p. 30.

¹¹⁵ La Torre, *Il bastone Jäger e gli appoggi Baumann*, cit., pp. 7-8.

¹¹⁶ Z. Ciuffoletti, *Tempo libero tra sociabilità e organizzazione del consenso (idee per un bilancio)*, in Istituto milanese per la storia della Resistenza e del movimento operaio (ed.), *Tempo libero e società di massa nell'Italia del Novecento*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1995, pp. 11-16 (citazione a p. 15).

stessa pratica della ginnastica, abbassando i costi di equipaggiamento delle palestre¹¹⁷ e rendendo più armonico e omogeneo lo sviluppo del corpo.

In luogo di palestre ripiene di innumerevoli attrezzi disposti teatralmente, parecchi di essi di dubbia utilità, che arrecano fortissime spese alle esauste finanze dei comuni, si riconobbe essere sufficienti quegli ordigni che, collo sviluppo armonico ed estetico del corpo, s'apprestino a svolgere quelle parti dell'organismo fisico e morale, necessarie ai bisogni della vita¹¹⁸.

I tentativi portati avanti da Gallo e dai suoi colleghi di adattare al contesto italiano una serie di esercizi fisici legati a un attrezzo ginnastico progettato in un contesto profondamente diverso da quello nazionale non possono essere letti come una conferma della mancanza di un'identità geo-storica sportiva originale italiana, che Tomlinson e Young considerano solamente come una filiazione dei quattro modelli principali europei (inglese, tedesco, scandinavo e sovietico)¹¹⁹. Al contrario, gli sforzi intrapresi dai teorici della «ginnastica italiana» per l'elaborazione di un'educazione fisica al servizio di una nazione che aveva necessità di «predisporre e disporre di un corpo sano e forte, adeguato ai nuovi compiti nazionali»¹²⁰, dimostrano come le rielaborazioni di modelli esteri possano essere considerate come originali tentativi di creazione di un modello pedagogico ginnastico mirante a «voler *far* acquisire al popolo del 'bel paese' una identità 'robusta' e 'gagliarda' che risulti la temperanza dell'*animus italicus* con l'archetipo borghese, ovvero con l'ideale *homo oeconomicus ed industrius* della civiltà capitalistica»¹²¹.

¹¹⁷ Nel 1867 il costo necessario per attrezzare una piccola palestra era pari a 120 lire. Cfr. Ferrara, *L'Italia in palestra*, cit., p. 144. Un bastone Jäger, invece, aveva un prezzo compreso fra 0.20 e 2 lire. Cfr. Gallo, *Il bastone Jäger*, cit., p. 9.

¹¹⁸ Lettera di P. Gallo a M. Coppino Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione, *senza oggetto*, «La Ginnastica», vol. 18, n. 10, 1884, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ Cfr. A. Tomlinson, C. Young, *Towards a New History of European Sport*, «European Review», vol. 19, n. 4, 2011, pp. 487-507.

¹²⁰ Magnanini, *Il corpo fra ginnastica e igiene*, cit., p. 12.

¹²¹ Bonetta, *Nelle palestre del Regno*, cit., p. 19.

Children's periodical press during World War II (the Great Patriotic War) by the example of the magazine «Murzilka»

Svetlana V. Ivanova
Institute for Strategy of Education
Development of the Russian Academy
of Education
Moscow (Russian)
info@instrao.ru

ABSTRACT: Interest for the wartime themes is quite understandable in the year of the 70th anniversary of the Victory in World War II. One of these themes – children and their life at the wartime – is interesting by many reasons. Researches in education were still carried out, and the change in the attitude of the Soviet periodicals of the wartime demonstrated the scope and role of children's periodical press. It was impossible to protect children against the horrors of war, but some of the most efficient means to reduce war impact were those children's magazines, which were published even before the war, which were well-known by children, on which pages there were both descriptions of heroic deeds at fronts and the examples of bravery in the rear life, and funny pictures raising optimism. Characters of children's magazines advised how to help adults at the difficult wartime and coloured brightly the joy of victory after the war. The paper considers these issues by the example of one of the most popular children's magazines of the Soviet Union.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Scientific Research; Periodicals; Children's journals; World War II; The Soviet Union; XX-XXIth Centuries.

Introduction

It is sad that witnesses of heroic war years are passing away, and we lose interest in the books of writers-participants of World War II (the period from June 1941 until May 1945, which in Russian is called the Great Patriotic War) and pay little attention to the problem of familiarizing of the young people with their books. Behind the haze of memory many years after a well-known slogan of the wartime «All for front, all for victory» makes an impression that life came

to a standstill at that time, that there was nothing but front and production of the most vital and necessary goods for the victory in the country. Yes, it is true, but it is only a part of the truth. The most important things were those led to Victory.

However, the historical pages show that life of the wartime was in full swing, it was rather manifold. Not only frontline concert venues were functioning, but performances were on in the evacuated theatres, wonderful artworks were created in many different areas of art. Together with political, socio-political press, hundreds of front leaflets, popular scientific, literary-artistic, art critical, history journals were published. Their list is amazingly extensive: «Nauka i Zhizn», «Priroda», «Tekhnika Molodezhi», «Ogonyok», «Ochyabr», «Novyi Mir», «Zvezda», «Znamya», «Literaturnoe Obrazovanie», «Molodaya Gvardiya», «Iskusstvo», «Iskusstvo Kino», «Sovetskaya Musyka», «Teatr», «Vestnik Drevney Istorii», «Voprosy Istorii», «Istoricheskiy Zhurnal»¹ and many others.

Scientific work including sphere of the humanities was carried out; in particular, education was actively developed. The researchers and educators published many theoretical and scientific-methodological papers. It is well-known that the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences was established in fiery year of 1943, while the Institute of Theory and History of Pedagogy dates back to 1944. According to various sources² the edition of such important pedagogical journals as «Sovetskaya Pedagogika», «Vozhatyi», «Doshkolnoe Vospitanie», «Nachalnaya Shkola», «Geografiya v Shkole», «Inostrannyi Yazyk v Shkole», «Literatura v Shkole», «Russkiy Yazyk v Shkole», «Fizika v Shkole», «Khimiya v Shkole»³ was not being ceased during the War.

Scientific community owes a debt of gratitude for those who solved topical pedagogic problems during the wartime, who worked for Victory, forming moral qualities, will and desire for Victory by artistic means, who were concerned about maintaining morale at seldom minutes of rest with soldiers and homefront workers. Why in debt? The quickest glance at themes of theses⁴ on pedagogical subjects shows that only a few dozens of works are dedicated to the wartime. It is important to note that after a certain attention in 1970s and

¹ The names of the journals are translated correspondingly: «Science and Life»; «Nature»; «Technology for the Youth»; «Chess in the USSR»; «Light»; «October»; «New World»; «Star»; «Flag»; «Literary Education»; «The Young Guard»; «Art»; «The Cinema Art»; «Soviet Music»; «Theatre»; «Bulletin of Ancient History»; «Questions of History»; «History Journal».

² For example, «Pionerskie zhurnaly» [Young Pioneer Magazines], (<<http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/bse/120557/>> (last access: 10th April, 2015).

³ Correspondingly: «Soviet Pedagogy»; «The Young Pioneer Leader»; «Pre-school Education»; «Primary School»; «Geography at School»; «Foreign Languages at School»; «Literature at School»; «The Russian Language at School»; «Physics at School»; «Chemistry at School».

⁴ Nauchnaya biblioteka dissertacii i avtoreferatov disserCat [Scientific library of theses and abstracts disserCat], (<<http://www.dissercat.com/content/1941-1945-gg#ixzz3Wg5scGFt>> (last access: April 2015).

1980-s to pedagogic themes of wartime, this attention completely ran out in 1990-s (the lack of attention to the heroic past of the Motherland is a striking feature of that time!) and again revived in 2000-s. Moreover, in any year the range of problems of scientific research is rather wide, it includes patriotic, moral, labour, physical education, military and pedagogic education. We can find such rare themes as musical education of schoolchildren during the Great Patriotic War, the leisure and cultural activity of schoolchildren during the War, preparing students for educative work of army officers with church people, the reflection of war in history education, professional training of servicewomen, pedagogical activity of the army officer during the wartime, preparing students for patriotic education of schoolchildren, ideological bases of upbringing in Germany and the USSR.

The children's magazine «Murzilka» during the wartime

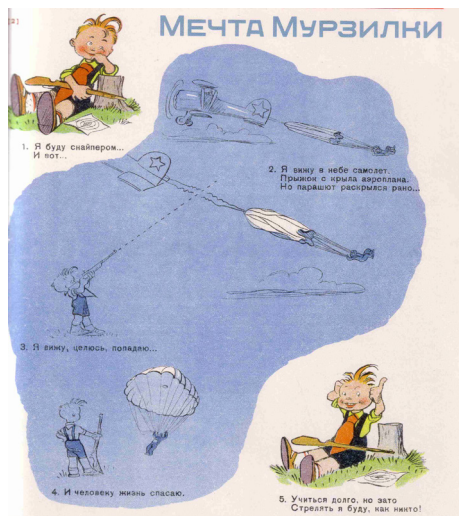
We represent here this list of pedagogical research and Soviet periodicals of the wartime to demonstrate the scope and role of children's periodical press separately against this background.

Before the War, there were about 15 so-called young pioneer magazines. During the Great Patriotic War, publication of many of those magazines was suspended, and some of them were not opened again after the war. In 1941-1945 only «Pioner» (Pioneer), «Druzhnye Rebyata» (Friendly Boys) and «Murzilka» were published.

Certainly, the style and subject area of these magazines changed considerably at the wartime. It is also important that the attitude was changing during the two prewar years (in 1939-1940). We know it well by the feature films, but in children's press we can see surge of attention to patriotism, military occupations, for the protection of Motherland, formation of such moral qualities as mutual assistance, team spirit, discussion of such concepts as human dignity, honour, honesty, love of truth. For instance, detailed pictures of artillery guns by the artist P. Kirpichev were published in the issue n. 11 of 1940 in Murzilka magazine. However, at that time it did not become as apparent as it was at the wartime, when exactly these themes became principal along with practical topics of the terrible life of the wartime.

Let us consider this fact in details by the example of the magazine «Murzilka»⁵ publications, which was not stopped in 1941-1945.

⁵ The idea of this fantastic character of children's fairy tales came from English/Scottish folk literature. The stories about Murzilka were published yet in pre-revolutionary Russia, and at first it looked like brownie. Later it changed its look to a little white dog. Only in 1930-s the Soviet artist A. Kanevskiy drew it as a little fluffy red creature, a magazine reporter with camera, red beret and



Pic. 1

So the poem of Natalia Konchalovskaya *Murzilka's Dream* was published in n. 6, 1941, illustrated by the artist I. Kesh:

I'll be a sniper... And there...
I see an aircraft in the sky.
The jump from the plane's wing.
But the parachute has opened early...
I look, I aim and hit...
And save the man's life.
It takes me a long time to study, but
I'll become the best sharpshooter of all⁶

Judging by illustrations, the little one aims and hits the shroud line, which caught on the plane and prevented parachute from breaking out [Pic. 1]. It is an unreal task, but after all little redheaded hero Murzilka is a very well trained sharpshooter as we can understand from this unpretentious poem. Issue number six was published in June of 1941. We can suppose that it was the last issue that had come out before the War was declared (because we know, at the Soviet time magazines were always released in time). In the previous issues

scarf. More information may be found in *Arhiv Murzilki. Tom 1: Istoriya strany glazami detskogo zhurnala. 1924-1954* [Magazine Murzilka Archive. Volume 1: the history of the country through the eyes of the children's magazine], Moscow, TriMag, 2014, pp. 119-171.

⁶ *Arhiv Murzilki. Tom 1: Istoriya strany glazami detskogo zhurnala. 1924-1954*, cit., pp. 136-137.

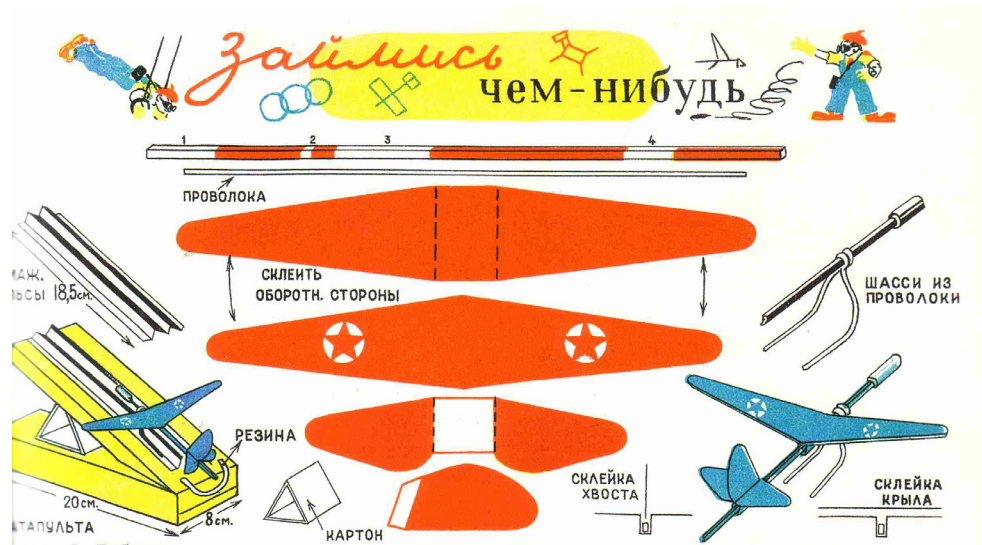
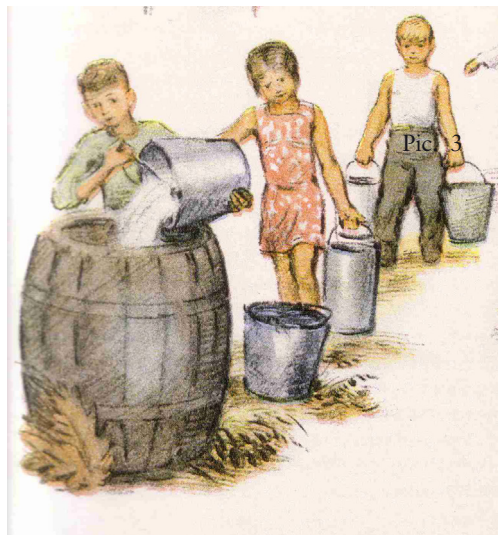


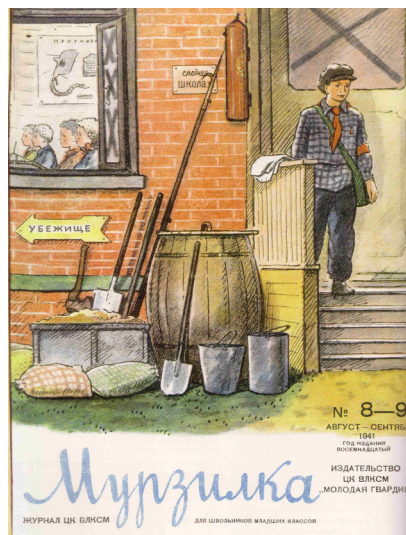
Рис. 2

of the same year and earlier in 1938-1940 we can hardly find materials about the war proper or about military professions. Topics specially mentioned are friendship, honesty, visiting the capital of our Motherland – Moscow and the beauty of this city. Sometimes pastime described is connected with certain military exercises. So the poem by S. Marshak *A nice day* and illustrations for it by the artist E. Afanasieva portray the day of the two Muscovites – the boy and his father, spending their spare time on Sunday in a beautiful Moscow. Among other things, they went to a shooting gallery. It was published in n. 1 in 1941. In the second issue of this year under the heading *Have fun!* [Pic. 2] the author with the nickname *Army General* (!) advises children to glue red and blue gliders with stars on their wings from the components, which should be cut out with scissors from the magazine's page, and to place them on the airfield which the author suggested painting on the sheet of paper together with the drawings of the forest and swamp. The rubber band glued to the gliders allowed ejecting them with the catapult. The author recommends organizing the ejecting of gliders as the battle with the enemy.

It is a terrible time. The war theme rises on the magazines' pages; however, positive composure is preserved as well. We can see the strong belief that it is necessary to get ready to ordeals confidently and quietly, to defend Motherland, to assist each other at that hard time. In the magazine's double issue nn. 8-9 (there have never been such issues before!) in 1941 (it was the first fall of the wartime) under the catchy bright red heading «It is a wartime! Start working, boys!» we can find the following advice:



Pic. 3



Pic. 4

Curtain the windows tightly, don't leave any slits! Don't let any ray of light come out to the street! Remember that the enemy may trace the light.

Work in the garden, help dig potatoes. Bring food to those who work in the field. Watch the new harvest. Leave neither grain, nor do leave a potato for the enemy...

Elder children can be signalers and bring messages. It is very honourable. Signalers are much respected in the Red Army.

Fill the barrel with water bucket after bucket with your friends; it will be helpful in case of fire. Remember, it's wartime!

Find out for yourself and show the way to the nearest first-aid post to the sick people. The doctors will treat the wounded, injured or sick. Moreover, you render aid: call the doctor or the nurse if necessary.

Train to wear a gas mask and to breathe in it.

Dig out and bring sand closer to your house. Sand is good to extinguish firebombs. They are not dangerous in sand.

Help grown-ups dig a trench – a fissure in a ground. It will serve as a cover, a small bomb-shelter. If air raid begins, hide yourself there. Don't be afraid of bombs there. See how many useful things you can do by yourself!⁷

We could not help citing this long war text, illustrated by the artist A. Brey, who drew his pictures like directions. This issue's cover by the artist V. Konstantinov is similar to these illustrations: we see a barrel, shovels, sandbags, a fire extinguisher near the school's entrance, the sign *Bomb shelter* and the pioneer with a gas mask in a special bag. The poster with gas mask device is

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

seen through the open window behind schoolchildren, sitting at their desks [Pic. 4]. In the same issue, there are also quite peaceful novels and stories: *Hot rock* by A. Gaidar with illustrations of K. Kuznetsov, *Boiler house* by A. Barto illustrated by E. Afanasieva.

During the wartime, the participation of children in the terrible military events, their inconspicuous heroism, their patriotism in deeds, not in words, was widely covered in the magazine. Therefore, *Aleksey Andreevich* by L. Kassil is a story about a boy who led the raft crossing of the wounded Soviet soldiers right in the backyard of fascists occupying the village (nn. 1-2, 1942); the story *Commander's Order* by I. Vasilenko about fearless scout Grishutka (n. 7, 1943) and many others.

There were stories about life of children-orphans in the settlements, occupied by fascists, about life-asserting behavior of people in the most difficult situations: *Little sister from Klin* by A. Gorobova (about the adoption of a small kid Svetik with frostbitten legs) – nn. 3-4, 1942; *Rimma Lebedeva's marks* by L. Kassil (how the wounded Soviet lieutenant helped the schoolgirl Rimma with her studies, the girl having survived during occupation) – nn. 8-9, 1942; about the starving children of besieged Leningrad, who hardly brought their food home, described in the *Story about the obligation* by K. Fedin (nn. 11-12, 1942), about a joyful return of the Red Army soldiers back to the occupied land (K. Paustovskiy, *The old garden*, n. 7, 1944). It is painful to read publications of the writers and poets, who perished during the War, for instance, *Notes from the Arctics* by Evgeniy Petrov, who was known to be killed on July 2, 1942 (n. 10, 1942).

The issues of 1945 became the illustration for Victory, the memorial for the terrible years and coming back to the peaceful life, serene childhood, its returning for children through so beautiful, so dear fairy tales, which are necessary to be told for the children.

The poem of K. Chukovskiy *For the children of Leningrad* is just dedicated to the bygone, to infernally disastrous years (nn. 5-6, 1945):

The years will pass
 One after another,
 And you'll become those old men.
 Now you are tow-haired,
 And young,
 And you'll become bold-headed
 And grey.
 Even our little Tatka
 One day will have grandchildren,
 And she'll wear those big glasses,
 And she'll knit her grandchildren the gloves.
 And even two-year-old Pete
 One day will be seventy,
 And all the children all over the world



Рис. 5

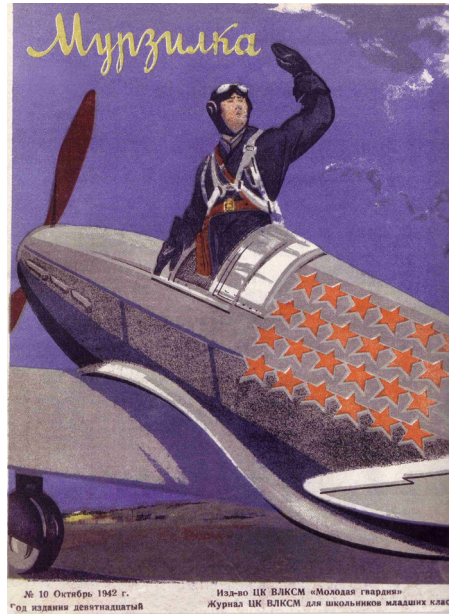


Рис. 6



Рис. 7

Will call him 'granddad'.
 And his grey beard
 Will be as long as up to his waist.
 So when you become those old men
 With those big glasses,
 Just to exercise
 You will go to visit somebody
 (Let's say you'll take your grandson Nikolka
 And you'll bring him to the New Year show),
 Or in the same two thousand twenty four
 You'll sit down on the bench in Summer Garden.
 Or not in Summer Garden but in a little garden
 Somewhere in New Zealand or America,
 Everywhere, at any place you come
 Dwellers of Prague, The Hague, Paris, Chicago and Cracow
 Will point at you
 And softly and respectfully they will say:
 'He was in Leningrad [...] during the Siege [...]
 In those years [...] you know [...] in the years[...] of the blockade'.
 And they'll take off their hats⁸.

For the first time this poem was published in «Literaturnaya Gazeta» (Literary Newspaper) on November 25, 1944.

For the children's magazine illustrations are extremely important, because «Murzilka» was read not only by the schoolchildren, but it was read for the children of preschool age. The magazine's publishers did their best to choose illustrations, the greatest talent of artists-illustrators earned high marks as well. The wartime issues' covers generally bear the stamp of the War. They had the illustrations of the everyday life during the war both in the rear and at the frontline. So we see children-pioneers working in the field, noticeable detail is a scarecrow in Nazi uniform and helmet [Pic. 5]; the aviator rising his hand in a welcoming gesture, sitting in the airplane on the board of which there are many stars, every child of the wartime knowing that those stars meant the number of the downed enemy aircraft [Pic. 6]. There is also children's theatre in the hospital; Red Army officer with children in the street of the city, lit up with bright sunlight. The magazine brought the optimistic faith in Victory, the belief in the viability of the Great country. What does it take for the panorama of the fireworks over the Kremlin of Moscow in the evening in October 1943! [Pic. 7]

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154.

Conclusions

The editorial board remembered that it was the children's magazine. At special festivals it was not possible to decide by the covers that it was the magazine of the wartime: there was the depiction of the New Year tree on the cover of n. 12 in 1944 (and the poem *The fir-tree* by K. Chukovskiy there), and a wonderful skating rink by P. Alyakrinskiy on the cover of n. 1 in 1945.

Since issue n. 5 in 1945, the theme of the Victory has been highlighted, and later in subsequent years the magazine amazingly quickly comes back to the usual children's subjects as if there was no war at all. The country wanted to emerge from losses as quickly as possible, to heal the wounds of war; firstly, it was necessary for children. All life surrounding them with its pain from losses of relatives, maims, wounds, poverty, lack of all necessary things did not allow them to forget about just ended war, but the beloved magazine brought smile, repose from the cares, cloudlessness. Yet, it again became dear, warmhearted Murzilka, the best children's friend. During the wartime, Murzilka was old beyond years and defender, and then he again became merry and resilient.

Child abuse in the family environment in Slovenia in the first part of the 20th Century

Ksenija Domiter Protner
Department of Sociology
University of Maribor (Slovenia)
ksenija.protner@guest.arnes.si

ABSTRACT: The article focused on the characteristics of revealing, identification and approaches toward the problem of child abuse in families in Slovenia in the period between the end of the 19th century and World War Two. Special attention was given to the attitude of individual professions towards this problem in this period. We observed the important role of literary works in the field of building awareness about the problem of violence in families and methods of individual pedagogues, jurists and sociologists in presenting child abuse in families as a social and not only individual problem. Researching this problem was also surprising because we have found that Slovenia witnessed as many as three empirical studies of child abuse and neglect in families during the period of the first part of the 20th century.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Family; Violence; Child protection; Literature; Education; Sociology; Social research; Slovenia; XIX-XXth Century.

Introduction

Child abuse in the family¹ is still a pressing and concealed problem despite several decades of scientific and expert research approach of different disciplines as well as the establishment of legal framework and basis for prevention and solving this problem worldwide² as well as in Slovenia³.

¹ The article uses the term child «abuse» in families for all types of violence a child can be subject to in the family (physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence, the presence of a child during violence between other family members and neglect).

² See: WHO, *Global Health Observatory (GHO) data*, <<http://www.who.int/gho/violence/en/>> (last access: 15th May, 2016); FRA, 2014, *Violence against women: an EU –wide survey*, <fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14_en.pdf> (last access: 15th May, 2015).

³ See: M. Sedmak, A. Kralj, B. Simčič, Z. Medarič, *Nasilje v družinah v Sloveniji* [Domestic

Given the fact that corporal punishment was abolished in schools in Slovenia already in the times of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy with the «School Educational Policy» in 1870⁴, the question arises regarding the attitude of the society of that time towards corporal punishment of children in the family and towards other forms of abuse of children in the family. The purpose of this paper is to review newspaper articles and expert as well as prominent literary works about child abuse in the family in the period from the 19th century until the first half of the 20th century and to examine the attitude of educators, sociologists and other authors towards this problem.

For this reason, we have reviewed all volumes of the pedagogic paper «Popotnik» (from 1880 to 1947), individual volumes of the teacher syndicate paper «Učiteljski tovariš» (volumes between 1869 and 1941), all volumes of the women's paper «Slovenka» from 1900 and individual issues of other papers as well (for instance «Kmečke in rokodelske novice», «Slovenec» and other).

This paper will review the characteristics of corporal punishment of children at the end of the 19th century which will be followed by a presentation of characteristics of detection and prevention of child abuse in the family found in the period until the middle of the 20th century in individual expert fields and authors for which the review of accessible sources identified an important role in the disclosure of the problem of child abuse in the family environment in this period.

1. *The attitude towards corporal punishment of children at the end of the 19th century*

The central pedagogic text of the 19th century by Anton Martin Slomšek (1848) is not titled *Šiba novo mašo poje* (The Rod is Singing the New Mass)⁵ without a reason. According to the Slovenian researcher of the history of childhood A. Puhar, it would be hard to find a family in Slovenia where the basic socialisation principle would not be intimidation and corporal punishment⁶.

Violence in Slovenia], Rezultati raziskave, Koper, Univerza na Primorskem, Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče Koper, 2006; V. Leskošek, M. Urek, D. Zavišek, *Nacionalna raziskava o nasilju v zasebni sferi in v partnerskih odnosih*, Končno poročilo 1. faze raziskovalnega projekta [National Research on Violence in the Private Sphere and Relationships], Ljubljana, Inštitut za kriminologijo, 2010; K. Domiter Protner, *Zloraba otrok v družini. Možnosti ukrepanja* [Child Abuse in the Family: options for action], Ljubljana, Zavod Republike Slovenije za šolstvo, 2014; Ead., *Characteristics and scope of youth domestic violence exposure in Slovenia*, «Revista de cercetare și intervenție socială», vol. 47, n. b, 2014, pp. 150-164.

⁴ *Šolski in učni red občinim ljudskim učilnicam* [School Educational Policy], «Učiteljski tovariš», vol. 11, nn. 3-6, 1871.

⁵ A. Puhar, *Prvotno besedilo življenja: oris zgodovine otroštva na Slovenskem v 19. stoletju* [History of childhood in the Slovenian in the 19th century], Zagreb, Globus, 1982, pp. 136, 145.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Slovenian parents seldom beat their children with the hand in the 19th century. Usually they had a special tool for beating such as various rods, wooden spoons, brooms, rackets, ropes, belts, rulers, chains, shovels and also boots as well as various pieces of furniture. In most families even a tradition formed as to which object was used for beating the children and this object was usually stored in a visible place in the house. But this was not a large enough punishment, the child would even have to kiss the object (mostly a rod) or the hand which beat him and sometimes even say a proverb⁷.

The Penal Code from 1803 did provide sanctions for the excessive punishment of children or the lack of child care⁸. But as found by Dragica Čeč⁹, criminal procedures for the crime in question were very rare in the 19th century according to accessible statistical information; for instance, in 1917 parent abuse amounted to only 78 per million of all criminal offences investigated¹⁰.

During the time corporal punishment was being abolished in schools¹¹, the pedagogic paper «Učiteljski tovariš» featured several articles on this topic. They often mentioned that they do not approve the use of a «rod» as the main means of education but they were at the same time (still) convinced of the educational effectiveness of its use for the so-called «arrogant children»¹². The paper «Kmetijske in rokodelske novice» (Agricultural and Handicraft Magazine) also published a polemic about disciplining in school a few years after abolishing corporal punishment in schools¹³. Thus, Kronberger, the head teacher on the female teacher training school, opposed any kind of «strahovalnice» (intimidations), as he called them, in contrast to the opinion of the majority and defended maintaining discipline with love and dialogue¹⁴. Opposing corporal punishment and along with it numerous situations of «permitted» use can also be found in other pedagogic texts of the time. There are only differences in the descriptions of the weight of the action which was permitted but no one forbid it completely at that time. Puhar¹⁵ even finds that arguments against savage beating never showed a doubt about the ethics of using force in general and that

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 145-146.

⁸ D. Čeč, *Pravni položaj in življenjske usode in revščini izpostavljeni otrok na koncu 18. in začetku 19. stoletja*, in A. Škoro Babič, M. Jeraj, M. Košir, B. Balkovec (edd.), *Zgodovina otroštva* [History of childhood], Ljubljana, Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 2012, pp. 217-230.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

¹¹ In 1869 there were talks organised by the Ministrstvo za poduk (Ministry of Education) about the total abolishment of corporal punishment in schools at the Vienna teacher society «Volksschule» and other teacher societies (*Šiba v šoli* [The Rod in School], «Učiteljski tovariš», vol. 9, n. 1, 1869, pp. 3-4.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Šiba ali ne šiba v ljudski šoli?* [Rod or No Rod in Public Schools?], «Kmetijske in rokodelske novice», vol. 34, n. 30, 1876.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Puhar, *Prvotno besedilo življenja: oris zgodovine otroštva na Slovenskem v 19. stoletju*, cit., p. 142.

there never was a trace of empathy with the child, but always only the problem of the punishment's effect.

The attitude towards corporal punishment, which can be found at the time in the discussions of teachers, shows the general attitude of the society of the time towards corporal punishment. The fact that educated teachers still saw a need for the use of corporal punishment, although only in «extreme» cases, especially shows the attitude towards using corporal punishment in families. The beating of children did not only have a basis in recommended or «traditional» education methods but it was also linked to the sole functioning and relationships in the distinctly patriarchal families of that time. On the other hand, various newspapers also started publishing articles which at least partially reveal the problems of child abuse at the beginning of the 20th century.

The newspaper «Slovenka» published an article about the torture of children¹⁶ in 1900 which stated statistical data from an English report on the torture of children «the poor little creatures who were subject to it, the children of beastly parents»¹⁷. They stated that it is evident from the report of the English national society for the protection of children that the «society found 109,000 children who were maltreated in various ways in its 10 years of operation. 25,437 of these small sufferers bared the marks of beatings with shoes, various dishes, shovels, straps and iron hooks on their bodies or were injured with fire, boiling water and everything you can imagine which came into the hands of these beastly parents»¹⁸. The article was concluded with a critique of the society of that time and the awareness of the seriousness of the problem of child abuse and an indication of the idea that change was needed: «If all these children would stand in line, this line would be 60 miles long and would march 24 hours to pass us. This is a gloomy picture which reminds us of how low our culture still stands and the extent and difficulty of the task of the philanthropists of today and the future»¹⁹.

2. *The role of individual professional disciplines and authors in the disclosure and prevention of child abuse in the first part of the 20th century*

2.1. *Literary works and authors*

The specifics of family life in that period can be seen in many literary works from that time. The *Misterij žene* (Mystery of the Woman)²⁰ published in 1900

¹⁶ *Mučenje otrok* [Torture of Children], «Slovenka», vol. 4, n. 2, 1900, p. 45.

¹⁷ «Slovenka», vol. 4, n. 2, 1900.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Z. Kveder, *Misterij žene* [Mystery of the Woman], Ljubljana, Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, 1900.

by the Slovenian author Zofka Kveder is one of the more notable works. In youth literary works, special attention is given to the theme of neglected and abused children in the family environment in the works of Fran Milčinski, for instance in the youth novel *Ptički brez gnezda* (Birds without a Nest)²¹. For both authors it is characteristic that they had direct experience with the problem of child abuse. Zofka Kveder was in fact herself victim of child abuse in her family²² and Fran Milčinski faced victims of child abuse during his occupation as youth judge.

2.1.1. Zofka Kveder

Despite the prevailing patriarchal attitude of the society of that time children were not beaten only by their fathers but also their mothers and Z. Kveder was also victim of violence of her father as well as her mother. Even before the publication of *Misterij žene* (Mystery of the Woman) she started sending her stories to various publishers before turning 20. She wrote the editor of the Trieste newspaper «Slovenka» that the Kveder family was unhappy because of drinking and that the family will fall apart because of it²³. A year later she wrote in the letter to the editor: «I cannot suffer so much shame that I had to suffer from age fifteen to eighteen for the rest of my life»²⁴. This statement pointed out the feelings for which we now know that most abused children have. *Misterij žene* describes mainly the suffering and injustices of women or, as the author herself wrote in the introduction, she wanted to present the suffering of women to those who do not see and do not know of it, although she does not expect that all would understand her²⁵. The author wrote about pregnancy, suicide, domestic violence, love, sexuality and worn out ladies and, as noted by Leskošek²⁶, many could not stomach her because of her openness and directness. She was mostly criticised for her directness, exaggeration as well as emancipation tendencies; catholic critics also reproached her for «moral perversion of the emerging liberalism»²⁷.

²¹ F. Milčinski, *Ptički brez gnezda: povest* [Birds without a Nest], Celovec, Družba sv. Mohorja, 1917.

²² Zofka Kveder was witness to the battering of her mother and many outbursts of her drunken father (Puhar, *Prvotno besedilo življenja: oris zgodovine otroštva na Slovenskem v 19. stoletju*, cit., p. 149).

²³ E. Muser, *Spremna beseda*, in Z. Kveder, *Njeno življenje* [Her life], Maribor, Založba obzorja, 1980, p. 227.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Kveder, *Misterij žene* [Mystery of the Woman], cit.

²⁶ V. Leskošek, *Zavrnjena tradicija. Ženske in ženskost v slovenski zgodovini od 1890 do 1940*, Ljubljana, Založba, 2002, p. 113.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Critiques were also expressed by women. They accused her, as stated by Leskošek²⁸, of revealing a secret which before that had stayed behind the walls of family life and was part of family intimacy. A particular problem in accepting her work was posed by the fact that she not only exposed the «secrets» of worker and farmer families but also middle-class families. Only «Rdeči prapor» and «Slovenka» expressed acknowledgements for Kveder together with critiques in German and Croatian papers²⁹.

2.1.2. Fran Milčinski – Writer and Youth Judge

Stories of many neglected boys and girls maltreated in their families, which arose during his work as youth judge, were described in the literary works *Mladih zanikrnežev lastni životopisi* (The Self-Resume of Young Slobs)³⁰, *Zločinci* (Criminals)³¹ and broader in the well-known youth story *Ptički brez gnezda* (Birds without a Nest)³².

The problem of torture and child neglect in the Slovenian society of that time was pointed out already in the lecture in the *Splošno slovensko žensko društvo* (General Slovenian Women's Society) in 1907³³. He pointed out the problem of education as well as the problem of neglected and maltreated children which he did not view from an individual perspective of single families, but pointed out a holistic view. He emphasised the importance and problem of responsibility and actions against this problem on a broader social and national level. He was of the opinion³⁴ that not only schools should be responsible for education, because the education of children should also be in the interest of «the state, lands, municipalities and human society in general»³⁵. Along with warning about the problem of neglecting children he also called for charity³⁶.

Along with emphasizing the awareness about the seriousness of the problem of torturing and neglecting children he also pointed out the great importance of the appropriate arrangement of the legal system which would prevent or sanction «the indifference of parents» who torture and neglect children³⁷. He was determining the difference between the Štajerska and Kranjska region; he

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ F. Milčinski, *Mladih zanikrnežev lastni životopisi* [The Self-Resume of Young Slobs], Ljubljana, Matica Slovenska, 1912.

³¹ Id., *Zločinci* [Criminals], Ljubljana, Matica Slovenska, 1912.

³² Id., *Ptički brez gnezda: povest* [Birds without a Nest], Celovec, Družba sv. Mohorja, 1917.

³³ Id., *Naša zanemarjena mladina in Krajnska, oblastna ji mačeha*, Predavanje v Splošnem ženskem društvu [The lecture in the General Slovenian Women's Society], Arhiv Slovenskega šolskega muzeja, 1907.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

thought the latter had the worst care for children. According to the findings of Milčinski³⁸, Štajerska established paid foster care for children younger than two years and criteria for foster parents with the national decree in 1896. This law established that every «client» can take only one child into foster care with the written approval of the mayoralty which gave the permission only to healthy individuals with permanent residency and a «healthy home» and only if they were not alcoholics³⁹. Milčinski, probably also on the grounds of his professional experience as a youth judge, where he faced delinquent youths, pointed out the following important fact: «The more the child grows the lesser the danger for its body and health becomes, but the bigger the danger for its soul»⁴⁰. He was thus of the opinion that it is possible to achieve success in tackling the problem of youth delinquency in at least 85% of the youths with the use of the right approach in education and re-education⁴¹. He presented several family cases which produced «depraved boys and girls». It was common for all these families, as we can see from his writings that the children were physically abused and neglected, most frequently because of alcoholism of one or both parents, disease and prostitution.

He interpreted delinquency in youths as the result of family situations where alcoholism, neglect and child torture is common; he also emphasised the importance of proper education or (required) re-education of youths as well as parents. He anticipated that it is possible to change the behaviour and attitude of youths as well as other adults (which are important for them) with proper re-educational procedures. His work exceeded the work of a judge which can be seen in the work mentioned above and his efforts for the connection of schools with the protective court in the care for neglected youths. In 1912 an article on this subject by Milčinski⁴² was published in the pedagogic paper «Popotnik» titled *Stik ljudske šole z varstvenim sodiščem v brigi za zanemarjeno mladino* (The Connection of Public Schools with the Protective Court regarding the Care for Neglected Children). This kind of planned cooperation between school and court also had legal basis in the national law *Šolski in učni red* (The School and Educational Policy) from 1905 and in the Executive Order from 1909 for the Kranjska region⁴³. Milčinski⁴⁴ did say that this cooperation (already) existed but at the same time he expressed his concern for the continuation of this cooperation, especially because «schools often do not see any effect or activity of the court». He found that we were living in a transitional period where

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 14.

⁴² F. Milčinski, *Stik ljudske šole z varstvenim sodiščem v brigi za zanemarjeno mladino* [The Connection of Public Schools in the Care for Neglected Children], «Popotnik», vol. 13, n. 10, 1912, pp. 292-296.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 293.

the state recognizes the need for caring for neglected youths but has not yet arranged for the method of implementation which cannot only be dependent on charity and the good will of private institutions⁴⁵. Thus it is essential that the already prepared government plan for the law on foster care enters into force because only then it will be possible to consistently care for the neglected youths⁴⁶.

Barenreiter⁴⁷ wrote about Milčinski's work in the foreword or introduction of the scientific paper of the *Prvi avstrijski dunajski kongres za varstvo otrok* (First Austrian Vienna Congress for Child Care).

Barenreiter⁴⁸ praised Milčinski's report on the negligence towards Kranjska's youths and agreed with him that it is not enough for the court to rule to take a child away from its father but that it is also important to find «shelter» for this child. He confirmed Milčinski's finding that this is hard to achieve in the given social circumstances (of that time). Two Croatian authors also give praise to Milčinski – Ivan Tomašič and Stjepan Širola⁴⁹ in their book *Uzgojna skrb za zaštitu i spašavanje djece i mladeži od moralnoga brodoloma* (Educational Concerns for the Protection and Saving of Children and Youths from a Moral Wreck). The authors had a contract with the city of Zagreb where they wanted to establish a new orphanage and home («help centre») for neglected youths, to make a comparison study about the care for neglected youths in Germany, Austria, Hungary and Slovenia and among other findings discovered that there are instances of good practise, as we would call it today, in Slovenia in this field.

Although Milčinski faced individuals in his work as a youth judge, his attitude towards the problem of child abuse in families is not characteristically individual but macro-sociological. His role in the field of awareness of the problem of child abuse and neglect was extraordinary. He emphasised social responsibility for the creation and solving this problem and gave numerous initiatives for the regulation of the legislation in this field, connected with schools and the operation of various other institutions such as foster homes. We must also not ignore the importance of his practical work and attitude towards youths whom he met as youth judge.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 294.

⁴⁷ *Za mladino* [For Youths], «Slovenec», vol. 35, n. 34, 1907, p. 1.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ F. Vajda, *Ocena knjige I. Tomšič, and S. Širola, Uzgojna skrb za zaštitu i spašavanje djece i mladeži od moralnog brodoloma* [Educational Concerns for the Protection and Saving of Children and Youths from a Moral Wreck], «Popotnik», vol. 32, n. 6, 1911, pp. 180-182.

2.2. *Pedagogues and Teachers*

2.2.1. *Franjo Žgeč*

Franjo Žgeč also pointed out the social problem of addressing alcoholism (which is also one of the factors in the maltreatment of children in families). He was aware of the problem of the presence of alcohol in the family environment of children and its consequences for the child; he also promoted addressing this problem in society. He estimated that this is not only a private problem but also a problem the whole society should devote attention to. He especially highlighted the important role of schools which have the opportunity to educate parents on parental meetings about the problem of alcohol and alcoholism⁵⁰. In search for characteristics of «right» education he was of the opinion that besides knowing the child's mental development and its capabilities and needs it is also important to examine the child's milieu and the obstacles it faces⁵¹. For the study of the child's environment he and *Pedagoško-didaktično društvo* (Pedagogic-didactic Society) from Maribor devised a survey, they called the questionnaires *popisnica* (survey sheet). The survey sheet about the mental state of a child was comprised of three main parts: social situation, physical state and mental development stage of the child⁵².

2.2.2. *Karl Doberšek*

Karl Doberšek published an extensive study which addressed the problem of child neglect in the family *Vpliv socialnih razmer na razvoj otroka na Prevaljah* (The Influence of the Social Situation on the Development of the Child in Prevalje) in 1929⁵³. The work was labelled by Žgeč⁵⁴ as the first extensive pedagogic-sociological study in Slovenia, with «our children» as its subject. He estimated that the findings of this research were not generally valid but the information about children in Prevalje⁵⁵ hold, in his belief, generally true laws every teacher has to be aware of. Doberšek⁵⁶ added to this that the survey

⁵⁰ F. Žgeč, *Pijančevanje, družba in vzgoja*, «Popotnik». vol. 49, 1921, pp. 127-137.

⁵¹ F. Žgeč, *Za otroka*, «Učiteljski tovariš», vol. 54, n. 1, 1926, p. 1.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ K. Doberšek, *Vpliv socialnih razmer na razvoj otroka na Prevaljah* [The Influence of the Social Situation on the Development of the Child in Prevalje], Ljubljana, Slovenska šolska matica, 1929.

⁵⁴ F. Žgeč, *Predgovor* [Foreword], in K. Doberšek, *Vpliv socialnih razmer na razvoj otroka na Prevaljah*, Ljubljana, Slovenska šolska matica, 1929, pp. 5-7.

⁵⁵ A Smaller Workers Town.

⁵⁶ Doberšek, *Vpliv socialnih razmer na razvoj otroka na Prevaljah* [The Influence of the Social Situation on the Development of the Child in Prevalje], cit., p. 10.

sheets about the developmental stage of the students⁵⁷, which were issued by Žgeč⁵⁸ himself, present the «practical foundation» of his work.

Doberšek's work is not only important because of statistical information about children but also because in this study he touches on the problem of rights and women's equality. Among neglected children he especially pointed out illegitimate children (in the school in Prevalje there were 17 illegitimate children among 80 entries in 1929/30). He saw the basic problem and origin of the problem of these children in the non-recognition of the rights of «illegitimate mothers» because the society of that time, as he said, «saw illegitimate mothers as the personified sin»⁵⁹. The consequence of this was that these mothers experienced and received less support in the social environment where they lived together with (or even separated against their own will from) their children. As a consequence, they also received fewer funds which did not suffice for the payment of a nanny and the children were often left to themselves⁶⁰. He found that the working class expressed higher tolerance towards illegitimate children; significantly lesser tolerance was expressed by the farmers. He especially highlighted miners and mining families who were the majority in Prevalje.

He estimated that women became equal to men and consequently less violent behaviour could be seen in these families – it was very rare; and if it did occur, it was a result of alcohol. He was convinced that «alcohol, which has an effect on the adults as well as the youths, is the biggest evil of the working class»⁶¹. He made an interesting and (at least for that time) unusual find⁶² about the importance of neighbours in mining villages as the providers of strong social control in the case of violence of a husband against his wife because such actions were immediately strongly condemned.

2.2.3. Iva Šegula

Amongst the pedagogues who addressed the problem of child abuse in the family environment we cannot ignore the work of Iva Šegula, who successfully defended her PhD at the Ljubljana Faculty of Arts in 1941 with her thesis titled *Pozabljeni otrok* (The Forgotten Child). This is without a doubt the first Slovenian PhD thesis which addresses the problem of neglected children as a

⁵⁷ Žgeč thought in his tendency to find the characteristics of «correct» education that it is important to research the child's environment and obstacles it faces. For this study he and Pedagoško-didaktično društvo (Pedagogic-didactic Society) from Maribor devised a survey, they called the questionnaires «popisnica» (survey sheet).

⁵⁸ Žgeč, *Za otroka*, cit.

⁵⁹ Doberšek, *Vpliv socialnih razmer na razvoj otroka na Prevaljah* [The Influence of the Social Situation on the Development of the Child in Prevalje], cit., p. 49.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* p. 50.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

whole because she studied it from different angles and perspectives when she arranged neglected children into categories such as «economically neglected child, psychologically neglected child, school and teachers in the light of guilt, causing difficult states of a child's neglect»⁶³. Neglect and exposing children to violence in the family was studied as one of the possible forms of child neglect. Child neglect in families was partially included in the 4th chapter which was printed in the scope of the inaugural dissertation titled *Problemi zanemarjenega otroka* (Problems of the Neglected Child). This chapter also represents the overview of her empirical research. Šegula⁶⁴ performed 30 quantitative analyses of examples of characteristics of children or youths (aged 13-15) where she evaluated their physical development as well as their intellectual, moral state and the state of their family. She was interested in the whole picture and degree of the child's integral development, the family situation was only part of it. For the family she assessed that it is disintegrating in all industrial communities⁶⁵ and that this kind of society «does not, in fact, give the child anything»⁶⁶. She was sure that the poor functioning of the family usually cannot be blamed on the parents but the industrialisation and employment of women⁶⁷. She regarded open neglect of children and exposure to violence in the family as a fact and part of the integrated state of children. She proposed ways of approaching children and understanding them based on this integrated assessment. She emphasised, which was in her opinion the most important fact, that we understand and regard the child in the environment where it lives, understand and take into account all those forces which influence the child with «its own, independent law if the child and its parents want it or not – this is at this time the most important for me»⁶⁸. Šegula documented the families of children and in most of these cases we can find child neglect or exposure to other forms of family violence. But we cannot find specific involvement with violence in the family and ideas for the prevention of the exposure of children to violence in the family in Šegula's work. This can be connected to her view of the immediate environment of the child which is not, in her opinion, represented by the family only, but also by «particular cultures and health circumstances»⁶⁹ which specifically determine the child⁷⁰.

⁶³ I. Šegula, *Problem zanemarjenega otroka* [Problems of the Neglected Child], (Inavguralna disertacija), Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta Kr. Univerze v Ljubljani, 1941.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Šegula emphasised that she has only the industrial family in mind.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁷⁰ Šegula was of the opinion that a child is never isolated and that it is always involved in an environment; first of all, in the family and through it the whole home town; and thus, the characteristics of this place are also the characteristic of the child.

2.2.4. *Other publications of articles about the problem of child abuse in pedagogic papers*

In 1908 the paper «Popotnik» published a translation of the German article on child abuse which listed 1064 sexual abuse cases of youths especially girls up to the age of 14⁷¹. As perpetrators they listed members of the higher social classes⁷² which was at that time extremely rare as it still remains to this day. In 1910 they published the findings of the Italian Psychologist Lino Ferriani on the problem and consequences of the also rarely exposed but common abuse, the so called intimidation of children⁷³. In the volume of 1913 we can find news about the intent of Switzerland to establish the *Mednarodno društvo za zaščito mladine, mater in otrok* (International Society for the Protection of Youths, Mothers and Children)⁷⁴ and about the establishment of a refuge for the children of drunkards, also in Switzerland.

The paper «Učiteljski tovariš» started publishing articles which exposed and critically evaluated the attitude of society and the state towards the problem of child abuse and their protection later in the 1930s. Thus, the article *Varstvo otrok in mladine* (Protection of Children and Youths)⁷⁵ published that, in comparison to other countries (quoting data for Germany and the USA), the Kingdom of Yugoslavia used and allocated inadequate funds for the care and protection of children and that therefore help for threatened youths in Yugoslavia does not exist. The article also points to a very important fact, which is still relevant today, that society is turning a blind eye towards the problem of children and youths at risk. The problem of the lack and inadequacy of family protection and the position of the child were debated several times in the paper «Učiteljski tovariš». A.P.⁷⁶ wrote clearly that whoever is able to observe cannot overlook the fact that children in families of lower classes are first to be exposed to deficiency, alcoholism, and neglect from an early childhood). He also pointed to the efforts of teachers and the initiative of the Ministrstvo za prosveto (Ministry of Education) of that time for solving this problem and emphasised that child protection cannot only be an unilateral issue of school or teachers, but of the whole society⁷⁷.

⁷¹ «Popotnik», vol. 29, 1908, p. 83.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ «Popotnik», vol. 31, 1910, p. 317.

⁷⁴ «Popotnik», vol. 34, 1913, p. 59.

⁷⁵ *Varstvo otrok in mladine* [Protection of Children and Youths], «Učiteljski tovariš», vol. 78, n. 20, 1936, p. 1.

⁷⁶ A.P., *Za zaščito otroka in družine* [For the Protection of Children and Families], «Učiteljski tovariš», vol. 81, n. 7, 1940.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

2.3. Sociologists

2.3.1. France Goršič

France Goršič was a jurist who was also involved in sociology and was introducing judicial sociology in Slovenia⁷⁸, he was also head of the *Urad za zaščito dece* (Office for the Protection of Children) from 1919⁷⁹. In 1921 he published a monograph titled *Socialna zaščita dece in mladine* (Social Protection of Children and Youths) which shows the historical development of the formation of the legislation in the field of child and youth protection and organising the protection in Slovenia, various needs for protection in the pre-school and school period and groups in need of this protection⁸⁰. He especially pointed out the moral neglect of youths for which he estimated that it has a lot of different reasons, one of them being the family education, or as he called it, bad family education⁸¹. Regarding family education, he also mentioned many different possible shortcomings and problems (i.e. if parents do not want or cannot educate «correctly»; if they go to work or live in shortage; if they are led by the current mood, etc.), among these he also mentioned obvious child abuse such as emotional neglect, educational neglect as well as contempt for children and deliberate perversion of children⁸².

2.3.2. Josip Jeraj

The sociologist Josip Jeraj also addressed the problem of neglected and maltreated children in the monograph *Socialno vprašanje* (Social Issue) issued in 1928⁸³. In the chapter *Cerkvena in zasebna dobrotelnost* (Church and Private Charity) he wrote about the care for children, separately about the care for youths and separately about the care for adults. He pointed out the problem of proper care for children during working hours of parents as well as the problem of neglect in general. He claimed that children of worker towns are generally educationally and physically neglected and that that was the reason that many wither in utmost misery because parents do not care for them at all⁸⁴. He was certain that if care is necessary for children it is even more necessary for adolescents.

⁷⁸ Slovenska biografija, <<http://www.slovenska-biografija.si>> (last access: 15th May, 2015).

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ F. Goršič, *Socialna zaščita dece in mladine* [Social Protection of Children and Youths], Ljubljana, Tiskovna zadruga, 1921.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ J. Jeraj, *Socialno vprašanje* [Social Issue], Maribor, Tiskarna Sv. Cirila Maribor, 1928.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

He specifically pointed out youths in working and craftsman families for which he stated that they are often left to themselves and have no protection in the family⁸⁵. In the chapter *Država in javna dobrodelnost* (The State and Public Charity) he noted that the state cannot be reluctant to the question whether youths at a certain age receive the right education⁸⁶. He was referring to *Splošni državljanski zakonik* (The General State Law) (1811) which stipulated that the protection court can take parental rights away from the parents and guardians if the child was abused and neglected and that the protection court has to make contact with associations which dedicate themselves to education and child care and «to consensually suppress abuse and perversion of youths»⁸⁷.

The *Zakon o zaščiti dece in mladine* (Law of Protecting Children and Youths)⁸⁸ from 1922 was commented on by Jeraj⁸⁹ that modern society assumed its most noble role to protect children. He finished the thoughts in his book in the belief that public charity is in an all-round competition with private charity in the “gentle” care for youths because institutions are being set up in cities and in the country which care for orphans, illegitimate children, foundlings, abandoned children, daily child shelters and stations as well as special institutions for the blind, deaf and speech impaired and children with development and mental disorders.

2.4. Doctors

The problem of neglect and abuse of children was also discussed by doctors. In 1934 they reached a resolution at the *Slovanski zdravniški kongres* (Slavic Medical Congress) with proposals for strengthening healthcare in rural areas⁹⁰. Among other they stood for ensuring compulsory protection of abandoned children regardless of the *status* of its parents⁹¹. This meant significant progress not only in the attitude towards abandoned children in general, but also towards illegitimate children. Doctors debated the protection of rural children and youths also on the *II. Balkanski kongres za zaščito otrok* (Second Balkan

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ The law (under the 1st and 2nd article) refers to all war orphans, children and youths which are not at all or are inadequately protected by their parents (Jeraj, 1928).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁹⁰ Zdravstvo na deželi [Healthcare in Rural Areas], «Učiteljski tovariš», vol. 75. n. 10, 1934.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Congress for the Protection of Children)⁹² in Beograd in 1938⁹³. The goal of the first section of the congress was to thoroughly and comprehensively examine the position of children in rural areas and to find possibilities for comprehensive moral, social, healthcare and hygienic protection of these children, taking into account specific economic circumstances of the participating countries⁹⁴. In the scope of this section they debated children without families (orphans, abandoned and illegitimate children in villages) and the family, especially the role of the mother and separately about the role of the father in the family. It is interesting that they especially thoroughly examined the role of the father regarding his attitude towards his wife and cooperation with her in taking care of and educating children and the cooperation of the father in his public and private initiative for the protection of children⁹⁵.

Conclusion

In Slovenian society in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century child abuse in families was constantly present similarly as in other parts of the world. This problem is very realistically presented in the literary works of that time. Along with writers, mostly lawyers, pedagogues, sociologists and doctors dealt with the problem of revealing child abuse in families. We are discovering that the majority pointed out this problem mostly in working and farming families; instances of families from upper classes were extremely rare. Among authors mentioned only Zofka Kveder, who drew from her experience, wrote about violence in upper class families reporting about her experience in mostly literary works and letters.

We have found that discovering and studying the problem of child abuse in the family in Slovenia from the end of the 19th century until World War Two was in no way negligible and, what has to be especially noted, it was mainly holistic and multidimensional with integration of social factors. The meaning and originality of the research approach in the first half of the 20th century in Slovenia was that much greater due to the fact that, according to the opinion of Gelles and Straus, the leading American Sociologists in this field in the last

⁹² The congress featured the countries Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Albania and Greece; the exhibition at the end of the congress featured also Italy, France, Czechoslovakia, Germany, England and America). The congress was divided into two sections: the first debated on the protection of village children, the second about the formation of social-medical staff in villages.

⁹³ *II. Balkanski kongres za zaščito otrok* [Second Balkan Congress for the Protection of Children], «Učiteljski tovariš», vol. 78, n. 38, 1938.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

decades, a psycho-pathological approach which excluded social factors was characteristic for most research until the 1960⁹⁶.

There is no research in this period which would expressly (explicitly) focus on researching the exposure of children and youths to violence in the family. But we do have three larger studies in this period which were also directly trying to determine violence and neglect in the family. We can consider the qualitative study of young delinquents and their families⁹⁷, which was performed by Fran Milčinski in the period of several years during his work, as a first. Along with constant work in the field of raising public awareness, Milčinski also planned, promoted and used inter-institutional cooperation in his professional practise which, despite clear legal ground, has not really taken ground even today.

The second study is Doberšek's survey and analysis of questionnaires (*popisnice*) prepared by F. Žgeč about the social characteristics of children in Prevalje. Each one individually and in its own scope represents an important view of the characteristics of families of that time but their joint shortcoming is that they focus only on the working class regarding domestic violence and neglect in families. Nevertheless, Doberšek's research and findings are of great importance. We can argue that his findings were almost revolutionary for that time because he did not only see and point out the meaning of women's equality but also stressed it as a strong factor in preventing violence in families and with it also child abuse. His distinction between the problem of intentional and unintentional neglect of children is also of exceptional importance. He namely saw the latter as a result of exceptionally hard circumstances of single mothers who were subject to social stigmatisation at that time and were thus without support in the immediate social environment and in the state in general. Pointing to the protective factor of the importance of neighbours as providers of strong social control in the case of domestic violence has remained an important finding to this day which is often not given enough importance⁹⁸. Žgeč's and Doberšek's work is interesting also because of the methodological point of view because the survey method was used which they called *popisnice* (survey sheet); this was extremely rare at that time.

The third larger empirical research is the doctoral thesis of Iva Šegula which is basically dedicated to the problem of child neglect and treats the problem holistically; here child neglect in families is mainly considered as one of the indicators of neglect in society and as a result the functioning of society.

⁹⁶ R.J. Gelles, *Violence in the Family: A Review of Research in the Seventies*, «Journal of Marriage and Family», vol. 42, n. 4, 1980, pp. 873-885; M A. Straus, *The Special Issue on Prevention of Violence Ignores the Primordial Violence*, «Journal of Interpersonal Violence», vol. 23, n. 9, 2008.

⁹⁷ See Milčinski, *Ptički brez gnezda: povest* [Birds without a Nest], cit.; Id., *Mladih zanikrnežev lastni životopisi* [The Self-Resume of Young Slobs], cit.; Id., *Zločinci* [Criminals], cit.

⁹⁸ See K. Domiter Protner, *Vloga socialnega kapitala na področju preprečevanja zlorabe otrok in mladostnikov v družini* [The Role of Social Capital on Prevention of Child And Adolescent Abuse in the Family], «Socialno delo», vol. 54, n. 2, 2015, pp. 99-110.

Despite a relatively small number of larger empirical studies especially in comparison with the first decades after World War Two we can argue that the research in this field in Slovenia before World War Two was rich. After the war we can namely find a distinct decline of (at least public) detection of this problem⁹⁹. In the whole period of socialism in Slovenia the research and attempts of solving this problem were very modest, a renewed interest in the problem in Slovenia emerged as late as the 1980s and mostly in the 1990s and has become stronger only in recent years.

⁹⁹ See Ead., *Pregled raziskovanja nasilja nad otroki v družini v Sloveniji od 19. stoletja do danes* [Overview of research on domestic child abuse in Slovenia from the 19th Century to the present], «Revija za kriminalistiko in kriminologijo», vol. 64, n. 1, 2013, pp. 53-62.

Il progetto di scuola media unica in Italia nei verbali del Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione (1958-1960)

Manuele Ambrosini
Dipartimento di Storia, Culture e Religioni
Università degli Studi di Roma «La Sapienza» (Italia)
man.ambrosini@gmail.com

The project of unified middle school in Italy in reports of the Superior Council of Education (1958-1960)

ABSTRACT: This paper analyzes the first projects related to «scuola media unica» (unified middle school) discussed inside the upper of Education Board. The debate took place on two floors, one strictly pedagogical and political, the other more sociocultural. Within the first container are threads related to educational planning and in the latter the incidence of this on social and cultural aspects of the country: Latin, freedom of the school, technical applications, religion, division into sections representing some of the major problems faced by the Board in which the board made constant reference during all the meetings that took place between 1959 and 1960.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Scholastic legislation; Debate pedagogical and political; Italy; XXth Century.

1. *L'operato del Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione (1959-1962)*

Il 21 gennaio 1959¹ veniva presentato al Senato il progetto di legge Donini-Luporini² frutto di alcuni orientamenti espressi da una commissione di studio istituita alcuni anni prima presso l'Istituto Gramsci a Roma³. Attraverso questo progetto i comunisti proponevano la realizzazione di una scuola media unica triennale che avesse il compito di fornire all'alunno un orientamento adeguato fornendogli una solida preparazione di base. Inoltre, si ribadiva, nelle considerazioni dei comunisti, l'importanza del provvedimento per avvicinare lo Stato alla realizzazione dei dettati costituzionali. La guerra era ormai alle spalle, la ricostruzione stava riconsegnando fiducia alla popolazione e la richiesta d'istruzione stava aumentando enormemente⁴. All'interno della relazione al progetto di legge si spiegava attraverso quali passaggi il nuovo progetto sarebbe giunto alla propria realizzazione:

¹ Il contesto governativo di quel periodo fu caratterizzato dal risultato delle elezioni del 1958 che vedevano, nei risultati elettorali, una conferma per il PCI (rispetto al 1953) che si attestava al 23%, mentre migliorava notevolmente il PSI che giungeva sino al 14,2 %. Nonostante questo passo avanti delle forze di sinistra lo "strapotere" elettorale della DC non era in discussione. In questa congiuntura, per superare il 50% dei seggi che garantivano la governabilità, la DC decise di allearsi con il PSDI avanzando i primi passi verso le forze della sinistra moderata. Per una maggiore comprensione del contesto sociale e politico si rimanda ai seguenti testi: G. Crainz, *Il paese mancato: dal miracolo economico agli anni ottanta*, Roma, Donzelli, 2003; E. Gelsomini, *Le campagne elettorali della prima Repubblica*, Manduria-Roma-Bari, Lacaita, 2009, pp. 169-296; S. Colarizi, *Storia politica della Repubblica. 1943-2006*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2007, pp. 69-77 e P. Pombeni, *Partiti e sistemi politici nella storia contemporanea*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1994, pp. 129-133.

² La riunione in questione ebbe luogo tra il 28 e il 30 novembre del 1955. I maggiori esponenti del PCI esposero le proprie idee in merito ad una riforma scolastica per il triennio della scuola media e, in particolare, il confronto avvenne tra Pietro Ingrao, Luigi Donini, Palmiro Togliatti ed altri. Il documento che attesta l'avvenuto confronto politico in merito alle innovazioni da apportare alla scuola media è situato in Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, Archivio del Partito Comunista, Fondo Comitato Centrale 1955, *Riunione congiunta del C.C. e del C.C.C. del PCI 28-30 novembre 1955*, MF 040. Inoltre in merito a questo argomento si veda Gruppo Comunista del Senato (ed.), *La riforma della Scuola media al Senato*, Roma, Aziende Tipografiche Eredi Dott. Bardi, 1962, pp. 183-237. Inoltre, per una maggiore comprensione della politica scolastica comunista a partire dalla scissione di Livorno del 1921 si veda: F. Pruneri, *La politica scolastica del Partito Comunista Italiano dalle origini al 1955*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1999.

³ A. Semeraro, *Il mito della riforma. La parabola laica nella storia educativa della Repubblica*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1993, pp. 153-158.

⁴ *Educazione e pedagogia in Italia nell'età della Guerra Fredda*, Trieste, Ed. Goliardiche, 1999; M. Gattullo, A. Visalberghi (edd.), *La scuola italiana dal 1945 al 1983*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1986; G. Ricuperati, *Storia della scuola in Italia*, Firenze, La Scuola, 2015; L. Pazzaglia, R. Sani (edd.), *Scuola e società nell'Italia unita. Dalla Legge Casati al Centro-Sinistra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2001.

a un criterio profondamente unitario, in modo che la sua stessa struttura corrispond[esse] all'esigenza di uno sviluppo armonico del ragazzo; [...] infine bisognava prevedere un piano di sviluppo degli strumenti organizzativi che assicurava la frequenza della scuola fino al quattordicesimo anno di età per tutti i ragazzi italiani⁵.

Dunque i capisaldi del progetto di legge sopracitato, rappresentava una tutela degli articoli costituzionali che fino ad allora non erano stati considerati in chiave legislativa. Inoltre, veniva data una notevole importanza alla cancellazione delle opzioni: per garantire una scuola unitaria era necessario eliminare la possibilità di scegliere alcune materie e, in tal modo, assicurare a tutti lo stesso livello di istruzione all'interno del quale l'alunno poteva indirizzare il proprio percorso formativo a seconda delle proprie esigenze e a quelle della famiglia di appartenenza⁶.

Le altre richieste del progetto di legge erano rivolte all'assistenza scolastica, ma la novità riguardava lo studio del latino: i comunisti non lo avevano previsto nel loro progetto di legge in quanto discriminatorio nei confronti di coloro i quali volevano intraprendere un percorso universitario. Tra gli studiosi e gli intellettuali il latino non era considerato una materia d'élite, ma rappresentava la possibilità di ottenere un accrescimento culturale per tutti poiché garantiva la comprensione dell'etimologia delle parole italiane.

È stato più volte detto che il latino non è che l'italiano antico e che l'italiano non è che un latino moderno. [...] Lo studio del latino nelle scuole è insomma uno studio comparativo della lingua italiana di straordinaria efficacia, talché anche un modesto ingegno può fare bella figura, mentre altrimenti, anche chi è diligentissimo, deve fare per raggiungere il medesimo scopo, uno sforzo addirittura maggiore⁷.

Per queste ragioni il governo, nella figura del ministro Medici⁸, aveva deciso di presentare un progetto di legge che veniva sottoposto all'attenzione

⁵ Gruppo Comunista del Senato (ed.), *La riforma della Scuola media al Senato*, cit., p. 6.

⁶ S. Ventura, *La politica scolastica*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1994, pp. 124-125; S. Sani, *La politica scolastica del centro-sinistra: 1962-1968*, Perugia, Morlacchi, 2000, pp. 57-59 e S. Oliviero, *La scuola media unica: un accidentato iter legislativo*, Firenze, CET, 2007, pp. 29-32.

⁷ Istituto Storico della Resistenza in Toscana (d'ora in poi ISRT), *Fondo Codignola* (d'ora in poi FC), Scuola Media – Dibattiti e Osservazioni, Documentazione. R. Mondini, *La preminente funzione formativa del latino nella scuola media*, p. 846. Per un ulteriore approfondimento si veda: G. Gozzer, *La scuola italiana e l'insegnamento del latino*, «La Scuola e l'Uomo», n. 4, aprile 1959. Il testo integrale della relazione preliminare e dello schema di legge e lo stesso schema si trovano in Archivio Centrale dello Stato (d'ora in poi ACS), Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione (d'ora in poi MPI), Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), b. 174, f. 396, sf. 1; G. Medici, *Relazione sullo schema di disegno di legge concernente l'istituzione della scuola secondaria dagli 11 ai 14 anni*, pp. 1-61; si vedano inoltre Ventura, *Politica Scolastica*, cit., pp. 125-127; Sani, *La politica scolastica del centro-sinistra*, cit., pp. 59-61 e Oliviero, *La scuola media unica: un accidentato iter legislativo*, cit., pp. 25-29.

⁸ Giuseppe Medici fu ministro dell'istruzione pubblica tra il 1959 e il 1960. Per approfondire la sua figura si veda: <<http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giuseppe-medici/>> (ultimo accesso: 5 Gennaio, 2016).

del Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione a partire dal 18 settembre 1959 prevedendo una scuola suddivisa in quattro sezioni: umanistica, tecnica, artistica e normale⁹. Il progetto di legge governativo prevedeva

Un curriculum scolastico fisso, dopo la scuola primaria, sarebbe gravissimo errore psicologico, perché presupporrebbe una manifesta rivelazione di personali attitudini e disposizioni, che in realtà, invece, è umbratile e ambigua e talora covante trasformazioni sconcertanti¹⁰.

Lo schema di disegno di legge per una scuola media unica si divideva in quattro sezioni differenziate e, in effetti, questo aspetto poteva apparire come una contraddizione in termini. Tuttavia, il ministro Medici sottolineava che in età preadolescenziale si era in grado di valutare – insieme alla famiglia – la scelta migliore per se stessi.

Nel frattempo i socialisti avevano cominciato ad avviare i primi dialoghi con la Democrazia Cristiana per impostare un progetto governativo che potesse sancire, di fatto, una collaborazione che avrebbe portato – in uno stadio successivo – alla costituzione dei primi governi di centro-sinistra. A questo proposito per ciò che riguardava la presentazione dello schema di legge Medici, si può segnalare una lettera inviata il 30 giugno del 1959 a Mario Gliozzi¹¹ da parte di Tristano Codignola¹² nella quale si suggerivano alcune trattative da proporre all'interno della seconda Sezione del Consiglio Superiore della P.I.:

⁹ G. Ciampi, G. Santangeli (edd.), *Il Consiglio Superiore della pubblica istruzione 1847-1928*, Roma, Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali – Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, 1994. Anche se la suddetta pubblicazione si situa cronologicamente sino al consolidamento del regime fascista è ugualmente di fondamentale importanza poiché la struttura del Consiglio Superiore non sarebbe cambiata fino al 1974 con l'approvazione dei Decreti Delegati per la scuola e la formazione del Consiglio Nazionale della Pubblica Istruzione. Il Progetto venne inviato alla segreteria del Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione il 1° agosto del 1959 con il seguente testo: «Allegato alla presente si trasmette – in via riservata – copia dello schema in oggetto, avvertendo che sull'argomento si pronuncerà l'assemblea plenaria nel prossimo mese di ottobre, in data che sarà tempestivamente comunicata», in ACS, MPI, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), b. 174, f. 396, sf. 1.

¹⁰ ACS, MPI, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), b. 174, f. 396, sf. 1, G. Medici, *Relazione sullo schema di disegno di legge concernente l'istituzione della scuola secondaria dagli 11 ai 14 anni*, p. 5.

¹¹ Mario Gliozzi fu uno storico della scienza molto importante di cui si può approfondire l'operato politico e scientifico attraverso le seguenti pubblicazioni: N. Bobbio, *Mario Gliozzi. Appartenne all'Italia civile*, «L'eco della scuola nuova», luglio 1977, p. 1; C.S. Roero, *Prefazione a Mario Gliozzi. Storia della Fisica*, Torino, Borlinghieri, 2005, pp. XV-XIX.

¹² Tristano Codignola, figlio di Ernesto noto pedagogista ai tempi del fascismo, in seguito agli studi di diritto e laureatosi nel 1935, si affiliò al Partito d'Azione. Dopo la conclusione della lotta partigiana e il successivo smembramento degli azionisti aderì al PSI all'interno del quale si occupò principalmente delle problematiche di carattere scolastico. Si veda <[http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/tristano-codignola_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/>](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/tristano-codignola_(Dizionario-Biografico)/>) (ultimo accesso: 4 Settembre, 2016). Inoltre, sulla formazione del pensiero socialista in merito all'educazione si veda: T. Pironi (ed.), *R. Mondolfo. Educazione e socialismo*, Roma-Bari-Manduria, Lacaita, 2005.

In generale si penso che convenga, anche in via indiretta, affrettare l'unificazione dei diversi rami della scuola dell'obbligo, fermo rimanendo la competenza del Parlamento. Ma il problema di fondo resta quello degli sbocchi per gli alunni degli avviamenti. Se infatti il Ministro vuole avvicinare i programmi alla Media, affinché più facile risulti poi la unificazione dell'obbligo, allora deve consentire che dall'avviamento si passi ai Tecnici senza l'assurdo esame integrativo di latino (che non serve poi più a nulla), in modo che ci si avvii ad una effettiva parificazione dei due ordini di studi. Tienimi informato dell'esito del C.S. io ti riscriverò circa i rapporti ADESSPI FISM¹³.

La risposta a Codignola da parte di Gliozzi veniva inviata dopo l'estate, il 4 settembre del 1959:

Il progetto Medici per la scuola dell'obbligo sarà discusso dalla seconda sezione del consiglio superiore il 18 di questo mese; poi deve essere discusso dalle altre sezioni (1 a e 3 a) e infine discusso dal consiglio superiore, in seduta plenaria. Il ministro ci ha già comunicato che quest'ultima discussione avverrà in ottobre (ma poi potrebbe anche essere novembre). [...] Se anche il progetto dovesse arrivare al parlamento, prima della crisi di governo, e se anche fosse approvato, occorreranno sempre due tre anni prima che si possa cominciare l'applicazione, che è prevista graduale¹⁴.

Prima di analizzare i lavori della Seconda Sezione, bisogna porre una maggiore attenzione alla relazione presentata dalla Sezione stessa dopo un accurato studio preliminare che si era svolto dal 7 al 12 settembre del 1959¹⁵. Le critiche nei confronti dello schema di legge furono aspre e provenivano da esponenti di vari settori del mondo politico, culturale e pedagogico:

La Costituzione della Repubblica, infatti, parla d'istruzione inferiore nel 2° comma dell'art. 34, ma – a parte le diverse interpretazioni sulla possibile durata di quest'istruzione inferiore che, secondo alcuni, potrebbe essere ritenuta tale, dagli ordinamenti, anche oltre gli otto anni dell'obbligo –, la classificazione d'inferiore viene riferita dal testo costituzionale all'istruzione e non a uno o all'altro riguardo, nel 2° comma, dove recita che 'la Repubblica detta le norme generali sull'istruzione e istituisce scuole statali per tutti gli ordini e gradi'. E cioè l'istruzione e l'educazione attengono a un interesse pubblico e quindi a una funzione pubblica, i tipi, gli ordini, i gradi di scuola, invece, agli ordinamenti scolastici. Ne consegue che la suddivisione in due 'gradi' dell'istruzione inferiore, di cui all'art. 2 dello schema in esame, risulta confusa riferendosi ad un interesse pubblico mentre vuole ordinare dei mezzi, cioè le scuole. E l'ordinamento dei mezzi che ne risulta finisce proprio, per questa confusione, col trasportare la scuola secondaria di primo grado in un ordine diverso da quello che è ad essa naturale ed esclusivo per ragioni pedagogiche, didattiche e funzionali¹⁶.

¹³ ISRT, FC, Scuola Media, Varie C – Corrispondenza. Lettera di Tristano Codignola a Mario Gliozzi, 30 giugno 1959.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, risposta di Mario Gliozzi a Tristano Codignola, 4 settembre 1959.

¹⁵ ACS, MPI, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), b. 174, f. 396, sf. 1, *Istituzione della scuola secondaria per gli alunni dagli 11 ai 14 anni di età*, pp. 1-24.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

All'interno della terza parte della relazione veniva resa nota la necessità di una svolta che doveva avere come punto di riferimento la Costituzione¹⁷. Tuttavia questa problematica non riusciva a farsi largo all'interno della classe dirigente particolarmente legata ad un liberalismo conservatore. Nella sua deliberazione finale la Commissione si assumeva il compito di elaborare un piano per una scuola media con una programmazione unica attraverso una scuola elaborata in Sezioni così da aggirare «l'articolo della Costituzione, che [voleva] obbligatoria (e gratuita) l'istruzione almeno per tre anni dopo la scuola elementare, [...] restringendo a poche categorie l'accesso alle scuole superiori»¹⁸.

Un ulteriore aspetto, affrontato dalla Seconda Sezione, riguardava il numero di insegnanti (assegnato in base al numero degli alunni) da destinare alla nuova scuola media. Un maggiore numero di alunni significava infatti un aumento delle risorse da destinare all'istruzione per il funzionamento delle attività educative del triennio di scuola media.

Anche il tema dell'istruzione professionale aveva suscitato numerosi dibattiti, tanto che secondo il parere della Sezione, era necessario inserire l'insegnamento del lavoro nella programmazione didattica così da garantire una competenza manuale a tutti¹⁹. Nella relazione il lavoro era considerato un buon esercizio che il ragazzo poteva svolgere per giungere alla consapevolezza dei propri mezzi tecnici²⁰.

Senza togliere nessuna importanza ai temi fin qui trattati bisogna evidenziare come la questione del latino, molto caro al ministro Medici, sia stato di gran lunga la più significativa confermando il tentativo di distaccarsi da una tradizione elitaria della cultura del mondo pre-repubblicano²¹.

¹⁷ S. D'Albergo, *La libertà d'insegnamento nella costituzione*, «Cultura e Scuola», vol. 1, n. 3, aprile 1962; G. Limiti, *La Scuola nella Costituzione*, in *Studi per il ventesimo anniversario dell'Assemblea Costituente*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1969, pp. 81-140.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁹ «Fu anzi osservato che il lavoro nel periodo dell'educazione, ossia dell'età evolutiva, è più necessario a chi proviene da classi sociali non lavoratrici, in quanto ignora anche quel lavoro manuale occasionale che un ambiente di lavoro favorisce invece per i fanciulli del popolo, che non ai figli dei lavoratori stessi, anche se destinati ad esercitare dei mestieri», in ACS, MPI, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), b. 174, f. 396, sf. 1, *Istituzione della scuola secondaria per gli alunni dagli 11 ai 14 anni di età*, p. 13.

²⁰ «Ciò vuol dire che in una scuola degli 11-14 anni non è né la perfezione, né la quantità, né la qualità dei prodotti dell'attività lavorativa ad avere importanza, ma sono le consapevolezze e i processi di acquisizione delle abilità dello scolaro a costituire il vero fine delle esercitazioni, anche se esse devono essere per forza acquisite in esercitazioni produttive, concrete ed effettive; mentre in un Istituto professionale, lo studente deve adeguarsi in modo preciso e intenzionale alle esigenze oggettive della migliore e maggior produzione» (*ibid.*, p. 14).

²¹ Sul tema del latino Medici si era espresso in questo modo nella sua relazione: «Nessuno può mettere in dubbio che il latino abbia segnato il confine storico tra l'Occidente e l'Oriente. L'area spirituale e culturale dell'Europa coincide con l'area del latino. Anche se si confondono i tre valori del latino, il culturale, l'educativo e lo scientifico, la confusione ha luogo perché quei tre valori sono stati più o meno chiaramente percepiti da tutti nel passato. [...] E poiché nessuno osa affermare che il latino debba sparire dal curriculum di tutti gli studi, c'è da ritenere che il dissidio cominci allorché

Intorno a questo tema la relazione della seconda Sezione si posizionava in una linea mediana senza sbilanciarsi in maniera radicale. Il Consesso suddivideva le proprie posizioni in tre punti: nel primo, indicava il latino come insegnamento di tipo elitario da riservare a pochi senza doverlo negare a chi ne possedeva una naturale predisposizione e, al contempo, senza doverlo imporre a chi non ne era mai stato possessore. In secondo luogo, la Sezione credeva che in un'età così particolare non fosse necessario lo studio della sintassi, ma ci si dovesse limitare alla sola struttura grammaticale così da fornire delle basi solide, in terzo luogo, si affermava che chi sceglieva di frequentare il corso di latino poteva avere accesso alle Scuole Superiori senza dover sostenere un esame preliminare. Coloro i quali invece, erano sprovvisti delle basi della lingua latina dovevano integrare le proprie conoscenze e superare un esame prima di poter accedere alla scuola superiore.

La Seconda Sezione considerava di fondamentale importanza lo studio del latino, anche non ritenendolo obbligatorio. Chi avrebbe insegnato il latino nella scuola media? Su questo tema la commissione liquidava con brevità la questione sostenendo che esso doveva essere insegnato da chi aveva studiato materie letterarie. L'ultimo dibattito relativo al latino riguardava quegli alunni che decidevano di scegliere questo insegnamento ma che, in seguito, volevano optare per la scelta di un istituto tecnico o professionale: in questo caso si sarebbe dovuto procedere all'ammissione attraverso un esame preliminare di applicazioni tecniche.

Dunque, nella seduta mattutina del 18 settembre 1959²² la Seconda Sezione del Consiglio Superiore incominciava ad analizzare lo *Schema di disegno di legge concernente l'istituzione della Scuola secondaria per gli alunni dagli 11 ai 14 anni di età e*

si tratta di stabilire se l'insegnamento del latino debba iniziarsi subito, o non debba piuttosto essere rimandato al 14° anno. Per un rinvio dopo la scuola secondaria non si possono addurre ragioni didattiche. Sappiamo che fino all'approssimarsi della pubertà il ragazzo possiede un'incomparabile potere di assimilazione e di plasticità linguistica, che viene poi a mano a mano perdendo. Perché per l'insegnamento del latino dovremmo attendere che quel potere si attenui?», in ACS, MPI, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), b. 174, f. 396, sf. 1, G. Medici, *Relazione sullo schema di disegno di legge concernente l'istituzione della scuola secondaria dagli 11 ai 14 anni*, pp. 6-8.

²² Precedentemente era stata costituita una commissione preliminare per l'esame dello schema di legge e se ne dà prova all'inizio del Verbale della seduta del 18 settembre 1959 in cui si specifica: «A nome della Commissione incaricata dell'esame preventivo del disegno di legge riferisce Agazzi [...]». In Archivio Ministero Pubblica Istruzione (d'ora in poi AMPI), Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Verbali. Sezione Seconda, Adunanza mattutina 18 settembre 1959. La Seconda Sezione era così composta: Presidente Prof. Carlo Cereti, Consiglieri: Agazzi, Barbieri, Baroni, Barra, Carrocao, Chiarapotto, Di Marcantonio, Frasca, Gliozzi, Modestino, Napolitano, Ottani, Pagella, Pazzanese, Rienzi, Varano, Vona. Segretario: Dott. De Simone. In AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Verbali. Sezione Seconda, 1959.

a proposito della II parte della relazione della Commissione ('Precedenti Storici ed esigenze costituzionali'), la Sezione esamina[va] la questione del raffronto tra il primo testo dello schema e quello dello schema sostitutivo (inviato, in data successiva, dall'Amministrazione), e su proposta di Gliozzi delibera[va] di lasciare ai relatori piena libertà circa la scelta di quella parte della relazione dove, a loro avviso, sarà più opportuno inserire un accenno alle più notevoli differenze riscontrate fra i due testi²³.

I problemi emersi dalle analisi dei relatori erano i medesimi che erano affiorati dopo la presentazione del progetto di legge Donini-Luporini. In questo contesto Carlo Cereti, presidente della Seconda Sezione, voleva discutere il progetto stesso prima di approvare gli emendamenti dei singoli relatori; riferendosi a due questioni fondamentali:

- a. in quali anni c'è l'obbligo costituzionale di andare a scuola;
- b. quale è la posizione di quegli alunni che 'saltano' la quarta classe elementare²⁴.

La svolta decisiva avveniva nella seduta del giorno successivo in cui Gliozzi dichiarò:

La Sezione ritiene che si debba procedere all'istituzione di una Scuola secondaria di primo grado unica e con programma uguale per tutti, senza insegnamento del latino, senza materie opzionali, con lingua straniera e con lavoro obbligatorio per tutti, con corsi complementari facoltativi di latino, senza specifici esami su questa materia²⁵.

La struttura scolastica, proposta dal Consiglio Superiore della P.I., non si coniugava al progetto iniziale del ministro Medici poiché prevedeva una riprogrammazione dell'intero progetto di scuola media sostenendo che

1. la scuola di completamento dell'obbligo [doveva] essere frequentata da tutti i ragazzi che abbiano già compiuto il corso elementare;
2. essendo diretta a tutti i ragazzi in una età in cui le attitudini non si sono ancora palesate chiaramente, non deve avere spiccati orientamenti tecnici o scientifici o letterari;
3. deve, invece, ordinarsi in forme tali da consentire il facile passaggio tra i vari indirizzi, che nel suo interno saranno attuati²⁶.

Si stava aprendo una spaccatura tra le considerazioni del ministro e quelle dei relatori del Consiglio Superiore. Nella seduta pomeridiana, in seguito all'approvazione unanime dell'art. 4 (*Ordinamento della scuola secondaria di primo grado*)²⁷, iniziava la discussione dell'art. 5 che sarebbe proseguita poi nel

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Verbali. Sezione Seconda, Adunanza mattutina del 19 settembre 1959.

²⁶ G. Medici, *Introduzione al Piano di sviluppo della scuola*, Roma, IPS, 1959, p. 31.

²⁷ Art. 4: «Ciascuna Scuola può avere corsi o classi decentrate in funzione dello stesso Comune o distaccate in località non facilmente raggiungibile nelle quali esiste un numero di obbligati

corso della seduta mattutina del giorno successivo. Il tema dell'art. 5 risultava molto delicato e, infatti, il Presidente della Sezione, aveva deciso di fermare l'attenzione dei relatori su questioni che riguardavano

- a. Se l'insegnamento del 'lavoro' debba essere inserito nel programma comune del I anno nella forma di 'esercitazioni di lavoro';
- b. se il latino ed il lavoro debbano essere oggetto dell'esercizio di una facoltà opzionale per il II e il III anno²⁸.

Il progetto Medici risultava ancora intriso di un conservatorismo che non accoglieva l'esigenza di stare al passo coi tempi e di aprirsi alle nuove richieste di coloro che avvertivano il bisogno di un livello di istruzione maggiormente unitario.

Il Consiglio Superiore della P.I. bocciava lo schema di legge Medici poiché era ancora legato, in alcune delle sue componenti, a categorie conservatrici che avevano avuto spesso il sopravvento in quel periodo²⁹. Il tema dell'obbligo scolastico veniva affrontato nell'Adunanza del 21 settembre 1959: nel verbale della seduta si rendeva noto il *modus operandi* lasciando immutato il testo ministeriale con la sola modifica di alcune parti non del tutto rilevanti. L'esame dell'art. 22, concernente il valore della licenza della scuola secondaria, aveva una particolare eco e, a tal proposito, Gliozzi proponeva di sopprimere il primo comma e di sostituirlo col seguente: «La licenza da Scuola secondaria è titolo valido per accedere agli esami di ammissione agli studi superiori»³⁰.

Nella seduta pomeridiana la proposta di Gliozzi venne respinta lasciando invariato il testo ministeriale ma, allo stesso tempo, stava già proponendo di aggiungere al testo dell'art. 17 un comma che garantisse la presenza di un professore di scuola media superiore all'interno della Commissione d'esame di licenza media. Gli altri relatori, decisamente contrari, non accolsero la proposta di Gliozzi e, dopo l'approvazione dell'art. 33, il Consesso decideva di respingere la proposta di inserire nello schema di legge l'art. 24 bis che derogava al limite di età di 11 anni tutti gli "obbligati" che frequentavano la seconda classe elementare.

inferiore a 60», in AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della P.I. Verbali, Sezione Seconda, Adunanza p.m. del 19 settembre 1959.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Adunanza del 20 settembre 1959. Sul tema del latino si veda D. Pelosi (ed.), *S. Valitutti, La Scuola, lo Stato, i Partiti*, Roma, Arti Grafiche Milillo, 1996, pp. 229-243 e sul rapporto tra scuola e lavoro si veda: R. Lombardi (ed.), *L'industria e l'istruzione e l'addestramento professionale*, in Confederazione Generale dell'Industria italiana, *Primo Convegno «L'Istruzione e l'industria» (Gardone 23-25 aprile)*, Roma, Confederazione generale dell'industria italiana, 1960, pp. 57-70.

²⁹ «Il Consesso respinge, quindi, con 8 voti contrari, 3 favorevoli e 4 astenuti la proposta di Gliozzi di inserire nel testo dell'art. 5 il seguente emendamento aggiuntivo: «Gli alunni, su richiesta delle rispettive famiglie, hanno il diritto di ottenere l'esonerazione dalla frequenza delle lezioni di religione». In AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, Seconda Sezione, Verbali, Adunanza a.m. del 20 settembre 1959.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Adunanza a.m. del 21 settembre 1959.

Le ore settimanali venivano stabilite nel termine di 24 complessive e, in seguito all'approvazione degli articoli dal 29 al 35, – con aggiunte o modifiche – il Presidente della Sezione dichiarava terminato l'esame dello schema in questione e affidava ai relatori l'incarico di preparare il testo della relazione conclusiva da presentare in seduta plenaria all'intero Consiglio Superiore.

A partire dal 1° ottobre 1959, incominciavano i lavori della Terza Sezione³¹ del Consiglio Superiore.

Nella prima adunanza la consigliera Badaloni elencava rapidamente le ragioni per le quali il diritto costituzionale di una scuola per tutti e gratuita non fosse stato ancora rispettato e proseguiva affermando che fosse necessario «assicurare l'unità della scuola medesima, pur rendendo possibile un'articolazione che consenta di adeguarla a ciascun alunno, trasformi senza ignorarla la situazione attuale e inoltre assuma tutti i motivi validi del criterio di opzione»³².

È di notevole interesse sottolineare come la Costituzione fosse un costante punto di riferimento attraverso il quale bisognava confrontarsi per riuscire ad applicare, nel miglior modo possibile e nel minor tempo, nuove norme che migliorassero le condizioni per la realizzazione della riforma della scuola.

Il tema della costituzione e quello relativo al latino, fino alla critica della divisione in sezioni, erano stati affrontati dal consigliere Carlesi. Su quest'ultima questione egli dichiarava che fosse necessaria una scuola che «[avesse] materie comuni aggiornate con opzioni non più caratterizzanti le sezioni, ed abbia inoltre le materie obbligatorie previste dall'art. 5 ed in più un'attività di lavoro o artistica e la lingua straniera portata in tutte le sezioni»³³.

Il consigliere Ungaro contestava Carlesi attraverso la determinazione del concetto di «attitudine» sostenendo che non si poteva fondare la scuola unicamente sulla determinazione della considerazione sulle materie comuni. Nel momento in cui si progettava un'unificazione delle sezioni si stava chiedendo agli insegnanti un'uniformazione di metodo e di applicazione al fine di garantire a tutti gli alunni lo stesso livello di istruzione.

Un altro aspetto molto significativo riguardava la regolamentazione della sezione normale ossia la prosecuzione della scuola elementare per tutti coloro che non potevano recarsi in un centro maggiormente abitato piuttosto che nel luogo di residenza. Carlesi si era preso carico di questo problema e ribatteva a Ungaro che «non [era] giusto che gli alunni residenti nelle zone lontane dal

³¹ La Terza Sezione era così composta: Presidente: Prof. Ezio Franceschini, Consiglieri: Agazzi, Badaoloni, Baiocchi, Basso, Borghi, Carlesi, Cassano, Granato, Guarnacci, Gussoni, Madera, Pittino, Santoro, Stagnoli, Ungaro, Zambelloni, Segretario: Dott. De Simone. In AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, Terza Sezione, Verbali, Adunanza a.m. del primo ottobre 1959.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

centro [dovevano] ricevere un insegnamento unico e quelli residenti nelle città un insegnamento plurimo»³⁴.

Su questa questione si inseriva anche Borghi che dichiarava che il mantenimento della sezione normale doveva garantire la valorizzazione della capacità degli alunni sostenendo che quest'articolazione, prevista dal progetto ministeriale non fosse un ripiego, bensì quanto di meglio si poteva proporre in quel determinato momento storico. Nell'adunanza della giornata successiva il consigliere Guarnacci esprimeva la propria opinione spiegando che «la creazione della scuola per i preadolescenti [...] soddisfa[va] [...] esigenze di carattere morale e sociale inderogabili, [...] grazie a un'istruzione e a un'educazione sempre più adeguate agli intimi bisogni dello spirito umano»³⁵.

Dunque, si era consapevole che la scuola fosse di fondamentale importanza per la costruzione di un'identità sociale e culturale che si rivelava fondamentale per affrontare le richieste del mondo sociale, industriale e lavorativo. Guarnacci giudicava lo schema di legge come consono alle esigenze dei tempi e adeguato alle differenti realtà con cui andava a confrontarsi. Egli vedeva nel problema dell'analfabetismo, una piaga ancora da debellare. Appellandosi all'art. 33 della Costituzione chiamava a raccolta – oltre al dovere e al diritto dei genitori di istruire ed educare i propri figli – enti pubblici e privati, col fine di istituire corsi e scuole che debellassero l'ignoranza e di conseguenza l'ingiustizia sociale. In seguito, il presidente poneva in discussione i singoli articoli e, tra le modifiche più importanti da sottolineare, troviamo lo spostamento dell'art. 21 al III comma dell'art. 5:

Sono materie facoltative in ogni sezione le materie obbligatorie delle altre sezioni di cui al secondo comma ed eventuali altre attività opzionali in funzione esplorativa delle attitudini³⁶.

Dalle fonti a disposizioni purtroppo non si ha riscontro delle adunanze dei giorni successivi, ma sappiamo con certezza che le sedute della Terza Sezione terminarono il 4 ottobre 1959. Questo aspetto è testimoniato da una lettera inviata dal consigliere Carlesi a Tristano Codignola³⁷. In questa lettera si

³⁴ AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, Terza Sezione, Verbali, Adunanza p.m. del 1° ottobre 1959, p. 6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Adunanza a.m. del 2 ottobre 1959, p. 7.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁷ «Caro Codignola, sono terminati domenica mattina i lavori della III Sezione del Consiglio Superiore della P.I. e saranno ripresi giovedì mattina a sezioni riunite per il definitivo parere. In Sezione, ad una relazione – diremo di maggioranza – della Badaloni è seguita la mia, imperniata sui principi stabiliti a Firenze nell'ultima riunione ed in chiave con quanto pubblicato in questi giorni sull'argomento dal SNASE. Respinta la pregiudiziale contro la divisione in 4 sezioni della scuola secondaria, abbiamo seguito i lavori tentando di apportare miglioramenti. Ed in questo siamo riusciti, almeno in parte. Infatti siamo riusciti a far prevalere il concetto che accanto alle opzioni caratterizzanti una sezione fossero ammesse le opzioni non caratterizzanti come attività libere opzionali. L'articolazione reale tra le sezioni è stata ottenuta apportando una serie di emendamenti che ora sarebbe troppo lungo spiegarti», in ISRT, FC, Scuola Media-Varie C, Corrispondenza 3.

accennava alla possibilità di un progetto di legge di iniziativa parlamentare proprio del socialista Codignola. La lettera si concludeva con un giudizio generale sui lavori che avevano visto Carlesi considerare il progetto di legge Donini-Luporini meglio strutturato rispetto alle modifiche apportate dalla Seconda e Terza Sezione³⁸.

La conclusione dei lavori della Terza Sezione portò alla redazione di un documento che riassumeva le posizioni dei singoli consiglieri e suggeriva le modifiche necessarie allo schema di legge³⁹. In seguito, la relazione veniva trasmessa ai colleghi della Prima Sezione per consentire loro una valutazione del progetto di legge. Accolte le relazioni della Seconda e della Terza Sezione, queste venivano analizzate dal consigliere della Prima Sezione, Francesco Battaglia⁴⁰ il quale esprimeva il proprio pensiero attraverso la redazione di una relazione nella quale emergeva un quadro che si scontrava con le fondamenta del disegno di legge.

Battaglia suggeriva che la scuola media unica si sarebbe dovuta strutturare con un primo anno nel quale insegnare le materie di base; in questo modo al secondo e al terzo anno si potevano scegliere alcune materie da approfondire per indirizzare i propri studi. Si sosteneva inoltre che un sistema così strutturato offriva numerosi vantaggi sotto vari aspetti: in primo luogo, si teneva ben saldo il principio dell'unicità della scuola media, in secondo luogo, si garantiva libertà di scelta agli alunni a seconda della loro attitudini.

Il punto più delicato della questione riguardava la sezione normale: la soluzione che suggeriva Battaglia per rendere davvero unica la scuola era quella di offrire la stessa formazione anche agli alunni dei centri meno abitati che non avevano la possibilità di spostarsi autonomamente; inoltre i maestri elementari dovevano provvedere all'istruzione media di questi alunni così da non creare discriminazioni.

La relazione di Battaglia si concludeva con un'aperta critica al ministro Medici, invitato a riconsiderare il suo piano attraverso i numerosi suggerimenti che erano arrivati dalle tre sezioni del Consiglio Superiore⁴¹. Le considerazioni

Lettera di Carlesi a Tristano Codignola, 6 ottobre 1959.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Di questo documento, intitolato *Parere sullo schema di disegno di legge riguardante l'istituzione della scuola secondaria (11-14 anni)*, è necessario citare le considerazioni finali a cui giunse la Terza Sezione. In conseguenza delle considerazioni fatte, dell'esame della situazione attuale e delle soluzioni principali finora prospettate, la terza Sezione ritiene concordemente che la nuova scuola debba trasformare, senza ignorarla, la situazione attuale, debba configurarsi e presentarsi come scuola unica (e non unitaria) anche se articolata; debba assumere tutti i motivi validi e gli aspetti concreti delle opzioni viste come mezzi di preorientamento e come elementi di parità tra una articolazione e l'altra scuola. In ACS, MPI, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), Terza Sezione, b. 174, f. 396, sf., pp. 8-9.

⁴⁰ In quel periodo Francesco Battaglia era docente all'Università *Alma Mater Studiorum* di Bologna.

⁴¹ ACS, MPI, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), Prima Sezione, b. 174, f. 396, sf., *Relazione del Consigliere Battaglia sul disegno riguardante l'istituzione della*

del consigliere Battaglia vennero approvate dal Consesso della Prima Sezione che ribadiva che fosse «auspicabile nello sviluppo della Scuola Italiana garantire la maggiore possibile unità avvicinando classi e gruppi ed eliminando differenze assicuri le definitive scelte scolastiche ad un'età fisiologicamente, psicologicamente, pedagogicamente appropriata»⁴².

Tutte e tre le sezioni avevano bocciato lo schema di disegno di legge Medici e la prova di quanto detto è accertata dalla relazione che le tre Sezioni proposero nella seduta plenaria del Consiglio Superiore della P.I. che si era riunita dall'8 al 10 ottobre 1959.

In seduta plenaria⁴³ si era ribadita l'importanza della Costituzione per la creazione di una scuola veramente unica e gratuita; la necessità di lasciare il primo anno uguale per tutti e, solo al secondo e al terzo, si doveva lasciare libertà di scelta allo scolaro per le materie facoltative.

La scuola media doveva essere, dunque, unica e orientativa allo stesso tempo senza precludere, attraverso lo svolgimento di esami integrativi, eventuali scelte future⁴⁴. Al punto 6 della relazione dal titolo *Accessi normali alle scuole superiori successive*, veniva proposta la regolamentazione per il passaggio dalla scuola media alla scuola superiore attraverso un servizio di orientamento e, ove ce ne fosse bisogno, di recupero per accompagnare gli alunni verso la scelta della scuola subito superiore. Il punto 7 e il punto 8 della relazione rielaboravano, il primo le materie opzionali e, quindi, in che modo e attraverso quali programmi dovessero essere insegnate; il secondo, analizzava lo stato giuridico di alunni e insegnanti la cui gestione doveva delinearci attraverso un piano ben delineato di assegnazione delle cattedre e di assistenza scolastica per i più bisognosi. Il punto 9 infine, proponeva gli emendamenti necessari al miglioramento dello schema di legge.

Il progetto di legge Medici veniva criticato e rivoluzionato da parte del Consiglio Superiore tanto da fare in modo che il ministro dovesse riconsiderare il suo progetto e ripresentarlo successivamente, il 9 gennaio 1960, con le opportune modifiche – passaggio dalle Sezioni alla opzionalità delle materie – al Parlamento⁴⁵.

scuola secondaria 11-14 anni, pp. 1-9.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴³ La relazione delle Sezioni riunite, dal titolo: «*Parere sul progetto di legge riguardante l'istituzione della scuola secondaria (11-14)*». ACS, MPI, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione. Atti. (1941-1966), Seduta Plenaria, b. 174, f. 396, sf., pp. 1-13.

⁴⁴ Ciò garantiva, almeno in parte, di non creare delle élites privilegiate che il Consiglio in seduta plenaria spiegava in questo modo: «Non 'sezioni', dunque, ma diverse scelte attitudinali; sì da far luogo concretamente a una scuola formativa (sulla base del ricco e completo programma comune) e orientativa (sulla linea della materia attitudinale a scelta); per nessuno preclusiva e predeterminante, tale da favorire il reperimento delle élites per la sua validità culturale e la sua estensione dovunque», in *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁵ Si veda T. Codignola, *La Guerra dei trent'anni. Com'è nata la scuola media in Italia*, in Gattullo, Visalberghi (edd.), *La scuola italiana dal 1945 al 1983*, cit., pp. 124-126; Ventura, *La*

2. *La programmazione nei progetti del ministro Bosco e le reazioni del mondo scolastico*

Durante l'estate del 1960 prendeva forma il nuovo governo monocolore DC con una dichiarata apertura a sinistra⁴⁶. Giacinto Bosco, neo ministro della Pubblica Istruzione, proseguiva l'operato del suo predecessore proponendo al Parlamento, mediante una richiesta di parere al Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, degli emendamenti al secondo progetto di legge Medici.

Attraverso l'operato del ministro Bosco si apriva una fase di sperimentazione scolastica che consisteva nell'implementare, in alcune scuole italiane, i nuovi programmi della scuola media unificata così da fornire dati concreti sulla necessità dell'istituzione della nuova scuola⁴⁷. La richiesta di parere al Consiglio Superiore della P.I. era stata formalizzata l'8 novembre del 1960: in essa si esprimevano le motivazioni che avevano indotto il ministro ad adottare delle precise misure attraverso le quali

l'Amministrazione voleva soltanto verificare, su di un piano sperimentale di estensione appena sufficiente, un'ipotesi di ordine prevalentemente pedagogico-didattico, la quale comporta l'adozione, in via provvisoria, di orari e programmi di insegnamento che si diversificano da quelli attualmente in vigore sia nelle scuole medie sia nelle scuole secondarie di avviamento professionale⁴⁸.

Nella seduta del Consiglio Superiore del 14 novembre 1960 si cominciavano a rendere note le opinioni dei singoli consiglieri. Il primo a riferire alla richiesta di parere, resa nota dal ministro Bosco, fu il consigliere Modestino il quale

politica scolastica, cit., p. 126 e Sani, *La politica scolastica del centro-sinistra*, cit., pp. 60-61 e il testo del nuovo disegno di legge in: Gruppo Comunista del Senato (ed.), *La riforma della Scuola media al Senato*, cit., pp. 183-237.

⁴⁶ Luigi Pedrazzi definiva la fase che partiva dal 1960 come il primo periodo dell'apertura a sinistra che culminava e si concludeva ufficialmente con il Congresso DC del gennaio 1962. Si veda L. Pedrazzi, *La politica scolastica del centro-sinistra*, Imola, Ed. grafiche Galeati, 1973, pp. 4-8. Si veda per comprendere le posizioni governative nei confronti della riforma il seguente testo: Massimo Baldacci (ed.), *Il centro-sinistra e la riforma della Scuola media (1962)*, Roma-Bari-Manduria, Lacaita, 2004, pp. 244-252.

⁴⁷ Tutto il materiale relativo alla sperimentazione, alla sua possibilità di attuazione alle sue linee programmatiche è stato pubblicato in MPI, Ispettorato per l'istruzione inferiore di 2° grado, *L'esperimento di scuola media unificata: anno scolastico 1960-1961*, pp. 55-60. Si veda MPI, Ispettorato per l'istruzione inferiore di 2° grado, *L'esperimento di scuola media unificata: anno scolastico 1960-1961*, Città Di Castello (PG), Ist. Professionale di stato per l'industria e l'agricoltura, 1961, G. Bosco, *Scuola e Stato democratico*, in *Il Convegno di San Pellegrino. Atti del Secondo Convegno Nazionale di studio della Democrazia Cristiana (S. Pellegrino Terme, 29 settembre-2 ottobre 1962)*, Roma, Ed. Cinque Lune, 1963; Ventura, *Politica Scolastica*, cit., pp. 127-131; Codignola, *La Guerra dei trent'anni*, cit., pp. 128-136 e Oliviero, *La scuola media unica*, cit., pp. 44-49.

⁴⁸ AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, Gabinetto, G. Bosco, *Richiesta di parere sugli orari e programmi delle classi di scuola media unificata in esperimento*, p. 2.

sosteneva che fosse necessario destrutturare il documento in analisi attraverso la formulazione di quattro tesi:

La prima delle quali è favorevole ad una ‘scelta’ che possa determinare gli studi successivi, la seconda giudica indifferente la scelta medesima e l’esito conseguito dall’alunno, la terza invece considera necessario l’esito positivo di quella scelta ai fini della continuazione degli studi, e la quarta invece sostiene che quell’esito positivo sia indispensabile per la prosecuzione nella direzione suggerita dalla Commissione giudicante, la quale è libera di orientare l’allievo verso l’una o l’altra materia⁴⁹.

In questi punti era emerso il problema degli sbocchi e il relatore Modestino sosteneva che la Commissione di studio fosse favorevole all’ipotesi concernente l’avanzamento degli studi al termine del percorso nella media inferiore. Dunque, la scelta della materia opzionale e l’esito positivo dell’esame in quella materia, doveva necessariamente portare alla prosecuzione degli studi nella direzione della materia opzionale stessa. In merito agli orari veniva proposta dal relatore la diminuzione delle ore di educazione artistica, l’aumento di quelle di italiano e si accennava al problema dell’insegnamento della storia giudicato troppo frammentario e nazionalistico. Modestino, nonostante le sue precedenti affermazioni, si considerava lieto di vedere al terzo anno l’insegnamento della geografia astronomica e della geometria piana al secondo.

Nell’Adunanza del giorno successivo veniva messo in rilievo dal Consigliere Di Marcantonio una problematica di natura tecnico-burocratica, «se cioè [potesse] aver valore un esperimento effettuato senza una norma precisa che ne regoli lo svolgimento»⁵⁰.

Di Marcantonio proseguiva il suo intervento dichiarandosi apertamente contrario all’insegnamento del latino nella scuola media, questo doveva essere completamente sradicato e sostituito con materie alternative. Nell’intervento di Gliozzi, invece, si rendeva nota una tesi che ribadiva la sua personale contrapposizione nei confronti delle opzioni che non rendevano veramente unica la scuola media avendo come risultato quello di livellare l’apprendimento di gli alunni. Agazzi si accodava al pensiero di Gliozzi sostenendo che la nuova scuola media non era altro che la fusione tra le già presenti scuole medie e quelle di avviamento professionale.

Emergevano dunque, da queste relazioni, critiche al progetto ministeriale il cui obiettivo era di rendere unica la scuola media, ma allo stato pratico delle cose erano fortemente ancorate a tradizioni conservatrici che non permettevano di incrementare il tasso culturale a tutti gli strati sociali. Tutti i discorsi emersi

⁴⁹ AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, Seconda Sezione, Adunanza a.m. 14 novembre 1960, *Richiesta di parere sugli orari e sui programmi di insegnamento della Scuola Media Unificata, Relatori: Agazzi, Chiarappotto, Modestino, Ottani, Pagella, Pazzanese e Rienzi*, p. 5.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Adunanza a. m. 15 novembre 1960, p. 9.

fin ora tendevano a dimostrare quanto ci si sia sforzati per avviare un progetto di unicità della scuola dagli 11 ai 14 riuscendo solo in parte ad attuarlo.

Nel frattempo alcuni consiglieri pronunciavano negativamente nei confronti della sperimentazione, tuttavia, nonostante questi pareri negativi, era presente una parte del consesso che aveva giudicato positivamente la possibilità di un esperimento in grado di fornire le indicazioni per le eventuali modifiche da implementare al disegno di legge⁵¹. Anche il consigliere Baroni sosteneva che i programmi dovevano essere giudicati solamente da un punto di vista didattico lasciando da parte le questioni generali.

Si proseguiva nell'adunanza pomeridiana con le valutazioni del consigliere Ottani il quale si dichiarava favorevole alla piena libertà di scelta per i ragazzi in relazione agli «sbocchi». Questa considerazione veniva accolta dal consigliere Frasca che sosteneva inoltre, a proposito del latino, che questo doveva essere abolito totalmente, oppure doveva essere insegnato con la massima serietà.

Il consigliere Chiarpotto si mostrava notevolmente favorevole all'esperimento voluto dal ministro Bosco, poiché questo non era stato preceduto dall'emanazione di nessuna legge e non si contrapponeva a nessuna norma di precedente attuazione.

Sul latino, Chiarpotto esprimeva una considerazione nuova rispetto al suo inserimento nella nuova scuola media. Egli vedeva il latino come un test mentale attraverso cui il docente doveva riuscire a stabilire se l'alunno fosse in grado di proseguire gli studi classici. Il consigliere Modestino tornava sulla questione della legittimità dell'esperimento e si soffermava sulla considerazione del termine «unica» per la nuova scuola media. Il termine «unica» voleva esprimere – secondo il suo parere – una standardizzazione degli insegnamenti in cui le opzioni non dovevano avere un carattere predeterminante. Si ribadiva, inoltre, che la scelta di una o dell'altra opzione (il lavoro) non fosse discriminante. Tuttavia, ma era di fondamentale importanza ribadire l'uguaglianza effettiva attraverso l'unità della nuova scuola. Questo aspetto necessitava di essere sottolineato attraverso la considerazione che il latino non lo si doveva scegliere solamente pensando al raggiungimento di un posto lavorativo.

Nella parte finale della sua relazione Modestino si scagliava con chi considerava la richiesta di parere solamente dal punto di vista didattico, ma in realtà l'analisi degli orari e dei programmi era il frutto di un piano che sarà determinante per la costituzione dei successivi governi di centro-sinistra⁵².

⁵¹ Questa posizione era stata presa dal Consigliere Pagella il quale dichiarava: «[Condivido] la tesi secondo la quale l'esperimento deve precedere la legge, dice che il Ministero ha già precisato di non aver alcuna intenzione di preconstituire determinate situazioni né di modificare la legislazione vigente. Pertanto, il Consigliere ritiene che la Sezione, se si convincerà della utilità delle nuove scuole, non potrà che dare parere favorevole al progetto ministeriale», in *ibid.*, Adunanza a.m. 15 novembre 1960, p. 11.

⁵² Sani, *La politica scolastica del centro-sinistra*, cit., pp. 61-63.

Nell'ultima seduta si era parlato anche dell'istruzione professionale: il Consigliere Gliozzi si era espresso in maniera abbastanza critica nei confronti del nuovo assetto proposto soprattutto per la notevole dispersione degli insegnanti che prevedeva il passaggio di questi ultimi dalla scuola elementare alla scuola media unica. Egli proponeva a tal proposito, di istituire una cattedra unica di italiano, storia, educazione civica e lingua straniera, così da accentrare l'insegnamento in un'unica figura proponendo lo stesso procedimento per la geografia, le osservazioni scientifiche e la matematica⁵³. Il consigliere Vona si mostrava contrario a questo tipo di impostazione, sostenendo che i professori non avevano le necessarie attitudini per insegnare tante discipline contemporaneamente. Solo la matematica e le osservazioni scientifiche potevano essere accorpate per una chiara necessità pedagogica. Allo stesso modo la storia e la geografia non potevano assolutamente essere divise, poiché in esse si insediavano i concetti indispensabili di spazio e tempo che erano di fondamentale importanza pedagogica. Modestino considerava la geografia una materia a cavallo tra le materie tecniche e quelle umanistiche dimostrandosi maggiormente favorevole a un suo abbinamento con le materie scientifiche pur considerandolo un procedimento ancora troppo prematuro per i tempi.

Ascoltate tutte le opinioni, venivano formulate quattro proposte: la prima, consisteva nella richiesta di approvazione dei programmi ministeriali con le opportune modifiche della Commissione; la seconda, proponeva l'abbinamento della lingua straniera all'italiano, alla storia e all'educazione civica, la terza; richiedeva l'aumento di un'ora dell'insegnamento dell'italiano e di stabilire nel tempo massimo delle due ore l'insegnamento della lingua straniera, l'educazione artistica e le osservazioni scientifiche; infine la quarta, riteneva necessaria la mutazione della denominazione di alcune discipline. Tutte le proposte, eccetto la terza, approvata con 9 voti favorevoli, 3 contrari e 3 astenuti, venivano approvate all'unanimità⁵⁴. L'esito finale di queste consultazioni produsse un documento che relazionava sulle questioni dibattute e spiegava le soluzioni proposte dalla Seconda Sezione⁵⁵. I temi trattati erano stati contestualizzati e spiegati molto dettagliatamente attraverso una divisione per aree. Dal punto di vista giuridico, la legittimità dell'esperimento veniva meno, nel momento in cui andava a costituire una vera e propria discriminazione tra coloro che

⁵³ A. Tonelli, *L'istruzione tecnica e professionale di Stato nelle strutture e nei programmi da Casati ai giorni nostri*, Milano, Giuffrè, 1964. L'istruzione professionale era molto legata allo sviluppo industriale e a proposito di questo tema si suggerisce il seguente testo: G. Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla costituente al centro-sinistra*, Firenze, La Scuola, 1988, pp. 116-144.

⁵⁴ AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, Seconda Sezione, Adunanza del p.m. 16 novembre 1960, *Richiesta di parere sugli orari e sui programmi di insegnamento della Scuola Media Unificata, Relatori: Agazzi, Chiarapotto, Modestino, Ottani, Pagella, Pazzanese e Rienzi*, pp. 24-27.

⁵⁵ AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, Seconda Sezione, Adunanza del 16 novembre 1960, *Parere sugli orari e sui programmi di insegnamento nelle classi di Scuola media unificata in esperimento*, pp. 1-16.

potevano avvantaggiarsi di tale privilegio e l'assai maggior numero che non poteva farlo⁵⁶. Ciò che tutelava l'esperimento era la Costituzione, infatti, nel caso in cui la nuova sperimentazione si fosse adeguata maggiormente ai diritti espressi nella Carta costituzionale, l'esperimento non doveva essere ostacolato, ma anzi, incoraggiato. Tuttavia in un carteggio successivo, datato febbraio-marzo 1962, tra Codignola e J.V. Aufschnaiter – preside a Bolzano di una scuola media e di un ginnasio statale) – si sottolineava il carattere illegittimo degli esperimenti incoraggiati dal ministro Bosco⁵⁷.

La risposta alla lettera, indirizzata a Codignola da parte del preside trentino nella quale venivano espresse ampie riserve alla sperimentazione in atto, era netta e pungente. Scriveva Codignola: «Non esiste perciò il dubbio che le recenti sperimentazioni di massa negli istituti tecnici e nelle scuole medie, disposte dal ministro Bosco siano illegali»⁵⁸.

L'illegalità veniva giustificata attraverso la considerazione che la legislazione italiana non aveva mai previsto sperimentazioni didattiche, tuttavia «non si poteva ritenere sufficiente il semplice accenno della legge del 30.11.1942, n. 545»⁵⁹. Chi si esprimeva in merito alla questione degli emendamenti era il consigliere Gliozzi il quale scriveva a Codignola che «la campagna contro il progetto Bosco [era] chiaramente ispirata, se non organizzata, dai partiti di destra. [...] E non bisogna[va] mettere nello stesso calderone riforma di struttura, programmi e metodi: sono tre cose distinte»⁶⁰. La risposta di Codignola fu quasi immediata e ammetteva che ci fossero «alla base del partito certe resistenze, che risentono dell'atteggiamento prevalente dei professori di scuola media che se si fosse reso necessario bisognava cedere qualcosa in prospettiva progressiva»⁶¹.

Ancor prima e, più precisamente nella riunione dell'8 dicembre 1961, la Commissione Scuola del PSI della Federazione di Bologna aveva dichiarato:

Infine l'articolo 20 bis, che apparentemente concede uguale trattamento agli alunni di classi sperimentali, permette il malcostume della istituzione dei nuovi tipi di scuola mediante semplici circolari ministeriali. È necessario invece ribadire anche a questo proposito la necessità dell'unicità dell'insegnante e l'abolizione di tutte le classi cavia⁶².

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁵⁷ ISRT, FC, Scuola media, Dibattiti-Osservazioni, Corrispondenze, Corrispondenza tra Tristano Codignola e il Prof. J.V. Aufschnaiter.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Risposta di Tristano Codignola alla lettera del Prof. J.V. Aufschnaiter. 26 febbraio 1962-28 marzo 1962.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ ISRT, FC, Scuola Media, Varie-Consulenze, Lettera di Mario Gliozzi a Tristano Codignola, 25 luglio 1961.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, risposta di Tristano Codignola a Mario Gliozzi, 28 luglio 1961.

⁶² ISRT, FC, Dibattiti e Osservazioni, Corrispondenze, A. Benassi, *Relazione sulla scuola media*, 29 dicembre 1961, p. 3.

La posizione dei cattolici, era negativa nei confronti dei programmi per la nuova scuola media unica e per ciò che riguardava gli «sboocchi». Queste posizioni vennero espresse soprattutto da Padre Giuseppe De Rosa (presidente della rivista «La Civiltà Cattolica») e da Gesualdo Nosengo.

Veniva ribadito, inoltre, che non a tutti poteva essere negata la possibilità dell'accesso alle varie tipologie di scuola superiore, ma ci si riservava la possibilità di inserire degli esami preliminari nel caso in cui ce ne fosse stato bisogno.

Ora con un anno uguale per tutti e con la possibilità di scegliere negli anni successivi materie differenti, si lasciava una possibilità maggiore di orientamento, ma allo stesso tempo non si negava a nessuno la possibilità di riconsiderare decisione precedente. In particolare bisogna segnalare un passaggio della relazione molto significativo:

La Sezione non ha difficoltà ad ammettere che le materie obbligatorie comuni a tutti gli alunni siano integrate da due materie opzionali e che queste siano il latino e il lavoro [...]. La scuola dagli 11 ai 14 anni ha infatti una finalità formativa e una finalità di orientamento: si può dire, in altro linguaggio, istruzione di base e valutazione attitudinale⁶³.

La relazione continuava esprimendosi sul delicato tema del latino suggerendo che era giusto non lasciare che quest'insegnamento venisse proposto a tutti poiché se ne sarebbe perso il valore intrinseco, teso a trasmettere i valori della classicità. Si considerava, inoltre non vincolante il latino per la scelta delle materie classiche, infatti, anche chi non lo studiava, poteva nutrire lo stesso dei forti interessi per altre materie umanistiche. La Sezione terminava la propria relazione dichiarando che l'alunno

[aveva] il diritto di iscriversi a una qualsiasi scuola superiore senza limitazione alcuna derivante dall'opzione avvenuta e senza che si possa presupporre per la frequenza utile della scuola superiore un complesso di cognizioni che nella scuola media unificata non gli sono state impartite⁶⁴.

Si proponevano nella parte finale anche delle variazioni agli orari delle singole materie a seconda delle esigenze pedagogiche⁶⁵ e didattiche. Lo scopo

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶⁵ Su questo tema si veda R. Zavalloni, *La psicologia del preadolescente*, in MPI, Ispettorato per l'istruzione inferiore di 2° grado, *L'esperienza di scuola media unificata: anno scolastico 1960-1961*, cit., pp. 63-79. Sullo stesso argomento e sugli aspetti pedagogici cfr due opere di carattere generale come: E. Catarsi, N. Filograsso, A. Giallongo (edd.), *Educazione e Pedagogia in Italia nell'età della guerra fredda*, Trieste, Ed. Goliardiche, 1999; G. Bonetta, F. Cambi, P. Minerva (edd.), *Educazione e modernità pedagogica*, Pisa, ETS, 2003. Si veda AMPI, Sala Ovale, Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione, Seconda Sezione, *Parere sugli orari e sui programmi di insegnamento nelle classi di Scuola media unificata in esperimento*, 16 novembre 1960, p. 9.

del parere conclusivo della Seconda Sezione, fu quello di favorire la proposta di introdurre degli emendamenti, tesi al miglioramento del disegno di legge n. 904, che in seguito sarebbero stati approvati dalla Commissione della Pubblica Istruzione del Senato⁶⁶.

⁶⁶ La legge discussa in Parlamento con la proposta degli emendamenti Bosco è pubblicata in MPI, Ispettorato per l'istruzione inferiore di 2° grado, *L'esperimento di scuola media unificata: anno scolastico 1960-1961*, cit., pp. 175-183. Per una maggiore comprensione dell'impianto degli emendamenti Bosco, in relazione alla più generale discussione sulla scuola secondaria, dei passaggi e dei dibattiti in merito a questa questione si veda *L'istruzione dagli 11 ai 14 anni dalla legge Boncompagni a Disegno di legge attualmente all'esame del Parlamento* in MPI, Ispettorato per l'istruzione inferiore di 2° grado, *L'esperimento di scuola media unificata: anno scolastico 1960-1961*, cit., p. 12.

To civilize for devotion

The cultural practice of holy cards in christian formation rituals (XXth century)

Luciane Sgarbi Santos Grazziotin
University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos
São Leopoldo (Brasil)
lsgarbi@terra.com.br

Maria Helena Camara Bastos
Pontifical Catholic University of Rio
Grande do Sul
Porto Alegre (Brasil)
mhbastos1950@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: The present study was conducted at the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos/Unisinos with documents from a collection of rare works denominated the Memorial Jesuíta [Jesuit Memorial]. Among rare books and documents, the collection keeps six albums containing series of holy cards which originally belonged to the Biblioteca do Colégio Máximo, Cristo Rei, Província do Brasil Meridional S. J. São Leopoldo [Maximum College Library, Christ the King, Province of Southern Brazil S. J. Saint Leopold], which originated the university above. These albums were part of the material the institution used to make available for reference and orders by the parishes and schools where the religious who graduated from Colégio Máximo worked, and were assembled in a handmade process of orderly disposing images according with a category-belonging criterion. The study analyzes the seemingly banal act of distributing *souvenirs* at religious ceremonies. It aims to identify the graphic production of the set of holy cards comprised in the Memorial Jesuíta's albums, and to understand certain aspects related with the usage of these images as evocators of a social memory related with Catholic rituals and their potential of Christian civility. The images combine, most of all, two mnemonic perspectives: one regarding the document's materiality, and the other related with its symbolic value in religious ceremonies. We found that the practice of giving out holy cards was not restricted, in the Catholic Church, to the ritual of first communion, but was also part of the rites of death and seventh-day mass, baptism, confirmation, festivities related to weddings and marriage development (such as silver, gold, and crystal anniversaries), priesthood consecration, and religious festivities organized by lay patrons; the cards also featured images of saints and prayers for obtaining a grace. In other words, for each Catholic ritual, there was a holy card corresponding to the

celebration. In this study, we were able to understand that the set of documents historically produced modes of subjectivation, i.e., practices of constitutions of the subject, which appears as the object of a particular relation of knowledge and power.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Holy cards; Cultural artifacts; Catholic rituals; Brasil; XIX-XXth Centuries.

*Introduction**

The «return to the archive» can be painful: after the physical pleasure of discovering the traces, comes a doubt mixed with the impotence of not knowing what to do¹.

Not by chance do we start the text with this epigraph; it was a choice directly related with the moment this study begins. At the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos/Unisinos, there is a collection of rare works denominated the *Memorial Jesuíta* [Jesuit Memorial]². During a visit to that space, which had been arranged in virtue of a research project aimed at mapping document collections in the region of Vale do Rio dos Sinos, we «stumbled» on a set of albums which at first we thought were photographs. A quick glance out of curiosity indicated they were a series of holy cards fancifully and systematically glued onto pages and pages of six albums. We gathered they were catalogues for orders, since there were also a few invoices and price lists.

We were truly delighted to come across a set of images which was unusual as to how they were organized. As we left the place, the excitement about the materiality we had found drove us to conduct a study; however, similarly to the feeling narrated by Farge³, as days went by, an anxiety of sorts set in which

* We thank Alberto Barausse, full professor at the University of Molise (Italy), for his careful reading of our article, and, in particular, his precious bibliographic recommendations of studies and research in Italy, which truly enriched our study.

¹ A. Farge, *O sabor do Arquivo*, São Paulo, EDUSP, 2009, p. 18.

² The *Memorial Jesuíta Unisinos* which is linked to the Library of the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos, in São Leopoldo/RS, keeps the collection about immigration that was gathered by researchers at the Center for German-Brazilian Studies, which is linked to the university's Post-Graduation Program in History. The memorial also contains historical collections pertaining to the memory and the history of Jesuits in Latin America. Its sections include: Rare Works, with works dating from the 15th to the 19th century; the Christ the King collection, pertaining to the areas of theology, philosophy, history of the church, geography and literature; the Antonio Vieira collection, which gathers the libraries of schools, seminars, parishes and other Jesuit institutions; the Saint Ignatius of Loyola collection, with journals dating from the 19th and 20th centuries; Jesuit personal archives; and Institutional Archives). I.C. Arendt, *O Memorial Jesuíta Unisinos e acervos sobre imigração*, in E. Fernandes, R. Neumann, R. Weber. (edd.), *Imigração: diálogos e novas abordagens*, São Leopoldo, Oikos, 2012, pp. 559-562.

³ Farge, *O sabor do Arquivo*, cit., p. 18.

mixed doubts and the impotence of not really knowing what to do with those documents.

Given the abundant material already selected and references to private collections, we began to reflect about the possibilities of research for history in general and, particularly, for history of education, since the images were related with the daily routine of Catholic faith, which, in our society, is closely connected to the school context, even for the time frame of the 20th century.

With regard to the schooling process in Brazil, the republican ideals which postulated – by means of the country's legislation – a public and lay school failed to become effective in daily school life, as it is well known that, for innumerable reasons, since the creation of public basic schools in late 19th century and early 20th century, the public school was a space of Catholic religious formation. Classrooms at public schools used to be also a place of formation of children to have their first communion, a place where the parish priest came to hear confessions, a space where images of Catholic saints and crucifixes were regularly found.

Studies indicate that «in the 1940's and 1960's, municipal teachers would receive instructions from ecclesiastic authorities to minister a discipline, which, according to all indications, was of a denominational character. The courses used to take place at the city hall, at public basic schools and at private schools»⁴.

By closely examining the albums and the series disposed in each of them, we found that the practice of handing out holy cards was not restricted, in the Catholic Church, to the ritual of first communion, but was also part of the rites of death and seventh-day mass, baptism, confirmation, festivities related to weddings and marriage development (such as silver, gold, and crystal anniversaries), priesthood consecration, and religious festivities organized by lay patrons: for each Catholic ritual, there was a holy card corresponding to the celebration.

The ritual of handing out holy cards is also linked to other purposes of religiosity expression, such as when they are dedicated to specific Catholic Church saints or contain specific prayers to the guardian angel for a child, for vocations, and, more recently, for a student who is taking a college admission test, among other contemporary-world graces.

By analyzing the selected images, we found that most of the variety of these holy card images, and therefore their offering, was dedicated to sacrament occasions: first communion, confirmation, baptism and wedding; in this sense, they became vulgarly known as *souvenirs*. The variety of images indicates that they are also handed out in services in honor to specific saints to allow the praying of novenas. In other words, the occasions are innumerable, and no opportunity to offer holy cards is missed in Catholic rituals.

⁴ L. Grazziotin, *Memórias recompondo tempos e espaços da educação: Bom Jesus /RS -1913-1963*, Doctoral thesis, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, 2008.

First communion memories immediately evoke the remembrance of the practice of exchanging holy cards among classmates and distributing them to friends and family; the same occurs with confirmation and baptism. About the latter, one certainly has no memories of the fact; but we are most likely to keep a paper souvenir offered by the parish where the baptism took place.

Holy cards have been present in first communion rituals since the 18th century – initially in black and white, then progressively gaining colors. The materials they were made from, as well as the texts, varied over time, as Mergnac⁵ notes. However, it is worth mentioning that they had been previously known as sacred images⁶, having been originated in Germany, in the 15th century, and its diffusion in the context of the Catholic Church occurs after the Council of Trent, when their use was disciplined⁷. The Jesuits were the first to order the production of holy cards in Asia and the Americas, and the first printing companies which made them were located in Belgium and France (Paris, Orleans, Chartres, Amiens, Épinal). The production of small format holy cards dates from early 17th century, but the range of situations where they were distributed expanded in the 18th century⁸.

From an Artifact Symbolizing Faith to a Historical Document

The decision to analyze the albums came accompanied by two initial questions: where did the albums come from? When did they come to the archive? These doubts were not cleared by the Memorial's archivist, as she was not able to tell us much about the provenance of this singular set of images. Even without these answers, we realized its potency as a document related to religious practices linked to Catholicism, Christian civility, and to Catholic religious education in a broad context.

In this perspective, other questions emerged: what would have been the purpose of these Christian artifacts in their time? They are prior, therefore, to their institutionalization in the collection that keeps them. In what situations

⁵ M. Mergnac, *Communions d'hier et de toujours*, Paris, Archives & Culture, 2008, p. 7.

⁶ The diffusion of the use of sacred images plays a very important role as an aid to preaching. We must consider that, until the mid-19th century in Europe, only the clergy and higher classes were able to read the sacred texts. The use of holy cards, which were distributed during the mass or in special occasions, allowed strengthening and memorizing the oral message, a form of «religious literacy». In Europe, it wasn't until the 19th century that holy cards began to feature prayers and meditations written on the back.

⁷ It is important to note the role played by the expansion of religious orders, lay brotherhoods, monasteries, and convents in the period from the late 17th century to the early 18th century, which led the Catholic Church, in the late 17th century, to recover control over cards dissemination, through the use of the *imprimatur* (*ibid.*, p. 10).

⁸ L. Bastiani, *La devozione popolare attraverso i santini e le stampe*, Viterbo, Sette Città, 2011.

where they distributed? Who produced them? What breaks and/or permanencies are there in the practice of distributing *souvenirs* containing images that evoke a whole Catholic Christian iconography? What do the images and texts communicate? What religious hexis do they express? The study of the images imprinted on the cards⁹ allows analyzing how these representations of religiosity and devotion practices are devices of Catholic religiosity and religious formation that can produce a sense of piety, compassion, solidarity, among other forms of arousing desirable feelings from a Christian faith perspective.

In addition to ritualistic questions, one can also consider aspects pertaining to their manufacturing and circulation: who drew them? Where were they sold? Where were they purchased? The different dimensions of analysis of these documents form a universe of representations that figure in the Christian symbology. These signs are generally used by the Catholic Church to perpetuate the memory of its rituals, the hagiography¹⁰ and the spiritual symbology that emphasize the Catholic Christian faith, creating what Meneses calls «pedagogies of devotion»¹¹.

The practice of offering a souvenir in Catholic celebrations remains until this day – in this case, with no major change, whether in the symbolical sense or in its materiality. Considering history as the study of changes, to understand them we must seek to understand the various processes they involve, many of which have been interrupted, while so many others have made it to the present esthetically remodeled, yet perpetuating practices whose goals remain constant.

The goal of this study is to analyze the seemingly banal act of distributing *souvenirs* at religious ceremonies. It aims to identify the graphic production of the set of holy cards in the Memorial Jesuíta's albums in order to understand certain aspects related with the practice of usage of these images as evocators of a social memory related to Catholic rituals and their potential for Christian civility. The images combine, most of all, two mnemonic perspectives: one

⁹ In Italy, we found similar studies by A. Nola, G. Rocca (edd.), *Santi e Santini. Iconografia popolare sacra europea dal sedicesimo al ventesimo secolo*, Napoli, Libreria Guida, 1985; A. Turchini, *Ex-voto. Per una lettura dell'ex-voto dipinto*, Milano, Arolo, 1992; C. Turrisi, *Il lungo viaggio. Santi e santini. Una lettura religiosa dell'avventura umana*, Manduria, Barbieri, 1992; Bastiani *La devozione popolare attraverso i santini e le stampe*, cit. We also found an international catalogue of holy cards comprising from the 16th to the 20th century in G. Toni (ed.), *Unificato. Primo catalogo internazionale dei Santini. Guida, catalogazione e quotazione di Santini di tutto il mondo dal XVI al XX secolo*, Milano, s.e., 2009, and an exhibition catalogue in *Catálogo, I santini. Un cammino tra fede, speranza e ritualità*, Piombino, Consiglio di Quartiere "Città Vecchia", 1993.

¹⁰ The word means the biography or the study of the biography of saints. To R. Sani, for many centuries, the lives of saints have represented one of the main instruments of literacy and transmission of moral contents, as well as an ideal educational path. See R. Sani, *Per una storia dell'infanzia e della sua educazione nell'Italia contemporanea. Interpretazione e prospettive di ricerca*, «Cadernos de História da Educação», vol. 15, n. 2, 2016, pp. 808-862.

¹¹ R. Menezes, *Saber pedir: a etiqueta do pedido aos santos*, «Religião e Sociedade», vol. 24, n. 1, 2004, pp. 46-64.

regarding the document's materiality, and the other related with its symbolic value in religious ceremonies.

According with Farge, «The archive petrifies these haphazard, disorderly moments; one who reads, touches or discovers it is always roused primarily by an effect of certainty. The word said, the object found, the trace left becomes representations of the real»¹². Indeed, finding the album with the holy cards was a totally haphazard event; it was never the result of a specific search. However, from the eventuality of an instant, the possibility to understand the object found emerged. This object constitutes the trace of an intentionality of past times, an intentionality about which, at first, one can only speculate. However, from the analysis of these vehicles of sacred images, we were able to build a regime of truth to understand certain dimensions of these documents.

According to Ulpiano de Menezes,

The old object was obviously manufactured and handled in a time prior to ours, according with social, economic and cultural contingencies of that time. As such, it must have had various uses and functions, whether utilitarian or symbolic. However, immersed in our contemporariness, decorating rooms, integrated into collections, or institutionalized in the museum, the old object has all of its prior meanings, uses and functions drained off and is recycled, here and now, essentially as a meaning-bearing object¹³.

The albums as vehicles of a Catholic culture certainly carry singular dimensions of a social memory; they are and used to be part of a specific period, a consumption society in which they used to belong. The question is to think: what meanings can we assign to them when they have become part of the religious memory? Answering this questioning is the challenge of this study.

Collections in Albums: An Iconography of the Catholic Faith/Images in Paper

João do Rio (1881-1921), in his short story titled *Orações* [Prayers]¹⁴, criticizes the selling of prayers which were printed and sold in Rio de Janeiro at large book shops and secondhand book shops, exported to the provinces in thick bundles, or simply handwritten. He notes that there are prayers for various purposes, such as helping «men to live in the mystery of the conciliating words». Many prayers have been and still are being printed on holy cards. One can question the scale or the vehicles, but this cultural religious practice certainly remains to this day.

¹² Farge, *O sabor do Arquivo*, cit. p. 18.

¹³ U. Menezes, *A História cativa da memória: para o mapeamento da memória no campo das ciências sociais*, «Revista do Instituto de estudos brasileiros», n. 34, 1992, pp. 9-24.

¹⁴ J. Rio, *A Alma encantada das ruas*, São Paulo, Companhia das letras, 2008.

This study of an object of the material culture related to Christian Catholic ideology – the holy cards – allows us to understand the behavior and ideas of a specific period with regard to religiosity expressions. Barbury¹⁵ proposes to analyze the symbols, ornaments and marks; to discover who produced them and their methods; to discover who their consumers were, in order to avoid naturalizing their uses and permanencies, from their production to their circulation to their consumption, as well as their significances¹⁶.

The Materiality of the Document

We begin our analysis with the materiality constituted, as mentioned earlier, by six albums which are kept at the Memorial Jesuíta/Unisinos, which present certain characteristics.

In each of the albums, there is a stamp identifying the place they originally belonged to: the Biblioteca do Colégio Máximo, Cristo Rei, Província do Brasil Meridional S.J. São Leopoldo [Maximum College Library, Christ the King, Province of Southern Brazil S. J. Saint Leopold], which originated the university¹⁷. Because the Colégio Máximo was a major seminary for forming religious, one might sense, since prices were included, that these albums were part of the materials of the institution for reference and/or orders by parishes and schools where those religious worked.

We chose the “album” designation because the same object that is normally used for keeping photographs in was used as a showcase for the cards, and because of its physical characteristics. Thus, the holy card models are glued and numbered according with the series they belong to, in a handmade process of

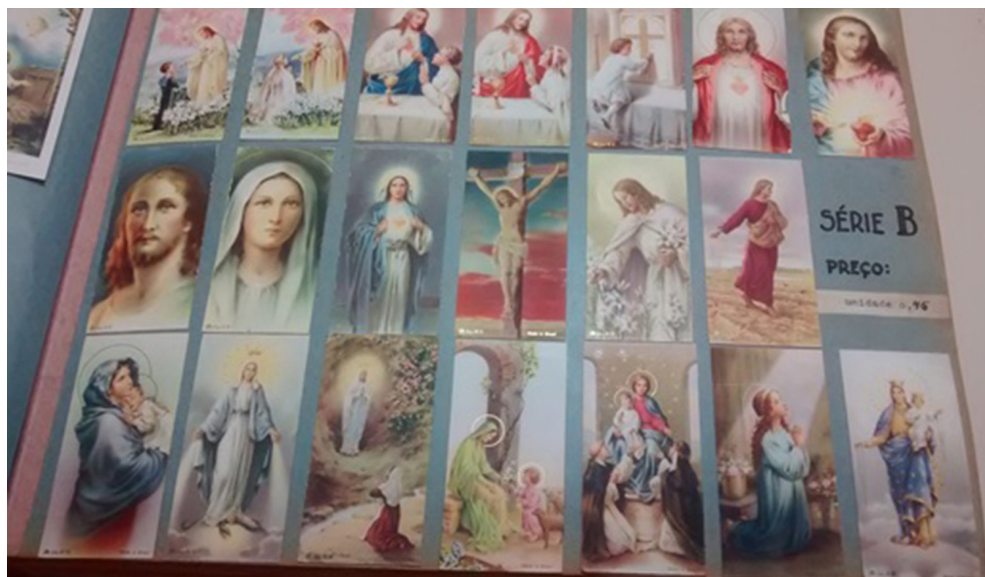
¹⁵ H. Barbury, *Entendendo a sociedade através dos objetos*, in H.S. Oliveira (org.), *Museu Paulista, novas leituras*, São Paulo, s.e., 1995, pp. 17-22.

¹⁶ F. Paz, *Contra Cultura visual e Museus escolares: as representações raciais no Museu Lassalista* (Canoas/RS, 1925-1945), Master thesis, Porto Alegre, Pos-graduation in Education, 2015, p. 16.

¹⁷ The first school created by Jesuits in the state of Rio Grande do Sul was the «Colégio Nossa Senhora da Conceição», which was founded in 1866 but started operating only in 1869, in São Leopoldo. «Initially conceived as a seminary to form priests and as a seminary to train teachers for schools situated in colonial communities». From 1877 to 1912, it becomes the «Ginásio Conceição» (a boarding school), preparing students for the «divided tests», which were administered in Porto Alegre. In 1890, it is declared equivalent to the «Colégio Pedro II». In 1913, it becomes a Provincial/Central (Minor/Major) Seminary until 1956, having taught 7,188 students, and it was the only Jesuit priest formation center. In the 1940's, the «Colégio Máximo Cristo Rei» is created, where theology and philosophy courses were implemented in 1943. In 1953, the Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras de Cristo Rei [Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of Christ the King] was founded, the germ of the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos/Unisinos, which dates from 1969. See A. Rambo, *Um sonho e uma realidade: Unisinos 1953-1969*, São Leopoldo, Editora Unisinos, 2009, p. 20.



Pic. 1. Caption: *The six-album set (1940-1960)*
Source: Memorial Jesuíta Unisinos – 2015.



Pic. 2 Caption: *The Ambrosiana Azul e Vermelho album open (1940-1960)*
Source: Memorial Jesuíta Unisinos – 2015.

orderly arranging the images according to the categorization employed. The album identified as *Ambrosiana Azul* [Blue Ambrosiana], for example, has 78 pages, hard blue covers and a red spine. It comprises 25 series with 1,160 black-and-white and color cards.

Tab. 1. Caption: *Material Characteristics of the Albums*

Albums	N. of Pages	N. of series	N. of black-and-white cards	N. of color cards	Total of Holy Cards
Ambrosiana Azul	78	25	349	811	1160
Aparecida Verde	43	16	237	325	562
Ambrosiana	76	22	0	1269	1269
Josef Eis (1968)	19	18	0	111	111
Josef Eis	28	11	0	213	213
Aparecida Bege	53	44	700	147	847
TOTAL		135	1286	2876	3162

Source: table made by the authors.

Two of the six albums contain attached documents from the printing companies that produced them, which provided us with a few clues. With addresses in the city of São Paulo, SP, four printing companies kept correspondence and sent price tables: «Reproduções Artísticas Maria José», «Artes Gráficas Alceste Campacci», «Oficina Gráfica Arte Sacra Aparecida» e «Josef Eis» (1968)¹⁸. The price lists and the correspondence kept in the albums allow determining that they encompass the period from the 1940's to the 1960's.

For the «Reproduções Artísticas Maria José» printing company¹⁹, a printed table is included which is identified as a *Numerical Index of Holy Cards*, no date, with 80 types of images, most of them of saints such as: Saint John the Baptist, Saint Cecilia, Saint Roch, Saint Therèse of Liseux, and The Sacred Wedding. Twenty types of first communion *souvenirs* are also included, and they are separated by genre, which are identified by letters, i.e., JC (standing for Jesus Christ) and HF (no meaning identified).

The «Artes Gráficas Alceste Campacci» establishment, in a correspondence dating from 1945, recommends for an order to be made immediately so they could have the whole range of images available, as it was «a busy sales period». That same printing company sends a price table printed on a sheet where a few image designations appear: simple mourning, double mourning, first communion, confirmation and wedding diplomas, diplomas of the Pious Union of the Daughters of Mary, and diplomas of the Pious Union of Saint Anthony. The mourning images are the only non-color ones; the description says these images are in «sepia black» on a creamy background.

¹⁸ «Josef Eis»: we infer it is a company, as there are two albums with a label showing the address: Rua Humberto IN, Vila Mariana/São Paulo. However, we could not get any information about the catalogues.

¹⁹ Below the printing company's name, the name of its owner appears: Joaquim Octavio Mattos Penteadó. Caixa Postal, 4710, situated at Rua Dr. Ricardo Batista, 140, 1^o andar/São Paulo/SP.

OFICINAS GRAFICAS ARTE SACRA APARECIDA
 APARECIDA ESTADO DE SAO PAULO

Nova Lista de preços em 20 de julho de 1946

Estampas pequenas	Cr 1	5,00
" cremes		12,00
" com friso dourado		12,00
" coloridas		15,00
" liturgicas		24,00
" nº 500 a 509		25,00
" de luto duplas		25,00
" " simples		15,00
Certões grandes		25,00
" medios		25,00
" pequenos		24,00
" duplos		24,00
Folhetos cremes papel nacional		25,00
" " couché		25,00
" " branco		25,00
Coleções:		
Os Sete Sacramentos		2,00
O Grande Mistério		2,00
As Sete Palavras		2,00
Os dons do Espírito Santo		2,00
O Padre Nosso		2,00
As Bem-aventuranças		2,00
O Mistério de Belém		2,00
Diplomas de Batismo e Casamento		25,00
" " Milhas de Maria		25,00
Certidão de Batismo e Casamento		25,00

REPRODUÇÕES ARTÍSTICAS Maria José

JOAQUIM OCTAVIO MATOS FERILADO
 Casa Postal 410 - Bot. Tupy - Osasco - SP
 Rua B. South Bém. N.º 17 - São - 133 741-1

INDICE NUMERICO DOS "SANTINHOS"

1 - Imaculada Conceição	31 - N. S. do Rosário
2 - N. S. dos Anjos	32 - N. S. do Carmo
3 - Conceição de São	33 - N. S. de Aparecida
4 - Conceição de Maria	34 - N. S. do Carmo
5 - São José	35 - N. S. do Rosário
6 - Santa Anunciada	36 - N. S. do Lázaro
7 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	37 - São João Batista
8 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	38 - Santa Rita de Cássia
9 - 1.ª Conceição AB. seculares	39 - São de Oureira
10 - 1.ª Conceição AB. seculares	40 - Nossa Senhora
Europa - IMEDIATA	
11 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	41 - N. S. Auxiliadora
12 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	42 - São Sebastião
13 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	43 - São Vicente de Paulo
14 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	44 - Chelivalde
15 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	45 - N. S. das Graças (Brasil)
16 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	46 - Conceição de Jesus (Brasil)
17 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	47 - São Roque
18 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	48 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares
19 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	49 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares
20 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	50 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares
Europa - IMEDIATA	
51 - São João Batista	52 - São José
52 - Sagrado Família	53 - São João
53 - São Sebastião	54 - N. S. do Bom Porto
54 - Santa Teresinha	55 - Santa Catarina
55 - São Jorge	56 - Santa Lucia
56 - São Francisco	57 - São Carlos e São Thome
57 - Santa Ifigênia	58 - São João de São Paulo
58 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	59 - São João de São Paulo
59 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	60 - São Estevão
60 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	61 - N. S. do Fátima
61 - 1.ª Conceição SF. seculares	Europa - SETEMBRO
Europa - AGOSTO	
62 - São Thome	63 - Santa Thome
63 - Santa Barbara	64 - Santa Espirito
64 - Santa Dorothea	65 - São Paulo
65 - São Paulo	66 - São Paulo
66 - Santa Catarina	67 - São Joao
67 - São João	68 - São João de São Paulo
68 - N. S. do Socorro (Paraguay)	69 - São Joao
69 - N. S. Socorro de Portugal	70 - São Joao
70 - Conceição de Maria (Brasil)	Europa - NOVEMBRO

Pic. 3. (left) Pic. 4. (right). Caption: *Printing Companies' Price and Model Lists (1946).*
 Source: The Memorial Jesuíta's Collection – 2015.

«Oficina Gráfica Arte Sacra Aparecida»²⁰ sent a typed price list and models dated 1946. The purposes of the images correspond to seven collections: The Seven Sacraments, The Great Mystery, The Seven Words, The Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Our Father, The Blessed, and The Mysteries of Bethlehem. There are also baptism diplomas and certificates and wedding diplomas and certificates of the *Children of Mary*.

²⁰ A few leads indicate that it is now a firm called «Editora Santuário» [Shrine Publisher]. Information about the «Our Lady of Aparecida Museum», created in 1952, indicated that it was established in a small room lent by the «Oficinas Gráficas de Artes Sacras de Aparecida» (now «Editora Santuário»), which operated at the Canisian Sisters' convent in the city of Aparecida. «Editora Santuário» was founded in 1900 with a pastoral purpose, i.e., to facilitate evangelization through printed means, particularly among the poor. The publisher's foundation is linked to the Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida, connecting pilgrims' faith to a communication vehicle. This originated the «Jornal Santuário de Aparecida» [The Shrine of Aparecida Journal], which has never interrupted the printing of issues (<<http://khristianos.blogspot.com.br/2014/09/museu-nossa-senhora-aparecida-completa.html>>; <<http://www.a12.com/editora-santuاريو/institucional/detalhes/historia>>, (last access: 4th May, 2016).

As to the selling of these artifacts for the period comprised in our study, he have a few leads on who used to sell them. For example, «Livraria Selbach e Cia» [Selbach & Co. Bookstore]²¹ specialized in selling items for cults and religious products: «chalices, missals, rosaries, candlesticks, images, statues, etc»²². In the lists found with the albums, in addition to holy cards, there are also prayer booklets, religious stamps, post cards, book markers, and *Via Crucis* sets.

The «Pious Society of the Daughters of St. Paul/Pauline Sisters» is turning 100 years old in 2015. They arrived in Brazil in 1931 and have been in Porto Alegre, RS, for 80 years. They kept a printing company until the 1980's²³, when it was then transferred to São Paulo, where holy card texts were printed. The establishment prints various holy cards, other cards, book markers, books, and other artifacts for religious purposes. In the 2004 Celebrating Messages Catalogue²⁴, the introduction text on the back cover states the object of these devotion artifacts:

Each day, we are graced with blessings, joys, surprises... Of course, we also have periods of shadows, difficulties... In times of rare beauty or extreme grief, we usually lack words. Post cards, letters and cards end up being a simple way of showing our love, our solidarity, our care and our hope to friends, work colleagues, fathers, mothers, boyfriends... They bring messages not to give news or repeat things already known, but to allow separate hands to touch each other as they touch the same paper [...] Paulinas Editora presents in this catalogue its collection of cards, page markers, post cards, posters, and prayers for various occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, baptisms, graduations, Christmas, Fathers' Day, Mothers' Day, etc. Celebrating the beauty of life, valuing its various stages and moments, is like conducting a great symphony that makes us vibrate and rejoice.

We can also infer that the parishes where catechesis and first communion were ministered used to sell holy cards to families and to recommend some printing firm identified on the back, in golden or black letters.

With regard to the materiality of the vehicles found at the Memorial Jesuíta, their number of pages ranged from 19 to 78. All of the albums are divided in series which vary, as to their number, from 11 to 44. It is worth noting that the series are identified by alphabet letters and names. For example: II FC; Crisma [Confirmation] Pr 244; Crisma Josef Eis. Others are identified by Latin names, such as Agnus, Antiqua, Aurora, Cielo, Dileta, Fides, Gratia, Fieles, Tax, Rosa, Furris, Marca Livros, Carnet Z. Apparently, these series are not characterized by having distinct elements, as the holy cards they contain are similar to others.

²¹ About this aspect, see: E. Arriada, E. Tambara, *Editoras e tipografias no Rio Grande do Sul: publicação e circulação de livros didáticos*, Anais do VI Congresso Brasileiro de História da Educação, Vitória, 2011, pp. 1-11.

²² K. Batista, *A Trajetória da Editora Globo*, Doctoral dissertation in History, Porto Alegre, PUCRS, 2008, p. 61.

²³ Sister Jurema, who was interviewed for this study, reported that besides printing holy cards, they also personalized them at the printing firm located on Aparício Borges Avenue, in Porto Alegre.

²⁴ The practice of printing catalogues starts in the 2000's.



Pic. 5. (left) Caption: *The Ambrosiana Azul album (1940-1960)*; Pic. 6. (right) Caption: *The Ambrosiana Azul album. (1940-1960)*

So, the series can be a mere classification intended to facilitate identification when orders were made, using denominations according with the printing firm that produced them.

The opposite can be seen in the Ambrosiana Azul collection, in which we can find specific characteristics in each series. In the Gracia series, all the holy cards contain drawings of children; they are colorfully allusive of and devoted to first communion. The Lieta e Serena series always presents drawings of angels and/or allusive of first communion. In turn, the Resetum series presents 53 color images showing coats of arms with Christian symbols and, on the lower edge, Latin inscriptions such as *Agnus qui tollis peccata mundi*, *templum dei estis*, among others.

By analyzing the album as a whole, we found that the great majority of the holy cards are dedicated to first communion. What varies between them is their graphic composition, as we can see in the figures below: more colorful; in pastel tones; black-and-white; gray, with or without edges; edges all around the card; golden, red or beige edges; edges with little flowers. There is also a few models with edges only on one side, which are vertical and include small details, such as grape clusters, bibles, flowers, wheat, and hearts.

In general, each series' first communion *souvenirs* are distinct, i.e., there are specific ones for boys and for girls.

With regard to size, most cards have dimensions ranging from 10 to 12 cm high by 6 to 7 cm wide, which we can consider standard. We found, for the same period, double cards of other sizes (8.5cm x 5cm; 11.5cm x 6.5cm); those, however, were not in the catalogues. The printing orientation also varies: most cards are vertically printed, but some are horizontally printed (10,5cm x 6).



Pics 7., 8., 9., 10. Caption: *The Ambroziana Azul álbum (1940-1960).*

Pic. 7. Description: Série IIF. Pic. 8. Description: Série IIFC, menino. Pic. 9. Description: Série IIFC, menina. Pic. 10. Description: Série D.



Pic. 11. Caption: *Double models (1957).*

Source: The authors' personal collection.

In the catalogues, a few cards contain golden- or black-lettered writings, but most have no text. The selling of cards with no printed text is owing, in some cases, to the possibility for each family to personalize the text and identify the name of the boy/girl when they purchased a certain amount of cards. Personalizing conferred greater importance to the souvenir, which was given to family and friends.

Since the 1980's, holy cards have started to include texts and a blank line where the communicant would identify himself. This change is also part of new guidelines issued by both the Church and the State establishing that catechesis

and preparation for first communion should be ministered by parishes with catechists with or without a formation²⁵.

As mentioned earlier, the images printed on the holy cards can be classified according with the purpose they are dedicated to: birth, baptism, first communion, confirmation, wedding, death, seventh-day, wedding anniversary, allusive dates (mainly Christmas and Easter), among others. Each is associated with a certain iconography, although they are diversified in some cases; most often, however, there is the predominance of a given representation.

Paz²⁶ uses the phrase «image-artifact», as they are bearer of significances of the social world, particularly a Catholic Religiosity. They are meant to express different religiosity meanings according with the events they are devoted to. This typology is not necessarily identified in the albums, but in various price lists. For example, the «Oficinas Gráfica Arte Sacra Aparecida's» list specifies: the prints – small, cream-colored, with a golden outline, colorful, liturgical, mourning (simple or double); the cards – large, medium, small, double; the leaflets – national or couché cream paper, white paper; baptism and wedding diplomas and certificates, Daughters of Mary diplomas. All of these products were sold by the minimum of one hundred units.

The collections including unit prices are: The Seven Sacraments (baptism, first communion, confirmation, wedding, anointing of the sick); The Great Mystery; The Seven Words; The Gifts of the Holy Spirit (seven: wisdom); Our Father; The Blessings; The Mystery of Bethlehem (linked to Christmas festivities).

The images dedicated to first communion present the symbols of this ritual established by the Catholic Church: the abbreviation JHS (Jesus, Sacred Host); the chalice; bread, wheat, grapes, fish; the angel; Jesus Christ; the dove; the rosary; the catechism. Some images present the angel leading the boy or girl to the church, accompanied by sheep. These are the most numerous in the albums, and are depicted in light colors in pastel shades.

For confirmation, the sacrament that ratifies baptism, the holy cards can present the image of the Holy Spirit: the dove and the tears. Christmas images show the Christ Child in the manger, snow-covered houses, in addition to a whole range of nativity scene representations. Colors are stronger, and the images richer in details; some of them evoke the idea of «photography» rather than drawings.

The series in honor to saints can vary as to the form of representation. Here, a series worth highlighting is one with a golden frame and the name of the saint at the bottom of the card. That series is in the Aparecida Verde

²⁵ After the discipline of religious education (of optional enrolment) was implemented in primary and secondary official schools, catechesis has since the 1960's been ministered at parishes. In this respect, see: P. Ruedell, *Trajetória do Ensino religioso no Brasil e no Rio Grande do Sul. Legislação e Prática*, Canoas, Unilasalle, 2005.

²⁶ Paz, *Contra Cultura visual e Museus escolares: as representações raciais no Museu Lassalista*, cit. p. 16.



Pic. 12. Caption: *Albums: Josef Eis and Aparecida Verde (1969)*, Pics. 13, 14, 15. Caption: *Albums: Josef Eis and Aparecida Verde (1960)*.

Source: Pic. 12. Description: 25th priesthood anniversary. Pic. 13. Description: Mourning. Pic. 14. Description: Mourning. Pic. 15. Description: Honor to a saint.

[Green Aparecida] album. Likewise, other images are represented by different signs and symbols, forming a varied set of interpretive possibilities of meaning production. An attentive observation of the whole iconography present in the cards is invariably conditioned by a period. There are also holy cards for mourning and 25th priesthood anniversaries.

Symbolic value

Each card's symbology is linked not only with the image; it is a set of characteristics of this artifact which produces certain representations: there are aspects related to the drawings' shapes, there are photograph-like images or images imitating stained glass or wood. With regard to color, the artifact's intentionality is fundamental – and is materialized in the pastel shades used in the great majority of images – but there are also strong colors which highlight certain symbols; there are collections with golden edges conferring an idea of value. In a few series imitating photographs of popes from different periods, differences can be seen in how the faces are drawn: from closer, emphasizing the features, or more distant, emphasizing the surroundings.

This whole set consists of liturgies and points us to a certain «pedagogy of devotion», to use a term of Menezes²⁷. The author understands this term as a

²⁷ Menezes, *Saber pedir: a etiqueta do pedido aos santos*, cit., p. 51.

«condescending attitude on the part of people who know about the devotion to a particular saint and can teach others who do not know»²⁸.

In the case of our study, the «pedagogy of devotion» does not rely on a person teaching another, but on the artifact. Therefore, the transmission of meaning is linked to the image printed on paper; it is the very iconographic presentation which teaches. It teaches an attitude of civility: attending a Catholic ritual is a way of honoring someone who is having first their communion or confirmation; it can also be a display of consideration for one's mourning. In this case, the retribution is to offer a souvenir of the occasion to those who attended.

Each image conveys a discourse, it is rich in meanings intended to indoctrinate the body and the mind. In this perspective, it indicates a suitable conformation for the body that has (or should have) faith, represented in one's posture of raising one's hands high, kneeling, lowering one's head, joining hands, extending hands, offering flowers, whether in a flowery or a tremendously simple setting. In each image, there is a set of representations that point to the way and the duty of being a good Christian.

Engendered in an iconography that is rich in symbols and signs, the images produce a pedagogical process in which one learns to be charitable, protective, to live without luxury, and to be respectful. In the images analyzed, there is a profusion of forms of exercising Catholic Christianity, repeated in innumerable ways which express a set of intentions to create or preserve Catholic teachings.

The production, diffusion and circulation of holy cards is a practice in which, according to Foucault²⁹, the subject does not appear as a foundational instance, but as the effect of a constitution. In this perspective, the set of documents related with this study produces, historically, ways of subjectivation, i.e., practices of constitution of the subject which come into being as the object of a given relation of knowledge and power linked with a way of being Christian and with the modes of consolidating the Catholic faith based on a heterogeneity of elements existing in the social context. This production of subjectivities, of which the subject is a provisory effect, «remains open-ended, since one simultaneously receives and emits the subjectivation components in circulation, making these exchanges a living collective construction»³⁰.

In our view, therefore, the social practices of creating models and producing these artifacts known as holy cards, as well as distributing them, selling them, instituting the habit of offering them at rituals, and collecting them, all of this forms an art of civilizing for faith, building ways of subjectivation in the collectivity.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²⁹ M. Foucault, *Ditos e escritos IV*, Rio de Janeiro, Forense Universitária, 2012.

³⁰ S. Mansano, *Sujeito, subjetividade e modos de subjetivação na contemporaneidade*, «Revista de Psicologia da UNESP», vol. 8, n. 2, 2009, p. 111.

Final Considerations

The imagery of Catholic Church saints – in sculptures, paintings, books, and holy cards – constitute a huge repertoire of the reified, yet fully active, Christian religiosity. The articulation between the set of artifacts, bodily techniques and visual images produce differential appropriations in Western society, in a process of (re)signifying values and roles associated with men and women.

The iconographic analysis allowed us to see the social role of an artifact which belongs to Catholic rituals' routine. As they were shifted to the position of a document, the images indicated distinct elements of a heritage which, in being denaturalized and problematized, suggests a set of possibilities for understanding the maintenance of cultural practices, forms of religious civility, and maintenance and/or production of devotion and faith.

The production of these artifacts, albums and holy cards occurred by means of a social practice conceived as an ordinary practice in a meaning creation process – «limited by the multiple determinations which define, for each community, the legitimate behaviors and the incorporated norms»³¹.

The rituals and use of holy cards linked to Catholic Christian faith conduct updating actions to ensure their maintenance. They can be re-signified, produced with other types of paper, other colors, they can be simpler or more elaborate, distributed in other ceremonies, but they remain with their *status* of a representation of faith. In this process, there are many permanencies and a few transformations; among the latter, we can see change in how they are accessed and sold.

Following contemporary tendencies, we searched the internet and found websites operating in the religious objects retail, such as the «Santinhos do Brasil», «Heliart Gráfica e Editora»³² and «Gráfica Santana»³³ websites, which offer «holy cards for promises», «paper holy cards with a prayer on the back» and «90 models of holy cards with prayers, novenas», «pendants, scapulars, and statuettes for sale». The website of «Gráfica Grafar»³⁴, situated in São Paulo, offers a profusion of holy cards containing the iconography of Catholic saints. This website allows ordaining the search by popularity, i.e., from the most to the least popular cards.

This study opens a wide ranges of paths for further research. For example, questions like: Which saints are most represented? What model of holiness do they preconize for each period and place? What idea of religious piety is there

³¹ R. Chartier, *A História Cultural Entre Práticas e representações*, Lisboa, DIFEL, 1994, p. 106.

³² <http://www.santinhosdobrasil.com.br/?gclid=CKq_7Miq48gCFROAkQodR2QJ4Q> (last access: 30th October, 2015).

³³ Gráfica Santana, *Tradição em impressos e artigos religiosos* [Santanta Printing Co. – Tradition in Printed Material and Religious Products], <<https://www.graficasantana.com.br/produtos/c308/santinhos-de-promessas/milheiro-de-oracao-r-3500.aspx>> (last access: 20th May, 2016).

³⁴ <<http://www.graficagrafar.com.br>> (last access: 20th May, 2016).

at the basis of holy cards' representation? The study also points us to other research perspectives regarding «religious education», such as the analysis of «Baptism Memory Albums», «First Communion Memory Albums»³⁵ and books dedicated to the preparation of this rite of passage; teachers and/or catechists; notebooks of students and teachers; memories of Catholic rituals.

³⁵ In the same way as the «Baby Albums» studied by M. Stephanou, *Álbuns de Bebê: discursos médicos, religiosos e educação das crianças (Brasil, 1930-1960)*, in *VIII Congreso Iberoamericano de Historia de la Educación Latinoamericana: Libro de resúmenes*, 2 vols., Buenos Aires, SAHE-Sociedad Argentina de Historia de la Educación, 2007, vol. 1, pp. 252-253.

Education and politics in Italy after the second World War*

Serena Sani
Department of Humanities, Social and
Education
University of Molise (Italy)
serena.sani@unimol.it

ABSTRACT: The article traces the complex sequence of events which marks the rebirth of Education in Italy after the Second World War, and the beginning of a lively and controversial experience of reformation and democratization of Education started by Guido Gonella, minister of Education in the years of post-war reconstruction (1946-1951).

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; School Policy; School Reform; Education; Italy; XXth Century.

1. *Post-war reconstruction problems and choices made by the minister of Education, Guido Gonella*

In 1946, the leader of the Christian Democracy Party, Alcide De Gasperi, during his second government – the first one after the Italian Liberation¹ – called on his comrade, Guido Gonella, to run the ministry of Public Education. At that time, the state of Italian Education was dramatic. In addition to the usual and still-unsolved problems – coming from previous years and worsened by war and its general state of abandon² –, other serious problems came up concerning different aspects of education system and structures without omitting all the spiritual and material needs produced by war as well³. The first and most important problem faced

* The article reviews topics already researched and written about by myself, the writer, S. Sani, *La politica scolastica del Centro-Sinistra (1962-1968)*, Perugia, Morlacchi Editore, 2000.

¹ See P. Scoppola, *La proposta politica di De Gasperi*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1977; and A. Gambino, *Storia del dopoguerra dalla Liberazione al potere D.C.*, Bari, Laterza, 1975.

² See G. Ricuperati, *La scuola nell'Italia unita*, in *Storia d'Italia*, 6 vols., Torino, Einaudi, 1973, vol. 5, Tomo II, pp. 1695-1722.

³ For a wide and well-documented overview on old and new problems of Italian Education

by post-war governments was, without any doubt, the material conditions of buildings. According to available dates, the number of unusable classrooms was about the 40% of the total amount; while the buildings not destroyed – or designated for other purposes – needed renovations or, at least, maintenance works aimed to restore minimum standards. Furthermore, dates about small schools were inaccurate because lease agreements hadn't been renewed anymore, therefore such buildings were available only in theory. Additionally, the situation got worse and worse because of the interruption of communication routes (bridges, viaducts, etc.), which made difficult road links between little, rural, mountain towns and bigger cities where schools were usually located. This way, a considerable number of pupils were kept away from education⁴.

Structural problems were enlarged by the dissolution of local organization of education (Education Agencies, Directorate-General) and by difficulties encountered while identifying trustworthy and skilled executive and office workers – able to reactivate quickly the normal functioning of Education System - without any connection with the previous regime⁵.

Moreover, in view of such shortages – and the extraordinary nature of actions required to restore normality – budgetary allocations to Education – still related to pre-war years – amounted up to 5% of the national expense. An amount of money as such was barely sufficient to satisfy fundamental needs of education system in ordinary periods - without forgetting the fact that most of this amount of money was used to cover management and teaching costs; in extraordinary periods, as post-war years, it was totally paltry⁶.

The needs and problems of Italian Education were not only related to material conditions of schools and to organizational and financial lacks. New appointed minister of Education had the need to carry on and complete the act of removing fascist contents in force – a removal already begun by the Inter-Allied Control Council chaired by C.W Washbourn – through the review of course books, which was inevitably partial and unsatisfactory, through the elimination of fascist and racist regulations, and through the introduction of new teaching plans concerning kindergarten, primary schools and teacher training high schools⁷.

System concerning this period see *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943. Con cenni introduttivi sui periodi precedenti e una parte conclusiva sul periodo post-fascista, preparato dalla Sotto-Commissione dell'Educazione della Commissione Alleata in Italia e offerto al Ministero della P.I.*, Roma, Garzanti, 1947, pp. 367-416 and Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1953.

⁴ See Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, cit., pp. 7-8.

⁵ See *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943*, cit., pp. 378-382.

⁶ See G. Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1988, p. 17.

⁷ See R. Fornaca, *I problemi della scuola italiana dal 1943 alla Costituente*, Roma, Armando, 1972, pp. 22-45.

Among problems not directly produced by war, it is important to cite the question of illiteracy. As it is well known, general and systematic collection of data are not available on illiteracy in 1945 and in the following years. However, researches tend to indicate the percentage of illiteracy to be about the 20% of the total population⁸. Obviously, it is a mean value concerning the whole country. Hence, it is reasonable to expect a greater percentage of illiteracy in the South of Italy and in rural and mountain areas, than in central and northern regions and big cities. It can be said that the situation was roughly similar to the last census held in 1931⁹.

Which was the motivation of a pronounced regression as such? Without any doubt, the first and most important motivation is related to the irregularity of lessons during the war-time and to the default of adult literacy teaching, begun in the 1930's. Related to specific areas (suburban, isolated, and disadvantages ones) there is a more classic motivation caused by the total or partial rate of school drop-out and, to be more specific, by a schooling limited to the Second or Third grades of elementary school due to the absence of a complete cycle of studies in rural and mountain regions. This last phenomenon gave rise to the *relapse into illiteracy* which was one of the most important wounds of Italian Education alongside the total lack of education.

Last but not least, material and moral needs of teachers were a serious problem as well. Teachers were going through a difficult situation due to economic and social crisis, high unemployment rate – especially in teaching –, and, above all, pre-war salary levels¹⁰. In addition, some psychological difficulties were added by a general state of uncertainty, the existential malaise produced by war and by the loss of classic moral-political institutional reference points. With mainly middle-class origins, teachers appeared to be «inner anguished by deep cultural and political identity crisis with the fall of Fascism, with its values and choices which they used to identify themselves with»¹¹.

The reorganization of Education undertaken by Guido Gonella, minister of Education, must be placed in a complicated context as above mentioned. The reorganization begun in 1946 and lasted five years till when Gonella was compelled to resign (July, 1951) because of his prominent role inside the Christian Democracy¹².

⁸ See Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, cit., pp. 7-8.

⁹ See D. Demetrio, *La scuola dell'alfabeto. Trent'anni di lotta all'analfabetismo 1947-1977*, Firenze-Rimini, Guaraldi, 1977, pp. 15-18.

¹⁰ See, *La politica e la legislazione scolastica in Italia dal 1922 al 1943*, cit., pp. 377-378.

¹¹ See R. Sani, *Le associazioni degli insegnanti cattolici nel secondo dopoguerra 1944-1958*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1990, p. 6.

¹² See D. Ragazzini, *Guido Gonella ministro della pubblica istruzione nel periodo transitorio*, in G. Tassinari (ed.) *La pedagogia italiana nel secondo dopoguerra*, Firenze, Le Monnier, 1987, pp. 215-225; Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, cit.

In a speech given to Italian Senate on October 21, 1948, at the end of the debate about expenditure on Education, Guido Gonella responded to criticism claiming his dedication to the reorganization of Education after the huge destructions produced by war:

We should begin by considering – said the minister of Public Education – a given: we have inherited an educational system with a sick soul and a disintegrated body. And what we were supposed to do? Of course, we could not interrupt educational activities awaiting the ideal educational system [...] or build a delicate system as such in a very short period. [...] We just had to save Education¹³.

The above-mentioned speech sums up the way Gonella got involved in the work of rebuilding structures and restoring the education system in its entirety. A work observed by post-war educational historians who – even the most critics – have shown a positive judgment about it, pointing out, at least, the unquestionable results achieved, despite the hard circumstances in which Gonella worked¹⁴. In addition, government actions had to deal with two types of problems – strictly related each other. The first one was related to the serious financial difficulties affecting the Country, with a consequent reduction of investments in Education; the second problem was originated by particular economic policies introduced by De Gasperi, especially the ones started from the end of 1947, when a liberal economist, Luigi Einaudi, was appointed as minister of Balance in order to supervise economic guidelines and financial strategies¹⁵.

With Einaudi, appointed by De Gasperi in his IV Cabinet – the first cabinet supported by centrist parties only (DC, PSLI, PLI, PRI), after the expulsion of left-wing parties (PCI, PSI) – there was an attempt to solve financial difficulties and give new energy to economy through the introduction of deflationary measures and the shortage of credit affecting public investment policy at large, with shocking effects on various ministries (cuts in public spending, drastic reduction of unproductive funding, strict control on public departments and agencies balances, etc.)¹⁶.

¹³ Now included in G. Gonella, *Cinque anni al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, 3 vols., Milano, Giuffrè, vol. 1.: *La rinascita della Scuola dopo la seconda guerra mondiale*, pp. 26-33.

¹⁴ See D. Ragazzini, *Dall'educazione democratica alla riforma della scuola*, Napoli, Liguori, 1987; A. Semeraro, *Il mito della riforma. La parabola laica nella storia educativa della Repubblica*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1993.

¹⁵ See A. Graziani, *L'economia italiana 1945-1970*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1972; C. Daneo, *La politica economica della ricostruzione 1945-1949*, Torino, Einaudi, 1975.

¹⁶ See P. Barucci, *Ricostruzione, pianificazione, Mezzogiorno. La politica economica in Italia dal 1943 al 1955*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1978; P. Saraceno, *Intervista sulla ricostruzione 1943-1953*, organized by L. Villari, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1977.

Clearly, ministry of Public Education's actions and plans – one of the most penalized ministries by Einaudi's political-economic interventions – were influenced by the combination of financing and investment reductions of unproductive sectors.

In view of this situation, which appears to be far from being comforting, available dates concerning the years 1964-1951 show how Gonella's actions – aimed to reorganising, reconstructing and strengthening education – achieved important results. Or rather, it can be said that, by the end of 1949, the state of buildings – rebuilt or restored – went back to pre-war standards. A short examination of dates will better explain this point.

First, ministry of Public Education's expenditure, between 1946-1947 and 1951-1952 financial years, went from 5.6% to 9.7% of Public Expenditure. In the same period, about 30,000 classrooms (29,177) were recorded to be rebuilt from the beginning or restored.

With regard to specific stages of Education: in the years 1946-1951, pre-school grew by 24.2% (12,995 units) and the number of pupils by 13.8% (990,103). Ordinary and extra funds allocated by the ministry in this sector – managed at that time by local and private authorities – grew about thirteen times between 1946-1947 and 1951-1952 financial years, going from 60 to 500 billion of Lire¹⁷.

About Primary School, the total growth of public schools was equal to the 10.6% (3,357 units)¹⁸. About Lower Secondary School (age 11-14), available dates are only about professional education and training schools (between 1945-1946 and 1951-1952, it went from 6,808 to 12,525 classes) and middle schools (in the same period, it went from 7,859 to 10,136). The total amount of funds grew from about 1,5 billion of Lire in 1946-1947 to more than 13 billion of Lire in 1951-1952.

With regards to Upper Secondary School, available dates related to the period between 1945-1946 and 1951-1952 are the following: Classic Lyceum went from 237 to 248 units; Scientific Lyceum from 78 to 91; Teacher Training High School from 145 to 146; technical institutes from 304 to 328; technical schools from 336 to 350. In this five-years period, a considerable growth was recorded in Secondary Education, as many as 58 units¹⁹.

Between 1946 and 1951, the number of teachers significantly grew as well. Pre-school teachers went from 20,519 to 24,090 units and the number of Primary Teachers went from 127,000 to 160,00 units. With regard to Upper Secondary School, the number of teachers recorded a very important growth: from 23,754 it went to 28,626²⁰.

¹⁷ See Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, cit., pp. 18-20 and pp. 254-255.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 256-258.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-58 and pp. 269-281.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 266-268 and pp. 272-275.

The improvement of teachers' material and moral conditions was a matter of interest broadly felt during the five-years period of Gonella's mandate.

Recent historiography on post-war education shows how Gonella's effort to increase the number of teachers was aimed to promote the widest expansion of popular and primary education through the implementation of compulsory schooling – still largely ignored in most parts of the Country²¹.

In addition, as other members of ruling class, Gonella had the clear awareness of a strictly connection between the rebirth/reform of education and the need of teachers with a more active and constructive spirit through the improvement of their living conditions, removing financial worries and creating a more trustful relationship with school administration²².

In this perspective, a lot of actions were taken: new competitive examinations for teacher of all levels after being interrupted for a long time during the war; new jobs with the establishment of new schools and the integration of all levels of Primary Education where missing; the institution of transitory positions and the improvement of career ladder for elementary teachers, *medi* teachers, supervising and executive staff; the abolishment of previous retirement plan for teachers, levelling it out with other public employees; the approval of legal statute of *medi* teachers, where self-government of schools and legal guarantees for teachers – denied or restricted by Fascism – were recognised²³.

Even though they were limited and partial interventions – as the ones concerning pay raise and financial improvements – a policy as such, started in the second half of 1940s, contributed to get back in touch teachers and school administrations and to reach a worthwhile partnership between ministry and labour and trade unions: a crucial partnership fated to turn out very important during the process of rebuilding schools and reforming Education²⁴.

²¹ See L. Pazzaglia, *Ideologie e scuola fra ricostruzione e sviluppo (1946-1958)*, in *Chiesa e progetto educativo nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra 1945-1958*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1988, pp. 418-430; Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, cit., pp. 17-29; Sani, *Le associazioni degli insegnanti cattolici nel secondo dopoguerra 1944-1958*, cit., pp. 45-61.

²² See, for instance, the speech given by minister Gonella to the Chamber of Deputies on October 15, 1945, at the conclusion of the debate on Education balance, now included in Gonella, *Cinque anni al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 1-25.

²³ See Pazzaglia, *Ideologie e scuola fra ricostruzione e sviluppo (1946-1958)*, cit., p. 499.

²⁴ See G. Gonella, *L'inchiesta nazionale della scuola*, «La Riforma della Scuola», vol. 1, n. 1, november 1947 (now included in Gonella, *Cinque anni al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 177-184).

2. *Gonella's reforming resolutions: from the National Inquiry into Education to bill n. 2100*

On April 12, 1947, when the debate on Education was still in full swing inside the Constituent Assembly²⁵, minister Gonella inaugurated a national Committee, involving former ministers of Education, with the task to promote a *National Report on Italian Education*. The *Report* was supposed to realize a «diagnostic consultation» on national education system preparing the ground for its reform²⁶.

On January 27, 1948, the *Report* formally begun. Five subcommittees were established – concerning all levels of Education – with the task to develop some questionnaires to be given to teaching and administrative staff of all education levels. Other organizations involved in training and education participated in the questionnaire as well (professional and trade unions, education divisions of political parties, business unions, educational institutes and similar)²⁷.

About 211,000 teachers (from private and public schools) and 85,000 administrative staff employees (directors of education, supervisors, headmasters, directors of studies, central and local administrative officials) took part in the consultation on education between October and November 1948. About 10,000 questionnaires were completed – 2,483 concerning primary education; 4,746 lower and upper secondary education; 151 higher education; 1,715 popular education²⁸.

In the same period, willing to support the *National Inquiry*, the national Committee published a magazine, «La Riforma della Scuola», including various conference proceedings on education reform and essays wrote by educational specialists and ministerial officials of different ideological and cultural views, concerning the most important questions and needs of the National Education System. With regard to the total number of magazine publications, published between November 1947 and June 1949, eight publications contained conference proceedings on preschool education, elementary education, popular education, secondary education (lyceum and technical education), school and

²⁵ See G. Limiti, *La scuola alla Costituente*, in *Studi per il XX anniversario dell'Assemblea Costituente*, 3 vols., Firenze, Le Monnier, 1969, vol. 3: *Rapporti sociali ed economici*. pp. 81-140; C.G. Lacaíta, *La Costituente e i problemi della scuola*, in N. Raponi (ed.), *Scuola e Resistenza*, Parma, La Pilotta, 1978, pp. 285-313; L. Pazzaglia, *Il dibattito sulla scuola nei lavori dell'Assemblea Costituente*, in G. Rossini (ed.), *Democrazia Cristiana e Costituente*, Roma, Cinque Lune, 1980, pp. 457-517; L. Ambrosoli, *La scuola alla Costituente*, Brescia, Paideia, 1987.

²⁶ The Constitutive Act of the National Committee of Inquiry is included in «La Riforma della Scuola», vol. 1, n. 1, november 1947, p. 2. A contribution of Gonella, *L'Inchiesta nazionale sulla Riforma della Scuola*, *ibid.*, pp. 3-4, outlines ministerial's general motivations and purposes.

²⁷ See Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, cit., pp. 243-250 for information about the stages and how the *Inquiry* was carried out.

²⁸ G. Chiosso, *Motivi pedagogici e politici nei lavori dell'Inchiesta Gonella (1947-1949)*, «Pedagogia e Vita», vol. 45, n. 3, 1983-1984, p. 308.

popular libraries, schools with classes made up of different ages groups; five publications contained different essays and contributions; the last publication contained the final results of *National Inquiry*.

Most recent and authoritative studies on the *Inquiry* have clarified aims and tendencies of ministry Gonella: a new democratic education system «should not have been simply originated from a new legislature, but from more complex procedures – involving different ways of thinking and behaving»²⁹ –, from a concrete and direct commitment of teachers and everyone – inside and outside schools – concerned about the education reform:

Giorgio Chiosso has emphasized how minister Gonella believed that constitutional directions would be transferred into education only by reconsidering education function and role – besides serious actions needed to rebuild schools. It would have been possible only if teachers had been able to be receptive to something new – as popular schools – entrenching the respect of natural rights pre-existing Nations and Education itself which has the role to defend them. [...] Therefore, the Inquiry focused primarily on teachers and then on organization and plans³⁰.

On October 1948, in a speech given to the Parliament, by Gonella showed the need of a reform «from below» – a reform able to sensitize teachers, involving them in the establishment of a truly democratic reforming plan of education meeting the needs of a new post-war society:

I have always had the willing to follow – said ministry of Public Education – this principle: Education must reform itself. We need the self-reform of Education. This is the reason why all educators have been consulted. We have promoted a Committee of Inquiry and various studies because we want to introduce the procedure of a non-demagogical democracy – a democracy which identifies itself with responsibility³¹.

Among the most important traits of ministerial project, one had a prominent position: Gonella's intention to include experts and teachers with different political backgrounds and pedagogical approaches in the Inquiry. Analysing the issues of «La Riforma della Scuola» and the member list of subcommittees, it can be easily identified the intention to organize the work «so that all parties and pedagogical approaches could be involved» assuring “the major guarantee of impartiality»³².

²⁹ See Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, cit., p. 35; Pazzaglia, *Ideologie e scuola fra ricostruzione e sviluppo (1946-1958)*, cit., pp. 498-499.

³⁰ Chiosso, *Motivi pedagogici e politici nei lavori dell'inchiesta Gonella*, cit., p. 307.

³¹ G. Gonella, *Dignità degli insegnanti e sviluppo scolastico*, in Id., *Cinque anni al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, cit., vol. 1, p. 22.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23. See also Chiosso, *Motivi pedagogici e politici nei lavori dell'inchiesta Gonella*, cit., pp. 311-312.

Fated to be positively accepted by school community – as proved by the massive participation in the questionnaire –, the *Inquiry* was generally supported by public opinion and politics. As proof of that, it is worth mentioning positive feedbacks on the initiative – and the way it was realized – stated during the debates on education balances (1948-1949), and, above all, the support given by educational-pedagogical and cultural current press: both catholic («Scuola Italiana Moderna», «Il Maestro», «La Scuola e l'Uomo») and lay and socialist orientations («I Diritti della Scuola», «Il Ponte», «Il Mondo»).

On the other hand, Communist Party's position was more complicated: after an early phase of moderate approval and collaboration, starting from the political election held on April, 1948, more and more criticisms were addressed to the initiative³³. Negative opinions were also expressed – with different reasons – by some leading figures of catholic culture, as father Agostino Gemelli, founder and rector of «Università del Sacro Cuore» of Milan, by moderate Catholics gathered around «La Civiltà Cattolica» – a prestigious magazine published in Rome by the Society of Jesus – and by the union of private professional confessional schools (FIDAE)³⁴. As Giorgio Chiosso explains, private professional schools «would have preferred the approval of a legislation on private schools – supported by Christian Democracy - with the implementation of art. 33 of Constitution»³⁵.

Between February and April 1949, the Central Office of the National Committee of Inquiry arranged to examine the questionnaires filled out by organizations, associations, institutions, universities and popular schools. The Central Office also reviewed all the materials arrived from regional and provincial offices – which had the duty to collect and roughly organise dates coming from primary, secondary and special schools – summarizing the answers given by each body of teachers³⁶.

Analysing the results of the *Inquiry* – submitted to final meeting of the National Committee on April 30, 1949³⁷ – Giorgio Chiosso has rightly observed that questionnaires generally revealed that «the majority of teachers was rather unaware of the problems affecting a country that was undergoing a deep changing». As proof of that «despite the great popularity of popular schools, a distinction between selective and formative functions was not made, not even in elementary school»³⁸.

³³ About Communist Party's position, see Semeraro, *Il mito della riforma*, cit., pp. 67-82.

³⁴ See R. Sani, «La Civiltà Cattolica» e il problema della scuola nel secondo dopoguerra (1945-1965), in L. Pazzaglia, R. Sani (edd.), *Scuola e società nell'Italia unita. Dalla Legge Casati al Centro-Sinistra*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2001, pp. 357-373; V. Sinistrero, *La politica scolastica 1945-1965 e la scuola cattolica*, Roma, Quaderno FIDAE, pp. 37-64.

³⁵ Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, cit., p. 41.

³⁶ Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, cit., pp. 243-246.

³⁷ The results of the Inquiry were published in «La Riforma della Scuola», vol. 3, n. 16 (supplement), 1949.

³⁸ Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, cit., pp. 45-46.

As a matter of fact, analysing questionnaires filled by teacher bodies, a general request of a more strict and rigorous education arose – a request followed by the demand of dignity and consideration for teachers, by the need of more rigorous and selective examinations and a general thinning in secondary schools and universities.

To understand the ongoing changes affecting Education, its problems and the strategies needed to solve them, another important date arose from the *Inquiry*: a substantial backwardness of pedagogy and teaching – still conditioned by the fundamentals and frames introduced by Gentile's Reform, but deprived of their original charge and reduced to merely catchphrases («selective schools», «more rigorous examinations», etc.)³⁹. A condition as such is also proved by the inadequate and irrelevant answers given in the questionnaires on teaching and methodological approaches – answers given only about elementary education⁴⁰.

On the contrary, a stronger awareness of the connection between school and society appeared analysing dates coming from questions about popular education. It is worth noting how insistently it was emphasized the link between erasing illiteracy – through a wide spread of education and cultural goods among the most disadvantaged social classes – and the consolidation of democracy⁴¹. The very same solutions proposed during the *Inquiry*, aimed to support literacy and schooling, indicated «a large-scale educational and social strategy», not only restricted to «a mere instrumental recovery of literacy skills», but aimed to promote the development of a civil and cultural society, the economic and social support for people at risk and particular areas marked out by backwardness, underdevelopment and a general state of neglect⁴².

Three months after the end of the Committee of Inquiry, minister Guido Gonella inaugurated a new Committee with the aim to develop the reform project of education in view of dates collected through the *Inquiry*⁴³. Luciano Pazzaglia has properly noticed that the minister of Public Education had at that time different options: «1) issuing general principles within outline a new Education System through acts of Government; 2) identifying problems with particular priorities and dealing with specific actions, even though coordinated; 3) outlining a general project of reform concerning education as a whole»⁴⁴. Gonella's choice went in for the general project of reform, perhaps because

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

⁴⁰ See, for example, the answers given in the *Inquiry* on this argument in «La Riforma della Scuola», vol. 3, n. 16 (supplement), 1949, pp. 45-46.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 175-198.

⁴² See the proceedings produced by the Convention on Popular Education organised by the Committee of Inquiry, held in Rome on May 2-5, 1948, in «La Riforma della Scuola», vol. 2, nn. 4-5, 1948.

⁴³ See *La Commissione ministeriale per l'elaborazione dei progetti di legge*, included in Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La Scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, cit., pp. 246-248.

⁴⁴ Pazzaglia, *Ideologie e scuola fra ricostruzione e sviluppo (1946-1958)*, cit., p. 505.

it was more in harmony with various reforms (finance, agriculture, local administration) started under De Gasperi I Cabinet⁴⁵.

Explaining the reasons of his choice to the Parliament, minister Gonella said – giving also generic principles which the new-born Committee should have worked within – «the answers given in the questionnaires are contrasting, but we don't have to find a compromise among different solutions – it will not be the best solution. We have to weigh proposals on a quality level, framing them in an organic vision of education reform».

In Gonella's opinion, the perspectives appeared with the *Inquiry* should have been selected and framed by a method able to combine «ideal needs» and «real life», following the general principles of the Italian Constitution⁴⁶.

Despite the important call to the spirit of cooperation, which animated the Constituent Assembly and marked out the *Inquiry*, the drafting stage of the Reform was characterized by the renunciation – or, at least, by a drastic reduction – of the procedure aimed to include different orientations and ideologies in the choices, ensuring pluralism and discussion in the making-decision process.

Such a change of direction is proved by Gonella's decision to appoint almost only ministerial and scholastic employees as members of the new Committee. A decision which surely gave to minister Gonella more discretion and autonomy and more conformity to the Committee's works, but it was clearly in contrast with the expectations of school, laic and left-wing parties. In fact, Gonella was accused of leaving the pluralistic and democratic approach aside – approach introduced with the *National Inquiry*.

Started working on July 1949, the Committee, which was appointed to arrange the text of the reform, presented in August 1949 a first outline of the text, *Features of Education Reform*, followed by other two drafts. The last one was the base text of the relation, presented on December 19, 1949, by minister Gonella to the C.S.P.I (High Council of Public Education) concerning the problems of the reform⁴⁷.

After being examined by the High Council of Public Education, between January and March 1950, the outline returned to the ministerial Committee which elaborated a first draft of the bill by the end of August 1950. It contained

⁴⁵ About Alcide de Gasperi's reforms (starting from April 18, 1948) see G. Baget-Bozzo, *Il partito cristiano al potere. La DC di De Gasperi e di Dossetti 1945-1954*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1974, pp. 39-51.

⁴⁶ G. Gonella, *Quadro di realizzazioni scolastiche*, in Id., *Cinque anni al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 60-61 (it is the speech given by the minister to the Chamber of Deputies on October 12, 1949, at conclusion of the debate on minister of Public Education Balance).

⁴⁷ Both drafts of *Lineamenti* [Outlines] had the same title «*schema provvisorio e riservato*» [temporary and confidential outline]. The first draft was issued on August 10 and the second on August 28, 1949. See Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, *La scuola italiana dal 1946 al 1953*, cit., p. 246.

286 articles concerning all the aspects of the Reform of Education⁴⁸. Between December 1950 and the summer of 1952, a new text was arranged with only 56 articles. It was debated and approved by the Council of ministers on June 18, 1951, and proposed to the Chamber of Deputies (13 July 1951) with the title *Norme Generali sull'istruzione n. 2100* [General Regulations On Education n. 2100].

Even if it was limited to indicate *General Regulations on Education*, bill n. 2100 appeared to be a real structured plan of reform. As a matter of fact, it concerned the administrative organization of public education, different levels of education -university included-, the organization of private education, popular education, integrative institutions and activities, buildings and equipments, family-school partnerships, extracurricular activities, and ancillary services.

The most important changes introduced by the bill concerned preschool education, compulsory schooling up to the age of 14, the reorganization of Teacher Training School, the regulation of private schools, examinations and academic qualifications.

An overall evaluation of minister Gonella's Education Reform Project should take into consideration its ambitious and complex nature, where innovative and precursory dispositions were next to more traditional dispositions and regulations – at times clearly inadequate and backward compared with the circumstance. Without any doubt, it was a reform – if realized - intended to broadly change the Italian Education System, starting that process of modernization and redefinition based on constitutional principles concerning education, wished by political forces and by the minister of Public Education himself – even if with a non-linear and coherent approach.

Bill n. 2100 was proposed to the Parliament on July 13, 1951, but it was not even examined. Left aside with other bills, it was cancelled when Legislature I of Italy ended (1953).

Which were the motivations behind a first shelving and a following withdrawal of the reform? In the last two decades, post-Second world war researchers have agreed upon – as it seems – the existence of different motivations behind the failure of Gonella's Reform. Motivations concerning not only the education side, but a more general framework including politics, economy, and culture⁴⁹.

The groundwork of reform lasted two years – a long and exhausting period of time which, without any doubt, awakened in teachers and school system some feelings of resignation and fatalism about the reform. This seems to be proved by the little and small reaction to the Parliament's decision to leave bill. n. 2100 aside. In addition, ministerial project seemed to be also fated to arise

⁴⁸ See Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla riforma Gonella al Piano decennale*, in *Chiesa e progetto educativo nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra 1945-1958*, cit., p. 320.

⁴⁹ See Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, cit., pp. 110-116; Pazzaglia, *Ideologie e scuola fra ricostruzione e sviluppo (1946-1958)*, cit., pp. 509-514.

doubts and objections, coming from almost all political and cultural alleys, because of its wish to achieve a global solution to the problem⁵⁰.

Besides the above-mentioned motivations, there were other reasons outside the education debate, but still important. For instance, «the financial objections presented by the minister of Treasury, Pella, by several sections of Government's majority, and by the very same Christian Democracy, adducing, as arguments, the need to put the improvement of national economy before social investments, hence the unwillingness to support the huge financial coverage required by the education reform»⁵¹. In the end, it is important to notice how the escalation of political and ideological confrontations – started in the end of 1940s – marked out the end of that spirit of collaboration proper to all political forces which characterized the works of the Constituent Assembly and the early years of Reconstruction⁵². Furthermore, with De Gasperi's policies aimed to fight against Communism defending the «Democracy»⁵³, central parties' reforming aspirations – appeared during the early years of Legislature I of Italy (1948-1953) – were moved to background. This way, the Education Reform was deprived of that support promised by the same political forces two years before the Reform⁵⁴.

⁵⁰ See Sani, *Le associazioni degli insegnanti cattolici nel secondo dopoguerra 1944-1958*, cit., pp. 71-84; Id., «*La Civiltà Cattolica*» e il problema della scuola nel secondo dopoguerra (1945-1965), cit., pp. 357-373.

⁵¹ See Chiosso, *I cattolici e la scuola dalla Costituente al centro-sinistra*, cit., p. 112.

⁵² See P. Scoppola, *Gli anni della Costituente tra politica e storia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1980, pp. 114-142.

⁵³ Id., *Per una storia del centrismo* and A. Riccardi, *La proposta dello Stato forte*, in G. Rossini (ed.), *De Gasperi e l'età del centrismo (1947-1953)*, Roma, Cinque Lune, 1984, respectively pp. 23-52 and pp. 469-494.

⁵⁴ See Baget-Bozzo, *Il partito cristiano al potere. La DC di De Gasperi e di Dossetti*, cit., pp. 390-397.

Rural Schools as a source of inspiration for urban schools

The historic example of Montesca, Umbria and its model of school gardening

Luca Montecchi
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism
University of Macerata (Italy)
l.montecchi@libero.it

ABSTRACT: Founded by the Barons Franchetti for the children of the peasants of their farm, the rural school of Montesca has become a symbol of the educational renewal that took place in the early twentieth century in Italy. Thanks to her great intelligence, Baroness Alice was able to acknowledge the best that the pedagogical reflection was working out at that time: if in 1909 Maria Montessori came to that school where she held the first Montessori course, two years before Alice Franchetti had already kept in touch with the British scholar Lucy Latter who, in 1906, had published a book entitled *School gardening for Little Children*. This work paved the way to gardening in schools as a method for the study of nature and science. The application of these indications by Baroness Alice in the school of Montesca, will be considered by Lombardo Radice as the most original element of the Umbrian school model and even the main legacy ever left to the national pedagogical reflection. The identification of a correspondence, although slender, kept by Lucy Latter on issues regarding the school of Montesca, now allows us to focus on the relationship between the English scholar and the Italian Baroness but also to value how ideas about the school gardening were the basis of the method experienced at the Montesca. It was then spread in the rest of Italy by an active and tireless popularizer as Lombardo Radice. This was a valid method for all schools, not only for rural and urban ones.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: History of Education; Primary School; Experimental School; Italy; XXth Century.

Having previously been downgraded to schools of lower *status*, destined to be largely ignored by the State and the ruling classes, deserted by teachers who preferred more convenient urban schools and by pupils who did not always

understand their usefulness, rural schools went on to experience their golden era in the early years of the 1920s¹. Of course, this change was not due to a political turning point accompanied by a coherent plan of state investments capable of reviving the fortunes of a sector of public education that had drifted between numerous difficulties and limitations. Neither did it concern a radical change of opinion within the teaching profession, which would always remain sensitive to the temptations of the urban world and the type of lifestyle that could be maintained in the city. From a pedagogical point of view, the change was due to the value given to rural schools. Rural schools began to be seen as interesting models for study, even as examples with which to inspire teaching, being a hotbed of experimentation for urban schools to draw on for their own teaching and stimuli.

The instigator of this cultural operation was without doubt Giuseppe Lombardo Radice, the scholar who, following his experience as General Director of Elementary Education, favoured «discovery» as part of the official pedagogy of the rural school, its characteristics and its power.

The first step of this journey is contained in the elementary school curricula which he developed in 1923, and which were partly inspired by several innovative experiences within rural schools. Reference to the rural scholastic world is fleeting, however, and as one can imagine, an appropriate and in-depth discourse cannot be found in the official programmes. This was realised in the book *Athena Fanciulla*, published in 1925, in which the need for school modernisation, already present in *Lezioni di didattica* of 1913, found in the rural school an ideal environment, to be adopted and developed. It is not by chance that educational experiences, inspired by the new schools movement and illustrated in *Athena Fanciulla*, came from the countryside: Baron Leopoldo Franchetti and his wife, Baroness Alice Franchetti Hallgarten's La Montesca, comprising the Rovigliano school; the Roman Agro schools and Maria Boschetti Alberti's Ticino schools were all rural. From this moment on, the rural school became a true *topos* of Italian pedagogical thinking: the expression «rural school» appeared with growing frequency in teaching and educational journals, essays and books written by schoolmasters. Increasing attention was given to the theme, which materialised in both publications and conferences. It almost seems paradoxical when one reflects on how farming community education had been considered until only a few years before.

The basis for this change in thinking was linked to the new vision that Lombardo Radice demonstrated regarding the countryside, which became a sort of *locus amoenus*, a place for learning *par excellence*, where young people

¹ For a complete picture of the theme of rural education in Italy between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, allow me to refer you to: L. Montecchi, *I contadini a scuola. La scuola rurale in Italia dall'Unità alla caduta del fascismo*, Macerata, eum, 2015.

could experience a calm, harmonious environment in which to grow free and independent, allowing their spirit to reveal itself liberally.

In this way, the bases for the well-known Lombardo Radice's concept of «scuola serena» – or «serene school» were therefore laid, that is to say of a school that respects the pupil, prioritises freedom and an openness towards life without being pedantic, repetitive and boring².

One of the first schools with such characteristics discovered by Lombardo Radice during his trip around Italy to find interesting educational practices, was La Montesca school, founded by Baron and Baroness Franchetti, near Città di Castello in Umbria. The educationalist had heard about this school from Gaetano Salvemini, and he was very enthusiastic when he visited it in October 1915. The Sicilian educationalist wrote the day after his visit, in a letter to his friend Giovanni Gentile, of his recognition of the outstanding value of the rural schools, which could be used to open the way for the didactic renewal which the Italian schooling system needed so greatly:

I will stay here for two days to study the schools that represent a fusion of what the lady had well observed during her travels in all the countries of Europe. I will return and I will write a report: it is of the greatest importance. Baroness Franchetti proved a genial teacher, an almost saintly woman; such an exceptional creature should not have worked only for La Montesca, and I wish to do my utmost to make up for this loss. I have taken away a wealth of materials in the form of her written notes, provided by Baron Franchetti, as well as a collection of year six pupils' schoolwork of the first day of school. It has been a moving experience for me to see all that I wrote in my *Didattica* be realised in a school, by a woman of great fortitude who has known how to establish partnerships and invest her saintly enthusiasm in them³.

True to his word, Lombardo Radice returned to La Montesca after the end of the war, when the villa had become a summer holiday residence for teachers, as well as the two schools founded years before by the Franchetti. In his inaugural speech, published in 1922 in the *Nuovi saggi di propaganda pedagogica*, the educationalist noted the distinctive features of this school, which, being a school for farmers' children, gave great value to the teaching of art, such as drawing, as well as scientific instruction. The Sicilian scholar stated:

² On the concept of «scuola serena» see I. Picco, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1951; G. Catalfamo, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1958; R. Mazzetti, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice tra l'idealismo pedagogico e Maria Montessori*, Bologna, Malipiero, 1958; S. Hessen, *La scuola serena di G. Lombardo-Radice. La scuola del lavoro di G. Kerschensteiner*, Roma, Avio, 1954; Id., *L'idealismo pedagogico in Italia. Giovanni Gentile e Giuseppe Lombardo Radice*, Roma, Armando, 1960; G. Giraldi, *Lombardo Radice tra poesia e pedagogia*, Roma, Armando, 1965; G. Cives, *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice: didattica e pedagogia della collaborazione*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1970.

³ Letter quoted in L. Montecchi, *Alle origini della «scuola serena». Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e la cultura pedagogica italiana del primo Novecento di fronte al mito della scuola della Montesca*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 4, n. 2, 2009, p. 317 (the translation from Italian into English has been done by the author).

The secret of the school, so profoundly sincere, is this: graphic expression has been raised to the same level of dignity as linguistic expression. Here, drawing is integral to words; in fact, it precedes them. Careful eyes and alert hands sketch: imagine how much internal concentration, accuracy and composure are required, in what ways and how much they lift the spirit of the child, happy to continue his/her own creativity. [...] Here, the study of science assumes a central role. However, it is not the study of half-baked notions or the reading of books; it is rather observation of the development of plants and animals. True science; that is, the ingenious scientific *exploration and discovery*, in which nothing is 'taught', but everything is 'found'⁴.

The two teaching aids that struck him in particular were the *Calendar*", which, at La Montesca, the pupils created based on their daily observations of the natural world, and the *Subject of the Month*, an exercise in which the pupils represented changes in the natural environment through drawings and captions. It was not by chance that Lombardo Radice prescribed these two teaching aids with the names *La Montesca Calendar* and *Illustrated Composition* in his stated programmes for the elementary school in 1923. The calendar in particular had to serve as a «stimulus for competitive drawing, to awaken a lively spirit of research and observation». The programmes were very detailed, with the following specifications: «a huge sheet of thick paper, divided into many large rectangles using a pencil». On this sheet: «every day, with the permission of the teacher and on his/her direction, one of the best pupils in drawing removes the sheet and, sitting away from the other pupils, draws an object of his/her choosing brought from home, or having been observed on the way to school, in one of the rectangles». The drawing had to be signed and dated by the pupil, and in its entirety served as evidence of «the variety of the nature around us». As such, the object drawn was usually a berry, a twig, a flower, a fruit, a branch with opened buds, etc.

The *Subject of the Month* was named *Illustrated Composition* in the 1923 programmes. It was prescribed for the third year (monthly illustrated composition) and the fourth year (annual illustrated composition)⁵.

The origins of these teaching aids that first became symbols of La Montesca school and subsequently models adopted by all Italian schools, were linked to the theme of school gardening. As previously stated, this theme had been introduced in the Umbrian school around twenty years before, thanks to the collaboration between Baroness Alice and the English scholar of «School Nature Study», Lucy Latter⁶. Miss Latter had attracted the attention of the dynamic

⁴ G. Lombardo Radice, *Nuovi saggi di propaganda pedagogica*, Torino, Paravia, 1922, p. 218 (the translation from Italian into English has been done by the author).

⁵ Montecchi, *Alle origini della «scuola serena»*. *Giuseppe Lombardo Radice e la cultura pedagogica italiana del primo Novecento di fronte al mito della scuola della Montesca*, cit., pp. 321-322.

⁶ Far from being deeply and organically studied, the figure of Lucy Latter must be still reconstructed. Her work was known in Italy paradoxically thanks to a necrology written in a review edited by Luigi Credaro in 1908 (Bice Ravà, *Lucia Latter*, «Rivista Pedagogica», vol. 1, n.

Hallgarten with her studies of school gardening. Hallgarten wanted her for a period of time at La Montesca. Relations between the two women proved noteworthy thanks to the historical reconstruction attempted a few years after the death of Alice, by the very same Lombardo Radice in his writings, beginning with *Athena Fanciulla*. In this book, retracing the steps taken by the Baroness, he highlighted the importance of the English scholar's contribution. The Sicilian scholar wrote:

Miss Latter had placed great importance on the study of nature from Kindergarten level and carried this out through the cultivation of, or rather, the assisting of divine creation revealed in plants. I promoted the Italian translation of her precious little book: 'School gardening for Little Children' [...] In April 1907, Lucy Latter trained the teachers in the study of plants, through amazing activities, together with the children, (subject of the month or the diary of observations of a plant made during the month, were the genial forms of written exercises). She demonstrated how children could use spontaneous drawing to illustrate what they discovered or recorded⁷.

Lombardo Radice had obtained his information from the testimonial sent to him by Miss Hamilton (subsequently Hamilton-Ingoldsby) via Baron Franchetti, in 1915, four years after the death of Alice. According to the recollections of the English lady, published by Lombardo Radice in an Italian translation of the aforementioned book, the meeting between Hallgarten and Latter occurred during Christmas in 1906, when there had been a conference in London organised by the School Nature Study Union⁸. On that occasion, Alice met Miss Latter when the English scholar was carrying out experiments on her theories in the Kindergarten of a school in a working-class area of London. Following their meeting, Alice accompanied Miss Latter to this school, which inspired the principle that allowed children the freedom to observe independently, while the teachers' role was simply to guide the children until they became protagonists of observation and knowledge. The Baroness subsequently became an associate of the School Nature Study Union, and in April 1907, welcomed Miss Latter as a visitor to La Montesca.

1, 1908, pp. 117-118). The necrology then, announced the forthcoming publication of her work into Italian: L.R. Latter, *Il giardinaggio insegnato ai bambini*, Roma-Milano, Societa Editrice Dante Alighieri, 1908. Afterwards, Lombardo Radice gave all the information on the relationship with the Franchettis in the already told work *Athena fanciulla* of 1925. An article by Salvatore Valitutti, written in 1946, told the contribution given by Lucy Latter to the development of school gardening, repropounding a reconstruction of the Franchetti's experience (S. Valitutti, *Due pionieri della nuova educazione: Alice e Leopoldo Franchetti*, «Bollettino della Deputazione di storia patria per l'Umbria», nn. 43-46, pp. 162-176). A more recent biographical profile has been made by S.S. Macchielli in *Lucy Latter*, in *Enciclopedia Pedagogica*, 4 vols., Brescia, La Scuola, 1990, vol. 4, coll. 6576-6577.

⁷ G. Lombardo Radice, *Athena fanciulla. Scienza e poesia della scuola serena*, Firenze, Bemporad, 1926, p. 27 (the translation from Italian into English has been done by the author).

⁸ Regarding the School Nature Study Union please refer to E.W. Jenkins, B.J. Swinnerton, *The School Nature Study Union (1903-94)*, «History of Education», vol. 25, 1996, pp. 181-198.

The events recounted by Miss Hamilton are now easier to reconstruct from a historical point of view, thanks to the identification of modest, but nonetheless interesting, archived documentation. This consists of three letters written by Miss Latter to Professor Patrick Geddes, a Scottish biologist and town planner, pioneer of applied planning of human settlements, written during the period between January and April 1907. At this time, the collaboration between the English scholar and the Baroness philanthropist was developing.

We can understand from the first letter dated 3 January 1907, that Miss Latter had returned to England from a trip to America taken on 30 December 1906, and that during this trip abroad she had been contacted by the Baroness who had come to know of her through her book *School gardening for little children*⁹. It was this book that had sustained the theory that the teaching of gardening notably improved children's manual capabilities, leading children to appreciate poetry and music at a higher level. Miss Latter wrote:

During my absence in America a Baroness Franchetti wrote to me about my book, how she had been trying to get my plan followed in the schools on her husband's estates [...] My Senior Assistant acknowledged the letter and said where I was. The Baroness then asked my Assistant whether she could go and to tell her about the school as there seemed no chance of my getting back to meet the Baroness herself. A meeting was arranged for Monday at the Ritz Hotel and it just happened that I was back in time to go too. It was a most delightful meeting and it ended in my promising to go to Italy this year to help stimulate and organise some work on my own lines in the schools on the estates of the Baron and Baroness, somewhere about Perugia, Umbria and Arezzo. We met again yesterday and discussed the matter further, and all being well I shall make a visit of [...] about Easter. I cannot tell you what great pleasure this event has given me. The letter the Baroness first wrote to me [...] in America and has never reached me. When it does get into my hands I will let you see it. Miss Scudden is great friend of the Baroness, and that is unhappily the one lady, I failed to meet altho[ugh] she invited me to lunch and tea on two occasions¹⁰.

From the second letter, dated 21 February 1907, we discover other details. In particular, Baroness Franchetti, during her recent trip to England and before contacting Miss Latter, had met a Miss Douglas Hamilton and had made enquiries regarding several of her botanical studies, organising a trip for Miss Hamilton to La Montesca for the following Easter. Miss Latter wrote to Professor Geddes:

I wrote to Baroness Franchetti just after I received your last letter and asked whether she had made any arrangement for her Botany work and if not, whether she would avail herself of your daughter's help, too. I just received an answer to my letter. The Baroness writes:

⁹ L.R. Latter, *School gardening for little children*, London, Sonnenschein & Co., 1906.

¹⁰ University of Strathclyde, Archives and Special Collections, T-GED/9/743, Lucy R. Latter to Patrick Geddes, 3 January 1907.

‘When I was in England I engaged a Miss Douglas Hamilton for my botany studies and she is coming to me at Easter. I am then very sorry not be able to think of Miss Geddes for the present. But I am grateful to you for having proposed her and should Miss Hamilton not be suitable or have to return home, I should love to think of so attractive a possibility’¹¹.

The third document is a postcard, showing on one side the photographic impression of Villa della Montesca surrounded by Umbrian hills and mountains. Dated 8 April 1907, it tells of the arrival of Miss Latter at the Italian barons’ villa. The English scholar’s message is brief but one can clearly understand the warm welcome that she received:

I am just longing for you to meet Baron and Baroness Franchetti. I am sure you will have so much in common. We have spoken much of you. We are probably going to Rome for a couple of days [...] I may meet some important Educationalists (Signor Credaro and others)¹².

The brief correspondence between Miss Latter and Geddes containing information about La Montesca ends here. However, we still have the recollections of that trip as told to Lombardo Radice by Miss Hamilton who was also present in the Umbrian villa at the same time, in notes written in 1915. Miss Hamilton wrote:

Miss Latter came to La Montesca in April of 1907 and it was at that time that her ideas became truly realised in schools. The little vegetable gardens that the pupils already had at La Montesca had been used to teach some gardening. Thenceforward, they became strictly connected to scholastic work. We began by studying a tree with Miss Latter: the Indian chestnut and buds in spring; we started daily calendars of flowers found by the children; simple weather observations were begun. We then decided to draw up a plan of work for the whole academic year, according to the suggestions made by Miss Latter¹³.

Miss Hamilton also remembered that the dynamic Alice did not limit herself to gathering ideas and suggestions regarding school gardening only from Great Britain: again from Miss Hamilton we learned news of visits made by Hallgarten to «several schools in America, especially The Ethical Culture School in New York», and other schools in Germany.

Proceeding towards a conclusion, we can ask ourselves what exactly was the nature of the legacy left to Italian education by Latter’s proposals in the early part of the twentieth century. There is no doubt that La Montesca school was the first in Italy to have adopted the suggestions and ideas put forward by Miss Latter. To this end, Lombardo Radice affirms that the teaching practices for which La Montesca school had become famous derived precisely from the ideas

¹¹ *Ibid.*, T-GED/9/760. Lucy R. Latter to Patrick Geddes, 21 February 1907.

¹² *Ibid.*, T-GED/9/769. Postcard form Lucy R. [Latter] to Patrick Geddes, 8 April 1907.

¹³ Lombardo Radice, *Athena fanciulla*, cit., p. 35 (the translation from Italian into English has been done by the author).

of the Anglo-Saxon scholar, such as the Calendar and the Subject of the Month. «There are certainly ideas from Miss Latter concerning the continuous study of a subject, for a month (*Subject of the month, illustrated by the children*) or for a year, and those of drawing (*La Montesca calendar*)». Furthermore, Lombardo Radice claimed that Miss Latter's proposals had an enormous influence on the thinking of Maria Montessori, who wrote in the edition of her celebrated *Manuale di pedagogia scientifica* (1921), «The ideal situation of the children's home, in this regard, is to imitate what is done best in those schools which owe their inspiration to Miss Latter». This last statement was deliberately remarked upon by Lombardo Radice, who had become critical of the Montessori method, after an initial period of admiration. To this end, the Sicilian educationalist could not avoid highlighting the fact that the reference to Miss Latter contained in the edition of the *Manuale di pedagogia scientifica* published fourteen years previously, had disappeared its third edition of 1935.

Moving on from the debate between the two Italian educationalists, it is without doubt that Miss Latter's legacy to Italian pedagogy passed on to Montessori. Montessori herself initially made reference to this, but later retracted the admission. Just two years after, in 1909 Montessori held her first course in scientific pedagogy at La Montesca itself, for a small group of elementary schoolteachers, under the guidance of Alice and Leopoldo Franchetti.

We can note how Miss Latter's ideas and suggestions regarding school gardening – seen as central fulcrums of scholastic life whose aims were to «promote manual work, and lead to a richer and truer appreciation of poetry, painting and music»¹⁴ – arrived like a breath of fresh air to an Italy that was still behind in terms of culture and pedagogy. When, in 1907, Miss Latter arrived at La Montesca, the Italian political and pedagogical debate largely ignored the theme of school gardening, and if anything, dismissed «school cultivation» projects. Recommendations were formulated by a ruling class that was frightened of the end-of-century social revolution and that wished to implement a strictly conservative project for society rather than one enlivened by the desire to improve the intellectual and moral levels of the children of its population, as demonstrated by the noble intentions of Miss Latter and Baroness Franchetti.

¹⁴ Latter, *School gardening for little children*, cit., p. XVIII.

Educating the European conscience in the correspondence between Ellen Key and Romain Rolland (1911-1924)

Tiziana Pironi
Department of Education «G.M.
Bertin»
University of Bologna (Italy)
tiziana.pironi@unibo.it

ABSTRACT: This work focuses its investigation on the letters exchanged between two important figures of European culture between 1911 and 1924: Ellen Key (1849-1926) and Romain Rolland (1866-1944). The great concern of both for the insurgent nationalism leading to the outbreak of the First World War can be seen in reading this correspondence. The collection of letters bears witness to the difficulty European intellectuals experienced in creating a common alliance against the ideology of war. A pedagogic message can also be extrapolated from this, aiming to lay the foundations of the education of European citizens of the future.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Ellen Key; Romain Rolland; History of Education; Citizenship; First World War History; XXth Century.

Introduction

Epistolary correspondence has represented an important historiographical source for some time. It allows us to perform an in-depth investigation of the dynamics of the circulation of ideas and the circuit of relationships in a given historical period¹. Collections of letters allow us to enter deep into the subjectivity

¹ R. Chartier (ed.), *La correspondance. Les usages de la lettre au XIX^{ème} siècle*, Paris, Fayard, 1991. R. Bizzocchi highlighted that French historiography has excelled in «refined epistemologically analysis on the kinds of letters and the autobiographical» (R. Bizzocchi, *Sentimenti e documenti*, «Studi storici», vol. 40, n. 2, April-June 1999, p. 477. Refer also to: A. Chemello (ed.), *Alla lettera. Teorie e pratiche epistolari dai greci al Novecento*, Milano, Guerini, 1998; L.W. Banner., *Biography as history*, «The American Historical Review», vol. 114, n. 3, 2009, pp. 579-586.

of the considered figures, highlighting their interior world which only partly runs over into the public dimension (publications, official declarations, etc.)². Having said this, it would be fairly simplistic and misleading to rely only on the consultation of epistolary sources. This work therefore attempts to make the epistolary sources - specifically the correspondence between Ellen Key and Romain Rolland – interact with the analysis of the authors' printed works, and the relative critical literature, to offer as accurate an understanding as possible of the motivations and problems underlying their intellectual commitments.

The correspondence between Ellen Key and Romain Rolland is highly effective in illustrating some of the significant features of their rich personalities, also offering us the opportunity to broaden our knowledge of the European cultural climate of the period from 1911 to 1924³. It must be remembered that they never met personally, but came into contact via mutual friends, including Stefan Zweig, Albert Schweitzer, Rainer Maria Rilke, George Brandes, and Adolphe Ferrière⁴. Their correspondence therefore offers insight into various aspects of ethics, aesthetics and the commitments of intellectuals in political fields and «civic culture»; more generally, it covers a number educational issues referring above all to the concept of educating future European citizens.

The collection of letters can be divided into three periods, corresponding to the parts into which this work is structured: the first phase, between 1911 and the outbreak of the war, traces a kind of European identity, making explicit reference to Rolland's famous masterpiece, *Jean Christophe*; the second phase corresponds to the war years (1914-18), highlighting the pacifism common to both figures; the third phase is marked by the profound delusion felt as a result of the construction of a culture of reconciliation in the difficult post-war period.

1. *Educating towards a European conscience*

On 2 December 1911, Romain Rolland sent Ellen Key the nine volumes of his novel, not yet complete⁵, accompanied by a letter. This marked the

² Cfr. T. Pironi, *Gli archivi personali e la ricerca storico-pedagogica*, «Studi sulla formazione», vol. 1, 2005, pp. 23-30.

³ The correspondence (1911-1924), partly incomplete during the war period, consists of 53 letters, written in French, respectively 27 letters from R. Rolland to E. Key and 31 letters from E. Key to the French writer. The letters of E. Key to Romain Rolland are in the archive: Pat Fran Ellen Key, L 41:52, Kungliga Bibliothek of Stockholm (henceforth BFEK). The correspondence is unpublished and has not been consulted before. All translations into English have been done by the author.

⁴ For example the letter of Key to Rolland, 20 March 1913 (BFEK).

⁵ The novel *Jean-Christophe* (1904-1912) consisted of 10 volumes (Paris, P. Ollendorff).

beginning of their epistolary correspondence, of which it appears useful to offer some extracts:

Madame,

I took the liberty of having my editor, Ollendorf, send you the nine already-published volumes of my *Jean-Cristophe* [...]. I have known you for a long time, Madame, not only through your books but also through our mutual friends, who show the most profound affection for you. I hope that one day I will have the pleasure of meeting you. In the meantime, I beg you to accept my *Jean-Cristophe* as a testimonial of my admiration for your bold works, and my most respectful friendship⁶.

At that time, Ellen Key, seventeen years older than Rolland, was at the height of her fame, following the worldwide success of her book *The Century of the Child*⁷, through which she contributed to the renewal of the 20th century pedagogic culture. She appeared to be an important point of reference for the French author, who was still on the road to fame, and whose works he declared to have always admired⁸. In any case, their perspectives shared many common aspects: the primary importance of consciousness, and consequently the educational question, lay at the centre of both their thoughts; the respect for personal freedom was revealed to be the keystone of both their concern over the uniformisation of the minds and therefore the consequent spread of the so-called «moral of the flock» and the «mass-man»; the value attributed to «beauty» and art, as universally human values and therefore to be shared by all, not only by a minority; for both, in a Tolstoyan sense, aesthetics was closely linked to ethics, as can be seen in Ellen Key's work, *Beauty for All* (1899)⁹ and Rolland's – if somewhat failed – attempts to establish the popular dramatic art known as the *Theatre of the People*¹⁰.

First of all we must wonder why the reading of Rolland's voluminous novel, *Jean-Christophe*, instantly met with such unbounding admiration from Ellen

⁶ R. Rolland to E. Key (Paris, 2 December 1911), BFEK. This was followed immediately by the confirmation of the Swedish authoress that she had received the books at her residence in Strand (Key to Rolland, 10 December 1911, BFEK).

⁷ E. Key, *Barnets arhundrade*, Stockholm, Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1900 (It. trans. *Il secolo dei fanciulli*, Torino, Bocca, 1906). The volume obtained worldwide success and was translated into many languages: Danish, Norwegian, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, French, English. Cf. L. Ceccarelli, *Ellen Key e il Secolo dei fanciulli*, Primary Teacher Education dissertation, supervising professor T. Pironi, University of Bologna, Department of Education, 2012-2013, p. 52.

⁸ The works of Ellen Key were introduced in France by Louise Cruppi, a mutual friend of Ellen Key and Romain Rolland, as shown in this correspondence. See also what L. Cruppi writes in *Femmes écrivains d'aujourd'hui*, Paris, A. Fayard, 1912.

⁹ E. Key, *Skonhet for alla*, Stockholm, Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1899.

¹⁰ We should remember that Rolland, still young and unknown, wrote a letter to Tolstoy asking for explanations about his negative consideration of art. The latter replied on 3 October 1887 with a letter 38 pages long; the Russian author stated that those who did not feel love for man could not create a valid work of art (L. Tolstoy, *A Romain Rolland, 3 October 1887*, in L. Tolstoy, *Lettres 1880-1910*, Paris, Gallimard, 1986, pp. 95-101).

Key, so much so in fact that she reviewed it immediately; even more so, she made efforts not only to have it published by the most famous Swedish publisher, but used all her influence to ensure that Romain Rolland was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915¹¹.

As is well known, Romain Rolland's fame was to be linked above all to this great novel, written between 1904 and 1912: it is a grand fresco of 19th and 20th century Europe, in which the author combines autobiographical motifs with ideas taken from the life of Beethoven to narrate the events of a young musician impersonating the ideal of the learning of European man.

In her letter to Rolland dated 1 November 1912, Ellen Key defined *Jean-Christophe* as «the French *Wilhelm Meister*», stating that with the French author she shared «the same sentiment: *to wish to have, all our lives, the moral values of Christophe*» [in italics in the text]¹².

At a time of exacerbated nationalism, the main character of Rolland's novel was a hero incarnating the European soul, a German musician with a pure heart, a free spirit, who through a journey of experience marked by failures and obstacles manages to capture the meaning of life¹³. The journey he undertakes across the main countries of Europe becomes a journey of self-learning, showing us how human beings learn to understand the lives of others, belonging to other cultural realities, thus gaining control over their own lives. It is an authentic novel of learning, which traces the passage from curiosity to knowledge, from emotional prejudice to the consciousness of human universality¹⁴.

The friendship which in the novel binds *Jean Christophe*, German to Oliver, French, represents the prototype of the spiritual alliance between two brother nations, defined by Rolland as the «two wings of the West»; however, a third form is required to complete the cycle of existence, that incarnated by the female character Grazia, the sweet beauty of the spirit of Italy.

Through the experience of the journey, Rolland's hero learns to see his own country from outside, and at the same time to understand other countries from the inside, taking part in the everyday life of their native citizens: in this way he acquires a European conscience, becoming aware of unity in complementarity.

¹¹ See the letter of Ellen Key of 20 March 1913: «I am so happy that my publisher (the largest of Sweden) *Jean Christophe: extraordinary*» (BFEK). In the same year, Ellen Key dedicated a monograph to Rolland (E. Key, *Romain Rolland*, Stockholm, Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1913).

¹² Key to Rolland, 1 November 1912, BFEK. In the same, long letter, Ellen Key added in German: «Der gar kein Buck ist sondern ein Freund, ein Erlebniss, ein Lebenserfahrung. What a Babylonian letter! But her French language found no expressions for *Jean-Christophe*. The right words had to be found and in this case they came from the German language. *Forgive me!*».

¹³ In the last page of his novel *Jean Cristophe*, Rolland tells the legend of Saint Christopher, the bearer of Christ, as a metaphor of the responsibility of intellectuals towards the suffering of humanity (R. Rolland, *Jean Cristophe. Journey's end. The New Day*, 10 vols., Milano, Sonzogno, 1924, vol. 10, p. 243).

¹⁴ S. Zweig, *Romain Rolland: the man and his work*, New York, Seltzer, 1921, translated from the original manuscript by Eden and Cedar Paul (this essay refers to the Italian edition of 2014).

In this sense, Christophe's journey is one of learning, from nationalist to citizen of the world, he acquires a European soul that contemplates unity in diversity; thus he is emancipated from the usual habit of talking of the French, Germans, Italians or Jews, labelled according to superficial stereotypes¹⁵. To complete his learning, this musician – who reminds us so much of Beethoven – dreams of composing a grand European symphony, the symbol of the greatest harmony of humankind.

Precisely for this reason, music represents that universal language which crosses all the dark boundaries of nations: musical expression thus allows us to overcome all differences, particularly those which at the time existed between France and Germany. In his second letter to Key in May 1912, Rolland in fact stated: «The fact that I know the German soul well is above all thanks to its music. I believe that I can say that I know their old masters of the 17th and 18th centuries better than most Germans»¹⁶.

A skilled scholar of the musical forms of every European country, from Scandinavia to Catalonia, Rolland showed how in an apparently abstract sphere such as music, nations cultivate their personal characteristics, unconsciously contributing to the development of a higher unity¹⁷.

In the same letter, he underlined the value of music, placing it above all the arts, as it is a spring that bubbles over eternally, not only a source of emotions but also of observations: as for those who understand it, it is a precise language, revealing secrets that literature has never been able to communicate¹⁸.

The cosmopolitan link uniting Romain Rolland and Ellen Key therefore found its most obvious confirmation in their love for music. The abstract nature of music, differently from literature or painting, is far less affected by any historical or cultural roots, allowing it to overcome culture boundaries in universal terms.

In the same letter, Rolland, driven by his interlocutor's interest, offers a kind of autobiography, indicating the essential features of his development:

¹⁵ In Rolland's monumental novel, in their having no homeland, Jews become the unifying element of the different European realities, without ever becoming assimilated; their freedom from the ties of the homeland – as Zweig writes – commenting *Jean Christophe* – makes them the promoters of an innovating spirit (Zweig, *Romain Rolland: the man and his work*, cit., p. 121).

¹⁶ Rolland to Key, 31 May 1912 (BFEK).

¹⁷ Rolland graduated in Literature with a thesis on the history of music See: Zweig, *Romain Rolland: the man and his work*, cit., p. 35.

¹⁸ Rolland to Key, 31 May 1912 (BFEK). Ellen Key replied on 1 November 1912: «I am writing with your portrait (the one by Granié) before me. It sits on my piano, on which Helene Nybion played Beethoven, Franck and Bach to me during the week when we read your book, she *playing*, and I *full of joy!*».

I was born in 1866 in Clamecy, in the Nièvre [...], into a bourgeois Catholic family. I owe much to my parents, who were passionately devoted to my education. My father, a notary in Clamecy, sacrificed his position to follow me to Paris, where I moved at the age of fifteen or sixteen. My mother passed her love of music on to me¹⁹.

Investing wholeheartedly in the education of their son, his parents had enrolled him in the prestigious Parisian school Lycée Louis-le-Grand; after finishing there, he went on to study at the École Normale Supérieure. However, beyond the prestigious schools he attended, Rolland underlined that his was above all a self-taught education, his models and companions were the great classics, on which he nourished his spirit²⁰:

My literary education, as usually happens in France, was almost exclusively based on classic 17th century French literature. But right from my youth, my personal preferences led me to Shakespeare, Goethe and the Encyclopaedists (first and foremost Diderot). Later, to these I added Tolstoy²¹.

Another extremely significant event in his life was the two years he spent in Rome on a scholarship at the École Française de Rome:

In Rome I met a woman whose memory for me is sacred: Malvida von Meysenbug, author of *Memories of an Idealist*, and a friend of Mazzini, Herzen, Wagner and Nietzsche. She was my best friend; and I regularly corresponded with her, from 1890 until her death in 1903. Rome had a profound influence over me. I stayed there for two consecutive years, from 1889 to 1891; thereafter I returned often, and for fairly long periods [...]. I travelled a little to Germany, where I have good friends; but I am far from having lived in this country for such a long time as to love it as dearly as I love Italy, where I lived for so long²².

In addition to his friendship with the famous German emancipationist, the love for Italy was shared by both. A great traveller with a cosmopolitan spirit, Ellen Key was very fond of our country, where she spent several long periods in the early years of the 20th century. Her theories, illustrated mainly in her masterpiece *The Century of the Child*, translated into Italian in 1906, were highly popular among the main Italian emancipationists, including Sibilla Aleramo, Ersilia Majno and Maria Montessori²³.

The exchange of letters between Key and Rolland demonstrates their agreement on the idea of a cultural action, steeped in humanist sentiment and

¹⁹ Rolland to Key, 31 May 1912, BFEK.

²⁰ At the École Normale Supérieure, Rolland chose to specialise in history and geography (Cf. Zweig, *Romain Rolland*, cit., p. 37).

²¹ Rolland to Key, 31 May 1912 (BFEK).

²² *Ibid.* After his stay in Italy, Rolland became professor of music history, firstly at the École Normale Supérieure and then at the Sorbonne. See Zweig, *Romain Rolland: the man and his work*, cit. p. 379.

²³ T. Pironi, *Femminismo ed educazione in età giolittiana. Conflitti e sfide della modernità*, Pisa, ETS, 2010, pp. 99-121.

explicit references to classical culture, despite the differences in their education: Rolland's more rationalist, Key's more vitalistic.

In her letter of 1 November 1912, Ellen Key revealed her *Lebenglaube*, declaring herself to be a fervent Spinozist, according to an interpretation that sees the Dutch philosopher as not only a champion of immanentist monism but also a precursor of the philosophy of life:

I must know your position on 'Lebensglaube' = life that is divine; that it is God, it is eternal - in both soul and matter - the life which is his very purpose (as life is the search for self) [(Der durch das Leben ist das Leben selbst Sucht)]»²⁴.

Rolland replied without wholly supporting her *Lebenglaube*; he was evidently afraid that in a monistic conception of life freedom and individual responsibility may be sacrificed:

Please do not ask me to describe a metaphysical *Belief*: because I would never seek to deceive myself by stating that I know all that I do not, what I may at most imagine, or hope; because I would never close myself within the boundaries of a belief; because undoubtedly I wish to evolve until the end of my days, reserving an indefinite freedom of change and intellectual renewal for myself. There is more than one god in my Pantheon. My first Gottheit is *Freiheit*²⁵.

Ellen Key's vitalistic atheism was influenced by the culture of the time, echoing a late-romantic sentiment however influenced by naturalistic and evolutionistic tones. This is confirmed by the influence of a thinker like Jean-Marie Guyau, according to whom ethics is a learning of the means by which it is possible to achieve the aims set by nature, understood as the development of life. Key's vitalism is not entirely in harmony with Rolland's belief, as can clearly be seen in his letter of July 1913:

Guyau's influence, which for me meant absolutely nothing. This ideal of vital beauty, this glorification of the force of life, I did not get from Guyau, who I have hardly read, but from the distant source that I undoubtedly share with Guyau: Greece, and «above all the Italian Renaissance»²⁶.

Indeed Rolland recognised his intellectual debt to the Italian Renaissance culture, in the roots of which he found Pre-Socratic philosophy, particularly that of Empedocles, who experienced an intimate contact with nature, as well as having captured the millenary essence of oriental culture:

²⁴ Key to Rolland, 1 November 1912 (BFEK).

²⁵ Rolland to Key, 8 November 1912 (BFEK).

²⁶ Rolland to Key, 14 July 1913 (BFEK). In his letter of 8 November 1912, Rolland wished to underline that: «Also in this field, I have reserved a place for Freedom. Monism does not satisfy me. I would lean rather to dualism, that of old Empedocles. (I nurture an unbound admiration for the Pre-Socratic philosophers, the wise men of the Ionian and Magna Graecia)».

I believe that these ancient philosophers lived in more intimate contact with nature than all those who came afterwards; and moreover they had captured the millenary science of the whole of the East, of which only a part has been passed on²⁷.

Rolland thought it necessary to develop a complete personality, through a culture helping to capture the sense of the universal, the spiritual essence of the different nations and historical periods: for him, this was expressed in terms of European thought and arts (from Da Vinci to Diderot, Rousseau to Spinoza, Shakespeare to Goethe, Schiller and finally Tolstoy), with its roots lying in the Greek culture (particularly Empedocles, due to the importance he gave to natural and the dualism between spirit and matter), the mediator of ancient Oriental culture²⁸. In this way, through his own experience, a person is able to interiorise the acquired heritage, re-processing it in his own personal meaning: precisely for this reason, Christophe, the lead character in Rolland's novel, is not simply a wayfarer, like the heroes of Goethe and Novalis, but a creator. The educational project traced by the French author in the pages of his novel is that of constructing an in-depth cultural transference; European countries must be related through their classics, as superficial knowledge based on stereotypes can easily become exploited by mass suggestion. Indeed, Rolland had anticipated the signs of war, clearly found in the final pages of his educational novel, in which he represented the manifestation of the collective madness that was about to break out:

It was as though the world had chosen the most mediocre to be its governors. The force of the human mind was in other things. So there was nothing to be done but to trust to the declivity down which they were moving. This both governors and governed were doing. Europe looked like a vast armed vigil²⁹.

As we will see, in his letters to Ellen Key during the war period Rolland continues to insist on the devastating and hazardous effects the propaganda machine can have on individual consciences.

2. «Above the battle»

On 28 July 1914, Romain Rolland and Ellen Key's ideals fell to pieces: their objective then became to save the European spirit from total destruction. The news of the outbreak of the war reached Ellen Key in the isolation of her home

²⁷ Rolland to Key, 8 November 1912 (BFEK).

²⁸ See in particular Rolland's letter to Key of 14 July 1913 (BFEK).

²⁹ Rolland, *Jean Christophe. Journey's End. The New Day*, cit., p. 191.

in Strand, while Rolland was on holiday in Vevey, a small, old town on Lake Geneva.

From the correspondence, the awareness of both of being faced with a breach, the collapse of the whole world, that «world of yesterday» immortalised in the famous book by their mutual friend Stefan Zweig, is most apparent. From that moment on, both were to inalienably link their names to the peace cause, aware of the indescribable consequences the mighty conflagration of Europe would have.

The anti-militarist efforts made to disseminate a culture of peace had marked Ellen Key's activities right from the last twenty years of the 19th century³⁰. An activist and speaker across Europe, Ellen Key had underlined the fundamental role of mothers against the war: she considered the education of children to be the necessary means for building their cosmopolitan consciousness and developing a culture of peace³¹. A few weeks after the start of the Great War, she spoke publicly on several occasions, offering her opinions on the question of whether it is possible to prevent war, and through which means; she considered that education focusing on the eradication of the predator instincts of man was the first tool for preventing conflicts; she also criticised the use of the press as a means for spreading hate among nations; finally, she supported the need for the force of law to win over the law of force³².

On his part, from that tragic summer of 1914 onwards, Romain Rolland was to become a worldwide point of reference for those who opposed the rhetoric of war. As Stefan Zweig wrote, while until that moment Rolland, aged almost fifty, was still unknown, after the war broke out his fame spread worldwide: in the preface to the biography on his friend, Zweig defined Rolland as «the strongest moral phenomenon of our time»³³.

Rolland stayed in Switzerland for the whole of the war, and was harshly criticised in France for his all-out pacifism. From his «exile», he promoted a kind of moral resistance against the dominant ideology. Indeed, he was the author of the famous anti-militarist pamphlet *Above the Battle* (1915), in which, one of few European intellectuals, he unreservedly made his stand against the war: From Switzerland he wrote letters and newspaper articles stigmatising the suspension of interior freedom, seeking to counteract the propaganda in the press of the warmongering countries³⁴. The initiatives thought up by Rolland

³⁰ Ceccarelli, *Ellen Key e il Secolo dei fanciulli*, cit., pp. 73-74.

³¹ E. Key, *The younger generation*, London & New York, Putnam & Sons, 1914.

³² The conferences on peace were collected in the volume: Ead., *War, peace and the future: a consideration of nationalism and internationalism, and of the relation of women to war*, London & New York, Putnam & Sons, 1916.

³³ Zweig, *Romain Rolland: the man and his work*, cit., p. 229.

³⁴ During the five years of war, Rolland wrote articles against the hate campaign that raged, published in the «Journal de Genève» and censored in France. They were gathered in the famous volume *Above the Battle*, translated and published in Italy (Milano, Editrice Avanti, 1916).

and promoted in the spirit of Berta von Suttner included the establishment of a kind of moral parliament in Geneva, calling on pacifists from all the European countries involved in the war³⁵.

As is well known, the beginning of the war was welcomed by many European intellectuals as a just catharsis that would finally free humanity from its idle everyday life, devoid of all choral impetus and denial of immediate and personal self-affirmation. Thus their huge responsibility in the apology of the conflict, conceived as a kind of beneficial chance for regeneration, can never be underlined enough. Among the many men of culture of the time who exalted the “escalation” of war, we may mention Sigmund Freud, Thomas Mann, Max Scheler, Max Weber, Stefan George, Ernst Jünger, Henry Bergson, Georg Simmel, Émil Durkheim, Charles Peguy, Giovanni Gentile, Gabriele D’Annunzio, Tommaso Marinetti, to name but a few³⁶. In fact, the war caused death and horrors of a level that humanity had never seen before: from 1914 to 1918 an average of around 1300 soldiers died every day, without counting civilians, that «useless massacre» rightly denounced by Benedict XV.

We feel it necessary to mention the – more than well-known – irresponsible attitude of many European intellectuals over the war, because this makes Rolland’s position even more significant, his pacifism placing him in a situation of isolation even in his own country³⁷. He could in any case count on the solidarity of Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, Bernard Shaw, Herman Hesse, Miguel de Unamuno.

It should also be said that, at the start of the hostilities, a divergence of opinion between Key and Rolland can be seen concerning the bombing of Leuven by the Germans³⁸. Rolland wrote to her telling that he had just sent an open letter to Gerhart Hauptmann, published in the «Journal de Genève». He also informed her that he was seeking to involve key European intellectuals in condemning the atrocities committed by the German army:

³⁵ Bertha von Suttner (1843-1914), Nobel Prize for Peace in 1905, was a landmark for Ellen Key. She was the author of the famous antimilitarist pamphlet *Die waffen nieder!* (1889). This Ellen Key collection includes five letters from B. von Suttner to Ellen Key.

³⁶ See in particular: G. Berti, *La Grande guerra e la crisi della civiltà europea. Riflessioni del tempo* [The Great War and the Crisis of European Civilisation. Reflections of the Time], in M. Isnenghi, *Pensare la Nazione* [Thinking the Nation], Rome, Donzelli, 2012, pp. 93-110.

³⁷ Indeed Rolland wrote to Ellen Key: «Every day I receive poisoned arrows; and the most cruel come from my own compatriots. I think you will agree that my latest article, *Les Idoles* [The Idols] appeared more offensive in France than in Germany. I am treated like a public enemy» (23 December 1914, BFEK).

³⁸ The German army entered Leuven on 25 August 1914, setting fire to the library at the Catholic University (around 300,000 books and many medieval manuscripts) and killing hundreds of civilians. Rolland wrote a letter to the German author, Gerhart Hauptmann, on this tragic event, asking him to condemn it, which the latter did not do. Gerhart Johann Robert Hauptmann (1862-1946), German poet, playwright and novelist, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1912.

In my understanding this is a case of making the cry of the human conscience heard against the monstrous attacks, not only against the life of the people but also the thought of centuries, like the devastation of Malines, Leuven and Reims. Faced with crimes of this entity I do not think that 'neutral' consciences can exist. Because we are not protesting against a nation; we are protesting against the misdeeds, whoever is their author. I would even have hoped, for the honour of Germany, that the German intellectuals would have taken the initiative of this movement. That was the sense of my letter to Hauptmann. They didn't understand it. They will atone heavily for this, on a par with their wretched countrymen, exposed to the criticism of the centuries. While humanity exists, Germany will bear the weight of the destruction of Reims cathedral and (even worse) the silence of the German élite, which makes itself an accomplice to such crimes³⁹.

Indeed, the accusations bouncing back and forth from one side to the other were infesting public opinion. Ellen Key's reply was quick in coming, offering several clarifications:

While it is true that Reims Cathedral was abused for military purposes on the French side, justice demands that we say: both one side and the other are very wrong in compromising such monuments. As – it is said – that in Leuven the university and the Hôtel de Ville were used to shoot from the windows!! I think that the effect will be twofold, if we raise our voice against *the abuse of the defenders* as well as against *the savagery of the offenders*. In a word: should both one side and the other consider *sacred monuments as inviolable* for both defence and attack!?!⁴⁰

Concerning this discrepancy over the destruction of monuments, we can undoubtedly state that Key truly showed herself to be super-partes. And it is her position of total neutrality, like Sweden itself, that allowed her to consider both points of view of the two warring armies. She agreed on condemning the German bombings, however the French – she wrote – exploiting the monuments as shelters when fighting against the Germans, are equally responsible for starting the war against the civilians.

This rift however did not alter their ideal community, as subsequent letters were to prove⁴¹. Thus also Ellen Key, thanks to her great fame and influence, was able to have Rolland awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature:

³⁹ Rolland to Key, 23 September 1914 (BFEK).

⁴⁰ Key to Rolland, 27 September 1914. Rolland replied: «Thank you for your letter of 27 September. But it is better if you do not take part in our protest. We cannot talk or hear talk of such crimes with moderation. There are no excuses for bombing the Parthenon. The ruin of Reims is inexpiable» (Rolland to Key, 30 October 1914, BFEK).

⁴¹ After the sinking of the Lusitania, on 7 May 1915, Ellen Key wrote to Rolland: «I spoke (in a Swedish newspaper) of Goethe's Germany that we love, and Bismark's Germany that we do not. A 'Swedish' informer selected extracts (falsifying the overall meaning) and now in Germany they spit on my name. And in Sweden too many people defend the Lusitania – murder!!!» (Key to Rolland, 16 May 1915, BFEK).

Last week Vernon Lee proposed to award you the *Nobel Prize* – as you are the only one who is *above the fray*⁴².

Rolland showed huge gratitude towards her, as well as his intention to devolve the prize money to relieve the suffering of the many people affected by the war:

I received your affectionate letter and the notification of the prize [Nobel Prize for Literature] almost at the same time. Until today I had doubts, because I believed that the decision had been postponed to after the war. It appears that they now fear it will continue! Thank you, with all my heart, not just for your letter! I know that your articles, your fervent campaigning in my favour must have had a great effect on Swedish public opinion, contributing to their choice of me. May this prize serve the ideas that are dear to us, and help to spread them! I hope that the Swedish Academy, to which I am grateful for such a high honour, will not consider badly my determination to devolve the prize money to works of charity and support⁴³.

From Switzerland, where he organised his pacifist campaign, he also did voluntary work at the International Agency for prisoners of war, established on 21 August 1914 with the aim of gathering information on prisoners and supporting their connection and communication with their families⁴⁴.

Appealing to the universality of the human consciousness, Rolland bore witness to those working in the shadows to relieve so much suffering, without taking sides; in his appeals he underlined the ethical disparities between the warmongering intellectual world and the reality of the trenches, where episodes of fraternisation between soldiers on opposite sides were recorded: the soldier is the first to learn the suffering of those like him, replacing the «heroic virtue of combat», with what Todorov defined as the «everyday virtue of care»⁴⁵.

⁴² Key to Rolland, 16 May 1915, BFEK. See also E. Key's letter of 29 January 1916: «Today I think that this war, an ocean of pain, has given me a pearl: *Above the Battle*, a book of action, the best book. My blessing will accompany you for the rest of my life. Or rather: my blessing is for your mother, who gave the world such a child! [in italics in the text]».

⁴³ Rolland to Key, 16 November 1916 (BFEK).

⁴⁴ He collaborated with Dr. Frédéric Auguste Ferriere, Vice Chairman of the Red Cross and father of pedagogist Adolphe Ferriere. After the war, Rolland proposed to Key to support his candidature for the Nobel Peace Prize, along with his wife Adolphine Faber: «Could you possibly intervene, dear Ellen Key, and have other influential persons intervene in favour of this candidature? At this time in which blind opinion acclaims generals, heads of state, the men who had millions of people killed, it would be worthy to honour the man who saved or fraternally assisted millions of people» (Rolland to Key, 17 October 1919). However the prize was not awarded to Ferriere, despite the involvement of Ellen Key: «Be sure that I will do my best for Dr. Ferrière, who is so worthy of this prize. It is not in Sweden but in Norway that the Peace Prize is decided upon. But it does not matter, I have influential friends in Norway» (Key to Rolland, 24 October 1919).

⁴⁵ T. Todorov, *Di fronte all'estremo*, Milano, Garzanti, 1992. As A. Bravo commented, Great War historiography – even the most recent which was published for the centenary – has given little room to those who strived to avoid or prevent it (A. Bravo, *La conta dei salvati. Dalla Grande Guerra al Tibet: storie di sangue risparmiato*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2013, p. 3). On the link between

3. *For a culture of reconciliation*

Good Friday, 1919

Dear Ellen Key,

For the Easter of peace I enclose a copy of the *Declaration of Independence of the Spirit*, which I have just finished writing [...]. I have sent it to a certain number of free thinkers; I have already received a positive response from Bertrand Russell, Benedetto Croce, Stefan Zweigg, Henri Barbusse, the painter Paul Signac, Henry van de Velde. I am still waiting for replies from Tagore, Upton Sinclair, G. Eekhoud, and a few others. If you agree with the sentiments you find expressed herein, would you be so kind as to sign it, and have this *Declaration* known by those near to you. It seems that we have to react against the voluntary subjection of the spirit towards all forms of despotism, from both above and below. I have written to Selma Lagerlof, but I do not yet know what she thinks. Do you think that Verner von Heidenstam would be on our side? And what about Lindhagen? In this regard, Nicolai explained to me that Lindhagen's Weltburgertum (even more extended than his own, that of Nicolai, who remains first and foremost European) extends equally to Asia and Europe. I was very glad of this, as I like him hope for the reconciliation of these two worlds of thought and civilisation: as long as they remain unassociated, the human soul will seem to me to be incomplete⁴⁶.

The objective Rolland had set for the whole of the war period was that of creating an association of free spirits, from different European countries, against the organisation of hate driven by the press. Those who signed his appeal included Stefan Zweig, Rainer Maria Rilke, Bertrand Russell, Benedetto Croce, Bernard Shaw, Georges Brandes, Henri Barbusse, Piötr Kropotkin and many others. Now he aimed to draft a *Declaration of Independence of the Spirit* to create a fraternal unity also involving the East. From this he made contact with Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi, seeking the most effective methods for averting the risk of new wars⁴⁷. Indeed Rolland showed profound bitterness for the outcomes of the post-war period. His appeal to the US President Wilson, published in «Le populaire» on 18 November 1918, fell on deaf ears. After the horrors of the war, he considered moral and constructive politics to be indispensable, favouring a reconciliation between Germany and France in order to placate the grievances between the two countries.

war/virility refer to G. Mosse, *Le guerre mondiali dalla tragedia al mito dei caduti*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1990.

⁴⁶ Rolland to Key, Good Friday 1919 (BFEK).

⁴⁷ In his letter of 20 September 1919, Rolland announced that he had begun to correspond with the poet Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1913; Rolland began his correspondence with Gandhi on 24 February 1924, shortly after publishing his biography. For the correspondence between Rolland and Gandhi, see: R. Altieri (ed.), *Mahatma Gandhi. Lettere ai pacifisti*, Pisa, Centro Gandhi, 2013, pp. 44-75; R. Rolland, *Mahatma Gandhi*, Paris, Stock, 1923 (It. trans. *Gandhi*, Milano, Castelvechi, 2015).

From the correspondence with Ellen Key we can see his great disappointment and worry for the post-war political climate⁴⁸; despite everything, Rolland continued his battle to support the construction of the «European soul». In his letter to Ellen Key of 20 September 1919, he announced the publication in the coming October of a book of his war articles, written in Switzerland, after *Above the Battle*⁴⁹. In this book, he intended to offer the future generations a testimonial of the so-called «pioneers of the European soul»; he considered it of fundamental importance to show young people the «precursors», the exemplary figures, as references and authentic «pole stars» for the future. In this book, he collected and commented on the contributions of scientists and intellectuals who opposed the belief that human beings have an innate tendency for destruction⁵⁰.

It was therefore on the educational front that action was needed. And this was precisely why Rolland sought to involve Ellen Key in an international initiative:

a. *Gilde Internationale*, which in Paris was seeking to attract both male and female students of all nations [...]. We would be most grateful if you could spread the word of the International Guild in Sweden. We hope that, sooner or later, we will be able to open a Scandinavian branch⁵¹.

Both in any case expressed bitter awareness of the dark times boded by the new international scenarios, «under the leaden sky that weighs over Europe today»⁵². An untiring warrior, Ellen Key denounced the dehumanisation taking place in the new Russia:

Tell Barbusse that he made a huge mistake about Russia in his 'J'accuse'. *We are close here [in italics in the text]* and we know better! Never has a revolution failed to *such an extent*. Nor has there ever been one *so* criminal as Lenin's. Reading an article such as Barbusse's makes one cry. He knows absolutely nothing of the *truth!* I assure you that we in Sweden know it!⁵³

⁴⁸ Rolland to Key, 17 October 1919 (BFEK).

⁴⁹ In his letter of 20 September 1919, Rolland confessed to Key that he did not subscribe to the «Clarté Group», founded by Henry Barbusse, who on 1 May 1919 in «L'Humanité» published the founding “manifesto” of a movement of left-wing intellectuals who supported the Bolshevik revolution.

⁵⁰ R. Rolland, *I precursori*, Roma, International Event, 1921.

⁵¹ Rolland to Key, 20 September 1919 (BFEK). Ellen Key replied that she would spread the word of this initiative in Sweden. Together with her letter, she sent him a brochure describing the events in Lille, «the result of an investigation of *German [in italics in the text]* men and women denouncing *the German misdeeds* against women» (Key to Rolland, 2 October 1919, BFEK).

⁵² Key to Rolland, 20 September 1920 (BFEK).

⁵³ Key to Rolland, 24 October 1919 (BFEK).

In September 1920, Rolland's *Danton*, written by him for the Theatre of the People in 1899, went on stage. In this regard, Ellen Key wrote to him that the play had obtained critical acclaim and that

Robespierre (the Lenin of those times!) interpreted his own role better than Danton! But it is easier to represent *dogma* than *life* [in italics in the text] – and that is the difference between the two Frenchmen, as between Lenin and the great revolutionaries of the Tsarist era!⁵⁴

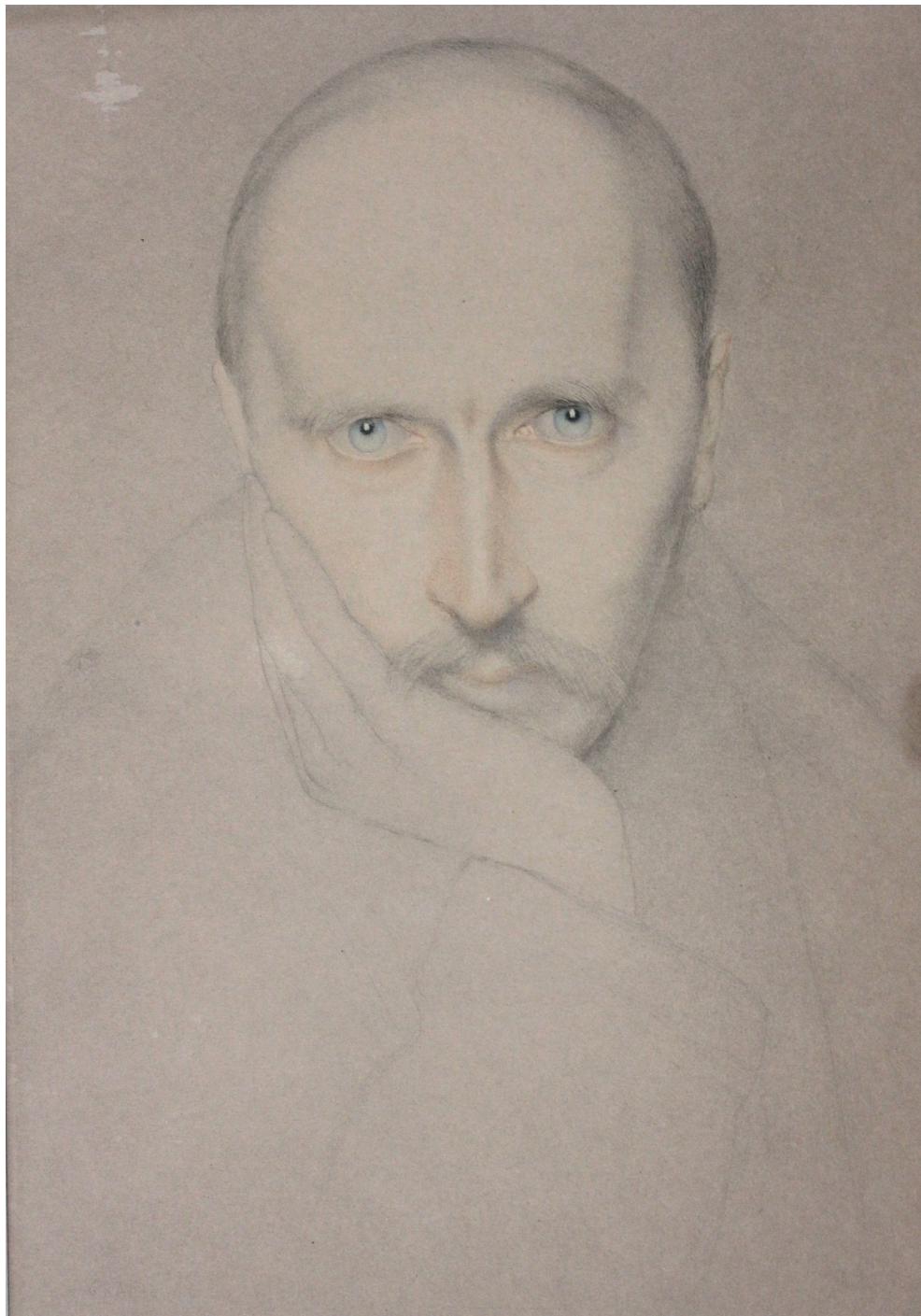
In the Robespierre/Danton dichotomy, Rolland aimed to represent the antinomy between the dogmas of a new religion, the rigidity of concepts, against the elasticity of the life of flesh-and-blood human beings.

The correspondence ends with the last letter from Rolland (14 April 1924) to which Ellen Key does not appear to have replied, then sick and elderly (she died on 25 April 1926). By that time, convinced of the inexorable sunset of the old Europe, Rolland looked to new worlds, beyond India, to Latin America:

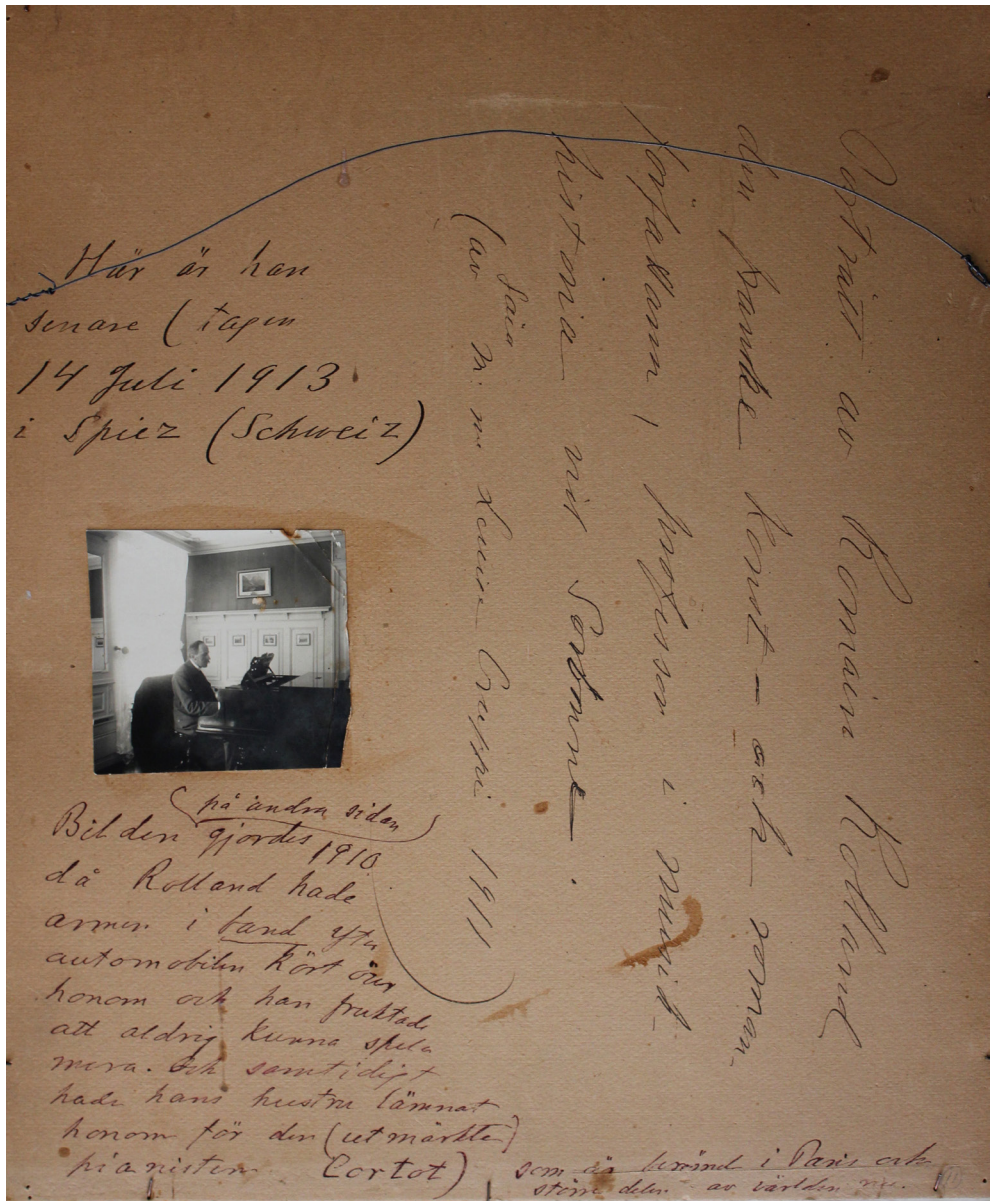
I am also studying the reawakening of Ibero-Latin idealism in America, it is truly very interesting. I am in contact with some truly heroic ures in Peru and Mexico. In the latter country, despite the political revolutions fomented from abroad, an admirable movement for education has been in place for three or four years. We must not always look towards the incipient autumn of the West! Elsewhere, the earth is in bloom⁵⁵.

⁵⁴ Key to Rolland, 20 September 1920 (BFEK).

⁵⁵ Rolland to Key, 14 April 1924 (BFEK).



Pic. 1. *Portrait of Romain Rolland*, The Library of Ellen Keys Strand.



Pic. 2. Picture of Romain Rolland, The Library of Ellen Keys Strand. Content: Rolland Portrait of Romain Rolland the French art- and novelwriter, professor of Music History at Sorbonne (gift from m:me Luisa Gruppi 1911); «Here he is later (taken July 14 1913 in Spiez (Switzerland)». «The picture on the other side, was made 1910 when Rolland had the arm in bandage after the automobile had run over him and he feared that he never would be able to play again. And at the same time his wife had left him for the (excellent) pianist Cortot, who is famous in Paris and the larger part of the world now».

Collective and public memory on the walls. School naming as a resource in history of education

Mirella D'Ascenzo
Department of Education «G.M.
Bertin»,
University of Bologna (Italy)
mirella.dascenzo@unibo.it

ABSTRACT: What do school names tell education and school historians? What do they reveal? This essay analyses the school names engraved on the plates affixed to school buildings, important «spies» of a collective and public memory sedimented into school culture over time. Starting from a case study of the city of Bologna between the 19th and 20th centuries, investigated in the archives and press records, particular attention is focused on the reasons behind and changes in the choices of schools names. What emerges is how school names, written on the walls and in the epigraphs, are shown to be the signs and instruments of political pedagogy readily promoted by the ruling classes, throughout the many metamorphoses of civil government between the 19th and 20th centuries, penetrating into the folds of school culture of entire generations.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Collective memory; Public memory; School memories; School names; Nation building, Cultural heritage; XIX-XXth Centuries.

1. *Why is a name written on the school walls?*

Strolling through the streets of a city, you will regularly come across the façades of far from recent school buildings still bearing a plate engraved with the name of a person or thing, at times accompanied by a special epigraph. What do the names engraved on these plates on the school walls represent? What meaning do they hold? Why do all members of a community associate the same name to that building, seeking through memory to remember everything that links their own personal experience to that school space? What do those names reveal to education and school historians? As the names are written on the school walls, we can state that they belong first and foremost to the

history of school and education, and to the memories of school, which in the past few years has been a very important issue for contemporary school historiographers, also expressed in an important conference held in 2015, the papers of which are partly collected in the book edited by C. Janes Cabrera, J. Meda and A. Viñao Frago¹. School names thus belong to the school memory of a community, sharing mental associations referring to shapes, geometries of space, colours, smells and personal experiences, as well as common mental representations that become sedimented over time. For example, in Bologna two high schools for classic studies, «Luigi Galvani» or «Marco Minghetti» not only occupy different spatial positions but also slightly different *curricula*, different socio-cultural spheres of both teachers and pupils, or are at least fixed in the «collective subconscious» of an urban space: in the first case, reputed as a selective high school for the elite, and in the second a less elite and more «popular» school. School names therefore recall a collective memory, they are authentic «tanks of collective memory»² sedimented over time and which help to identify a community; school names hold and reveal a form of civil belonging and a set of common values, triggering strong educational values for the whole community. As names recall things, to paraphrase Foucault, school names also recall the historical dimension of the choice of names and the underlying «things», the cultural, political and social meanings of these choices³. As these school memories belong to the collective memory, the task of school historians may legitimately be that of investigating the historical moment in which such names were given. The choice of names cannot have been neutral or free of political implications or historically conditioned and defined values. Names transform school spaces into places; like monuments and street names, school names perform a function of public memory, and school buildings are transformed from spaces into «places of memory»⁴ around

¹ *International symposium «School memories». New Trends in Historical Research into Education Heuristic Perspectives and Methodological Issues*, Seville 22-23 September, 2015. Following the conference, the *Abstracts* of the participants were published and a part of them was developed in C. Yanes Cabrera, J. Meda, A. Viñao (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends In The History of Education*, Cham, Springer, 2017.

² M. Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1950; J. Le Goff (ed.), *La nuova storia*, Torino, Einaudi, 1977, pp. 347-399; P. Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989; A. Huyssen, *Present pasts. Urban palimpsests and the politics of memory*, Stanford, Stanford University, 2003; P. Nora (ed.), *Entre Mémoire et Histoire*, in Id., *Les lieux de mémoire*, vol. 1, Paris, Gallimard, 1984; J. Assmann, *La memoria culturale. Scrittura, ricordo e identità politica nelle grandi civiltà antiche*, Torino, Einaudi, 1997; Id., *Cultural memory and early civilization. Writing, remembrance, and political imagination*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011.

³ M. Foucault, *Le parole e le cose. Un'archeologia delle scienze umane*, Milan, BUR, 2004 (or. 1966); Id. *Archeologia del sapere*, Milano, Rizzoli, 1971.

⁴ P. Nora (ed.), *Entre Mémoire et Histoire. Le problème de lieux*, in Id. (ed.), *Les Lieux de mémoire*, Paris, Gallimard, 1984; M. Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Simboli e miti dell'Italia unita*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1996; Id. (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Personaggi e date*

which a community identity and a sense of belonging are celebrated. A public memory which, of course, is also an «invented memory», in the sense that it was created by the ruling classes to educate the community, in the framework of the historical construction of *nation building* firstly, and later education to citizenship⁵. Still today, school names bear witness to choices linked to a given historical moment and the pedagogical intent of the ruling classes; they are presented as «monuments» for the new generations, in the sense indicated by Le Goff as «things» performing the function of the Latin verb «monere», i.e. «to make remember» or «warn», illuminate, «educate»⁶ and therefore point out as an «exemplum» for the new generations. In choosing names, the ruling classes at times drew from the collective memory, particularly in the case of namings triggered by special events such as the death of a famous and popular figure; or on other occasions they used names unknown to most but considered crucial for contingent political needs, and in the choice of name they «constructed» or «invented» a public memory as a tradition to be acquired, shared and handed down, at times doing so by replacing previous names⁷. Often, having chosen the school names, an authentic ritual structure of initiation of the community in sharing the values represented by such names was created, including inauguration ceremonies, speeches by the authorities, the placing of epigraphs or commemorative stones or other forms of monument in the school space: a peculiar choreography, a theatrical performance, aiming to build a collective sense of belonging to the community.

In this sense, the study of school names falls within the history of school culture indicated by D. Julia, A. Viñao and, recently translated into Italian, by A. Escolano, as a set of rules, theories and practices acting within educational establishments and which underlie discourses, concepts and forms of school communication⁸. Specifically, school names are part of the regulatory

dell'Italia unita, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1997; Id. (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Strutture ed eventi dell'Italia unita*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1997; B. Binder, *Luogo della memoria*, in N. Pethes, J. Ruchatz (edd.), *Dizionario delle memoria e del ricordo*, Milano, Mondadori, 2002, pp. 291-293.

⁵ E.J. Hobsbawm, T. Ranger (edd.), *L'invenzione della tradizione*, Torino, Einaudi, 1983; A. Huyssen, *Present pasts. Urban palimpsests and the politics of memory*, Stanford, Stanford University, 2003; N. Gallerano (ed.), *L'uso pubblico della storia*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1995; Id., *Le verità della storia. Scritti sull'uso politico del passato*, Roma, Manifestolibri, 1999.

⁶ J. Le Goff, *Documento/Monumento*, in *Enciclopedia Einaudi*, Torino, Einaudi, 1978, vol. 5, pp. 38-47, poi in Id. (ed.), *La nuova storia*, cit. p. 443.

⁷ K.O. Logan, *Do Public School Names Have Any Educational Significance?*, «The Social Studies», vol. 28, n. 8, 1937; J. Goldstein, *National Identification in Winnipeg: An Analysis of School-Naming Events from 1881 to 1976*, «Prairie Forum», vol. 3, n. 2, 1978, pp. 117-130; D.H. Alderman, *Names as Cultural Arenas: The Naming of U.S. Public Schools after Martin Luther King, Jr.*, «Urban Geography», vol. 23, n. 7, 2002, pp. 601-626; J.C. Lehr, B. MCGregor, *Did Your Mother Go To Bimbo School?: Naming Schools, Power, and Politics in Canada's Prairie West*, «Canadian Ethnic Studies», vol. 47, nn. 4-5, 2015, pp. 111-112.

⁸ On school culture see D. Julia, *La cultura scolaire comme objet historique*, in A. Nóvoa, M. Depaepe, E.W. Johanningmeier (edd.), *The Colonial Experience in Education: Historical Issues*

aspect of school culture, indicated in archive documents, certificates, postal correspondence, in the reports of headmasters and teachers, school reports and registers, etc., as an element of – far from neutral – support for the objects of the material culture of schools. As an element of the regulatory aspect of school, they belong to the written culture as well as the spoken one, part of the everyday life of the school, multi-semantic graphic marks wrapped in an infinity of meanings and personal and collective experiences. And thus, like a modern Sherlock Holmes, school and education historians may attempt to investigate the messages hidden therein, authentic written clues that refer to many meanings to be deciphered and understood, authentic «spies» to be analysed with the scientific method so cleverly illustrated by Carlo Ginzburg⁹. Developed with a profound theoretical basis by H. Perez Moreno, the study of school names may constitute a kind of «cultura escolenímica» of school. This term is a neologism born from the union of the Spanish word *escuela* and the Latin word *nomen*: a kind of discipline within the study of school culture, able to capture the different aspects underlying the study of school names, to be approached by the scholar from a perspective that is above all semiological, ethnographic and scientific, to cite Umberto Eco and Michel Foucault¹⁰. Some interesting works on school names in Spain published in the past few years lie in this perspective. In fact, in the same period, and with the same theoretical basis, we find the ethnographic mapping of school names in the district of Castilla y Leon in the province of Salamanca by Prof. Hernandez Diaz who, grouping together the names of the local schools by typology, offered some interesting thoughts on the semantic and historical-educational signature of the province. Along slightly different lines we find the studies initiated by a research group

and Perspectives, «Paedagogica Historica», vol. 35, n. 1 (supplementary studies), 1995, pp. 353-382, revised in Italian D. Julia, *Riflessioni sulla recente storiografia dell'educazione in Europa: per una storia comparata delle culture scolastiche*, «Annali di storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche», vol. 3, 1996, pp. 119-148; A. Viñao Frago, *Por una historia de la cultura escolar: cuestiones, enfoques, fuentes*, in *Cultura y Civilizaciones. III Congreso de la Asociaco de Historia Contemporanea*, Valladolid, Universidad de Valladolid, 1998, pp. 167-183, Id., A. *Sistemas educativo, cultura escolares y reformas*, Madrid, Ediciones Morata, 2002; A. Escolano Benito, *Las culturas escolares del siglo XX. Encuentros y desencuentros*, «Revista de Educación», vol. 26, extraordinary number, 2000, pp. 201-218; J. Ruiz Berrio, *La cultura escolar en Espana. Tendencias historiografica emergergentes*, Madrid, Biblioteca Nueva, 2000; A. Escolano Benito, *La cultura empirica della scuola. Esperienza, memoria, archeologia*, Ferrara, Volta la carta, 2016; J. Meda, *Mezzi di comunicazione di massa. Saggi di storia della cultura materiale della scuola tra XIX e XX secolo*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2016.

⁹ C. Ginzburg, *Miti, emblemi, spie. Morfologia e storia*, Torino, Einaudi, 1986; Id. *Il filo e le tracce. Vero, falso, finto*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2006. On several occasions prof. A. Escolano Benito cleverly illustrated the scientific method in school history and cultural heritage, see among others *Sherlock Holmes goes to school. Ethnohistory of the school and educational heritage*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 5, n. 2, 2010, pp. 17-32.

¹⁰ H.M. Perez Moreno, *La cultura escolenímica en Espana. Propostas para el estudio etnohistórico de los nombres de las escuelas*, «Cabás», vol. 7, June 2012, pp. 1-16.

from the Balearic Islands, directed by Bernat Sureda, who recently published a paper on the changes in school names in Palma de Majorca in Francoist Spain¹¹.

In Italy, the study of school names is still in an embryonic phase, part of contemporary political history research that – also – focuses on namings, particularly in city settings¹². Only recently have some works begun to further study what we may define as «school naming», often linked to the celebration of centenaries or anniversaries of the founding of historical schools or institutes, with an inevitable celebratory intent but with the added value of having recovered new documents in the school archives, including the origin of the school names¹³. In the following pages, we will focus our attention on

¹¹ J.M. Hernandez Diaz, *La escuelas de la ciudad tienen nombre*, in A.P.L. Moreno Martinez, A. Sebastián Vicente (edd.), *Patrimonio y toponimia de la escuela en España y Portugal durante el siglo XX*, Murcia, SEPHE/CEME Universidad de Murcia, 2012, pp. 145-172; G. Barcelo Bauzà, B. Sureda Garcia, *Cultura escolar immaterial en temps de guerra. Els canvis de nom a les escoles de Palma*, in *XXII Jornades Internacionals de l'Educació, Valencia, 8-11 de novembre 2016*, Edició Societat d'Història de l'Educació dels Països de llengua catalana i Departament d'Educació Comparada i Història de l'Educació de la Universitat de València, Diputació de València, Institutió Alfons el magnànim Centre Valencia d'estudis i d'investigació, Valencia, 2016, pp. 387-398.

¹² B. Tobia, *Una patria per gli italiani. Spazi, itinerari, monumenti nell'Italia unita (1870-1900)*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1991; A.M. Banti, *Sublime madre nostra, La nazione italiana dal Risorgimento al fascismo*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2011. Specifically, refer in chronological order to S. Raffaelli, *I nomi delle vie*, in Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Simboli e miti dell'Italia unita*, cit., pp. 215-242; I. Porciani, *Identità locale-identità nazionale: la costruzione dei una doppia appartenenza*, in O. Janz, P. Schiera, H. Siegrist (edd.), *Centralismo e federalismo tra Otto e Novecento. Italia e Germania a confronto*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1997, pp. 141-182; M. Baioni, *Identità nazionale e miti del Risorgimento nell'Italia liberale. Problemi e direzioni di ricerca*, «Storia e problemi contemporanei», vol. 22, 1998, pp. 29-30; R. Balzani, *Itinerari della nazionalizzazione nella provincia italiana del secondo Ottocento*, in *Atti della Giornata di studi 'Dal Municipio alla Nazione'*, «Ravenna. Studi e ricerche», vol. 5, n. 2, 1998, pp. 167-181; C. Sorba, *Identità locali*, «Contemporanea», vol. 1, n. 1, 1998, pp. 157-170; M. Morandi, *La costruzione dell'identità locale: Cremona e Mantova nell'onomastica del secondo Ottocento*, «Memoria e ricerca», vol. 13, n. 20 (supplement), 2005, pp. 153-146; M. Ridolfi, *Il nuovo volto della città. La toponomastica negli anni della transizione democratica e della nascita della Repubblica*, «Memoria e ricerca», vol. 13, n. 20 (supplement), 2005, pp. 147-167; L. Baldissara, *Lo 'spazio degli storici'*, «Memoria e ricerca», vol. 14, n. 22, 2006, pp. 23-38; C. Mancuso, *La patria in festa. Ritualità pubblica e religioni civili in Sicilia (1860-1911)*, Palermo, La Zisa, 2013.

¹³ See in this regard C. Mancuso, *Miti del Risorgimento a Palermo. Spazi urbani e simbologie patriottiche (1860-1911)*, «Mediterranea Ricerche storiche», vol. 11, 2007, pp. 545-576; M. Morandi, *Local e nation building nelle targhe degli istituti scolastici postunitari. Un percorso di ricerca*, in M. Ferrari, M. Morandi (edd.), *Documenti della scuola tra passato e presente. Problemi ed esperienze di ricerca per un'analisi tipologica delle fonti*, Azzano San Paolo, Edizioni Junior, 2007, pp. 41-53; Id., *Scuola è un nome femminile. Riflessioni intorno alle scelte denominative delle scuole normali in età liberale*, in C. Ghizzoni, S. Polenghi (edd.), *L'altra metà della scuola. Educazione e lavoro delle donne tra Otto e Novecento*, Torino, SEI, 2008, pp. 123-133; Id., *Lo spazio urbano*, in A. Arisi Rota, M. Ferrari, M. Morandi (edd.), *Patrioti si diventa. Luoghi e linguaggi di pedagogia patriottica nell'Italia unita*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2009, pp. 66-70; A. Ranieri, *Quando un monumento non basta. Gli Asili Monumento di Siena e Grosseto*, in N. Labanca (ed.), *Pietre di guerra. Ricerche su monumenti e lapidi in memoria del primo conflitto mondiale*, Milano, Unicopli, 2010, pp. 129-141; M. Morandi, *Que l'enfance soit éduquée dans le*

school names in the city of Bologna, part of a broader research project¹⁴, of which this essay constitutes one step. In particular we will look at the process of political choice which led to the naming of municipal primary schools and preschools, investigating above all the specific documentation found in the Historical Archive of the Municipality of Bologna from the late 19th century to more recent years.

2. *Nation building on the walls*

The development of a school system suited to constructing the Italian nation was a long and complex operation that demanded increasingly more funds, also to build specific spaces for primary school children. For around twenty years following Unification, the pupils of the city schools were housed in rented premises, and the school names were taken from the name of the street they were located on, or the name of the teacher who taught them. This was probably the expression of a small, tightly-knit community in which everyone knew the streets and the places used as schools. It was only from the mid-19th century that the municipal administration, in charge of managing the primary schools and the school buildings in the city, began to seriously tackle the problem of appropriate school premises. The first municipal school building used as a primary school was planned from 1889 in an area of Porta Galliera and was inaugurated in 1898, without however being named after any specific figure: the documents and newspapers of the time referred to the «Porta Galliera schools» or the «Orti Garagnani schools», confirming an identity shared by the community according to the place, perhaps by virtue of a lack of specific national regulation on public schools which were in any case strictly under municipal responsibility. The first proposal for the official naming of a municipal primary school in Bologna was put to the Municipal Council only in 1908, during the vote on the new local school building projects following the

sillon de la gloire. *Les écoles maternelles monuments aux morts de la première guerre mondiale en Italie*, «Rivista di storia dell'educazione», 2, 2015, pp. 209-218.

¹⁴ M. D'Ascenzo, *L'onomastica scolastica come strumento di commemorazione del mondo della scuola tra dimensione locale e nazionale*, in *Abstracts/Resumens International symposium «school memories» New Trends in Historical Research into Education Heuristic Perspectives and Methodological Issues (Seville 22-23 September, 2015)*, Universidad de Sevilla Edita, Copiarte, 2015, p. 71; Id., *Creating Places of Public Memory through the Naming of School Buildings. A Case Study of Urban School Spaces in Bologna in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, «El futuro del pasado», vol. 7, 2016, pp. 441-458; Id., *Linee di ricerca della storiografia scolastica in Italia: la storia locale*, «Espacio, Tiempo y Educación», vol. 3, n. 1, 2016, pp. 249-272. About history of education in the city of Bologna see M. D'Ascenzo, *La scuola elementare in età liberale. Il caso Bologna 1859-1911*, Bologna, Clueb, 1997; Id., *Tra centro e periferia. La scuola elementare a Bologna dalla Daneo-Credaro all'avocazione statale 1911-1933*, Bologna, Clueb, 2006.

loans granted by the State. The first municipal primary school in Bologna was not however named in memory of Giosuè Carducci, the famous Nobel Prize winner for literature and a key figure in the local political, cultural and school events, as would have been expected after his death in 1907. The high collective sentiment triggered by the death of the author of the book *Cuore*, Edmondo De Amicis, on 11 March 1908, led the socialist minority councillor Francesco Zanardi to propose that the primary school in Porta Galliera be named after the famous writer. The proposal was fully shared by the mayor Giuseppe Tanari, who stated

nobody more than us [...] understands how the sudden death of Edmondo De Amicis has caused universal sadness in Italy, because there is no Italian, from the highest and educated classes to the most modest, who did not know this author of many works all inspired by the highest ideals of truth, beauty and goodness; there is no child who, in his earliest, sweetest and most healthy emotions, does not remember the author of *Cuore*; there is no Italian who may forget the soldier faithful to the flag, the exemplary citizen whose soul was filled with the purest ideas of harmony, brotherhood and social justice. He states that the Executive Council accepts councillor Zanardi's proposal to name one of the new schools under construction after Edmondo De Amicis; and, while waiting to submit a concrete proposal to the Council, he invites them all to vote in favour, obtaining a unanimous show of hands¹⁵.

And it is thus that, on the emotional wave of the recent death of the famous author of *Cuore*, that the proposal made by Zanardi to name a municipal school building after De Amicis, the emblem of national unity and humanitarian socialism, was voted. This figure was not directly linked to local affairs, but was of national importance, and this was probably a cause of suffering for many. It was not by chance that in the same council meeting, municipal councillor Tassi spoke out that «another name, particularly dear to the people of Bologna, must not be forgotten: that of Enrico Panzacchi»¹⁶. And so, from the very first naming, the national-local dimension of the dialectic was also found on the «school walls»: despite the agreement of the municipal council to name a school after De Amicis, only four months later an immediate resolution of the municipal Executive Council named a new school being built in via Principe Amedeo after Enrico Panzacchi, famous poet, writer, politician and councillor for education in the Municipality of Bologna, a key figure of Bolognese culture¹⁷. The decision was taken officially yet mutedly by the municipal Executive Council, the body

¹⁵ Municipal Historical Archive of Bologna (hereinafter ASCB), Bologna Municipal Council Deeds (hereinafter CC), 3 April 1908.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ ASCB, Minutes of the Bologna municipal executive council meetings (hereinafter the Executive Council) 27 August 1908 and inauguration of the Panzacchi School on 7 January 1909 as per the resolution of the Executive Council of 6/1/1909. On Panzacchi, refer to the sheet drafted by me in G. Chiosso, R. Sani (edd.), *Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione* (hereinafter DBE), 2 vols., Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 2013, vol. 2, p. 279.

in charge of running the city. Why? Panzacchi died in 1904 and certainly did not achieve the same heights of fame as De Amicis, but probably the national author of *Cuore* may not have been so popular among a clerico-moderate municipal Executive Council, hostile to socialism, and humanitarianism, of which De Amicis was an expression, to be proposed by a socialist councillor like Zanardi¹⁸. At the current state of research it is not possible to be sure of this, however only two years later the municipal council voted in favour of naming the school building in Porta Galliera after De Amicis «who is renowned as one of the city's most important figures»¹⁹. In the same council meeting, the criteria chosen for the naming were also illustrated, clearly establishing that it was «appropriate to give the schools names that recall the worthy and illustrious men of the city of Bologna»²⁰. Having clarified the priorities, during the same meeting the council voted to name three more schools after figures from the local Bolognese cultural world, Giovan Battista Ercolani, Ferdinando Berti and Ernesto Masi. The first was a famous professor at the university of Bologna; the second was one of the key figures of the city's (and the nation's) political and cultural life after Unification, as well as councillor for education in the Council²¹; the third was a renowned writer, patriot and historian, the author of important works on the Renaissance and head of the city's Education Department²². The choice of locally born and renowned figures continued throughout the following years with the naming of two new school buildings: the first to Tommasina Guidi, a famous children's and women's writer

Tommasina Guidi is, as is known, the pseudonym of the delightful Bolognese author, born into the Guidicini family, with the name Cristina. She devoted her life to children's education, producing highly interesting literary works, containing warnings and advice based on healthy morals²³.

The second school was named after Salvatore Muzzi (1807-1884), teacher, famous writer and author of the popular *Cento novelline e quattro nuovi racconti* published by Zanichelli

Salvatore Muzzi was an illustrious Bolognese citizen, a worthy historian and scholar and an excellent teacher. Both one and the other are most worthy of being remembered to those who follow, particularly to our children, and to the world of education to which they both devoted much of their lives²⁴.

¹⁸ ASCB, CC, 03 April 1908.

¹⁹ ASCB, CC, 18 July 1910.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ M. D'Ascenzo, *Ferdinando Berti*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, p. 150.

²² M. D'Ascenzo, *Masi Ernesto*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 128-129.

²³ ASCB, CC, 15 November 1911.

²⁴ *Ibid.* On Muzzi see R. Andreassi, *Muzzi Salvatore*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 2, p. 22.

In this first phase of namings, managed by a coalition of mostly clerico-moderate politicians, the names of local cultural and political figures were given, the only exception being that named after Edmondo De Amicis. The naming of a school after Giosuè Carducci was voted only years later, during the management of the socialist Executive Council led by mayor Francesco Zanardi between 1914 and 1919, one of the names given to six more municipal school buildings. The proposed figures were all linked to local events, chosen for their political and cultural works in secular, masonic and socialist fields. The first was the naming of the Trachoma school after Augusto Murri, academic and physician renowned both in the city and across the country for his secular humanitarian and radical-socialist works²⁵. Other illustrious figures from the scientific and literary culture were then identified. On 7 May 1915 the Municipal Council resolved to name schools after: Giosuè Carducci (via Dante schools), the famous poet Giovanni Pascoli (via Orfeo schools), the secular and masonic mineralogist and university professor Luigi Bombicci (Orbi schools) and the memory of Severino Ferrari (S. Ruffillo schools). The majority councillor Leonello Giommi justified the choice by stating that, although they were not registered socialists, they had worked according to ideas that were very close to socialism, such as Pascoli, who was remembered on his death for his patriotic socialism, and whose death was marked by the «condolences of democracy and humanity»²⁶. The reason for naming the primary school after Severino Ferrari, born in the socialist municipality of Molinella, a much-loved pupil of Carducci, school teacher, poet and author of school texts, was supported strongly. He was chosen above all for his affinities with humanitarian socialism, remembered in the long citation which is given here in full, to underline the many speeches made by the municipal councillors

on Severino Ferrari, I who can still see that good, sharp spirit shining in his eyes, will modestly say why the socialist party pays homage to him. His art, in which Carducci recognised the freshness of the image of sentiments, flowing through a bright elocution of gay verse, would not on its own be sufficient for his name to be engraved on an educational establishment. But in Severino Ferrari we honour the man, who I will never forget for his duties as a citizen and a worker. Severino's work at school was hard and arduous, renouncing his verses singing the praises of love and courtesy for Italy, while with his *shoulders bent* (his own words) he corrected the spelling mistakes of his pupils. But keeping his shoulders bent over the pupils' papers, he gazed beyond the shabby classrooms to the thousands and thousands of *bent shoulders* of the workers in the Bolognese fields, curved like his own in a task, like his own, that was ungracious, noble and unrecognised. His gentle soul stopped many times and lent its ear to the pruners singing on the banks of the Reno, as the sun sent shafts of gold on the green meadows, or those of the carters in the deep of night, or the rice pickers saluting the end of the day *raising their beautiful curls to the sky?* For him, all these voices

²⁵ ASCB, Education, 1914, Folder on Trachoma School. Naming after Augusto Murri, Council resolution of 9 December 1914.

²⁶ ASCB, CC, 03 May 1912.

melted together in the harmony of the fiery verse of indignation against social iniquity, and the protest rose from his heart in the verse *degli Argini del Reno* (the speaker reads the main verses of the poem). But the sentiment of revolt against the oppression of the masses coming from the poets who flourished around Carducci, was contained in a measured temperance of expression and form. It is the old pagan idyll, the dreamed harmony of nature, and of the spirit, which is enriched with a new element for the prophesy of a fairer and less unhappy humanity. Today there can be neither dignity or greatness of the homeland separated from the prosperity of the working classes. Let us state this once again in the act of naming a school after Severino Ferrari who foresaw new carnage among the peoples of Europe yet glorified the Latin name which arouses the “still flowing civility for the centuries”. Mr Pedrazzi takes the floor, stating that not only the Socialist Party but the whole of Bologna wishes to name one of its schools after Severino Ferrari, all wishing to honour this man. And rightly so - he says - we honour Severino Ferrari by naming a school after him, a place where the minds and hearts of our children are educated. As councillor Giommi recalled, Severino Ferrari was the poet of love; love for the humble, love for humble things, but also love for his country. He saw our Italy and deemed it a pioneer for progress and well-being, obtained by raising the humble without the depression of any, the route to true progress and well-being, obtained with neither preaching nor the manifestation of hate. At the proposal of the Mayor, all councillors stood and applauded, showing their unanimous and solemn approval of the proposal²⁷.

In the meantime, the Great War had also reached the city of Bologna, which, though far from the front was a place of passage of the troops and a shelter for injured soldiers. Although amid all the difficulties of the conflict, the socialist Executive Council had promised to build an open-air school and a large park in the centre of the city. The sudden death of a socialist municipal councillor in the war provided the opportunity to name the school after him, as a mark of the sacrifice of a socialist Executive Council that was in any case neutral towards the world conflict. Thus in 1917 the first municipal open-air school was named in the memory of Fernando Fortuzzi, a humble factory worker and municipal councillor in the socialist Executive Council, who had died in the Great War, as explained by Councillor Longhena

a man born in the fields, simple and intelligent, the clearest denial of a whole concept: alone, thinking, he was a good and strong reasoner; rough manual labour had not removed him from all ideal questions, and thus to us he seemed a new man, a man of tomorrow, able to hold within that political and administrative life which many believe to be a monopoly of a few²⁸.

This was the first case in Bologna of a «martyr of war», offered to the city as an example of exemplary conduct and service to his country; the fact that he was also a socialist councillor was an added value, demonstrating the loyalty to the homeland expressed by the Bolognese socialists, accused of neutralism and

²⁷ ASCB, CC, 07 May 1915.

²⁸ ASCB, Administrative correspondence of the Municipality of Bologna, Title XIV Education (hereinafter Education), 1917, b. 503, Folder on Primary Schools. Open-air schools at the Margherita Gardens. Resolution of the Executive Council of 11 July 1917.

false patriotism. The practice of using martyrs of war as examples for the young generations was later used widely following Fascism. Far from being neutral, school namings were used in increasingly aware terms as an instrument of propaganda in the new national unity of the following years, with increasingly sophisticated and effective communication methods. In this period, the municipal council directed by Puppini lost no opportunities to commemorate the death of well and less known local university and cultural figures who were the expression of 19th century liberal Bolognese tradition including Giovanni Federzoni²⁹, Adolfo Merlani³⁰, Adolfo Albertazzi³¹, Vittorio Fiorini³², Vittorio Puntoni³³ as well as minor figures including Amalia Casali, the first female teacher appointed in the municipality of Bologna after Unification³⁴, a very well-known teacher in the city³⁵ and even a municipal archivist³⁶. The analysis of these commemorations does not escape a political reading of the figures remembered, exalted for the role they played in the local and national society and culture, but also as an expression of a «Bologna-ness» and a «nationality to be heralded as an example for the new generations. It was thus a great opportunity for reconfiguring the reading of the national and local political history according to the values of firstly Nationalism and later Fascism, blending the local and national dimensions yet with a strategic use also of the names of roads, streets and squares, as well as the naming of monuments and memorial stones and plaques to consecrate a certain kind of collective memory, focusing on the memory of «glorious» local history, the Great War and the legend of the Fascist Revolution, considered to be the redeemer of local and national fate. The choice of names for the new schools fell on figures from Bolognese cultural and political history, which the Fascism in power wished to publicly consecrate, their names written on the walls of 23 new primary schools between 1923 and 1945, in a number of different phases. During the Puppini phase (1923-1926)

²⁹ ASCB, CC, 31/07/1923.

³⁰ ASCB, CC, 21/07/1924.

³¹ ASCB, CC, 12/05/1925.

³² ASCB, CC, 20/12/1925.

³³ ASCB, CC, 21/03/1926.

³⁴ ASCB, CC, 17/04/1924.

³⁵ The retired teacher Ugo Parmeggiani was recalled like this: «in the vast school field, the teacher *Ugo Parmeggiani* stood out for his exceptional educational virtues; appointed as teacher in 1887, he retired from honourable service in 1917; he was headmaster in Arcoveggio and in the now-closed schools of S. Marcellino and Aurelio Saffi. He published a paper for teaching history and geography, which was highly appreciated as an effective teaching aid. He composed and published an atlas of the Renaissance, in which historical events were recorded clearly and precisely. His last work was a map of our city, updated with the most recent constructions. Our fond gratitude goes out to the memory of the late teacher, in the name of the local citizens and particularly all those who personally had the honour of appreciating the good works he did in his sacred mission of educating our young people, a mission performed for many long years with perseverance, faith, passion and rate modesty (applause)» in ASCB, CC, 26/5/1924.

³⁶ This was Benedetto Carpanelli, see ASCB, CC, 29/11/1925.

the school buildings that had already been ordered and initiated by earlier executive councils were completed and inaugurated, and between 1924 and 1926, 18 new municipal schools were named. The correspondence does not indicate any local naming commission established to study and propose useful names, but the choice of names was rather a joint work of the political bodies of the Executive Council and the civil servants working in the administration of the state education sector. For naming the new municipal schools between 1924 and 1926, they sought the opinion of Albano Sorbelli, director of the Archiginnasio Library, who was renowned for his knowledge of cultural history and local politics³⁷. He proposed the naming of the new schools to figures from the city's recent and less recent history, offering a suitable motivation for each one. Among these, Puppini's Executive Council initially chose to name the school after Giulio Giordani, the nationalist councillor who was mysteriously murdered in the massacre at Palazzo d'Accursio on 20 November 1920 and who was made a martyr of the Fascist Revolution. The naming of the school in via Libia after him was one of the steps in this new city "legend" of proposing to the new generations models to be imitated, with the following motivations

the [...] memory of whom we can never exalt enough. We know of his excellent life and glorious end, and his memory rings through powerful to us every time we enter this hall. It is most worthy to name one of our schools after him, in one of the most popular and populated neighbourhoods in our city!³⁸

In the same resolution of 18 April 1924, primary schools were named after Adelfo Grosso (Villa Ronzani school in Arcoveggio), Giacomo Venezian (via S. Vitale 63), Luigi Zamboni (via Zamboni 15), Anna Morandi Manzolini (via Andrea Costa 16) and Giovanni Federzoni (Arcoveggio Nuovo schools)³⁹. Councillor Cremonini fully approved the motion, underlining particularly the figures of Giordani and Federzoni, Councillor Bonacorsi proposed to name future schools to the memory of the Fascist «martyrs» Gian Carlo Nannini and Oscar Paoletti, while Councillor Ballarini explicitly underlined the political and educational value of these choices of naming schools for the new generations

I have always given a twofold meaning to the use of names of illustrious citizens: revered homage to the memory of deceased great men, and an incitement to their survivors to follow their example. I note with particular satisfaction that the name of Giulio Giordani was given

³⁷ ASCB, Education, 1924, b. 967, File on Primary Schools. Naming of school buildings.

³⁸ ASCB, CC, 18 April 1924.

³⁹ In fact, the decree of 5 February 1923 of the prefectural administration had proposed to name the schools under construction in via Libia after Adelfo Grosso, at the proposal of some of Adelfo Grosso's ex-pupils; however this request suggested naming a rural school, and Puppini's Executive Council thought it more appropriate to name the school in via Libia after Giordani and the rural school in Villa Ronzani after Adelfo Grosso. On Grosso see M. D'Ascenzo, *Grosso Adelfo*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, p. 692.

to one of our schools. The figure of martyr which had in such a short time been engraved on all the faces of his admirable, multifaceted life was in this instance particularly illuminated by his qualities as a teacher. It is just that in this aspect that his name be carried on in our schools, as a caution to our children⁴⁰.

Who were the personalities the schools were named after? Adelfo Grosso had been the director of the «Scuola Normale» in Bologna from Unification to 1888 and the educator of many teachers who were still alive, and who remembered him as an example and a memory of schools of excellence⁴¹; Anna Morandi Manzolini was the famous 17th century Bolognese wax modeller, whose “gender” dimension was not even mentioned, but was in any case the preferred candidate among those chosen in this sense and indicated by Sorbelli; Luigi Zamboni, Bolognese Renaissance martyr, was explicitly linked to the need to give a name to the school that had been in the road of the same name for a long time; Giovanni Federzoni was the famous writer who was remembered by the Council for his teaching role in the city⁴²; Giacomo Venezian was the Bolognese municipal councillor who died in the Great War and called a hero even during the school inauguration ceremony in front of the pupils

having erected the buildings, it is worth giving them a name. The names of the schools, where our future citizens are educated, must speak to the minds and hearts of the children. And thus the new municipal Executive Council has decided to name the new school which will be inaugurated next October after Giacomo Venezian. An excellent decision, the name of this tenacious claimer of the grandeur of Italy, who fought for the country and gave his life for it, will tell the children how the Homeland must be loved and served. Other schools were given names of people who devoted their best energies to the municipal schools, or who left long-lasting impressions in the field of studies and charity. And fortunately, the list of these names is long⁴³.

The following year, in the municipal council meeting of 16 February 1925, a further 11 new primary school buildings were named, with the motivations given in the following table

⁴⁰ «We who were taught by him in our high school, were able to appreciate his rare qualities not only as a scholar but even more so as a teacher», in ASCB, CC, 18 April 1924.

⁴¹ M. D’Ascenzo, *Adelfo Grosso*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, p. 692.

⁴² ASCB, CC, 18 April 1924; M. D’Ascenzo, *Federzoni Giovanni*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, p. 535.

⁴³ E. Cappelletti, *Gli edifici scolastici*, «Bollettino del Comune di Bologna», February 1924, pp. 47-48.

Tab. 1. *School namings of 16 February 1925*

Surname and name	Motivation for naming
Albertazzi Adolfo	Renowned writer and journalist and teacher of Italian literature at the «Pier Crescenzi» Technical Institute
Bignami Giuseppe	Veteran of the battles for Italian independence and for 24 years Head of the Municipal Education Office
Casali Amalia	The first primary school teacher in our Municipal Schools
De' Vigri Caterina	15 th century miniaturist painter and ascetic author, raised by the Church to the honours of the altars
Gozzadini Giovanni	Ex-Senator of the Kingdom and illustrious historian and archaeologist
Gualandi Francesco	Municipal primary school teacher, who died following injuries sustained in the war
Marsili Luigi Ferdinando	General and scientist, founder of the Institute of Science in Bologna
Merlani Adolfo	Famous mathematician and astronomer
Sassoli Dino	Municipal primary school teacher, who died a hero in the Great War
Silvani Antonio	From an ancient Bolognese family, for many years a devoted municipal administrator
Tambroni Clotilde	Scholar of Greek literature and professor at our University

This was a choice which, alongside figures from high culture and the local administration, wrote the memory of three primary school teachers on the walls: Amalia Casali, Francesco Gualandi and Dino Sassoli. The first was chosen as a model of self-denial for her educational mission, and for being the Municipality's first patriot teacher⁴⁴. The other two were teachers who died

⁴⁴ The municipal council had previously commemorated her as a «humble and modest lady, perhaps not known to many of Bologna's citizens [...] she was the teacher that the Government of King Vittorio Emanuele II assigned to the first school that the Government had opened in the municipality of Bologna. Mrs Mattiuzzi was the first primary school teacher who flew the Italian flag from a school in our city. She was born in Venice 98 years ago. She played a lively role in works of piety and patriotism from the very constitution of the Kingdom of Italy. In 1861 she lost her husband and had to work to survive; she thus qualified as a teacher, entering teaching when she was getting on in life, aged 38. She was in love with School. On Sunday she would teach girls and women. She kept the school open for her female pupils even during the summer. And many of them, overcoming that natural instinct children have of enjoying their holidays, attended the school even in the summer, such was their fondness for the teacher. She continued to teach until the age of 73. I repeat that I commemorate this first Female Teacher of the schools of Bologna not only to underline her own very special merits, not only to offer expressions of comfort for here own son, who was first a worthy teacher and then a headmaster in our schools, but because I feel that the name of the teacher Mrs. Mattiuzzi may, due to the special circumstances of her life, be considered a marker and a symbol. As soon as the opportunity presents itself, after completing all previous commitments, the municipal administration proposes to name a school after 'Amalia Casali Mattiuzzi'. In doing so we do not intend merely to honour this unsurpassed educator, this first female teacher in the municipality of Bologna, but also to honour, through her, all those teachers we had, many of whom live on only in our memory; and we also intend to keep the virtues

during the Great War, reminding the new generations of their sacrifice. The world of the militant school, of school teachers, thus entered the *pantheon* of deserving figures held up as examples for the young generations in the name plates affixed to the walls. The following year another primary school was named after Francesco Acri, a teacher of Pedagogy at the city university and a much loved figure among the Bolognese teachers, indeed the proposal for naming the school came from a large representative of the teaching community, who was then a headmaster, Francesco Bonatto, who stated

Bologna had dedicated some of the best primary schools to Giosuè Carducci and Giovanni Pascoli: spontaneously set alongside these names was that of Francesco Acri. And would it not be without great meaning for the population of Bologna to have one of its schools dedicated to a man who was a teacher of the highest levels of humanity, elected wisdom and goodness?⁴⁵

Completing this first phase of Fascism naming came the name of Elisabetta Sirani, a famous 17th century Bolognese painter⁴⁶. In the subsequent Fascist phase, the podestà period (1926-1945), the few new primary schools were named after illustrious figures from the local cultural world – including Vittorio Fiorini in 1929⁴⁷ – or from Fascism in its strict sense. In the meantime, from 1931 the management of the primary schools had been definitively transferred from the municipalities to the state, even for provincial capital municipalities like Bologna. During these years, the practice of school naming appears less clear in the transition of national and local regulations, and remained firmly in the hands of the local powers, that of the podestà. A new school near the railway station was named after Gian Carlo Nannini, a «martyr» of Bolognese Fascism, in 1931⁴⁸, while on 29 October 1932 an official ceremony inaugurated a new school building without an official name, and the school was named only later after the Nobel Prize winner Guglielmo Marconi. In 1935 the construction of a new school was authorised, and this was later named after Costanzo Ciano, father of the Fascist hierarch Galeazzo Ciano, Mussolini's son in law, the specific date of which was not however recorded⁴⁹.

of Mrs Mattiuzzi alive among our teaching staff, so that they may be kept in future, as was in the past and which continues today, worthy of our first and most noble of primary school teachers (applause)» in ASCB, CC, 17/4/1924.

⁴⁵ ASCB, Correspondence, 1924, b. 967, File Primary Schools. Naming of school buildings, Letter from Francesco Bonatto, 28 June 1924. The official naming ceremony was held on 5 March 1925 in the municipal council.

⁴⁶ ASCB, CC, 21 March 1926.

⁴⁷ scholar of the Renaissance, high school teacher of Literature and head of the education department, see P. Dal Toso, *Fiorini Vittorio*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, p. 557. The naming resolution can be found in ASCB, Resolutions of the Podestà, 19 January 1929.

⁴⁸ No precise date of the naming for the Marconi or Ciano schools can be found in the resolutions of the podestà kept in the Historical Archives of the Municipality of Bologna.

⁴⁹ S.A., *Vita scolastica*, Il Comune di Bologna, vol. 11, 1932, p. 104.

3. *New names after the Second World War*

As explained, with the transfer of the primary schools to the State decreed between 1931 and 1933, in the 1930s the naming of primary schools became regulated and controlled by the state; in fact the local dimension of the choices was no less important, given that the legislation was in any case unclear and with shortcomings⁵⁰. The city's naming practices also followed the metamorphoses of citizenship after the Second World War, referring to figures from the collective memory of the Resistance from a range of local, but also increasingly national, cultural and political spheres⁵¹. In the very first phase, some schools in the city named after clearly «fascist» figures were renamed after other people from local Bolognese history who were not involved in the Regime. For example, the «Nannini» schools were renamed after «Ernesto Cappelletti», an interesting figure in local school history⁵². The «Costanzo Ciano» primary schools also saw their name changed by force, to Alberto Dallolio, after the famous mayor of Bologna between 1891 and 1902, who later became Senator of the Kingdom, a key figure in liberal Bologna between the two centuries⁵³. As the primary school management had transferred to the state, it would appear at this point more appropriate to focus attention on the naming of the preschools, managed by the municipality, even though the proposed names even of primary schools were also submitted for the approval of the Municipality. Attention on municipal namings after the Second World War is also interesting to understand any transformations in the choices, linked to the «metamorphosis of citizenship», with the passage from the 19th century *nation building* to a democratic perspective of education to citizenship.

⁵⁰ School namings were not specifically governed even by law n. 1118 of 23 June 1927, Naming of roads and monuments after contemporary figures (in the Official Gazette n. 164 of 18/7/1927) which set the criteria for naming roads and squares. Only in 1947 C.M. n. 4452/48 of 25 June 1947 placed the teachers and heads of the schools directly in charge of proposing the school names, to be approved directly by the Ministry with the favourable opinion of the Municipality concerned, the Prefecture and the Provincial School Board. On this law, which was in force until 1980, see N. Labianca, *La disciplina della toponomastica stradale e scolastica*, Palermo, Quattrosoli, 1995.

⁵¹ On the concept of metamorphosis of citizenship see A. Ascenzi, *Metamorfosi della cittadinanza. Studi e ricerche su insegnamento della storia, educazione civile e identità nazionale tra Otto e Novecento*, Macerata, eum, 2009. On the changes in naming after the Second World War, also in relation to the Resistance see Raffaelli, *I nomi delle vie*, cit.; Gallerano (ed.), *L'uso pubblico della storia*, cit.; A. Ballone, *La resistenza*, in Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Strutture ed eventi dell'Italia unita*, cit., pp. 403-438; Ridolfi, *Il nuovo volto della città. La toponomastica negli anni della transizione democratica e della nascita della Repubblica*, cit.

⁵² An ex-teacher, he was head of the primary schools of Bologna from 1904 to 1930, a very long period in which he had seen the passing of the clerical-moderate, socialist and then Fascist seasons, until he finally retired in 1930; see M. D'Ascenzo, *Cappelletti Ernesto*, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 269-270.

⁵³ On Dallolio refer to the sheet drafted by M. D'Ascenzo, in Chiosso, Sani (edd.), *DBE*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 429-430.

It therefore seems indispensable to provide some information on the context in which this topic is framed. After the Second World War, the local political situation had profoundly changed, with the rise to power of those political forces which had remained in the shadow of Fascism and had been active promoters of the Resistance⁵⁴. Locally, the Communist Party took over the reins of the city of Bologna, which remains firmly in the hands of Mayor Giuseppe Dozza until 1966, then from 1966 to 1970 Mayor Guido Fanti and from 1970 to 1975 Mayor Renato Zangheri. From the Fifties onwards, precisely by virtue of being a «red» municipality, the city of Bologna was certainly an important political laboratory also in terms of education and school policies, the authentic place of experimentation of a social model of “welfare” sensitive to the needs of women and the working classes. In pedagogical terms, the establishment of the Faculty of Education in 1955 marked the assertion of a highly secular and problematicist line, characterised by the key figure of Professor Giovanni Maria Bertin, open to dialogue with the city. From the 1950s the municipality began to renew the summer schools, opening them up to active education methods, and introducing the Montessori method into preschools. In 1960 the young Ettore Tarozzi was appointed councillor for education, and guided the fate of municipal schools and education for fifteen years until 1975. In this phase, education and school policy was marked by the considerable expansion in the quantity of educational and preschool services, moving towards both pedagogical and teaching innovations, with important collaborations such as that with Professor Roberto Mazzetti and the Cooperative Education Movement represented by Bruno Ciari. This turmoil led to the diversification of educational services in preschools, the birth of the first municipal nurseries, the introduction of all-day schooling and the spread of social and democratic school management, appointed to joint school-society committees in the city districts, the families and the various free organised expressions of society. Tarozzi invented the «Pedagogic February» formula, a group of events, conferences, meetings, seminars organised in February in different parts of the city, open to a wide audience. The purpose was to promote joint thought on topics concerning education and schools in Italy and other countries, with the presence of experts, teachers, heads in service and university professors from various national departments with a range of cultural and pedagogical orientations. The Pedagogical Februaries were a showcase and a marketing tool, placing an education and school policy interested in promoting social participation and democracy in school management processes in the spotlight. By no means a neutral policy, but one which fostered values of secularity,

⁵⁴ On the Dozza Executive period and particularly on the school policies of the Municipality of Bologna after the Second World War, see M. D’Ascenzo, *Virginia Predieri, maestra di scuola dell’infanzia nella Bologna del secondo dopoguerra*, in M. D’Ascenzo, G. Ventura (edd.), *Dalla parte delle maestre. La stagione pedagogica di Virginia Predieri (1931-2009)*, Rovato-Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2016, pp. 17-63.

democracy and school for all, understood as a tool for obtaining effective equal opportunities for all citizens, particularly those who were historically excluded from culture and education⁵⁵.

The 5th Pedagogical February in Bologna in 1966 focused on the educational value of the Resistance, planned a series of «conferences, supply to schools of books, plates indicating the reason for the granting of the Gold Medal of Military Valour for the Resistance to the city of Bologna»⁵⁶ which, as indicated by Tarozzi himself, «will attract the greatest interest in the public events held for the naming of 8 municipal schools after the young heroes fallen in the war for Liberation»⁵⁷. Explaining further, Tarozzi illustrated the planned events, which were to involve the district councils and the parent-teacher committees, including the distribution of books and plates to the schools

all preschools, primary, middle and senior schools will be given 1950 colour plates reproducing the motivation for Bologna being decorated with a Gold Medal for Military Valour for the Resistance, so that they be placed in every classroom. At the same time, the school libraries will receive a set of books from the Municipality, chosen from the most qualified issues, on the history of the Resistance and the contribution of young people to the struggle for Liberation. The Vice Mayors, District Councils, parent-teacher committees have already been informed of the initiative, to ensure that the plates and the books are delivered in the methods and forms the city's representative bodies wish to adopt, in agreement with the Directors and Heads of the schools⁵⁸.

and the naming of six preschools and two middle schools in the city which

will be named respectively after young Italians who fell in the war of Liberation and after two different and distant worthy figures of the anti-Fascist struggle: Irma Bandiera and Piero Gobetti⁵⁹.

In this regard, Tarozzi underlined the new method for choosing the names and the epigraph to be written on the plate

the schools are located in the districts of Colli, Costa-Saragozza, Mazzini, Murri, S. Donato, S. Vitale and Centre. The names of the young fighters. proposed by the Department of Public Education – were chosen, for each school, by the district councils concerned. The parents

⁵⁵ On the Pedagogical Februaries and the councillor for education Ettore Tarozzi see D'Ascenzo, *Virginia Predieri, maestra di scuola dell'infanzia nella Bologna del secondo dopoguerra*, cit.; more generally B. Ciari, *Bologna: esperienze e problemi*, «Riforma della scuola», nn. 8-9, August-September 1969, pp. 22-28; Municipality of Bologna, Councillor for Basic Education, *Agenda del febbraio pedagogico bolognese 1962-1975*, Bologna, Luigi Parma, 1976.

⁵⁶ Municipality of Bologna, R.I.E.S.C.O. Documentation Centre, 5th Bolognese Pedagogical February, Press release n. 1 by councillor Ettore Tarozzi, s.d.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem* then in Municipality of Bologna. Department of Public Education, *Agenda del febbraio pedagogico bolognese 1962-1975*, cit., p. 6.

⁵⁸ Municipality of Bologna, R.I.E.S.C.O. Documentation Centre, 5th Bolognese Pedagogical February, Press release n. 2 by councillor Ettore Tarozzi, s.d. p. 3.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

of the Fallen Heroes, the representatives of the Partisan Associations, national figures from the Resistance and cultural figures have been invited to the school naming ceremonies. For each fallen hero, a dedication will be written to be kept in the school. The Department has proposed that the teachers of the city schools participate jointly and individually in the drafting of the text. This seems perhaps the most appropriate way of involving the world of school in the events of city life, rather than asking for an epigraph from a famous cultural figure, as used to be done and which was also thought of for this circumstance⁶⁰.

The councillor thus clarified that some names had been proposed, among which the district councils concerned had made their own choice, thus decentralising the preference of the school name to local level. He also introduced a further innovation into the written memory of the naming: the epigraph would no longer be drafted by a cultural figure, as was done in the past, but would be composed individually or jointly by the school teachers, initiating a process of research and historical and civil appropriation of the human story of the fallen heroes of the Resistance. This choice aimed to foster the sharing and construction of the collective and public memory of the Resistance among the young generations, who were born after the war of Liberation and who therefore had no direct or personal memory of the events constituting the foundations on which the Republic was born. Indeed the councillor concluded that

of course, we all agree that it is not the case of celebrating the Resistance as a concluded event to which we must pay homage, but rather a fixed point of our society today, which we must study and reflect on so that it may continue to grow and mature with our children in the city⁶¹.

Another interesting aspect was the choice, for the first time in the city's school history, of naming schools not after famous cultural or political figures or personalities from adult history, but rather to courageous adolescents, little more than children themselves, from different parts of Italy. For each one, the motivation of the Gold Medal for Military Valour was indicated. Of Di Filippo Illuminato, after whom the preschool in the «Colli» district was named, it was stated that the

thirteen year old fighter in the insurrection of Naples against the German invaders, alone and with sublime bravery, while the grown men sought shelter, moved out against an armoured car which was entering Via Roma from Piazza Trieste e Trento. After throwing a hand bomb, he continued forwards beneath the enemy fire and threw another bomb, before falling, riddled with bullets. Supreme, noble audacity, which raised the thirteen year old boy among the Heroes of the Fatherland, made a proud example of in memory of Naples and the whole of Italy⁶²

⁶⁰ Municipality of Bologna, R.I.E.S.C.O. Documentation Centre, 5th Bolognese Pedagogical February, Press release n. 1 by councillor Ettore Tarozzi, s.d. p. 3-4.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, School naming and motivation for the gold medals, p. 1.

while of the young Giacomo Lettieri it was told that

aged fifteen, on 9 September 1943 he was doing his work in a square in Naples when he saw some German soldiers brutally shoot an Italian soldier. With generous indignation, he grasped a rifle left resting against the wall by other Italian soldiers, who looked on unmoving, killed two Germans and managed to escape. A few days later he was reported and fell into enemy hands, where he stoically suffered maltreatment and torture, sacrificing his young life for the ideals of liberty and the fatherland⁶³.

and of Gennaro Capuozzo, after whom the preschool in via degli Orti was named, it was written that

just twelve years old during the insurrection in Naples, he took part in the battles against the Germans, firstly reloading the patriots' weapons and later taking up arms himself. In a battle against German tanks, on foot and careless of death, between two rebels firing their weapons, with great courage he through hand bomb, until a grenade crushed him in battle along with the machine gun he had by his side. A prodigious boy, and an admirable example of young bravery and sublime heroism⁶⁴,

of Franco Centro it was written that

aged fourteen, he left his family to join the partisans and fight the Nazi-Fascists, brilliantly completing all his tasks until, in a very dangerous mission, he was captured carrying command documents. Aware of their importance, he managed to destroy them, and then stoically underwent the most atrocious torture without revealing the position of his comrades. Before the firing squad, invited to ask for grace given his young age, he proudly answered: «I ask only that you shoot me with my three-coloured star, the Garibaldian symbol of my faith». The enemy lead cut short his heroic youth⁶⁵

and of sixteen-year old Ludovico Ticchioni it was told that

aged sixteen, with noble patriotic sentiments, he enrolled voluntarily in a partisan formation, dedicating himself to the cause of liberty with all the passion and bravery of his young age. Arrested after being reported, he spent forty nine days in prison, stoically and proudly facing torture of the worst kind, in an attempt to make him give the names of his comrades, but his lips remained sealed by honour and loyalty. The promise of saving his life if he renounced his faith did no good, and he preferred death of the shame of betrayal. A pure apostle of the love for the fatherland, he was shot down barbarically, to rise up again shining among the martyrs of the new Italy⁶⁶

and of Ancilla Marighetto, the only woman after whom the preschool in via Arcobaleno was named, still present today in Bologna, a glorious story of the Resistance is told

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, School naming and motivation for the gold medals, p. 2.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

generous daughter of Trentino, she left her home and her family to answer the call of the Homeland, to which her father had already given his life. Along with her older brother, she shared the serious risks and great sacrifices of the partisan struggle, in the coldest season and in a harsh and dangerous area. During a raid, with one ski broken by enemy fire, she took shelter up a tree. When she was found, she unloaded her pistol on the enemy until all her munitions had been used up. Captured and tortured, she did not bend. Offering to save her life if she gave up the names of her comrades, she refused indignantly, spitting in the faces of her torturers and shouting: «Kill me, I will never betray my brothers». The petty enemy cut short her heroic existence⁶⁷.

The archive documents include a detailed biographical sheet on each figure of the Resistance after whom a school was named. For example, much was written on Ancilla Marighetto:

the history of Ancilla Marighetto, a young girl from Valsugana, began in July 1944 when her brother Celestino, escaping the Nazi command he had been forced to enrol in when on 8 September Trentino was annexed to Germany by Hitler, joined the Bellunese partisans. Thereafter his Brigade was transferred to Trentino, and Celestino could reach his family, where he learned that very frequently the Germans searched to house hoping to arrest him. Exhausted by the abuse received from the Germans, Ancilla asked her brother if she could go with him. And so Ancilla, along with a friend, joined the partisans in the mountains, and learned to use weapons, soon taking her turn in the guard shifts like the men. Alongside her brother, she bravely took part in many actions that kept the German forces occupied for a long time. The winter made their actions increasingly difficult. The group was tired and decimated, but this did not prevent them from continuing to fight. Ancilla's friend was captured and killed during a shoot-out against the Germans. On the evening of 19 February 1945, the group was caught in a mountain lodge in a surprise attack by the Germans. Ancilla Marighetto clipped on her skis along with the others and escaped, but a round of bullets snapped one of her skis. Not being able to continue, she climbed up a pine tree in the hope of escaping the Germans. They soon reached her, however, but Ancilla fired her ammunition against them. She hesitated for a second, thinking of the torture her friend Velia had suffered, and was about to put the gun to her own head, though she quickly gave up her gun and climbed down the tree. The Germans beat her in an attempt to make her talk, but Ancilla Marighetto resisted with great courage until a German soldier stood up and shot a round of bullets into her at close range⁶⁸.

Comparing this preliminary text with the official one of the naming ceremony, in the first case we can see a more detailed and less emphatic story, perhaps more «objective» and closer to the truth; unfortunately it was not possible to trace the author of the two type-written «memoires», though it is clear that the official text proposed for the naming ceremony has a more celebratory and pedagogical intent⁶⁹. In addition to these school namings there were a further two municipal middle schools. Those named after Irma Bandiera and Piero

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ The official reasons for the namings were gathered in the book printed by the Municipality of Bologna Department for Public Education, *5° Febbraio Pedagogico Bolognese*, s.d., s.e. p. 12.

Gobetti, key figures in the struggle for Liberation. Irma Bandiera was chosen as a Bolognese partisan who received the gold medal of Military Valour for being

the first Bolognese woman to take up arms in the fight in the name of freedom, fighting constantly with great courage. She was captured by the SS in battle. Subjected to terrible torture, she did not say a word to compromise the safety of her comrades. After being blinded, she was shot barbarically in the street. The purest of heroines, worthy of the virtue of Italian women, she was a shining example for all Bolognese patriots during the war of liberation⁷⁰.

Certainly more famous nationally, Piero Gobetti was remembered as

a political writer, thinker, literary and theatre critic, founder of the journals «Energie nuove» and «Il Baretto», Gobetti offers the clearest of examples of political correctness and coherence; his activities as a writer and thinker offered a precious contribution to the struggle against Fascism. The many attacks he suffered due to his anti-fascist activities were the primary cause of his death, in exile in Paris, on 26 November 1926⁷¹.

We cannot exclude that the naming of the school after Gobetti was in some way suggested by the friendship and close collaboration between Tarozzi and Gobetti's wife, Ada Marchesini Gobetti, writer and author of the famous «Diario partigiano» who collaborated several times on the Bolognese Pedagogical Februarys⁷².

In this complex operation of political pedagogy implemented in 1966 we can clearly see the strategic choice of adolescent figures, no more than twenty year olds, with the exception of Bandiera and Gobetti. This choice was all the more powerful in pedagogic terms, as it aimed to offer the students of Bologna a model to be imitated for its courage, love of freedom, civil commitment and love for the country, even more important given that, targeting young people who had not known the Resistance personally, being born after the war, it could remain even more impressed on them precisely because it was «written on the walls». Dedicated to martyrs of the war of Liberation, school spaces automatically became educating spaces, with highly symbolic values, sealed by the school naming plates, the books left in the city's school libraries, the public naming ceremonies in the presence of political authorities and representatives of the associations, as well as the relatives of the commemorated fallen hero. This trend of school namings remained long in the city's school history, even in the 1970s, in the state primary schools named after Don Giovanni Minzoni

⁷⁰ Municipality of Bologna Department for Public Education, *5° Febbraio Pedagogico Bolognese*, p. 12.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² See D'Ascenzo, *Virginia Predieri, maestra di scuola dell'infanzia nella Bologna del secondo dopoguerra*, cit.

in 1974⁷³, Mario Longhena in 1977⁷⁴ and Dante Drusiani⁷⁵, alongside cultural figures of the city including the children's author Adele Cremonini Ongaro in 1974⁷⁶ and the painter Giorgio Morandi⁷⁷, or figures of peace such as Pope John XXIII in 1978⁷⁸.

In 1980 the ministerial circular letter n. 313 dated 12 November was implemented to govern the naming of schools, classrooms and other school premises, including commemorative stones and monuments at state level, definitively abrogating the orders of 1928 for secondary schools and 1947 for primary schools. This order led to the increasing participation of schools and education bodies in the process of choosing state and municipal school names. In 1982 a preschool was named after Don Lorenzo Milani and another after Gianni Rodari⁷⁹ with a further choice of naming a primary school after the partisans Bruno Monterumici in 1982⁸⁰ and Dino Romagnoli (1986), with the following motivation given by the municipal executive council

whereas Dino Romagnoli, born in Budrio (BO) on 19 December 1927 and who died in Bologna on 18 April 1945, a very young man among the young, was committed to the anti-Nazi struggle with a spirit of self-denial, and who perished tragically on the eve of the Liberation along with other comrades, ready for the final charge of the partisan war⁸¹.

In recent years there have not been many inaugurations of new municipal schools in the city, also due to the effective reduction in the construction of school buildings. In 2014 however, an interesting and innovative naming procedure began for a nursery school being built in the outskirts of Bologna, which is worth examining. The Teachers' Board established an Internal Commission to assess the 16 proposals submitted by parents and children to name the new school. The Commission decided to exclude

the proposals, however valid, but which were linked to figures or symbols of national political groups⁸²

identifying two possible solutions, «Parcobaleno» and «Futura» and expressing a clear preference for the latter

⁷³ Municipality of Bologna, Education and Training Department, School Naming, Decree of the Head of the Department of Education Bologna dated 22 November 1974.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 25 February 1977.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 01 December 1977.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 11 November 1974.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 01 December 1977.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 04 August 1978.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 02 March 1982.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 02 March 1982.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 18 August 1986.

⁸² State Comprehensive Institute n. 1 nursery, primary and middle school of Bologna, school year 2013-2014, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of 9/6/2014.

both due to the sentimental and cultural references of the song by Lucio Dalla, and in order to link the name Futura to the new generation of children the school will take care of in their process of growth and maturity, referring to the values of our Constitution⁸³.

This was an interesting participatory process between the school, the families and the local community, also in historical and educational terms. On one hand, it shows the overcoming of a directive, authoritarian practice – and therefore a model of school and society – in favour of a democratic selection process based on discussion, participation, agreement, as a form of education to and of the local citizens themselves. On the other hand it underlines the will to remember the early death of Lucio Dalla, the Bolognese singer-songwriter known internationally for his songs «Caruso» and «Futura», representing the hope for a school and a society able to welcome children of different colours and cultures, in the shade and the shelter of the values of the Italian Constitution.

Conclusions

From this case study of the city of Bologna between the 19th and 20th centuries, we can draw some considerations and stimuli for more general research. First of all, it confirms how the names of historical school buildings across the country constitute the «spies» revealing the educational intentions of a community, and of the ruling classes in particular, who through the specific choice of names build a public memory that is written on the walls as a tool of «national pedagogy»: *nation building* first, and subsequently education to citizenship after the Second World War. Secondly, it highlights the dependence of such choices on the political, ideological and cultural contexts of the period in which they were made, and become clues that reveal an identity model for citizenship over time: figures from high culture and politics during the liberal phase; socialists or victims of the Great War during the socialist government; once again, people from local culture and martyrs of Fascism during the Fascist phase; the change of the names of some «fascist» schools immediately after the war; the naming of schools after martyrs of the Resistance after the Second World War. Thirdly, the case study invites us to widen our geographical horizons from micro to macro. Indeed, further investigation of the school naming processes in other cities or rural areas in the country – in the framework of a research project on the local history of school and education which is now consolidated in Italy⁸⁴ – would allow us to identify similarities and differences in the names, studying the role of local political planning and the connections between local

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ D'Ascenzo, *Linee di ricerca della storiografia scolastica in Italia: la storia locale*, cit.

collective memory and national memory sedimented in the school culture as a whole. School names become signs of spaces that, through their names, can tell of a complex and not only local history, but a history linked to the birth and development of public school as a socially recognised and shared educational space. Moreover a disaggregated study of different Italian urban and rural situations could offer an interesting historical and educational geography of school naming, the expression of a tangible and intangible cultural heritage that is certainly «all-Italian» yet worthy of comparison – specifically of school names – with other countries in Europe and around the world, according to that «comparative history of school cultures» that was once hoped for by D. Julia. It therefore seems clear that the study of school names is filled with considerable heuristic potential, the spy of collective memory, public memory and local, national and international school memories, an authentically new source of historical and educational research. Finally, I feel that the study of school names may constitute not only a field of research but also a further element for educational actions and policies for safeguarding the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of schools, along the lines also given by the UNESCO conventions on tangible heritage in 1972 and the intangible heritage in 2003. Indeed in the 2003 Convention it is stated that intangible heritage refers to

the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development⁸⁵.

School names across the country are indeed an intangible heritage, as «practices, representations, expressions, knowledge» as they hold the collective and public memory of the community, the heritage of a past to be known, preserved, critically processed and handed down to the new generations.

⁸⁵ UNESCO, *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, Paris, 17 October 2003, also available at the link <<http://193.206.116.19/cni/index.php/cultura/patrimonio-immateriale>> (last access: 20th January 2017). In Italy, this definition lies at the origin of the Cultural Heritage and Landscape Act, Legislative Decree n. 42/2004, of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities. On this issue see the very recent contribution by C. Yanes Cabrera, A. Escolano Benito, *School memory and heritage education*, in Yanes Cabrera, Meda, Viñao (edd.), *School memories. New Trends In The History of Education*, cit. pp. 263-270.

*Critical Reviews
and Bibliography*



Rassegne critiche,
Discussioni, Recensioni e
Bibliografia

Critical Reviews / Rassegne critiche

Le Scuole serali e festive superiori di Milano. A proposito di una recente ricerca sull'istruzione post-elementare

Luigiaurelio Pomante
Dipartimento di Scienze della
Formazione, dei Beni culturali e del
Turismo,
Università degli Studi di Macerata (Italy)
luigiaurelio.pomante@unimc.it

The night and Sunday high Schools in Milan. About a recent research on post-primary education

ABSTRACT: This paper aims to analyze the genesis and development of The night and Sunday high Schools in Milan. Starting from the analysis of the significant results achieved from a recent publication of Carla Ghizzoni, the essay focuses on the importance covered by these educative institutions created in post-unification and developed over the following decades. These civic schools represented undoubtedly peculiar initiative of the Milanese context especially with particular reference to the training needs of young men and young women who, often already begun in humble jobs, aspired to improve their working and social position.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Post-primary education; Night School; Sunday School; Civil conscience; Milan; Italy; XIX-XXth Centuries.

La storia delle Scuole serali e festive superiori, rispettivamente destinate a ragazzi e a ragazze, sorte per opera dell'amministrazione comunale di Milano a partire dal 1861, è stata fino ad oggi oggetto di indagini storiografiche quantitativamente e qualitativamente molto limitate. Alcuni tra i contributi coevi più apprezzabili, peraltro non sempre tra loro coerenti, hanno infatti rivelato un taglio troppo celebrativo e il più delle volte interessato unicamente a tessere le lodi o l'encomio di uno o più protagonisti coinvolti nelle singole iniziative¹. Ad

¹ P. Ravasio, *Scuole popolari*, in *Mediolanum*, Bologna-Milano-Napoli, 1881, vol. 2, p. 376;

onor del vero è giusto sottolineare come tale lacuna storiografica non abbia fatto altro che rispecchiare la più generale ed evidente povertà di studi esistente sulla scuola a Milano nel periodo post-unitario soprattutto con specifico riferimento all'impegno profuso dall'amministrazione cittadina in materia di educazione e scuola dall'Unità alla metà degli anni Trenta, periodo in cui l'istruzione primaria rimase sotto il controllo dell'amministrazione municipale². La maggior parte degli studi esistenti, infatti, ha focalizzato la propria attenzione su aspetti specifici, quale ad esempio l'edilizia scolastica³, o su precisi e assai ridotti archi cronologici come, a puro titolo esemplificativo, quello dell'amministrazione socialista di Emilio Caldara, sindaco meneghino dal 1914 al 1920⁴ o quello relativo agli anni della Grande Guerra⁵.

Proprio per questo motivo, dunque, se della città di Milano sappiamo con certezza che fu «benefica e previdente», grazie alla fitta rete di istituzioni assistenziali che la caratterizzarono nel corso dell'Ottocento⁶, e che in campo educativo aveva conosciuto un fecondo sviluppo dell'istruzione elementare in seguito alle riforme teresiano-giuseppine⁷, è solo grazie al recente volume di Carla Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*⁸, che è stato possibile aggiungere un ulteriore

Comune di Milano, *Le scuole serali e festive, le scuole professionali, e la Scuola superiore femminile "Alessandro Manzoni. Due discorsi di Michele Scherillo Assessore comunale*, Milano, Allegretti, 1912; P.F. Nicoli, *Le scuole serali superiori di Milano*, «La tecnica scolastica», vol. 1, n. 12, 1923, pp. 734-739.

² Si vedano i dati ma validi C.A. Mor, *L'istruzione elementare pubblica in Milano. Cenni storici e statistici. A cura della Commissione ordinatrice del VI Congresso dell'U.M.N. 11-12-13 settembre 1906. Milano. Omaggio ai congressisti*, Milano, Pallestrini & C., 1906; W. Novi Tommolini, *La scuola milanese e la sua didattica. Dalla fondazione delle scuole gratuite (1786) all'inizio del Novecento*, Milano, Ceschina, 1943.

³ L. Finocchi, *Edilizia scolastica a Milano dal 1860 al 1885*, «Storia urbana», vol. 6, n. 1, 1978, pp. 88-129; I. Giustina, *Scuole, teatri, ospedali. I luoghi della promozione dell'uomo*, in G. Rumi, A.C. Buratti, A. Cova (edd.), *Milano nell'Italia liberale 1898-1922*, Milano, Cariplo, 1993, pp. 237-265.

⁴ M. Punzo, *La Giunta Caldara. L'amministrazione comunale di Milano negli anni 1914-1920*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1986, pp. 146-152.

⁵ C. Ghizzoni, *Maestri e istruzione popolare a Milano negli anni della prima guerra mondiale*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 2, n. 1, 2007, pp. 143-172.

⁶ E. Bressan, *Povertà e assistenza in Lombardia nell'età napoleonica*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1985; Id., *Carità e riforme sociali nella Lombardia moderna e contemporanea: storia e problemi*, Milano, Ned, 1998.

⁷ S. Polenghi (ed.), *La scuola degli Asburgo: pedagogia e formazione degli insegnanti tra il Danubio e il Po (1773-1918)*, Torino, Società Editrice Internazionale, 2012; R. Sani, *Storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche nell'Italia moderna*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2015, pp. 288-297.

⁸ C. Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, Lecce-Rovato, Pensa MultiMedia, 2014. Su tale volume si vedano le interessanti recensioni di P. Alfieri («Pedagogia Oggi», vol. 7, n. 2, pp. 315-317), di G. Spampani («Rivista di storia dell'educazione», vol. 2, n. 1, 2015, pp. 210-212), di D. Caroli («Il Mestiere di Storico», vol. 7, n. 2, 2015, p. 209) e di M. Ostenc («History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 11, n. 1, 2016, pp. 530-534).

tassello alle nostre conoscenze su una significativa realtà formativa locale che ha segnato la crescita intellettuale e professionale di intere generazioni e, più in generale, sulla storia delle istituzioni scolastiche in Italia. Il saggio della Ghizzoni, infatti, ricostruisce in maniera attenta la genesi e gli sviluppi delle Scuole serali e festive superiori dall'Unità all'avvento del fascismo, fino alla vigilia della fase podestarile e quindi della fine di ogni garanzia di libertà e di democrazia nella vita del Comune. Tali civiche Scuole rappresentarono senza dubbio un'iniziativa peculiare del contesto milanese soprattutto con particolare riferimento ai bisogni formativi emergenti da quei processi di industrializzazione e di modernizzazione che caratterizzarono la città ambrosiana tra il secondo Ottocento e il primo Novecento. Nella Milano «capitale economica e morale» d'Italia, tali percorsi di istruzione post-elementare e di accesso al mondo del lavoro compiuti dai figli del ceto operaio e delle piccola borghesia rappresentavano la concreta risposta offerta dalle classi dirigenti cittadine alla domanda di istruzione proveniente da quei giovani uomini e quelle giovani donne che, spesso già avviati a lavori umili, ambivano a migliorare la propria posizione lavorativa acquisendo conoscenze ed abilità spendibili all'interno del settore commerciale, industriale e impiegatizio.

La nascita di tali Scuole serali superiori per ragazzi e delle Festive superiori per ragazze, dunque, può essere collocata nel quadro delle iniziative promosse dal Comune di Milano a partire dal 1861. Dopo la liberazione dall'Austria l'amministrazione cittadina decise infatti, anche coraggiosamente, di non limitarsi alla sola e fedele applicazione della normativa gradualmente varata dal nuovo Regno d'Italia in materia scolastica, bensì, anche al fine di colmare la lacuna presente proprio nell'ordinamento casatiano a proposito della formazione tecnica e dell'avviamento al lavoro, scelse di dedicare parte delle proprie attenzioni anche all'istruzione post-elementare di coloro i quali, magari già lavoratori, intendevano arricchire e approfondire la propria posizione culturale al fine di migliorare la propria posizione professionale e sociale.

I nascenti istituti, che non rientravano tra gli oneri dei comuni secondo quanto disposto dalla legge Casati, finirono sin da subito (e continuarono a farlo anche nei decenni successivi) per godere di una specifica fisionomia che li resero un *unicum* che in alcun modo trovava riscontro nel sistema scolastico governativo. Come ben illustrato e documentato da Carla Ghizzoni tali Scuole non coincidevano né «con le scuole elementari serali create dai comuni per adulti analfabeti subito dopo l'Unità»⁹ né sarebbero coincise «con le scuole

⁹ Cfr. Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, cit., p. 11. Sulle scuole serali promosse soprattutto da religiosi negli anni della Restaurazione si vedano i saggi, relativi ai diversi Stati regionali, raccolti in L. Pazzaglia (ed.), *Chiesa e prospettive educative in Italia tra Restaurazione e Unificazione*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1994. Si segnala, inoltre, relativo a Roma, il lavoro di R. Sani, *Le scuole notturne per artigiani nella Roma pontificia (1818-1870)*, in Id., *Sub specie educationis. Studi e ricerche su istruzione, istituzioni scolastiche e processi culturali e formativi nell'Italia contemporanea*, Macerata, eum, 2011, pp. 228-276.

serali complementari del corso inferiore delle primarie e le festive autunnali, previste dalla legge sull'obbligo scolastico del 15 luglio 1877, o con le scuole serali festive promosse da Orlando nel 1904 per sconfiggere l'analfabetismo»¹⁰. Il «comune sentire» che albergò negli organi comunali agli albori degli anni Sessanta dell'Ottocento e che altro non era se non il prodotto di un intenso e fruttuoso dibattito sviluppatosi in quel periodo tra i locali amministratori, generò pertanto una «realità educativa sperimentale» destinata tuttavia a riscuotere un'ampia adesione tra lavoratori e lavoratrici e a divenire di fatto un'istituzione stabile e soddisfacente¹¹. Tali Scuole, infatti, accolsero una domanda formativa che nella scuola italiana, così come era strutturata in quel periodo, non riusciva a trovare una risposta soddisfacente e che non mostrava un particolare interesse per la pur articolata rete di scuole professionali esistenti in città che fornivano saperi tuttavia troppo specifici¹². Le Scuole civiche, al contrario, avanzavano una proposta formativa capace di saldare insieme una preparazione culturale di base ed elementi di formazione professionale, «assumendo di fatto un carattere 'ibrido', che seppur messo sotto accusa per la sua genericità in età giolittiana, alla luce del crescente successo numerico, rappresentò il loro punto di forza»¹³.

Uno degli elementi maggiormente significativi messi in evidenza dall'ottima analisi condotta dalla Ghizzoni è altresì quello relativo alla costante attenzione rivolta dalle Giunte che nel tempo si avvicendarono a Palazzo Marino per questa tipologia di istituti, un'attenzione palesata per la prima volta a partire dalla primavera del 1860 quando, animato dalla «decisa intenzione di superare

¹⁰ Cfr. Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, cit., p. 12. Tali scuole serali festive furono incrementate ulteriormente dai provvedimenti per il Mezzogiorno del 1906 e dalla legge Daneo-Credaro del 1911. Si veda in proposito G. Chiosso, *Alfabeti d'Italia. La lotta contro l'ignoranza nell'Italia unita*, Torino, Società Editrice Internazionale, 2011, pp. 21-39.

¹¹ Molto interessante, al fine di comprendere l'elevato grado di soddisfazione che tali Scuole incontrarono tra i ceti medio-bassi della popolazione, è il contenuto dell'articolo di C. Reborà, *La vita che va a scuola e viceversa*, apparso su «La Voce», vol. 5, n. 31, 31 luglio 1913, p. 1127 e riprodotto nell'Appendice del volume della Ghizzoni (documento n. 3), nel quale l'autore descrivendo tali scuole asseriva che «in queste scuole, le piaghe profonde si rimarginano un poco, grazie al buon sangue che vi fluisce; qui dove, professori e scolari, se vengono spesso con noia o malvolere, si dipartono quasi sempre con letizia» (cfr. Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, cit., pp. 177-180, la citazione è a p. 180).

¹² Il riferimento, ad esempio per il ramo maschile, è alle scuole promosse dalla Società di Incoraggiamento di Arti e Mestieri, alle scuole sostenute dall'Associazione generale di mutuo soccorso degli operai milanesi, alle scuole della Società Umanitaria o alle scuole promosse da congregazioni religiose quali i Pavoniani e i Salesiani. Per una mappa completa di tali istituzioni si veda il recente e interessante R. Gobbo, M. Priano, *Repertorio delle istituzioni formative tecnico-professionali lombarde in età giolittiana*, in C.G. Lacaita (ed.), *La leva della conoscenza. Istruzione e formazione professionale in Lombardia fra Otto e Novecento*, Lugano-Milano, Casagrande, 2009, pp. 139-331.

¹³ Cfr. Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, cit., p. 17.

la lacune del sistema scolastico asburgico» ma «facendo comunque tesoro delle potenzialità che quel sistema presentava»¹⁴, il Consiglio comunale, nella seduta del 4 maggio, approvava la proposta avanzata nelle settimane precedenti della Giunta comunale circa la impellente necessità di istituire una Commissione civica degli studi, composta da autorevoli esponenti del mondo intellettuale e politico lombardo¹⁵, con l'obiettivo di riformare tutta l'istruzione pubblica milanese. Tale Commissione, che rimase in carica fino al 1868 e che ebbe in Carlo Tenca¹⁶ il suo relatore nonché «anima» vibrante, nella *Relazione* letta in Consiglio municipale il 6 maggio 1861, presentò le sue proposte per la riforma del sistema scolastico cittadino. Tra queste figurava anche l'istituzione delle Scuole superiori serali per i ragazzi e le festive per le ragazze¹⁷. Da quel momento in poi il Comune di Milano si sarebbe impegnato in maniera persistente per il continuo miglioramento di tali strutture tramite interventi correttivi e riforme che, più o meno efficaci, tuttavia non persero mai di vista la reale domanda formativa proveniente dalla città e la necessità crescente di un ampliamento del numero delle sedi riservati a tali Scuole¹⁸. Tutto ciò nonostante l'esborso considerevole che queste Scuole comportavano per il bilancio comunale in quanto non rientranti nelle spese obbligatorie sostenute dal Municipio per

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁵ Della Commissione facevano parte, in qualità di assessori del Comune di Milano, Giovanni Visconti Venosta e Carlo Cagnola (di lì a poco sostituito da Paolo Belgioioso); in qualità di consiglieri Carlo Tenca e Giovanni Cantoni; come esperti esterni furono coinvolti Cesare Correnti, Luigi Rossari e Giuseppe Ambrosoli, sostituito poi da Francesco Rodriguez. Per ulteriori notizie bio-bibliografiche su tali personaggi si rimanda a quanto riportato in *ibid.*, pp. 21-28, soprattutto nell'apparato di note.

¹⁶ Sull'impegno di Tenca nel riordino del sistema scolastico milanese, strettamente connesso al suo interesse per le tematiche educativo-scolastiche, si vedano in particolare C. Mollica, *L'attività pedagogica di Carlo Tenca*, «Rivista Pedagogica», vol. 2, 1932, pp. 274-299; S. Polenghi, *La politica universitaria italiana nell'età della Destra storica 1848-1876*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1993, pp. 92-101; L. Pazzaglia, *Carlo Tenca e il progetto di una Società d'Istruzione e d'Educazione agli albori dell'Italia unita*, «Annali di storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche», vol. 1, 1994, pp. 241-252; M.C. Morandini, *Scuola e nazione. Maestri e istruzione popolare nella costruzione dello Stato italiano (1848-1861)*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2003, pp. 331-340.

¹⁷ La *Relazione* fu letta nella seduta del Consiglio municipale del 6 maggio 1861 ma il Consiglio deliberò ufficialmente circa l'istituzione di tali scuole superiori soltanto nel mese di giugno. Nel novembre del 1861 si inaugurarono il primo anno scolastico delle Scuole serali superiori maschili e il primo anno delle Scuole festive superiori femminili.

¹⁸ Tali scuole post-elementari hanno rappresentato nel corso degli anni una presenza significativa, anche dal punto di vista numerico, nella realtà ambrosiana. Ad esempio, nell'anno scolastico 1912-1913, le sedi delle serali superiori erano 8 e contavano 3.553 iscritti, mentre quelle delle festive superiori erano 9 e registravano 3.870 alunne. Se si confrontano tali dati con quelli delle scuole tecniche, alle quali esse guardavano sin dall'origine come istituzione gemella, si coglie in maniera evidente il loro radicamento nella città. Nello stesso anno scolastico infatti le scuole tecniche maschili governative e comunali pareggiate erano complessivamente 7 e accoglievano 3.090 studenti, mentre quelle femminili risultavano essere appena 4 per un totale di 2.030 ragazze frequentanti. Per i dati sul numero degli iscritti sia alle serali che alle festive sia alle scuole tecniche si rimanda al Comune di Milano, *Dati statistici a corredo del resoconto annuale dell'amministrazione comunale 1913*, Milano, Stucchi-Ceretti, 1914, pp. 400, 407-412.

l'istruzione. Peraltro tale continuità di interesse e di cura per quella che era considerata una vera e propria occasione di crescita morale e culturale per tutta la popolazione emerse non soltanto nei

momenti connotati da omogeneità politica e culturale, quali sono, ad esempio, gli anni del prevalere della consorzeria, vale a dire il gruppo di politici 'moderato per interessi, mentalità e prospettive' che governò Milano fra l'Unità e gli anni Novanta, ma anche in fasi di cambiamento della storia amministrativa della città, quali quelle che videro l'avvicendamento delle Giunte popolari guidate da Mussi e Barinetti (1899-1904) a quella clericomoderata presieduta da Ettore Ponti (1905-1909)¹⁹.

Come ricordato, le Scuole serali e festive superiori, punto di riferimento per le famiglie dei ceti medio-bassi del capoluogo lombardo, si inquadravano nell'ambito dell'istruzione post-elementare anche se in realtà non assunsero mai l'ordinamento di una vera e propria scuola media. Per accedere a tali Scuole era necessario sostenere e superare un esame atto a comprovare il possesso dell'istruzione elementare mentre la licenza che veniva rilasciata al termine del corso di studi non aveva alcun valore legale ma era comunque riconosciuta in ambito locale dalle imprese commerciali, artigiani e industriali. Sia le Scuole serali che quelle festive avevano una durata triennale e prevedevano specifiche discipline curriculari e metodologie didattiche che tenessero in considerazione il fruitore delle lezioni. Nell'offerta formativa erano previste materie di cultura generale, quali italiano, geografia, storia, e insegnamenti professionalizzanti quali contabilità, calligrafia, francese e disegno, naturalmente con significative differenze per ampiezza di programmi, discipline attivate e ore di insegnamento fra le scuole maschili e quelle femminili. L'analisi dei piani di studio delle scuole femminili, infatti, caratterizzati da un'offerta formativa meno impegnativa, anche se non di minore originalità, rispetto a quella prevista per le scuole maschili, fa emergere quali fossero i modelli educativi proposti alle studentesse e soprattutto ribadisce la considerazione dell'istruzione femminile post-elementare come un bene assolutamente accessorio e quindi non indispensabile.

Il volume, tuttavia, non si ferma alla sola ricostruzione storica della genesi e dello sviluppo di queste Scuole o alla descrizione pur dettagliata ed esaustiva di *curricula*, piani di studio e contenuti degli insegnamenti in esse proposti ma va ben oltre. La Ghizzoni, infatti, arricchisce il suo saggio di carattere prettamente storiografico-educativo anche di una dimensione sociologica, riuscendo a tratteggiare a tutto tondo il profilo degli allievi e delle allieve di queste Scuole, consentendo al lettore di conoscerne le caratteristiche socio-economiche, e soprattutto di coglierne appieno i loro più specifici bisogni, le loro spesso celate

¹⁹ Cfr. Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, cit., p. 15.

aspettative, la loro “sete di istruzione” e soprattutto «il grado di coinvolgimento nei confronti dell’itinerario formativo cui essi partecipavano»²⁰.

Uno spazio ugualmente rilevante e opportuno è altresì riservato ad un’altra categoria di attori principali della politica educativa ambrosiana e cioè al corpo docente del quale l’autrice del saggio, grazie al suo rigore metodologico, ricostruisce la fisionomia professionale, sia sul piano della preparazione culturale sia su quello delle capacità educative e didattiche. Ed è proprio attraverso la particolareggiata descrizione della vita interna delle Scuole, scandita dalle lezioni ma anche dallo stretto rapporto esistente tra docenti e discenti, che il testo riesce ad offrire uno spaccato estremamente interessante e variegato di quella «cultura scolastica» esistente all’interno di ogni esperienza educativa da cui prendono forma i diversi processi di apprendimento e di crescita umana e personale dei suoi protagonisti.

A pervadere costantemente la ricerca condotta da Carla Ghizzoni è però soprattutto la percezione che ragazzi e ragazze frequentanti le Scuole serali e festive superiori avevano della forza emancipatrice dell’istruzione, un’idea che proprio negli anni immediatamente post-unitari era destinata a trovare feconde argomentazioni nella letteratura del *self-help* che tanta eco avrebbe avuto nei libri di lettura per le scuole elementari del secondo Ottocento²¹. Molti modelli classici del «lavorismo» trovavano infatti accoglienza nei discorsi introduttivi tenuti in occasione di cerimonie e/o premiazioni ufficiali al fine di rinforzare sempre di più nei giovani il concetto che attraverso il proprio impegno avrebbero dato un concreto contributo al consolidamento della giovane nazione. Proprio per questo motivo l’amministrazione comunale di Milano, nel suo progetto di fare della scuola, e più nello specifico delle Scuole serali e festive, il canale privilegiato per integrare i ceti popolari nel nuovo corso storico, pensò bene di destinare un apposito spazio agli studenti di tali istituzioni scolastiche all’interno del cerimoniale della speciale Festa dello Statuto, evento istituito con la legge del 5 maggio 1861, celebrato la prima domenica di giugno e fortemente voluto dal nuovo Stato italiano quale «quale pietra angolare nella costruzione della comunità nazionale»²². Obiettivo di tale festa civile, alla quale peraltro le allieve delle Scuole civiche presero parte solo per pochi anni²³, era il consolidamento

²⁰ Cfr. Alfieri, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, recensione, «Pedagogia Oggi», cit., p. 316.

²¹ Sulla letteratura del *self-help* si vedano, tra i numerosi lavori esistenti, S. Lanaro, *Nazione e lavoro. Saggio sulla cultura borghese in Italia 1870-1925*, Venezia, Marsilio, 1979, pp. 89-162; G. Di Bello, *La pedagogia del self-help di Samuel Smiles e dei suoi imitatori italiani; da chi si aiuta Dio l’aiuta a chi si contenta gode (1865-1890)*, in G. Di Bello, S. Guetta Sadun, A. Mannucci (edd.), *Modelli e progetti educativi nell’Italia liberale*, Firenze, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 1998, pp. 19-142.

²² Cfr. I Porciani, *La festa della Nazione. Rappresentazione dello Stato e spazi sociali nell’Italia unita*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1997, p. 34.

²³ Le alunne delle scuole civiche festive presero parte alla Festa dello Statuto intorno alla metà degli anni Sessanta, ma solo per pochi anni, a conferma di quella precisa volontà, assai diffusa su tutto il territorio, di esclusione femminile dai luoghi destinati all’esercizio della cittadinanza. Si veda

fra tutti i ceti sociali della «religione della patria» e di quel sentimento di identità nazionale che meglio avrebbe attecchito in un «popolo educato». In tali occasioni celebrative agli alunni delle Scuole civiche era pertanto reiterato l'appello ad avvalersi della scuola per promuovere il miglioramento personale e contribuire così al consolidamento della nazione appena nata in nome dell'amore per quella patria che aveva a cuore il loro destino e che per il loro bene promuoveva l'istruzione. Naturalmente questo concetto di un'istruzione che non fosse più privilegio di pochi ma soprattutto opportunità e dovere per tutti era ben messo in rilievo in molti discorsi del tempo tenuti da amministratori locali ma anche dal personale docente e dirigente, con lo specifico obiettivo formativo di suscitare nel popolo un vero e proprio «dovere di gratitudine» nei confronti della classe politica dominante (nello specifico l'amministrazione municipale milanese) che, con «provvida larghezza», aveva ben pensato all'istruzione dei ceti popolari, anche al di fuori degli obblighi imposti dalla legge Casati²⁴.

Appare dunque evidente ed innegabile che l'eccellente e innovativo lavoro di Carla Ghizzoni, fondato su un accurato e certosino scavo d'archivio, sulla lettura attenta e competente di pubblicazioni coeve²⁵, brillantemente sostenuto da una scrittura fluida e seducente, può a ragione essere considerato a livello metodologico un vero e proprio modello storiografico di ricerca grazie alla sua capacità di indagare in modo scrupoloso una realtà scolastica locale assai peculiare, per poi tuttavia riuscire altresì a travalicare i confini territoriali e offrire suggestioni significative in merito al più ampio tema «dei meccanismi di accesso all'istruzione post-elementare e di costruzione e rafforzamento dell'identità culturale che sfuggivano ai classici circuiti delle scuole diurne tradizionali»²⁶.

Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, cit., pp. 50-51.

²⁴ Carla Ghizzoni, a titolo esemplificativo di quanto detto, riporta il testo di un tema assegnato per gli esami delle Scuole civiche serali superiori proposto da Luigi Rossari all'assessore Belgioioso negli anni Sessanta (probabilmente l'anno è il 1867), in cui si sollecitavano gli studenti a riflettere vivamente sull'attenzione mostrata dall'amministrazione comunale per i bisogni dei ceti popolari che, a loro volta, in segno di gratitudine e al fine di sdebitarsi verso i loro «benefattori», erano invitati ad individuare le modalità più opportune per tessere le lodi della classe dirigente e rendere così omaggio adeguatamente a tale concessione. Si veda la traccia integrale del tema riportata in *ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁵ Il testo della Ghizzoni, costituito da tre ricchi capitoli e da un'ampia *Appendice* documentale, è il frutto di un'indagine molto meticolosa condotta dall'autrice su materiale inedito e a stampa coevo conservato negli archivi e nelle biblioteche milanesi. L'analisi ha infatti interessato, oltre alla corposa documentazione conservata presso l'Archivio Civico del Comune di Milano (Fondo Storico, Istruzione Pubblica) e ad alcuni fondi custoditi al Museo del Risorgimento e all'Archivio storico della Società Umanitaria, anche gli Atti del Consiglio comunale, le pubblicazioni periodiche curate dal Comune di Milano e gli articoli apparsi su alcune testate scolastiche di spicco del tempo quali, ad esempio, «Patria e famiglia» o «L'Educatore Italiano».

²⁶ Cfr. Ghizzoni, *Scuola e lavoro fra Unità e fascismo. Le civiche Scuole serali e festive superiori (1861-1926)*, cit., p. 17.

Forum / Discussioni

How is the futuristic school imagined in science fiction movies and literature?

Ornat Turin
Gordon College of Education
Haifa (Israel)
ornat@gordon.ac.il

ABSTRACT: This paper aims to analyse the common features of education in popular films and literary works of science fiction. Building the corpus has made use of the «Must Read» and «Must See» lists published by fan associations on the internet. The research is based on a qualitative content analysis of films, novels and short stories that include representations of schools, teacher-student interactions and learning processes within an establishment. The findings reveal that science fiction mainstream works tend to predict a more totalitarian and indoctrinated education system. The curriculum in the imagined futuristic institution is war orientated while, in accordance with the genre, processes of classification and selection start from an early age. Also, one is expected to accept the convergence of teaching instruments and information hardware with the human body. The positive images of teaching are often associated with the character of a mentor, open schools and independent learning.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Film; Popular literature; Science fiction; Portrayal of schools in fiction.

Introduction: science fiction as a genre

Science fiction is a speculative literary genre in which the writer elaborates on the effects of social or scientific innovation in order to explore its potential outcomes. This is why the science fiction genre is also referred to as «the literature of ideas».

Like in many fictional genres, it relies on the «suspension of disbelief», which involves the reader delaying his or her judgment regarding the farfetched nature of the text in question. However, in science fiction this mechanism is supported by an air of scientific credibility and maintained by strict consistency

with the alleged new rules¹. When we agree on the premise that humanity has achieved time or space travel technology, from that point on the story continues to examine the implications of the situation.

Science fiction has a number of different definitions. Some claim it is not a genre in itself, but a setting instead, a set of rules and decors that accommodate the narrative. Thus, for example, a western or a film noir work may take place in a science fictional setting. Another argument upholds that the genre is an umbrella for dozens of specific genres, such as dystopian and utopian works, parallel universes, alternate histories, etc. In all these definitions, however, we can identify one common element: the described world should feature elements that are very different from our own reality². Perhaps the society is one in which children are born only via genetic engineering, or maybe the state prohibits reading books or humanity is after a recent encounter with aliens.

Science fiction, moreover, is subversive in nature, because it describes a social reality in the context of time and space that is different from the experienced by humanity on a daily basis. In works of science fiction, the portrayal of an alternative reality can inspire readers to understand that the *status quo* is neither natural nor obvious, and that it is not the only way to live. These insights, in turn, summon alternative ways of thinking³. Some have identified the origins of science fiction in the early days of humankind, in works such as *The Epic of Gilgamesh*⁴ and Homer's *The Odyssey*⁵, both of which entail plenty of fictional and fantastic elements. Others cite the beginning of science fiction in philosophical works such as Thomas Moore's *Utopia* (1516)⁶, they believe that Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver* (1727)⁷, a literary work that addresses the Enlightenment, was a milestone for the genre. However, the association between scientific invention and human consequences is generally attributed to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818)⁸. The Industrial Revolution was the historical force that led to the emergence of science fiction. At the time, the rapid cycle of innovation laid the foundation for the focus on the implications of technology on human society⁹. The term «science fiction», however, came to be later, in 1920s America. The genre crystalized within the pulp fiction and magazine niche, as it was perceived by many as of lower cultural standards.

¹ C. Freedman, *Critical theory and science fiction*, Middletown CT, Wesleyan University Press, 2000 p. 16.

² D. Suvin, *On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre*, «College English», vol. 34, n. 3, 1972, pp. 372- 382.

³ S. Spiegel, *Things Made Strange: On the Concept of "Estrangement" in Science Fiction Theory*, «Science Fiction Studies», 2008, pp. 369-385.

⁴ G. Andrew, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, New-York, Penguin, 1999.

⁵ M. Robinson, *Homer's the Odyssey*, Hauppauge, Barron's Educational Series, 1984.

⁶ T. More, *Utopia*, 1516, London, Penguin, 2003.

⁷ J. Swift, *Gulliver's travels*, London, Penguin, 1994, pp. 58-59.

⁸ M. Shelley, *Frankenstein: The 1818 Text*, New York, WW Norton, 1996.

⁹ R. Luckhurst, *Science fiction*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2005, pp. 15-25.

Nevertheless, having freed themselves of literary expectations, science fiction writers were able to go beyond the conventions of their time and express critical ideas about the society in which they lived¹⁰. Maybe the sense of exclusion and marginality nurtured the affinity science fiction readers had for fans clubs. It is interesting to note that science fiction is perhaps the only literary genre that develops vivid communities, associations, conventions and conferences all over the world¹¹.

Until recently, the genre endured a relatively marginal *status* and was underrepresented in lists of canonic literary works. In contrast, science fiction now yields a growing portion of financial returns in mainstream popular culture. In the last decade, we have witnessed a shift in the popularity of science fiction, to the preference of phantasy¹². The enthusiastic audience of films such as «The Matrix»¹³, and «Avatar»¹⁴, transferred his affection toward works like «Harry Potter»¹⁵, «Lord of the Rings»¹⁶, and the very successful television Series *Game of Thrones*¹⁷. The proposed explanation for this shift is that the rise of fantasy is a reaction to scientific disappointment, from the inability to solve global problems such as climate issues, religious wars, and the brutal penetration of technology into our daily lives.

Science fiction and fantasy

Science fiction and fantasy are both sub-types of speculative fiction. They ask, what would happen if? For example, what would happen if humans were forced to survive in a world without water or if winter were to linger for years? What would happen if telepathic abilities were common, or if humanity were given an option to extend life for several hundred years?¹⁸ Although science fiction and fantasy do share similar characteristics the same geek followers, Facebook pages and adjacent shelves at the libraries – they are two distinct genres¹⁹. The fantasy genre depicts societies that lack advanced technology,

¹⁰ Suvin, *On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre*, cit.

¹¹ K. Hellekson, K. Busse, *Fan fiction and fan communities in the age of the Internet: new essays*, Jefferson, McFarland, 2006, p. 45.

¹² V. Sobchack, *Sci-Why? On the Decline of a Film Genre in an Age of Technological Wizardry*, «Science Fiction Studies», vol. 41, n. 2, 2014, pp. 284-300.

¹³ L. Wachowski, A. Wachowski (Directors), *The Matrix* (Film), USA and Australia, 1999.

¹⁴ J. Cameron (Director), *Avatar* (Film), USA and UK, 2009.

¹⁵ J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, Vancouver, Raincoast Books, 2000.

¹⁶ P. Jackson (Director), *The Lord of the Rings* (Film), New Zealand United States and UK, 2001.

¹⁷ D. Benioff, D.B. Weiss (Producers), *Game of Thrones* (Television Series), USA, 2011.

¹⁸ C. Freedman, *Critical theory and science fiction*, Middletown CT, Wesleyan University Press, 2000, p. 30.

¹⁹ D. Broderick, *Reading by starlight: postmodern science fiction*, New York, Routledge, 1995,

though they possess an element of magic and sorcery. These societies are populated with archetypal characters, such as the warrior knight, the fair princess or the master sorcerer. The regime is feudal and is consciously set in the past. On the other hand, science fiction is consciously set in the future and societies are described as being dependent on science. As such, science fiction's iconography is permeated by computers and innovative technologies, the common regime is hyper capitalism²⁰.

A sizeable portion in works of the fantasy genre is devoted to describing educational institutions. The *Harry Potter* series²¹, and the *Wizard of Earthsea* series²², are two such examples. In most cases, the educational institutions resemble stern Europeans boarding schools, where social *status* and upbringing play important roles²³. The teachers are set apart from the students, who make efforts at acquiring knowledge and are expected to succeed in proficiency and personality examinations. By contrast, the landscape of science fiction lacks educational institutions and no parallel or similar school can be found in its corpus that has made an impression in the same way as Hogwarts.

Science fiction can boast the foretelling of numerous inventions, which, at the time of their depiction in literature, were considered to be marvels, but have become reality with the passage of time. The most common examples of this are Jules Verne's submarine and journey to the moon, the communication satellites in Arthur C. Clarke's vision, cellular phones in *Star Trek*²⁴, robots and clones in countless other works of the genre. The school, as an ultra-conservative institution, stands in stark contrast to the bold and innovative characteristics of science fiction. Many elements that emerged during the industrial revolution are still present: the blackboard, the chairs, the bell and the teacher-pupil hierarchy²⁵. It would be interesting to explore, from this perspective, how the futuristic school would be imagined in science fiction.

If science fiction has inspired some of the great steps of humanity and shaped technological innovations that mold our present day, can it also inspire our schools? In the past decade the education system has become vibrant with the entrance of new media: students attend courses online, utilise applications and employ web-based collaboration to leverage learning, while teachers

pp. 4-6.

²⁰ D. Spencer, *The Blurred Lines Between Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Last updated 17 April 2015), <<http://dalespencerbooks.com/the-blurred-lines-between-science-fiction-and-fantasy/>> (last access: 18th December, 2015).

²¹ Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, cit.

²² U.K. Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, New York, Bantam, 1968.

²³ D.K. Steege, *Harry Potter, Tom Brown, and the British School Story*, in L. Whited (ed.), *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter. Perspectives in a Literary Phenomenon*, Columbia Missouri, University of Missouri Press, 2002, pp. 140-156.

²⁴ G. Roddenberry (Producer), *Star Trek* (Television Series), USA, 1966.

²⁵ S. Sarason, *Revisiting the culture of school*, New York, Teachers College Press, 1996.

incorporate social networks and smartphones in the lessons²⁶. Are there additional contributions, ideas and innovations in science fiction from which we can benefit?

Children in Science Fiction

The appearance of schools and education in science fiction works is linked to the emergence of children in the genre. The Science Fiction Encyclopedia lists several types of stories incorporating children²⁷. Among them are stories about children with super powers, who are treated by society as a double-edged sword, admired and feared²⁸. Example of this is *Loopers*²⁹.

The second type includes stories about children who establish a contact with aliens, such as *ET*³⁰, they have storylines that lead to intergenerational conflict. The last type includes narratives of apprenticeship in which the children must endure difficult trials of both body and mind, in order to prove themselves as adults. Educational institutions are common in this type. *Ender's Game* is a fair example³¹.

Several writers have pointed to the absence of children in the science fiction genre. Keres noted that although most people on earth have children, reading science fiction gives the impression that the race is not reproducing itself³². Heroes own a house, study a profession, follow a career, and engage in romantic relationships, but they do not have children and it seems that their future plans do not include the next generation. The explanations offered for this phenomenon address the text, and its sender. Explanations related to the text consider the escapist nature of science fiction, which sterilises it of the elements of daily routine. In addition, the target audience of the genre is dominated by teenagers, who have little interest in young children. The explanations focused on the sender finds the hegemony of male writers to be responsible for the

²⁶ A. Collins, R. Halverson, *The second educational revolution, rethinking education in the age of technology*, «Journal of computer assisted learning», vol. 26, n. 1, 2010, pp. 18-27.

²⁷ D. Pringle, P. Nicholls, D. Langford, *Children in SF. The encyclopedia of science fiction*, <http://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/children_in_sf> (last access: 18th December, 2015).

²⁸ J. Miller, *The child as Alien*, in G.E. Slusser, Gary Westfahl (edd.), *Nursery Realms: Children in the Worlds of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror*, Athens, Georgia, University of Georgia Press, 2011, p. 98.

²⁹ R. Johnson (Director), *Looper* (Film), USA and China 2012.

³⁰ S. Spielberg, M. Mathison (Directors), *ET* (Film), USA, 1982.

³¹ G. Hood (Director), *Ender's Game* (Film), USA, 2013.

³² N. Kress, M. Stanton, J. Wallenius, *Children in Science Fiction*, in C. Bjorklind, (Chair), symposium conducted in ConFuse 93 Science Fiction convention, Ann Arbor Science Fiction Association, Michigan, <http://www.lysator.liu.se/lfff/mb-nr19/Children_in_Science_Fiction.html> (last access: 18th December, 2015).

scarcity of children³³. Children are not uppermost in the minds of men as part of their lives and duties, so they have a tendency to ignore them.

Support for this claim can be found in the change that has occurred during the last two decades. In the original series of *Star Trek* there were no children on board³⁴, while in the sequel series *Deep Space Nine*, there is a small school³⁵. The same is true of *Star Wars*; one can easily spot children's performances in the prequels created after the first three classics³⁶. What caused the improvement? Explanations relating to the senders, point to the entry of women writers to the science fiction circle. Explanations referring to the text assert that the action cinema genre has developed more sophisticated and realistic narratives.

However, even when children are present in science fiction, it seems that it is difficult to find them in the environment and landscape of the school. The current analysis will seek to assess the extent to which schools are prevalent in mainstream works and in what ways these institutions differ from our contemporary schools.

Future Representations of Education in Classic Fantasy Works

The study of contemporary representations of future education best begins in the past: yesterday's vision of future schools through the eyes of classical fantasy writers such as Thomas More, Jonathan Swift, H.G. Wells and Jules Verne.

More's 1665 work, *Utopia*³⁷, describes a fictional island, home of a supreme society that had adapted itself to lifestyles that generated moral order and prosperity. In his vision, all children are entitled to a unified learning curriculum from exquisite teachers and carefully selected clergies. Here, education is of paramount importance. It is education that predicates the longevity of a society based on an altruistic value system – one that is dependent upon perfect socialization of the next generation. What will they learn in *Utopia*? Studies in *Utopia* range from the old distinction between the theoretical and the practical. Instead of rhetoric, students learn geometry, and along with music, everyone studies agriculture³⁸. Although all members of society are encouraged to read and be educated in their free time, only the truly gifted will be allowed to dedicate themselves to intellectual life.

³³ E.L. Davin, *Partners in Wonder: Women and the Birth of Science Fiction, 1926-1965*, Lanham MD, Lexington Books, 2005, p. 29.

³⁴ Roddenberry (Producer), *Star Trek* (Television Series), cit.

³⁵ R. Berman, M. Piller, *Deep Space Nine* (Television Series), USA, 1993.

³⁶ G. Lucas (Director), *Star Wars* (Film), USA, 1977.

³⁷ More, *Utopia*, 1516, cit.

³⁸ H. Yoran, *More's Utopia and Erasmus 'No-place'*, «English Literary Renaissance», vol. 35, n. 1, 2005, pp. 3-30.

In 1726, a century after Thomas More, Jonathan Swift wrote *Gulliver's Travels*. Most of what is notable from this epic work in the field of education is the ridiculous picture of scientific research on Lagadu Royal Academy, the floating island. There, in the practical knowledge section, scholars try to extract sunlight from zucchinis. They attempt to build a house beginning from the roof. Nothing is better in the theoretical knowledge section where scholars have developed a way to internalize mathematics by writing the formula on a wafer and forcing the student to eat it. Other scholars are engaged in shortening the language to monosyllables striving to absolute silence. The chapter on Lagadu academia is understood as a satire on behalf of science in Gulliver's era more than on education. For each fictional district, readers were provided with an analysis of schooling. These descriptions indicate that English social stratification of the seventeenth century is not eliminated in Swift's fantastical vision. The educational system of Gulliver's Lilliput is well portrayed. In the miniature land, children are taken from their parents in infancy and undergo thorough enculturation in boarding schools. Women are somewhat relieved from intensive sports exercise to accommodate extra knowledge in house working. Blue colors' Descendants will leave school at an early age, while Farmers' children will not study at all. Parents are allowed to visit their children only twice a year for a short time and are denied bringing gifts or displaying any signs of affection.

These schools are of several kinds, suited to different qualities, and both sexes. They have certain professors well skilled in preparing children for such a condition of life as befits the rank of their parents, and their own capacities, as well as inclinations. [...] They are bred up in the principles of honor, justice, courage, modesty, clemency, religion, and love of their country; they are always employed in some business, except in the times of eating and sleeping, which are very short, and two hours for diversions consisting of bodily exercises³⁹.

What is the nature of education at the inverse kingdom of the giants, which Gulliver arrives to after escaping from Lilliput? It turns out that in Brobdingnag Mathematics and applied science master all other subjects. The giant avoids all philosophical discussions in favor of practical science and Gulliver laments that he was not able to discuss abstractions and transcendental ideas with them.

The tension between the ideological and the practical as evident in the works of more and Swift has lost its centrality in contemporary educational discourse. The futuristic elements shared by more and Swift are the ideas that education should be funded by the state, not by parents. Another idea is that of a uniform curriculum, these were innovative ideas in the 16th and 17th centuries, when only a small elite had access to literacy and every school held different traditions.

A century after Swift, the old dichotomy takes shape into the hierarchy among the natural science, art and humanities in Jules Verne's imagined city of

³⁹ Swift, *Gulliver's travels*, cit., pp. 58-59.

Paris in the Twentieth Century. The bleak vision about the interaction between capitalism, technology and education will be more familiar.

Technology Enters the Picture

In 1883, Jules Verne submitted a book manuscript to his publisher for *Paris in the Twentieth Century*, a pessimistic book with an unfortunate ending. The hero, a tortured artist, dies of hunger and cold. In the manuscript, which describes Paris in the future, Paris is imagined as a modern city with electricity, running water and telegraph reminiscent of the internet, but is controlled by one purpose – getting rich. It is a culture in which technology and science have been transformed into gods, and the arts, literature, and drama forgotten and erased. The future Paris is a world in which disclosure of artistic talent is framed as negative inclination. How does Verne describe the scholastic system in this future society? All academic and cultural institutions belong to and are managed by a financial corporation that Verne describes:

Hence, we shall not be surprised by what would have astonished a nineteenth-century Parisian and, among other wonders, by the creation of the Academic Credit Union, which had functioned successfully for over thirty years, under the financial leadership of Baron de Vercampin. By dint of multiplying university branches, lycées, primary and secondary schools, Christian seminaries, cramming establishments, as well as the various asylums and orphanages, some sort of instruction had filtered down to the lowest layers of the social order. If no one read any longer, at least everyone could read, could even write. Such was the scheme, in 1937, of Baron de Vercampin, notorious for his far-flung financial dealings: it was his notion to establish a single vast institution⁴⁰.

Early in the book, Verne presents the hero, who won first prize in a Latin rhymes contest where onlookers mock him for being the only candidate. In future Paris, ancient languages, arts, literature and drama are neglected. So, what is left? Math, engineering, physics, chemistry and astronomy. In 1962, according to Verne's book, intellectuals will become eccentrics, marginal persons, and paintings at the Louvre will decay. It is interesting to observe that vision from a distance of 200 years, there is more than a slice of truth in it. Indeed, has the prestige of technological professions overcome the humanities? Verne's bleak vision resulted in rejection of the book. «You are out of your mind», said the publisher, and the manuscript was left in a safe for more than 130 years.

Five years after 1883, H.G. Wells contributed gloomy thoughts about the growing penetration of technology into life and its impact on learning and teaching.

⁴⁰ J. Verne, *Paris in the twentieth century*, New York, Del Rey/Ballantine Books, 1997, p. 3.

Wells wrote the book *The Sleeper Awakes* in 1899. This is the story of an Englishman named Graham who lived in the late nineteenth century and fell into two centuries of deep sleep. He awakes in 2100 to a world governed by technology. For a start, the English village was abandoned in favor of cable wired cities:

After telephone, kinematograph and phonograph had replaced newspaper, book, schoolmaster, and letter, to live outside the range of the electric cables was to live as an isolated savage⁴¹.

In the year 2100, according to Wells, the insertion of knowledge into the brain becomes simple by means of hypnosis. Such ease eliminated the need for concentration, memorization, and internalization.

Instead of years of study, candidates had substituted a few weeks of trances, and during the trances expert coaches had simply to repeat all the points necessary for adequate answering, adding a suggestion of the post hypnotic recollection of these points. In process mathematics particularly, this aid had been of singular service, and it was now invariably invoked by such players of chess⁴².

However, the new technologies do not bring freedom and wellbeing but rather increase the ability to control information and maintain social order. In a conversation between Graham and a uniformed officer, we learn that schools teach little and that people are channeled into an industrial peace by their government.

‘About the public elementary schools’, said Graham. ‘Do you control them?’ The Surveyor-General became sentimental. ‘We try and make the elementary schools very pleasant for the little children. They will have to work so soon. Just a few simple principles: obedience-industry’. ‘You teach them very little?’ ‘Why should we? It only leads to trouble and discontent’⁴³.

One cannot understand a literary work without exploring the political and historical context in which it was written. Each piece contains a dialogue, overt or covert, with social institutions and ideas in that era. In this respect, pulling out a picture of a school within works such as «Utopia» and «Gulliver’s Travels» is a reduction of criticism, satire and the wider discussions of human nature and proper government.

However, our purpose is to review educational alternatives raised by science fiction from an institutional and curricular perspective. Given this, the imagined school in the works of first-generation science fiction writers remained with a conservative nature. Yesterday’s tomorrow predicted education taking place in classrooms, in a frontal manner, by teachers. The future curriculum is a pendulum

⁴¹ H.G. Wells, *The sleeper awakes*, UK, Penguin UK, 2005, p. 113.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

that moves between the philosophical and the practical. Education is governed by a centralized regime, whether for the better as like in Utopia or in Lilliput for the worse, like in the writings of Verne and Wells. Technology, while seeming like a ticket to freedom is, in fact, the oil lubricating hegemony.

Building the Corpus for Analysis

There are various ways of identifying the main and pivotal works in the mainstream of science fiction literature. I used lists such as *Must See, Must Read* and *The 10 Most Influential Books*. Looking into these lists one can find many similarities; film names such as: *Space Odyssey*⁴⁴ and *Blade Runner*⁴⁵ are repeatedly presented in most of them. For the purpose of the current this research I used a lists from one science fiction fan's web sites. These lists were compiled by means of a widespread and dynamic survey:

its top 100 lists are based on statistical survey of sci-fi literary awards, noted critics and popular polls. To qualify a book has to be generally regarded as science fiction by credible sources and/or recognized as having historical significance to the development of the genre⁴⁶.

When discussing education, we refer to the educational institution and not to learning processes, which undoubtedly take place in many science fiction works. For example, in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*⁴⁷, NASA's space team has to learn a new musical language in order to communicate with the aliens; in *The Fifth Element*⁴⁸, Lillo studies the bloodshed history of mankind in a couple of hours, the evidence occasionally making her weep in front of the flickering image on the computer screen. However, this learning does not take place within a formal educational facility. In «Dune», on the other hand, an educational system for *Bene Gesserit*, a women secret order is mentioned throughout the series, both in the original books and in the prequels⁴⁹. This was the kind of portrayal I was looking for.

⁴⁴ S. Kubrick (Director), *Space Odyssey* (Film), USA, 1968.

⁴⁵ R. Scott (Director), *Blade Runner* (Film), USA, 1982.

⁴⁶ The all-time best sci-fi books, films, TV shows and stories (Last Updated 11 January 2015), <http://scifilists.sffjazz.com/lists_books_rank1.html> (last access: 18th December, 2015).

⁴⁷ S. Spielberg (Director), *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Film), USA, 1977.

⁴⁸ L. Besson (Director), *The Fifth Element* (Film), USA, 1997.

⁴⁹ F. Herbert, *Dune*, New York, Ace Books, 1965. Dune poses a problem and a challenge, since 50 years after the most important, dramatic and fundamental book was published, there is still an ongoing debate with regard to whether it is science fiction or fantasy.

Procedure

The research method used in this paper is a qualitative content analysis. The corpus contains movies, books and short stories that have been read and viewed repeatedly.

Most of the themes were derived directly from the questions: Is the teacher human? Are there sanctions and rewards for learning? Is society described as democratic? While viewing, I was looking for similar patterns, exceptions and variances. These allowed me to describe the common schools in science fiction and to consider the implications of their portrayal.

The Research Questions

How are the educational institutions imagined in the science fiction genre?
In greater detail:

- a. Are teaching and instruction limited to a certain age group and confined to a specific period in time?
- b. Is there clear distinction between the roles of teachers and the roles of pupils?
- c. Are teachers human, or merely a device? What is the nature of their interactions with the pupils?
- d. How discipline is maintained and how is motivation stimulated in the futuristic educational system?
- e. What are the boundaries of teaching and what are its intellectual goals?
- f. Does learning eventually result in a better world, or does it serve as a destructive power?
- g. Does learning involve the convergence of teaching technology with the body?
- h. Is the society in which teaching occurs a totalitarian one or a democratic one?

The Frequency of Educational Institutions in Science Fiction

Studying the 20 most popular books and 20 most popular movies reveals almost no reference to the education system. Seven of twenty books and four of twenty films include a description of or reference to an education institution.

How can we tell whether or not this is a lot? We need a basis for comparison. If, for instance, we were to rephrase the question and ask - How prevalent are portrayals of futuristic technologies in the top 20 Science Fiction books and movies? We would discover a greater number of such representations

in the sample. But if we were to ask how many of these have alternative representations of political regimes, the number would shrink again. From this point, we would cautiously claim that these figures are low, especially when considered in relation to the following factors:

Primarily, the significant part education plays in the life of the human race. Most individuals in developed countries spend 12-15 years behind plywood desks.

Secondly, the fact that education is one of the largest expenditures in every country's budget. Thirdly, that the educational system is accountable for the cultural environment that generates the technological narrative which is the epicenter of many of these works;

Finally, that children who are the natural residents of educational institutions are a common symbol for «the future». Children embody the potential, the seeds of what is to come; in view of this line of thought, their absence is puzzling, the low number of such representations should be regarded as an enigma in itself, worthy of explanation, interpretation and discussion.

Findings – the Imagined Schools in Science Fiction

School Stage and classroom setting

When educational institutions are depicted, the focus is mainly on college and university tier, like in *Starship troopers*⁵⁰ and *Gattaca*⁵¹, rather than elementary and high school phases. This is also true when examining the overall representation of schools in the media. The common explanation is that the choice of older children for the storyline allows for sub-plots of a romantic nature⁵².

A different fictional genre of films, namely, horror movies, features more elementary school children. The reason is that the plot prefers to conceal the monster within the innocent and least expected, thus children are often cast in this role. In films that converge both genres, such as *Village of the Damned*⁵³, a secret invasion of aliens to Earth causes the birth of children throughout the village during a single day. These children all share similar appearances, such as white hair, as well as silent, murderous personality characteristics. Yet the classroom is of the same frontal rural type, with wooden desks arranged in

⁵⁰ P. Verhoeven (Director), *Starship troopers* (Film), USA, 1997.

⁵¹ A. Nicole (Director), *Gattaca* (Film), USA, 1997.

⁵² L.A. Swetnam, *Media distortion of the teacher image*, «*Clearing House*», vol. 66, n. 1, 1992, pp. 3-30.

⁵³ J. Carpenter (Director), *Village of the Damned* (Film), USA, 1995.

columns. *Village of the Damned* takes place in an Earthling American town, but even when situated in a different sphere beyond Earth, such as in the series *Deep Space Nine*⁵⁴, the classrooms maintain their layout as an assemblage of desks facing a teacher at the front, the difference being that the blackboards transform into smart, interactive ones and instead of models and stuffed animals, the teaching accessories are 3-D holograms.

The Computer as a Teacher

In 1951, Asimov published *The Fun They Had*⁵⁵, a story focused on a girl who despairingly contemplates her mechanical «teacher»; into its slot she inserts her geography homework, and receives more and more assignments. Meanwhile, she savors an imagination of the fun and joy children used to have sharing a classroom, laughing and rejoicing together, in a time before they became isolated.

The computer as a teacher was predicted long before the online revolution. For instance, in a chapter in the second season of *Star Trek*, *Spock's Brain*⁵⁶, the spaceship's crew arrives at an unknown planet, while trying to retrieve Spock's brain, which had unexpectedly vanished from his head. This culture possesses a helmet adorned with brackets and bulbs, such that anyone who places it on his head will receive a huge dosage of knowledge. When Dr. McCoy stands beneath it, he learns how to perform complicated brain surgery that would restore Spock's mental capacity. The helmet has a flaw, however: the knowledge disintegrates within three hours. Hence, the prolonged surgery enters a difficult phase, but luckily Spock has reached a state in which he can give directions to his doctors. The idea of loading and transferring knowledge directly into the body has developed in later works. In 1968 it was an external helmet, whereas in 2000 the procedure is invasive and irreversible. Johnny Mnemonic in the eponymous film⁵⁷, Neo in *The Matrix*⁵⁸, *Ender in Ender's Game*⁵⁹, all have their scalps drilled with USB-like ports through which the required knowledge and software will be uploaded. The ease and speed with which the wisdom is transferred bears its own price: during the process, the faces of the characters all twitch in discomfort and pain and, as we later observe, society does not necessarily benefit from this innovation.

⁵⁴ Berman, Piller, *Deep Space Nine* (TV Series), cit.

⁵⁵ I. Asimov, *The complete stories*, New York, Broadway Books, 1990, pp. 120-123.

⁵⁶ Roddenberry (Producer), *Star Trek* (TV Series), cit.

⁵⁷ R. Longo (Director), *Johnny Mnemonic* (Film), Canada, 1995.

⁵⁸ Wachowski, Wachowski (Directors), *The Matrix* (Film), cit.

⁵⁹ G. Hood (Director), *Ender's Game* (Film), USA, 2013.

Convergence of the Body with the Teaching Instrument

Drilling USB ports, installing memory cards and pre-programmed implants are common features of a wider phenomenon – the convergence of the actual physical human body with the virtual one. Science fiction cinema predict a process that is already taking place; our lives, our bodies, are tightly bound up both physically and mentally with our computers and cell phones.

Although this theme of virtual reality had already appeared years ago in computer games and in science fiction literature for example in *Neuromancer*⁶⁰, this image in popular culture penetrate to mainstream in the film *The Matrix*. Neo appears sitting almost motionless on a chair while his dynamic and actual adventures happen in a virtual reality. Since then, the physical «real» body has become even less significant in *Avatar*⁶¹ and *Inception*⁶², two major films of the genre.

Paradoxically, imagining the process of knowledge transmission brings us back to the old «banking education» or «knowledge banking» approach, terms used by Paulo Freire that criticized the traditional education system. Freire claimed that the student in a conventional school is usually perceived, metaphorically speaking, as having an «empty deposit bank account» that is due to be filled up with knowledge by his teacher⁶³. The student is portrayed as a blank sheet upon which the teacher is about to write. In this system, the student is not involved as an active participant and partner in the learning process.

Curriculum

Once the problems of transmitting the knowledge to the student have been taken care of, new questions of curriculum emerge. What would be the desired knowledge our heroes will need? Asimov predicted that the future curriculum would engage in computer programming, space construction, lunar mining, cold fusion and laser beams communication⁶⁴, but these prophecies have not yet been fulfilled.

A particularly interesting lesson in history is given by the teacher in *Starship Troopers*⁶⁵. From his speech we learn that under the flag of «democracy», social

⁶⁰ W. Gibson, *Neuromancer*, New York, Ace, 1984.

⁶¹ J. Cameron (Director), *Avatar* (Film), USA and UK, 2009.

⁶² C. Nolan (Director), *Inception* (Film), USA and UK, 2010.

⁶³ P. Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, New York, Continuum, 1993.

⁶⁴ I. Asimov, *The New Teachers, The American Way Jan*, <http://hermiene.net/essays-trans/new_teachers.html> (last access: 24th April, 2015).

⁶⁵ Verhoeven (Director), *Starship troopers* (Film), cit.

scientists have rolled the world down to sheer chaos. As a countermeasure to this dangerous state, the new elite restricted civil privileges, such as voting for a representative in parliament, only to those that had completed the mandatory army service. While sending and receiving messages on tablet-like screens, one of the students came up with the cliché «Violence doesn't solve anything». «It's a common mistake», replied the teacher, «Actually, violence and force are often the cure for many problems and Hiroshima is an example of such a result».

What else do the future students learn? In «Matrix», surprisingly or not, it is the classical martial arts such as jiu-jitsu and kung- Fu, alongside flying a helicopter. Martial arts are the bread and butter in the teaching of grand master Yoda, Luke Skywalker's teacher in «Star Wars»⁶⁶, and that is also exactly what the child, Ender, studies in «Ender's Game»⁶⁷. Studying warfare in science fiction is usually linked with another feature that characterizes this genre, namely, the inter-galactic conflict and the portrayal of the human society under siege.

Mentoring

Despite the background of war, when there are positive references to teaching, they are often associated with the image and the role of the teacher as a mentor. The first and most vivid example is Yoda from «Star Wars», joined by Morpheus, Neo's mentor from *The Matrix*, and Mazer Rackham, Ender's tutor in *Ender's Game*. The mentors reveal deep empathy with their protégées, disguising their own greatness and putting their faith. The mission to be accomplished is always nothing less than saving the entire human race, and their high hopes in their student's ability to outgrow his mentor's skills and success. The student is a precious gem which the mentor aims to polish; a natural treasure that needs to be nurtured at the hands of the teacher who develops him, in order to fulfill his full and highest potential.

In order for the student to fulfill his destiny the mentors procedures and lesson structures are creative, responsive and flexible; nonetheless they include harsh and difficult tests that push the student to overcome his weaknesses of body and soul.

⁶⁶ G. Lucas (Director), *Star Wars* (Film), USA, 1977.

⁶⁷ G. Hood (Director), *Ender's Game* (Film), USA, 2013.

Classification and Eugenic

A recurring motif in many works is that of eugenics. Due to the development of genetic science, processes of classification and sorting would take place at a very early age; in some works, even before birth. In 1957, forty years before *Gattaca*⁶⁸ and *Brave New World*⁶⁹, Isaac Asimov wrote the novel *Profession*⁷⁰. The story takes place in a futuristic human society that populates numerous planets. At the age of 8, a reading ceremony is performed. One by one the children are brought into a room, which is an elaborate computer lab, in Asimov's imagination resembles a battery of coils, the size of a living room, through which the ability to read is imparted to them. The child's next encounter with the system is at the age of 18, when he is sorted, classified and loaded with a profession. The story's main character strives to be a computer programmer and in preparation for this, he engages in the unconventional activity of reading related books. When he arrives at the classification procedure and reports this to the clerk, he is sent to what appears to be a mental institution with a great library. After a while he decides to escape and tries to get re-classified, but after a few twists and turns he realizes that the place he was sent to an Institute of Higher Studies, a greenhouse for raising inventors, where he was expected to be resourceful, to act and to initiate. This is a way of survival for a centralistic society that had stagnated in terms of original thought; a society whose professionals know nothing except what was taped into them; where the ability of self-teaching, originality and inventiveness occurs only within a limited few, such as the story's protagonist; and where they are nurtured by what may seem to us to be cruel methods.

Ideas of classification, early in the education process, are almost always associated with a centralistic regime and indoctrination. In Aldous Huxley's «Brave New World»⁷¹, selection begins at the embryonic stage, when people are categorized into a few types, from the most inferior, the Epsilon, which is deprived of oxygen at the most critical stages of brain development, to the most sophisticated, the privileged Alpha people. As a means of maintaining order, children are exposed to recorded broadcasts during their sleep. These announcements bear messages that condition the children with feelings of contentment with their identity and fate. Books are accessible only to a limited few in this dystopian society and the entire population is kept in ignorance by a high consumption of drugs.

Interesting to note that books restriction and control over the knowledge and information that reaches the people are common features in the genre. As

⁶⁸ A. Niccolò (Director), *Gattaca* (Film), USA, 1997.

⁶⁹ L. Libman, L. Williams (Directors), *Brave New World* (Film), USA, 1998.

⁷⁰ Asimov, *The complete stories*, cit., pp. 162-208.

⁷¹ Libman, Williams (Directors), *Brave New World* (Film), cit.

portrayed in «*The Giver*⁷², *Brave new world* and *Fahrenheit 451*⁷³. In all of these, books are forbidden and burnt. The term *Fahrenheit 451* is derived from the temperature at which books are consumed by fire.

Another example can be found in *Gattaca*. Here, the world is classified into «perfect», faultless ones whose DNA was chosen and engineered, and *God's Children*, people who were conceived without interference and are therefore damaged. The story focuses on Vincent, a cleaning janitor at a space agency, who manages to become a space navigator by posing as Jerome, who provides him with blood and urine samples. The film actually conveys the opposite message, that the human spirit will and determination are stronger than any physical limitation.

Variation Rather Than Change

As I have mentioned earlier, educational representations in popular science fiction works are scarce. In accordance with academic tradition, absence, or non-existence, is not credited since it is difficult to report. It is claimed that studies of the differences between men and women, or between the majorities and minorities, which conclude that there are no dissimilarities, are rarely published because, apparently, they have no findings. But when contemplating the lack of difference between genders in terms of behavior, preferences or driving habits, this could be a very interesting finding.

On the same topic, I would like to highlight the interesting fact relating to the relative absence of alternative educational representations. Generally speaking, depictions of science fiction educational institutions demonstrate more cloning than transformation; futurism is illustrated using slight variations on what is already familiar to us.

The 35th of May is a fiction book by Erich Kastner written in 1931⁷⁴. Conrad assigned homework to write an essay on the South Sea. His uncle Ringelhuth takes him through the wardrobe in the hallway to a fantastical journey. The uncle and nephew arrive at an electric city where people talk on phones that are carried in their pockets and walk on moving pavements. In the upside-down world, children wear suits, drive cars, and go to work while adults are educated in school. School in a parallel world looks the same but instead of adults, the teachers are children who use extreme behaviorist methods to correct abusing parents. Despite Erich Kastner's ability to create worlds where bushes grow

⁷² J. Annaud (Director), *The Name of the Rose* (Film), Italy, West Germany and France, 1986.

⁷³ F. Truffaut (Director), *Fahrenheit 451* (Film), UK, USA and France, 1966.

⁷⁴ E. Kästner, *The 35th of May; Or, Conrad's Ride to the South Seas*, London, Cape, 1971.

candy and dogs smoke chocolate cigarettes, in his imaginative school, he simply switched roles and the power relations.

The movie «sky high»⁷⁵, set in a superhero high school. Each superhero possesses a unique and distinctive super-power, such as glowing in the dark or supersonic movement. During their ride to school in a yellow school bus that, unlike its counterparts, flies on rocket engines, the students are engaged in discussions of dating and the prom, just like ordinary American high school students. The message communicated by these recurring themes is that in the future, as well as in fantasy, humankind's nature will prevail, especially where romance and family values are concerned.

This attribute of preserving familiar elements as a source of humour appears in many movies. We know that in many cases humour is based on what is recognisable and familiar, such as parents who take delight in their son's high grades in school, or students who are preoccupied with puppy love. It seems that in the future as well as in fantasy, society, the human race and especially the nuclear family will remain as we know them.

Outside the Mainstream – Two Alternatives for Education Systems

Reading works of mainstream science fiction revealed relatively few innovative ideas. It seems that the more promising area to search for alternative models and inspiration for organizing our educational institutions, it is outside this realm. In the second stage, which resulted from the limited representations that were found in the first stage, we abandoned the mainstream and set out to seek any representation of any innovative educational system we could find. In order to locate films and literary works for this stage, we made use of the Israeli science fiction fans' Facebook page. We asked for help in locating books and films that depicted schools but are not popular mainstream works. dozen of references were recived, book titles and many short stories in which the plot includes a description of an education system. One name that appeared repeatedly on the Facebook fans' list was *The Dispossessed*, a masterpiece novel written by Ursula Le Guin.

⁷⁵ M. Mitchell (Director), *Sky High* (Film), USA, 2005.

The Dispossessed

In Ursula Le Guin's cannonic book *The Dispossessed*⁷⁶ Anarres is a moon of the planet Urras. A group of anarchists withdraws to Anarres after a failed revolution on Urras. The two societies, inhabiting Anarres and Urras, are portrayed with certain similarities to the USA and the USSR. In Anarres, raising the children is undertaken in similar way to that of a commune, not within the family unit but in day care centres and dormitories. The anarchists create a rigid language and grammar, aimed at designing a world view. The use of the first person form is discouraged, drawing a negative reaction and the accusation of «egoizing». Instead, children are trained to express themselves and speak in a «collective dialect». In one scene, Shevek's daughter, meeting him for the first time, tells him «You can share the handkerchief I use», rather than «you may borrow my handkerchief», thus conveying the idea that the handkerchief is not owned by the girl, but merely used by her.

Studying is pursued in mutual interest groups. The hero can choose from the choir group, the story group, the debate group, etc. In these groups, each student can present an idea and receive feedback from his community and guidance from the tutor, in a manner that resembles the open and alternative schools of our time. Teachers move from one place to another, offering their expertise, each time to a different group.

Le Guin does not portray the communal society as flawless. In the care centers the children are treated impersonally, there is poor sensitivity and a lack of attentiveness to their needs. They are expected to undertake independent, explorative and inquisitive studying, lacking the regulation and guidance of an adult. In one chapter, the children ask to examine the notion of 'prison'. They set up a makeshift solitary confinement and lock up one of their own, who volunteers for the task, it went on for hours, putting his health at risk. The insights they gain from this experiment are not discussed with a mentor and the children are left to themselves with the horrifying experience. Le Guin portrays freedom: children free of their families, free of coercion regarding school topics and free to set the pace of their own individual growth. But she also portrays a system in which the ideal of equality hinders personal and scientific development; new ideas pose a threat to the sacred conformism and a scholar's community that is not free of competitiveness, jealousy, plagiarism and the suppression of information.

The children at Anarres are integrated into the communist social structure, a civilization where there are no private possessions or private property. There is shortage, but «No one eats if their friend goes hungry», and solidarity ranks

⁷⁶ Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, cit. The book won literary recognition and several distinguished awards: the Nebula Award for Best Novel in 1974, both the Hugo and Locus Awards in 1975, and a nomination for the John W. Campbell Memorial Award in 1975.

high. As they grow up, they will work as apprentices and acquire various skills. One day they could be assigned to manufacture soap and the next to lay water pipes. There is no tenure at a specific job, but instead, work is allocated according to society's requirements, except for specialized professions, such as music or physics research.

The protagonist, Shevek, who is on the brink of developing a significant invention of communication, faster than the speed of light, is forced to leave his planet to go to the twin planet, a hyper-capitalist state. There, the economy and welfare are better and there are excellent conditions for his research, but along with these are the oppression of women, nationalism, armed conflicts and other familiar afflictions.

With regard to knowledge and education, Le Guin informs us that as far as collectivism and individualism are involved, any inclination towards either of them would have its costs. Leaning towards exalting the collective deprives the individual of his welfare and impedes one's intellectual progress. On the other hand, favouring the individual brings about social gaps and intense disparities in power and prestige. Despite the pros and cons of both systems, Le Guin seems to be demonstrating that vitality and inventiveness are derived from the world of anarchism, where learning is individual and independent and innovations are intended to promote the welfare of all mankind.

Beatnik Bayou

The second work which presents an interesting alternative to the education system we are familiar with, is a short story by John Varley, *Beatnik Bayou*⁷⁷. The story takes place in a world beyond Earth, where people can alter their age and gender. When a teacher, member of the teachers' union, undertakes to educate a new pupil, he is able to transform himself to being seven years old, in flesh but not in mind, and matures with his pupil through the years. Teaching is performed one to one between a «friend» and a pupil so that the transfer of knowledge and values is carried out by a role model. In that way, Socialization is made by a member of the same peer group. In a world of one to one teaching, there is a grave shortage of teachers, resulting in their high *status*. Teachers are regarded as surrogate parents, but in contrast to parents, they are didactically orientated, ready to turn daily events into lessons of value. The story begins in a virtual space, a replica of the *Bayou Swamp Park* in 1951 Louisiana. A pregnant woman is running through the swamp, chasing what appear to be three children, but is actually a pupil and his two adult-in-a-child-

⁷⁷ J. Varley, *The Barbie murders And Other Stories*, New York, Berkley Books, 1980, pp. 146-182.

body teachers. Stumbling in the swamps, she follows them with the intention of asking the teacher to teach her unborn child. The teacher declines, as he is bound by a contract and designated to teach another child. The crying, furious woman refuses to take no for an answer and continues stalking them until the three of them drive her away, throwing chunks of mud at her. The whole affair is put to trial, the judge is actually a super-computer, which rules that the three acted in violence and will have to compensate her. It also rules, however, that the woman's own conduct was sociopathic and sentences her with a heavy penalty: she must terminate the pregnancy and undergo years of psychological treatments until it is decided that she is cured of her mental illness. It later turns out that in this futuristic world, the teachers' association holds more power than that of the courts of justice. Following the trial, the teacher's association decides to permanently suspend the teacher. The story ends when the *Bayou Park* is purchased, after having been turned into a golf course, a transformation symbolising the change from a wilderness to a most civilized, tranquil site.

In *The Dispossessed*, Ursula Le Guin draws a direct line between the regime and the education system within society. According to her, the education system and the way children are treated are directly derived from the social and economic orders. She also maintains that people like Shevek, the protagonist who developed communications innovations, can be nurtured only within a specific educational style: a system where teachers are instructors who communicate with the pupils with no *status*-related etiquette; a system that places the responsibility for both studying and the fashioning of tastes and interests in the hands of the pupils. She describes the circumstances that allow for the development of an independent learner, internally motivated to increase knowledge. This alternative suggested by Le Guin brings to mind contemporary open and democratic systems.

In *Beatnik Bayou*, John Varley suggests that futuristic education will transcend the limits of the classroom and will be carried out on the move in a natural environment, in the encounter of daily events and accompanied by a personal mentor. Varley adds that meaningful learning is one which is conveyed by peers and that education is an on-going process requiring both physical and mental proximity between teacher and pupil. All these assertions might be true, but are certainly not practical. The only noteworthy contribution to our world, in which teachers are unable to freely change gender or years of age, is related to the very purpose of education. The paramount goal of education, according to Varley, is the aspiration for empathy and altruism, which transform the individual into a moral entity capable of choosing right from wrong.

Summary and Discussion

Summarizing what has been said up to this point, the typical story of education in works of science fiction's mainstream would describe a world set in intergalactic conflict and a classroom where the curriculum is associated with preparations for war. The future's most common society, as predicted by science fiction, would be governed by a centralistic administration, with high levels of supervision allowing for interference in reproductive processes aimed at enhancing the human race and channelling the population towards required tasks. Genetic engineering, which could have improved quality of life, set humankind free of diseases and prolonged life itself, would instead become a device for making individuals better suited to the system, while expunging personalities and unique traits. The advantage of directly conveying knowledge, without the need for an intermediary, would come at the cost of painful invasion of the human body.

The more pleasant aspects of futuristic learning involve choice: choice between right and wrong and choices of interests and topics. The learning process will be independent, motivated by fascination, a desire to experiment and the will to extend wisdom. It will occur in the encouraging environment of age peer groups. The mentor's character as a charismatic role model will be of greater importance, promoting insights and maximizing cognitive and physical skills. Alongside the mainstream, and particularly in literature where time and location are available resources for the fictional evolvment of the educational institution, more elaborate alternatives have been created. The alternative impressions view the purpose of education in humanistic terms, aimed at socialising a moral and kind person and making use of advanced technologies to broaden the flexibility of choice and independence of the individual.

So why is it that when thinking of education, the future comes to mind, but when thinking of the future education does not necessary comes to mind? Some suggestions aiming to explain the relatively few representations of educational institutions were discussed in the introduction to this paper: the escapist nature of the genre; the male hegemony within the authors; the target audience of teenage readers; all leading to fewer child characters and consequently to fewer schools. In addition to these causes, focusing on best-seller works leads to a narrow and limited list that does not fully represent the range of the genre's ideas. In popular works, the speculative nature of the genre is downgraded in favor of dramatic elements, heroes and action, which rarely afford the opportunity of presenting or discussing educational processes.

But these explanations are not sufficient, nor do they offer an answer to the question at hand: Why, when educational institutions are depicted, do they resemble schools as we know them from our world? Why is it that in space as well as in the future, most of the teaching is performed in a frontal manner, the teacher is the knowledge-stock and elements of alienation and coercion still

symbolise the educational institution? Science fiction succeeded in establishing alternative models for social institution such as gender, technology and leisure, yet the development of alternatives for schooling is poor. It seems that, rather than deliberating education, the representation of schools in science fiction discuss contemporary society, the fears lodged in the minds of the human race and the extent to which the strict model of the modern school is entrenched in our minds.

Historical research tells us that to this day, the layout of most classrooms in the western world has originated from reading and teaching halls in monasteries of the Middle Ages. Columns of wooden desks and chairs arranged one behind the other in Panopticonic order, allowing for minimum communication between the pupils and maximum supervision by the teacher. Historical research also taught us that modern schools did not arise from affluent cities but rather from communities where a substantial percentage of the workforce was employed in manufacturing jobs, mainly in large industrial factories. This is where classrooms that resemble factory halls have evolved from, complete with the clock, the bell, standardisation and obligatory quotas⁷⁸.

These elements of «normalizing» body and mind are maintained and even emphasised in works that deal with the future. Science fiction works describe an alienated education system, a mass production for obedient citizens and a hierarchical society. The reason for this could be that this picture blends well with the dystopian narratives of war, catastrophes and taking over of the planet's resources by a narrow elite.

The concepts of genetics that are engineered to create a predefined and final vocational profession along with uploading knowledge directly into the body by use of fixed electronic components represent, respectively, the fear of totalitarianism and the fear of the rise in power of machines.

According to science fiction, tracking and identification technologies will result in the loss of anonymity and privacy and people will fall prey to a centralistic administration; a big brother who knows everything and who will subjugate technology for his own interests, thus reducing freedom of choice and action to nothing. Even the fear of machines is entering a new phase. At the moment, smartphones and computers accompany us 24 hours a day. In the future, so it is prophesised, they will be wholly integrated with our bodies. Each of these fears could be labelled as a fear of losing humanity.

Outside the mainstream, in works I have described as alternative, the educational system is portrayed as one whose goals are to nurture and perfect the humane elements in the pupils. This is achieved by trial and error in dealing with moral dilemmas in an authentic environment. The success factor is the creation of an empathetic human being.

⁷⁸ S. Bowles, H. Gintis, *Schooling in capitalist America: educational reform and the contradictions of economic life*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976.

As I have mentioned in the introduction, science fiction is a laboratory, or workshop of sorts, for investigating possibilities, inventions and ideas that pave the road to the future. When examining the manner in which innovations in communications and aviation have inspired and encouraged scientific and commercial thought, one might hope for the same when it comes to education. Perhaps we should appeal to science fiction authors and screenwriters and ask them, consciously and in full awareness, to dream up and create with their skilled writing educational institutions that would set us free from the familiar imagery and inspire us with new horizon.

*Appendix*⁷⁹

The books listed here were named as the top 20 of a list of hundred chosen science fiction books. Underlined and marked in Bold are books with reference to an educational institution (7 out of 20).

Top Twenty Books

Rank	Author/Editor	Title	Year
1	Orson Scott Card	Ender's Game	1985
2	Frank Herbert	Dune	1965
3	Isaac Asimov	The Foundation Trilogy	1951
4	Douglas Adams	Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy	1979
5	Robert A Heinlein	Stranger in a Strange Land	1961
6	George Orwell	1984	1949
7	Ray Bradbury	Fahrenheit 451	1954
8	Arthur C. Clarke	2001: A Space Odyssey	1968
9	Isaac Asimov	I, Robot	1950
10	Philip K Dick	Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?	1968
11	Robert A Heinlein	Starship Troopers	1959
12	William Gibson	Neuromancer	1984
13	Larry Niven	Ringworld	1970
14	Arthur C Clarke	Rendezvous With Rama	1973
15	Dan Simmons	Hyperion	1989
16	H.G. Wells	The Time Machine	1895
17	Aldous Huxley	Brave New World	1932
18	Arthur C Clarke	Childhood's End	1954
19	H.G. Wells	The War of the Worlds	1898
20	Joe Haldeman	The Forever War	1974
	Total	7 of 20	

⁷⁹ The all-time best sci-fi books, films, TV shows and stories. Last Updated 11 January 2015), <http://scifilists.sffjazz.com/lists_books_rank1.html> (last access: 24th April, 2015).

The films listed here were named as the top 20 of a list of hundred chosen science fiction books. Underlined and marked in Bold are films with reference to an educational institution – 4 out of 20.

Top twenty films

Rank	Director	Title	Year
1	Ridley Scott	Blade Runner	1982
2	George Lucas, <i>et al.</i>	Star Wars Trilogy IV-VI (1977-83)	1977
3	Ridley Scott	Alien	1979
4	L & A Wachowski	The Matrix	1999
5	Stanley Kubrick	2001: A Space Odyssey	1968
6	James Cameron	Aliens	1986
7	Luc Besson	The Fifth Element	1997
8	James Cameron	The Terminator	1984
9	James Cameron	Terminator 2 - Judgement Day	1991
10	Terry Gilliam	Twelve Monkeys	1995
11	Robert Zemeckis	Back to the Future	1985
12	Stanley Kubrick	A Clockwork Orange	1971
13	Robert Wise	The Day the Earth Stood Still	1951
14	Fred M Wilcox	Forbidden Planet	1956
15	Nicholas Meyer	Star Trek II - The Wrath of Khan	1982
16	Steven Spielberg	Jurassic Park	1993
17	Andrew Niccol	Gattaca	1997
18	Steven Spielberg	Close Encounters of the Third Kind	1977
19	Franklin J Schaffner	Planet of the Apes	1968
20	George Lucas	Star Wars I-III (1999-2005)+	1999- 2005
	Total	4 of 20	

Poesie a memoria, poesie della memoria. Affrancare l'infanzia dall'orfanezza poetica: una sfida per l'educazione, per la letteratura per l'infanzia

Milena Bernardi
Dipartimento di Scienze
dell'educazione «G.M. Bertin»
Università degli Studi di Bologna
(Italy)
milena.bernardi@unibo.it

Poetry by memory, poetry of memory. Break childhood from poetic orphanage: a challenge for education, for children's literature

ABSTRACT: The essay focuses on the deep relationship between childhood and poetry. In an ontological sense, poetry is familiar with childhood, yet we notice how childhood risks losing poetry. The central theme of the encounter between childhood and poetry is the mythical origin that comes from the poetic universal. For this reason poetry by heart saves the poetic heritage and gives it to the children. Children's literature gives back poetic collections to childhood and helps to save the poetic word. Authors like Pavese, Rilke, Calvino, Pascoli, Pasolini help to reflect on the value of poetic experience: children's literature, literature, education, may listen to these authors in order to give back poetry to childhood.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Childhood; Poetry; Myth and fable; Children's literature.

Premessa

Un soffuso dibattito affiora da tempo in ambito educativo e nell'ambito della letteratura per l'infanzia. Ci si interroga intorno a quale posto d'onore e/o, invece, di storica emarginazione, occupa la poesia nell'insieme complesso delle proposte letterarie e culturali per l'infanzia. Di conseguenza ci si chiede se la didattica della lettura e dell'educazione letteraria possa ancora comprendere la poesia imparata a memoria. Questa precisa questione emerge non appena

si nominano le poesie, i bambini, la scuola. Quasi fossero inseparabili, e non solo dal punto di vista della storia dell'educazione e del «fare letteratura», la poesia e il mandarla a memoria. In effetti, è davvero come se lo fossero: se non altro per la vocazione al ritmo, alla melodia, al suono, alla rimembranza, alla ripetitività, al tradursi in un deposito mnestico che la poesia parrebbe possedere fin da tempi lontani, quando, ad esempio, aedi e cantori, trovatori e compositori persino analfabeti, la declamavano. Come è noto, l'approccio didattico al poetico e al verso è andato mutando più volte fino a separare quasi completamente l'apprendimento in fase di memorizzazione dall'esercizio di scrittura e lettura sia di componimenti d'autore sia di versi prodotti dal lavoro dei bambini. In questo dibattito, per altro appartato quanto la poesia stessa, la letteratura per l'infanzia si è inserita aprendosi ad opere poetiche collocate in collane dedicate alla poesia per l'infanzia e riproponendo fondamentali raccolte – dalla poesia anglosassone, francese, italiana e di altre culture – vicine al sentire infantile.

Non è tutto qui: esiste una tradizione poetica cara alla storia della letteratura italiana e, più ampiamente, europea, in cui l'infanzia è protagonista e testimone, in senso storico, di una certa immagine dell'infanzia, del suo universo affettivo, dei suoi legami con il mondo e le vicissitudini complesse della vita e della morte. Opere, queste ultime, da cui si trae uno spaccato sempre acuto e rivelatore riguardo a come si guardava ai bambini, ai loro sentimenti, al loro essere e stare. A seguire, si va verso pagine poetiche da cui promanano sonorità ritmiche che hanno spesso richiamato l'orecchio infantile pur essendo state scritte non per l'infanzia o sull'infanzia: eppure l'infanzia c'è, affiora, ritorna, è sempre presente. Basti rileggere Giovanni Pascoli e Guido Gozzano, per far solo due tra tanti esempi.

Scrivere versi per l'infanzia, scriverne sull'infanzia: un tema che merita di essere esaminato approfonditamente a sé. Ma per ogni filone poetico che incroci i bambini nell'atto concreto del leggere poesie, ritorna il dilemma del mandarle a memoria.

Sì, è la nostra risposta. Certo non riducendo l'esperienza di prendere in sé una poesia a un mero esercizio arido finalizzato a una valutazione. Al contrario, per conservare un prezioso apporto artistico cui fare riferimento liberamente ogni volta in cui se ne senta il bisogno. R.M. Rilke, scrive dichiaratamente, «Io ho un poeta»¹, mentre se ne sta seduto in biblioteca e contempla lo svuotarsi melanconico della sala di lettura. Abbiamo bisogno di poesia, scrive Cesare Pavese. Ed proprio principalmente a partire dalle sue riflessioni e da quelle finissime di altri autori, che si vuole riflettere intorno alla relazione che intercorre, ancestralmente, ontologicamente, tra infanzia e poesia. Dando voce, seppure brevemente, a autori che hanno affondato i loro pensieri nel gorgo della creazione letteraria. Considerando, così, l'apporto della Stevenson, come

¹ R.M. Rilke, *I quaderni di Malte Laurids Brigge*, Milano, Garzanti, 1974, p. 28.

un tesoro che attende di essere riscoperto in quell'isola di Stevenson ogni volta in cui un bambino sta per avvicinarsi ad dire poetico. Stevenson² scrisse una importante raccolta di poesie per bambini dedicandola alla sua balia, la persona che più aveva raccontato, letto, declamato con lui e per lui.

Avere un poeta per sé può essere il dono di un repertorio personale di poesie mandate a memoria? A partire, come non ricordarlo, dalla tradizione straordinariamente ricca delle ninna nanne, il pane malinconico, secondo Federico Garcia Lorca³, con cui si andava riequilibrando la relazione primaria tra madri e neonati nelle faticose campagne andaluse.

L'infanzia, i luoghi mitici, l'origine poetica

L'infanzia, luogo mitico in cui la poesia comincia ad essere concepita e poi a nascere. I miti dell'infanzia, i miti personali, germinati in ognuno, non sono, in quanto tali, già poesia.

Possono rappresentare, però, il presupposto mnestico e affettivo che il ricordo concede al crearsi dell'«ispirazione» poetica: nel suo congedarsi da ciò che è ordinario per immergersi nello straordinario metaforico dell'invenzione artistica, il sedimento del luogo mitico contribuisce a svolgere una funzione di stimolo desiderante, ad aprire la strada ai passi successivi.

All'infanzia appartengono, infatti, stati d'animo aurorali che sono propri anche della poesia: lo stupore, la scoperta di eventi unici, il contatto immediato con il sapore, tanto spesso inesprimibile, del mondo interiore, la commozione eccitata dell'attimo atemporale in cui tutto si ferma per far posto ad una rivelazione.

Quella cosa rivelata, scrive Cesare Pavese⁴ nel saggio *Del mito, del simbolo e d'altro*, giunge al cospetto dell'infanzia con la complicità ineludibile delle parole, del racconto e, quindi, con la trasposizione della realtà nei suoi «segni» che, nella percezione infantile, si fanno simboli.

Se si risale un qualche momento di commozione estatica davanti a qualcosa del mondo, si trova che ci commuoviamo perché ci siamo già commossi; e ci siamo già commossi perché un giorno qualcosa ci apparve trasfigurato, staccato dal resto, per una parola, una favola, una fantasia che vi si riferiva e lo conteneva. Al bambino questo segno si fa simbolo, perché naturalmente a quel tempo la fantasia gli giunge come realtà, come conoscenza oggettiva e non come invenzione. (Che l'infanzia sia poetica è soltanto una fantasia dell'età matura). Ma questo simbolo, nella sua assolutezza, solleva alla sua atmosfera la cosa significata, che col tempo diviene nostra forma immaginativa assoluta. Tale, la mitopeia infantile, e in essa

² Cfr. R.L. Stevenson, *Questo letto è la mia nave, poesie per grandi incanti e piccoli lettori*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2009.

³ Cfr. F. Garcia Lorca, *Sulle ninna nanne*, Milano, Salani, 2015.

⁴ Cfr. C. Pavese, *Saggi letterari*, Torino, Einaudi, 1951.

si conferma che le cose si scoprono, si battezzano, soltanto attraverso i ricordi che se ne hanno. Poiché, rigorosamente, non esiste un «veder le cose per la prima volta»: quella che conta è sempre la seconda. Il concepire mitico dell'infanzia è insomma un sollevare alla sfera di eventi unici e assoluti le successive rivelazioni delle cose, per cui queste vivranno nella coscienza come schemi normativi dell'immaginazione affettiva⁵.

La rivelazione dell'esperienza insita nella scoperta dell'unicità delle cose si stratifica e di trasfigura nel deposito del mito personale. Pavese lo chiama, proustianamente, tempo ritrovato. Il che fa ripensare al tempo profondo del mondo interno, della memoria, dei sedimenti di stati di commozione che ritornano quando ci si può commuovere nuovamente di fronte al sentire mitico antico collocato nel passato tanto quanto l'infanzia. Così Pavese discute intorno al passaggio dal mitico al poetico. Ben sottolineando quanto la poesia sia intelletto, «invenzione» – dice espressamente l'autore –, e poi intenzione, volontà. Eppure essa si può e si sa radicare nella dimensione mitica che ritorna, ricompare, si infiltra tra i ricordi e tra le righe per riproporre l'esperienza affettiva già vissuta.

Dalle pagine di Pavese poeta, romanziere, traduttore, intellettuale, che scrive i *Saggi Letterari* tra il 1930 e il 1950 si ricavano suggestivi suggerimenti per riflettere ed interrogarsi intorno al rapporto che l'infanzia sa intrattenere con la poesia: nel tempo-spazio dell'età infantile, in quella dimensione caratterizzata dall'alterità propria dell'essere bambine e bambini, quale incontro può realizzarsi tra la percezione mitica (misteriosa nella propria lontananza) delle scoperte dei primi anni e la forza evocativa della parola poetica?

La poesia come il racconto e la parola stessa che lo narra ripete il circolo del rimembrare. La poesia, ribadisce il poeta Pavese, è invenzione intenzionale, eppure diviene lucidamente sacrificale riguardo alle visioni dei passati che ci attraversano e ci configurano, se e quando su di essi si sparga una coltre di illusoria menzogna: quella che preserva la dimensione ingenua che il poeta non si può permettere, egli è ormai l'adulto dall'implacabile capacità di scavo che porta alla luce il verso densificato dell'unicità rivelante che gli è propria.

Ma, se «far poesia significa portare a evidenza e compiutezza fantastica un germe mitico»⁶ al poeta succede di ristabilire il contatto con quei «luccichii aurorali»⁷ da cui proviene la sua materia prima viva e pulsante.

All'infanzia giungono e risuonano versi come declamassero un canto in parte giù udito, una vibrazione già percepita e riconoscibile per le melodie che rimanda e che sfiorano, forse, altri passati rievocati e riassunti nelle composizioni dei poeti adulti.

In tal senso l'infanzia riceve il lavoro della creazione poetica quando è stata già attraversata dalle ricerche spinte in direzione del sublime che l'artista

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 273-274.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

⁷ *Ibid.*

ha voluto intraprendere. Il dono si incarna nel ripristino di una condivisa unicità: rinunciare all'infanzia, quando e perché si è adulti e poeti non significa non possedere l'infanzia in sé: la perdita dell'infanzia essendo un destino dell'evoluzione dell'essere mortale è una condizione implicita nell'umano. Ma non sarà, non è una perdita senza ritorno. Il tempo ritrovato evocato da Pavese riacquista spessore quando, di nuovo, è la parola, è il racconto, è la favola, è la fiaba, è dunque la poesia, a promettere il ricongiungimento tra il luogo mitico dell'infanzia e il tramandarsi delle risonanze poetiche.

Se quel luogo mitico peculiare e sostanziato di una propria singolarità di cui parla Pavese conserva la sacralità del mito e del sacro, appunto perché è mito, e si conserva nel ricordo di un'esperienza ripetuta ma nel contempo irripetibile che ci commuove quando si rinnova e dà forma al nostro immaginario, allora sarà là che andrà a posarsi l'ala sensibile della prima poesia imparata a memoria, o ascoltata in una lettura serale, o declamata insieme in una intesa relazione affettiva. La parola amata che diviene simbolo, anzi lo è già, spinge il tempo indietro quando è il poeta a trarre vocazioni dai contenuti mitici in cui si radica il suo immaginario, mentre, quella stessa parola amata divenuta verso poetico anche per il lettore bambino, sposta il tempo in una dimensione atemporale, se parla ai bambini che stanno sperimentando in quell'istante l'incontro con i momenti fondativi che diverranno mito.

Quando? Non appena le riconosceranno come esperienze assunte nella dotazione della memoria, nel ricordo vivificato in cui incroceranno quel sentire: «l'io sento» della letteratura alberga in interstizi intimi che provengono sovente da molto lontano, eppure, come succede al poeta, si accostano all' «io penso» e accendono la pensabilità.

Un processo, questo, che concerne le esplorazioni stupefacenti del mondo e delle cose tutte e, pertanto, assai simile alla fantasia della fiaba che si veste e si nutre del panteismo che tutto contiene.

Ma ogni cosa, ogni essere è parte di un tutto da scoprire e da nominare, anzi, che attende di trovare un nome. Accade anche per le emozioni, i sentimenti, gli affetti, le conoscenze.

Pertanto il mitico, il simbolico e il poetico si ricongiungeranno in esperienze infantili tessute nelle parole care che curano. Ovvero, parole che si prendono cura del bisogno di poesia, di immersione nel poetico, da intendersi come il linguaggio del contatto sensibile con la dimensione interna – fantasie, pensieri *in nuce*, pensieri non pensabili, visioni, sogni ad occhi aperti, incubi, nullità paralizzante causata da sentimenti oscuri, scoperte di allegrezza incommensurabile ecc. – che più radicalmente risulta inesprimibile, indicibile, perché ancora sconosciuta anche in conseguenza della mancanza del «verbo» con cui esprimersi.

Allo stesso modo, contemporaneamente, avviene l'incontro con il mondo esterno, il vasto mondo, lo chiamava Hans Christian Andersen, e si tratta di un impatto potentissimo che necessita di traduzioni che lo decifrano e ne disegnano mappe percorribili.

La parola poetica, accanto a quella narrata, è pronta a far da guida, ad accompagnare il viaggio alla scoperta della complessità del mondo.

Scrivono Furio Jesi che la perdita dell'infanzia coincide (e allo stesso tempo si trasforma) nell'acquisizione di «un'assoluta infanzia adulta»⁸ se e quando vi sia la temerarietà dell'ironia, della consapevolezza di cosa sia stato quell'universo infantile in cui si ascoltavano racconti oppure, al contrario, non si ricevevano mai narrazioni.

R.M. Rilke e T. Mann si interrogano su quel passato di racconti donati o, al contrario, mai avuti all'orecchio. Ed è ancora l'amore per la parola che esalta la visione di momenti d'infanzia in cui era il nascondersi nel buio di un sottotetto o di un angolo appartato ad accendere le luci fulgide del dire narrato e poetico.

Quel che si vede da bambini al buio/luce di una soffusa penombra è l'immagine di un atto creativo, sostanzialmente metaforico, fantastico, certamente immaginifico.

Come si può dunque pensare che l'infanzia non sappia abitare con la poesia?

Scrivono Italo Calvino in un saggio dedicato ad Eugenio Montale:

Da giovane mi piaceva imparare poesie a memoria. Già molte se ne studiavano a scuola – e oggi vorrei che fossero state molte di più – che poi hanno continuato ad accompagnarmi per la vita, in una recitazione mentale quasi inconsapevole, che riaffiora a distanza d'anni. Fino al liceo, continuai per qualche anno a impararne per conto mio, dei poeti che allora non erano compresi nei programmi scolastici⁹.

E in una intervista televisiva, insisteva, rispondendo alla domanda:

Italo Calvino, tre chiavi, tre talismani per il 2000: Imparare molte poesie a memoria: da bambini, da giovani, anche da vecchi. Perché fanno compagnia: uno se le ripete mentalmente. Inoltre, lo sviluppo della memoria è molto importante. Anche fare dei calcoli a mano: delle divisioni, delle estrazioni di radici quadrate, delle cose molto complicate. Combattere l'astrattezza del linguaggio che ci viene imposto, con delle cose molto precise. Sapere che tutto quello che abbiamo ci può essere tolto da un momento all'altro. Certo, goderlo: non dico mica di rinunciare a nulla, anzi. Però sapendo che da un momento all'altro tutto quello che abbiamo può sparire in una nuvola di fumo¹⁰.

Imparare poesie a memoria. Conservare la compagnia del patrimonio di versi che ci appartiene fin dall'infanzia se da bambini abbiamo goduto del dono della rivelazione, della commozione e del ritmo intrinseco alla ripetitività poetica.

⁸ F. Jesi, *Sul mito e la fiaba*, in G. Cusatelli et al., *Tutto è fiaba*, Milano, Emme Edizioni, 1980, p. 48.

⁹ I. Calvino, *Eugenio Montale, Forse un mattino andando*, in *Saggi*, 2 voll., Milano, A. Mondadori Editori, vol. 1, 1995, p. 1179.

¹⁰ Cfr. I. Calvino, *Tutto può sparire in una nuvola di fumo*, *Le interviste di Italo Calvino in televisione*, a cura di Mauro Angeloni.

Nelle eredità di pensiero lasciateci dagli autori citati – Pavese, Rilke, Calvino – sembra di cogliere una fitta tessitura di senso che intreccia l'infanzia al fascino misterico del poetico e del mitopoietico.

Senza, tuttavia, mai ricadere in idealizzazioni dell'infanzia o in volgarizzazioni che la vorrebbero mitizzabile, – nozione stereotipica che si oppone alla visione filosofica del luogo mitico dell'infanzia, luogo di visione simbolica – quell'età primigenia sembra appartenere al disegno del tempo anch'esso primo, ed è Pavese a indicare come la poesia «cerca sovente di rinverginarsi, ricorrendo al simbolismo, alle memoria d'infanzia e anche ai miti»¹¹. Purché essa si ricordi di evolvere nella nuova sapienza del poeta, però. Purché essa cresca e risalga, e non si affossi in un antro che sottrae anziché proiettare verso la riscrittura trasformativa, metamorfica delle storie rimesse al mondo.

Cosa succede se l'infanzia perde la poesia, se perde il poetare?

L'infanzia rischia di venire esiliata dall'ebbrezza della parola poetica. Come se quel verseggiare che dà un suono e un senso al mistero dello stare al mondo non le fosse dovuto.

Poesia e Infanzia, dunque: creiamo risonanze per dar voce alla parola che è nostra e a cui apparteniamo come creature dell'essere naturale e culturale, la parola germinata nell'unicità di miti personali che ci accompagnano per tutta la vita e che si vanno poi rielaborando creativamente in visioni dal valore universale quando gli spazi del pensiero si aprono a possibilità espressive e finanche filosofiche finalmente libere.

Eppure l'infanzia corre sempre più il rischio di cadere in una condizione di orfanità poetica.

La sfida educativa, specificatamente letteraria e culturale che la letteratura per l'infanzia mette in atto da tempo consiste, allora, nel cercare di affrancare l'infanzia dal pericolo sempre più imminente di perdere ogni possibilità di incontro con la poesia.

La responsabilità adulta rispetto ad una tale privazione è enorme.

È, infatti, il mondo adulto, innanzitutto, a non frequentare le raccolte di versi, a tenersi a debita distanza di sicurezza dalle opere poetiche. Considerate elitarie, difficili, ieratiche, nobili oltre ogni limite di accessibilità per il lettore, le raccolte poetiche soffrono di una storica forma di ambivalente patologia culturale: da un lato sono stimate come fossero sacre ed inviolabili espressioni di genialità, dall'altra si ammalano della dissacrante derisione di chi, temendole, le disprezza.

¹¹ Pavese, *Saggi letterari*, cit., p. 275.

Ma la poesia che Calvino invita ad imparare a memoria è una compagna di strada, è un canto interno, è una confidente intima.

È un vocabolario cui non si può rinunciare se si vuole conservare il legame tra mito (luoghi mitici ancestrali), simbolo e poesia.

Giunge, la poesia mandata a memoria, al confine della memoria stessa quando la si richiama persino inconsapevolmente e ci rammenta quel rinnovarsi di storiche commozioni, di esperienze consolidate nel nostro viaggio biografico, di patrimoni emozionali trasferiti negli apprendimenti, nella conoscenza. È il suo essere poesia e storia insieme che ci consola e, ripetendo Calvino, ci fa compagnia. Imparare poesie a memoria, fin da quando si è bambini, consente alle poesie di abitarci e di svolgere anche il ruolo del testimone del ricordo. Certo, la poesia evolve dal mito, essa sconfinata nella elaborazione interpretativa e racconta storicamente attraversando le istanze storiche, filologiche, stilistiche della composizione poetica ma si ode in essa, ancora, l'universale mitico che sospira nell'atemporalità come fosse fiaba, come fosse nel sempre e nel mai, nel nessun dove, nell'altrove: perché la poesia ha compiuto il salto al di là del qui, dell'ordinario.

Come si è già detto, essa fugge nello straordinario e si alimenta del raddoppiamento di senso che è stile della metafora. In tal modo non abbandona i luoghi ancestrali da cui deriva la sua linfa. Luoghi che l'infanzia sta imparando ad esplorare.

L'affinità di atmosfera e di senso che intercorre tra la prima età della vita – l'infanzia – e il manifestarsi del mito come manifestazione del fenomeno inspiegabile eppure apparso all'esperienza sensibile dei bambini, rimanda al tema della memoria personale, del ricordo che riepiloga il simbolo fino a traslarlo, poi, nell'incontro con la dimensione poetica. Si fa poesia a partire da un mito sebbene la poesia interpreti, superi e, come si è detto, smembra il contenuto mitico del suo alone illusorio, fuori dal tempo storico.

Ma è solo così che il mito resta tale, preservando la propria essenza assoluta.

Tuttavia l'atto poetico è visionario e cammina oltre il margine del reale, producendo una metamorfosi ermeneutica che comincia in una sorprendente stupefazione mitica e si esplica in una nuova forma di «favola», termine spesso scelto da Pavese.

L'intreccio cui si assiste risente di una inesorabile complicità tra infanzia e bisogno prolungato, inestinguibile, infinito di poesia.

La poesia, infatti, riesplora e rielabora la ricerca stessa dell'esclusività di miti interni che, da personali, divengono universali. Così scrive ancora Pavese, cui stiamo riconducendo queste riflessioni. L'infanzia, posta a contatto diretto con la parola in poesia, si trova allora a poter frequentare due dimensioni esistenziali nel tempo del suo essere infantile: il tempo suo proprio e degli stupori che ne caratterizzano la recente venuta al mondo, e il tempo prossimo futuro che le arriva da chi ha riscritto la ripetizione trasformata delle scoperte remote già

restituite alla cultura e alla storia tramite la «favola», la poesia, la storia delle poesie e del poetare.

L'infanzia che riceve la poesia in dono accoglie le parole del senso profondo, del già attraversato ed ora rispedito a lei in forma d'arte, nella veste metaforica che salva i luccichii aurorali dell'origine.

A proposito di luoghi mitici da cui sgorgherà, forse, la tensione poetica, è emblematico un passo di R.M. Rilke, in *I quaderni di Malte Laurids Brigge*. L'autore dà la parola all'io narrante, il bambino protagonista:

Io stavo quasi tutto il giorno nel parco e fuori nei boschi di faggi o nella landa; e per fortuna c'erano dei cani a Urnekloster, che mi accompagnavano; c'erano qua e là un cascinale o un rustico dove potevo avere pane e latte e frutta, e credo che mi godessi abbastanza spensierato la mia libertà, almeno nelle prime settimane, senza lasciarmi angustiare dal pensiero delle riunioni serali. Non parlavo quasi con nessuno perché la mia gioia era starmene solo; soltanto con i cani, a volte, avevo dei brevi discorsi: con loro mi intendevo perfettamente¹².

Rilke, il poeta delle Elegie, delle liriche e delle prose, possiede il raro dono di mantenere viva una giovinezza eternizzata del sentire, restituisce la parola – il verbo primo, infantile, remoto – al suo personaggio bambino e ne trascrive la inesorabile sentenza di solitudine là dove e soltanto si poteva costruire un mito, al riparo dal mondo invadente ed intrusivo, nella separatezza che promette l'approfondimento della conoscenza.

Il poeta appare, fa sentire la sua voce, sa rivolgersi all'infanzia cui cede la pagina. Potrebbe l'infanzia non sintonizzarsi, empaticamente, con il ragazzino che brama la solitudine libera goduta nei boschi in compagnia dei cani? Privare le bambine e i bambini dell'essenza del poetico equivale a sottrarre loro l'anelito del sublime che la letteratura può donare: in poesia si dicono cose altrimenti non narrabili, non raffigurabili ma che è necessario nominare.

La poesia a memoria dà corpo a una sequenza immaginativa di suoni, versi, parole, colori, immagini, poi impersonate in gesti, canti, melodie, pensieri. Di queste nostre poesie in testa, dice Pierpaolo Pasolini¹³, facciamo un nostro repertorio poetico, rubandolo all'autore e servendocene come di una biblioteca privata, viaggiante, che non ci abbandona mai.

La poesia nella letteratura per l'infanzia è, spesso, una poesia che rapisce l'infanzia nel suo verseggiare, la ospita, la ascolta e la narra.

La riconosce e le parla con la lingua delle sonorità che non andranno del tutto smarrite. A quelle sonorità, in parte, rimanda anche Giovanni Pascoli nella «poetica del fanciullino». Accanto all'uomo poeta passeggia l'altro da lui in lui. Nel passato permanente, forse imperituro che vibra nel fanciullino si scorge, però, un'ombra oscura: laggiù o lassù sembra esistere una presenza che

¹² Rilke, *I quaderni di Malte Laurids Brigge*, cit., p. 22.

¹³ Cfr. P.P. Pasolini, *Introduzione* a G. Gozzano, *Poesie e prose*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1996.

segna il confine tra il punto d'inizio – forse simile la luogo mitico su cui riflette Pavese – e la perdita già annunciata della visione temporale.

Il fanciullino è fuori dal tempo, come lo è il mito. È sia nuovo sia antico, è l'avvio e il saluto, il commiato che poi trascende verso la forma poetica. La poesia, dice Pascoli, non è forse lingua morta...Eppure, consapevolmente, in risonanze poetiche ci si rispecchia: dal gorgo di Pavese, dal dialogo demonico tra Pascoli e il fanciullino si riassorbono rispecchiamenti e identificazioni di sentimenti e di pensieri, di immagini, che creano aperture di senso, donano epifanie, consentono risarcimenti.

Da qui in poi si dovrebbe doverosamente proseguire per indagare quale dialogo si instauri tra la poetica di Pavese e quella pascoliana, entrambe intersecabili al punto di visto che si è scelto di privilegiare, ossia la relazione tra infanzia e poesia. L'opera di Giovanni Pascoli, per la potenza simbolica che contiene e continua a disvelare, discute a fondo del permanere e del perdere il legame con il mito d'origine, di cui il fanciullino risulta rappresentare la personificazione prima ed ultima. Proprio la connessione che Pascoli esalta tra la voce di quel fantasma e la nascita della poesia può riguardare l'infanzia e il suo affacciarsi al poetico: ma di quale infanzia si tratta? Eterna, o totalmente incorporata, umana e mortale oppure fantasmatica e dimmortale? Loquace o muta è la sua voce?

La tribolazione pascoliana intorno alla morte giovanile precoce può concernere anche il mistero del fanciullino e la poesia, che il fantasma suggerisce, può risalire a forma malinconica di saluto a qualcosa che vive di *nostos*, di rimpianto, di remoti addii.

In fondo la poesia è pur sempre un argine tra qualcosa che è stato vissuto e qualcosa d'altro che lo rappresenta alla distanza di un verso. Essa trasporta l'esperienza sul differente piano dell'astrazione sollevandola dal peso del reale e consegnandola alla metafora.

Si ripresentano i temi della memoria, poi del ricordo e della trasformazione simbolica di una rimembranza. In questa complessità di senso che dalla poesia traspare l'infanzia sa stare.

Notices / Recensioni

Notices

Recensioni

Susanna Barsotti, *Bambine nel bosco: Cappuccetto Rosso e il lupo fra passato e presente*, Pisa, ETS, 2016, 234 pp.

Negli studi di storia della cultura e dell'educazione, il concetto di «immaginario collettivo» è uno dei più utilizzati e, nello stesso tempo, dei più discussi in quanto *mare magnum* significante il tutto e il niente. Si tratta comunque di una formula storiografica efficace e sintetica che, se ben orientata, circostanziata e supportata da opportune fonti documentarie, può dare grandi risultati sia sul piano teorico che metodologico, e quindi degli esiti scientifici. In particolare nella storia della letteratura per l'infanzia, l'immaginario collettivo è uno degli orizzonti d'indagine più diffusi, anche se non sempre viene percorso con quello scrupolo filologico ed ermeneutico che è indispensabile per non arrendersi ai luoghi comuni che pure danno fiato a molte esperienze critiche. Da diversi anni il lavoro di Susanna Barsotti si

concentra con brillantezza sui modi e sulle forme della fiaba, ovvero il genere letterario che, stratificatosi attraverso il tempo, ha prodotto forse uno dei più imponenti patrimoni di figure e simboli che hanno popolato e che popolano l'immaginario collettivo delle società di ieri e di oggi.

Oggi la studiosa italiana, docente di Letteratura per l'infanzia nell'Università di Cagliari, dà alle stampe una corposa indagine su una protagonista indiscussa dell'universo fiabesco, Cappuccetto Rosso. Al volume, e alla sua autrice, va subito riconosciuto un grande merito: come già aveva fatto nel suo libro precedente (*Le storie usate. Calvino, Rodari, Pitzorno: riflessioni pedagogiche e letterarie tra mitologia e fiaba*, Milano, Unicopli, 2006), Barsotti unisce al rigore dell'indagine letteraria sul passato (di taglio storico-antropologico) un sagace sguardo sul presente, sulla vitalità tuttora persistente del personaggio-Cappuccetto Rosso in alcune esperienze significative dell'arte e dell'editoria

contemporanee. Ecco così che torna a far capolino fra le pagine del libro il concetto di “uso” e di “riuso” del materiale fiabesco (luoghi, trame, scene, scenari, personaggi etc.), passaggio fondamentale per condurre autori, lettori o, più in generale, fruitori (in senso multimediale e intermediale) ad appropriarsi di una lingua comune che costituisce la base fondamentale di quell’immaginario collettivo che poi ciascuno arricchisce di una personale *langue*.

Stimolata dalle indagini della studiosa canadese Sandra Beckett, Barsotti struttura la sua ricerca su due grandi fenomeni culturali che interessano anche il personaggio-Cappuccetto Rosso: da una parte il fatto che si tratti di una figura (e una storia) *crossover*, ovvero adatta a catturare l’interesse dell’infanzia, dell’adolescenza e dell’età adulta, dall’altra la sua fortuna *crossmediale*, ovvero la sua capacità di vivere e rivivere (a volte, va detto, di sopravvivere) attraverso diversi linguaggi espressivi che animano i modi della comunicazione culturale contemporanea. Di suo Barsotti aggiunge una sicura esperienza nel campo della critica letteraria applicata alla storia dell’educazione, che si avvale del metodo della «intertestualità» (e del vaglio filologico delle «varianti»), strumento faticoso per la ricchezza di letture e di capacità comparativa che richiede, ma di sicura forza probante nel momento in cui l’obbiettivo dell’interprete stringe sui particolari testuali, per dimostrare derivazioni e filiazioni di parole, immagini, situazioni.

Se poi dalle peculiarità metodologiche proprie della storia e della critica della letteratura per l’infanzia, ci spostiamo sul piano più generale della storia dell’educazione e delle prospettive pedagogiche che il personaggio in questione ha incarnato attraverso i secoli, ci accorgiamo che il libro di Barsotti aggiunge un tassello importante a quella storia dell’educazione di genere

che, negli ultimi anni, ha definitivamente conquistato il rango di «filone» anche nel nostro campo accademico di storici della pedagogia. *Le fiabe e le donne* è il titolo del secondo capitolo del libro. Sulla scorta delle riflessioni di Angela Carter, di Jack Zipes, di Marie-Louise von Franz e di Simonetta Ulivieri, l’Autrice conclude che è «essenziale sapere e conoscere se colui che ha scritto o trascritto la fiaba sia un uomo o una donna, perché da questo dipende il modo in cui ciascuno costruisce figure che lo rispecchiano o che rispecchiano il suo modo di vedere l’altro o l’altra da sé» (p. 59). Ciò accade anche nel caso di alcune artiste contemporanee (Paula Rego, Kiki Smith, Sharon Singer) che si sono misurate con quello che, a questo punto, potremmo definire il «mito» di Cappuccetto Rosso, accostandolo dal punto di vista delle narrazioni orali più remote (recuperate a suo tempo da Paul Delarue prima e da Yvonne Verdier poi), dove la bambina è senz’altro più volitiva e risoluta di fronte al maschio-belva, che non nella tradizione fissata da Perrault o dai Grimm. Tutto ciò fa di questa fiaba un testo memetico per eccellenza: ammonimento, iniziazione all’età adulta, educazione sessuale, prospettiva cannibalica ai danni sia della nonna che del lupo, infine curvature pedagogiche «ben educate» in chiave borghese. Un testo e un personaggio camaleontici, insomma, che ciascuno, di narrazione in narrazione, ha tirato dalla propria parte, proprio come accade ancora oggi. La ricchezza di indagini storico-critiche condotte su questo personaggio ha infatti reso ancora più disinvolto il fronte della creatività multimediale contemporanea, per cui inesorabilmente (quasi come dev’essere accaduto nella mutevole tradizione orale più antica) si accumulano esercizi di riscrittura, sia testuale sia iconica. Arriviamo così alla sezione del libro dedicata alle *Storie di una moderna Cappuccetto*

Rosso dove Barsotti dà ampio spazio al trionfo di questa «icona universale» (p. 112) in una serie di albi illustrati italiani e stranieri. Si tratta di un capitolo molto importante dove, al di là del contenuto, affiorano con grande lucidità da una parte l'autorevolezza dell'albo illustrato come genere letterario dotato di caratteristiche sue proprie, dall'altra l'importanza dell'elaborazione di un metodo e di un linguaggio critico costruiti su misura dell'albo illustrato stesso, altamente specialistici, consapevoli della peculiarità della fonte. Le pagine di Barsotti sono un appassionato esercizio di lettura che muove dalla quanto mai opportuna contestazione della «convinzione, piuttosto diffusa, che il linguaggio delle immagini sia più naturale e spontaneo di quello delle parole [...]. Da qui la necessità di dotare i bambini delle 'parole' per esprimere giudizi e saper guardare le immagini» (p. 112). L'urgenza di *visual literacy*, viene qui subito soddisfatta dalla carrellata critica attraverso i testi e le immagini di Yvan Pommaux, Roberto Innocenti con Aaron Frisch, Chiara Carrer, Marjolaine Leray, Priscilla Galloway, Carmen Martín Gaité, Anne Bertier, Fabian Negrin, Arianna Papini, Giovanna Zoboli e Joanna Concejo. Ambigua, plurale, sfuggente, inaspettata sempre, prevedibile mai: Cappuccetto Rosso oggi vive e rivive proprio così. Donna e bambina, vittima e carnefice, innocente e peccatrice, casalinga e girandolona, coraggiosa e paurosa, impubere e pubere, etc. Non si accontenta, poi, questa capricciosa, della carta e degli inchiostri. Esce da un albo e rientra in un videogioco (*The Path*) o in un romanzo per adulti (*La bambina che amava Tom Gordon* di Stephen King), o in un film (*Hard Candy* di David Slade, *Cappuccetto Rosso Sangue* di Catherine Hardwicke, *The Village* di M. Night Shyamalan), o nei racconti de *La camera di sangue* di Angela Carter e nel film che

ne è stato tratto, *In compagnia dei lupi* di Neil Jordan. In questo straordinario repertorio di media ispirati alla figura di Cappuccetto Rosso, che contemporaneamente confermano e contraddicono l'esistenza di un univoco immaginario collettivo, Barsotti si muove con la sicurezza dell'esploratrice avvezza ai terreni impervi e poco dissodati, aperta a nuove ipotesi critiche ma forte di una tradizione ermeneutica che dimostra di aver assorbito con intelligenza e flessibilità autentiche.

Lorenzo Cantatore

Vladislav Rjéoutski (ed.), *Quand le français gouvernait la Russie. L'éducation de la noblesse russe 1750-1880*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2016, 395 pp.

Ce volume – édité par Vladislav Rjéoutski, chercheur à l'Institut allemand de Moscou et auteur de plusieurs ouvrages remarquables sur l'histoire de l'éducation de la noblesse russe – présente une analyse de l'afflux de Français, de Suisses et d'Allemands qui se rendirent en Russie au cours des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles pour y éduquer les enfants de la noblesse.

Le recueil est constitué d'une introduction, de douze articles (chapitres) représentant chacun un essai complété de documents originaux sur les différents idéaux et modèles véhiculés par les éducateurs, souvent inspirés par les idées de Locke et surtout de Rousseau, et de deux index (un index des noms propres et des œuvres et un autre thématique), très utiles pour repérer les nombreux éducateurs présents en Russie. Il se compose de deux parties concernant respectivement le credo et la pratique éducative (chapitres 1-6) et les éducateurs étrangers et leurs sociétés d'accueil (chapitres 7-12) qui examinent, selon diverses méthodes d'analyse,

l'éducation de la haute aristocratie et de la noblesse russe au cours du XVIIIe siècle et du XIXe siècles.

Dans son introduction Vladislav Rjéoutski décrit les trois axes autour desquels sont organisés les textes – éducation publique versus éducation privée, éducation et identité, tradition et nouveauté des modèles éducatifs –, axes qui contribuent à renouveler considérablement les études sur l'histoire de «l'éducation informelle» donnée par des étrangers aux jeunes nobles russes. L'éducation privée s'exprimait parfois en une représentation très négative, souvent alimentée par les tendances nationalistes, du précepteur étranger (pp. 9-10). Le changement d'attitude manifesté suite à la guerre de 1812 se manifesta dans des phénomènes de gallophobie, bien que «quelques rares voix reconnaissent pourtant le rôle culturel des éducateurs et enseignants étrangers» (p. 14). Cette attitude négative en Russie à leur égard ne constitue pas une exception parmi les autres pays européens, où la culture et la langue françaises sont vues comme des moyens de corrompre la jeunesse et pousser les femmes nobles à la débauche. Cependant cette vision reflète aussi le fait qu'augmentait la part de l'État pour le contrôle sur l'éducation privée; pourtant, malgré tout, les grandes familles de l'Empire semblent toujours préférer les instituteurs privés aux établissements publics.

Les douze articles illustrent bien le propos de l'auteur qui est de «contribuer à une meilleure compréhension de l'éducation se déroulant dans le cadre des familles nobles en Russie: les idéaux qui l'ont guidée, les pratiques éducatives, les problèmes rencontrés par les familles et par les éducateurs et le regard que ces derniers portaient sur leurs employeurs et sur leur société d'accueil» (p. 17). Les documents présentés en annexe de chaque chapitre sont des correspondances entre les parents et les

éducateurs et des plans éducatifs écrits par les éducateurs (précepteurs) eux-mêmes. Ce qui ressort de ces sources inédites, souvent rédigées en français, donne une image très intéressante de la noblesse, de ses valeurs (honneur, dignité, courage, réserve, sang-froid) et de ses représentations.

La fonction du précepteur est celle «d'intermédiaire à l'intérieur de la famille, chargé de transmettre des valeurs propres à la couche sociale à laquelle appartiennent ses employeurs: l'étiquette, les codes qui sont définis dans ce milieu» (p. 20). Cette transmission était néanmoins marquée par un aspect de réciprocité dans la mesure où le gouverneur (précepteur) d'un jeune noble devait aussi assimiler les codes de ses employeurs afin de garantir une bonne éducation. Y sont décrites aussi les qualités, la formation et le caractère du gouverneur idéal, souvent embauché par contrat en Russie. Ainsi, la question de la langue, française notamment, n'est pas marginale pour l'éducation nobiliaire, car elle véhicule aussi bien les idéaux éducatifs des Lumières que la pensée de John Locke. Les documents ont le mérite de montrer que la noblesse traversait une profonde transformation, car il s'agissait d'une couche sociale très hétérogène, comme les études sur l'essor des lycées au cours du XIXe siècle l'ont déjà montré.

D'ailleurs, il ressort aussi la grande influence des idées pédagogiques de Rousseau en Russie, aussi bien sur les éducateurs que sur la couche supérieure de la noblesse. Nombre d'exemples révèlent que «l'éducation dans la famille du monarque suit, dans ses grandes lignes, les mêmes tendances que l'éducation dans les familles nobles» (p. 25).

La première partie de l'ouvrage débute avec un chapitre concernant l'éducation d'une jeune fille dans une grande famille de la noblesse russe: Vladislav Rjéoutski, prend en considération le cas de la famille

Golytsine et porte une attention particulière à l'éducation morale de Catherine confiée à Cécile Olivier. L'auteur la reconstitue grâce aux correspondances qu'il a pu retrouver entre la princesse Natalia Golytsine et l'éducatrice Cécile Olivier.

Dans le deuxième chapitre, Alexandre Tchoudinov analyse la figure du précepteur et utopiste Pierre-Ignace Jaunez-Sponville, dit James, un adepte des théories pédagogiques de Rousseau, qui fut précepteur du fils du comte Alexeï Kirillovitch Razumovski. Son engagement fut arrangé par Gilbert Romme, acteur bien connu de la Révolution française, lui-même précepteur à Moscou dans la famille d'Alexandre Sergueïevitch Stroganov, une famille très haut placée en Russie.

Dans le troisième chapitre, Vladislav Rjéoutski aborde la question de l'idéal d'éducation d'un jeune aristocrate, le baron Stroganov, accompagné par son précepteur Jacques Démichel dans son voyage éducatif à Strasbourg, un lieu de prédilection du Grand Tour russe. Dans le plan qui accompagne l'article, et en particulier dans la partie sur la «constitution morale», Démichel évoque aussi une des idées fondamentales des plans éducatifs à cette époque, celui de «l'honnête homme», qui «a influencé non seulement l'éducation domestique, mais aussi le cursus de la principale école pour la noblesse, le Corps des cadets nobles, qui se distingue par une grande diversité des matières étudiées dont certaines nous paraîtraient assez éloignées des besoins d'un militaire» (p. 125).

Dans le quatrième chapitre, Vladimir Somov traite du médecin Nicolas-Gabriel Le Clerc, directeur des sciences et études au Corps des cadets nobles, proche d'Ivan Ivanovitch Betskoï, ministre de l'Éducation et protagoniste d'importantes réformes éducatives auxquelles il prit une part active sous Catherine II.

Le cinquième chapitre, Vladislav Rjéoutski, présente le vademecum du jeune voyageur de Fritz-Charles Maréchaux des Entelles, éducateur chez les barons Meyendorf, une famille noble d'origine balte, grâce à la découverte d'un document des archives de la famille permettant de préciser certains aspects du Grand Tour pratiqué par la noblesse russe au cours du XVIII^e siècle, qui privilégie l'Italie sous l'influence de la mode anglaise.

Dans le chapitre suivant, le sixième, Vladislav Rjéoutski et Natalia Vochtchinskaïa traitent de la figure de Frédéric-César de La Harpe, un Suisse diplômé en droit, qui accompagne deux Russes dans leur voyage éducatif en Italie et devient le maître de français des petits-fils de l'impératrice, les grands-ducs Alexandre et Constantin. Catherine II lui confia l'enseignement de plusieurs disciplines.

Dans la deuxième partie du volume, le septième chapitre de Vladislav Rjéoutski, sur les éducateurs étrangers et leurs sociétés d'accueil, analyse le cas d'un journaliste français héraut de l'éducation publique en Russie, le baron Théodore-Henri de Tschudy, considéré comme «un parfait représentant des aventuriers des Lumières» (p. 234) au cours du règne de l'impératrice Elisabeth, une époque marquée par nombre de changements du point de vue éducatif.

Dans le huitième chapitre, André Bandelier aborde la question de l'éducation privée et l'éducation en Russie, d'après la correspondance du précepteur Fornerod avec Jean-Henri-Samuel Formey, secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie des sciences de Berlin. Théologien de formation, Fornerod avait le français comme langue liturgique; il réunissait les qualités du généraliste et du maître de langues et élargissait «le concept des Lumières à la française» (p. 248).

Le neuvième chapitre d'Alexandre

Stroev a pour sujet «devenir précepteur» à partir des mémoires de Louis Levade, médecin-pédagogue amateur qui propage les Lumières en Russie.

Le dixième chapitre, de Michel Mervaud et Vladislav Rjéoutski, reprend la question des sociétés prussienne et russe; elles sont vues par un précepteur franco-prussien, Paul Bigot et par Morogues, qui a été précepteur en Prusse et en Russie et a laissé un témoignage de ses pérégrinations.

Dans le onzième chapitre, Isabelle de Lassus jette un nouvel éclairage sur les aristocrates russes vus par un précepteur français, Jean-Joseph de Pradel de Lamaze, chargé d'abord de l'éducation du petit-fils de Natalia Petrovna Golytsine, ensuite au service de la famille du banquier Rall à Saint-Pétersbourg. Dans ce cas, l'auteure a pu reconstituer son profil intellectuel à partir du catalogue de sa bibliothèque.

Très intéressant aussi le douzième chapitre, rédigé par Alla Polossina en collaboration avec Vladislav Rjéoutski et Danièle Rutily, qui décrit la figure d'un communal, Jules Montels, précepteur chez le comte Léon Tolstoï à Iasnaïa Poliana à partir de janvier 1878. Montels s'occupe des fils de l'écrivain tout en participant à la vie sociale de la famille Tolstoï dans une ambiance réconfortante et stimulante.

En conclusion, cet ouvrage offre un tableau très original de l'histoire de l'éducation de l'aristocratie et de la noblesse et révèle nombre d'aspects inconnus par rapport au recueil sur les gouverneurs en Russie, contribuant d'une façon très érudite à approfondir l'évolution de l'éducation privée en Russie dans ses différents aspects tels que les figures d'éducateurs et leur culture pédagogique, leur formation, leur réseaux sociaux et la place du métier d'éducateur dans la carrière des intellectuels européens, ainsi que l'évaluation de leur travail, leur

représentation sociale et littéraire et la vie des familles au service desquelles ils étaient.

Dorena Caroli

Elisa Marazzi (ed.), *Miei piccoli lettori... Letteratura e scienza nel libro per ragazzi tra XIX e XX secolo*, Milano, Guerini e Associati, 2016, 224 pp.

Dalla condizione ancillare rispetto alla letteratura «alta» e alla pedagogia il territorio della letteratura per l'infanzia e la gioventù sta conquistando una sua autonomia grazie all'impulso impresso da studiosi ormai affermati (in particolare Pino Boero, Emy Beseghi, Anna Ascenzi, Walter Fochesato, Renata Lollo) e ora proseguito da giovani ricercatori impegnati a vario titolo e in vari contesti a portare nuova linfa a un settore in sicura crescita.

Un'ulteriore conferma di questa tendenza viene da un volume curato da Elisa Marazzi – giovane studiosa nei cui interessi s'intrecciano la storia dell'editoria e l'attenzione alla vita scolastica –, con postfazione di Pino Boero, sui rapporti tra letteratura e cultura scientifica nei libri per ragazzi. Nel volume interagiscono studiosi di storia del libro e storici dell'educazione e del libro per l'infanzia che offrono una serie di apporti che esplorano un territorio finora poco conosciuto, quello del libro di divulgazione scientifica redatto in omaggio alla formula «istruire dilettaando».

In un primo saggio dovuto alla stessa Marazzi si spiega come tale genere, pur di antica tradizione, abbia avuto una notevole fortuna nell'ultimo Ottocento (con riverberi primo novecenteschi) da porre in stretta relazione al fenomeno della scienza come oggetto di consumo popolare, fenomeno legato, d'un lato, alla diffusione dell'ideologia laica e

positivista di quel periodo e, dall'altro, alla convinzione che la lettura oltre che «dilettevole» dovesse essere utile. Accanto alle opere assai popolari destinate agli adulti di Paolo Mantegazza e Michele Lessona, ebbero così larga circolazione molti libri in parte tradotti dalla Francia (in specie quelli di Jean Macé e Gaston Tissandier) e in parte frutto dell'iniziativa di apprezzati autori italiani (come, ad esempio, Antonio Stoppani).

Con il nuovo secolo – come documenta Elisa Rebellato in un successivo contributo – l'editoria divulgativa ampliò gli orizzonti e si orientò verso la produzione di opere enciclopediche per ragazzi nelle quali venivano assemblate racconti, favole, nozioni geografiche e viaggi, notizie relative a scoperte, piccoli esperimenti. Un ricco apparato di informazioni che affina la lettura personale, migliorava le conoscenze e affiancava l'attività scolastica. Esempari furono, in tal senso, tra principali iniziative editoriali, «La Scala d'oro» e *Il tesoro del ragazzo italiano*, edite dalla Utet di Torino e l'*Enciclopedia dei Ragazzi* di Mondadori.

A questi due saggi che forniscono alcuni significativi contesti di sviluppo della divulgazione scientifica per ragazzi fanno seguito alcuni sondaggi di carattere tematico: l'analisi del ruolo e della funzione degli animali in Rudolph Kipling (Anna Antoniazzi); l'immagine dell'orco tra fiaba e criminologia (Alberto Carli); il ruolo dell'illustrazione (Marta Sironi e Walter Fochesato); annotazioni su Gian Burrasca «piccolo chimico» (Francesca Orestano) e sui piccoli lettori del «Corriere dei Piccoli» colti tra incertezza sulle pratiche educative e parodia della medicina e introdotti a una visione moderna della salute attraverso le corrispondenze di zia Mariù (Sabrina Fava).

Giorgio Chiosso

Walter E. Crivellin (ed.), *Istruzione e formazione. La Provincia Piemontese dei Fratelli delle scuole Cristiane*, Cantalupa (Torino), Effatà editrice, 2016, 537 pp.

Remo L. Guidi, *Uomini in cattedra non per mestiere ma per passione*, Alessandria, Edizioni dell'Orso, 2016, 344 pp.

Giungono in libreria quasi contemporaneamente due libri che conservano alla memoria eventi e persone della tradizione educativa e pedagogica lasalliana, il primo di robusto impianto storico-critico, l'altro di carattere più memorialistico.

Walter E. Crivellin raccoglie in un denso volume 17 saggi dovuti a storici di varia tendenza (dell'educazione, della Chiesa, dell'architettura e della stessa congregazione) che ripercorrono, alla luce di una ricca documentazione conservata presso la Provincia Piemontese, le complesse e varie vicende dei Fratelli attivi non solo in terra sabauda, ma nell'intero nord Italia ove hanno operato per quasi due secoli mediante una presente tuttora viva, per quanto molto inferiore al passato segnata purtroppo da chiusure di istituti anche di lunga tradizione.

I Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane giunsero a Torino nel 1829 su invito del re Carlo Felice, accompagnati dalla fama di ottimi maestri che si erano guadagnata in terra di Francia al servizio dell'istruzione dei ceti popolari. In poco tempo furono loro affidati le scuole di carità dipendenti dalla Regia Opera della Mendicizia Istruita e poi, poco dopo, le scuole elementari municipali funzionanti nella capitale.

Insedati nei locali di Santa Pelagia qui vennero formate generazioni di nuovi fratelli destinati alle case via via aperte in varie località piemontesi (Pinerolo, Racconigi, Saluzzo, Vercelli, etc.) e dell'Italia settentrionale (Genova, Piacenza, Reggio Emilia, Parma, Carrara, etc.), contribuendo con il loro originale metodo didattico

all'abbattimento dell'ignoranza non solo dei fanciulli, ma anche di molti adulti istruiti nelle scuole serali e domenicali. Nel 1854 i Fratelli insegnanti attivi in Piemonte erano 177, 10 mila gli allievi e di cui poco più di 3 mila nella sola Torino.

I processi di laicizzazione scolastica gradualmente ridimensionarono la presenza dei discepoli di Jean Baptiste La Salle nell'istruzione pubblica, ma questa riduzione – accompagnata spesso a vivaci campagne di stampe da parte dell'opinione pubblica anticlericale – fu compensata da una rinnovata vitalità sul versante dell'iniziativa privata che soprattutto nel secondo Ottocento/primo Novecento si segnalò per la presenza di importanti colleghi (San Giuseppe a Torino, Gonzaga a Milano, Istituti Filippin in Veneto) e per la costante opera di educazione e istruzione popolare disseminata in decine di scuole e centri professionali.

Il volume offre una documentata rassegna dei vari tempi storici e ambiti nei quali operarono i Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane con la presentazione di tematiche finora poco o nulla esplorate (per esempio le caratteristiche della popolazione studentesca, l'editoria lasalliana, le caratteristiche degli edifici scolastici, l'associazionismo sportivo) o ulteriormente approfondite (i rapporti con il mondo politico liberale e il confronto con il rinnovamento pedagogico in età risorgimentale, l'impegno catechistico). Tra gli autori: Paolo Bianchini, Ester De Fort, Remo L. Guidi, Marco Paolantonio, Patrizia Savio, Bruno Signorelli.

Il volume ha un doppio merito: d'un lato quello – più evidente – di offrire un quadro molto documentato dell'attività svolta dai Fratelli e, dall'altro, di colmare una lacuna negli studi sulla presenza delle congregazioni religiose in area piemontese.

Con un intento più interno alla vita della comunità lasalliana e con un'impo-

stazione soprattutto memorialistica si presenta il volume di Remo L. Guidi, *Uomini in cattedra non per mestiere ma per passione* il cui titolo indica efficacemente la sostanza del volume. Apprezzato studioso dell'umanesimo religioso e letterario e cultore di memorie lasalliane, Guidi presenta alcune decine di biografie di fratelli che, a vario titolo (missionari, superiori, insegnanti, catechisti, animatori di realtà sociali e giovanili) hanno segnato la vita della congregazione in Italia tra l'unità e la fine nel secolo scorso.

Ne emerge un quadro animato dalla presenza «di protagonisti ritratti con la propria cifra umana, religiosa e professionale, a ridosso di un panorama assai variegato per competenze e specificità dei luoghi e delle categorie oggetto delle loro calde attenzioni», uomini che hanno speso la loro esistenza e posto a disposizione dei giovani la loro passione umana e pedagogica, silenziosi e spesso nascosti protagonisti della storia educativa di questo Paese di cui – senza libri come questo – si perderebbe ingiustamente la memoria.

Giorgio Chiosso

Cristina Yanes Cabrera, Juri Meda, Antonio Viñao (edd.), *School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education*, London, Springer International Publishing, 2017, 278 pp.

School Memories. New Trends in the History of Education is a collection of twenty essays written by an international team of historians of education and edited by Cristina Yanes-Cabrera, Juri Meda and Antonio Viñao. The focus of the book is school memory, defined as the individual and collective memory about schooling and educational processes. The relevance

of the topic emerges considering that compulsory education requires almost all citizens to spend 5-hours a day in schools, making schooling «a common experience at a biographical, generational and social level» (Meda and Viñao, p. 2). As a result, historians who study school memories must investigate a process of social reconstruction of the past, in which stereotypes and prejudices about teachers and teaching approaches are relevant as well as school practices, rituals, materials and places. Indeed, *School Memories* aims at studying the social perception of schools in recent past, from the middle 19th century onwards, and then at discussing present common opinion about the school of the past. Pointing out the eventual contrast between the past and present perception of schools might be considered a third and implicit aim of the research. Indeed, the authors state that studying school memory enables historians to deepen the understanding of the relation between the past and the present from the view point of the «long past». To its credit the collection of essays provide an insight into school memory through a variety of topics and sources, ranging from visual sources as postcards, pictures and engravings to material ones as buildings and gravestones.

With regards to visual sources, a thoughtful analysis of picture postcards as a device produced to preserve and construct school memory and cultural values embodied in school practices is offered by Viñao and Ruiz-Funes. The authors stress the degree of variability of the message conveyed by isolated images rather than collection of postcards and provide a provisional typology of picture postcards which might lay down a model for further research on this topic. A less specific kind of school image is that analysed by Brunelli, who focused on school photographs increasingly shared

on the web. Apart from evaluating the merits and limitations of Internet as a visual open archive always in progress, Brunelli suggests a list of social practices regarding school photographs on the web. These practices, which includes social sharing, narration of the Self, memories of places and photo-mashups, demonstrate the extent to which ordinary citizens are involved in an ongoing process of elaboration of school memory. This calls for a reflection upon the role of professional historians in interpreting both the past perception of schools and the present elaboration of its memory.

With regards to material sources, Yanes-Cabrera and Escolano Benito argue that an archaeological approach to school materialities enable historians to immerse themselves «in the world of training practices» (Yanes-Cabrera, Escolano Benito p. 267). Then, the archaeological perspective can be applied also to immaterial memories, such as rituals and narratives. Among the material sources which can be investigated to discover their symbolic meaning and point out an archetype of teachers' professional identity, Šuštar wrote an essay about teachers' gravestones in Slovenia and Caramelea interpreted two examples of ceremonies associated with school buildings in 19th century Romania.

It is worth noting that even written sources analysed in the collection of essays are rather unusual for their nature or content. This is the case, for instance, of yearbooks, 729 of which have been collected in Europe and Latin America and analysed to «write a history of the image that these schools aimed to transmit to the public» (Dávila, Naya, Zabaleta p. 67). Through yearbooks, historians of education can overcome the difficulty of gathering relevant information about private religious school, which is

usually available only for the members of congregations involved in ruling the schools studied. In addition, these sources contribute to fill in the gap regarding religious, athletic and cultural activities which take place in schools but leave hardly any evidence. Instead, Gordillo, Fernández *et al.* focus on the way in which educational resources have contributed to the representation and development of Andalusian identity. The authors conclude that vocabulary is the most important tool to identify the traits of Andalusians in textbooks.

As far as more traditional written sources are considered, such as diaries and autobiographies, Cagnolati and Huerta point out that autobiographies of Italian women in the second half of the 19th century contribute to shape a new image of female teachers, far more contradictory than what used to be thought. On the one hand the study of biographical accounts about schooling shed light on dominant stereotypes about female teachers and the divergence between female and male education; on the other, it highlights an unsuspected tension between instances of modernization and traditional social conventions.

An overturning of commonly held stereotypes about teachers – especially primary school teachers – results also from the study of their diaries and autobiographies throughout the 19th and 20th century (Morandini). Indeed, the study of teachers' memoirs is even nowadays a useful tool of pedagogical and didactic research. The papers which analyse memoir of teaching or teachers' training (Morandini; Garai, Németh; Šušnjara) widen the scope of the research on teachers' life and self-reflection, showing the extent to which these sources can be used to gain a better understanding of the role teachers played in the social and political context

they lived in. Their contribution to the process of modernization and nation-building emerges in 19th century Italy as well as in 20th century Hungary and Yugoslavia. Despite the differences in the contexts in which they worked, teachers aimed at bringing about a development of their communities and lived up to a vocation mainly directed towards lower social classes.

As demonstrated by Bandini and Targhetta with regards to the 20th century teachers' memories can be collected through the analysis of written sources as well as through audio and/or video interviews. Digital sources enable researchers to overcome the conflict between history and memory as well as to take into account the symbolic value of gestures and expressions and even to catch the nuances conveyed by silence and dialects. Involving a wider public in a task of reflection upon personal experience and requiring the researcher to develop an empathic relationship with the interviewee, oral history promote an understanding of schooling and education processes far from institutional and educational rhetoric (Bandini, p. 151), which enhances the role of subjective perception and interpretation in the creation of memory (Targhetta, p. 158).

Internet archives, as well as digital libraries, offer access to video sources too, which have been increasingly recognised as relevant sources because of their powerful influence on collective memory. Film adaptations can be more or less faithful, but the deviation from what is on the page may be in itself very significant, as Polenghi argues in her essay about De Amicis' *Cuore*. Indeed, an accurate comparison between the book and four different movies shot between 1948 and 2001 points out the «pedagogical shift» occurred over time in Italy, which was reflected on the choices of topics, the

narrative devices used by the directors and even on the final plot of the movies. This compelling investigation concludes that the way in which school is represented through movies results both from memory and wishes. The role of cinema in distorting memory and the gap between a script and the reality it incorporates emerges also in Karakatsani and Nikolopoulou's essay about Greek films of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Even though these movies did not represent faithfully Greek education system, they reproduced the ideology of those social classes which tried to gain a new social position at the end of the Greek civil war. From this point of view, movies constitute archives which preserves «projects, ideas, desires as well as metalinguistic elements of memory» otherwise unavailable to historians (Karakatsani, Nikolopoulou p. 261).

The essays written by Alfieri-Frigerio and Debè reflect on movies as a historical source focusing on how real and exceptional schooling experiences were represented by cinema and television. Alfieri and Frigerio highlight that documentaries and movies contributed to increase the knowledge of Don Lorenzo Milani's education model, despite different emphasis and aims between cinema and television. The case of the television drama *Diario di un maestro* is somehow intermediate between a screen adaptation from a book and a witness account of an existing experience of schooling. Indeed, director De Seta took inspiration from the novel *Un anno a Pietralata* but then shot a film which was a pedagogical experiment in itself – based on the principles of the *Movimento di Cooperazione Educativa*. Child-actors were asked to respond to the inputs of a teacher-actor, thus reproducing on the screen a concrete experience of schooling. Both the essays reach the conclusion that TV and cinema implemented Italian

school memory, reaching a wider audience of teachers as well as of families and encouraging a reflection on national school system. Conversely, the power of persuasion of cinema can be highlighted also when it is used as a tool to transmit social myths, including the stereotypes linked to professions, as demonstrated by Kalinina's essay on Russian Soviet Cinema. When this is the case, it contributes to the construction of social memory through the reproduction of homogeneous standards and values which are conveyed as a hidden message to the audience.

The fact that each chapter, despite what type of sources it comments upon, contains a methodological introduction about the value of the source and the proper way to analyse it is of particular value. Therefore, the book provides readers with a theoretical framework which sets the principles of analysis of a variety of sources available for further research in the field of History of Education. Then, those presented in the book can be considered as models for future and wider investigations.

Domenico Francesco Antonio Elia

Rossella Raimondo, *Audaci filantrope e piccoli randagi. Il contributo di Lucy Bartlett, Alessandrina Ravizza e Bice Cammeo a favore dell'infanzia travagliata e derelitta*, Parma, Edizioni Junior, 2016, 145 pp.

Se in ogni nazione si cercassero le radici storiche del welfare state, si troverebbe una donna, o un gruppo di donne. Non per la questione del puro ruolo materno, in Italia così strutturalmente tagliato e cucito sul corpo delle donne, sancito dallo stato unitario, rinsaldato dal matrimonio borghese, ruolo che ha mosso una montagna di studi attenti al genere (da Franca

Pieroni Bortolotti a Egle Becchi, da Annarita Buttafuoco a Marina D'Amelia, Anna Scattigno ed altre) cambiando totalmente l'approccio storiografico, grazie proprio a una generazione di storiche, storiche sociali e dell'educazione.

Il problema ci tocca e ci tocca da vicino. Perché distinguiamo, rovesciando i cassetti della storia, nei luoghi e nelle istituzioni pubbliche e private, figure di donne che in quei ruoli per loro codificati ci stavano strette, e dettero risposte positive e originali alla domanda di vera, autentica cittadinanza che la presenza di masse di indigenti poneva alle classi dirigenti dello stato. Risposte che furono prese in carico dalle donne, che comprendevano come non fosse sufficiente per loro la pura maternità biologica, ma ci fosse bisogno di quella simbolica e sociale, divenendo esse stesse «madri sociali», secondo una felice definizione, e che allargarono lo sguardo di cura all'intera società, accogliendo come propri quei «valori di comunità», quei diritti (alla giustizia sociale, all'eguaglianza, al soddisfacimento dei bisogni primari, di cibo, di casa, di salute, di istruzione, di lavoro) cui guardava da lontano lo stato borghese.

Il lavoro di Rossella Raimondo, inserendosi in una linea di ricerca storiografica che ha solide radici oramai in Italia focalizza lo sguardo sulla centralità delle questioni educative e rieducative verso l'infanzia «traviata e derelitta», svelando l'enorme portata di agency dell'attivismo femminile del secondo Ottocento, capace di produrre modificazioni sostanziali e di lunga durata nella creazione e nel funzionamento di istituzioni di aiuto e di welfare, su cui si modelleranno le successive forme di pubblica assistenza ai bambini e alle famiglie nel corso del tempo.

Raimondo ha maturato in passato una profonda conoscenza dei «luoghi di interramento» e di custodia dei «discoli» nel

territorio bolognese, esaminando le fonti d'archivio relative al Discolato, istituzione capostipite di altre forme di contenimento della devianza giovanile e sociale in epoca napoleonica.

Seguendo questa pista di ricerca ha messo ora a fuoco nel presente lavoro il contributo di tre donne coraggiose, Lucy Bartlett, Alessandrina Ravizza e Bice Cammeo, da lei definite «audaci filantrope», dove l'audacia, come termine riferito a un coraggio che va oltre i ragionevoli confini individuali, racchiude l'idea, intollerabile per l'epoca, di un empowerment femminile che sconfina oltre il consentito realismo del cosiddetto «femminismo pratico», per approdare a forme quasi di inaudita utopia, un'utopia che poche, grandi donne hanno intravisto come possibile, oltre che realizzabile, nelle forme e nei modi concreti che hanno saputo poi mettere in campo. Mi riferisco all'utopia cui allude anche lo studio di Patrizia Zamperlin e Liviana Gazzetta sulla filantropa Stefania Etzerodt Omboni.

Scorrendo la variegata bibliografia del volume di Raimondo, accanto alle fonti afferenti in modo particolare all'archivio dell'Unione femminile nazionale di Milano, e riguardanti quotidiani e riviste dirette da donne, come «Vita femminile italiana», o «L'Alleanza», e soprattutto l'omonimo periodico dell'associazione, L'Unione femminile, troviamo riviste di settore («Rivista della beneficenza pubblica e degli Istituti di previdenza», «Rassegna di studi penitenziari») e inconsuete fonti letterarie, come i numerosi articoli di «Nuova Antologia di letteratura, scienze ed arti», o i meno conosciuti scritti educativi di Ada Negri, o di Amelia Rosselli, o i testi teorici e precorritori della svedese Ellen Key, a dimostrazione di come il dibattito a favore della tutela dell'infanzia come condizione unica della vita, che va riconosciuta degna di diritti, fosse già pluridisciplinare e coinvolgesse in un lavoro di rete i più diversi ambiti del

sapere (la letteratura, le scienze giuridiche, la pedagogia, l'antropologia, la medicina e l'igiene). In pratica, il riconoscimento e la tutela dell'infanzia vanno di pari passo con il riconoscimento della donna come soggetto sociale.

Bianca Pitzorno, nel suo *La vita sessuale dei nostri antenati*, afferma che la vita delle donne in passato è stata fatta di lacrime e sangue. La piaga degli «esposti» evidenziava l'impossibilità della famiglia patriarcale di farsi carico di una sessualità molto spesso subita dalle donne come sopraffazione, inganno e stupro. Dal Settecento il libertinismo avvalorava la figura del seduttore, autorizzato a usare ogni mezzo per usare la donna, spesso di rango inferiore.

Maria Montessori mise a tema proprio la sessualità nella sua relazione al I Congresso Nazionale delle Donne italiane, e l'«Asilo Mariuccia», fondato a Milano da Ersilia Majno, fu considerato a lungo un modello di casa rifugio per donne «pericolanti», che non avevano altra forma di aiuto e di difesa nel loro difficile reinserimento sociale.

Lo stigma sociale che caratterizzò i figli di N.N., i «figli di nessuno», cioè gli illegittimi, si è protratto fino al secondo dopoguerra, col suo carico di infelicità e divieti di cittadinanza (ai figli di N.N. era vietato, per esempio, prestare il servizio militare). Ragazze «traviate», protagoniste di romanzi, racconti e opere (l'omonima Traviata o la Signora delle Camelie di Dumas), prolungavano la loro esclusione sociale nei figli, i ragazzini «traviati», figli della povertà, della chiusura sociale, dello sfruttamento del corpo della donna, e trovavano muro nei divieti che questo sfruttamento strutturava nel tempo, e contro cui lottarono le prime emancipazioniste come Anna Maria Mozzoni, il divieto alla ricerca della paternità e la prostituzione legalizzata.

L'assenza di sguardo sulle donne più povere nella storia, operaie, contadine, orfane, servette che non hanno avuto voce, si prolunga così nell'assenza dalla storia dei loro figli, che soffrirono di essere stati gli ultimi degli ultimi, i senza voce e senza diritti.

La grandezza del femminismo emancipazionista stava dunque nella sua capacità di agire in uno spazio lasciato libero dai poteri e dalla storia, lo spazio degli ultimi.

In questo spazio Ravizza, Bartlett e Cammeo intravidero possibilità di cambiamento. Esse descrivono con esattezza, nelle loro conferenze e relazioni, il nucleo amaro della miseria e della deprivazione, le abitazioni promiscue e fatiscenti, stipate di esseri e animali, l'incuria e l'abbandono dei più poveri. Muovono interpellanze, chiedono riforme, al fianco a volte di uomini nuovi, come Salvatore Morelli, consultano statistiche, offrono cifre: 30.000 esposti ogni anno, scrive Ravizza nel 1908, 130.000 persone a carico di Comuni e Opere Pie, 60.000 nei Riformatori, «fuori da ogni legge», spesso inviate in forza di decisioni dovute a un'idea di patria potestà basata unicamente su doveri e patrimonio, a volte per punire i rei di quel «socialismo, sovversione, anarchia» che fu l'anima delle lotte primonovecentesche, in una sorta di operazione di «internamento antisovversivo» della devianza.

Ravizza, la «santa» amica della «spudorata» Aleramo, scrive che finalmente si arriva a «comprendere che il fanciullo derelitto di oggi è il cittadino di domani», così come si comprende che l'infanzia «non appartiene alla carità pubblica ma all'organizzazione sociale evoluta» e quanto sia importante «fare di ogni bambino un membro sano della società».

Donne come Ravizza sono capaci di lanciare sguardi transnazionali, di guardare e confrontare sistemi istituzionali diversi, come il Codice civile austriaco per la tu-

tela dei minori non abbienti o le istituzioni giuridiche americane, le Juvenile Courts, che sanno distinguere finalità diverse della pena per adulti e ragazzi, e la forza rieducativa e di riaccompagnamento sociale che l'azione correttiva dovrebbe contenere anche in Italia. Sanno soprattutto che miseria e delinquenza camminano a braccetto, che esiste uno stretto legame fra intelletto e salute, soprattutto nei ragazzi, che la cura e la rieducazione devono avvenire, e hanno maggiore impatto, dentro le famiglie e non sottraendo i ragazzi ai genitori.

Lucy Bartlett, italo-scozzese, aprì il primo patronato per i minorenni, che favoriva, tramite progetti pilota, la prevenzione dalle situazioni penali, basandosi sul confronto con la prassi del Probation System di origine statunitense.

A Firenze, dove era ritornata nel 1904, viene aperto da Bice Cammeo il Rifugio temporaneo per fanciulli abbandonati e vagabondi, che inizia le sue attività nel 1910. Bice Cammeo, inviata dai genitori a Milano per «distrarla dall'idea di iscriversi all'Università», divenne nel capoluogo lombardo una delle più strette collaboratrici di Ersilia Majno, cui la legò un sentimento di grande amicizia, dovuto al riconoscimento dell'autorevolezza femminile e alla stima provata per la fondatrice dell'Asilo Mariuccia. Alla sua scuola, alla scuola delle donne suffragiste dell'Unione femminile, del cui periodico fu anche caporedattrice, Cammeo dovette una crescita personale e intellettuale esponenziale, che la portò a rappresentare l'Italia, assieme a Elisa Boschetti, al Congresso internazionale delle donne di Berlino, nel 1904, con una relazione sul valore dell'istruzione femminile. Su sua iniziativa, con la collaborazione di Lucy Bartlett, sorse, sempre a Firenze nel 1908, il Tribunale dei fanciulli, sul cui modello prese forma successivamente il Tribunale per i minorenni, fino alla legge n. 1441 del 1952.

Il Rifugio, da lei fondato a Firenze, ri-

mase attivo come laboratorio pedagogico di avanguardia fin dopo la seconda guerra mondiale, quando venne rilevato dall'ASL poi AUSL 10 di Firenze. Non so se esista un targa che rechi memoria della sua fondatrice, soprattutto dopo il disilluso ritiro di lei a vita privata dopo le famigerate leggi razziali del 1938, che esclusero dalla cittadinanza (e perseguitarono) proprio quelle protagoniste e quei protagonisti, di famiglia ebraica, che avevano costruito cultura e innovazione nell'Italia risorgimentale prima e del primo dopoguerra poi. Questi ed altri sono gli innumerevoli spunti di lettura che questo studio accurato offre, assieme a rare fotografie e a interessanti documenti, ad esempio quello sulla favolosa nave-scuola di Giovanni Vitali, o un ricordo di Amelia Rosselli o un bozzetto della stessa Bice Cammeo. Figure da ricordare e studiare, su cui la ricerca delle donne punta finalmente una luce nuova.

Loredana Magazzeni

Leonardo Acone, *Le mille e una nota. Letteratura, musica, infanzia. Orizzonti interdisciplinari e pedagogici*, Lecce-Rovato, PensaMultimedia, 2015, 163 pp.

Nell'opera che qui si presenta Leonardo Acone, ricercatore italiano specializzato in letteratura per l'infanzia e concertista in ambito nazionale e internazionale, mette in luce la relazione triadica tra letteratura, musica e infanzia, dando il suo personale contributo a un settore di studi ancora scarsamente esplorato a dispetto della sua importanza. Avvalendosi di approfondite conoscenze in diverse discipline, quali la musicologia, la letteratura, la filosofia e la pedagogia, l'autore ricerca un'interessante integrazione tra arte letteraria e musicale, che sono da lui stesso definite «fluide», intendendo per fluidità il libero «passaggio»

e la reciproca comunicatività tra letteratura e musica. Acone si propone, così, di superare il tradizionale arroccamento scientifico dei rispettivi ambiti, presente anche in un'ottica apparentemente privilegiata come quella comparativistica.

In particolare Acone rileva come la dimensione infantile funzioni da terreno comune tra «arte dei suoni (musica) e arte dei suoni significanti (letteratura)» (p. 11), avvalorato proprio dal potenziale educativo offerto dalla musica, la quale, in virtù dell'immediatezza recettiva che la caratterizza, permette di veicolare nella coscienza del bambino una visione disingannata del mondo introducendo l'età fanciulla alla tematica della vita adulta senza scalfirne l'innocenza ad essa connaturata.

L'indagine di cui si tratta è stata contenuta entro gli argini di una delimitazione storica circoscritta al periodo romantico, poiché il «Romanticismo europeo [è] riconosciuto quale ambito privilegiato dei rapporti tra letteratura e musica strumentale, grazie ad esperienze quali quelle del Poema Sinfonico da un lato, ed alle elaborazioni pianistiche e cameristiche dall'altro» (p. 148). Acone, dopo una necessaria panoramica sulla musica come primo linguaggio e una puntuale ricostruzione dei tratti generali delle forme musicali anzidette e la loro messa a confronto con i capisaldi della letteratura romantica di area francese come tedesca, quali le produzioni di Hugo e Goethe, focalizza la sua attenzione sulla figura e l'opera di Robert Schumann (1810-1856). Il compositore tedesco, infatti, particolarmente sensibile all'incanto della fanciullezza e testimone della temperie culturale del suo tempo, nelle sue opere piega molto spesso l'ispirazione musicale a quella letteraria e filosofica divenendo, così, protagonista a tutto tondo del periodo romantico. Ciò che l'autore riesce a mostrarci attraverso una raffinata indagine è come proprio in Schu-

mann si realizzi la sintesi tra commistione di arti e intento educativo. Infatti, come si legge nel testo, con particolare riferimento all'Album per la gioventù, «[Schumann] anche quando scrive per i bambini o, in senso più lato, per la gioventù [...], non cade mai nella banalità dell'immagine scontata o rassicurante, nella prevedibilità di modi, troppo spesso, prossimi ad una visione 'puerile' del mondo dei bambini. [...] Schumann allestisce uno scenario allusivo, evocativo, simbolico e 'vivo', che si permea di sostanza narrante; e proprio per questo diviene tanto più interessante per i piccoli 'interlocutori', a seconda che si rivelino quali fruitori, studenti o ascoltatori» (p. 122).

Ad esempio di quanto sostenuto dall'autore portiamo la riflessione che egli trae dall'esame di uno dei brani che fanno parte della raccolta Album per la gioventù. Si tratta di Mignon, breve pezzo che prende il nome da uno dei personaggi del Wilhelm Meister di Goethe, pubblicato tra il 1795 e il 1796. In questo particolare brano Schumann riesce a fissare in un'unica pagina le caratteristiche del personaggio goethiano, facendo apparire la Mignon musicale quasi più vera di quella letteraria. Secondo l'autore «Schumann ne reinterpreta ogni interiore sfumatura: dalla rassegnazione addolorata all'impeto desiderante e commosso, che poi addolcisce nella fluidità melodica di un canto; un canto che il compositore tedesco riesce a ricreare, intatto e diverso al contempo con piccoli, brevi spunti che quasi evocano, lontana, la voce della piccola Mignon» (p. 142).

Dall'analisi del testo musicale e sulla scorta della riflessione di Elizabeth Green, che si interroga sulla plausibilità della destinazione infantile dell'Album, Acone sottolinea come proprio nel modo in cui Schumann tratteggia la figura di Mignon emerga «una visione in prospettiva, una possibilità di sintesi comprensiva dei di-

versi aspetti del vivere, colti già a partire dall'età dell'incanto, che non va 'ingannata', in quanto tale, illudendola di non dovere, prima o poi, osservare anche i versanti meno felici del vivere» (p. 143); quel lato opaco del vivere «non per questo slegato o lontano dall'ingenuità spensierata dell'età più bella [...] complementare a qualche primo barlume di adulta (o almeno più matura) consapevolezza» (*ibid.*).

Grazie alle numerose competenze dell'autore e all'utilizzo di nuove metodologie che consentono un approccio interdisciplinare, l'opera costituisce un valido e prezioso strumento per gli storici dell'infanzia, della pedagogia, della letteratura e della musica, poiché propone chiavi di lettura trasversali per sondare la trasposizione musicale delle maggiori opere letterarie romantiche alla ricerca di nuovi orizzonti utili al pensiero pedagogico. Come sottolinea l'autore, inoltre, il testo offre spunti declinabili anche in un ambito specificamente operativo, divenendo concreta proposta didattica e pedagogica per un metodo di studio che si serve di una forma d'arte per favorire la fruizione dell'altra. L'autore afferma altresì che la musica possa essere un canale interpretativo privilegiato nell'accostarsi alla letteratura e alle arti da parte di bambini e ragazzi, rimarcando a giusto titolo quanto lo sviluppo di canali multidisciplinari possa diventare preziosa occasione di arricchimento di saperi ed elasticità mentale. Con questo lavoro Leonardo Acone, sebbene si rivolga primariamente a storici ed esperti del settore, grazie a uno stile scorrevole e raffinato, riesce a coinvolgere e a interessare anche il lettore non specializzato.

È utile, infine, ricordare come l'autore, rimarcando ancora una volta nelle sue Conclusioni come sia l'elemento infantile a rendere possibile la versione delle narrazioni letterarie nel linguaggio proprio dello stile compositivo tardo-romantico,

si sia limitato, qui, a suggerire punti di appoggio per nuove, ulteriori ricerche che possano fruttuosamente tematizzare la rilevanza dell'incontro tra suono e parola nell'educazione degli uomini del futuro.

Elisa Mazzella

Antonio Gibelli, *La scuola come maneggio del sistema. Breve storia di un manifesto antiautoritario*, Genova, L'Amico Ritrovato, 2016, 63 pp.

Dopo il suo fortunato *Il popolo bambino* (Torino, Einaudi, 2005), lo storico contemporaneista Antonio Gibelli effettua una nuova incursione nell'ambito della storia dell'educazione, dando alle stampe l'opuscolo *La scuola come maneggio del sistema*, da lui stesso scritto nel 1968 e successivamente stampato al ciclostile dai Gruppi di organizzazione studentesca (GOS) di Genova in alcune centinaia di copie.

Si tratta di un documento eccezionale per molteplici ragioni. La prima è che chi lo scrisse ne cura anche l'edizione critica, antepoendo al testo una introduzione in cui delinea il contesto in cui maturò quel manifesto antiautoritario e ne spiega le ragioni, e posponendogli un'appendice con le relazioni finali sull'andamento dell'attività didattica da lui svolta in qualità di docente di storia e filosofia di fresca nomina al Liceo classico «D'Oria» di Genova tra il 1968 e il 1972. La seconda ragione è l'idea di scuola che viene delineata all'interno dell'opuscolo, che presenta numerose convergenze con le teorie elaborate di lì a poco da Pierre Bordieu (*La reproduction: éléments pour une théorie du système d'enseignement*, 1970) e Michel Foucault (*Surveiller et punir: naissance de la prison*, 1975) sulla scuola come sistema di riproduzione

sociale e come apparato egemonico delle classi dirigenti, nonostante – come ricorda l'autore – all'epoca i suoi riferimenti culturali fossero rappresentati da alcuni passi di Rousseau, da *L'uomo a una dimensione* (1967) di Herbert Marcuse e *Lettera a una professoressa* (1967) di don Lorenzo Milani. Nel testo c'è l'idea che la scuola così com'era, anziché sprigionare le energie intellettuali ed espressive degli studenti, fosse una macchina organizzata per deprimerle e nello stesso tempo per indurre atteggiamenti disciplinari di sottomissione all'autorità e di conformismo sociale. Questa interpretazione dei sistemi formali di trasmissione del sapere come strumenti di oppressione delle classi subalterne contrastava nettamente con la tradizione consolidata all'interno del movimento operaio, che intendeva invece storicamente l'istruzione pubblica come uno strumento di emancipazione sociale e politica.

L'interpretazione della scuola come «maneggio del sistema», d'altronde, aveva alla base un assunto ideologico in base al quale l'istruzione era funzionale a un sistema globale di dominio e di sfruttamento, che finiva col giustificare – in maniera eccessivamente semplificatoria – l'assimilazione degli studenti come gruppo sociale omogeneo alle classi oppresse del mondo capitalistico e ai popoli sottomessi all'ordine imperialistico mondiale. Se questo era il fine fondamentale dell'apparato scolastico, ogni obiettivo di riforma e miglioramento dello stesso era da considerarsi sbagliato, in quanto – in base a una logica antagonistica – non andava migliorato, ma abbattuto, impedendo che l'apparato raggiungesse il proprio scopo. E allora, recita il testo: «Se l'organizzazione del Consenso è lo scopo dell'apparato scolastico, l'organizzazione del Dissenso deve essere l'obiettivo del Movimento Studentesco» (p. 44), che

doveva intraprendere un «percorso di liberazione».

Questo libriccino – a mio modesto avviso – ha il merito di aprire nuovi scenari di ricerca. Il primo è quello di una storia mai scritta dell'«antiscolola», che è qualcosa di più complesso della «controscolola» di moda tra gli anni Sessanta e Settanta e che ha ascendenze di più lungo corso. Sottesa all'interpretazione un po' iperbolica degli studenti come gruppo sociale omogeneo alle classi oppresse del mondo capitalistico, infatti, c'è la convergenza con un antagonismo scolastico di matrice prepolitica, che discende dai discorsi ottocenteschi e trova forse il suo capostipite letterario nel pamphlet *Chiudiamo le scuole* di Giovanni Papini (Firenze, Vallecchi, 1919) – ripubblicato nel 1992 da Stampa Alternativa e ripreso ancora nel 2010 da Marcello D'Orta nel suo *Aboliamo la scuola!* –, in cui il noto scrittore toscano proponeva provocatoriamente la chiusura delle scuole perché «insegnano moltissime cose false, inutili o discutibili» e «intristiscono gli animi invece di sollevarli». C'è un filo rosso che ripercorre tutta una letteratura, magari minoritaria, ma che merita di essere analizzata a fondo per comprendere la crescente insofferenza nel corso del '900 nei confronti del modello classico di istruzione e le ragioni profonde del sentimento antiscolastico ancora prima che di esso fosse fornita una lettura politica.

Il secondo scenario è costituito dalla scuola degli anni Sessanta e Settanta, che fino a questo momento è stata presa in esame solo episodicamente dagli storici dell'educazione e che merita invece di essere studiata organicamente. Alcuni primi contributi in tal senso sono stati forniti negli anni passati da Alessandra Chiappano con l'articolo *Il Sessantotto visto dagli studenti medi ed elementari del*

tempo comparso all'interno del numero monografico de «Il Protagora» (n. 4, luglio-dicembre 2004) e da Maria Luisa Tornesello con il volume *Il sogno di una scuola. Lotte ed esperienze didattiche negli anni Settanta: controscuola, tempo pieno, 150 ore* (Pistoia, Petite Plaisance, 2006) e in tempi più recenti dai due numeri monografici pubblicati dalla rivista di storia contemporanea «Venetica» (n. 2, 2012: *Quando la scuola si accende. Innovazione didattica e trasformazione sociale negli anni Sessanta e Settanta*, a cura di Luisa Bellina, Alfiero Boschiero e Alessandro Casellato; n. 1, 2015: *La scuola delle 150 ore in Veneto*, a cura di Alfiero Boschiero, Annamaria Lona e Filippo Maria Paladini) e da alcuni interventi pubblicati all'interno del numero monografico *La classe sotto esame. Scuola, società e utopie* della rivista di conflittualità sociale «Zapruder» (n. 27, 2012), a cura di Gino Candreva e Raffaele Nencini.

Non può non colpire che tutte queste iniziative scientifiche siano state promosse da storici generalisti e che vedano un coinvolgimento modesto di storici dell'educazione, quasi che la cifra epistemologica della nostra disciplina e la prospettiva euristica che la caratterizza non siano giudicate indispensabili per comprendere in profondità i mutamenti che attraversarono la scuola e l'educazione più in generale (si pensi alle complesse dinamiche inter-generazionali esplose in quel ventennio) in questa stagione di forte rinnovamento. C'è invece bisogno anche di quella prospettiva, se – come ha giustamente annotato Dario Ragazzini all'interno del contributo pubblicato nel volume *Concentramento ore 9* (Consiglio Regionale della Toscana, Firenze 2016) – la storia del movimento studentesco non è solo una storia politica, ma anche una storia scolastica, «nel senso che quel

movimento nasceva e si radicava nella scuola» (p. 204), ma anche perché alla scuola rivolgeva specifiche istanze, come quelle inerenti forme di sperimentazione didattica e di innovazione dei contenuti dell'insegnamento o intese a ottenere una riforma organica della scuola media superiore. Hanno recentemente ribadito tale punto di vista – dando un significativo segnale all'intera comunità scientifica di settore – due convegni di studi: «“Abbiamo lasciato un segno a chi vuole continuare”. La scuola di Mario Lodi tra passato e presente» (Macerata, 16 settembre 2016), un cui resoconto dettagliato è stato pubblicato su «Rivista di storia dell'educazione» (n. 2, 2016, pp. 190-194); «No thought control. Pedagogia, istanze di emancipazione, trasformazioni dell'immaginario educativo tra gli anni Sessanta e Settanta» (Catania, 27-28 ottobre 2016), che si proponeva appunto di aprire il dibattito su una stagione che ha cambiato radicalmente gli scenari, le pratiche e i linguaggi dell'educazione. Ciò a conferma che i tempi sono maturi affinché la storia dell'educazione ampli significativamente il proprio spettro cronologico e avvii una nuova e feconda stagione di studi, che fornisca forse gli strumenti per comprendere anche meglio la scuola di oggi, che di quelle rotture e di quegli esperimenti è figlia.

Un'ultima riflessione conclusiva: questo libriccino esce in un momento nel quale la scuola è sottoposta da più parti a forti pressioni per un rinnovamento profondo dei propri modelli di riferimento, che viene dalla società civile e si concretizza nelle sempre più numerose reti per l'educazione parentale (*homeschooling*) e nel rinverdirsi dei paradigmi educativi dell'educazione libertaria... sarà un caso?

Juri Meda

Carla Ida Salviati, Aldo Cecconi (edd.), *La Vita Scolastica. Settant'anni di una rivista per la scuola*, Firenze, Giunti Editore, 2017, 289 pp.

Quando si parla di riviste per maestri al di fuori d'un ristretto gruppo di addetti ai lavori, inevitabilmente, il cerchio si restringe intorno a pochissime testate. Tra queste, tuttavia, non manca quasi mai «La Vita Scolastica», che si conferma ancora oggi essere uno dei periodici scolastici più letti e conosciuti. Qual è il segreto di tanto successo? Tenta di rispondere a questa domanda il nuovo libro curato da Carla Ida Salviati e Aldo Cecconi per Giunti Editore in occasione del settantesimo anniversario della fondazione della rivista (1947-2017).

Il libro è suddiviso in quattro parti. La prima parte è dedicata alla storia della rivista, con contributi di Carla Ida Salviati, Carmen Betti e Aldo Cecconi. Nel suo contributo Carla Ida Salviati – già direttrice de «La Vita Scolastica» dal 2008 al 2014 – propone un bilancio complessivo della rivista, delineandone le principali linee di sviluppo nel corso dell'intero settantennio: la nascita nell'immediato dopoguerra per opera d'un editore di provincia e d'un gruppo di «insegnanti operosi» (così si autodefinivano), fortemente impegnati a costruire la scuola indicata nella nuova Costituzione; la crescita all'ombra di veri e propri pilastri della stampa scolastica italiana, come «I Diritti della Scuola» di Annibale Tona o «Scuola Italiana Moderna» di mons. Angelo Zammarchi, e il confronto a distanza con altri agguerriti concorrenti, come «Scuola e Città» di Ernesto Codignola e «Riforma della Scuola» di Lucio Lombardo Radice; la straordinaria diffusione tra gli insegnanti e il primo passaggio di editore, con l'acquisizione da parte del marchio Bemporad Marzocco, impegnato in quegli stessi anni nella scalata al mercato editoriale scolastico; il

potenziamento della rivista, con una veste grafica più razionale, nuove rubriche, più immagini e l'irruzione della pubblicità, e l'individuazione d'una linea editoriale distintiva e d'una più precisa collocazione tra i periodici professionali. Sono anni intensi, in cui la rivista raccoglie – sotto la guida sapiente di Renato Giunti – le numerose sfide che le sono imposte da una scuola in profondo cambiamento. Questa capacità continuerà anche successivamente, quando giungerà il momento di affrontare, da un lato, l'esplosione delle tecnologie nella vita quotidiana e, dall'altro, le trasformazioni multiculturali delle classi italiane, cui la rivista farà fronte con l'avvio d'una rivista elettronica interamente accessibile in rete e col lancio del dinamico supplemento di didattica interculturale «Sesamo», sfogliando le cui pagine si può cogliere oggi la transizione da una didattica genericamente interculturale ad una autenticamente interculturale.

Carmen Betti – dopo aver proceduto a uno spoglio sistematico della «Parte generale» e del «Notiziario sindacale» della rivista nei suoi primi vent'anni di vita (1947-1968) – analizza le modalità con cui la rivista riprese i temi del dibattito politico-scolastico contemporaneo e tentò di stimolare fra i lettori uno spirito di cittadinanza e di partecipazione democratica. Il contributo mette intelligentemente in luce come – dopo essere ampiamente (e anche duramente) intervenuta nel dibattito pubblico – verso la fine degli anni '60 la rivista scelse di attenuare il proprio impegno sull'attualità e preferì orientarsi verso tematiche inerenti al «fare scuola» e all'essere insegnante in situazione, scommettendo sulla crescita della professionalità docente nei suoi risvolti pratici ma anche teorici; questa scelta – in una fase di inasprimento del dibattito politico sulla scuola – mise al riparo la rivista dalle forti turbolenze della contestazione sessantottina,

che sarebbe scoppiata di lì a poco. Risulta pregevole – in questo contributo – lo sforzo certosino di ricostruzione delle biografie intellettuali dei principali collaboratori della rivista (tra i quali spiccano i nomi di Walter Ganzaroli, Umberto Reginato, Arturo Mazzeo, Alessandro Marcucci, Giovanni Zaghi, Nino Dal Sasso, Carlo Polizzi e Quirino Piccioni), alcuni aspetti delle quali erano poco noti anche tra gli addetti ai lavori e risultano utilissimi per identificare i componenti dell'intelligenza pedagogica che animò le redazioni di queste riviste e alla quale in passato anche Giorgio Chiosso tanta attenzione ha dedicato (*La stampa pedagogica e scolastica in Italia*, 1997; *Dizionario Biografico dell'Educazione*, 2014). Completa il quadro storico della rivista il contributo di Aldo Cecconi sugli editori che si sono avvicinati in questi settant'anni nella pubblicazione de «La Vita Scolastica», dall'originario Istituto Padano di Arti Grafiche di Rovigo alla Bemporad Marzocco di Renato Giunti, che rilevò la rivista nel 1957 nel segno della continuità, passandola poi nel 1974 a Giunti Marzocco e nel 1990 al gruppo editoriale Giunti.

La seconda parte è dedicata al solido rapporto collaborativo che la rivista ha da sempre intrattenuto con il mondo degli insegnanti, con due approfondimenti. Nel primo Chiara Grassi analizza l'evoluzione degli umori (e malumori) magistrali attraverso lo studio delle lettere pubblicate da Giovanni Bianchini nella rubrica di posta «L'opinione dei lettori» tra il 1975 e il 1980, quinquennio particolarmente paradigmatico in quanto il sistema scolastico italiano perde la connotazione elitaria e selettiva che lo aveva contraddistinto fino a quel momento ed è sottoposto – anche sull'onda dei profondamenti mutamenti socio-culturali determinati dalla cosiddetta «stagione dei movimenti» – a una progressiva

democratizzazione con l'emaneazione dei Decreti delegati. Nel secondo Rosaria Di Santo esamina il proficuo rapporto stabilito dalla rivista con le principali associazioni degli insegnanti attraverso i testi pubblicati nella sezione «Politica scolastica e amministrazione» in uno dei nodi più significativi della scuola degli anni Ottanta e Novanta, quello in cui esplose il dibattito in relativo ai Programmi del 1985. Il contributo si sofferma in particolar modo sul dialogo stabilito con l'Associazione Italiana Maestri Cattolici (AIMC) e il Movimento di Cooperazione Educativa (MCE), evidenziando come esso si concentri più sugli aspetti sindacali e sulle trasformazioni della professionalità del maestro che non sulle questioni più propriamente didattiche e pedagogiche, rispetto alle quali evidentemente le associazioni non erano ritenute dalla redazione un referente attendibile.

Carmen Betti ha sottolineato all'interno del capitolo da lei curato come – a un certo punto – la rivista scelga di dedicarsi alle tematiche inerenti al «fare scuola» e all'essere insegnante in situazione. La terza parte, allora, non poteva che essere dedicata agli orientamenti per la didattica che hanno caratterizzato la rivista – da sempre distinta in una «parte generale» e in una «parte didattica» – e all'evoluzione degli insegnamenti disciplinari (italiano, matematica, storia, geografia, scienze, attività espressive e religione), con contributi dei membri del comitato scientifico per la didattica della rivista (Silvana Loiero, Martha Fandiño Pinilla, Ivo Mattozzi, Tiziano Pera, Gianfranco Staccioli e Giuliana Mantovani), coordinati da Bruno D'Amore, che qui li introduce con un intervento che si sofferma su continuità e discontinuità nelle indicazioni didattiche fornite dalla rivista, con i caratteristici suggerimenti espliciti e impliciti di carattere pedagogico, i consigli

di letture complementari, la prescrizione degli ausili per l'insegnamento, oltre che sull'evoluzione del linguaggio usato dagli autori, con alcune gustose notazioni.

Il libro è completato dalle testimonianze di alcuni storici collaboratori della rivista (Emilia Passaponti, Tullia Colombo, Paolo F. Iacuzzi e Dino Baldi), da un elenco ragionato dei direttori della rivista (da Walter Ganzaroli a Tullia Colombo, passando per Sergio Giunti, Giuseppe Lisciani, Bruno Piazzesi, Mario Di Rienzo e la stessa Carla Ida Salviati) e da un'ampia appendice iconografica, riprodotte copertine, pubblicità, vignette e cedole di commissione libraria dagli inizi ai giorni nostri. Una postilla: il volume è disponibile in formato e-Book e in formato cartaceo, esclusivamente su Amazon.

Juri Meda

Giulia Simone, Fabio Targhetta, *Sui banchi di scuola tra fascismo e Resistenza. Gli archivi scolastici padovani (1938-1945)*, Padova, Padova University Press, 2016, 188 pp.

Il volume nasce dalle ricerche condotte grazie a due borse di studio messe a disposizione dell'ANPI padovana dalla latinista Licinia Ricottilli, docente presso l'Università degli Studi di Verona, in memoria del marito, Guido Capovilla, ordinario di italianistica a Padova e dirigente per un decennio dell'ANPI locale, tragicamente scomparso nel 2011. Il piano di lavoro originale prevedeva una semplice mappatura degli archivi storici degli istituti superiori padovani al fine di trarne delle schede descrittive sintetiche; in corso d'opera, tuttavia, considerato anche l'interesse della documentazione nel frattempo reperita, si è deciso di ampliare il lavoro e trarne un volumetto, agile nell'apparato di note

e rimandi, ma che potesse servire anche ai docenti per spiegare ai propri studenti il fascismo partendo da una prospettiva apparentemente eccentrica, quella scolastica, in grado però di restituire ai giovani di oggi l'incidenza delle politiche educative promosse dal regime al fine di diffondere la propria ideologia autoritaria tra i loro coetanei dell'epoca.

Lo scavo d'archivio è stato condotto all'interno degli archivi storici di cinque antichi e prestigiosi istituti padovani, caratterizzati da profili istituzionali e obiettivi formativi estremamente diversificati: l'Istituto magistrale «Duca d'Aosta» e il Liceo classico «Tito Livio», studiati da Giulia Simone; l'Istituto femminile «Pietro Scalcerle», l'Istituto tecnico commerciale «Pier Fortunato Calvi» e il Liceo scientifico «Ippolito Nievo», studiati da Fabio Targhetta. Le pessime condizioni di conservazione (già più volte messe in luce dai non molti altri studiosi che con questi negletti giacimenti si sono confrontati negli ultimi anni) e la consistenza assai eterogenea degli archivi scolastici consultati ha inevitabilmente causato una certa disomogeneità tra i capitoli, che però non pregiudica il delineamento di un quadro complessivo di estremo interesse storiografico, principalmente per due ordini di motivi: il primo è la decisione di mettere a fuoco un ordine scolastico alternativo a quello sul quale – nel corso degli ultimi vent'anni – la riflessione storico-educativa si è polarizzata, ovvero quello elementare, ritenuto paradigmatico della pervasività del processo di «colonizzazione delle coscienze» promosso dal fascismo tra le giovani generazioni; il secondo è l'accertamento che il tasso di adesione al fascismo del corpo insegnante e di quello studentesco non era monolitico come il regime tendeva a far credere nelle sue autorappresentazioni propagandistiche, in particolar modo all'interno dei licei cittadini. Questi due risultati sono più correlati di

quanto si sarebbe indotti a pensare.

La storiografia recente si è maggiormente concentrata sulla scuola elementare fascista, interpretandola non a torto come vera e propria fucina del progetto totalitario mussoliniano, di cui permetteva di sottolineare la natura esplicitamente manipolatoria, in quanto imposto a soggetti non ancora dotati dello spirito critico necessario per mettere in discussione i postulati ideologici propagandati dal regime, come appunto i bambini. Su tale orientamento storiografico, tuttavia, a nostro modo di vedere, continua a gravare uno stereotipo culturale (più o meno condivisibile) già ampiamente utilizzato dagli Alleati nel corso della Seconda guerra mondiale per denunciare le nefaste politiche educative naziste con la diffusione del noto *Education for Death* di Gregor Ziemer: niente politica per i bambini. Gli innumerevoli studi sulla scuola elementare fascista promossi negli ultimi anni aderiscono in qualche modo a tale stereotipo e confermano implicitamente la perversione morale d'un regime che non si fece scrupoli a condizionare ideologicamente i propri minori. Se tuttavia, esaurito tale filone di studi, la storiografia educativa oggi si astraesse da tale contesto e si dedicasse sistematicamente allo studio delle modalità di penetrazione ideologica del fascismo all'interno degli istituti superiori e dell'effettivo radicamento dell'ideologia mussoliniana nel corpo insegnante e in quello studentesco, sarebbe possibile disporre di dati statistici in grado di dimostrare in via definitiva come l'adesione della scuola italiana al regime fu senza dubbio massiccia ma non omogenea e monolitica (soprattutto se riferita ai contesti sociali e agli ordini scolastici) e come anche nel contesto della scuola fascista la categoria defelicianiana del «consenso di massa» debba quantomeno essere ridimensionata.

Senza scomodare il «maestro senza cattedra» Toni Giuriolo ricordato da Luigi

Meneghello nei suoi *Piccoli maestri*, questo volume fa emergere – tra la partecipazione obbligatoria alle attività parascolastiche di regime e l'incessante propaganda del periodo bellico – le figure di Adolfo Zamboni, insegnante del Liceo scientifico «Ippolito Nievo», e di Mario Todesco, insegnante del Liceo classico «Tito Livio», che mai rinunciarono alla propria identità politica antifascista e giunsero a partecipare attivamente alla lotta di Liberazione accanto ai propri allievi. Non erano quelli padovani casi isolati. Nel 2007 il Liceo classico «G.D. Romagnosi» di Parma ha dato alle stampe un volumetto passato per lo più inosservato, intitolato *Dalla scuola fascista alla lotta antifascista* (MUP Editore, Parma), all'interno del quale – sulla base di fonti documentarie inedite, reperite all'interno dell'archivio storico dell'istituto – si delineavano i profili biografici di ventisei tra docenti e studenti dello stesso liceo che avevano aderito a vario titolo alla lotta antifascista, evidenziando l'imprescindibile opera di formazione politica e di magistero morale esercitata «da quegli insegnanti che furono antifascisti in una scuola fascista». Del resto, già nel 1961 Ruggero Zangrandi col suo *Il lungo viaggio attraverso il fascismo* (Milano, Feltrinelli) aveva sottoposto per primo all'opinione pubblica le complesse dinamiche identitarie della generazione di coloro che erano stati educati dal fascismo e avevano poi partecipato alla lotta antifascista. In tempi più recenti, prima Aldo Grandi nel 2001 con *I giovani di Mussolini: fascisti convinti, fascisti pentiti, antifascisti* (Milano, Baldini & Castoldi,) e poi Maurizio degli Innocenti con *L'epoca giovane. Generazioni, fascismo e antifascismo* (Manduria, Lacaia) avevano focalizzato le proprie ricerche su quella generazione, concentrandosi sull'incidenza del fattore generazionale in rapporto ai processi di mutamento politico nella prima metà del XX secolo.

Inutile e fuorviante sarebbe proseguire questa disanima, la quale si propone unicamente d'indicare una strada rimasta interrotta, che forse è giunta l'ora di riprendere, per scoprire un'altra scuola, quella superiore, sottoposta alle medesime spinte di omologazione ideologica a cui il regime fascista sottoponeva anche quella elementare, ma in grado di esprimere anche proposte formative alternative. Il caso padovano indica che gli archivi scolastici sono ancora in grado, ove preservatisi, di restituire una documentazione di straordinario valore, la quale – unita ai diari degli insegnanti, alle testimonianze orali o scritte di studenti e alle riviste studentesche (altra fonte poco studiata, le cui potenzialità euristiche erano state ben evidenziate da Alberto Folini e Mario Quaranta già nel 1977) – può consentire l'avvio di una nuova feconda stagione di studi.

Juri Meda

Giuseppe Zago (ed.), *Sguardi storici sull'educazione dell'infanzia. Studi in onore di Mirella Chiaranda*, Fano, Aras Edizioni, 2015, 506 pp.

Les travaux de Mirella Chiaranda consacrés à la réflexion pédagogique vouent une attention particulière à la méthodologie de l'histoire de l'éducation. Ils manifestent tout leur intérêt pour des études profondément immergées dans les réalités politiques, économiques, sociales et religieuses d'une époque, embrassant toutes les composantes du passé afin d'éclairer les origines de phénomènes contemporains. Mirella Chiaranda a enseigné pendant de longues années à l'université de Padoue et l'ouvrage qui lui est consacré concerne avant tout l'enfance en Italie; mais au-delà de ses spécificités pédagogiques, il comporte l'étude de modèles d'éducation, de lutte

contre l'analphabétisme et d'instruction civique qui contribuent à lui donner une dimension religieuse.

Dans la France des Lumières du XVIII^e siècle, la peinture exploite la sentimentalité de compositions mélodramatiques; mais elle traduit aussi une attention nouvelle portée à l'éducation. La mère et l'enfant deviennent les protagonistes d'utopies littéraires à finalités pédagogiques. Le XVIII^e siècle français voit naître un nouveau type de femme. La mondaine philosophe donne aux idées un air de décence et de bon goût; mais la femme reste victime des préjugés sociaux et la réussite littéraire n'est chez elle que le «deuil éclatant du bonheur» (Madame de Staël). La mère est la première éducatrice, celle qui initie l'enfant à la vertu, et ce rôle moral confirme son statut d'infériorité intellectuelle. Le rationalisme des Lumières reste essentiellement masculin et l'émancipation féminine se limite à des cas individuels. L'image traditionnelle de l'épouse et de la mère exemplaire règne au XIX^e siècle, s'étendant à la bourgeoisie. Toutefois, le monde nouveau ne s'élabore pas seulement à travers les logiques de l'empirisme scientifique. Il émerge aussi d'une réévaluation du rapport à la nature et d'une prise en compte des sentiments qui animent le courant pré-romantique.

Au XIX^e siècle, le catholicisme se féminise et cette orientation influence profondément la pastorale et l'apostolat, la catéchèse et l'éducation chrétienne. Les nouvelles congrégations religieuses ont pour mission de donner conscience à la femme catholique de l'importance de son rôle dans la société. Elle doit revigorer le sentiment religieux dans la famille afin de la protéger d'une désagrégation liée à la modernisation économique et à la sécularisation des mentalités. La femme devient le principal interlocuteur de l'Église et la destinataire privilégiée de son message. L'idéal éducatif féminin de la société

bourgeoise trouve sa raison d'être dans une convergence paradoxale entre la culture libérale laïque et celle du catholicisme. Il attribue à la femme, totalement identifiée dans son rôle d'épouse et de mère au foyer, une place centrale dans l'éducation des enfants et dans la morale de la famille.

L'Eglise contribue largement à l'éducation dans l'Italie pré-unitaire. Des communautés religieuses s'inspirent d'un courant humaniste de la culture vénitienne. L'apostolat des frères Cavanis se nourrit d'un dialogue permanent entre le monde des clercs et celui des laïcs à des fins d'évangélisation. La discipline de la congrégation est sévère, mais l'inspiration rosminienne l'incite à s'adresser au cœur plus qu'au corps ou à l'esprit dans des jardins de récréation pour enfants pauvres. Elle noue des liens avec les «école de charité» de Maddalena di Canossa qui s'étendent en Lombardie, en Vénétie et jusqu'au Trentin (E. Butturini, *Istituzioni educative a Verona tra '800 e '900*, Verona, Mazziana, 2001). Mirella Chiaranda a étudié la politique scolaire autrichienne en Vénétie et la place centrale occupée par l'enseignement religieux; mais des philanthropes créent des établissements destinés à l'enfance pauvre. On y pratique une pédagogie qui obéit à une méthode démonstrative, avec un apprentissage précoce de la lecture et de l'écriture. Homme cultivé, parfaitement intégré dans la société vénitienne, l'inspecteur des écoles Giovanni Codemo anime «L'istitutore elementare» qui défend l'école publique et conçoit l'alphabetisation comme la clé du civisme; mais la revue subit les influences pédagogiques autrichiennes, notamment celle de l'archevêque de Vienne V.E. Milde, un prélat acquis au joséphisme en matière scolaire. Elle se réfère à Pestalozzi pour chercher la solution de la question sociale dans la rénovation de l'éducation et s'inspire d'Albertine Necker de Saussure pour préconiser le libre épanouissement de la personnalité dans une éducation fami-

liale renforcée par de fréquents recours à la morale.

Au Piémont, des ecclésiastiques jouent un rôle important au ministère de l'Instruction publique, dans la direction d'écoles, l'édition scolaire et l'université. En 1848, le royaume compte 66% d'analphabètes, mais 42% seulement en 1871. Ces progrès sont dûs à des philanthropes et à des prêtres dont la foi religieuse entend vivifier les conquêtes révolutionnaires de 1789 et de 1848. Ces «prêtres nationaux» nourris d'une culture puisée chez Gioberti, représentent les 2/3 des enseignants des écoles primaires publiques piémontaise dans les années 1850. Leurs classes sont surchargées, les effectifs variant avec les saisons suivant les travaux des champs. Ils s'adressent aux élèves pris individuellement et utilisent d'ingénieux procédés didactiques pour occuper les autres. Pour ces «prêtres libéraux», l'ignorance est un handicap dans l'exercice des droits civiques, mais aussi un obstacle à une foi religieuse libérée de toute superstition.

Les travaux de Mirella Chiaranda évoquent deux figures emblématiques d'éducatrices. Celle de Pauline Kergomard insiste sur les ferments laïques permettant de briser la crédulité d'une foi religieuse dévouée à un Dieu qui aime et punit. Elena Raffalovich Comparetti offre une version novatrice et laïque des jardins d'enfants qui entend concilier la dignité de l'enseignement et le respect des convictions individuelles dans le choix des valeurs morales. Mirella Chiaranda manifeste ici tout son intérêt pour l'utopie, considérée comme la manifestation d'une tension intellectuelle révélatrice de l'esprit d'une époque.

La vision traditionnelle qui fait des sœurs Agazzi et de Maria Montessori des modèles antithétiques catholique et laïque dans l'Italie du début du XX^e siècle doit être nuancée. Des travaux récents

décrivent le catholicisme «sui generis» de la pédagogue de la «Casa dei bambini». Maria Montessori noua des liens avec des personnalités catholiques modernistes qui influencèrent sa pensée (F. De Giorgi, *Montessori, Dio, il bambino ed altri scitti inediti*, Brescia, La Scuola, 2013). Les Sœurs franciscaines missionnaires de Marie manifestaient un grand intérêt pour la «Casa dei bambini» et Montessori cessa d'enseigner à l'École pédagogique de Luigi Credaro. Il semble même qu'elle ait été en contact dès 1903 avec des ecclésiastiques attentifs à l'action du laïcat catholique. Ce fut le cas du cardinal archevêque de Bologne Domenico Svampa personnalité éminente de l'Eglisetrès ouverte aux directives pastorales de Léon XIII. Il soutint en 1905 un ambitieux projet de Maria Montessori, probablement destiné aux enfants handicapés, dont il approuva la dimension charitable mais aussi la portée religieuse. Svampa se montre fidèle au nouveau pape Pie X, sans partager ses conceptions, et Loisy le range parmi ses défenseurs (Sur la dimension religieuse de l'œuvre de Maria Montessori, voir: E. Butturini, *La pace giusta. Testimoni e maestri tra '800 e '900*, Verone, Mazziana, 1999). Beaucoup de chercheurs ont insisté sur l'influence de la théosophie sur la pensée de Montessori; mais elle semble se limiter à une simple curiosité intellectuelle, sans impact véritable sur sa pédagogie.

Au tournant du XX^e siècle, l'Eglise reconnaît elle aussi l'importance de l'enfance dans la construction de la personne. Le décret pontifical «*Quam singulari*» (1910) montre que Pie X la considère comme un retour possible à la pureté originelle. Dans le processus éducatif qui creuse l'identité de l'être pour en libérer l'image de Dieu, l'enfant doit communier avec la source de la vie éternelle. L'homme n'est pas naturel; l'action de Dieu rend sa créature divine, c'est-à-dire capable d'amour. La vie devient

une fidélité à l'enfance dont le décret pontifical reconnaît la spécificité avec toute sa fragilité humaine.

A l'époque du positivisme triomphant, Francesco De Sanctis n'hésitait pas à montrer les limites d'une politique excessivement soumise au scientisme et à l'économie, en insistant sur le rôle de la spiritualité religieuse dans la formation du caractère. Au début du XX^e siècle, le philosophe idéaliste Giovanni Gentile soutenait la nécessité de l'enseignement de la religion à l'école primaire pour la formation de la personne et il le rendait obligatoire dans sa réforme scolaire de 1923. Aujourd'hui, une idée fautive de la laïcité et du pluralisme tend à attribuer un sens discriminatoire à la foi religieuse. L'enseignement de la religion doit lui rendre sa valeur authentique d'une «distinction pour unir» (Jacques Maritain) et elle ne peut y parvenir que dans les limites d'une rationalité scientifique. Antonio Rosmini distinguait la «foi naturelle» de la «foi surnaturelle». Certes, les vérités révélées ne peuvent être pleinement vécues sans la grâce d'une «foi surnaturelle»; mais la recherche pédagogique peut renouer avec une «foi naturelle» qui ne doit rien à une émotion ou à une sensibilité artistique. Ses vérités premières restitueront à l'enseignement de la religion la dimension que lui confère sa valeur sociale.

L'ouvrage consacré à Mirella Chiaranda est multiforme. Il est sous-tendu par un idéal démocratique qui exige une formation libérale humaniste ouverte à la recherche scientifique et consciente de son utilité sociale. Il s'insère parfaitement dans l'éducation populaire dont la générosité transparaît dans l'œuvre de Mirella Chiaranda.

Michel Ostenc

Marcella Bacigalupi, Piero Fossati, *Dal Ludimagister al maestro elementare. Le scuole in Liguria tra antico Regime e Unità d'Italia*, Milano, Unicopli, 2016, 639 pp.

Sulla scorta di una larga messe di preziose fonti archivistiche e a stampa analizzate con grande competenza e in maniera accurata, il lavoro ricostruisce in maniera eccellente la storia della molteplici forme di insegnamento che si sono sviluppate e succedute sul territorio ligure dall'Età moderna alla metà del diciannovesimo secolo, con una particolare attenzione rivolta alla città capoluogo di Genova ma senza trascurare gli innumerevoli borghi, grandi o piccoli che fossero, delle Riviere e dell'entroterra. Il corposo volume di Bacigalupi e Fossati, autori già ben noti per i loro preziosi e puntuali studi sui processi di acculturazione scolastica e sul ruolo degli insegnanti nella storia d'Italia, si presenta come un contributo di scorrevole lettura, assolutamente valido a livello scientifico e che arricchisce in maniera considerevole gli studi del settore. Elemento chiave che emerge da un'attenta analisi del testo e che costituisce il file rouge tra tutte le sue pagine, è l'aspirazione degli autori, assolutamente soddisfatta, di dimostrare come la storia delle scuole e delle variegate occasioni di apprendimento di alfabeto e lettere in Liguria si presenti come una vicenda ben lontana dal possedere caratteri di linearità e di sviluppo progressivo. Proprio per questo motivo il lavoro rivela evidenti disparità nell'impostazione delle quattro parti che lo costituiscono tanto da consegnare al lettore alcuni periodi concentrati in un numero di pagine che, rispetto alla dimensione temporale, appare decisamente ristretto, ed altri momenti, brevi in termini di durata, sviluppati molto più ampiamente. Sono gli stessi autori, nella Premessa, a spiegare la genesi di ta-

li differenze che non sono dovute solo al prevalere della penna di uno o dell'altro autore. Vi sono infatti periodi storici nei quali le forme di acculturazione «sembrano caratterizzate da persistenze accompagnate da varietà locali o da trasformazioni lente che lasciano sussistere marginalmente antiche istituzioni». A tali periodi all'apparenza statici, si contrappongono tuttavia periodi di svolta che «richiedono un'analisi ravvicinata e obbligano chi voglia comprenderne il senso a seguirne l'andamento passo per passo» (p. 7). Tali svolte, secondo gli autori, sono quelle che riescono a fornire un senso nuovo a termini già ben noti: è proprio in questo modo che parole come "scuola", "istruzione", "educazione", finiscono per assumere connotazioni inedite e si organizzano secondo nuove strategie nelle diverse fasi storiche analizzate. Basti pensare al periodo di Antico Regime, quando molti furono «i momenti di contrazione e di stasi, le parziali riprese, le deviazioni verso nuovi significati e nuove direzioni» (p. 615). Nel contempo ci furono altresì momenti di improvviso e rapido mutamento e accelerazioni che produssero nel giro di pochi anni l'emergere di un clima culturale e di linguaggi che attribuivano significati assolutamente nuovi alle cose. Basterebbe qui ricordare la breve esperienza della Repubblica ligure giacobina, la cui storia è opportunamente ricostruita nella parte seconda del testo. Tale esperienza, pur generando di fatto delle «perdite in termini di istituzioni che trasmettevano alfabeto e istruzione» (p. 615), mutò radicalmente il senso dell'alfabetizzazione e trasformò la scuola, per quanto per un breve periodo e in ambienti circoscritti, in una realtà che fosse nel contempo diritto e dovere del buon cittadino. Le quattro articolate parti che costituiscono il lavoro (la prima su scuole, alfabeto e litterae nella Liguria d'Antico Regime; la secon-

da appunto sulla scuola della Repubblica ligure a cavallo tra Sette e Ottocento; la terza sull'età napoleonica e la quarta che copre il periodo compreso tra la Restaurazione e l'Unità) si differenziano anche per le caratteristiche delle fonti utilizzate. Se, infatti, ad esempio, per tutto l'arco cronologico dell'Antico Regime non ci sono, almeno per il territorio della Repubblica di Genova, complessi documentari nei quali l'istruzione sembri avere un proprio spazio specifico e ciò costringe lo storico a cercare informazioni utili sul funzionamento e le caratteristiche della scuola magari nei bilanci comunali o nei verbali dei Consigli di Comunità, dal periodo napoleonico in poi le scuole iniziano a poter vantare un loro spazio ben individuabile nel materiale archivistico, ulteriormente arricchito, soprattutto intorno alla metà dell'Ottocento, dalla copiosa pubblicistica che accompagnò i cambiamenti nel modo di pensare l'educazione e l'organizzazione scolastica. Questa situazione ha pertanto costretto gli autori a doversi misurare inizialmente con una penuria di documentazione che li ha obbligati «a sfruttare ogni minimo spunto faticosamente reperito», per poi passare ad una sovrabbondanza di fonti che pone il problema opposto della scelta significativa. Anche questo aspetto, da non sottovalutare, non fa che confermare le discontinuità, la mancanza di linearità e di sviluppo progressivo che in Liguria, come altrove, è rilevabile nella storia delle forme di acculturazione. In questo processo di alfabetizzazione e progressiva crescita culturale dell'individuo ha da sempre svolto un ruolo da protagonista l'insegnante. Figura tipica degli inizi dell'età moderna e che è oggetto di attenta analisi nel testo di Bacigalupi e Fossati è pertanto quella del ludimagister, il maestro di scuola che nelle comunità impartiva a chi voleva e poteva permetterseli i rudimenti del leggere e scrivere in latino e

l'eventuale lettura degli autori. Nel volume ben si ricostruisce l'evoluzione storico-socio-culturale di tale figura che, al termine di un percorso tortuoso e complesso di circa tre secoli, finisce per specializzarsi o nelle diverse funzioni di professore delle varie discipline degli studi secondari o in quelle di maestro elementare, protagonista di quell'alfabetizzazione del popolo che lo Stato si impegnò sempre più a promuovere soprattutto a partire dalla legge Boncompagni del 1848.

Luigiaurelio Pomante

Agustín Escolano Benito, *La cultura empirica della scuola. Esperienza, memoria, archeologia*, Ferrara, Volta la Carta, 2016, 255 pp.

Secondo titolo della nuova collana *Verità provvisorie*, diretta da Anita Gramigna ed edita dalla giovane casa editrice di Ferrara, Volta la carta, il volume *La cultura empirica della scuola. Esperienza, memoria, archeologia*, rappresenta una brillante ed interessante riflessione in tema di cultura della scuola e di filosofia dell'educazione dello studioso spagnolo Agustín Escolano Benito, già professore ordinario delle Università di Salamanca e di Valladolid e fondatore e direttore del CEINCE (*Centro Internacional de la Cultura Escolar*). Nel suo saggio, costituito da quattro capitoli, da una puntuale *Introduzione* e da un' altrettanto articolata conclusione (*Per concludere*) ed arricchito dalla *Presentazione* della stessa Gramigna e dalla *Postfazione* di Umberto Margiotta, Escolano, presentando una dettagliata analisi dei recenti risultati raggiunti dalla storiografia educativa e dalla riflessione scientifica ad essa connesse, pone il proprio specifico *focus* sulla cultura empirica, troppo spesso colpevolmente avviluppata da uno «strano

silenzio» (p. VII) da parte degli studiosi. Attraverso un taglio innovativo ed un linguaggio didatticamente molto efficace, l'autore, con l'arte accattivante dell'investigatore archeologo (immagine peraltro assai cara ad Escolano e già rilevabile in altri suoi rilevanti studi), riesce a svelare al lettore del volume come, quotidianamente, si sia costruita una «cultura della scuola» a partire dall'esperienza pratica e come tale prassi si sia configurata nell'attualità e nella concretezza dell'educazione. Come sottolineato dalla Gramigna nella *Presentazione* del volume, ad essere indagata e svelata nel saggio di Escolano, è «l'umile fattività educativa che si nasconde fra le incrostazioni taciute dell'esperienza, nello scorrere di un tempo quotidiano che prima d'ora non era parso degno di essere studiato, fra i meandri della memoria, nelle narrazioni dense di vita vissuta» (p. VII).

Il docente spagnolo, presentando nel suo testo documenti, iconografie e narrazioni di differenti paesi e ambienti culturali, realizza di fatto, anche in chiave comparatistica, una sorta di opera affascinante di archeologia educativa che riesce a recuperare «reperti» di notevole valore sia per comprendere la cultura della scuola sia per la proposta educativa ad essi connessa. Attraverso la riproduzione e la lettura critica di fotografie raffiguranti la scuola di tutto il mondo in epoche diverse, copertine di libri scolastici, quaderni di scuola o anche semplici disegni infantili, Escolano dimostra come, ad esempio, le illustrazioni che accompagnano i libri scolastici non illustrino solo in contenuti, ma a loro volta, rappresentino un'altra trama testuale. Ugualmente le note e le sottolineature scritte ai margini del foglio di manuali o di quaderni, possano farsi strumenti per una «duplice ermeneutica integrata», quella lineare del testo e quella dei segni aggiunti a mano, plasmando di fatto la cultura della scuola come rappresentazione.

Come spiega bene lo stesso autore nella sua *Introduzione*, il *fil rouge* che collega i quattro capitoli costituenti il saggio è la presa di coscienza consapevole che la teoria e la storia dell'educazione devono rendere conto di quanto si è costituito nel mondo dell'esperienza come «cultura prassica» (p. 3) e non accontentarsi più solo della teoria e delle norme che hanno cercato di regolare, dall'esterno, la vita delle istituzioni. Se davvero tali normative strutturali possono in qualche modo assumere un certo interesse, sottolinea Escolano, è soprattutto «in funzione delle modalità di ricezione che le istituzioni educative ed i docenti hanno adottato nei vari momenti storici, nonché dell'assorbimento di tali appropriazioni nella pragmatica dell'educazione nella costituzione di tale prassi in cultura» (p. 3). Tutto, dunque, per l'autore, parte dall'esperienza e tutto, alla fine, si incarna in essa. Si tratta di una sorta di «meccanismo di selezione o di darwinismo culturale che fa sì che certe metodologie e certi materiali possano giungere ai costumi degli attori dell'educazione, che altri modelli o metodi si affermino o decadano e che alcune opzioni emergano in certi momenti come innovazioni, senza sapere bene quale sarà il loro destino» (p. 3). Allo studioso della scuola, che ha compreso che i reperti archeologici della scuola sono le fonti più appropriate per porre domande con approccio etnografico e con internazionalità interpretativa agli indizi del passato, il compito di sostenere che «queste materialità rappresentano la testimonianza empirica a partire dalla quale si devono costruire comunità ermeneutiche di studiosi in grado di leggere i significati impliciti nei dati primari, affinché si decifrano sia le semantiche che i segnali semiotici, che tali fonti di sapere ci suggeriscono» (p. 6).

Nel primo capitolo del volume (*Apprendere dall'esperienza*), facendo proprie le indicazioni del sociologo e filosofo fran-

cese Pierre Bordieu rivolte agli scienziati sociali affinché conducano i propri lavori con la prudenza delle salutari «ragioni pratiche» e disciplinino le proprie analisi mediante costanti e ripetuti ritorni al mondo dell'esperienza, Escolano si sofferma principalmente, a sostegno dell'assunto che anima l'intero contributo sul ruolo primario dell'esperienza nella riscoperta e valorizzazione della cultura scolastica, sulla figura dell'insegnante e sulla sua peculiare «arte dell'insegnamento» che trae origine e linfa vitale da quelle regole operative che nascono dall'esperienza quotidiana nella relazione con le persone e con le cose. Egli passa così in rassegna due testimonianze significative: le confessioni degli insegnanti, agenti primari della cultura scolastica, così come si esprimono in alcune narrazioni personali, e i fondamenti dell'innovazione pedagogica dell'attivismo, la corrente del cambiamento educativo più accreditata in termini di validazione storica. Tanto i racconti dei docenti quanto i propositi delle scuole innovative tendono, infatti, come illustra Escolano, a «sostenere sull'esperienza le modalità con le quali si costruisce la cultura della scuola, empirica o effettuale, cioè quella che si è affermata nella realtà, che non sempre è coincidente con quella postulata teoricamente o desiderata sul piano sociale» (p. 10).

Nel secondo capitolo (*La prassi scolastica come cultura*) l'autore avvia invece un'interessante riflessione su come sia possibile costruire tale «cultura della pratica» (p. 77). Partendo dalla constatazione dell'esistenza di tre culture che incidono nel campo dell'educazione (l'empirica, l'accademica e la politica), così come delle loro relazioni interattive, il saggio cerca di cogliere, in alcuni contributi recenti (di autori quali Tyack, Cuban, Arata, Depaepe, Simon) le modalità attraverso le quali la nuova storia culturale sia riuscita a legittimare il valore della pratica e il modo

attraverso cui gli studi etnografici e ermeneutici siano arrivati «ad implementare i rinnovati approcci attorno alla cultura della scuola» (p. 77). Escolano, in particolare, si sofferma poi ad analizzare da un lato gli studi interdisciplinari che hanno suscitato i dibattiti sulla scuola della Fondazione Spencer; dall'altro riconosce i preziosi contributi forniti dal Circolo di Teramo, all'ermeneutica dialogica, ispirata da Antonio Valleriani e Paul Ricoeur.

Di particolare interesse è altresì il terzo capitolo (*La scuola come memoria*), in cui si analizza la cultura scolastica come «memoria», prestando attenzione particolare al valore dei ricordi e dei contenuti che tale memoria riesce ad archiviare. Secondo l'autore alla memoria deve necessariamente essere riconosciuto un ruolo di primaria importanza «nella strutturazione delle pratiche di socialità tra i pari di età che hanno convissuto nella scuola e nella creazione di stereotipi attorno all'immagine dei docenti e dei loro ruoli» (p. 141). Il contributo riflette inoltre attorno alle possibilità che il patrimonio educativo come memoria offre e che pertanto è da preservare e diffondere, così come sulle sue enormi potenzialità terapeutiche ed ermeneutiche. Proprio per tale motivo viene descritta l'interessante e meritevole esperienza portata avanti all'interno del CEINCE con soggetti affetti da demenza senile e malati di Alzheimer, coinvolti nel ricordo delle proprie ormai lontane esperienze scolastiche e sui quali è stato possibile riscontrare un notevole miglioramento del clima affettivo-sociale, dell'espressività linguistica nonché della motricità e del comportamento in generale.

Il quarto ed ultimo capitolo del libro (*Archeologia della scuola*) studia infine la possibilità di volgere uno sguardo archeologico alla memoria della scuola. Con tale finalità si offrono al lettore «alcuni esempi di immersione nei giacimenti in cui sono depositati gli elementi materiali del mon-

do scolastico e le rappresentazioni che ne abbiamo archiviato nella nostra memoria» (p. 185). Tali resti conservano, come fonti della cultura della scuola, proprio quei «segreti relativi alla storia dell'educazione e la grammatica che ha codificato la scolarizzazione» (p. 185). L'approccio archeologico dell'indagine viene esemplificata dall'autore attraverso quattro esperienze portate avanti sempre all'interno del CEINCE. La prima mostra come il contatto con una realtà museale (anche una semplice visita ad un museo della scuola) possa suscitare il recupero, da parte dei soggetti, di immagini relative ai loro vissuti scolastici, quelli che si sono sedimentati nella memoria personale. La seconda esperienza fa invece riferimento «ad un'archeologia sul campo» organizzata attorno ad una scuola chiusa da circa mezzo secolo conservante però in loco elementi materiali dell'epoca nonché di tempi anteriori risalenti al XIX secolo: la situazione offre la possibilità di considerare il «giacimento» come «un testo in forma di palinsesto, ogni volta che vi si osservano oggetti, scritti e immagini corrispondenti a vari strati storici, tanto per ciò che si riferisce ai materiali come per ciò che riguarda i registri grafici dell'espressione infantile» (p. 185). Il terzo esperimento si realizza attraverso l'incontro con un fondo scolastico che si converte in lascito per un ricercatore e che rivela la storia personale di chi era stata, nel Novecento, alunna di una scuola nazionalsocialista in Germania mentre nel quarto ed ultimo esperimento lo studioso, nelle vesti di Sherlock Holmes alle prese con la sua ennesima indagine, è chiamato ad «annusare» tra la spazzatura urbana la presenza di materiali di origine scolastica per capirne il vero significato ma soprattutto per coglierne la loro portata culturale ed educativa nella società.

Luigiaurelio Pomante

Giordana Merlo, *Alle origini della favola in Italia. La letteratura per l'infanzia nel Veneto tra '700 e '800*, Lecce-Rovato, Pensa MultiMedia, 2015, 251 pp.

Inserito nella collana *Paideia*, diretta da Hervé Cavallera, l'interessante volume di Giordana Merlo si pone l'obiettivo primario di riuscire a presentare al lettore il definirsi di una prima letteratura per l'infanzia all'interno di un preciso contesto culturale, quello veneto, particolarmente ricco ed eterogeneo alla luce anche degli avvenimenti politici e socio culturali che animarono l'arco temporale comprendente gli ultimi decenni del Settecento e l'Ottocento, fino alla seconda e più duratura dominazione asburgica. Ipotesi di ricerca alla base del testo è che non fu la sola alfabetizzazione la causa prima e necessaria del definirsi di una letteratura per l'infanzia, bensì fu la raggiunta consapevolezza dell'educabilità dell'infanzia a richiedere per sé attenzioni particolari e specifiche. La riconosciuta educabilità del bambino favorì pertanto la definizione delle prime espressioni di letteratura per l'infanzia e, nel contempo, ne accentuò «l'impronta precettistico-morale rispondente ad un dover essere pedagogico» (p. 14). Proprio alla luce di ciò, anche all'interno della riconosciuta e ben nota ricchezza culturale della realtà veneta, è possibile cogliere un processo di cambiamento in ordine all'immagine del bambino che da «non adulto», da uomo incompleto, finisce di fatto per divenire il protagonista di una progettualità pedagogica. Nell'ambito del definirsi di una sensibilità nuova nei confronti dell'infanzia quale premessa necessaria per il definirsi di una specifica letteratura, la Merlo riesce brillantemente nell'intento di mostrare come il territorio veneto anche sotto questo aspetto si sia rilevato particolarmente stimolante e degno di approfondimenti, ponendo l'accento su un'espressione letteraria che tenesse con-

to, in qualche misura, del destinatario non adulto. Proprio per tale motivo l'attenzione dell'autrice del lavoro è stata riservata ad un genere letterario di antica tradizione quale quello delle favole di derivazione esopica che, trovata considerevole diffusione nel territorio veneto, si configurava quale proposta di lettura per un nuovo destinatario, il bambino. In tal modo, all'interno di un ampio recupero della classicità proprio della seconda metà del Settecento, la favola diventa un genere letterario significativo nell'offrire, sotto veste classica, contenuti moderni; nell'esplicitare l'affermazione del bene quale virtù e la negazione del male in quanto vizio, mirando alla trasformazione dell'umanità per mezzo dell'educazione delle giovani generazioni. Quella della favola, come ben illustra la Merlo, diventa una lettura amena e gradevole ben lontana da sterili finzioni, radicata nella realtà e per questo veritiera e adatta pertanto ad un pubblico di lettori in progressivo aumento e necessitante di una guida. Nel volume della Merlo, tuttavia, l'interesse dell'autrice non rimane circoscritto unicamente alle sole produzioni favolistiche ma si rivolge in maniera apprezzabile anche all'attenzione editoriale prestata a tale genere letterario in un periodo in cui l'editoria veneziana in particolare si ritrovava a passare dall'aver un ruolo quasi di monopolio della produzione libraria, ad un ruolo secondario a causa dell'espandersi a livello editoriale di altre realtà territoriali (si pensi a quella milanese). Secondo la Merlo, pertanto, la lettura e lo spoglio attento dei cataloghi dei libri in vendita come pure degli elenchi delle opere stampate diventano «interessanti indicatori di una più o meno considerevole diffusione delle favole nella cultura veneta, quale prima espressione di una letteratura che si preoccupa di tener conto di un destinatario non adulto e che necessita di essere educato ed istruito» (p. 18). Tra la fine del Settecento e la seconda dominazione degli

Asburgo, la favola dunque ben risponde alla volontà di trovare nuove forme di insegnamento adatte al mondo dei più piccoli nonché contenuti adeguati alla capacità di comprensione del bambino il quale riesci a trovare nel contempo divertimento ed educazione nei dialoghi pieni di realismo contenutistico di animali umanizzati e parlanti. Composto da sette ampi capitoli ben strutturati, da un'attenta e articolata conclusione e da una ricca e aggiornata bibliografia, il testo di Giordana Merlo, molto gradevole alla lettura anche grazie allo stile particolarmente brioso dell'autrice, si presenta come un contributo di sicuro valore che arricchisce in maniera originale e accurata gli studi del settore. Dopo aver definito in maniera chiara ed esaustiva i concetti di letteratura per l'infanzia e di storia dell'educazione dell'infanzia e le loro rispettive funzioni nonché lo stretto rapporto con il paradigma dell'educabilità, la Merlo si sofferma più da vicino sul genere letterario delle favole, sottolineando come, a testimonianza «di un certo interesse per tale genere letterario, non disgiunto dal riconoscimento dell'importanza educativa» a loro attribuito (p. 75), alcune significative raccolte di favole, molte delle quali anche di origine e diffusione extra-italica, fossero apparse nel territorio veneto già nel secolo XVIII. Dopo tali esaustive premesse ampiamente sviluppate nei primi tre capitoli del suo lavoro, l'autrice passa in rassegna alcuni tra i più importanti favolisti veneti, tra cui, in particolare, Giuseppe Manzoni e «le sue favole per imparare a leggere e scrivere» (p. 93), il conte e gesuita Giambattista Roberti che nei suoi testi provò ad «adattare il genere della favola ai nuovi gusti dell'età moderna, cercando di rinnovarne, in particolare, i soggetti e le forme» (p. 106), Aurelio de' Giorgi Bertola assai noto per le sue favole in versi connotate dalla volontà di fare della favola «uno strumento di sensazioni piacevoli ma soprattutto di motivi educa-

tivi», in piena sintonia con il programma illuministico di una letteratura utile alla società e con il programma sensista di suscitare nel lettore «impressioni gradevoli» (p. 151). L'ultimo capitolo del libro, invece, dal titolo *Il grande silenzio veneto*, è dedicato alla riscoperta di Luigi Fiacchi, detto Clasio, e di Gaetano Perego, due favolisti di valore che vissero a cavallo tra il Sette e Ottocento, troppo spesso trascurati dagli editori veneti e oggetto di giudizi estremamente diversi e contrastanti tra i critici che oscillavano «dall'estrema valorizzazione alla critica più mordace» (p. 206). Di fatto, grazie alle riflessioni e alle suggestioni presentate nel suo lavoro, Giordana Merlo dimostra come la favola, con «la sua *moralità* esplicita» (p. 225), posta a chiusura, e anch'essa in rima tanto da poter essere facilmente ricordata come filastrocca, ben assolveva al compito di educare il buon bambino rispettoso di quei valori imposti e condivisi dal mondo adulto. Senza dubbio l'interesse manifestatosi, nel contesto veneto, per la favola, pur non essendo estraneo ad un certo gusto letterario proprio del neoclassicismo, particolarmente evidente nella ricercatezza stilistica di alcune proposte, come le produzioni di Roberti o la *Raccolta* remondiniana del 1800, altro non era che lo specchio fedele di un'attenzione già diffusa in quei territori per l'educazione del mondo infantile. «Un'attenzione – come afferma la Merlo nelle *Conclusioni* del volume – che connota un territorio significativamente ricettivo nei confronti della cultura pedagogica francese e austriaca entrambe sorrette dalla emanazione di una politica scolastica tendente alla diffusione dell'istruzione e quindi alla promozione dell'alfabetizzazione» (p. 224).

Luigi Aurelio Pomante

A. Ascenzi, R. Sani, *Tra disciplinamento sociale ed educazione alla cittadinanza. L'insegnamento dei Diritti e Doveri nelle scuole dell'Italia unita (1861-1900)*, Macerata, eum, 2016, 171 pp.

Il volume di Anna Ascenzi e Roberto Sani si inserisce nel filone di studi che negli ultimi quindici anni ha rinnovato radicalmente la storia della scuola, valorizzando fonti inedite utili a svelare quella cultura empirica della scuola fatta di modalità didattiche, di modelli curricolari e di pratiche educative, ma anche di immaginario sociale, di clima culturale e di imposizioni politiche più o meno sottili. E l'insegnamento dei Diritti e doveri del cittadino risulta particolarmente esposto ai condizionamenti ideologici e politici, piegato a fini specifici volti alla trasmissione dei valori di cittadinanza e alla formazione del senso di appartenenza al regno d'Italia. Un compito delicato e gravoso, reso ancor più necessario dall'urgenza di legare al neonato stato nazionale masse di cittadini – i legislatori coniarono il neologismo «regnicoli» – fino ad allora distanti dagli ordinamenti e dalle istituzioni dello stato liberale, estranee al sentimento di identità nazionale, in taluni casi ostili.

A fronte di queste considerazioni, molte sono le domande che percorrono le pagine del libro: in quale modo le classi dirigenti hanno inteso introdurre questo insegnamento nelle scuole italiane? E in quali scuole? Quanto spazio riservare alla nuova disciplina all'interno del monte ore di ciascun grado scolastico? Quali testi prescrivere? Che taglio dare ai programmi di insegnamento? A quale concetto di democrazia ispirare tale materia? Quanto spazio concedere – sempre che fosse il caso di concederlo – al riconoscimento di diritti dei nuovi cittadini? Fino a che punto bilanciare queste eventuali aperture con l'approfondimento dei numerosi doveri ri-

chiesti dall'appartenenza al regno italiano? L'elenco non è certo concluso, ma consente ugualmente al lettore di intuire la rilevanza di questa materia di studio all'interno dei processi di *Nation building* e le implicazioni connesse al suo insegnamento. Tuttavia, a fronte di tali considerazioni, finora non era mai stata condotta nel nostro Paese una ricerca sistematica su tale argomento.

Il presente intende dunque fare finalmente luce su un ambito disciplinare decisivo per comprendere l'idea di cittadinanza – e di Stato! – che la classe politica liberale del secondo Ottocento intese perseguire. Ad esempio, è altamente rilevante che il legislatore abbia deciso di introdurre questo insegnamento nelle scuole elementari, in quelle normali e tecniche, escludendo quindi la scuola per antonomasia, il ginnasio liceo classico. Nell'istituto deputato alla formazione della futura classe dirigente non ce n'era infatti bisogno, dal momento che altre discipline avevano il compito di educare il senso morale e civile degli studenti, quali la letteratura, la storia e la filosofia.

Ecco dunque che la presenza o meno di questo insegnamento e la specifica declinazione prevista per ciascuna scuola non rispondono tanto a ragioni di carattere pedagogico o didattico, bensì, sostengono gli autori, a preoccupazioni di natura ideologica e politica. L'insegnamento dei Diritti e doveri doveva infatti «fornire schemi ideologici e modelli di comportamento funzionali alle esigenze specifiche» delle varie popolazioni studentesche. La provenienza e il destino sociale degli studenti, dunque, condizionarono la declinazione di questo specifico insegnamento.

Emblematiche, poi, sono le denominazioni assegnate nel corso degli anni a questa disciplina, al punto che uno studio di carattere semantico sarebbe già quasi sufficiente per fornire interpretazioni e chiavi di lettura. Nel grado primario di istruzio-

ne, ad esempio, a lungo si è dato spazio alla sola componente dei «doveri» del cittadino, quasi che un esplicito riferimento ai diritti potesse innescare pretese da futuri spostati, per utilizzare la terminologia del tempo. Controllo ideologico e disciplinamento delle classi popolari furono infatti le finalità precipue di questa disciplina nell'istruzione primaria.

Nelle scuole normali, invece, l'insegnamento fu inizialmente previsto nei soli istituti maschili, in forma facoltativa ma con un titolo interessante: *Nozioni generali sui diritti e doveri del cittadino in relazione allo Statuto, alla legge elettorale e all'amministrazione pubblica*. Coi programmi del 1861 fu però incorporato nella materia chiamata «Religione e Morale», per poi, nel corso dei vari e frequenti mutamenti dei programmi, seguire un andamento ondivago tra autonomia e accorpamento ad altre discipline («Pedagogia e Morale», 1892; «Morale», 1895).

Andando oltre le intitolazioni e valutando i contenuti dei programmi si nota il riferimento costante allo Statuto Albertino e, in particolare, agli articoli dedicati ai Diritti e Doveri dei cittadini (artt. 24-32). Si trattò, tuttavia, di mere enunciazioni di principio: come bene evidenziano gli autori, infatti, alle classi inferiori era riconosciuta una cittadinanza debole, fatta di ben pochi diritti a fronte degli impegnativi doveri che era chiamata ad assolvere. Gli strumenti principali per limitare fortemente i diritti e negare le condizioni necessarie per renderli effettivi a tutti furono individuati in una legislazione ordinaria decisamente restrittiva e nell'introduzione di meccanismi di esclusione (si pensi, ad esempio, al diritto di voto, limitato a una percentuale irrisoria della popolazione).

Da qui l'esistenza di un sistema fortemente contraddittorio: a uno Statuto liberale e garantista, quantomeno sulla carta, faceva da contraltare un modello repressi-

vo di stampo reazionario. Il sistema trova tuttavia una sua coerenza interna se valutato in base ai differenti destinatari: una differenziazione per classi – ma anche per genere – cui era subordinato il godimento dei vari diritti riconosciuti dallo Statuto. E infatti, sostengono Ascenzi e Sani, non fu tanto la cittadinanza, quanto l'appartenenza al ceto borghese a essere fonte di diritti nel corso del secondo Ottocento in Italia.

A chiudere il volume, e in ottemperanza a quella linea storiografica fortemente innovativa richiamata in apertura, sono tre appendici. Se nelle prime due vengono integralmente riprodotti i programmi didattici dei Diritti e doveri del cittadino emanati nel secondo Ottocento e dedicati rispettivamente alle scuole elementari, a quelle tecniche e alle normali, la terza sezione raccoglie, suddivisi per anno di pubblicazione, i testi d'istruzione pubblicati dall'Unità d'Italia al nuovo secolo. Un repertorio prezioso costruito sulla scorta dello spoglio sistematico di cataloghi e altre fonti a stampa, oltre che dall'analisi della documentazione conservata presso l'Archivio Centrale dello Stato di Roma e che rappresenta uno stimolo forte a ulteriori approfondimenti.

In conclusione, il presente lavoro contribuisce in maniera significativa a colmare una grossa lacuna nella ricerca storico-educativa in Italia – quella relativa alla storia della didattica – e apporta originali e rilevanti elementi di riflessione intorno alle varie declinazioni che assunse, nel corso del secondo Ottocento, l'insegnamento dei Diritti e doveri, una disciplina fondamentale in termini di maturazione del sentimento di cittadinanza e di educazione etico-civile.

Fabio Targhetta

G. Gabrielli, *Il curriculum «razziale. La costruzione dell'alterità di «razza» e coloniale nella scuola italiana (1860-1950)*, Macerata, eum, 2015, 233 pp.

Il volume di Gianluca Gabrielli, profondo conoscitore del tema come testimoniano alcuni suoi precedenti lavori, si inserisce nel filone di studi avviati recentemente in Italia con l'obiettivo di indagare l'immaginario coloniale. A fronte tuttavia della costituzione di una solida linea di ricerca focalizzata su tali questioni, è finora rimasto sostanzialmente scoperto il ruolo esercitato dalla scuola nella trasmissione della cultura coloniale alle giovani generazioni. Una lacuna, questa, piuttosto sorprendente vista la mole di studi sulla funzione dell'istruzione all'interno dei più generali processi di formazione dell'immaginario socio culturale del nostro Paese.

Il presente lavoro si pone dunque l'obiettivo di colmare questa menda, andando a interrogare fonti di prima mano – testi scolastici, quadri murali, sussidi didattici, etc. – per ricostruire l'immagine veicolata dalla scuola dell'altro coloniale nelle sue diverse manifestazioni. L'arco cronologico considerato – dall'unità al secondo dopoguerra (1860-1950) – consente peraltro di trarre conclusioni sulla lunga durata di certi stereotipi trasmessi dal sapere scolastico.

Il primo dei quattro capitoli di cui è composto il libro è dedicato alla presentazione dello stato dell'arte. L'autore presenta infatti un'accurata e approfondita indagine sugli studi avviati in Italia intorno all'immaginario coloniale; una disamina molto utile a chi volesse raccogliere le sollecitazioni di Gabrielli intorno agli aspetti non ancora sufficientemente indagati dagli studiosi, in riferimento alle tematiche, all'intervallo cronologico considerato o alle fonti da valorizzare.

I due capitoli centrali costituiscono il

cuore dell'intero lavoro e ne rappresentano la parte più innovativa. L'analisi parte dal confronto con la normativa allora vigente; in particolare l'autore ha inteso verificare come i programmi di studio si siano riferiti al tema coloniale e a quello dell'alterità. Risulta in quest'ottica molto interessante indagare fino a che punto i documenti ministeriali abbiano recepito i fermenti in atto nel Paese, sia per quanto riguarda il discorso pubblico intorno all'avventura coloniale italiana, sia per quanto afferisce al rapporto tra cultura superiore – e specificamente accademica – e cultura scolastica, quando non espressamente popolare (mi riferisco qui al grado primario dell'istruzione).

All'interno di questo macro argomento (i programmi ministeriali per le scuole di ogni ordine e grado dall'Unità agli anni Cinquanta del Novecento), l'autore ha inteso individuare alcune tematiche chiave su cui compiere l'analisi delle pratiche didattiche e dei libri di testo relativamente al tema della "razza" e del colonialismo: i continenti extraeuropei, e l'Africa in modo specifico; la geografia antropica; l'espansione coloniale, soprattutto italiana. Va da sé che i contenuti e le pratiche didattiche fossero differenziate per tipologia di utenza: i destinatari della formazione all'immaginario coloniale differivano, infatti, per censo e provenienza sociale a seconda dell'istituto frequentato.

Come dimostrano le numerose indagini sui manuali di istruzione prodotte negli ultimi anni, i libri di testo si fecero a lungo carico di raccogliere queste differenze e di perpetuarle, contribuendo a bloccare le possibilità di ascensione sociale col formare ciascuno al ruolo cui era destinato per nascita e censo. L'insegnamento coloniale non fece eccezioni a questa regola: esso risultò declinato in forme differenti, con allontanamento dagli stereotipi e livello di problematicità che crescevano col pro-

gredire del livello culturale dei discenti, da un minimo rappresentato dalla scuola elementare – il grado popolare per eccellenza – a un apice costituito dagli studenti liceali, la futura classe dirigente. Contribuì a questa discordanza dei testi scolastici, contenutistica e qualitativa, anche l'eterogenea formazione degli autori: raramente, infatti, chi si occupava di esporre queste tematiche nei sussidiari era uno specialista della materia, a differenza degli autori di manuali per le scuole secondarie, i cui legami con la ricerca accademica erano, di norma, più evidenti.

A finire sotto la lente di indagine dell'autore sono poi stati, come anticipato, i libri di geografia, con particolare attenzione alle pagine riservate alla descrizione delle «razze umane» e delle civiltà. Il valore aggiunto è costituito dal costante riferimento al corredo iconografico, fossero semplici illustrazioni dei testi o quadri parietali da appendere alle pareti, le famose tavole delle razze. In queste ultime la collocazione – al centro della scena, o in posizione dominante – dell'individuo di «razza caucasica o bianca», la sua posa, l'abbigliamento, risultano tutti elementi in grado di esercitare una significativa influenza sull'immaginario infantile, scandendo la profonda differenza tra un gruppo, quello di riferimento per i giovani lettori, e gli altri, ritenuti implicitamente inferiori, sia sotto l'aspetto estetico che culturale (si veda, ad esempio, la differente foggia delle vesti).

Il paradigma razziale veicolato dalle immagini era il medesimo che ispirava i contenuti dei testi scolastici, nei quali la classificazione dell'umanità in «razze», per grado di civiltà o in base alle credenze religiose sottintendeva sempre una comune matrice di tipo razzista (livelli differenti di sviluppo evolutivo su base razziale). Si tratta, come mette in evidenza l'autore sulla scorta di una documentazione vasta e di prima mano, di un paradigma capace

di essere replicato nel lungo periodo – pur con le inevitabili differenze prodotte dal tempo e dal differente orientamento degli autori – col risultato di trasmettere a generazioni di studenti il concetto culturale di una suddivisione gerarchica di «razze» o popoli. Paradigmatico in tal senso è il caso, presentato nel quarto e ultimo capitolo, dell'apologo *I negri e il libro*. Si tratta di un brano che, a partire dalla prima trascrizione settecentesca per proseguire con la ripresa nel 1843 da parte di Alessandro Parravicini, poi ripubblicata nelle antologie scolastiche fino agli anni Cinquanta del Novecento, mantiene inalterati gli stereotipi sulla presunta inferiorità delle popolazioni africane.

Per concludere, il lavoro di Gabrielli si segnala non solo per il ricorso a fonti primarie finora poco utilizzate dagli storici, per la scrittura piana e per la profondità dell'analisi interpretativa, ma soprattutto perché ha il grande merito di aprire gli studi sulla formazione dell'immaginario coloniale al ruolo esercitato dalla cultura scolastica nella trasmissione di una determinata visione dell'alterità di «razza».

Fabio Targhetta

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La letteratura per l'infanzia e la sua storia tra ricerca e didattica. A proposito di un importante seminario di studi

Juri Meda
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism
University of Macerata (Italy)
juri.meda@unimc.it

The children's literature and its history between research and teaching. About an important study seminar

ABSTRACT: The article gathers and summarizes the papers presented at the seminar of studies on the history of Italian children's literature held at the Department of Education «Giovanni Maria Bertin» of the University of Bologna as part of the 54th edition of the Bologna Children's Book Fair (April, 3-6 2017). The seminar was promoted by the Workgroup on Children's Literature of the Italian Society of Pedagogy (SIPED) on the occasion of the publication of the first volume of the *Storia e antologia della letteratura per l'infanzia nell'Italia dell'Ottocento* by Anna Ascenzi and Roberto Sani (Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2017).

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Children's Literature; History of Education; Seminar of studies; Bologna Children's Book Fair; Italy.

Il 3 aprile 2017 – nell'ambito della 54^{ma} edizione della Fiera internazionale del libro per ragazzi di Bologna (3-6 aprile 2017) – si è svolto presso il Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Educazione «Giovanni Maria Bertin» dell'Università degli Studi di Bologna il seminario di studi «La letteratura per l'infanzia e la sua storia tra ricerca e didattica», organizzato dal Gruppo SIPED sulla letteratura per l'infanzia, dal Centro di Ricerca in Letteratura per l'Infanzia (CRLI) dell'Università degli Studi di Bologna e dal Centro di documentazione e ricerca sulla storia del libro scolastico e della letteratura per l'infanzia (CESCO) dell'Università degli Studi di Macerata in occasione della pubblicazione del primo tomo dell'opera di Anna Ascenzi e Roberto Sani, *Storia e antologia della letteratura per l'infanzia nell'Italia dell'Ottocento* (Milano, FrancoAngeli,

2017-2018, 2 voll.). Erano presenti – oltre ai vari relatori – Leonardo Acone, Anna Antoniazzi, Angela Articoni, Susanna Barsotti, Lorenzo Cantatore, Dorena Caroli, Mirella D'Ascenzo, Sabrina Fava, Ilaria Filograsso, Maria Filomia, Giorgia Grilli, Marino Negri, Luigiaurelio Pomante, Luana Salvarani, Maria Teresa Trisciuzzi e chi scrive.

Apri i lavori Emy Beseghi – coordinatrice insieme ad Anna Ascenzi e a Flavia Bacchetti del Gruppo SIPED sulla letteratura per l'infanzia e organizzatrice dell'evento – la quale ringrazia i colleghi per la massiccia adesione all'iniziativa e confida nel fatto che – anche in virtù di ciò – essa possa rappresentare un'occasione concreta per riflettere sulle radici della letteratura per l'infanzia in quanto disciplina scientifica, sia a livello metodologico che epistemologico, a partire proprio dalla sua storia. Beseghi passa a presentare brevemente il primo tomo dell'opera in più volumi di Anna Ascenzi e Roberto Sani, soffermandosi dapprincipio sul taglio antologico che i due autori hanno inteso dare all'opera, il quale è in grado di fornire utili strumenti per la didattica della letteratura per l'infanzia nel contesto accademico, in aderenza anche alla saldatura tra l'approccio critico e la lettura diretta dei testi (siano essi fiabe, romanzi o poesie) da sempre auspicata da Antonio Faeti. Beseghi mette quindi in luce alcuni tra i nodi critici di maggiore interesse all'interno del volume, come l'inclusione nella categoria della letteratura per l'infanzia dei libri di lettura per le scuole elementari, il focus dedicato alla circolazione in Italia dei classici della letteratura straniera per l'infanzia e infine la distinzione tra una letteratura per l'infanzia con dignità autoriale e una di carattere maggiormente didascalico, che – per quanto valida nel periodo cronologico preso in esame in questo primo tomo – tende successivamente a sfumare i propri contorni, come dimostra anche l'ambizioso progetto di rifacimento dei classici della letteratura per l'infanzia della *Scala d'Oro* (già fatta oggetto di approfondimento da Lorenzo Cantatore e più recentemente anche da Elisa Rebellato). Beseghi cede quindi la parola a Simonetta Ulivieri – presidente della Società Italiana di Pedagogia (SIPED) – e a Tiziana Pironi – presidente del Centro Italiano per la Ricerca Storico-Educative (CIRSE) – per i rispettivi saluti.

Ulivieri rammenta come recenti studi confermino – nonostante gli sforzi compiuti per la promozione della lettura nelle scuole e le numerose iniziative promosse in tal senso – il calo della lettura tra i giovani in età scolare e rileva come questo preoccupante dato attesti la centralità che lo studio della letteratura per l'infanzia deve avere nella pedagogia contemporanea e nella formazione degli insegnanti. Questo significa che la letteratura per l'infanzia come disciplina scientifica deve crescere. Secondo i dati ufficiali, ad oggi, nei quarantadue dipartimenti di scienze della formazione presenti nel nostro paese, risultano attivi solamente ventidue docenti universitari di letteratura per l'infanzia; questa carenza testimonia una volta di più la necessità di investire nei nostri corsi di laurea e nelle nostre scuole di dottorato sulla formazione e sulla crescita di altri/e giovani studiosi/e che possano in seguito assumere i

posti ancora vacanti all'interno delle sedi dove sono attivi corsi di studio in Scienze dell'Educazione e della Formazione, Scienze Pedagogiche e Scienze della Formazione Primaria.

Pironi d'altronde testimonia come all'interno della comunità italiana di storia dell'educazione, da lei rappresentata, l'ambito di studi della letteratura per l'infanzia sia uno tra quelli maggiormente dinamici e – confermando la necessità di espansione di tale disciplina a livello nazionale – annuncia che il CIRSE intende procedere a una mappatura del proprio settore scientifico disciplinare a livello nazionale al fine di verificare quale sia la copertura degli insegnamenti di letteratura per l'infanzia e di storia dell'educazione su tutte le sedi italiane da parte degli studiosi incardinati nel settore scientifico disciplinare M-Ped/02 – Storia della pedagogia.

Terminati i saluti istituzionali, Beseghi passa la parola ai colleghi invitati a tenere le tre relazioni introduttive, nell'ordine: Pino Boero (Università degli Studi di Genova), Flavia Bacchetti (Università degli Studi di Firenze) e Milena Bernardi (Università degli Studi di Bologna). Boero rileva in apertura come quest'opera non faccia che confermare un dato già emerso chiaramente nel corso del convegno «Scrivere, leggere, raccontare: la letteratura per l'infanzia tra passato e futuro» (Genova, 19-21 gennaio 2017), vale a dire la molteplicità degli approcci critici utilizzati oggi nell'ambito degli studi sulla letteratura per l'infanzia, che attestano l'estrema vitalità di questo particolare ambito di studi. Quella ottocentesca, analizzata nel primo tomo dell'opera di Ascenzi e Sani, è una letteratura didascalica, sostanzialmente precettistica, che è profondamente differente dalla letteratura per l'infanzia novecentesca, nonostante la precettistica dei buoni sentimenti continui a trovarvi spazio anche se con un nuovo linguaggio, più fruibile anche da parte dei piccoli lettori. La lingua e la sua evoluzione, infatti, tanto quanto i contenuti morali, lo stile letterario e il gusto estetico, costituiscono un elemento fondamentale della storia della letteratura per l'infanzia. Questa considerazione induce Boero ad affermare che (nonostante egli detesti profondamente le antologie, convinto – come Sanguineti – che convenga sempre leggere il testo integrale piuttosto che non la sua riduzione) la scelta degli autori di combinare la loro ricostruzione critica ad una antologia di testi letterari è estremamente efficace dal punto di vista didattico, in quanto riesce a restituire al lettore testi oggi altrimenti difficilmente reperibili e a offrirgli un saggio autentico dei paradigmi letterari e dei modelli linguistici in uso all'interno di questo particolare genere letterario nel XIX secolo. Un genere che – con la sua lingua desueta, pomposa e colma di stilemi retorici – si rivolgeva ancora evidentemente più agli alfabetizzati che agli alfabetizzandi e che costituiva proprio per questo motivo lo “specchio linguistico” di un'Italia colma di ingiustizie e disuguaglianze, nella quale erano ancora poche le zone in cui era garantita una buona diffusione editoriale e nella quale circolavano dunque pochi libri, i cui contenuti educativi erano veicolati alle classi incolte prevalentemente attraverso l'oralità. Boero termina il proprio

intervento lodando l'attenzione concessa dagli autori alle traduzioni (il cui peso era già stato messo in evidenza anni fa nel noto manuale Boero-De Luca) e alle prime edizioni italiane di alcuni classici della letteratura straniera per l'infanzia.

Flavia Bacchetti afferma che – nonostante non condivida in alcuni casi i criteri di selezione utilizzati dai due autori e sottolinei come la scelta dei testi antologizzati possa non incarnare fedelmente lo spirito dei tempi e risultare anzi fuorviante – mancava ancora ad oggi sul piano della didattica accademica un volume di questo genere. Gli storici, infatti, da questo punto di vista, si sono abituati ad utilizzare piste ermeneutiche di tipo critico, tralasciando spesso l'approccio diretto ai testi, che questa antologia colma e a cui rimedia. Bacchetti sottolinea poi che – richiamando la fortunata categoria storiografica inaugurata da Bacigalupi e Fossati – il processo di sviluppo socio-culturale «da plebe a popolo» è estremamente lento e l'uso, la diffusione e la proliferazione editoriale di questo genere di letture non hanno avuto uno sviluppo rettilineo, ma anzi si sono caratterizzati per connotazioni estremamente differenti a seconda delle aree geografiche, nelle quali il processo di alfabetizzazione è avvenuto a più velocità. Come aveva già rivelato Tina Tomasi, d'altronde, lo scolasticismo era un aspetto preponderante nella letteratura per l'infanzia ottocentesca, che – come anche il volume mette ben in rilievo – seguiva sostanzialmente due binari: quello scolastico (come *Il Giannetto*, con le sue caratteristiche enciclopediche, obsoleto nel linguaggio e precettistico nei contenuti) e quello letterario. Questa divaricazione tra letteratura amena e letteratura d'istruzione appare ancora oggi quanto mai complessa e necessiterebbe forse di ulteriori approfondimenti critici, cui si confida che questo volume darà avvio. Bacchetti, infine, riprendendo quanto già affermato anche da Boero, rileva come sul piano ermeneutico gli autori testimonino una poliedricità e un poliformismo degli studi di letteratura per l'infanzia che appare fondamentale e che deve essere rispettato.

Milena Bernardi dà avvio al suo intervento affermando di non condividere l'interpretazione fornita dianzi da Pino Boero delle antologie come persecutorie, in quanto le interpreta come raccolte indiziarie, vive e provocatorie, che non si chiudono in sé, ma tracciano anzi nuovi sentieri e forniscono utili piste di approfondimento. La «letteratura tra i banchi di scuola» costituisce uno di questi nuovi sentieri, una zona intermedia dell'immaginario, che si posiziona tra il «racconto chiuso» tradizionale e la «letteratura analfabeta», alimentata dall'apporto originale dell'oralità, in mutamento continuo, tipica dei *filò*, con la lettura ad alta voce dei grandi *feuilleton* ottocenteschi (come *I Miserabili* o *Il Conte di Montecristo*) da parte d'un lettore unico alfabetizzato che legge per tutti. La «letteratura tra i banchi di scuola» è senza dubbio alternativa a quest'ultima, in quanto non è «analfabeta» ma alfabetizzante, ma riprende in alcuna misura i temi e le dinamiche della lettura collettiva ad alta voce proprie della «letteratura analfabeta», innestandole nel contesto scolastico. È una letteratura che tende al dirozzamento delle plebi e alla loro educazione morale, puntando a distinguere il bene dal male e a catalogare le angustie e i sentimenti.

Beseghi apre il dibattito, invitando i colleghi presenti a intervenire. Lorenzo Cantatore (Università degli Studi Roma Tre) plaude alla pubblicazione di quest'opera, in quanto accredita – a suo modo di vedere – definitivamente la letteratura per l'infanzia come strumento di analisi e conoscenza del passato, applicando alla storia di questo particolare genere letterario paradigmi metodologici e modelli interpretativi sviluppati dagli autori nel corso delle loro precedenti ricerche sulla stampa periodica magistrale e sull'editoria scolastica. Se l'antologia recentemente curata da Stefano Calabrese (*La letteratura per l'infanzia: dall'Unità d'Italia all'epoca fascista*, 2011) – per quanto colta e in grado di mettere in luce come le costrizioni pedagogiche esercitate sui giovani lettori non siano riuscite a soffocare la nascita di una letteratura amena – appare parziale, la nuova opera di Ascenzi e Sani offre invece agli studiosi una collezione di testi in grado, da un lato, d'accreditare le fondamentali linee di tendenza della letteratura per l'infanzia nel secolo XIX e, dall'altro, di rilevare la prevalenza d'un intento morale, didascalico e di omogeneizzazione linguistica e l'assenza d'un canone letterario, che sarà ricercato più avanti.

Sabrina Fava (Università Cattolica di Milano) conferma come quest'opera vada a modificare in qualche modo la fisionomia assunta dalla letteratura per l'infanzia nell'ambito degli studi storiografici, nei quali prevale una ricostruzione letteraria che parte dai testi e dagli autori, che ha messo spesso in ombra un altro versante, quello della ricezione del testo letterario, molto più difficile da indagare, perché si staglia sullo sfondo della divaricazione tra lettori ideali e lettori reali. In tal senso, Fava apprezza particolarmente lo sforzo compiuto dagli autori nel descrivere l'effettiva diffusione, la fortuna letteraria e la persistenza nel tempo di alcuni testi letterari (come *Le novelle morali* di padre Soave o *L'arpa della fanciullezza* di Luigi Sailer), ma anche l'attenzione dedicata alle traduzioni (come *Le avventure di Telemaco* del Fénelon). Fava esprime poi il proprio apprezzamento anche per la parte antologica, in quanto dal punto di vista ermeneutico riafferma la centralità del testo letterario, interpretato non solo in prospettiva filologica ma anche educativa, che costituisce poi il focus specifico del nostro ambito disciplinare.

Luana Salvarani (Università degli Studi di Parma) si concentra sul capitolo quarto del primo tomo dell'opera, con particolare riferimento alla traduzione e alla circolazione della letteratura selfhelpista, considerata in qualche modo il grimaldello utilizzato dalla letteratura americana per entrare in Italia. Salvarani – autrice di due volumi sulla cultura educativa americana, *Sunday school literature* (Anicia, 2012) e *Nascita di una nazione* (Anicia, 2015), cui è stato recentemente conferito il Premio Italiano di Pedagogia della SIPED – sottolinea infatti come i colti ceti dirigenti delle regioni più industrializzate del nostro paese prendano a modello la cultura politica liberale e laica di matrice americana e importino la letteratura educativa selfhelpista espressione di quella cultura, pur contraendo le eccessive aspettative di crescita sociale tipiche del modello americano del *self made man* e adattandole alla realtà nazionale, in cui

è possibile migliorare le proprie condizioni di vita senza tuttavia stravolgere le gerarchie sociali consolidate. Salvarani evidenzia infine anche l'impatto stilistico della produzione americana su quella italiana, con l'adozione di frasi brevi, di impianti sintattici meno complessi e con l'apertura a uno *humor* fino a quel momento estromesso da questo genere letterario, sottolineando come questi aspetti andrebbero maggiormente approfonditi.

Seguono gli interventi di Chiara Lepri sulla diffusione in ambito nazionale de *Le avventure di Robinson Crusoe* del Defoe, ritenuto paradigmatico del romanzo per ragazzi di fine Ottocento, e di Martino Negri (Università degli Studi di Milano) sulla fortuna italiana di *Pierino Porcospino* di Hoffmann, un grande classico della letteratura tedesca per l'infanzia, in cui emerge in tutta la sua densità la relazione non sempre lineare tra tensione estetica e dimensione educativa, più volte messo in luce nel corso delle relazioni precedenti all'interno della letteratura per l'infanzia di stampo ottocentesco.

Terminati gli interventi degli studiosi e delle studiose presenti, Beseghi passa dunque la parola ai due autori dell'opera per le conclusioni. Anna Ascenzi e Roberto Sani (Università degli Studi di Macerata), dopo aver ringraziato i presenti per le numerose sollecitazioni ricevute e per gli stimoli dei quali non mancheranno di tener conto all'interno del secondo tomo dell'opera, tentano di tracciare le linee evolutive della letteratura per l'infanzia come disciplina scientifica nel corso degli ultimi decenni. Le prime cattedre di Storia della letteratura per l'infanzia furono quelle di Anna Maria Bernardinis alla Facoltà di Magistero dell'Università degli Studi di Padova a partire dall'anno accademico 1967-'68, di Rita D'Amelio alla Facoltà di Magistero dell'Università degli Studi di Bari dall'anno accademico 1969-'70 e di Antonio Faeti alla Facoltà di Magistero dell'Università degli Studi di Bologna dall'anno accademico 1975-'76, che fu poi anche il primo docente a ricoprire un posto di ruolo specificamente assegnato alla disciplina.

Lo stesso Faeti, d'altronde, nel 1990, nel suo *Le notti di Restif: peripezie di un girovago tra media e finzioni* (La Nuova Italia, 1990), sottolineava come le cattedre di Storia della letteratura per l'infanzia attivate negli atenei italiani fossero solo cinque: Bari, Bologna, L'Aquila (dove lavorava il compianto Franco Trequadrini), Padova e Urbino (dove lavorava Carlo Marini). È la fase pionieristica della letteratura per l'infanzia, che vede emergere la scuola bolognese grazie all'indiscussa genialità di Antonio Faeti, ma che sconta la totale assenza di apparati e strumenti di ricerca, di collegamenti e raccordi con gruppi di studio nazionali e internazionali e sulla quale grava ancora l'ambigua commistione con la pedagogia. Una svolta fondamentale avviene nel 1999, quando – nella valutazione comparativa per la copertura d'un posto di professore ordinario di Storia della Pedagogia, bandita dalla Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione dell'Università degli Studi di Genova – risultano idonei Emy Beseghi, Pino Boero e Renata Lollo, che – a partire dai primi anni del nuovo secolo – costituiscono la «cabina di regia» per la promozione di questo ambito di

studi a livello nazionale e per il consolidamento dei suoi tre poli di irradiazione in ambito accademico, costituiti dalle università di Bologna, Genova e dalla Cattolica di Milano. Un successo testimoniato dal crescente impulso dato alla ricerca, con la produzione di importanti studi sia sul versante storico che su quello critico, dall'avvio d'un'organica politica di reclutamento accademico, con la creazione di numerose nuove cattedre, e dalla creazione d'una comunità coesa di studiosi e studiose, tra cui numerosi giovani, dotata d'una propria precisa identità epistemologica, di cui il Gruppo SIPED sulla letteratura per l'infanzia è una significativa espressione.

Al termine del seminario, il Gruppo SIPED sulla letteratura per l'infanzia ha deciso d'attribuire un premio speciale a Pino Boero, Emy Beseghi e Renata Lollo (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano), per i loro studi originali e innovativi e per il loro incisivo magistero accademico, i quali hanno conferito un notevole spessore culturale alla letteratura per l'infanzia e hanno contribuito a farne una disciplina di elevato profilo scientifico.

Un laboratorio culturale e scientifico: il «Centro di ricerca in letteratura per l'infanzia» dell'Università degli Studi di Bologna

Milena Bernardi
Dipartimento di Scienze
dell'educazione «G.M. Bertin»
Università degli Studi di Bologna
(Italy)
milena.bernardi@unibo.it

A cultural and scientific laboratory: the «Children's Literature Research Center» at the University of Bologna

ABSTRACT: The «Children's Literature Research Center» (CRLI) was born in November 2013 within the Department of Science of Education «Giovanni Maria Bertin» of Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna. The main Center's studies are focused on children's literature with an interdisciplinary approach. The CRLI pays particular attentions to the complexity of the relationship between childhood and literature. The CRLI's goal is to promote his theoretical researches and support international collaborations. Through academic researches, teaching, students and teachers training the CRLI aim to deepen and spread the knowledge of a literature often marginalized.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Childhood; Children's literature; Theoretical research; Interdisciplinary approach; International collaborations; Italy.

La ricerca ed i presupposti teorici

L'11 Novembre 2013 nasce il Centro di ricerca in letteratura per l'infanzia (d'ora in avanti CRLI)¹ del Dipartimento di Scienze dell'educazione «Giovanni

¹ Il collegio scientifico del CRLI è così composto: responsabile scientifico, Milena Bernardi (professore associato, Dipartimento di scienze dell'educazione, Università di Bologna); componenti

Maria Bertin» dell'Università degli Studi di Bologna, già sede, fin dal 1982, della cattedra universitaria di letteratura per l'infanzia del prof. Antonio Faeti.

Il centro di ricerca si è attivato con la precisa finalità di ampliare le possibilità e le potenzialità di ricerca teorica e sul campo, di comunicazione e di scambio tra centri di ricerca e studiosi in ambito nazionale e internazionale.

In tal senso il CRLI ha voluto costituirsi come punto di riferimento per studi ed eventi culturali dedicati specificatamente alla letteratura per l'infanzia secondo un tipo di approccio interdisciplinare e comparativo, tendente ad individuare connessioni e accostamenti fra testi, contesti, temi, rappresentazioni, nella prospettiva di un'indagine ermeneutica capace di far emergere tutta la complessità del narrare, anche e propriamente all'infanzia.

Obiettivo pedagogico, storico e letterario, oltre che educativo e didattico del centro di ricerca risulta essere, innanzitutto, la promozione e l'avanzamento dell'atteggiamento scientifico con cui la letteratura per l'infanzia viene studiata a partire dalla sua propria esistenza di materia letteraria che si realizza e si materializza nell'editoria per l'infanzia, per ragazzi, per adolescenti e per giovani adulti.

La letteratura per l'infanzia, infatti, considerata dalla prospettiva della complessità, richiede di essere collocata sempre all'interno dell'intero sistema culturale cui appartiene e, pertanto, non può fare a meno dello scavo filosofico e del contributo storico, come, egualmente, dell'apporto antropologico, sociologico e, certamente, narratologico e letterario. Vi si accostano gli studi sull'illustrazione, congiunti alla storia dell'arte e delle innumerevoli e variegata produzioni del visivo che hanno storicamente dato consistenza alla cultura delle immagini.

A delineare la cornice interpretativa di riferimento si pone la collocazione pedagogica ed educativa che guarda alla letteratura per l'infanzia con chiavi di lettura mai disgiunte dalla storia dell'infanzia e dell'immagine che di essa si è andata configurando culturalmente nel corso del tempo. Una prospettiva, questa, che mantiene sempre e comunque alta l'attenzione alle relazioni educative che coinvolgono l'infanzia reale e la sua storia affettiva e sociale: libri, storie e bambini in famiglia, a scuola, in biblioteca, nei luoghi e nei contesti che, tra scuola ed extrascuola, tra camerette e altri ambienti contigui o alternativi a quelli domestici – i trascorsi cortili, i paesaggi di vacanza, le case sull'albero, ciò che si riassume nel «fuori» – consentono, promuovono e facilitano, oppure ostacolano, controllano e demotivano, l'incontro con la letteratura e l'esperienza della lettura e dell'ascolto di storie.

del collegio: Emy Beseghi (professore ordinario, Dipartimento di scienze dell'educazione, Università di Bologna), William Grandi (professore associato, Dipartimento di scienze dell'educazione, Università di Bologna), Giorgia Grilli (ricercatore a tempo indeterminato, Dipartimento di scienze dell'educazione, Università di Bologna), responsabile del sito del CRLI, <www.crli.edu.unibo.it>.

La visione complessa della struttura culturale che sottende ai «libri per bambini» riguarda, dunque, sia l'infanzia reale sia, in particolare modo, l'infanzia rappresentata, immaginata, raccontata all'interno di vari tipi di narrazioni: letterarie, figurative, filmiche, teatrali, fino a quelle micro-narrazioni in cui l'infanzia appare con altissima frequenza nei palinsesti pubblicitari e, con altre modalità, nei notiziari, nell'informazione e nella documentaristica.

La distanza che si insinua e si frappone tra l'infanzia reale – o meglio, le bambine e i bambini immersi nella realtà – e le rappresentazioni d'infanzia che nutrono la letteratura, sostanzia lo studio e l'indagine ermeneutica delle «rappresentazioni d'infanzia» e delle “immagini d'infanzia”, sottolineando la sottile, forse interstiziale ma fondamentale complicità fra l'una e l'altra costruzione culturale nell'immaginario: ci si può chiedere, infatti, quando e quanto le rappresentazioni d'infanzia derivano da immagini interiorizzate collettivamente ed individualmente di infanzie idealizzate, prefigurate, fantasticate; ed è più che mai necessario interrogarsi, in quanto studiosi, riguardo al percorso contrario secondo cui le rappresentazioni d'infanzia prodotte dalle narrazioni (al plurale, nelle variegate declinazioni che lo *storytelling* ha guadagnato nella cultura contemporanea) influenzino il formarsi di immagini d'infanzia assimilabili a certi modelli di «bambine e bambini» piuttosto che ad altri.

Modelli che suggeriscono l'innescarsi di processi di rispecchiamento in grado di rimandare all'immagine di sé, condizionandola e, quindi, da considerarsi con estrema attenzione: a maggior ragione la qualità estetica, letteraria, poetica, figurativa con cui si dà alla luce un libro per bambini diventa il criterio principale con cui guardare ad una letteratura dedicata che non può abdicare alla responsabilità di offrire produzioni di alto livello ai propri destinatari.

È, quindi, alla dimensione dell'immaginario e alla sua potenza metaforica, che si intende guardare per fornire alla letteratura per l'infanzia un quadro teorico ampio che permetta di riconoscerne le correlazioni incongrue² che ne disvelano l'alterità, la vocazione sovversiva³, le difficili parentele che segnano i destini conflittuali, ambivalenti, chiaro-scuro che caratterizzano l'iter storico dei rapporti tra mondo infantile e mondo adulto: la nozione di immaginario, tanto ampia quanto impalpabile, tanto metamorfica quanto conservativa di icone inscalfibili, si configura come una sofisticata e fitta tessitura intrinsecamente capace di generare un sistema complesso di infiniti accostamenti ed intrecci⁴

² Nella corposa produzione di saggi critici di Antonio Faeti si incontra ripetutamente la nozione di «correlazione incongrua», da leggersi come riconoscimento, individuazione e successiva interpretazione di accostamenti apparentemente ritenuti incongrui tra opere e fenomeni prodotti dall'immaginario. L'incongruo va di pari passo con la dimensione dell'alterità cui la cifra ermeneutica non cessa di fare attenzione.

³ Cfr. A. Lurie, *Non ditelo ai grandi*, Milano, Mondadori, 1993; Ead., *Bambini per sempre*, Milano, Mondadori, 2005.

⁴ Cfr. A. Faeti, *Guardare le figure*, Roma, Donzelli, 2011; Id., *I diamanti in cantina*, Cesena,

da cui trarre le categorie e gli strumenti interpretativi, le chiavi di lettura, le tematiche, gli ambiti, gli oggetti di ricerca. Ed ecco affacciarsi immantinentemente una serie di biforcazioni che invitano la ricerca a seguire strade a più diramazioni, mai lineari o rettilinee: il bambino e l'adulto, l'istanza estetica e quella pedagogica, la creatività e l'educazione, il personaggio bambino e l'autore di libri per bambini, i generi narrativi e i generi letterari, la letteratura e la letteratura per l'infanzia, ecc.

Nessuna tematica che sia affrontata dal punto di vista dell'approccio ermeneutico alla letteratura per l'infanzia sfugge alla forza rappresentativa dei contenuti dell'immaginario. La storia della letteratura per l'infanzia, dai classici all'editoria contemporanea, documenta rappresentazioni di infanzie plasmate in base alle differenti epistemologie che culturalmente di sono andate fondando nella storia sociale e nella storia delle idee pedagogiche, così come esalta opere capaci di porsi dal punto di vista infantile, assumendo l'infanzia stessa come spirito guida che non concede spazio ad ammaestramenti ed addomesticamenti inautentici.

Ambito letterario situato in una posizione ambigua al pari dell'infanzia stessa, questa letteratura cammina in punta di piedi su sentieri pericolosamente esposti: l'atteggiamento ermeneutico si configura come scelta per non lasciare che l'opacità del reale offuschi la ricerca indiziaria⁵. Indizi, sintomi, spie, riconoscimento di legami di senso e individuazione dei significati: un libro per bambini, che sia un romanzo, una novella, un albo illustrato, una raccolta di fiabe o una fiaba a sé, proviene da un universo e un altro ne rivela.

Da questo punto di vista, l'incontro tra infanzia e letteratura per l'infanzia mantiene sempre alta e vigile l'attenzione ai tre attori implicati: l'infanzia, la letteratura e quel «per» che indica, mostra, esalta la presenza dei destinatari bambine/i mentre già segnala la problematicità insita in scelte (a volte, non si tratta neppure di scelte) letterarie, artistiche, espressive, linguistiche, figurative, che implicano qualcosa in più, di specifico e peculiare, nell'indirizzarsi a quelle lettrici/lettori.

L'universo letterario abitato dalle proprie icone e dalle incommensurabili interdipendenze tra letterature e linguaggi, straripa nei territori delle storie che giungono ai bambini e viceversa queste ultime rielaborano e restituiscono illuminanti rivelazioni: storie, poesie, figure che Francelia Butler⁶ ha chiamato la letteratura de «La grande esclusa» coltivano l'attitudine a raccontare più da vicino, nell'intimo dell'alterità del nascondiglio infantile, i segreti, i dubbi, le visioni, le inconfessabili forme della paura, le radici storiche e folcloriche, le

edizioni Il Ponte Vecchio, 2011; Id., *La prateria degli asfodeli*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2010.

⁵ C. Ginzburg, *Miti, Emblemi, Spie*, Torino, Einaudi, 1986; M. Bernardi, *Infanzia e metafore letterarie*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2009.

⁶ Cfr. Francelia Butler (ed.), *La grande esclusa*, Milano, Emme edizioni, 1978.

eredità e i sedimenti che affondano nello scavo filosofico del mistero di vivere e di morire.

La grande esclusa, tenuta storicamente in disparte soprattutto poiché afferente ai più piccoli della società, letta nelle sue pagine più alte, porta all'infanzia quel che era, che è appena stato e non è più⁷: la designa ad erede di stratificazioni di iniziazioni e passaggi culturali, di tradizioni, di conoscenze impresse nel passato, di esperienze forse troppo difficoltose da nominarsi in un modo diverso da quello che compete, ad esempio, ad una fiaba o ad un romanzo divenuto un classico per l'infanzia.

Questa letteratura, infatti, risentendo di una storica sorte di emarginazione culturalmente attribuita ad ambiti che riguardano l'infanzia, ha potuto avvalersi di spazi di inusitata libertà, dovuti proprio a quella sua posizione a parte. Il che non significa che anch'essa – come sempre l'opera d'arte, le letterature, e il romanzo in particolare – non abbia subito l'intrusione del sistema del controllo dell'immaginazione e dell'immaginario⁸, esercitato con sapienza e raffinata prudenza da ogni società che voglia preservare lo status quo che si è data, ma pur confrontandosi e scontrandosi con i dettami di rigidi modelli, la letteratura per l'infanzia ha trasformato lo stato dell'esilio in un laboratorio per esuli desiderosi di esprimere poetiche innovative e sensibili al sentire e all'essere di quelle strane creature che sono i bambini.

Anche quest'ultimo processo, però, richiede una panoramica di studio e di ricerca che analizzi l'andamento dei fenomeni letterari in senso diacronico e sincronico: osservandone i mutamenti storici e le ricadute nelle singole fasi della storia della mentalità mentre compie incursioni nella letteratura per bambini. In tal senso è necessario tenere presente la profonda mutazione che l'editoria per ragazzi ha attraversato negli ultimi decenni alla luce di strumenti critici che penetrino le componenti che contribuiscono a determinarla: l'economia, l'editoria, la dimensione mediatica, la collocazione culturale e pedagogica e, certamente, quella inerente a movimenti e flussi di apertura di spazi espressivi-creativi che sembrano trovare il loro approdo proprio nella letteratura per l'infanzia ecc.

A maggior ragione, vista la numerosità ed il peso dei soggetti che entrano in gioco, il centro di ricerca è impegnato a stimolare l'approccio interpretativo alla complessità degli universi cui la letteratura per l'infanzia appartiene e che, tramite la sua stessa esistenza, metaforicamente racconta.

In un libro per bambini si inseriscono le stesse componenti su cui la società fonda i propri rapporti di forza e la propria identità socio-culturale. E i bambini? E le rappresentazioni d'infanzia? E le immagini d'infanzia? Per non smarrire la centralità di domande di tale portata è più che mai indispensabile ribadire

⁷ Cfr. G. Agamben, *Infanzia e storia*, Torino, Einaudi, 1979.

⁸ L. Costa Lima, *O controle do imaginario, razao o imaginazao nos tempos modernos*, Sao Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 1984.

l'inesauribile funzione dello scavo storico, filologico-testuale ed ermeneutico e, insieme, di categorie interpretative quali il problematico, il complesso, l'autentico, l'inattuale: dispositivi indispensabili per tracciare un percorso di formazione e costruzione della consapevolezza critica che compendia la vasta gamma degli studi in letteratura per l'infanzia.

I filoni di ricerca cui il CRLI si sta dedicando sia in fase di ricerca, sia in fase di didattica e di formazione, tengono conto dei presupposti teorici sinteticamente esposti e delle evidenti connessioni – in termini scientifici – con la storia della letteratura per l'infanzia, la storia dell'educazione, la storia della scuola, la storia della pedagogia.

Di seguito, in breve, le tematiche di cui il centro di ricerca si sta occupando:

- Scrivere per l'infanzia (autrici, autori, storie, temi, figure, generi, linguaggi).
- Storia e teoria della letteratura per l'infanzia.
- Rappresentazioni d'infanzia, di adolescenza, di giovinezza (in letteratura, al cinema, ecc.).
- Metafore d'infanzia (inafferrabilità, indicibilità, alterità infantile).
- Cosa non è la letteratura per l'infanzia (Controllo, stereotipo, semplificazione).
- Complessità delle narrazioni (oralità-scrittura-corporeità; scrivere-leggere-guardare).
- La qualità in letteratura per l'infanzia.
- Studi sull'Immaginario (testi e contesti, accostamenti, correlazioni, ricorrenze, *topoi*).
- Visivo (illustrazione, *picturebooks*, *silent books*, prodotti di soglia).
- Educazione alla creatività (arte, educazione).

Le fonti

Il CRLI considera fonte primaria per la ricerca teorica e per i legami con la ricerca sul campo la letteratura per l'infanzia, i libri per bambini, le opere, i testi. Il corpus dei testi si compone dell'intera gamma dei generi narrativi – romanzo, novella, racconto breve, poesia, albo illustrato, *silent books*, *graphic novel*, fumetto, ecc. – e dei generi letterari – dal fiabesco all'avventura, dal fantasy all'horror, dal fantastico alla fantascienza, dal romanzo storico al romanzo introspettivo, ecc. -, a cui si associano, come è già stato detto, altri irrinunciabili tipi di testi – l'illustrazione, il cinema, il teatro di narrazione, ecc. - : ben sapendo, però, che tali «classificazioni» si contagiano a vicenda e la frequentazione dei testi, degli stili, delle poetiche, dei linguaggi mette in evidenza i continui prestiti, le citazioni, le sperimentazioni da cui nascono interessanti e nuovi sconfinamenti da una pagina all'altra.

In termini comparativi le fonti letterarie comprendono sempre «le letterature» e, con esse, convintamente, la gamma delle narrazioni. I legami tra le opere e le tracce che i testi seminano da una storia all'altra, da una narrazione all'altra, confluiscono nella interminabile raccolta che dà corpo al patrimonio delle fonti per la ricerca, la didattica, la formazione, la progettazione e la realizzazione di eventi culturali. In coerenza con l'intenzione di promuovere la ricerca valorizzando la vocazione alla molteplicità e all'interdisciplinarietà degli approcci teorici propria di un ambito che si connota per la propria composita appartenenza, il CRLI collabora alla realizzazione di una specifica collana di titoli di studio, che porta il nome di uno speciale personaggio mentore creato da Rudyard Kipling: La collana «Bagheera», per la casa editrice ETS, Pisa.

La didattica, la formazione

Obiettivo fondativo del Centro di ricerca è stato, fin da subito, quello di farsi interlocutore costante ed attivo per i percorsi di studio e di approfondimento intrapresi da studentesse e studenti in fase di preparazione degli esami e della tesi di laurea e, nell'ambito del dottorato di ricerca in Scienze pedagogiche, per le tesi di dottorato. Nel corso del tempo si è andato registrando un interesse crescente per le tematiche proposte dal CRLI, espresso anche da chi stia compiendo studi in ambiti affini. Questa diffusione dinamica ed «interdisciplinare» della letteratura per l'infanzia e degli approcci critici che la indagano invita a proseguire nel compito di puntuale informazione intorno agli eventi che la riguardano, presentati in rete sul sito web del Dipartimento di scienze dell'educazione: ww.crli.edu.unibo.it.

Mantenere un *feed-back* dinamico tra ricerca, didattica, e formazione è senz'altro un persistente impegno che il CRLI si è dato e desidera coltivare: le numerose richieste di progetti di aggiornamento che vengono rivolte al centro di ricerca e che il centro, a sua volta propone, vanno, infatti, nella direzione di creare occasioni di riflessione e confronto con soggetti che incrociano la letteratura per l'infanzia nei diversi ambiti dell'educazione, della ricerca artistica, dell'editoria, dei servizi culturali del territorio ecc., e che esprimono intenso interesse verso le direzioni di ricerca poste in primo piano dalle scelte individuate dal centro in questa o quella fase di lavoro. Le proposte di formazione e le opportunità di ulteriore approfondimento inserite nella didattica universitaria si intendono, quindi, anch'esse, strettamente collegate con i percorsi di ricerca in atto e con gli eventuali eventi e seminari previsti in sinergia con le molte entità che da tempo operano mirabilmente in questo settore (ad esempio, nel territorio di Bologna: la Fiera Internazionale del Libro per Ragazzi, la Biblioteca Salaborsa Ragazzi, la cooperativa Giannino Stoppani, l'Associazione culturale Hamelin, la Cineteca, La Baracca – Testoni Ragazzi, ecc.). Nel contempo, di grande rilevanza, sono

da considerarsi i rapporti di cooperazione con i servizi educativi e le scuole che permettono di proseguire senza soluzione di continuità il cammino di scambio di *feedback* tra ricerca teorica e ricerca sul campo, mentre offrono la disponibilità preziosa di sperimentare la riflessività pedagogica nell'ambito della relazione tra adulti, bambini e letteratura per l'infanzia. Rendere pensabile la complessità della materia tra dubbi, incertezze e motivazione alla conoscenza rappresenta un passaggio formativo per tutti i soggetti implicati: educatori, insegnanti, studiosi, studenti, ecc.

Esempi di azioni sinergiche tra ricerca, didattica, formazione e creazione di eventi a partire da tematiche di ricerca, possono essere l'allestimento di mostre di illustrazione⁹ corredate da volumi che ne offrano la lettura ermeneutica, alle cui visite guidate da studiosi sono invitati studenti ed insegnanti, bibliotecari, appassionati. Oppure, progetti dedicati, ad esempio, alla fiaba¹⁰ nella versione della narrazione teatrale che, di nuovo, comprendono mostre di illustrazione, performance, letture a voce alte dei testi integrali, lezioni tematiche. O, come nel caso della *Rocca delle Fiabe* di Sant'Agata Feltria, concorrono a dar vita ad un museo ideato da Antonio Faeti ed ispirato al motto «tutto è fiaba», in sintonia con il pensiero del poeta romantico Novalis.

Ancora, lezioni, convegni e seminari¹¹ cui partecipano studiosi di università italiane e straniere, in Italia e all'estero, rappresentano momenti di interlocuzione

⁹ Alcuni esempi di mostre a cura del CRLI: *Ugo Fontana. Illustrare per l'infanzia*, Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna (1-30 Aprile 2014); *Il Pinocchio di Leo Mattioli*, Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna (18 Marzo - 5 Aprile 2015); *La vetrina magica. Cinquant'anni di Bologna Ragazzi Award*, BolognaFiere (28 e 29 Marzo 2015, in occasione del weekend dei giovani lettori); *I cappuccetto rosso di Charles Perrault e dei fratelli Grimm*, Teatro Testoni Ragazzi (21 gennaio 2016), illustrazioni di Wolfango.

¹⁰ *La Rocca delle Fiabe*, Rocca Fregoso, interamente restaurata, svetta in cima al Borgo di Sant'Agata Feltria, ed è la sede del museo «Rocca delle Fiabe», ideato dal prof. Antonio Faeti. Il CRLI, che segue la realizzazione delle stanze del fiabesco, ne detiene la responsabilità scientifica e collabora con il Comune e l'Associazione Pro Loco di Sant'Agata Feltria per la realizzazione del percorso museale e delle iniziative ed eventi che vi si tengono. La *Rocca delle Fiabe*, si propone di ospitare un'accademia di ricerca intorno ai temi del «Tutto è fiaba» che comprenda il contributo di studiosi, di docenti, insegnanti, educatori, bibliotecari, editori. Obiettivo primario della *Rocca delle Fiabe* è la formazione. Essa ha infatti ospitato già due edizioni – settembre 2015, settembre 2016 – di un importante progetto formativo per insegnanti, educatori e bibliotecari, in collaborazione con la Provincia di Rimini e la Regione Emilia Romagna. Il progetto ha come titolo: *Una giornata per la fiaba*. Il CRLI ha partecipato a questo progetto con il Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Educazione, e la Scuola di Psicologia e Scienze della Formazione, Università di Bologna.

¹¹ Si riportano di seguito alcuni tra gli eventi internazionali e nazionali cui il CRLI ha partecipato o che ha promosso. Innanzitutto le *Lezioni americane*. Nel 2015, a rappresentanza del CRLI, Giorgia Grilli è stata invitata negli Stati Uniti per «raccontare» la letteratura per l'infanzia del nostro paese ad un pubblico di accademici, studiosi, bibliotecari e insegnanti americani in due importanti occasioni di confronto e scambio, una tenutasi presso la Parsons School of Design di New York e una all'interno della grande conferenza annuale della Children's Literature Association, (presso l'Università di Richmond, Virginia). In particolare *Where the Wild Books Are* (Parsons School of Design, New York, 18 Aprile 2015), presentazione di una selezione di libri illustrati per l'infanzia italiani dall'inizio del Novecento ai giorni nostri in una conferenza organizzata espressamente per

e discussione di grande rilevanza per lo stato dell'arte della ricerca accademica nell'ambito della letteratura per l'infanzia e contribuiscono a predisporre studi critici indispensabili per la didattica e, certamente, per la formazione.

Infine, ma soltanto per necessità di sintesi, un progetto che il CRLI sta perseguendo in stretta sintonia con il Dipartimento di scienze dell'educazione e la collaborazione della Fiera internazionale del libro per ragazzi, mirato a dar vita al laboratorio PITEA¹² (Pedagogie, Illustrazioni, Testi, Editoria, Audiovisivi).

Le relazioni con Centri di ricerca, enti, studiosi in ambito nazionale e internazionale

I rapporti tra centri di ricerca, enti e studiosi in ambito nazionale e internazionale determinano la rete delle connessioni e dei collegamenti stabiliti a partire dalla storia stessa della cattedra di letteratura per l'infanzia dell'Università di Bologna.

Dalle collaborazioni storiche a quelle più recenti, si è andata disegnando una mappa di rapporti che aprono a visioni e punti di vista sempre più ampi

‘spiegare’ la letteratura per l'infanzia europea agli americani; *Italian Children's Literature: Past History and Present Challenges* (Longwood University, Richmond, Virginia, 18-20 Giugno 2015). Quindi due incontri americani per promuovere il CRLI e il suo lavoro di ricerca anche internazionale presso la Columbia University, New York, *Visual Journeys through Wordless Narratives: An international Inquiry with Immigrant Children and the Arrival*. Ed ancora. Convegno CIRSE 2016: *Sguardi della Storia. Luoghi, figure, immaginario e teorie dell'educazione*, svoltosi presso la Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio – Sala Stabat Mater – Bologna (26 e 27 Febbraio 2016); Seminario internazionale *Scrivere per l'infanzia* (27 marzo 2014), tavola rotonda che ha visto presenti docenti e ricercatori di letteratura per l'infanzia provenienti da molte università italiane e straniere, con la partecipazione straordinaria del grande scrittore per ragazzi inglese David Almond, che ha aperto i lavori con una riflessione sulla propria poetica; Seminario di studi *La letteratura per l'infanzia e la sua storia tra ricerca e didattica*, organizzato dal gruppo SIPED di letteratura per l'infanzia, dal CRLI, e dal «Centro di documentazione e ricerca sulla storia del libro scolastico e della letteratura per l'infanzia» dell'Università degli Studi Macerata in occasione della pubblicazione del primo tomo dell'opera di A. Ascenzi e R. Sani, *Storia e antologia della letteratura per l'infanzia nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2017 (Bologna, 3 Aprile, 2017).

¹² Il CRLI ha avviato, dal 2016, un progetto di laboratorio permanente in collaborazione con Bologna Children's Book Fair e il mondo dell'editoria per l'infanzia italiano, che ne fornisce i materiali di base (ovvero i libri e i prodotti editoriali che via via vengono pubblicati). Il laboratorio PITEA (Pedagogie, Illustrazioni, Testi, Editoria, Audiovisivi) intende creare uno spazio strutturato di documentazione, studio e formazione intorno ai molteplici profili narrativi e letterari rivolti all'infanzia e all'adolescenza: esso è organicamente inserito nel CRLI, si coordina con la Biblioteca «M. Gattullo» del Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Educazione e si pone in rete con importanti realtà del territorio quali appunto la Fiera Internazionale del Libro per Ragazzi di Bologna. Il progetto è seguito da William Grandi.

intorno alla letteratura per l'infanzia, a come viene studiata, interpretata, e ancor prima, scritta, editata, diffusa.

Le collaborazioni con altri centri di ricerca del Dipartimento di Scienze dell'educazione dell'Università di Bologna e di altre Università italiane e straniere (evidenziati anche dai componenti del consiglio scientifico del CRLI)¹³ consente di mantenere attiva e costantemente aggiornata la comunicazione con studiosi che partecipano all'instancabile lavoro di approfondimento teorico della letteratura per l'infanzia. Non meno importante risultano essere le relazioni di confronto con ambiti esterni alle accademie: la sperimentazione artistica nei contesti teatrali del teatro ragazzi, dell'illustrazione, della promozione delle biblioteche e dei centri lettura, dell'ambito cinematografico, del mondo delle autrici e degli autori – per citare soltanto alcuni esempi – guarda direttamente alla necessità di dare alla letteratura per l'infanzia collocazioni di incontro di alta qualità essendo essa stessa, prima di tutto, votata a mantenere quel grado importante di qualità artistica, letteraria, poetica di cui si è detto fino a qui. I punti di vista¹⁴ che gli studi internazionali adottano per studiarla si differenziano tanto quanto le culture e le tradizioni si diversificano nel dar forma alle rappresentazioni di infanzia. Inoltre risentono, quei punti di vista, di impostazioni teoriche che vogliono privilegiare o meno l'analisi del testo e del libro separatamente o isolatamente dal destinatario lettore. Il panorama

¹³ Il Consiglio Scientifico del CRLI è così composto: Martin Salisbury, Direttore del «Centre for Children's Book Studies» (Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK); Joseph Thomas, Direttore del «National Center for the Study of Children's Literature» (San Diego University, USA); Hans-Heino Ewers, Direttore dell'«Institut für Jugendbuchforschung» – Goethe Universität (Frankfurt am Main); Juan Mata Anaya, docente di didattica della lingua e della letteratura – Facultad de ciencias de la educación (Universidad de Granada); Penni Cotton, «National Centre for Research in Children's Literature» (University of Roehampton); Mariagrazia Contini, professore ordinario di Pedagogia generale e sociale – Dipartimento Scienze dell'educazione (Università di Bologna); Mirella D'Ascenzo, professore associato Storia della scuola e dell'educazione – Dipartimento Scienze dell'educazione (Università di Bologna); Raffaele Milani, professore straordinario Estetica – Dipartimento Scienze dell'educazione (Università di Bologna); Beatrice Borghi, ricercatore – Dipartimento Scienze dell'educazione (Università di Bologna); Silvia Demozzi ricercatore Pedagogia generale e sociale – Dipartimento Scienze dell'educazione (Università di Bologna); Ivana Bolognesi, ricercatore Pedagogia interculturale – Dipartimento Scienze dell'educazione (Università di Bologna); Marcella Terrusi, assegnista di ricerca – Dipartimento Scienze per la qualità della vita, Rimini (Università di Bologna); Tiziana Pironi, presidente CIRSE (Centro italiano per la Ricerca Storico-Educative); Anna Ascenzi, direttore del «Centro di documentazione e ricerca sulla storia del libro scolastico e della letteratura per l'infanzia» (Università di Macerata); Romano Montroni, presidente del «Centro per il Libro e la Lettura»; Gianluca Farinelli, direttore «Cineteca» (Bologna); Roberto Frabetti, membro del comitato esecutivo e tesoriere di «Assistey International Association of theatre children and young», Elena Pasoli, project manager *Fiera del libro per ragazzi*; Roberta Chinni, project manager *Fiera del libro per ragazzi*; Nicoletta Gramantieri, Direttore Biblioteca «Sala Borsa Ragazzi» (Comune di Bologna).

¹⁴ Cfr. G. Grilli, *Terra di confine. Lo studio della letteratura per l'infanzia nel panorama internazionale*, «Rivista di Storia dell'Educazione», vol. 2, n. 2, 2015, pp. 25-38; E. Beseghi, *Verso nuovi percorsi ermeneutici: immaginario, Letteratura per l'infanzia, Storia dell'educazione*, «Rivista di Storia dell'Educazione», vol. 3, n. 2, 2016, pp. 45-56.

è intrigante e testimonia del gran lavoro di comparazione e riflessione che si richiede a chi operi in questo settore. Gli eventi, i seminari, i convegni, le mostre, le iniziative in didattica e nella formazione, le collaborazioni che il CRLI ha promosso e vorrà progettare si inseriscono in un quadro culturale che vuole tenere in considerazione la molteplicità degli indirizzi della ricerca ma, in primis, non rinuncia alla dimensione di pensabilità dedicata alla centralità dell'infanzia nella letteratura per l'infanzia.

Call for Papers «History of Education & Children's Literature»

Memories and Public Celebrations of Education in Contemporary Times

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Marta Brunelli
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism
University of Macerata (Italy)
marta.brunelli@unimc.it

Juri Meda
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism
University of Macerata (Italy)
juri.meda@unimc.it

Luigiaurelio Pomante
Department of Education, Cultural
Heritage and Tourism
University of Macerata (Italy)
luigiaurelio.pomante@unimc.it

ABSTRACT: The forthcoming monographic issue of the journal «History of Education & Children's Literature» intends to explore the public memory of education meant as the multifaceted representation of the school as an institution, and of schooling as a mass phenomenon, which was offered in the past, and is still offered today, by the public celebrations promoted on the basis of precise politics of memory. With this aim, possible sub-thematic perspectives as well as new categories of sources are illustrated which can offer the theoretical coordinates and the methodological criteria necessary to develop the historiographical potential of such topic.
EET/TEE KEYWORDS: School Memory; Public Memory; Late Modern and Contemporary History; History of Education.

English version

This monographic dossier – which intends to continue the line of research introduced by the international symposium *School Memories. New Trends in Historical Research into Education: Heuristic Perspectives and Methodological Issues* (Seville, from 22nd to 23rd September 2015) – aims to focus on the multifaceted representation of the school as an institution, and of schooling as a mass phenomenon, which was offered in the past, and is still offered today, by the public celebrations promoted on the basis of precise politics of memory. On the other hand, it also intends to explore the socio-cultural dynamics which oversee the commemoration of the figures and the thought of educationalists, as well as of teachers and their educational role.

In this sense, the new perspective with which past schooling is observed, may allow expanding the heuristic prospects of the history of education, safeguarding its historiographical dimension, and overcoming the temptation to resort to alternative interpretive paradigms. The purpose of this dossier is therefore to offer the international scientific community of educational historians a first in-depth reflection concerning this specific new area of research, by defining its general theoretical coordinates and by offering precise methodological criteria for its correct historiographical overview.

Thematic fields

The monographic issue will focus primarily on five thematic fields of reference, through which it is possible to investigate the fundamental articulations of the public memory of the school.

- *Funeral Memories*: this thematic area brings together the many forms of public commemoration of the protagonists of schooling and education, both at a local and national level, which were promoted by families, friends and citizens not only as a fulfilment of a private obligation but also as a public tribute aimed to highlight the role that these figures played for the civil and cultural progress of the society. In this scenario, tombstones and funerary epitaphs, commemorative brochures printed by committees for the funerals of deceased teachers, funeral orations, obituaries appearing in newspapers and educational magazines are elevated to being privileged sources and objects of investigation.
- *Places of memory*: this thematic area is based on the concepts (respectively processed by French historian Pierre Nora and British anthropologist Paul Connerton) of «*lieu de mémoire*» or place of memory intended as a material or symbolic space capable of

generating collective memories, on the one hand; and, on the other, of the «memory of places» understood as the memory inspired by a physical presence in certain places. Even though public monuments are not usually dedicated to the commemoration of the past of the school (especially if compared to other collective phenomena, such as war), however a range of places can fulfil this task such as: historical school buildings in general; old rural and mountain school houses; again, all those places where extraordinary educational experiences took place (for example: the first Montessori's Children's House in Rome); and, finally, the school-museums. These, and other places, can be investigated for the image of a past school which they convey.

- *Stone Memories*: this thematic area aims to determine which memory and image of schooling and of teaching as a profession, has been promoted over the years by public institutions through the use of commemorative plaques, statues and busts on display inside and outside public buildings, and finally the place names dedicated to educationalists, educators and teachers.
- *Politics of Memory*: this subject area reconstructs the dynamics and the criteria by virtue of which the school was perceived as deserving public commemoration by the institutions. This topic can be explored, as concerns the anniversaries of historic events related to public education (anniversaries of the institution of school orders and fundamental public education reforms, university jubilees, etc.), as well as large celebrations and important national occasions. In this regard, sources and subject of the research are represented by the issuance of celebration stamps or commemorative coins, the naming of streets and squares as well as awards, medals, decorations and certificates of merit conferred by the public authorities in order to recognise the high social and cultural role of schools and teachers within the national community.
- *Invention of educational tradition*: this thematic area is based on applying the historiographical category, developed by Eric Hobsbawm, of the «invention of tradition» to those educational institutions which were mostly affected by deep and radical changes during the contemporary age and consequently had to cope with the need to strongly legitimise their own role, prerogatives and functions. It was within such historical and cultural context, in fact, that higher education institutions, colleges and universities artificially attempted to attribute historical significance to their founding myth in order to boast a lengthy educational tradition capable of ranking them as prestigious and exclusive educational places in the collective imagination.

Deadlines

By 30th September 2017, each author must submit a draft of an article in English, using the attached submission form. This form must be sent to the email address: roberto.sani@unimc.it.

By 30th November 2017, each author will be notified about the outcome concerning the preliminary assessment and whether the submitted articles have been accepted or rejected.

The subsequent deadline for submitting the final papers, written in English according to the editorial standards of the journal and not longer than 7,000 words (including footnotes, references, tables and captions), is scheduled for 30th September 2018.

Both the drafts and the final articles will be subjected to anonymous peer review, according to the journal's standards; the Editor will appoint a specific peer-review committee consisting of nationally and internationally renowned scholars with proven expertise in the various thematic areas of this call for papers.

By 30th November 2018, the editors of the issue will notify the authors of any amendments to be made to their contributions, which must be returned by 31st January 2019.

Spanish version

El presente dossier monográfico –que se propone continuar con la corriente de investigación inaugurada por el simposio internacional *School Memories. New Trends in Historical Research into Education: Heuristic Perspectives and Methodological Issues* (Sevilla, 22-23 de septiembre de 2015) – apuesta por poner de relieve en sus múltiples formas la representación que de la institución escuela y del fenómeno de la escolarización han ofrecido y siguen ofreciendo aún hoy en día las celebraciones públicas promovidas por las instituciones en función de específicas políticas de la memoria, así como también las dinámicas socioculturales que dirigen la conmemoración de los pedagogos y sus revoluciones teóricas y de los profesores y la acción didáctica que estos promueven.

En este sentido, el nuevo enfoque desde el que se observa el pasado escolar puede permitir ampliar las perspectivas heurísticas de la historia de la educación, salvaguardando su dimensión historiográfica y superando la tentación de utilizar paradigmas de interpretación alternativos.

El objetivo de este dossier es por tanto el de ofrecer a la comunidad científica internacional de los historiadores de la educación una primera y profunda reflexión sobre este nuevo y fascinante ámbito específico de investigación,

definiendo sus coordenadas teóricas generales y ofreciendo criterios metodológicos precisos para su correcto encuadramiento historiográfico.

Ámbitos temáticos

El dossier monográfico se concentrará principalmente en cinco ámbitos temáticos de referencia mediante los cuales es posible indagar la memoria pública de la escuela en sus articulaciones fundamentales.

- *Memorias fúnebres*: dicho ámbito temático reúne las múltiples formas de conmemoración pública de los protagonistas de la educación a nivel local y nacional promovidas por familiares y amigos como cumplimiento de una obligación privada y públicamente explicitadas con el objetivo de subrayar el papel desempeñado por los mismos en el progreso civil y cultural del lugar en el que ejercieron; en dicho contexto, se recogen como objetos privilegiados de investigación lápidas y epitafios funerarios, opúsculos conmemorativos impresos por los comités de exequias a profesores fallecidos y oraciones fúnebres, así como necrológicas publicadas en periódicos y revistas para maestros.
- *Lugares de la memoria*: dicho ámbito temático se basa en los conceptos de «lieu de mémoire» – entendido como espacio material o simbólico capaz de generar memorias colectivas – y de «place memory» – entendida como la memoria suscitada por la presencia física en determinados lugares – elaborados respectivamente por el historiador francés Pierre Nora y el antropólogo británico Paul Connerton. A diferencia de otros fenómenos colectivos (como la guerra), la escuela generalmente no dispone de monumentos públicos dedicados a la conmemoración de su propio pasado; sin embargo, lugares en los cuales se llevaron a cabo experiencias educativas únicas e irrepetibles (por ejemplo, la primera Casa de los Niños de Montessori en Roma), museos de la escuela o escuelas-museo de pequeñas aldeas de montaña pueden llevar a cabo dicha tarea y se pueden investigar para ver la imagen de la escuela del pasado que sus organizadores han pretendido transmitir.
- *Memorias lapídeas*: dicho ámbito temático se propone determinar qué memoria de la escuela y de la profesión docente ha sido fomentada a lo largo del tiempo por las instituciones públicas a través del estudio de las lápidas conmemorativas, así como de las estatuas y de los bustos expuestos tanto en el interior como en el exterior de los edificios públicos y las placas toponímicas dedicados a pedagogos, educadores y profesores.
- *Políticas de la memoria*: dicho ámbito temático reconstruye en función de qué dinámicas y en virtud de qué criterios ha sido percibida la escuela

como digna de conmemoración pública por parte de las instituciones, tanto en ocasión de celebraciones en educación (aniversarios de la institución de órdenes escolares y de reformas fundamentales de la educación pública, jubileos universitarios, etc.) como de importantes fiestas nacionales mediante la emisión de sellos, la acuñación de monedas conmemorativas y la dedicatoria de calles y plazas; de igual forma, pueden convertirse en objeto de investigación los premios, las medallas, las condecoraciones y los certificados de reconocimiento otorgados por las autoridades públicas con el objetivo de reconocer el alto valor social y cultural de la actividad ejercida por los profesores dentro de la comunidad nacional.

- *Invencción de la tradición educativa*: dicho ámbito temático se basa en la aplicación de la categoría historiográfica de la «invencción de la tradición» desarrollada por Eric Hobsbawm a las instituciones educativas más afectadas por las profundas y radicales mutaciones a lo largo de la época contemporánea y por tanto dedicada a una nueva y más sólida legitimación de su propio papel y sus propias prerrogativas y funciones; es en dicho contexto histórico-cultural, en efecto, donde las instituciones de educación superior, colegios y universidades intentaron artificiosamente atribuir historicidad a su propio mito fundador para poder hacer gala de una larga tradición educativa capaz de afirmarlos en el imaginario colectivo como prestigiosos y exclusivos lugares de formación.

Indicaciones operativas y plazos

Antes del 30 de septiembre de 2017 como máximo, cada autor deberá presentar una propuesta de artículo en inglés, utilizando el formulario de presentación adjunto a la presente. Dicho formulario deberá enviarse a la dirección de correo electrónico: roberto.sani@unimc.it.

Antes del 30 de noviembre de 2017 como máximo, se comunicará a cada autor el resultado de la valoración preliminar y la aceptación o no de las propuestas recibidas.

El plazo máximo para la entrega de los textos definitivos, redactados en inglés según las normas editoriales de la revista y con una extensión no superior a 7.000 palabras (incluidas notas al pie, referencias, tablas y leyendas de las figuras), es el 30 de septiembre de 2018.

Tanto las propuestas como los textos definitivos se someterán a revisión anónima por pares, según los estándares de la revista; el director de la misma procederá al nombramiento de un comité de arbitraje compuesto por expertos

de fama nacional e internacional y experiencia comprobada en los distintos ámbitos temáticos de la presente convocatoria.

Antes del 30 de noviembre de 2018 como máximo, los curadores del dossier comunicarán a los autores cualquier tipo de modificación que hayan de realizar a sus textos, que deberán volver a entregarse antes del 31 de enero de 2019.

German version

Mit diesem monographischen Band soll eine Reihe von Studien fortgesetzt werden, die mit dem Internationalen Symposium *School Memories. New Trends in Historical Research into Education: Heuristic Perspectives and Methodological Issues* (Sevilla, 22.-23. September 2015) eingeleitet wurde, und konzentriert sich auf die vielfachen Darstellungsformen der Schule bzw. Schulbildung in öffentlichen Würdigungen von Institutionen basierend auf einer bestimmten Erinnerungspolitik in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, ebenso wie auf die soziokulturellen Dynamiken hinter den Rückblicken auf berühmte Pädagogen und innovative Theorien sowie auf Lehrer und deren angewandte Didaktik.

In diesem Sinne ermöglicht der neue Blickwinkel auf die Schulgeschichte eine Erweiterung der heuristischen Perspektiven der Geschichte der Erziehungswissenschaften unter Wahrung der historiographischen Dimension und ohne Rückgriff auf alternative Interpretationsparadigmen.

Der Zweck dieses Bands besteht darin, der internationalen Gemeinschaft von Historikern der Erziehungswissenschaften eine erste vertiefte Übersicht über diesen neuen und faszinierenden Forschungsbereich zu liefern, wobei allgemeine theoretische Parameter und genaue methodologische Kriterien für eine korrekte historiographische Einordnung festgelegt werden sollen.

Themenbereiche

Der herausgegebene Monographieband konzentriert sich vor allem auf fünf Themenbereiche, anhand derer die öffentliche Erinnerungskultur der Schule in ihren Grundaussagen untersucht werden soll.

- *Trauerschriften*: dieser Themenbereich fasst zahlreiche Formen des öffentlichen Gedenkens an bedeutende Vertreter der Pädagogik und Schulbildung auf lokaler und nationaler Ebene zusammen, die von Verwandten und Freunden als Erfüllung einer privaten Pflicht angesehen wurden, mit dem Zweck, deren bedeutenden Beitrag für den zivilen und kulturellen Fortschritt der Gesellschaft zu unterstreichen.

Die wichtigsten Studienobjekte in diesem Zusammenhang sind Grabsteine und Grabinschriften, von Ehrenkomitees herausgegebene Erinnerungsschriften für verstorbene Lehrer sowie Todesanzeigen in Tageszeitungen und Pädagogikzeitschriften.

- *Orte des Gedenkens*: dieser Themenbereich basiert auf den Konzepten des «lieu de mémoire» – als materieller oder symbolischer Ort, der kollektive Erinnerungen generiert – und der «place memory» – als Erinnerung, die durch die physische Präsenz an bestimmten Orten geweckt wird –, die jeweils von dem französischen Historiker Pierre Nora und dem britischen Anthropologen Paul Connerton geprägt wurden; im Gegensatz zu anderen kollektiven Erfahrungen (wie Krieg) gibt es für die Schule im Allgemeinen keine öffentlichen Denkmäler, an denen der eigenen Vergangenheit gedacht werden kann. Diese Funktion wird jedoch unter anderem von Orten übernommen, in denen einzigartige und nicht wiederholbare pädagogische Projekte stattfanden (z.B., das erste Montessori-Kinderhaus in Rom), sowie von pädagogischen Museen oder Schulmuseen in kleinen Bergdörfern, anhand derer das Bild der Schule der Vergangenheit untersucht werden kann, welches die jeweiligen Institutionen zum Ausdruck bringen wollten.
- *Gedenksteine*: mit diesem Themenbereich soll anhand der Untersuchung von Gedenksteinen, Statuen und Büsten innerhalb und außerhalb öffentlicher Gebäude sowie von örtlichen Gedenktafeln an Pädagogen, Erzieher und Lehrer untersucht werden, in welcher Weise die öffentlichen Einrichtungen im Laufe der Zeit an die Schule und den Lehrerberuf erinnerten.
- *Erinnerungspolitik*: dieser Themenbereich beschäftigt sich mit den Dynamiken und Kriterien, nach denen die Schule von den Institutionen als des öffentlichen Lobes würdig angesehen wurde, sowohl im Rahmen historischer Gedenktage für die allgemeine Schulbildung (Jahrestage bestimmter Schuleinrichtungen oder wichtiger Schulreformen, Universitätsjubiläen usw.), als auch großer nationaler Feiertage und Anlässe, durch Sonderbriefmarken, Prägung von Gedenkmünzen oder Benennung von Straßen und Plätzen; ebenfalls als Forschungsgegenstand können dabei Auszeichnungen, Medaillen, Würdigungen und Ehrenurkunden dienen, die von den öffentlichen Einrichtungen vergeben wurden, um den hohen sozialen und kulturellen Wert der Lehrertätigkeit innerhalb der staatlichen Gemeinschaft anzuerkennen.
- *Erfindung der erzieherischen Traditionen*: dieser Themenbereich basiert auf der Anwendung der historiographischen Kategorie der «Erfindung der Tradition» nach Eric Hobsbawm auf die am meisten von den tiefen und radikalen Änderungen der Gegenwart betroffenen

Schuleinrichtungen, deren Rolle, Funktionen und Merkmale einer neuen und stabilen Legitimation bedürfen; in diesem historisch-kulturellen Kontext versuchten weiterführende Schulen, Internate und Universitäten auf künstliche Art, ihrem Gründungsmythos Historizität zu verleihen, um eine lange Schultradition nachweisen zu können und sie in der kollektiven Wahrnehmung als renommierte und exklusive Bildungsstätten erscheinen zu lassen.

Arbeitsanweisungen und fristen

Jeder Verfasser muss bis spätestens 30. September 2017 durch Ausfüllen des beigefügten Formulars einen Artikelvorschlag in englischer Sprache unter folgender E-Mail-Adresse einreichen: roberto.sani@unimc.it.

Bis 30. November 2017 werden alle Verfasser über das Ergebnis der Vorauswahl informiert sowie darüber, ob der eingereichte Vorschlag angenommen oder abgelehnt wurde.

Abgabefrist für die definitiven Beiträge, die den geltenden Verlagsbestimmungen entsprechend in englischer Sprache verfasst werden müssen und nicht länger als 7.000 Wörter sein dürfen (einschließlich Fußnoten, Tabellen und Bildunterschriften), ist der 30. September 2018.

Sowohl die Vorschläge als auch die endgültigen Texte werden gemäß dem Standard der Zeitschrift einer anonymen Peer Review unterzogen. Der Herausgeber der Zeitschrift ernennt ein Review-Komitee von Experten aus dem In- und Ausland mit einschlägigen Erfahrungen in den Themenbereichen der vorliegenden Call for Papers.

Bis 30. November 2018 teilen die Herausgeber der Schriften den Verfassern eventuelle Änderungen mit, die an den Beiträgen durchzuführen sind, mit Abgabefrist bis 31. Januar 2019.

Portuguese version

O presente dossiê monográfico – se propõe a dar continuidade à linha de pesquisa iniciada no simpósio internacional *School Memories. New Trends in Historical Research into Education: Heuristic Perspectives and Methodological Issues* (Sevilha, 22 a 23 de setembro de 2015) – tem como foco as representações que em suas múltiplas formas, a partir da instituição escolar e do fenômeno da escolaridade, se ofereceram e continuam a oferecer ainda hoje com as comemorações públicas promovidas pelas instituições com base em políticas específicas da memória, bem como as dinâmicas socioculturais que

se sobrepõem à comemoração dos pedagogos e de suas revoluções teóricas, dos professores e das atividades didáticas que promovem.

Neste sentido, o novo ângulo a partir do qual se observa o passado escolar pode permitir a expansão das perspectivas heurísticas da história da educação, salvaguardando a dimensão historiográfica e superando a tentação de recorrer a paradigmas interpretativos alternativos.

O escopo deste dossiê é, portanto, oferecer à comunidade científica internacional de historiadores da educação uma primeira reflexão aprofundada sobre este novo, fascinante e específico âmbito de pesquisa, definindo as coordenadas teóricas gerais e oferecendo critérios metodológicos precisos para um enquadramento historiográfico desejável.

Áreas temáticas

O dossiê monográfico se concentrará principalmente em cinco áreas temáticas relevantes, através das quais é possível investigar a memória pública da escola em suas articulações fundamentais.

- *Memórias fúnebres*: esta área temática reúne as formas múltiplas de comemoração pública dos protagonistas da educação e da formação em nível local e nacional, promovidas por parentes e amigos como o cumprimento de uma obrigação privada e publicamente explicitada, a fim de destacar o papel desempenhado por eles no progresso civil e cultural da sociedade em que atuaram; neste contexto, são utilizados como objetos privilegiados de investigação as lápides e os epitáfios funerários, opúsculos comemorativos impressos pelos comitês para os funerais dos professores falecidos, orações fúnebres, obituários publicados em jornais e revistas sobre instrução.
- *Lugares de memória*: esta área temática se fundamenta nos conceitos de «lieu de mémoire», entendido como espaço material ou simbólico capaz de gerar memórias coletivas, e de «place memory», entendido como a memória despertada pela presença física em determinados locais, elaborados pelo historiador francês Pierre Nora e pelo antropólogo britânico Paul Connerton, respectivamente; ao contrário de outros fenômenos coletivos (como a guerra), a escola normalmente não tem monumentos públicos dedicados à comemoração do seu próprio passado, no entanto, os locais nos quais foram feitas experiências educacionais únicas e irrepetíveis (por exemplo, a primeira Casa das Crianças de Montessori em Roma), os museus da escola ou escolas-museu de pequenas aldeias, entre outros, podem realizar essa tarefa e, assim, serem investigados para mostrarem a imagem da escola do passado que as instituições promotoras têm procurado transmitir.

- *Memórias lapidárias*: esta área temática tem como objetivo determinar que memória da escola e da profissão docente foi promovida ao longo dos anos por instituições públicas, através do estudo de placas comemorativas, estátuas e bustos em exposição dentro e fora dos edifícios públicos e das placas toponomásticas, dedicadas a pedagogos, educadores e professores.
- *Políticas de memória*: esta área temática é construída de acordo com as dinâmicas e em virtude dos critérios pelos quais a escola foi percebida como merecedora de comemoração pública por parte das instituições, tanto em eventos de recorrência histórica relacionados com a educação pública (aniversários das instituições de ordens escolares e das leis fundamentais de reforma da educação pública, jubileus universitários, etc.), quanto em grandes celebrações e ocasiões de importância nacional, por meio da emissão de selos, cunhagem de moedas comemorativas e nomeação de ruas e praças; também pode se tornar objeto de pesquisa os prêmios, medalhas, honras e certificados de mérito conferidos pelas autoridades públicas, a fim de reconhecer o elevado valor social e cultural da atividade realizada pelos professores dentro da comunidade nacional.
- *Invenção da tradição de educar*: esta área temática se baseia na aplicação da categoria historiográfica da «invenção da tradição», desenvolvida por Eric Hobsbawm, nas instituições de ensino impactadas principalmente por mudanças profundas e radicais ao longo da idade contemporânea e, portanto, no lidar com a consequente necessidade de uma legitimidade nova e mais firme do próprio papel e de suas prerrogativas e funções; é exatamente nesse contexto histórico e cultural que as instituições de ensino superior, faculdades e universidades tentaram artificialmente atribuir historicidade ao próprio mito fundador, a fim de ostentar uma longa tradição educadora capaz de se afirmar no imaginário coletivo como locais prestigiosos e exclusivos de formação.

Diretrizes operacionais e prazos

Até 30 de Setembro 2017, cada autor deve apresentar uma proposta de artigo escrita em língua inglesa, usando o formulário de apresentação anexo à presente. O respectivo formulário deve ser enviado ao endereço de e-mail: roberto.sani@unimc.it.

Até 30 de novembro de 2017 será comunicado a cada autor o resultado da avaliação prévia e a aceitação ou rejeição das propostas recebidas.

O próximo prazo para apresentação dos textos finais, escrito em inglês de acordo com as normas editoriais da revista e com não mais do que 7.000

palavras (incluindo notas de rodapé, referências, tabelas e legendas de figuras), está agendado para 30 de setembro de 2018.

Tanto as propostas quanto os textos finais serão submetidos à revisão anônima por pares, de acordo com as normas da revista; o diretor da revista irá nomear um comitê especial de avaliadores, composto por especialistas de nível nacional e internacional com experiência comprovada nas diferentes áreas temáticas desta *call for papers*.

Até 30 de novembro de 2018, os editores do dossiê comunicarão aos autores quaisquer alterações necessárias às suas contribuições, que devem ser devolvidas até 31 de janeiro de 2019.

Italian version

Il presente dossier monografico – che si propone di proseguire il filone di ricerca inaugurato dal simposio internazionale *School Memories. New Trends in Historical Research into Education: Heuristic Perspectives and Methodological Issues* (Siviglia, 22-23 settembre 2015) – punta a mettere a fuoco nelle sue molteplici forme la rappresentazione che dell'istituzione scuola e del fenomeno della scolarizzazione hanno offerto e continuano a offrire ancora oggi le celebrazioni pubbliche promosse dalle istituzioni in base a precise politiche della memoria, così come anche le dinamiche socio-culturali che sovrintendono alla commemorazione dei pedagogisti e delle loro rivoluzioni teoriche e degli insegnanti e della azione didattica da essi promossa.

In tal senso, la nuova angolazione dalla quale si osserva il passato scolastico può consentire di ampliare le prospettive euristiche della storia dell'educazione, salvaguardandone la dimensione storiografica e superando la tentazione di ricorrere a paradigmi interpretativi alternativi.

Lo scopo del presente dossier è pertanto quello di offrire alla comunità scientifica internazionale degli storici dell'educazione una prima approfondita riflessione su questo specifico nuovo e affascinante ambito di ricerca, definendone le coordinate teoriche generali e offrendo precisi criteri metodologici per un suo corretto inquadramento storiografico.

Ambiti tematici

Il dossier monografico si concentrerà principalmente su cinque ambiti tematici di riferimento, attraverso i quali è possibile indagare la memoria pubblica della scuola nelle sue articolazioni fondamentali.

- *Memorie funebri*: tale ambito tematico riunisce le molteplici forme di commemorazione pubblica dei protagonisti dell'istruzione e dell'educazione a livello locale e nazionale, promosse da parenti e amici come adempimento d'un obbligo privato e pubblicamente esplicitate al fine di sottolineare il ruolo da essi svolto nel progresso civile e culturale della società in cui operarono; in tale contesto, sono assunti quali oggetti privilegiati di indagine lapidi ed epitaffi funerari, opuscoli commemorativi stampati dai comitati per le onoranze agli insegnanti defunti, orazioni funebri, necrologi apparsi su quotidiani e riviste magistrali.
- *Luoghi della memoria*: tale ambito tematico si fonda sui concetti di *lieu de mémoire* – inteso come spazio materiale o simbolico in grado di generare memorie collettive – e di *place memory* – intesa come la memoria suscitata dalla presenza fisica in determinati luoghi – elaborati rispettivamente dallo storico francese Pierre Nora e dall'antropologo britannico Paul Connerton; diversamente da altri fenomeni collettivi (come la guerra), la scuola in genere non dispone di monumenti pubblici dedicati alla commemorazione del proprio passato, tuttavia – tra gli altri – luoghi all'interno dei quali si sono compiute esperienze educative uniche e irripetibili (per esempio, la prima Casa dei Bambini della Montessori in Roma), musei della scuola o scuole-museo di piccoli villaggi di montagna possono assolvere a tale compito ed essere così indagati per l'immagine della scuola del passato che le istituzioni promotrici hanno inteso trasmettere.
- *Memorie lapidee*: tale ambito tematico si propone di determinare quale memoria della scuola e della professione magistrale sia stata promossa nel corso del tempo dalle istituzioni pubbliche attraverso lo studio delle lapidi commemorative, delle statue e dei busti esposti all'interno e all'esterno degli edifici pubblici e delle targhe toponomastiche, dedicati a pedagogisti, educatori e insegnanti.
- *Politiche della memoria*: tale ambito tematico ricostruisce secondo quali dinamiche e in virtù di quali criteri la scuola sia stata percepita come meritevole di commemorazione pubblica da parte delle istituzioni, tanto in occasione di ricorrenze storiche relative alla pubblica istruzione (anniversari dell'istituzione di ordini scolastici e delle fondamentali leggi di riforma della pubblica istruzione, giubilei universitari, etc.) quanto di grandi celebrazioni e di importanti ricorrenze nazionali, attraverso l'emissione di francobolli, il conio di monete commemorative e l'intitolazione di vie e piazze; ugualmente, possono diventare oggetto di ricerca i premi, le medaglie, le onorificenze e i certificati di benemerenzza conferiti dalle autorità pubbliche allo scopo di riconoscere l'alto valore sociale e culturale dell'attività svolta dagli insegnanti all'interno della comunità nazionale.

- *Invenzione della tradizione educativa*: tale ambito tematico si fonda sull'applicazione della categoria storiografica dell'«invenzione della tradizione», sviluppata da Eric Hobsbawm, alle istituzioni educative maggiormente investite dai profondi e radicali mutamenti nel corso dell'età contemporanea e quindi alle prese con la conseguente necessità di una nuova e più salda legittimazione del proprio ruolo e delle proprie prerogative e funzioni; è in tale contesto storico-culturale, infatti, che istituti d'istruzione superiore, collegi e università tentarono artificiosamente di attribuire storicità al proprio mito fondativo al fine di vantare una lunga tradizione educativa in grado di affermarli nell'immaginario collettivo come prestigiosi ed esclusivi luoghi di formazione.

Indicazioni operative e scadenze

Entro il 30 settembre 2017, ogni autore dovrà presentare una proposta di articolo in lingua inglese, utilizzando il modulo di presentazione allegato alla presente. Il rispettivo modulo dovrà essere inviato all'indirizzo di posta elettronica: roberto.sani@unimc.it.

Entro il 30 novembre 2017 verrà comunicato a ogni autore l'esito della valutazione preliminare e l'accettazione o meno delle proposte ricevute.

La successiva scadenza per la consegna dei testi definitivi, redatti in lingua inglese secondo le norme editoriali della rivista e di lunghezza non superiore a 7.000 parole (incluse note a piè di pagina, riferimenti bibliografici, tabelle e didascalie), è fissata per il 30 settembre 2018.

Sia le proposte che i testi definitivi saranno sottoposti a *peer review* anonima, secondo gli standard della rivista; il direttore della rivista provvederà alla nomina di un apposito comitato di referaggio, composto da esperti di fama nazionale e internazionale e comprovata esperienza nei diversi ambiti tematici della presente *call for papers*.

Entro il 30 novembre 2018 i curatori del dossier comunicheranno agli autori eventuali modifiche da apportare ai propri contributi, che dovranno essere riconsegnati entro il 31 gennaio 2019.

Submission form

Author	Name Surname
Institutional affiliation	
Email address	
Title and subtitle	
Keywords	keywords (min. 3 – max. 5) must be in English.
Abstract	the length of the abstract – written in English – must be between 500 and 1,000 words; the text must be structured according to the following outline
<i>Objectives</i>	
<i>Methodology and sources</i>	
<i>Content development</i>	
<i>Preliminary results of the research</i>	
Bibliography	it is possible to enter up to 10 references, which should follow the editorial standards of the journal, attached to this <i>call for papers</i>

Peer-review policy / Referaggio

All papers submitted for publication are passed on to two anonymous Italian and foreign referees (double-blind peer review), which are chosen by the Editor on the base of their expertise. For further information see the website:

<<http://www.hecl.it>>

Tutti gli articoli inviati alla redazione vengono sottoposti a referaggio anonimo da parte di due esperti, italiani e stranieri, selezionati dal Direttore sulla base delle competenze e interessi di ricerca. Ulteriori informazioni sul sito:

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